

International Gathering of Young Theosophists

3 to 7 June 2022

International Theosophical Centre (ITC) Naarden
The Netherlands



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Photo gallery

Thanks

Dedication

To all members of the Theosophical Society, particularly to all young theosophists scattered in all corners of the globe.

May this gathering serve as inspiration of the potentials and possibilities that the youth movement can bring for the future of the TS.

Contact the WFYT:

World Federation of Young Theosophists

If you are a member of the TS 40 years old or younger, and want to be informed about the Federation, and/or get actively involved, please write to info.WFYT@gmail.com
You are welcome to participate!

Mission of the Theosophical Society:

To serve humanity by cultivating an ever-deepening understanding and realization of the Ageless Wisdom, spiritual self-transformation, and the unity of all life.

Message from the Organizing Committee

Nicoletta Boriello

Sara Ortega van Vloten

Pauline van Tol

Tobia Buscaglione

From 3 to 7 June 2022 an International Gathering of Young Theosophists under the theme "Treading the Path to Self-Transformation" took place at the ITC Naarden (The Netherlands). It was the first in-person gathering of members under 40 years old since the global pandemic began.

After some months of preparations, a number of 31 participants attended from 16 countries: Australia, Brazil, Canada, Colombia, Estonia, Finland, France, Ireland, Italy, Mexico, Netherlands, Philippines, Singapore, Spain, Sweden and United States. We were glad a diverse group of like-minded people could be gathered since diversity of points of view and background enriches the outcome when all come together with similar reasons.

At the ITC Naarden one feels immediately submerged with Nature, so that a welcome and safe atmosphere was built, like entering a sacred space out of the ordinary world, allowing to relate with other participants in such a profound manner, with genuine and sincere sharing of our highest aspirations, points of view, curiosity, inquiries, questions etc., as well as laughing, singing, and playing games.

The program activities included morning meditations, youth workshops, a panel of youth talks, volunteering activities at the ITC, and sessions with guest speakers Tim Boyd (International President of the TS) and Vicente Hao Chin Jr. (former President of the Philippines' section). Workshops promoted participation and brainstorming while focusing on the theme through several topics: the Future of the TS and the role of young theosophists; different aspects and experiences on Service; and the Arts as a means of portraying the process of self-transformation, including a fun painting session to creatively illustrate our highest aspirations.

This event was very meaningful in order to interact and to be able to share many precious moments together, including rich conversations and enjoying some music during free time. It was significant to experience a few days of practical theosophy, building fraternal bonds and friendships, and feeling a deep sense of Unity as the whole group worked in harmony. All of it ignited a renewed and stronger motivation, sense of responsibility and willingness to serve, as coworkers within the TS and our communities.



Group photo of all participants with Tim Boyd and his wife Lily

Testimonials from participants

All participants kindly shared their impressions so that our readers may have a glimpse of their experiences through their memories and perceptions



Tobia Buscaglione

Italy

I think it was still January when we started to put on the table some ideas for the program and to plan a strict schedule with few moments to rest. In my opinion we began to work without a complete awareness of how huge this little task would be and has become. We used our best skills, working together and being enthusiastic, imagining the time at the ITC and setting key points before the beginning of the gathering, learning things by doing, as it is usually said. I think our attitude, as the organizing team, was a bit naive but effective and productive.

Besides that, the word that best describes my feeling when I think of the gathering is “thankful”, I shared this with all in the best way I could, but at a certain point, you know, words are not enough, so we have to let the heart talk. All those who took part in our little adventure had a specific role, each one was important, indispensable, and perfect. Together we faced the arduous task of being harmonious, of becoming better than ourselves, letting teachings arrive from the rest of the group and the environment, knowing that the true teacher of each one is not outside but inside us, mostly hidden.

We started to know each other, to interact, and by organizing little things we learnt about small new details that can lead to tremendous revelations, we just have to let it happen. Sometimes making connections is not an easy path but it is the most natural habit of Nature itself, we can either fight that or choose to sit and observe, experiencing the growing process. Someone said that there is no need to ask for

certain things, as they happen spontaneously at just the right moment.

I would really like to be able to thank all again, one at a time by name, to those who listened, those who asked questions, those who supported us and were our hosts, those who nourished us in body and soul, those who convinced us, those who transmitted knowledge, those who got sick but participated anyway in a different way, those who faced their fears in order to make it there to be together, those who took the rain, those who had fun and those who got tired, those who danced and sang, even those who made the werewolf [gameplay].

It was an honor to create that safe space with you, I can say that in every single moment I felt at home, rested even after hours and hours of work, warmed by the love of family (ok, waiting for the thief in the night, but that's another story).

See you around! May the Force be with you!

Rachel Mellado

Australia

The gathering of the Young Theosophists started with a walk on the surreal garden paths of the ITC in Naarden, boasting copious amounts of greenery and



a stillness broken by the soft sounds of nature. The group took moments of silence amongst the statues depicting Buddha, Tara and Mary, and at the Garden of Remembrance; acknowledging the flow of energy throughout the grounds and setting intentions for the rest of our stay. As we passed by the cabins, the group

paused to send well wishes and healing energy to Sara, who unfortunately, after organising the entire conference, caught Covid and was forced to isolate for the duration. Finishing up with tea and biscuits at Besant Hall, I could feel my eyes getting heavy with the jet lag and 20 hours of travelling from Australia, and decided to call it a night.

For the rest of the conference, we would meet in Besant Hall, or the Ashrama to hear lectures and activities, given by Tim Boyd, Vicente Hao Chin and members of the young theosophists. Tim is an excellent public speaker, captivating his audience with expressive language and down to earth anecdotes. Tim makes the ever-daunting Theosophy, seem like a subject that isn't exclusive to convoluted ideas and complex words, and more an amalgamation of what those ideas and words mean to each individual. Vic's practical lectures provided us with useful tools to assist in navigating life on a daily basis, frequently checking in with our emotional health, whilst working towards becoming assertive and positive individuals.

Arend and Peter were gracious and hospitable, sharing stories of their youth as theosophists and facilitating the activities at the centre, both past and present. We were able to spend parts of the day, volunteering around the ITC, fixing the fence line, collecting wood and gardening around the perimeter. This time spent with other young theosophists was rich with conversations, swapping stories of our lodges back home and dreaming of better futures for more young theosophists. Provided by the talented Kabir Catering, nutritious and delicious vegan meals were taken at Crystal Hall, where friendships began to bloom, ideas and invitations were spread and laughter filled the tall ceilings.

The youth-led activities included brainstorming in small groups; what we each see and hope, for the future of theosophy and young people. The group listened intently, as members from around the world shared their experiences, knowledge and discoveries; displaying the many facets of theosophy and what it means for each individual in attendance. The bonds formed, through sharing and being vulnerable with one another, enriched the experience, showing that all across the globe, are people who are working towards building better lives in service to unity and brotherhood.



Andrea Corona Maldonado

Mexico

This was my first big encounter with young theosophists and I'm not disappointed. I'm so happy for the privilege of having visited Naarden, being surrounded by nature and all the amazing energy and magic that emits; an energy that helped us to be more connected and helped me to be more inspired and charged with light.

One of the multiple things that I bring away with me is the exercise we learned at Vicente Hao Chin Jr.'s courses, it helped me to be more aware of my body and to be connected with spirituality, and physically, I will keep practicing it.

In general, I'm very happy and grateful for the experience and for meeting all the people I was able to connect with, and I hope to keep in touch and learn more from them. Also, special thanks to the organizers for all their effort and energy put into this gathering, and to all the workers at Naarden for keeping this marvelous place on its feet.

