

## News from our team

After not filling any vacant positions in the past two years of the COVID-19 pandemic, we have now hired new full-time staff again. Jacqueline Abu-Abara and Abeer Kheir started working in the new class for children with severe disabilities that opened in the fall of 2021. Shireen Nasser and Ragda Jaraiseh support the special school as teachers. Nour Abu-Daud joined us for administrative tasks in the school. Maysun Ayyad takes care of cleaning the school in the afternoon. After her "children's time out" our former kitchen staff Nisrin Ghawali started to work with us again; Nisrin is now running the LIFEGATE cafeteria. We hope that the new team members will settle in well and wish them all the best!

## Reflections

by Burghard Schunkert

### "From Jerusalem to the whole world"

The resurrected Jesus had asked his disciples to stay in Jerusalem - until the Jewish Feast of Weeks (Shawuot-Pentecost), the third most important pilgrimage festival for the Jews. On the Feast of Weeks, the first sheaves of harvested grain were offered to God in the Temple in thanksgiving for the harvest. The grain fields were not far. About five kilometers from Jerusalem, in Bethlehem, the faithfulness of a "foreigner," Ruth, to her Jewish mother-in-law, Naomi, was rewarded. Ruth had stayed with Naomi, also a widow, after the death of her husband and returned with her from Moab to Bethlehem. There, while gleaning ears of corn in the grain field, she caught the eye of a man named Boaz, who later married her. Ruth thus became one of the foremothers in the family tree of Jesus Christ (who later reconciled all people, Jews and Gentiles, to God in his death on the cross).

The disciples were together in Jerusalem when suddenly it stormed and roared and then little flames of fire fell on them and they began to talk about Jesus and all they had experienced with him. God gave understanding to all who listened. More than 3000 people wanted to start a new life that day - a life in which Jesus would be the center. They shared their goods, met in homes, ate together, cared for widows, orphans and the poor. They were a living example for the whole population and "the Lord added to the church daily those who were being saved" (Acts 2:47). On our Pentecost birthday of churches and congregations (unfortunately often not crowded), we can, indeed must, ask God to rekindle the wind and fire, and then to practice "first love" anew. Christians can have a contagious effect with a healing message. By our love we shall be known and "God will add to it". What wonderful prospects!

Happy Pentecost wishes you / your  
Burghard Schunkert

## LIFEGATE REHABILITATION

Beit Jala

P.O.B. 10369, Jerusalem

phone +972-(0)2 2741373

fax +972-(0)2 2741065

Email: reha@lgate.org

<https://www.lifegate-reha.org/en/>

account for donations:  
account holder Lifegate-Rehabilitation  
Mercantile Bank Jerusalem, Israel  
branch 638, Swift code: BARDILIT  
account no. 61-244988

As representation and because of financing of the institution "LIFEGATE REHABILITATION", the association "Tor zum Leben - LIFEGATE Rehabilitation" was founded in the year 1993 in Germany with its board in Würzburg.

TOR ZUM LEBEN –

LIFEGATE REHABILITATION e.V. (TzL)

Albert-Einstein-Straße 25g

D-97941 Tauberbischofsheim, Germany

Phone: +49-(0)931-5 80 69

Mobile phone: +49-(0)15792361991

[geschaeftsstelle@lifegate-reha.de](mailto:geschaeftsstelle@lifegate-reha.de)

<https://www.lifegate-reha.org/>

"Tor zum Leben - LIFEGATE Rehabilitation" is a member of the Diakonische Werk of the Protestant churches of Germany and Caritas-Verband for the catholic diocese Würzburg. The dedication of LIFEGATE is based on and supported by personal and long-standing relationships with the Young Men's Christian Association, YMCA, national association in Germany, CVJM.



