

The Shelter Youth Hostel Ministry NEWSLETTER

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SUMMER AT THE SHELTER

World Cup fever has hit the Netherlands. Shops and streets are decorated with orange flags and banners, the color of the national soccer team. In the hostels, travelers from various nationalities are sitting together in front of the TV. Some are cheering on their country's team, others are just hoping for a good game.

Building relationships
An international event, such as the World Cup, can be a great aid in starting up conversations with guests who might otherwise not take the time to stick around in the hostel café or who would not be interested in meeting staff or fellow travelers. In general, the summer season provides many opportunities to host relationship building events. A recent brainstorm with the Shelter City staff resulted in so many great ideas that it might be hard to make choices.



Even our new website is being promoted on an orange shirt.

Did you know that there is a poll on our new website as well as a staff forum?! Take a look and pass it on:

www.youthhostelministry.org



The city of Amsterdam and the Shelter hostels: a great combination.

BBQ

Among the activities that will take place in the summer is a weekly barbecue. This will be a great opportunity to meet people in a relaxed and not threatening way. Relationship is the key word here. This aspect is essential in our ministry. The most effective way of communicating Christ in the hostels, is through personal conversations and building relationships with the guests. Another activity that serves this purpose well is the City Walk. This is a sight seeing tour that we offer our guests. With a staff member as tour guide, it provides opportunities for conversations about spiritual things as well as the city of Amsterdam.

Wheaton

In the summer we also welcome many short term volunteers. Some are part of a school Missions team. For example, from Wheaton

College or North Western University. We are thankful for this help and we hope for more volunteers to sign up for August. Most of all we are looking for longer term staff who can join us for 6 to 12 months. We still have many openings for the second half of this year, starting in September. See our website for more details.



Welcome to Amsterdam.

Full hostel

The summer also brings many travelers to Amsterdam and to the Shelter Jordan and Shelter City hostel. The number of guests so far, has been higher than last year's and even higher than we budgeted for. This means busy reception and café shifts for our staff. But also lots of fun and enthusiasm about getting the job done and being able to serve so many people. Yes, summer at the Shelter is great!

EVANGELISM IN THE MTP

Since I am back from my maternity break I have called out the rest of the year, at least for myself, as the year of Evangelism. With this I mean that I want to especially focus on further improvement of the evangelism part of the Ministry Training Program (MTP).

As the coordinator of the training program, I asked some staff members to write about a thought, a topic, or a comment of a teacher from the Ministry Training Program that had inspired them. When I was reading through these reflections, it appeared to me that these reflections actually show a bit of the many-sidedness of evangelism in the youth hostels. Have a look for yourself:



Tina: "Friends or projects"?

To love people
Staff member Tina Ermke from Germany remembers a class on Evangelism by Luc.

"The teaching really emphasized the questions why and what I am here for. We are here to reach out to people, to share the Gospel with them at the hostel. But what is the best way to do it? Are the people you are hanging out with, friends or just 'projects' which you want reach for Jesus?"

"As we look at Jesus' life - He simply lived and He did what needed to be done. He didn't call it Ministry. He just did it. He loved. He lived. He shared life with his friends. And that's all He wants me to do. God really gave me the gift to love people, to enjoy hanging out with them - even if it is sometimes just a smile or just to be there to listen to someone. This class challenged me again to love people; not with my limited love but with His love and because I'm loved. It should not be about myself..."

God at work

For Susana Martins, a staff member from Portugal, it was a prayer that made a great impact. "It was after a class on teambuilding, last September. The teacher finished the class by saying something in her prayer like: 'We thought we were here to serve God, but maybe God brought us here to do something in us...'"

"On the one hand it was not so easy to hear that, because we like the feeling that we are needed, that we can make a difference. On the other hand, that thought has helped me through times when it seemed that there is too much going on inside of me and I hardly have the time or energy to be around guests!!!"



Susana: "Maybe God want to do something in us."

"Yes, we are here to share about who God is and what He has to offer people... But we can only do that if God is at work in our lives... and when others can see that!"

Music scene

It was a class about evangelism in the Music scene that spoke to Jacoline Jonker from the Netherlands. "Especially the following quote: 'There is no such thing as Christian music, literature, internet sites, etc. Christian can only be a person that follows Christ.'"

"I found myself in this world with the same old Christian friends and meetings; attending Bible studies, enjoying music and concerts together with my friends. In a way it was easy to grow closer to God, but at the same time I was building my identity in a protected way of living. Being a Christian, though, is not in the first place being surrounded by other Christians, but having a relationship with Christ Himself. The life of a Christian is not about the Christian culture; Christian rules, a Christian way to act. It is about being obedient to God, living out of His grace."

So far these few reports. We'll continue reflecting and acting in the area of evangelism. And we are looking forward to the news we can share with you in newsletters to come!

Johanna Oudman, Coordinator of the MTP

PRAYER SUPPORT

- In the previous newsletter we placed a article - written by Laurissa Anderson - about returning home after having served in the Shelter. This often is not easy. We know of a number of ex-staff who are back home and struggling desperately to fit back into their old life when they have changed so much at the Shelter. Some are desperately trying to follow God still but finding everything very hard and others are not going to church or really following God anymore. We ask you to pray for those who have already left the YHM and those who will do so in the coming months.
- Pray for the summer activities such as the BBQ and the City Walk. For wisdom in choosing and skill in working out these and other activities.
- Pray for the cleaners and cleaning supervisors as they share from the Bible every day.
- Pray for the long-term guests who are stuck in Amsterdam and seemingly going nowhere.
- Pray for all the summer volunteers.
- Pray for enough staff for August and later.
- Pray for the outreaches every Friday evening and the daily Bible discussions.
- Pray and give thanks for the two new managers in the City: Adinda de Jong and Suzanne Winkler.
- Pray for safety and protection in the hostels.
- Pray for Gerrit Jan and Krista, coordinators of the staff community.
- Pray for the spiritual life of the staff and a passion for evangelism.

The Shelter Youth Hostel Ministry is a Christian evangelism ministry in the centre of Amsterdam, the Netherlands. Our goal is to share the Gospel of Jesus Christ with the 30,000 travelers who are staying each year in our two Christian youth hostels: The Shelter City and The Shelter Jordan. 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

This Newsletter can also be found at www.youthhostelministry.org

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