Salvatore Marrone

Italy



Fifteen days have passed since the amazing gathering in Naarden but three things are still deeply impressed in my mind and my heart. The first is the surprise when meeting so many people from all over the world and finding that pure and enthusiastic gaze in everyone. That look expressing curiosity and openness. The surprise in recognizing that we are all seekers, taking part to the same search for the Truth.

The second is the Theosophical Centre in Naarden and the wonderful people sustaining that place. I clearly remember the sense of beauty emerging from the surrounding forest, the marvelous trees and the history permeating every path and building. Walking

in the morning through those peaceful paths was a regenerating experience. And all this invaluable beauty was maintained and protected by few careful and precious people who have all my esteem.

The third is meeting with Tim Boyd, which was unexpectedly frank and informal but at the same time profound and sacred. That gave me a glimpse of what one would experience when getting in touch with the sense of Oneness.



Pauline van Tol

Netherlands

Years after the last conference for young theosophists in Brazil, it was time to bring again together young people from all over the world for a gathering at the idyllically located Theosophical Centre in Naarden. A conference focused on the path towards self-transformation, although from group discussions it became clear very quickly that self-transformation is not to be seen as a goal, but rather as a process – a process of unfolding of that which is true and divine within ourselves. And in which interactions with other people seemed essential for this unfolding to take place, providing us a mirror in how we position ourselves into this world as to be able to know ourselves better.

In my experience, this conference provided participants with a safe place to explore who we are as a human being, even diving into unresolved parts of ourselves under the guidance of Vicente Hao Chin by a method called ‘processing’. During his sessions, we were invited to let go of the things that hinder us on our path and to become more free in our responses to situations that used to trigger us. This level of vulnerability that participants were invited into, in my view, could only be reached from a sense of trust in one another and the recognition that we all encounter some hindrances on our path that need to be resolved – or ‘released’. And it is only in this recognition of what hinders us that we can truly transform ourselves. But let us not forget that our individual transformation

also affects others. As our divine nature gets the chance to shine through us even more, our light will touch and transform the people around us as well. I’m grateful for the light each one of you has shown me during these days. And I wish that – besides forming a nucleus of brotherhood – we can together form a nucleus of light, transforming not only ourselves, but also the wider world around us.

Kaio Giurizatto Utsch

Brazil

The sensation of inspiration, kindness and joy that permeates these encounters is an indescribable experience that has to be and should be experienced by everyone who still has the possibility. I think the youth meetings bring out the best in each one of us. We can later bring back a little of these better facets of our own selves back to our ordinary lives.



Clover Wu

Singapore

I almost couldn’t make it to the youth gathering at the ITC due to delayed passport renewal, and I almost gave up all hope of getting my passport in time.

Now, I can’t imagine not having attended the gathering, as my love for and commitment in Theosophical service is renewed and strengthened through this experience and it has become so precious to me. As a group of spiritual seekers of diverse backgrounds with unique life stories and paths, we came together with so much understanding, so much openness, that naturally we bonded on a deeper level, recognizing and making more luminous the spiritual light within us. I was able to explore and practice self-

transformation in an atmosphere of love and acceptance where I could be myself without worrying about being cool, knowledgeable, and/or accomplished. When we brainstormed ideas for self-transformation and service, our passion for making Theosophy more inclusive and practical for the youth came to forefront, and it really inspires and motivates me to put all these ideas into action.

We got to know each other through conversations which sometimes can turn into deep heart-to-heart talks, through music, through volunteer activities, as well as through games! There were many instances where bonding happened in even the smallest moments, like holding hands around the oak tree to embrace it, lugging a heavy tree trunk together, and searching for song lyrics to sing along together, to name a few I've experienced. It's as if in these moments, the magic happened when we intuitively saw the divine in each other and in the unique moment itself. Tim Boyd, Vic Hao Chin, and Arend Heijbroek gave us their invaluable support by sharing their wisdom, insights, and support, for which I'm very grateful. I'm incredibly humbled and uplifted by this whole experience and it's really expanded my capacity to love! I look forward to serve alongside everyone.



José Montes Cruz

Spain

I have never been to a TS international gathering before. To be part of the Youth International Gathering in Naarden, was an unexpected and wonderful experience. I felt myself surrounded by good souls, with good will, full of motivation to learn from each other. I think it was a unique experience in which I could meet other people that share the same aims, life's concerns, and the main interest in walking the path of self-transformation.

It was easy to start a conversation with anybody that easily became profound. It was a peaceful place. The people at the ITC in Naarden were welcoming and friendly hosts.

It was a gift to be part of this. I want to thank the TS, ITC Naarden and all the people that the Universe gave me the opportunity to meet.

Elena Bessie Camplone

Italy



The gathering took place in the beautiful ITC in Naarden, an enchanted place in the heart of Holland, where lush nature offers magical corners of powerful energy of Peace.

I had no particular expectations on this trip, I was simply very curious to know a new reality.

The first presentation circle was immediately revealing of what would happen later, I felt a strong sense of union and fraternity, we were on the same wavelength. The strong intention of wanting to create an exchange, a sharing of intentions and experiences, was evident.

The activities were well organized and allowed each of us to interact deeply with each other. The rhythm was perfectly articulated between intellectual, spiritual, physical and playful activities.

Vicente Hao Chin guided us into the world of self-awareness starting from listening to one's body and emotions, showing us on a practical level the possibilities we have to transform our personality, simply by observing ourselves.

International President Tim Boyd welcomed us, sharing his wisdom with us in an informal and playful way, managing to reach directly to our hearts, conveying the importance of focusing one's physical and mental strength towards building a better world, starting each from their own little one.

The volunteering activities in the Centre were an opportunity to work in contact with nature, which is part of us and not apart from us, and is one of the most powerful means to enrich the knowledge of oneself, teaching us to stay in the present, which is the only real, infinite and eternal moment.

The workshops were fun and well organized, even

those helped to create unity among us participants.

After dinner we were able to create and further raise our harmony by playing and singing all together. The harmony was strong, with each of the guys. We have lived days with conscience and awareness, without conflicts, with simplicity, placing ourselves under observation, trying to go beyond the dual aspect of life, which instead keeps us tied to limiting thought forms, for ourselves and for others, we have lived in the unit.

We are one.

I'm sure that this is the beginning of a precious brotherhood, I will always keep the magic of this beautiful experience in a special place in my heart.

Last but not least, I cannot omit a special thanks to those who made an effort so that this enchantment could be fulfilled: Nicoletta, Pauline, Sara and Tobia. A thousand times Thank you for your commitment!

May the Peace and Serenity of those days always accompany Our Hearts.



Seth Edwards

United States

All five days of the International Youth Gathering were filled with activities to promote a deeper understanding of Theosophy and bonds of connection between these young theosophists from all over the world. Although this is the first time most of the International Youth Gathering participants have met in person, many have been working together online since the pandemic began in 2020.

Spending time with people from the same generation walking in the same direction is a blessing beyond words. Working together towards something larger than ourselves, with a group of intelligent and kind people from all over the world all striving for meaning and purpose- it's divine. This gathering was worth every second of the 6,000km trip to get there, and the bonds formed will last a lifetime.

Catalina Isaza Cantor

Colombia



A poet friend of mine, after the exercise of reading or writing, used to say: "Nobody comes back the same after the verse"... Well, I think that for those of us who had the opportunity to participate in the International Meeting of young theosophists in Naarden, this could be translated as: "Nobody comes back the same after Naarden". Nobody comes back the same after 5 days of living together with young people from other latitudes. They say that at the perfect moment, kindred spirits come together, and indeed, it was a meeting of kindred spirits, twin souls, perhaps.