Translated by Richard Sharp; edited by Volker Metz



Photo: LIFEGATE

Children from the first class of our special school start to make the model of a cow together

## Dear friends!

We are very happy that (after the restrictions due to COVID-19) people from Germany and other countries are again visiting the Holy Land. This means that we can once again welcome interested and open-minded people in the LIFEGATE Garden guest house and in our rehabilitation center. Our "world" at LIFEGATE becomes bigger and qualitatively richer when people are interested in our work and in the people who do it and who are with us, and we thereby find new friends as well as supporters for our work.

Despite many positive developments, LIFEGATE's work takes place in an environment with many challenges. For example, we have to manage without any public support from the Palestinian Authority. We strive to enable our young people with disabilities to finance themselves through various services. These include work in LIFEGATE Garden, our shoe and upholstery workshop, aids department, laundry, bakery, catering and restaurant operations. However, due to the economic crisis in the two years of COVID-19, our local income has shrunk to a minimum. Through the sale of our workshop and gift products and our good olive oil in Europe, as well as your wonderful financial support, we have managed to make up the deficits so far. Many family members of our employees became unemployed during the pandemic period. In many cases, LIFEGATE staff members became the sole providers for their families. We are very happy that we were able to continue paying their salaries with your help. Thank you very much for that as well!

We are concerned about the war in Ukraine and the suffering that has come over the people there. On the other hand, we are happy that many people in Western and Central Europe are strongly committed to helping the refugees, taking refugees into their apartments and houses or supporting them financially. We are in contact with friends who help people in need in Ukraine. With them, we are considering organizing a shipment of supplies (wheelchairs, walkers, etc.) to these areas. We would like to send a Palestinian-Israeli team of professionals to the region who can adapt these aids to the needs of the people on the ground. Pray and help that this aid can be carried out, which could also be a sign of reconciliation in the once again tense situation in our country. We are living in worrying and uncertain times. In these days we want to reflect on the good Spirit of God, which once empowered the disciples of Jesus in Jerusalem to new and extensive acts of love. This spirit is also alive and working today and wants to empower and use us as Jesus' hands and feet in this world. Trusting in him, we may work for people, alleviate need and raise signs of hope. We wish that you will continue to support us in this. Happy and blessed Pentecost!



## "Open Day" at LIFEGATE

LIFEGATE invited and many came. Our neighbors, friends, family members of the LIFEGATE team were our guests. There were also people from Beit Jala and Bethlehem who finally wanted to discover what is behind the name "LIFEGATE". In the past two years we had planned an "Open Day" several times, but the pandemic had all too often thrown a spanner in the works. Now the time had finally come. A preparation team was quickly put together and detailed plans were made. We were able to win over artists who were friends of ours to participate in the music and fun program. Also the culinary side of things was not neglected - our people in the LIFEGATE kitchen and cafeteria had a lot to do. Besides the varied and interesting program, there were many opportunities to get into conversation with each other. People with and without disabilities spent time together, fear of contact was reduced and many were amazed at what happens at LIFEGATE. A day that encouraged us to hold such meetings more often and to open the "gateway to life" for the citizens in our towns as well.

## The wholemeal bakery next to Bethlehem - "House of Bread"

Bethlehem translated means "House of Bread". The previous bread baking activities in the former LIFEGATE residential groups in Bethlehem and in Beit Jala were quite primitive, but our bakery is now making good progress. Our bakery was already well equipped in January, but we began to search for whole grains (wheat, rye, spelt and gluten-free grains) at local mills. To our surprise, several mills had only flour, but no cereal grains on sale. Since we want to use flour that is freshly ground each time with our own East Tyrolean wooden grain mill, we were happy to finally find a mill in Israel that also offers whole grains. The very friendly Jewish-Israeli miller, who also does his own baking, gave us the first ten bags of grains as a start-up gift. He also agreed to take over the training of a local Arab young man without any charge for us. Another Israeli whole grain baker also offered his expertise and help. So we are on our way to developing another small "peace project" with the LIFEGATE bakery. To our friends - two very experienced German bakers joined us for a trial run and together with our volunteers they prepared the first delicious spelt loaves and rolls made of spelt flour in the LIFEGATE bakery. We look forward to inviting retired bakers and learn from them many delicious bread, rolls and also cake recipes. The produce is consumed at our facility but also sold to parents and local people, and delivered to our guest house and other interested hotels and guest houses.



