

## Lifegate in June 2023

Dear friends of Lifegate work,

Time seems to fly and the summer break, which will last from mid-July to mid-August, is getting ever closer. Before that, however, the annual delivery of gift products from our workshops should be on its way to Germany, so that there is enough time left for delivery in the autumn and Christmas season. In our German warehouse there is also the high-quality olive oil, which can be ordered from us. Always a nice and healthy "souvenir" and gift.

We look with concern at a further escalation of violence through terrorist attacks in Israel and in the Palestinian territories. It is often the lack of prospects and radicalization of many young people in the Palestinian territories, further exacerbated by the settlement policy of the current Israeli government. More and more radical and armed Palestinian groups, financed from Iran and other states hostile to Israel, recruit these young people, who then face young people, often of the same age, from Israel (in army uniforms) who have to put their lives on the line for bad policies. Injured and dead, hatred and more hatred are the result of a seemingly endless spiral. Frighteningly, more and more radical youths from Israeli settlements are also wreaking destruction and fear in Arab villages and are hardly prevented from doing so. Israeli soldiers fire warning shots at Israeli settlers and try to prevent the worst, often their hands are tied and they are called in much too late.

The Palestinian autonomous government has been in a major financial crisis and facing insolvency for months. Many people employed by the government have not received a full salary for months and are therefore looking for other jobs on the private labor market, which weakens the government and especially the security forces (police, military) even more and allows radical militias freedom of movement. Teachers have been on strike for months and the children of government schools often sit at home, piles of garbage pile up in the streets because even the garbage collection service works only sporadically.

In Israel, demonstrations continue, especially on Saturday evenings, against the "so-called judicial reform" and for the first time, the airport was now included in the peak travel season, which only caused incomprehension among many people and will probably not be repeated. Calls for non-violent resistance are piling up in Israel and many people are exercising the right to demonstrate, while the government is pushing through its "so-called reform" in many small and large decisions. The news pictures from the parliament and the way people treat each other there are simply an indictment of this country and many people turn away disgusted and deeply disappointed. The times when politicians were a role model for the next generations are a thing of the past. Egoism, self-promotion and hatred of opponents set the agenda. Lord have mercy! A real heartfelt prayer for both governments.

In spite of all this unpleasant news, we do not tire of planting our "little apple trees" (as Luther put it) or olive trees precisely because we know that violence and hatred will never have the last word! Acts of love and care, reaching out, reconciliatory speech and action and giving hope, that is our task every day in the place we are allowed to fill.

We are looking forward to people who will help harvesting the olives in the Lifegate garden in November and to skilled and motivated people who will work with us from the end of August until Christmas to turn the olive grove next to the Lifegate center into a park for the senses (touching, feeling, smelling, hearing, seeing, feeling and creating) for our children, youth and adults.

More specifically it is firstly about woodwork, to build playground equipment, a play kitchen, and swings (wheelchair swing and wheelchair carousel we want to buy for safety reasons from a specialized company). Then there is landscaping with shovel and spade (picking up lots of rocks), creating a planting gazebo and a barefoot path. Building a small semi-circular "theater" with natural stone seats. Maybe create a water course with sand games, make and install sound elements, create sitting areas and planting beds around the olive trees for resting, smelling intense flowers and spices and touching different objects (woods and stones). Many activities would be possible even in a wheelchair. A designer friend from Germany has provided us with a drawing with many ideas and many elements should find their place. All existing trees will be integrated naturally and many natural materials shall be used. But further ideas are always welcome! Our workshops are available with the necessary machines and tools. We can offer board and lodging and are looking forward to applicants! Maybe we can find a „foreman“ or „forewoman“ who could lead the project for three months?

### **Lifegate Garden - a small oasis in the middle of Bethlehem**

We are happy about many friends who stayed in our guesthouse and also visited Lifegate. We worked on the outside facilities, which we made a little more colorful with a "garden of lights" and also our wine barrels, which have been transformed in Lifegate and can be used in the future to sit together comfortably, have arrived in the guest area.