Like a dream come true, after several years of pandemic and many meetings via Zoom, some of us could see each other directly in the eyes, give each other a big hug. During these 5 days, 31 youths from 16 countries from 4 of the 5 continents had the opportunity to meet and reconnect. To create and strengthen the bonds of a spiritual friendship based on a fundamental affinity that is woven from the search for the meaning of existence and the possibility of serving humanity.

A sacred place in the midst of nature and high vibrations such as the Naarden Theosophical Centre was the perfect environment to achieve the communion that reminds us that fraternity is the basis for the construction of a transformation from within that is reflected in the world in which we live. It is from inner movement, self-transformation, that we create the possibility to fulfil our dharma and give meaning to this passage on earth. Indeed, "treading the path of self-transformation", the theme of the gathering, was the focus of every day, of every moment together and of all the activities, official and extra-official.

This gathering was undoubtedly a transformative experience in several dimensions. The organizers of the meeting, Sara, Pauline, Nicoletta and Tobia, members of a team that worked tirelessly, ensured that every detail was perfectly planned. In the midst of lectures by the two guests, Tim Boyd and Vicente Hao Chin, workshops led and devised by the young

people themselves, formal and informal talks, meetings around a guitar and a few percussion instruments, role-playing, voluntary work to help with the upkeep of the ITC's facilities, contact with and observation of nature, we were able to experience the various dimensions of spirituality: theosophy in action.

The possibility of sharing experiences from different regions, new ideas and, in addition, of being able to have several informal talks and Q&A sessions with the international president of our TS, who, as always, was open and willing, ready to listen and give value to the ideas of the younger ones, made it possible to broaden the horizons and the look in relation to our own commitment to Theosophy and the TS. The gathering was undoubtedly an important step in the consolidation of the revival of the World Federation of Young Theosophists, which has been in the making since September 2021 with the help of the Zoom platform and the online participation of young people from various corners of the globe. In addition to the presentation of the draft constitution of the Federation (approved by the president and supported by the Council of the TS), agreement was reached on the mission of the Federation: "To inspire a community of seekers on the quest of life". Several action fronts were also created to enable the message of theosophy to reach more people and young people specifically.

At the same time, we were able to take a prospective look at the possibilities for work in the dissemination and strengthening of the work of the TS in the different countries to which we belong. It became clear that it is essential that the channels of dissemination of the Ancient Wisdom be renewed and, little by little, adapt their vehicles without losing the deep essence that really makes the transformation alive. Learning from the experiences of the speakers as well as from the people involved in the maintenance and administration of the Naarden Centre was also an opportunity to incorporate experiences, teachings and lessons that can contribute to the future work for the growth and propagation of TS and Theosophy. The bonds established during this meeting are, without doubt, an important part of the web of the theosophical community in the world: we continue to expand the boundaries and possibilities of the family.

It is vital that this web continues to be strengthened through working together and in future meetings.

Through renewing what is necessary and strengthening what generations of committed members have built up over more than a century of existence. Attitudes such as creativity, courage, thinking outside the box, stepping out of the comfort zone, honoring tradition, among many others, are fundamental ingredients for this legacy to permeate many more spheres than possible and thus continue the mission of the TS. Undoubtedly, the meeting was an opportunity to recharge our batteries and consolidate our bonds.

Each of us returns home with a piece of each other in our hearts, with a heart full of inspiration and with an inner and personal commitment to be an even more active part of the realization of the universal brotherhood. May this encounter be the seed of a constant change in us that is reflected as change in the world.

Inspiration, a sense of unity, harmony, synchronicity and especially gratitude are the feelings that remain after five days of intense and fraternal sharing.



**Celeste & Dave
Francis Yangyang**

Philippines

Thank you to Sara and the team who made it all possible. I have finally met some people I only see online and it felt great to talk to them in person. It was great to get to know everyone. The overall program was great even the volunteer part, but others weren't able to prepare clothes for the gardening.

I would've loved it if there was more personal sharing among the group. The only times we got to talk to each other were during meal times, and everyone was sort of in a hurry not to miss the next program. Other times were during the workshop but the conversations were in relation to the workshop.

Overall, the place, the food, the people, and the program were awesome. Thank you again for doing your best and congratulations on the success of the gathering of young theosophists.



Nicoletta Boriello

Italy

"To form a nucleus of the universal brotherhood of humanity without distinction of race, creed, sex, caste, or colour."

"To encourage the study of comparative religion, philosophy, and science."

"To investigate the unexplained laws of nature and the powers latent in man."

This is what I felt realized during the meeting in Naarden... an eternal spirit of harmony, understanding, union, research, awareness, curiosity and magic, manifested itself in all its power, and made us perceive as real, and suddenly realized, the purposes of the theosophical society.

It was a meeting of Souls, and we got in touch with the most inner part of ourselves, reaching that position in a suspended space, in that dimension that we can call "Continuous Infinite Present", where All Souls reside and are connected to the All, where Everything is already realized.

Kiran Apsunde

Ireland

This long weekend together was nothing but pure joy and love. People from all walks of life and cultures coming together and connecting right with the all-pervading spirit in each one of us, is something so rare to experience in today's polarised world. All our interactions were deep, the smiles were genuine, and the joy was pure. In a way, we were all high on one substance, and that substance was 'love'. This will surely go down as one of my best memories till date. It is hard to point out any one moment that stood out as the whole thing was a special experience, with every bit playing its part - just like the Cosmos. I was very unsure of being able to join as my Visa arrived just a



day before flying. It was meant to be and this makes it even more special for me on a personal level.

The gathering composed of a wide range of activities involving brain storming sessions on the future of WFYT, self-transformation exercises, volunteering work and lots of interesting conversations. It was refreshing to see the variety of views and ideas presented during the discussions. The hard work put in by the organising committee was evident. Their dedication was truly inspiring and certainly ignited the spirit of volunteering in me. I am truly grateful for the entire experience and I eagerly look forward to another opportunity of meeting the beautiful souls I met at the wonderful ITC.

Miriam Martínez Suárez

Spain

I wrote a poem about these incredible days we spent together, the title is "*INVISIBLE THREADS*":



Invisible threads unify the earth
Through the chirping of birds
And the music of canyons and lakes,
It is in the owl's silent eyes
And also, in the tender surrender
Of the fiery aspirant's heart.

Can't you see it in the bewildering dance,
Can't you feel it in the joyful observer's eyes?

There's no beginning nor end
In the cosmic dance of the Universe
As Truth is first and foremost
A never-ending journey
Through the merry-go-round of Growth
Ever becoming spirals of Bonds
That now begin to emerge
A family of All
The invisible threads carry on
Quietly fulfilling their work.



Krista Umbjarv

France

It is amazing that in the current conditions the gathering could take place and that it turned out to be such a fruitful and inspiring event. Lectures, talks and the calm and cantering atmosphere of the ITC played certainly their part, but probably it was being together and doing activities together that left the deepest mark in everyone. It was wonderful seeing participants going from shyly introducing themselves at the first meeting to in the end having this sense of deep communion that could be felt but probably not so easily described. I think many connections were made or probably it would be more just to say that many connections were remade. I feel profoundly grateful to all the speakers, organisers and to everyone who were there to share this moment. I wonder whether the gathering will not be a steppingstone (or one of them) to something even greater to come.

Francis Lim

Singapore

Don't we all want to walk the path with someone else? The path is nothing but the same for all, only to appear different mentally, emotionally and physically. Our fear of judgement on each struggle in our personal lives may have led us to not speak about the shameful desires, but only the glorious achievements.