Wilfried Schroth taught us to bake delicious breads

## Planting and harvesting - organic vegetables & herbs from LIFEGATE

A year ago, we reported that we were building small greenhouses from discarded plastic bottles and wooden pallets, i.e. waste material, and making them available to families with no income. By growing vegetables in these greenhouses, the families can provide for themselves and in some cases also sell the products they have grown.

We also reported on Abir Mattar, a teacher at our special school. As a result of COVID-19 measures, her husband, like many other people in our region, lost his job. Abir and her husband developed a small business growing organic vegetables and herbs. In her spare time, Abir continues to work on the farm from which the LIFEGATE kitchen now sources vegetables, lettuce and herbs. We are happy that Abir now brings her newly acquired knowledge to our special school. The children learn and understand, especially through using their own hands, the process of planting and growing, watering, caring for the plants; later harvesting, processing and eating vegetables and spices, but also the joy of blooming flowers. We are grateful to be provided with food. We also teach our children that there are many people in the world who do not have enough to eat and that we can give to others, from what is sometimes abundantly available to us.

## Progress on our neighboring property

The registration process of the neighboring property in our name is going on slowly but steadily. With the help of our lawyer, the many departments involved in the registration process are being provided with the requested documents - "long live bureaucracy!" We hope to begin construction of the planned adventure landscape for children this summer. Here we will be happy to have volunteers from Germany who may be able to contribute their ideas and handicraft skills. On the day of the open house the "Easter bunny" had already hidden eggs on this property. Many small and big children had fun searching and finding them.



Sara joins in one of the planting activities at the special school

Photos: LIFEGATE

## "Hooray, the guests are back!"

It had become a bit lonely in our guest house LIFEGATE Garden in the past two years, when no foreign individual travelers or tour groups came to us due to COVID-19. We were able to welcome a few guests from local organizations who held seminars at the guest house. Otherwise, we used the time to make further improvements to the building. Since January of this year, the entry regulations have been relaxed and the first tour groups have come to stay with us. We are happy that people feel comfortable with us and we received good reviews so far. Next to our guest house, a cozy garden area is currently being built under shady trees, where our guests - for example after a hard day of sightseeing - can relax and recharge their batteries with wine, beer, fresh juice or sparkling water with their friends. A warm welcome!

## While stocks last: olive oil from LIFEGATE available

The delivery of cold-pressed olive oil from the 2021 harvest has now arrived at our distribution center in Tauberbischofsheim, Germany. All pre-orders have already been sent to our customers. At the moment there are still 0.5 liter bottles as well as 2 and 5 liter canisters of the olive oil in stock. Christine Mohr and Cecilia Monsalve ("Tor zum Leben - LIFEGATE Rehabilitation" office; contact details on the back page) will be happy to take your orders.

## Your help counts ...!

### Thanks to your help we were able to ...

- ...purchase an air compressor with water filter for our workshops (€10,000);
- ...provide our employees with an increase in compensation in the new year to somewhat offset the drastic increase in the cost of living (€50,000 for one year);
- ...finance the growing parent work (€15,000);
- ...repair a defective inverter for the photovoltaic system (€3,500);
- ...adapt 100 wheelchairs specifically for people with disabilities (€18,000).

**These concerns make up a certain part of our monthly costs, which are in total about 70,000.- €. They are the most urgent of our concerns and we'd be especially grateful for your support.**

### With your help, we'd like to...

- ...finance vocational training for young people with disabilities - 35 young people in eleven professions (€12,000 per month);
- ...finance the rehabilitation costs for fifty special needs children for half a year (€100,000);
- ...cover the cost of medical materials and equipment - dental clinic, catheters, etc. - cover (€5,000);
- ...finance repairs, service and insurance for the LIFEGATE vehicles (€5,000).

Thank you very much for your support!