

Lifegate in October 2025

This was a month filled with beautiful stories and wonderful people. Each one a unique individual, and their positive impact will stay with us for a long time. It began with a celebration we were planning with the Lifegate youth group at the Sea of Galilee with an Israeli group of people with disabilities. First, we built a hut, thatched the roof with palm fronds so the stars could still shine. Our Israeli friends told the story of the Exodus from Egypt, the harvest festival, and the prayers for sufficient water in winter. On the final day, we shared the joy of the Torah, the laws Moses received on Mount Sinai. Then we enjoyed plenty of good food and drink, sang and told stories, and for three days we cooked for each other, went on excursions, played games together, and swam in the lake and the seven springs (Tabgha). Finally, we returned home joyfully on October 6, 2023. The next morning, our world changed. Since then, we have been patiently waiting with our friends for permission from the Israeli authorities to continue these encounters. "Giving up is not an option in our country!"



...as a small consolation, an invitation to our volunteers to our little sukkah in Jerusalem..

All's well that ends well

Jonas is an orthopaedic shoemaker and orthopaedic technician. He came to us for a few years as part of a German government project abroad, to further develop this area of work and train a local employee. The war thwarted Jonas's and our careful plans. Jonas was brought back to Germany for safety reasons, and a suitable local employee hadn't yet been found. Jonas started working for an orthopaedic company in Germany. He had met his current boss in a tour group visiting Lifegate. Jonas came to us for three weeks this October, hoping to say a proper goodbye, or so he thought...! No sooner had he landed and arrived than the first orders started coming in: orthopaedic shoe inserts for children, team members, and their relatives.

Then, completely out of the blue, we learned of a young man from Beit Sahour (a neighboring town) who had just completed his five-year orthopaedic technician training in Jordan and was looking for work. The job interview went perfectly, and Jonas was able to familiarize Awad with his former Lifegate workshop and train the young man. Osaid, who had recently undergone surgery and was part of the early intervention program, received his orthotics, and Jonas had to work night shifts to meet the needs of all his clients. Jonas and all of us are incredibly grateful for how everything worked out so wonderfully, and we're postponing our farewell for a few years, as Jonas already plans to return next year. Thank you so much, Jonas!



Jonas, Osaid, and Auwad are making a plaster cast.



Skilled helpers from Hesse and the “Erzgebirge” (a mountainous region in Germany)

Gundula, Michael, Johannes and Adelbert had always enjoyed helping out at Lifegate, while Hannelore and Andreas were with us for the first time.

This year, the enthusiastic group was on a special mission. Adelbert's oil paintings with biblical motifs, created over many years, found their way to our country in specially sewn and professionally padded bags, and some already adorn the small chapel in Lifegate Garden.

There in the guesthouse, many walls were repaired and repainted by two professional painters. Gundula and Hannelore lovingly worked with our group of severely disabled children, and Michael and Johannes built benches from old wooden pallets around the olive trees in our sensory garden . Finally, our therapy department received a fresh coat of paint, and the women helped create a beautiful tabletop in the mosaic workshop. Excursions to Jerusalem and the surrounding area , as well as musical performances in the small chapel, testify to a wonderful community and a truly blessed time with this team. Thank you so much!



“ Nativity scenes are glued together”, artist and professional painter Adelbert (left) and Andreas (right)



Our therapy department
has been given a fresh coat
of paint.

Top: Andreas and Michael

Middle: Johannes and
Adelbert

Bottom: Hannelore and
Gundula, Michael and
Johannes



New benches and playground equipment are
being created from old wooden pallets.

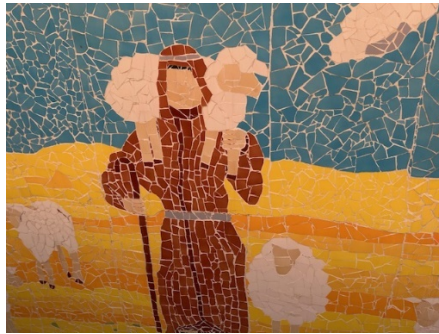


Adelbert's oil paintings will find their new
home in the chapel in Lifegate Garden.



The chapel in Lifegate Garden shines in new splendor

Mosaic Frankie



Frank, who worked with us for many years, has joined us for three months and, as always, is incredibly versatile. He has many gifts and talents, and here, former cable reels are transformed into beautiful tabletops and our walls into biblical stories. Frank loves creating mosaics, both large and small, and has trained under Italian masters . He has inspired us so much that we will be opening our own mosaic workshop for young people with special needs starting in January . We have already found an enthusiastic artist to guide these young people, and we are looking forward to the launch. Soon, our new art will also be available in German retail stores.



Our training workshop team attended a training course with Elias Najah (a professional coach and youth leader in a Bethlehem church) at Lifegate Garden. Our team returned from the course encouraged and strengthened, delighted with the broadened horizons and the successful collaboration in all the tasks they were given, which Elias particularly emphasized.



Lifegate on the go

Representatives from a village approached Lifegate and asked us to learn more about their situation with the many disabled children in their village. During our visit, we were met by local officials and many parents who told us about their plight. A social worker, a nurse, and a speech therapist live in the village, and we are now involving them from the outset in strategic planning. We are starting with the urgently needed provision of assistive devices and aim to build trust with the residents.

Establishing a parents' initiative, a small therapy center, and the inclusion of children with disabilities in the local kindergarten are further topics we want to discuss with the families and representatives from the village. " We work **with** the people, listen to them, encourage them, and want to work **together** with the local community to give the children a future . We would like to encourage the many owners of quarries and stone factories in this area to make a monthly contribution for the children of their village and thus help finance the salaries of the local staff."



...four Lifegate team members (right) listen , look closely and a process begins...



A well-maintained electric scooter, purchased in Israel, was completely overhauled by us and now provides a man who has been confined to his apartment for years because he cannot walk with renewed mobility. His son and a grandchild accompanied him to the riding training session at Lifegate.

Goerge (below) is a new employee in the assistive technology department, which is now expanding its services to other locations in the West Bank. He will soon be responsible for his own



Joni and Friends wheelchair distribution at Lifegate

A second distribution of wheelchairs took place in our courtyard, and many younger and older people received a new, custom-made wheelchair. Many happy faces and a successful event.



Creative mothers raise creative children

...that's exactly what we want! The women thoroughly enjoyed painting small flowerpots and chatting with each other. In our parent groups we aim to encourage parents to be creative with their children at home and practice simple activities with them. We sometimes notice that women and men have grown up far too quickly and had to start work early, leaving no time for games and creative activities. Mothers, in particular, often make up for this at Lifegate and have a lot of fun playing, doing sports, and crafting together.



Twenty living Israeli hostages have finally been freed, bringing great relief to them and their families. The release of the deceased hostages is progressing slowly.

In Gaza, the first piles of rubble are being cleared and streets are being reopened; restaurants and bakeries are also beginning to operate. The "peace" imposed by the US has by no means reached the hearts of the people; there are no clear signs of détente from the Israeli government, nor from Gaza, Lebanon, or Iran. But we place our hope in the man who can change hearts and create something entirely new at any time and in any place.

From a country that is still enjoying summery warmth, **both of us send** warm regards

Yours truly, Burghard Schunkert and team