A gentle whisper of the higher came into my mind about a week before the International Gathering of Young Theosophists at the ITC Naarden, Netherlands.

“You shall be there”, it said.

As a personality with a focus on logic and mental abstractions, I couldn't believe that I would be called or even be worthy to be there. There are many more



individuals who have done and given more than me.

“Am I worthy to be there, or to be even considered a Theosophist?” Of course, I have only just returned from a vacation in Thailand two weeks before and have tons of deadlines piling up at work. This has gotten me to believe that this ‘whisper’ has got to be a lower motivation of my wanderlust nature.

I kept it to myself, quickly dismissed and forgot the thought. Few days later, to my surprise, Brandon mentioned to me that there were still openings for the conference and asked if I wanted to go, together with him and Clover. This quickly triggered my memory of the faint whisper.

“Show me more signs and give me the required resources. Prove to me that this whisper is real”, I thought to myself. The first came in the form of my brother-in-law randomly knocking on my door, wanting to exchange his flyer miles for my return ticket. The second came as my usually unsupportive boss giving his fullest support and approval during work peak. Both came impossibly and to my disbelief.

Next thing I knew, I was bathing in birds' singing, waving branches and gentle whispers of the leaves from the great trees, and loving and warm souls of St Michael's House in ITC Naarden. At first, I was experiencing peace at all levels, of a quality that I've never imagined and expected to exist. Then as the other Young Theosophists arrived, the sense of completeness overwhelmed my emotions. The birds sang brighter and the trees danced in joyousness as if it was an occasion of celebration. Perhaps a reunion of old friends, brothers and sisters of many lifetimes. It seemed and felt like it was. Love and bonds were rekindled across and within each of us. The possibility of a great time has dawned upon us. The group of Theosophical Workers rallied and gathered to the service of the world.

Through the days of conference, my meaning of Service and Self-Transformation has evolved. From giving the very best of oneself, to shining the golden light of hope and inspiration of the collective consciousness of the World Federation of Young Theosophist (WFYT). We are all in it together.

The uplifting nature of the event and environment had the lower quaternaries give way to the expression of the higher self.

”Apparently Young Theosophists are not made of sugar”. Manual labour has given new physical and higher potential to the ITC, from clearing the pond, removing weeds, replacing rotten poles and fence repair. Even though physically demanding, yet ever spiritually rejuvenating. The rain couldn’t stop us from the needed work. Work that could’ve been usually conflict-triggering was just wonderfully harmonious as if we are each fingers of a hand, giving potential to a higher expression with every bunch of soil we till and every pole we hammer. I’ve never seen physical service from this perspective.

”To Inspire a Community of Young Seekers on the Quest of Life”. Putting together Will, Love and Mind, many great ideas have been exchanged. Personal bonds have been forged through knowing how everyone more or less resonated with, and arrived at the draft mission statement of the WFYT.

The president of the ITC, also an ex-WFTY member Arend, had added new dimensions and light to my perspective. The picture album from Arend’s time of the WFYT camping back in the 1970s has shown me the connection from the past. The older members were once youth and there was an actual one standing in our presence. We will all eventually grow old, and seeing the years Arend had been around and giving years of effort to the Theosophical work has greatly inspired me. Even the warm lovely souls like Jan, Loes and Lupe from the St Michael’s house have shown me how love and service had extended the consciousness of the ITC over the years.

Now meeting the youths had inspired an image of our contribution and years to the federation, our respective lodges and the future young theosophists. And we may be standing where Arend was, telling and showing our experiences as youths.

“Volare, oh oh. Cantare, oh oh oh oh.” (Oh Kaio) Lovely tunes rang and filled the nights of Crystal Hall. There were so many talented musicians and singers! I was honored to be in their presence and bathed in the colourful emotions and devotion of harmonious air vibrations. Never had I in any kind of group singing and strumming sessions in my life, nor had I ever sung in the presence of people I’ve only known for a few days. The sessions even ventured into the late nights, opening my heart to the beautiful melodies and tones

of music of different languages.

Somehow a part of me awakened, music with nostalgic melodies brought up the bittersweet romantic memories of my childhood. The parts which I’ve almost remembered, yet slumbered just beyond my subconsciousness. Interestingly, I started to do emotional processing during the following self-transformation session. A broken fragment of me was released.

The game of Werewolves hosted by Rafael had gotten our personalities involved. Laughters pierced the silence of the night but were not alarming, even the curious devas and fairies came to see. Not only the days of higher mental and emotional bonding, the game got our personalities pretty involved. Will we lie in the presence of the others? Will we act as someone else in the presence of our new found brothers and sisters? There isn’t any judgement. It was just a game.

The balance of music and games had brought a new dimension of bonding, in the worldly sense, yet ever higher and spiritual. We are all bonded on every existing level. Impressions of digital pixels of faces turned into actual living presence. The experience was so unreal, as all of the meetings and sharings were made online through zoom. We knew and interacted with each other only from a flat screen with millions of coloured dots before.

I’ve finally appreciated the power and importance of physical meetings. The ability to meet true servers of mankind and bathe in each other’s gentle presence inspired me to have a greater picture and vision on the Work. The workshops are especially useful as many of the challenges and brilliant strategies were exchanged, mixed and blossomed into greater potentials.

We were blessed by the presence of the International President Tim Boyd and his wife Lily, with many inspiring anecdotes and enlightening perspectives during the conference. The formal and informal sessions have given me the human touch to divine wisdom.

The first time ever coming across the TS’s Mission. Together with the draft mission for the WFYT, it gave me the direction to see where the youth movement in Singapore could be like. We now know who to speak to, to look for and how to inspire them to set off on their quest of life, through service, by cultivating and

ever-deepening understanding and realisation of the Ageless Wisdom, spiritual self-transformation, and the unity of all life.

Self-transformation was not the first thing that came to my mind for this gathering. I was included as one of the facilitators for the Self-Transformation seminar by Brother Vic, and I was pretty anxious about it. Through the days, little did I realise that the transformation had happened deep within. Subtle yet profound. It happened during every human, animal, plant interaction. Through every breath taken, with every blink of an eye and every whisper of the leaves.

The transformation has taken place.

The yearning has stopped, and the unity has begun.

Ever silent, ever peaceful.



Sara Gencarelli

Italy

What I have understood these days is that in my process of self-transformation what I have to learn in my life is to think about my well-being

and peace of mind with no sense of guilt. Not in a selfish way, but because it is important, if we are not well, we cannot do good to others. Once during the gathering, I needed peace and quiet and I arrived at a beach. I found some shells that made me think of all of us. We are all different, we have different colors, different habits, different thoughts. But like shells we are made with the same matrix. And like shells in the sea we are carried by the currents and events of life. What I've heard these days is that a little piece of you is now in my heart, and a little piece of my heart is in each of you. Is this the deep meaning of universal brotherhood? It has been important for me to be with you these days, many things inside of me have changed. The challenge now is to bring these things into real life so that it doesn't just remain a good experience. I feel a lot of gratitude and joy for what we have done and for what we are building together.

Rafael Marques de Albuquerque

Brazil

The 2022 Naarden Youth Gathering felt like meeting for the first time a lot of people who I already knew.

Of course, there was the internet to create this feeling, but there was something more. I have nurtured a sense of responsibility for the future of the Theosophical Society, and in Naarden I found people with whom I could share this responsibility. It was comforting and exciting to meet people who can become more than friends, but also coworkers in the next decades. I could feel a sense of collective joy and a freshness of thought. Of a group of people who will be able to create original thinking and keep the theosophical movement coherent with new times, while keeping the essence. It felt like the seed of the World Federation of Young Theosophists was growing, which is a beautiful moment of hope and expectation.



