

Ellel Ministries Netherlands
“Huize Baak”
Annual Report 2021





January 2022

Introduction

2021 has been both a tough and a rewarding year. It has required great perseverance with the ever-changing Covid restrictions ranging from full lock down to short-lived freedoms. We took every opportunity to open our doors and welcome the people; often rearranging schedules, so that our students could finish Explore within the year. We were thrilled to welcome 26 students to our first Explore + in July; and though student numbers have been greatly reduced, those who attended have been richly blessed. There have also been major changes in the team and we continue to pray for more mature members to join us in the work. We have faced many challenges and overcome them by God's grace, encouraged by countless beautiful testimonies, we are reminded daily of His faithfulness as he provides for all our needs.

The Ellel Ministries Netherlands Team.

Overview

In 2021 the Team was mostly restricted to base, with travel restricted due to Covid and most international borders closed. We were disappointed to postpone "Bridge from the Head to the Heart" for a second time, but made up for it with a local "Healing through Creativity". The Team gathered each week to watch Peter Horrobin's live stream broadcasts, and time permitting... finished a team study of "The Bait of Satan" before moving on to "Boundaries". The Team has been blessed by the introduction of weekly intercession and worship times, and ongoing monthly Communion, as well as regular pray and fasting days.

We began the year with a very cold winter, -17 in February and 20cm of snow. This was a beautiful distraction from the worries of the world as the Baak village gathered on our moat, skating and BBQing on the very thick ice. Some of the team enjoyed playing in the snow; some also took a turn on the ice, it was a great circuit breaker for the stresses of Covid.

January and February saw us in full lockdown, until we found a way to meet the Covid restrictions. As religious gatherings were permitted; with social distancing in place, we looked for opening options. With the dining room unable to open, we offered a takeaway service and our students ate in their rooms. In March and April we held Thursday to Sunday double weekends to catch up with the courses we had missed. We also offered teaching via Zoom to our international Explore students who were unable to travel.

This was also our third year running the Explore programme, so finally our first Explore+ which ran in the summer, after graduating our first Explore B. We began preparing for Explore+ in March, and continued to fine tune our plans till our 26 students arrived in July. Explore+ was a busy, but beautiful week with many of our Ministry Team and trainees in attendance, along with a bunch of former students who had been waiting. We decided to have everyone students, team and volunteers pitch in to get things done. Working together brought a great sense of belonging and unity to the group, and has resulted in more students joining us as regular volunteers.

We have continued to make new connections into the wider Christian community in The Netherlands. In June we met with Leaders of a Church in Hoogeveen EGH. Martijn and Eunice are passionate about fostering growth and maturity in their congregation, and see the work of Ellel Ministries has the spiritual Keys they need. Marc together with a small team made four visits to the church; they were well received, and set to continue in the New Year.

This was Marc and Margaret's 9th year leading the work of Ellel Ministries Nederland it has had its blessings and challenges, as well as new opportunities to stretch and grow. The full-time team numbered 9 in January, 6 in the summer and grew to 8 in September. Our faithful part-time team has remained steady. As always, an army of faithful volunteers has turned up to fill the gaps as required. We continue to pray for mature loadbearing team members. Explore+ was a great challenge, and very rewarding as we taught a new school for the first time. We were assisted in the leading and teaching by Conny, Johan and Hein. In August, we were able to visit Ellel Germany's new, and former directors, which was a good time of

fellowship and encouragement. September saw us traveling to Lille to teach “Stress anxiety and Burnout”, it was encouraging to work with more of the Ellel family.

Marc has really enjoyed teaching and engaging with our students this year. He, together with Conny and Johan presented a Zoom one day course “Rescued from Rejection” during the lockdown in February, attracting 70 participants. In July he also visited Ellel Belgium to teach. He taught most days on Explore+ including the one day course “God’s Covering”. Marc kicked off our new school year in September teaching both “The Big Picture” and “The Family Business”, he also taught “Lost and Found”. These came on top of all the usual administration as director; of a very small team, that goes with running a large centre. This load was increased again with the departure of our office manager, Vicki mid-year. In November Marc was able to travel to Australia; to visit Family, for the first time in two years.

Margaret along with her usual tasks as Deputy and Ministry Manager taught “In His Image” for the first time; with the extra challenge of organising and coordinating all the workshops, which she repeated for “Healing through Creativity” in the summer. She also taught most days on Explore+ “Knowing God” and “Godly Sexuality”. Margaret has continued to receive treatment for a whiplash injury from last year, which requires considerable time. In December she was also able to visit family in Australia; for the first time in two years, returning late January.



Vicki, after 8 years on Full-time team; most as office manager, felt the Lord was calling her to something new. She had already stepped down from leadership; while she considered her future, and with the completion of co-ordinating the translation process for Explore+ felt that her time had come. She officially finished work in July, took a vacation and was farewelled in August. We are grateful for her many years of dedicated service and all she contributed to the pioneering of the work here in the Netherlands, we pray she finds a new place to call home. She will spend some time at Ellel France while she considers where God is leading her in her retirement.



Jack has continued the work of restoration and painting various parts of the main house, and other buildings. He also still carries most of the responsibility for food shopping and weekend catering, though Birgit and Klaas are also taking some of these responsibilities. During the shutdown, he and Joel painted the catering kitchen and dishwasher room in the Koetshuis.

Hein also travelled to family in Texas over Christmas, for the first time in two years. His main work is still maintaining the estate, improving the garden beds, and organising volunteers to work in the grounds. Together with Marc he reviewed and corrected the translation of EXPLORE. Hein taught some sessions on Explore+, he also Translates for courses, leads Bible study and mentors for the YPT's, and is part of the Ministry Team.

