

Lifegate in April 2024

We are thankful that the Muslim month of Ramadan ended peacefully in Jerusalem at the Dome of the Rock and the El Aksa Mosque, where 20,000 people gathered on the last Friday of Ramadan. Fears that the war in Gaza and northern Israel could lead to tensions and violent clashes did not materialize. The subsequent Muslim Eid also gave us a few days off at Lifegate and now we are well on the way to the Orthodox Easter in early May. Our Jewish neighbors sit around the Passover table a week earlier and celebrate the Exodus from Egypt and the birth of the people of Israel. It is always amazing how people on the Israeli and Palestinian side try to experience the joy of the holidays with their families, despite the many distressing news stories. If only for a few moments and hours they can leave behind the otherwise very sad reality of life. A particular gift that is very important in our region.



[Entrance to the Lifegate Center](#)



Standing still is a step backwards (further training at Lifegate)

Lifegate is a development institution, which means that we as a team are constantly educating ourselves so that the children and young people in the rehabilitation programs are not deprived of important developments and knowledge gained in other countries.

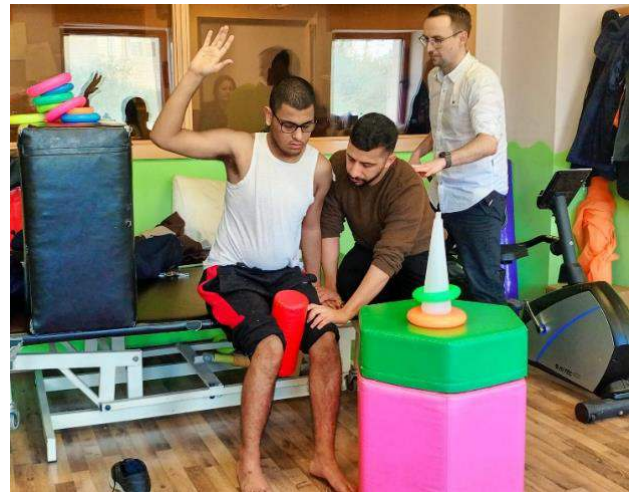
Paulustherapie in Halle has been sending us motivated team members in the therapy area for years, who train our team of therapists with theoretical and practical exercises and also bring aids and donations for Lifegate. Georg Neumann (son of one of the managing directors Torsten Neumann) teaches "PNF therapy" with our children. We are planning a series of training courses with Georg over several weeks in this area at Lifegate.



Georg Neumann (white T-shirt) shows our therapist Majd some exercises



Georg with Majd and Issa
(physiotherapists) with two young adults



Early support

Erik Praetorius supports Lifegate's early intervention work as a German curative educator. The German organization Co-Workers (CFI-Christliche Fachkräfte International - Christian Professionals International) prepared him for this task and sent him (and his family) to work with us for three years. Erik works with individual children in the early intervention center and conducts training sessions with the staff. Here is a seminar on stress reduction. The kindergarten lays down foundations on which the children's development is built. We are delighted to have Erik on the team as an empathetic and friendly member of staff, who provides many new impulses and improves the quality of our early intervention work.





Erik Praetorius with the kindergarten team during training (stress reduction)





...Our "little ones" reduce stress in their own way...



New training program at Lifegate Garden

Three young people began their vocational training at Lifegate Garden on April 1. Under the guidance of Abir Bannoura, the young people are learning how to work in the garden (watering, pruning and caring for flowers and trees) and how to grow vegetables and spices.

They are also trained in cleaning and preparing guest rooms and gain insight through participating in the work of the Lifegate Garden kitchen and dining room.

The young people should later have the opportunity to work in hotels and guesthouses and perhaps be able to grow their own vegetable gardens at home. They are very enthusiastic and committed and our employees have already taken them into their hearts.





Abir (instructor) with Batul, Adam and Jowi in the Lifegate Garden Chapel

Holiday delays

The construction of the underground storage rooms (shelters) in the courtyard of the Lifegate Center is progressing more slowly than we had hoped due to the many holidays and, as so often before, we have to be patient and come to terms with the circumstances. In this project our financial supporters (the German government) are holding us to a strict timetable so we can only hope that we will meet with

understanding. We do what we can, but unfortunately there is so much that has been taken out of our hands over which we now have little or no control. We hope that the rooms and the sports field for the wheelchair basketball players can be put into operation before the summer vacation.