Elmer Overdevest

Netherlands

Thinking back to our few days together at our very first international meeting of young theosophists (or at least since a very long time!) - I don't know where

to start, honestly. It was such a special time, I felt so much love and joy throughout these days - you could really feel the unity. There are so many moments that I will cherish for a very long time. On the last day, going back home, it really felt like stepping out of a dream state.

I'm truly grateful for all the time and effort that has gone into organising this gathering, and I'm very much looking forward to seeing the new WFYT being realised and seeing it flourish with many more young people. Above all, I can't wait to see everyone again! Much love!





Marie Soone

Estonia

The International Gathering of Young Theosophists was a beautiful opportunity to meet with other similar minded people from all

over the world. It is most precious to share experiences and spend time together with those who hold the same core values. It's rare to find so safe and comfortable atmosphere where all are equally accepted and cared for and where all outer differences are but an enriching nectar for all.

Gabriele Sabetta

Italy

Immersed in the affairs of everyday life, taken by thousand commitments, oppressed by the gears of a mechanized life, it can happen, at a certain point, in mysterious ways, that we wake up and begin to observe everything with detachment. The fundamental questions therefore arise: who am I? What is the meaning of my being in the world?

A fervent and enlightened calm starts to pervade the soul; anxiety, haste, fears and worries of the previous condition thin out like clouds when a storm ceases. Then, the inner depths begin to become transparent like the sky, and we realize that until that moment we were chained to a dark existence, far from the truth of ourselves. Wobbling the ancient certainties, it is possible that fear assaults us and prevents us from continuing: the journey has just started; patience, perseverance, sincere devotion are required.

However, not all human beings are ready for this enterprise: despite moments of crisis, most lack the courage to make the Great Leap, preferring to remain in the so familiar prison. The riddle they represent to themselves, what lies beyond their limited perspective, scares them more than the ordinary slavery.



So H. P. Blavatsky writes in "The Voice of the Silence": "The further you go, the more your feet will encounter pitfalls. The Path leading up is illuminated by a single flame – the flame of daring, which burns in the heart. The more you dare, the more you will get. The more you fear, the paler the light, and it alone can guide. As the last ray of sunshine that lingers on the top of some high mountain is followed by its extinction in the black night, so, when the light of the heart disappears, a deep and menacing shadow will fall from your heart on the Path, and the terror will root your feet on the ground".

If we have the determination to get to the bottom of ourselves, we will discover an immense field of freedom, usually obscured by the cares and occupations of the usual life. In that field the seeds of man's hidden potentials are placed.

Always, but especially in recent centuries, the terror of what cannot be controlled and programmed, which isn't immediately available to us, has led to the appearance the world that imposes itself on our eyes now: a world that wants the same everywhere, that pushes towards universal homologation, that wants to make everything uniform, that kills individuality. From external lifestyles to ways of approaching the spiritual sphere, modern man remains in a condition of total closure to himself. But we must not deceive ourselves: we have always fallen into this captivity too, although we shyly struggle to get out of it, since the tendency to astring things, to conceptualize them and to want to "dominate" them is so difficult to eradicate.

Here, in the days spent in Naarden I saw the beginning of another world, the seeds of a Rebirth: I saw my brothers and sisters who have decided to put everything back into play, who aspire to great discoveries, to go further, to love and to share. In the loving shyness of those who are taking their first steps towards the "Great Unknown", I saw an uncommon courage, a real impetus towards understanding the Other (and therefore ourselves). Because this is the great secret: the further adhesion to ourselves grows, the closer we will be. Going up the path towards the Eternal, we find what unites us: all of us being the infinite faces of the Eternal.

While today everything tends to limitation, exclusion, petrification, death, we have begun to destroy

our small horizons and in a great common breath we are about to undertake the rediscovery of our cosmic consciousness, constituting a solid pole of attraction for the forces of Light.



Angie Silva Maldonado

Mexico

It was a revitalizing event. Before living it, I discovered that I lived in a world where everything must be done in a hurry. That time

must be sliced into thin layers so that there is time to do everything, where to sleep 8 hours is seen as a luxury, and where to stop is sometimes very complicated. Theosophy came to me very young to teach me to look for the answer, to give value to what really matters. I spend all the time I need to find the answer and listen to myself. Sometimes it's hard and this event helped me to reconnect with what fascinated me about this world 12 years ago. Because there is so much noise sometimes around us, so many things to do. So many rushes, so much pending, so many tips, so many restrictions, that sometimes we forget that all we need is a little silence, meditation. And thanks to this event I managed to reconnect with that. I hope soon a meeting like this can be held in Mexico and Latin America.

Janne Vuononvirta

Finland

I really enjoyed the gathering! The program was well-planned. I was delighted that there was some volunteering work besides all the talking (which is important too, of course). I made many new friends and some of them are even visiting Finland this summer.



Merike Martsepp

Estonia

As I flew home from Holland, I had an indescribable feeling inside me - that the real thing was just beginning ... A little of the deep peace of the meditations in the Besant Hall from these mornings has remained with me in my modest moments of meditation.

A bit of this fairy tale forest is still with me when I walk by the river between the trees and sit in their company for a while. The breathing exercises Vicente taught us will still help me whenever I notice that my breathing is too superficial and the weight or stiffness is on my body. I remember Vicente's last message to us: "If you are getting somewhere, please help others!" Kabir's delicious foods, as well as Rachel's recommendation to just make raw oatmeal porridge in the morning, have made my diet at least half healthier when I return to Estonia. Elena's simple prayers at the Grand Old Oak tree that sounded in me till long time later... As well as the prayers we said with Tim, are vastly more powerful than the ones I have said alone. I learned that apparently good prayers are meant to be said together, but if the conditions are not ideal, you can practice them alone also. I'm excited about the short conversation with Lily, who gave me a simple piece of advice that has been helpful to me on a couple of occasions already: "First of all, be happy yourself!" And Sara, who worked so hard to organize and send letters and information so that everyone knew everything, and who couldn't be physically present, embodied a thought for me: "It's not what I can get out of this, it's what can I give!" I am really grateful to you, and Pauline, for your good organization in this gathering!

Thanks to Francis, Krista, Dave, Clover and all of you who recorded our activities! I am happy to have come with Marie, thanks to whose foresight and planning skills, our trip to Naarden was in itself a valuable experience in terms of both culture and physical training. I am also pleased with Tobia, his driving skills and the kind car, as he used to take us



to the train station. We were lucky to have Rafael among us, who taught us to protect ourselves from wolves in the middle of the dim Naarden forest, and he also taught us through the game to understand new aspects in our new sisters and brothers, which would probably have been overlooked in purely philosophical discussions. With Celeste, my beloved wife, in this one game where the wolves didn't win, we managed to die peacefully in our old age. It was a good game, although I still managed to say one overly dubious comment that would have been almost life-threatening. I will always remember Seth as one of the best detectives in the game, who was with Marie, just like Sherlock Holmes and Dr. Watson, who worked against evil and for good. I was surprised to find that Krista became a very good lawyer - she did an incredibly great job of persuasion in the game. And our sweet Clover is actually a wolf in sheepskin, and I'm better off talking about how good an actor Rachel is! I'm glad Brandon, who apparently took courage from his fresh role as a wolf, invited us to take a walk in a truly dim forest; fortunately we did not come into contact with the predators, but an ominous sprinkler was able to secretly spy on the grass and wait until we got unsuspectingly close to it before it started to work, and seriously frightened us. But that experience only hardened us for the next day's fieldwork, led by Elmer vigorously, which happened to be while the rain cloud decided to bless Naarden's beautiful nature. From this we learned that young theosophists are not made of sugar, and do not melt if there is more H₂O than usual in the background.