Birgit continues as our House Manager and has been a faithful member of both our ministry team and our worship team, which she continues to serve on. She introduced a weekly worship time, and weekly intercession for the team. From November to January she co-ordinated and lead worship for all our events while Tanja was on leave.

Rhode along with house and catering, was a great help to Marc (and the rest of the team) in all things technical. She also was a great help to Margaret in managing our Covid logistics and preparing two banners for our two Creativity corporate project. She completed both Explore B and Explore+ and after two years on team was decommissioned in July. She is know back in full time study but still joins us occasionally as a volunteer, and for intercession.

Kathleen has continued to serve on team; as she is able, following a whiplash injury from last year. She has ongoing treatment, which requires considerable time. Kathleen prepares soup for our weekend courses, and a team meal each week. She was a great help to

Margaret cutting all the stars and shields for our two corporate projects, folding and messaging paper planes, and preparing creativity materials for several courses.

Joel completed Explore A, and finished his Flourish year in July. He worked with most of the team in all areas of the work and learned a lot, for which he was grateful. He has now returned to full-time study.

Klaas and Jose joined the full-time team mid-September, having just begun their retirement. They have already been serving at Baak as volunteer cooks for many years and decided to go a step further. They have both been in mission work for many years and have a great love for serving the Lord. They are students on Explore A, cater for Explore B, and each take a turn at preparing team meals.

Klaas works with Jack in catering, with Hein in house maintenance, and with Marc on events. Jose works in the office in the mornings, and assists Birgit with light housekeeping in the afternoons.



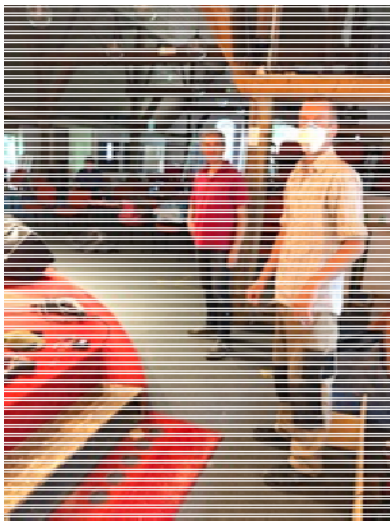
The major highlight of the year was Explore+ and completing all our Explore schools inspite of the Covid shutdowns. The transition to Explore has been a huge and exciting adventure that has required all our skills, and a great dependance on Gods faithfulness.

We were blessed by our Zoom visiting teachers David, Denise and Julie... but even more blessed by Holy Spirit when we had to jump in and do it without our international teaching team. We pray they can return soon though especially Fiona and the Creativity crew for "Bridge from the Head to the Heart", please God let them come. We were also blessed by a visit from Jim and Tanya, which is always a great encouragement for the whole team.

Our two Open Days were able to proceed, the first in July coinciding with Explore+ attracted 20 guest. The second in August was staffed mostly by volunteers, while most of the team were enjoying a well-earned summer vacation. Because of Covid lockdowns we were again unable to promote our work at our Christian conferences.

House and new equipment

The installation of our Fire alarm system has continued step by step, it is a huge project and will continue well into next year at least. Slowly but surely the locks and door handles are being replaced around the property, this is another long term project in such a large property. He also managed to clear an attic space by selling the excess chairs that had been gathering dust there.



A new air refreshing system was installed in the conference room by our handy friends Kees and Jan. It has the benefit of retrieving the heat or cool from the expelled air and returning it to the fresh in the process, as desired. This has made our environment healthier, reduced our heating costs and been greatly appreciated by all, as we no longer need to open the windows for Covid.

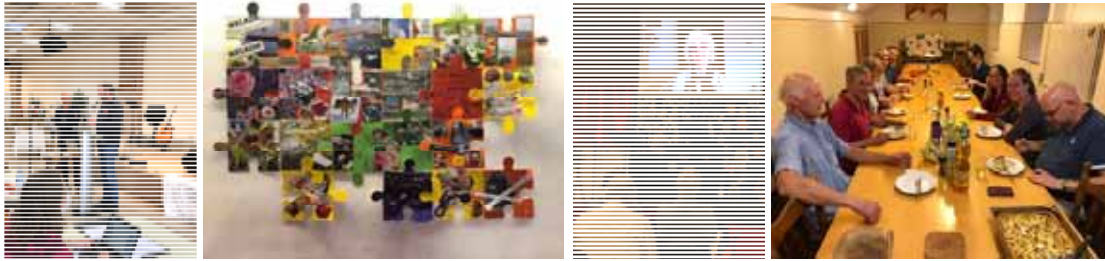
We received a large gift of crockery, cutlery and cookware from Ellel Germany, which Marc and Margaret took the opportunity to collect. We also upgraded our two team vehicles as they were getting a little long in the tooth.

Books, eBooks and Online book store...

We continue with the translation and publishing of Ellel books in Dutch. This year we tried to order the book “Boundaries” by Cloud and Townsend and found that the Dutch version called “Grenzen” had been sold out. We managed to get the rights, one of our volunteers translated the book and we managed to get it printed. A valuable addition to our bookshop. We have also started to process of moving our online store to WooCommerce to have it the online bookstore integrated with the new Ellel Website.

Finance

We are grateful for God's provision and the faithfulness of our supporters. We were able to pay all bills and repay a portion of the outstanding private loans as planned.



Conclusion:

The last year with the Covid pandemic have been a huge challenge and has forced us to be creative in the way we do what we do. Except for a few months, we were able to keep operating and we managed to run all Explore courses and finish the year well.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Marc Schuthof'.

Marc Schuthof
Centre Director
Ellel Ministries Netherlands at Baak.