



Treasure of Heaven Summer Camp 2019

Beugen, The Netherlands, August 5 - 12, 2019

By Lisa Janssen

The TOH family camp is one of the summer activities that is offered by and to our European Church community. This year we had found a beautiful location in the South of the Netherlands - a carefully refurbished old farmhouse with a big playground and a fruit yard to enjoy outside activities.

There were 40 people at the workshop, including 6 TOH participants, 8 parents, all staff and volunteers and the kitchen crew. Special guests were 4 brothers and sisters from Russia, who were inspired to join our workshop after meeting Marco Rivetti and me in March 2019, when the TOH ministry was inaugurated in Moscow. Dr. David Hanna, who has been a great support to our summer camps in previous years, joined us as well for two days!

The motto of the workshop was the same as all ESGD 2019 summer activities: "REPRESENT: Truth in Action" and each day a specific aspect of this was covered during morning service. Spiritual guidance, lectures and group discussions, adjusted to our special needs brothers and sisters, surrounded all activities. But of course, there's always a lot of fun and excitement as well – this year highlighted by a Djembe drum workshop, a visit to the Africa

Museum in Nijmegen with a special Body Percussion session, outdoor competition games, music, dance, crafts and a dinner at a typical Dutch Pancake restaurant.

Looking back, we realize once again that there are a few very specific aspects that make our summer camps unique: We are a **Family Camp**, including parents and siblings of the participants. The number of supporting volunteers is about twice as much as the TOH brothers and sisters, to make sure their needs and safety are met.

Our program consists of different parts. There are activities among the 2nd generation only, separate parents' meetings, and all-together activities. While the young people enjoy their activities, the parents especially appreciate the deep and heartfelt sharing about their joys and fears, strengths and challenges in daily life, their concerns about the future or other topics that come up spontaneously. At several points of the day we **ALL come together**, including kitchen- and other supporting staff: like morning service, outings (for example to a local attraction), afternoon games and evening programs; that again nurtures the feeling of being **one, big family**.

Inviting families, staff and volunteers, 1st and 2nd gen, we realized throughout the years how all of us are **special Treasures**, some of us unseen or unheard because they had struggled

with the Church or personal issues and became distant – yet, at TOH we are open for everyone to re-connect as family in our common desire to dedicate our heart and time to young brothers and sisters with special needs, creating unforgettable memories. Many of us could experience God's heart again and found new meaning for our life through living for the sake of others in a very warm and natural environment.

Last but not least, **we want to thank everyone who has financially supported us** – European Headquarters, ESGD, Church communities, brothers and sisters and several 2nd gen families and individuals! Due to the large number of staff, special supplies or activities, our camps have more expenses than usual, therefore we always set up a fundraiser in the hope to support the families and cover all expenses. However, besides the external aspect, these donations have a much deeper meaning on the heartistic level: they connect our cause to the whole European community.

To conclude, the final remark of someone that "the whole camp was an experience beyond belief" gives us the grateful feeling of having accomplished our goal! Thank you all!





