

Highlights House of Light fall 2019

We want to share on behalf of the House of Light pioneer team a few highlights from last fall. Mid 2020 we will send you the annual report for 2019.



House of Light Sunday meetings

We began by looking at Bible stories about meeting Jesus, in the hope that the participants may also meet Him. From September onwards, we discussed the stories of Moses. Many visitors of House of Light are in a form of captivity. This may have to do with their past, with debts or with addictions. Some are caught in an eternal struggle to be accepted by others. We looked specifically at how God wants to free us from these "Pharaohs" of our lives, through the Easter lamb Jesus. And how we - like Israel - sometimes remain imprisoned by our own guilt. God asks us to stand up and leave but this can be quite a challenge. A visitor who first came on the Sunday when the 9 plagues were discussed said: "I normally hear believers only talking about how God lovingly helps them in their lives, so this is completely new to me. I'm curious where this story ends."

Christmas 2019

The Christmas celebration of House of Light was really great! The atmosphere was welcoming and open, the meal fantastic. But above all it was a great opportunity to celebrate the birth of Jesus together. The group of about 35 visitors listened to an inspiring reflection on loneliness and how Jesus came to break this. Many of these people struggle with worries and with

loneliness. In their grief and pain, they often feel alone and isolated; and sometimes 'put aside' by society. That is why it is so special to see that the mutual bond has become very close and that people take care of each other with comfort, encouragement and kindness. We see people find new hope with God and we see how He transforms human lives. For example, it was great to see a traumatized African



woman helping happily with the Christmas meal. Until recently, she was trapped in a terrible situation and seriously abused. The redeeming work of Jesus Christ is so visible in people who are broken, that it makes us, pioneering team, speechless sometimes.

Pioneering team expanded

We expanded the pioneering team with three regular visitors to House of Light. The vision of House of Light is to grow more towards greater responsibilities for the target group and a smaller role for the initiators. We see a strong motivation among the regular visitors to play their part in serving. The challenge is to guide them well and to give them the space to acquire leadership skills. The ICF church worker has also been participating in the pioneering team since September and focuses, among other things, on fundraising. In March, the pioneering team and the church pioneer resource person of the Protestant Church of the Netherlands (PKN), will take two days for team building and vision development.

Children's work

We have a nice intercultural team of children's workers who do wonderful things with the approximately 12 children of House of Light. A number of children come from unstable families and have their own "baggage". The children's workers always succeed in taking them to another world: of good news, faith, love and hope. A girl spontaneously prayed in silence when the teacher told that children can NOW believe in Jesus and can receive Him in their hearts. An 8-year-old boy from Afghanistan proudly showed his Bible to his mother; he also spoke aloud the Bible texts he had learned during the Christmas party. There are more people with a Muslim background involved in the children's work. A Syrian mother comes to help faithfully and takes part in everything. We see children's work as essential for building the House of Light community.

Pastoral care

Worries and problems almost always play a role. Pastoral care is normally provided in one's own environment and at House of Light meetings. Sometimes something special is needed. This fall, House of Light organized a pastoral midweek in Amerongen, in the forest. Five women had an unforgettable time with God and with each other as a group. The program included Bible study, thematic education, sharing of personal testimonies, and prayer. The subjects were tailored to their life situation. It was about struggle of the mind, forgiveness from the heart and God's encouragement in times of setbacks.



Two responses indicate what the impact was:

- *'Life, nature, being full of love, always being heard and listened to, being able to ask forgiveness'.*
- *'I am grateful that I could be here, freed from sorrow and that I have learned to forgive. I'm glad I was released from a burden. Thank you Lord.'*