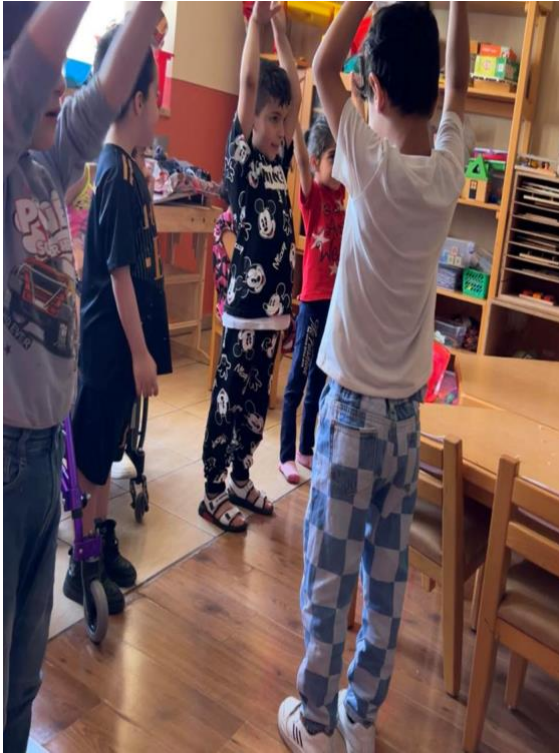


They are still being installed now and then we will report in more detail. This way we can always embellish our little "oasis" in the middle of Bethlehem a little and offer our guests pleasant sitting areas inside and outside. One can find relaxation and peace, but also talk to each other, have exchanges and celebrate without disturbing other people. **During the months of July and August we offer a 15% discount on our room rates for those who decide quickly. All rooms are equipped with air conditioning and so far our temperatures are quite comfortable at the edge of the desert, thanks to low humidity and cool nights. From Bethlehem, a public bus line goes directly to Jerusalem's Old City. In Jerusalem you can reach all places in the city by streetcar and buses and also the long distance bus lines and the railroad network are very well developed in Israel. You are very welcome!**

**Your booking to: [S.Saed@lgate.org](mailto:S.Saed@lgate.org)**

### From the early support

15 kindergarten children will be admitted to our special school after the summer vacations. Before that, however, they will have a good romp at Lifegate and in a play park, and then the children will look forward to four weeks of vacation.





### "Love goes through the stomach"

In the special school in June, the children learned about different seasonal fruits (apricots and melons) and our different domestic animals, and also about the animals that some people like to eat, especially at our festivals. Preparing a meal and then eating it together gave great pleasure to children and educators.





...Jusif perhaps a contender for our kitchen training program in the future....

### **Daniel and an "extra mile"**

Because of his aggressive behavior, the young man often presented us with great problems when we had to protect other young people and also team members. With the great patience of our team and our social worker, Daniel slowly learned to change his behavior and we are very happy that we gave him a new chance again and again and that today he has found a place in our laundry where he likes to work. Daniel likes to come to us and his parents are also relieved that he has taken a good path. In addition to learning and working in the departments, the young people are involved in various programs involving sports activities, socializing, but also community service. They learn to read and write the Arabic language, arithmetic and general education, thus taking responsibility for their own lives and finding their place in their society.



Daniel in the Lifegate laundry

### **Summer recess and a heartfelt request!**

Dear friends and supporters of Lifegate work.

Like everywhere else in the world, energy and living costs have increased a lot in the last two years, the number of people who need a rehab place is also constantly increasing. In contrast to Germany and also Israel, there is no financial support for families with disabled children in the Palestinian territories and also no support for institutions like Lifegate. We are 100% responsible financially.

A sponsorship place at Lifegate, which includes not only education but also therapeutic support and aids, costs 450 euros per month. Many people often cannot afford the small contribution that we ask the families to make (70.-Euro per month). If we refuse a child for financial reasons, we know that the parents have almost no way of finding another place for support and then the child will pay "the price" in the future. It will not receive any support and its problems and those of the family will increase as it grows older. We would therefore like to ask you not to leave us alone with these financial challenges. The cost of a normal month's work in our institution ranges from 70,000 to 90,000 euros. It is only with your support that we are able to provide extensive support to 200 to 250 children and young people every month! **Thank you very much!**

We will send out the next monthly report at the end of August.

We wish all friends and readers a good, satisfying and relaxing summer time and look forward to a blessed second half of 2023.

With kind regards and good wishes Your Burghard Schunkert and the Lifegate Team

# [ BETHARRAM ] LIFEGATE GARDEN BETHLEHEM

Price list at Betharram Lifegate Garden  
(Prices in Euro per person in room)  
Group rates (16 Guests and more)

Service	Single room	Double room	Triple room	Arrangement
BB = Bed & Breakfast	48	35	32	per person /Per day
HB= Bed & Breakfast & Dinner	60	47	44	per person /Per day
FB= Bed & Breakfast & lunch & Dinner	72	59	56	per person /Per day

Driver and guide in single rooms      50% reduction / Extra lunch      18 Euro

Rates for individuals on bed and breakfast Basis

Service	Single room	Double room	Triple room	Arrangement
BB = Bed & Breakfast	55	40	37	per person /Per day
Extra meal	20 Euro per person per day			

Price changes at the holiday seasons (Eastern and Christmas)

Groups: A down payment of 10% might be requested by our office upon booking. The final bill has to be settled not later than one month after the group was with us. We need here your support to guarantee our cash flow and meet our own financial obligations (rent, running costs, and food) Thank you for your understanding!

Individual travelers: We kindly ask for a cash payment upon arrival.

Please note: Our binding cancellation regulations will be sent to you with the confirmation of your booking and are a part of the agreement.



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Your Betharram Lifegate Garden Team