I am also glad that Mattia had previously become acquainted with the guitar playing, and we all had the opportunity to share the joys of singing together in the evenings, and Francis, who kindly shared the lyrics. I vividly remember the evenings that became too soon the night when we talked to Kiran, Jose and Elena about interesting spiritual topics, and I'm really grateful to Kiran and Gabriele for still sharing with all of us interesting works in Whatsapp! Thanks to Nicoletta and Miriam, I learned that there are many more works of art inspired by theosophical ideas than I knew before. Also, thanks to the exercises experienced with Andrea and Salvatore, the process of self-transformation became a little clearer for me. I'm also thankful to Melissa and Janne, who kindly, precisely and

constructively summed up the ideas of our workshop team. Thanks to Kaio, who brought me a sound bowl from somewhere for the final meditation of the workshop, with which I finished our common moment of reflection 5 minutes later (due to lack of great experience) with an extremely bold blow. Sorry about that - I promise to try to make softer sounds in future meditations!

During the tea break, Angie and Andrea gave us an idea of how sweet Mexico really is along with invitation to Mexico. Thanks to Hannes and his charming accent, I heard about the theosophical activities of my quiet Swedish neighbors. I also remember the abundance of Kaio's ideas as we prepared for the workshop. And how we made funny faces for Sara's kids over the phone at the dinner table. And also how Catalina sang a duet with José - I have no idea what the song was about, but it was so beautiful!

Thank you, dear young theosophists, for all these and many special memories that have not been mentioned! May we have many more! Thanks also to those who were once young theosophists, and in whose footsteps, such a meeting could take place again! I hope that with the inspiration entrusted to us, we will be able to do something good in this world!



Hannes Pettersson

Sweden

The Youth Gathering of young theosophists in Naarden was very inspiring and gave me many ideas on how to be a good fellow human being, serve others

and at the same time take care of oneself. I joined the Theosophical Society just before the pandemic, so this was the first time I met theosophists from all over the world. It was very rewarding with all different views and perspectives, and to see how much motivation and good spirituality there is in the world. I'm very glad I got to be a part of this.



Melissa Barbosa da Silva

Canada

The International Gathering of Young Theosophists was an amazing experience for me. It was so well organized

that the atmosphere and vibe of the entire event was harmonious! The food was delicious and beautiful, prepared by a cheerful and energetic cook, and the whole property was peaceful and magical. I made so many new friends with people from all over the world, and we went down "rabbit holes" of conversation in our free time, speculating on the Esoteric Section of the TS, on dream interpretations and past life influences leading us to the present moment. The only other place I can do this is at my own TS! We also played games, made music together and meditated in the morning. We bonded and connected with each other over gardening and maintenance of the ITC grounds and had so much fun in doing so! Some of the attendees were able to share stories of self-transformation and all were captivating and inspiring. I feel very fortunate to have attended, and feel it would only have been better if all of the youth at my TS shared the experience as well! But there's always next time...

Brandon Goh

Singapore

The International Gathering of Young Theosophists was the most profound, life-changing and happy period of my life. I am still trying to assimilate it all in the silent sanctuary of the heart.

It is hard to fathom how one could forge such close bonds within a few days – a slice of time, but no less of eternity. At some point, a flash of realisation dawned upon me – that we share one overarching Vision, that everyone in the group is a selfless server dedicated to



the Cause. It felt as though an unseen conductor drew compatible musicians together to orchestrate a symphony of oneness; each member had to possess the right instrument to play the right notes in harmony with all others. Young servers who had long been working together in spirit for the same Vision were now gathered from all corners of the world. It was heartening, to say the least, and perhaps in the inner planes the spirit of youth, creation and divine activity aflame in our hearts blazed forth and merged, growing into a lotus fire to receive the descent of something even greater. Moreover, during an informal evening with Tim Boyd, I felt that our lives have changed there and then – it could never be the same again. A bubbling spring has arisen from deep within and shall renew us forevermore – if we let it.

Through this gathering, I realised what true unity is. Somehow everyone in our diverse group thought and acted seamlessly as though in a frictionless medium. We worked like bees of one hive and felt love and joy in simply being together. Come to think of it, nearly every moment at the ITC was unifying as there was something more, something indefinable, infused into what would otherwise seem to be prosaic, everyday interactions. On the mere surface – which is all photos and videos could capture – the gathering seemed, after all, just a bunch of like-minded youths doing activities together without knowing one another enough to deal with their issues. But deep down, many of us felt and still feel that there was something beyond. What seemed to have sanctified almost every human connection made during the gathering? I cannot define it; I can only state from the bottom of my heart that it is so.

So many stars now illumine the firmament of my heart that I am resonant with the harmony of a constellation of servers, filled with the ecstasy of union only to be fully experienced in silence. The words 'we are one' have a tremendous new meaning for me and I shall strive to find the star in as many people as I can, though I feel that these youths are special stars in my sky. I know we all cherish the eternal moments we have borne witness to, and if this sublime sun of unity becomes eclipsed or clouded by the strains and stresses of life, we shall at least have our Remembrance to light our way. Together, we stand. Together, we rise. Together, we love and serve.



Mattia Lugarà

Italy

First of all, thanks to the organizers. You really did a huge work and made possible something that we all will keep in our hearts forever. I'm still thinking

about the gathering. We had the great conjunction to meet in a wonderful place, at a certain period of time, with specific people. The energy we channeled will be a potent engine for the future of the TS. In the years to come, we all will see the fruits of this meeting.

We laid the foundation for a new generation of living brotherhood. Life has flowed through us and we should be honored by this and bear this Life with us.

Sara Ortega van Vloten

Spain

My experience of the gathering was slightly different than the rest of participants. Just before the start of the gathering I



tested positive with Covid so I went into isolation in one of the cottages at the ITC separated from the group for the whole duration. However, I was very grateful to be able to recover at the Centre which is so dear to me since my childhood. It is a place where one feels submerged with Nature, connected with it in deeper dimensions. Therefore, it naturally kind of awakens That which is most sacred and profound in us, which has an uplifting and inspiring effect that can last long after our stay. In this atmosphere it is very easy to put aside our daily lives and be present, to slow down, to be aware and to rejoice in the beautiful surroundings.

During the gathering I was taken care of with delicious food from Loes and Kabir, which was brought to me by various participants as well as by Peter, a volunteer at the ITC who was the contact person during preparations and also helped on-site (many thanks

also to all workers at the ITC Naarden!). At some point, it was possible for me to meet participants at a distance, although all they could see was my eyes and a mask... But I remained in contact with the organizing team, and watched/heard behind the scenes how everything that we had planned for months unfolded day after day. Vic's activity was the one I could attend since he delivered one session each day remotely. All in all, I feel I took part in the gathering, although it was not in the conventional way!

I was really glad that so many young members could attend from all corners of the globe, as in my mind I wanted to make justice to the gathering being "international", so that diversity was supposed to play an important role. During the preceding months I was driven with that motivation and contacted intensively many countries and young members. In the process, it was interesting to see how things developed over time: in some cases Visa was granted just a day before traveling (literally), in other cases something unexpected happened which prevented the possibility to come, and in some other cases circumstances aligned for them to come although it was not initially planned. It was so clear to me that there is a motion of Life which directs certain things that are "meant to be" with a higher purpose although we may not be able to grasp it at the time, so one can work to the best of her abilities, and then results will follow. I suppose that after such an intense period of work I was "meant to" rest for a while, and I was thankful for that also.

