

The Netherlands

History

The Netherlands—commonly called Holland—was conquered by Rome in the first century AD, but Germanic tribes drove them out in the 400s. France gained control of The Netherlands in the 1300s, and Spain took over 200 years later. In the 1600s, Dutch explorers (people from The Netherlands are called Dutch) sailed to Java and South Africa, claiming many as colonies. Under Napoleon, The Netherlands was reclaimed for France, but after his defeat it became a sovereign nation. Belgium was originally part of The Netherlands, but seceded in 1830, leaving the country's borders as they are today. During World War II, the Nazis occupied The Netherlands. After the war, the country rebuilt its industries and cities and is an economic success story today. Two islands in the Atlantic are also part of the Netherlands: Antilles and Aruba.

Church History

Pentecost first came to The Netherlands in 1906 when Gerit Polman, an evangelical pastor in the capital, Amsterdam, heard about outpourings of the Holy Spirit that were occurring in neighboring countries. He and his congregation earnestly prayed for Pentecost to come to The Netherlands, and it did. The gospel message spread across The Netherlands and both a Bible school and large church, called Immanuel Hall, were established by 1912. During the Nazi occupation, believers suffered greatly. Assemblies of God congregations in the U.S. helped as much as they could. After the war, shipments of food and clothing were sent to the impoverished church in The Netherlands. In 1952, several Dutch Pentecostal congregations joined to form the Brotherhood of Full Gospel Assemblies. Seven years later, the government recognized this body as the Brotherhood of Pentecostal Assemblies.

The Movement Today

In February 2002 The Brotherhood of Pentecostal Assemblies and the Full Gospel Church merged to form the Assemblies of God of the Netherlands. Teen Challenge coffeehouses, rehabilitation centers, training centers and a prison ministry touch lives in The Netherlands. American Assemblies of God missionaries to The Netherlands identify themselves as part of the church and work closely with it to plant churches and ministries.

Additional Facts About the Netherlands

Capital: Amsterdam

Area: 16,033 square miles

Population: 16,150,000

Government: Parliamentary democracy under a constitutional monarch

Language: Dutch

Agriculture: Grains, potatoes, sugar beets, vegetables, fruits and flowers

Industry: Metals, machinery, chemicals, oil refining, diamond cutting, microelectronics and tourism