

The Shelter Youth Hostel Ministry NEWSLETTER

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THANKS FOR GROWTH

In the hostels we see a growing interest in the Gospel. Our Easter program, for example, attracted 100 people in the Shelter City and 60 people in the Shelter Jordan. This means that over half of all the guests wanted to hear about the Easter message! This was really encouraging.

On a special computer in the hall way, guest can now find all sorts of information about the Gospel and are able to watch the Jesus Video as well.



For longer term guests and for former guests who settled in the Amsterdam area, we are also offering Alpha courses. Jan de Visser is already hosting the third course of the year in the Shelter City. People are really eager to attend these meetings and to learn more about a life with Christ.

Baptisms

Through the Alpha course and other initiatives we have seen a number of people come to faith in the previous months. Often new believers also want to make a visible step and desire to be baptized. Together with the ministry of Oudezijds 100 we already had two baptism services. At the most recent one in March, even as many as three hostel guests were baptized. Praise be to God.

Hostel growth

The increase in the number of guests continues. Last year we were very excited about an extra 12,000 booked nights in the first quarter of the year compared to the year before. This year we have even topped that by another increase of 1,400. We are thankful that after some difficult years, the hostels are economically doing better every year.

To remain a suitable accommodation, the Shelter Jordan is facing a huge renovation. In November the hostel will close for three-and-a-half months to make smaller rooms and better facilities.

Management team

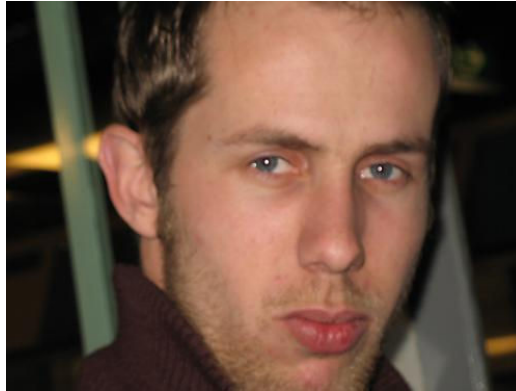
With these and other developments, the management team is pretty busy. We miss Rosemary who has been ill for a while now. We are thankful for Jaco who has replaced Freek in the Shelter Jordan. To give you the full picture, these are the managers at this moment: Ewout, Jaco, Lynn and Rosemary in the Jordan, Hennie, Susanne, Adinda, Jan and Taka in the City, Jacob and Benjamin serving at both hostels, and Maarten, Harald and Ian as Nightmen.

A YEAR ON STAFF

For many staff members, serving at the Youth Hostel Ministry is a time of personal development and spiritual growth. This was also the experience of Douwe van der Wal from Drachten, the Netherlands. Douwe worked in the Shelter City for a full year. In a little while he will go to Israel to join the team of the Shelter in Eilat, but first he looks back at his time in Amsterdam.

After one year of service in the Shelter, how did your picture of God change?

Douwe: I came here with the wish to explore more of God and to trust Him more. Since I became Christian two years ago, I mostly thought about God in general and abstract terms. During this last year I realized that God really cares for you, and you are not too small to receive His special attention. He wants to work things out for you, but you have to put your faith in His power. My general picture of God changed into a much more precise and personal picture about who He is and what He does in my life.



What would you see as your most impressive experience in the Shelter?

Douwe: There is one event that really had a deep impact in my life. I was ready with my evening shift, when the evening manager told me that one of the cleaners was very sick. He asked me to accompany the cleaner to the hospital. To be honest, I was not very enthusiastic about this idea but rather felt irritated; I was tired and wanted to go home. But I said yes anyway and we took the metro to the hospital.

This happened at a time that I was thinking a lot about God being almighty. So I prayed to God about this situation, asked Him to be with us and even heal this person. In the hospital, the doctor was confident that the problem was a infected appendix. **However, after more prayer, the cleaner recovered and could leave the hospital one hour later.** There was nothing wrong anymore.

Where did you see the biggest change in your character?

Douwe: After I got saved I lived in truth but I still had to learn to live out of love. Somehow love did not have a place in my head and heart. When I started in the youth hostel ministry, I evangelized out of truth. It must have made me look like the Pharisees with their judgmental and rigid attitudes. I realized that if you only want someone to agree with you, you are not acting out of love. I am still struggling, but now I try to keep Jesus' love for the people in mind while talking with them. I don't need to convince people, that's the work of the Holy Spirit.

What will you miss when you think of staying in Amsterdam?

Douwe: I will surely miss the craziness of the city. Amsterdam, to me, is one of the most beautiful cities in the world. It has a lot of history and I like this. I

have always felt at home here. I frequently took hostel guests on city walks, and I really liked to show them the variety and beauty of the city. On these walks, people would often ask me about my motivation to work at the Shelter. It gave me the opportunity to tell them about what Jesus did for me. This is a very natural way to speak about God, while walking and sightseeing.

Last question: What advice would you give to someone, who wants to join the Shelter family in the Willemsstraat?

Douwe: Put energy in everything you think God wants you to do. Getting to know co-workers and taking time to work on a good team, really is important. I did a lousy job there. Don't care about what people think of you, but stand always clean and sincere before God. I tried not live out of my own emotions and understanding, but to bring everything before God, and have faith in Him. Often He would renew and refresh my emotions and understanding. I really want to encourage all the people who will read this, to live their lives 100% for Jesus.

From the management:

Weekend manager/Night man

We are curious how many men would be interested in working as weekend manager and night man if such a paid position would become available. It would be approximately a Saturday plus Sunday shift every other week and four night shifts in the intermediate week. If you are from a EU country and possibly interested, please contact Jacob Kops via Jacob@shelter.nl

PRAYER POINTS

Give thanks for the openness for the Gospel and guest giving their life to Christ.

Give thanks for the many guests in our hostels.

Pray for the ministry in the hostels. That guests will see the love of Christ made visible, will feel comfortable to ask questions and share things about their own life, will be interested in the testimonies of the staff. Above all, that God will speak to their hearts.

Pray for our staff team. For unity and friendship, health and emotional strength. Also for growth in faith and desire to serve God wholeheartedly, as well as for a desire to meet guests and share Christ.

Pray for creativity and effectiveness in the various programs and activities such as the Bible discussion, evening devotional, cleaner time, city walk and hostel night.

Pray for the management team during this time of a heavy work load.

Pray for Rosemary and her recovery.



The Shelter Youth Hostel Ministry is a Christian ministry to travelers. In the centre of Amsterdam, the Netherlands, we run two Christian hostels: Shelter City and Shelter Jordan. Each year, we provide accommodation to 40,000 travelers from all over the world. Our desire is to be a blessing to them and to share the Gospel of Jesus Christ with these travelers. The ministry is part of the association Tot Heil des Volks, a non-denominational mission organization registered in Amsterdam. Internet: www.youthhostelministry.org

Donations. The work of The Shelter Youth Hostel Ministry would not be able to continue without financial support. Help support this ministry! Read more about **easy online donations** at www.youthhostelministry.org

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