I'm sure that the repercussions of this gathering will be beneficial, with each participant carrying a renewed energy and motivation to continue the work of the TS and to contribute in their communities across the world, as we are all reinforced with the powerful sense of Unity that was experienced, as well as the newly formed bonds of friendship. All this gives us strength to serve with our talents and skills, and courage to keep persevering in the path of self-transformation towards living the spiritual life. Deep inside we are longing to have future gatherings and to meet many more young theosophists which will broaden even more our horizons. Until then, there is work to do ahead of us if we mean to abide by the Divine Law, by which we must give as much as we have received.

Love and Light to All, my dear friends.

Testimonials from guest speakers



Tim Boyd

International President of the Theosophical Society

As International President of the TS I had a special interest in the Young Theosophists gathering at the International

Theosophical Centre in Naarden. Having witnessed the recent resurgence of the YT movement, I looked forward to meeting and sharing with this group. Of the 31 who attended I had met a few over my years of TS travels. Coming from 16 different countries they were a diverse group with a variety of interests and experiences.

For me it was fascinating to watch this group come together, each with their own unique background, with the Ageless Wisdom and its application as the binding factor. Prior to June 3 almost everyone was new and unknown to each other. By the time they were leaving, five days later, tears were shed on parting from their new sisters and brothers. A great deal of energy and focus was placed on Theosophy and the role of the Theosophical Society, but the real benefit of the gathering was the friendships that formed among young people searching for ways to grow and to serve. For some those bonds may be fleeting, but others have met brothers and sisters on the path with whom they will be working for years to come. I came away filled with great hope for the YT's and for the TS.

Vicente Hao Chin Jr.

Former President of the Philippines' section

This gathering of young theosophists is an important milestone in the theosophical work of recent decades. It will help

introduce new approaches to theosophical dissemination around the globe. The world has been changing very fast and the previous generation has found it difficult to keep pace with the rapid changes in technology, outlooks, values, and modes of communication.

The youth group will bridge such a gap and enable the TS to reach the current and coming generations. It may help reverse the loss of membership in the TS in many parts of the world. I deeply appreciate their dedication and commitment to the work of the Elder Brethren of humanity.



Arend Heijbroek

Chairman ITC Naarden

I find it hard to write in just a few lines about the youth gathering. Thinking back many memories pop up. Memories on my own YT camps round 1970,

memories on the excellent cooperation with Sara to prepare this event, but even more important all participants of the gathering at ITC Naarden. What a fantastic team you are; serious, committed, relaxed and lots of fun, all at the same time. An ideal combination which looks very promising for the future. Please come again!



Photo Gallery



Upon arrival, Arend led a tour visit around the ITC Naarden

A selection of lovely flora



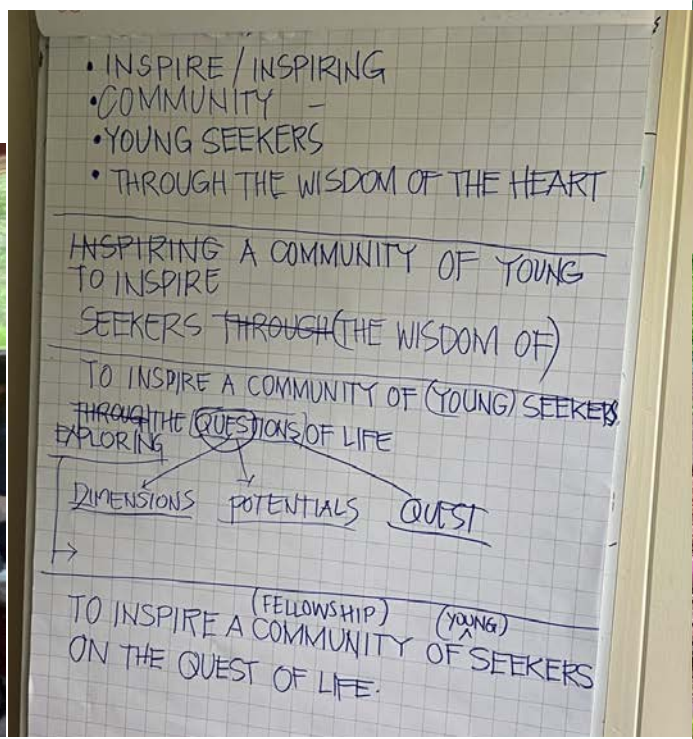
Pauline and Mattia presenting the workshop on young theosophists and the future of the TS



Flipping over an old album of young theosophists from the last century



Brainstorming ideas towards the mission of the World Federation of Young Theosophists - WFYT

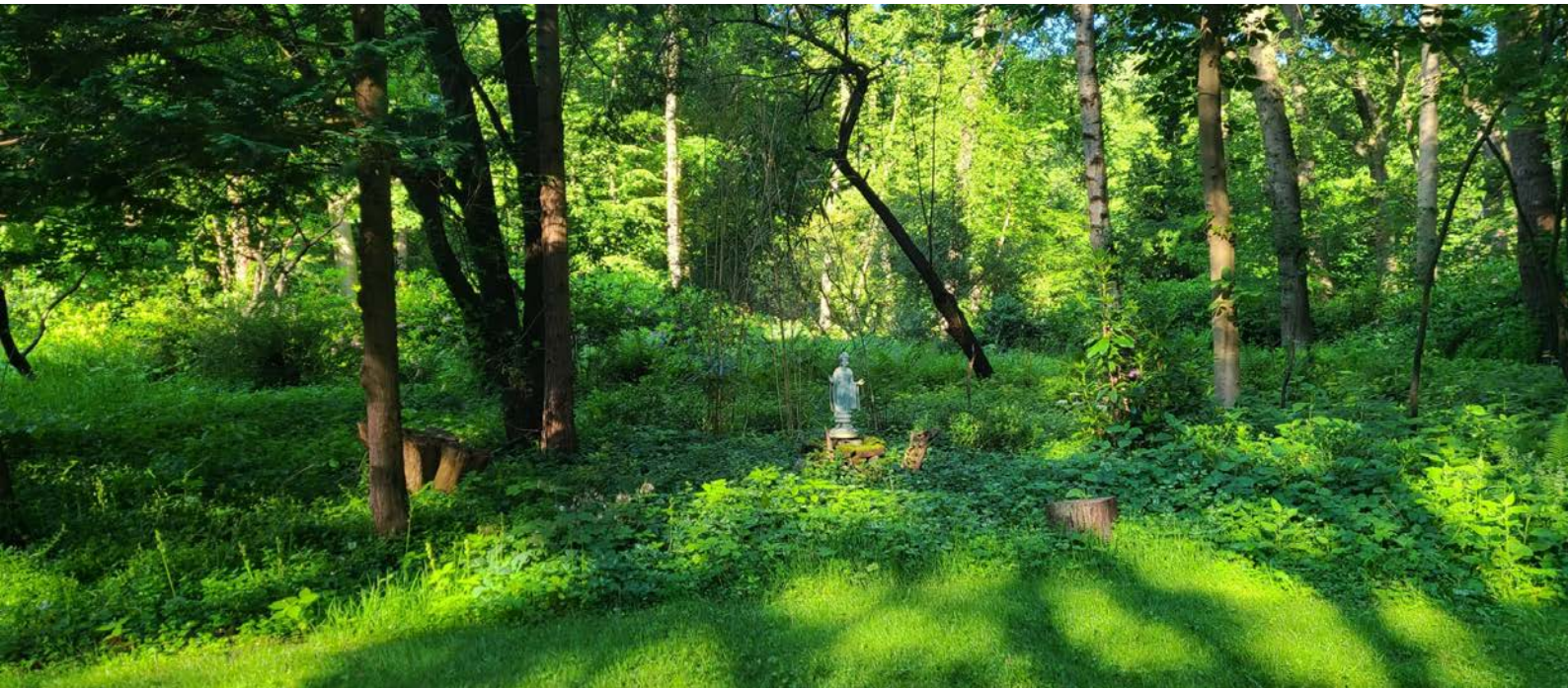




Days began with early meditations at Besant Hall



Opening lecture by Tim Boyd followed by Q&A



Peaceful sight of the garden of Meditation



Volunteering activities at the ITC...
These young theosophists were not afraid of the rain until the work was done!