The wheelchair basketball court is being built on the roof of the rooms. We are looking forward to new sports wheelchairs, which are due to be delivered from Germany this month.



Health and fitness programs at Lifegate

We previously reported on an extensive gymnastics program that takes place daily in the afternoon and evening hours at Lifegate. Up to 100 ladies come to these programs in different groups every week.

Part of the Lifegate team of therapists works in the afternoons and treats patients of all ages who greatly appreciate our excellent therapy services.

A dietician will now also open her studio at Lifegate in the afternoons to advise and help people.

Our healthy "bakery products" are available for guests and the cafeteria offers freshly prepared fruit juices and snacks.

All these "healthy" activities also help us to generate a small income that benefits our support work in kindergarten, school and education.



Spring Awakening

Nature and its blossoms form a stark contrast to the sad and tense situation in our country.





It was in the year 613 when the last Persian army invaded the then Christian Roman Holy Land and destroyed all the churches in the country. Except for one: "The Church of the Nativity in Bethlehem." The story goes that a painting in the church showed the "Wise Men from the East" following the constellation and in traditional Persian dress. Awe gripped the army and the church was spared.

The "Persian Storm" of April 14, 2024 at 2:00 a.m. had a different dimension. The killing of two Iranian generals in Damascus, in a building right next to the Iranian consulate, who Israel blamed for coordinating all hostile activities against Israel in the Middle East, prompted Iranian retaliation. In fact, Hezbollah in Lebanon, Huthi forces in Yemen, Iranian Al-Quds Brigades in Iraq and Syria and Hamas are

operating with Iranian weapons and under direct Iranian influence, if not leadership, in the war against Israel. According to Israeli data, 99% of incoming combat drones, medium-range missiles and ballistic missiles were intercepted by the Israeli defense belt.

A seven-year-old girl from a Bedouin village in the Negev was seriously injured by falling missile fragments and three people died in Jordan when an Iranian drone exploded there. It is astonishing that for the first time in Israel's history, Arab countries such as Jordan and Saudi Arabia, alongside France, England and the USA, helped to intercept the more than 300 drones and missiles entering Israel.

Israel has long wanted to stop the Iranian nuclear program once and for all for fear of such attacks, and now a spiral of violence could be set in motion, the effects of which we do not want to imagine. We pray for prudence on the part of politicians and the military and for the wisdom of those responsible not to submit to the rationale of vengeance and not to risk the lives of many people, but to protect them.



„Persian Storm 2024“



Incoming Iranian ballistic missiles intercepted over Jerusalem (Israel's parliament)



Iranian ballistic missile lands at the Dead Sea

Given the experience of the Iraq war (missiles were fired at Israel) we have already built a shelter in the Lifegate building, and the storage rooms being built in the courtyard will also double up as shelters. We will now practice going to this shelter with all the people (250) in our center within a few minutes. Ballistic missiles from Iran take just under 10 minutes to arrive in Israel. The weapons arsenal of Hezbollah, which will then probably be used by Iran, can also strike anywhere in Israel and the Palestinian territories and cause serious damage. Pray with us that all this will not be used! Once again, Hamas has rejected the agreement negotiated by America to release the hostages. The open wounds are bleeding on all sides; where are the people who connect, reconcile and dare to make a new start?

On Passover, the lambs were slaughtered in the temple in Jerusalem and a sacrifice of thanksgiving was offered to God. At the same time, a man laid down his life on a cross outside the city gates. He had previously said to Peter when he was arrested: "Put the sword back in its place", weapons are not the means to my end.

An innocent man gave his life so that we could be reconciled with God the Father. He paid the price for our transgressions. He promised His followers not to leave them alone and He has shown us the way peace and reconciliation. Let us trust in this and take Him at His word. Please stay at our side in your prayers and with your support!

Best regards and good wishes from Burghard Schunkert and the Lifegate team