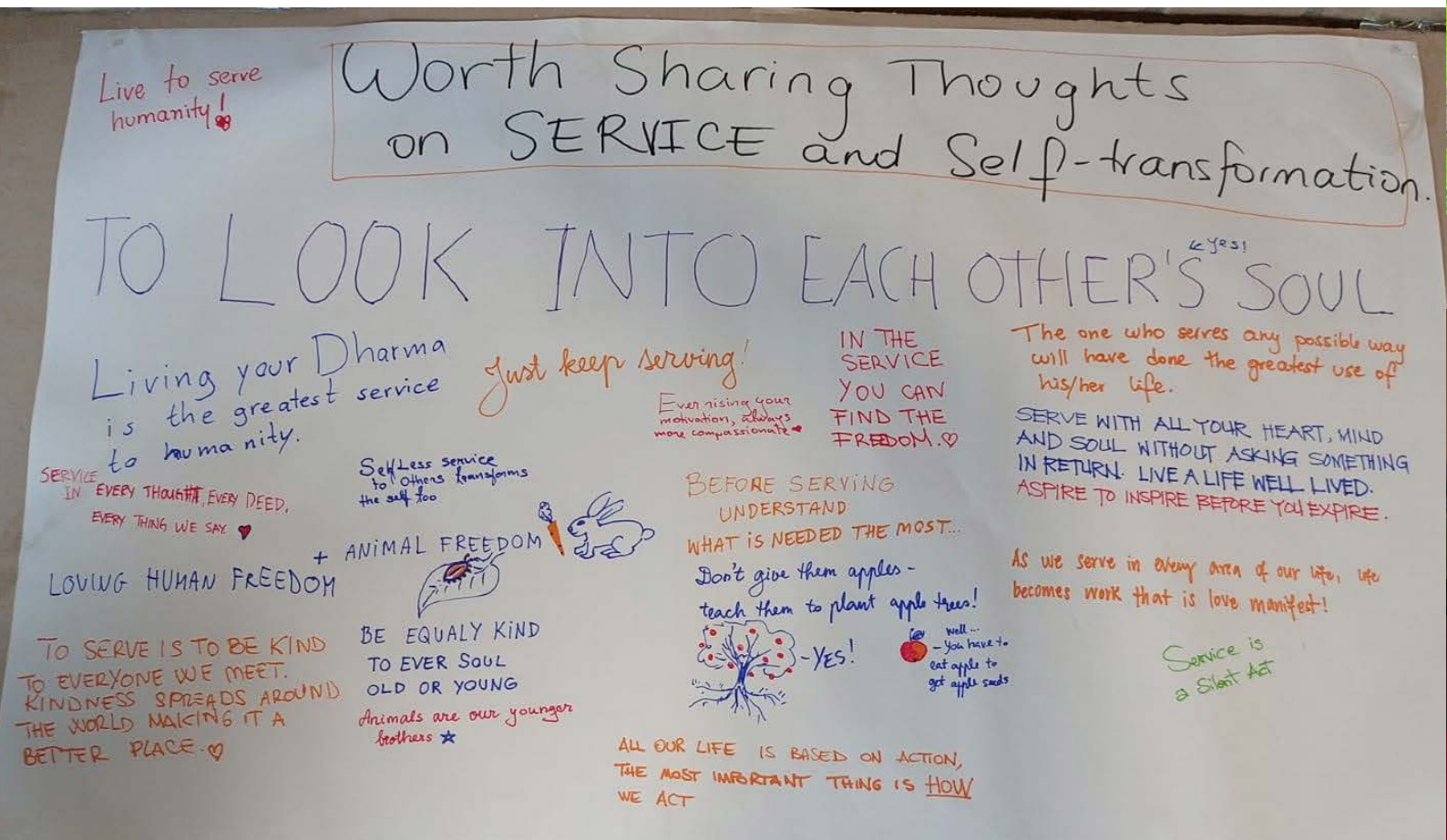
Workshop with small groups to discuss ideas on "Self-Transformation through Service"



Facilitators preparing the workshop on Service



During the next days a blank panel was filled with spontaneous and inspiring thoughts on Service





Lining up at
mealttime...

... and everyone took turns for cleaning the dishes



Elena and Merike quietly around the big oak tree

Francis and Catalina embracing a tree

Walking in the forest

Round table conversations with Tim Boyd





Vic's seminar included a practical workshop on processing, assisted by a group of young facilitators



Bust of Madame Blavatsky



Garden of Remembrance

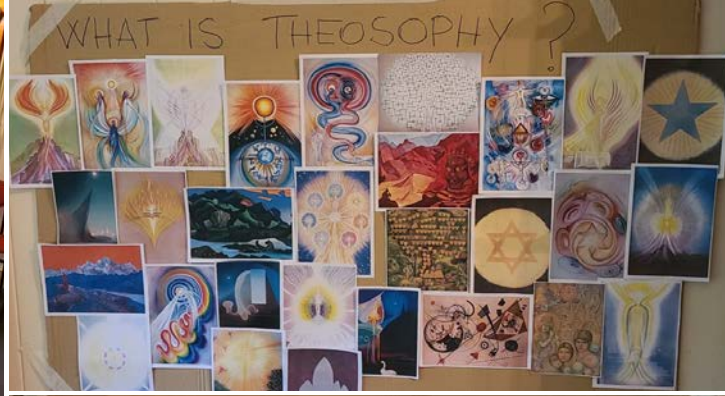
Two sides of the canteen during tea breaks





Nicoletta and Miriam preparing the Arts workshop on Self-Transformation

Everyone chose portraits that represented "What is Theosophy?" and "How do you feel after the gathering days?"...



Statues of Buddha (left) and Tara (right)



... and later they painted their vision with colors and pastels



We had a few guitar players (Mattia, Clover, Dave, Kiran, Catalina, Kaio)... lots of singing, and time for games too!



Thanks

To all young theosophists who could attend and brought to life a magical collective experience with an all-embracing harmony, freshness and vitality to give back to the world.

To the ITC Naarden, the European Federation of the TS (EFTS) and various European sections for sponsoring this event. And to those who helped young members who needed some kind of support to travel.

To General Secretaries and Presidents of Regional Federations of the TS for their explicit support and best wishes.

To Tim Boyd for conveying the importance of focusing our attention and capacities towards building a better world, starting by ourselves.

To Vicente Hao Chin Jr. for his readiness to facilitate sessions on Self-Transformation and the Spiritual life, diving into practical "processing".

To all workers at the ITC Naarden, who were welcoming and very much supportive.

To cook Kabir for preparing such delicious and energizing meals.

Our gratitude to the One Life.

