

Newsletter

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Editors: Gibran & Johanneke Siman
Address: info@vriendenvanhaifa.nl
Bergstraat 34 3811 NJ Amersfoort, the Netherlands
IBAN: NL36 RABO 0163 6489 80
BIC: RABONL2U

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Dear Reader,

It has been a while since we sent our last newsletter. However, that does not mean that the work for the foundation has been standing still. In this newsletter we will walk you through what has been happening. Happy reading!

Theme Evening Thursday May 22, 2014

Who are the Christian Arabs? What is it like to live as a Christian-Arab, among Jews and Muslims? These are just a few of the questions raised during the themed evening organized by the Foundation on Thursday May 22, 2014.



We had a good evening with a great turnout. Together we concluded that offering Christian education in Israel is of extreme importance. Comments given by the visitors indicated they left with a more complete understanding of the work that the Foundation does, and that the evening was

very informative on the situation of Christian-Arabs and showed a balanced approach to the political situation in the Middle East.



These reactions are encouraging for the foundation. It also caused us to consider a possible sequel to this theme night. We are grateful for your response and the interest in our work!

Construction News

In the last newsletter we explained that the land would need to be cleaned up in preparation for the construction. There were large olive and palm trees growing on the building site. Cutting down these trees in Israel is not allowed, unless there is a good reason, such as the trees are sick or dead. So, the trees on the building-site had to be moved instead. A tough job!

The local authorities came for an inspection and an arborist was hired. The trees were counted, sprayed with a special remedy to protect them, and the

largest branches were sawed off to facilitate their movement.



In the spring of 2014 the trees were excavated and



moved to a temporary location elsewhere on the grounds.



At the end of the construction project, the trees will be moved once more to their final location on the school grounds.

For this first part of the construction project, the foundation transferred €5,000.00 to the project account of the school. This was only possible because of the donations we received from you.

The movement of the trees was an important first step in the building of the new kindergarten building. Now the ground must be further prepared for construction. As we mentioned in a previous newsletter, the construction will take place in phases. This is not unusual in Israel. This is because the full amount for the new building has not yet been raised. At the same time, waiting to build is not an option. The current kindergarten building is unsafe and must be replaced. Will you help with the progress of the new building?

Around the kindergarten

In August 2014, the Christian schools in Israel held a joint press conference. This is unusual. The reason for the conference was the new budget cuts for Christian schools in Israel. For the past 5 years Christian schools have received less aid. According to the heads of the schools, the budget has been cut by 35%. This greatly concerns the Christian schools, because they were already not fully supported by the government.

In the months prior to the press conference, there were intensive discussions with the Ministry of Education. Unfortunately, this did not lead to any success in preventing new budget cuts. In the press conference, the school warned that they wanted to suspend school for one day to send a message to the government. The schools are worried that the financial shortage will prevent their mission (providing Christian education) from being a success. This troubling situation also applies to the Sisters of Nazareth School in Haifa.

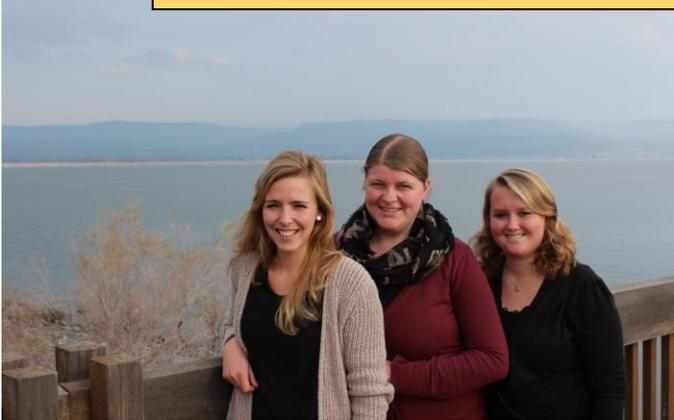
The strike eventually fell through because of new developments with the Ministry of Education.

However, it remains to be seen what will happen with this situation. We hope the government will continue to support Christian education.

Intern Students from Driestar-Educatief College

The international program of Driestar-Educatief College in Gouda, the Netherlands, provides students the opportunity to go abroad for a period of time. The Foundation has created a program for Driestar-Educatief where students are able to complete a three month internship and work on their graduate research in Israel: two months in Haifa at “our” Christian-Arab SON-school and a Jewish school, then a third month in Nes Ammim.

From left to right: Liesbeth, Arianne en Lisa



A letter from Arianne, Liesbeth and Lisa:

On November 7, 2014, we found ourselves at the Haifa train station. With suitcases full of clothes, research methods, and a lot of questions. We were ready for three months in Israel! Not knowing that less than two weeks later, our heads would be spinning from all the information and experiences. Because we had not taken into account how complex the situation in Israel would be.

The past few weeks we have gotten a “behind the scenes” look at the forms this complexity can take. Jews live in Israel, we all knew that. But there are also Christian-Arabs, and we were not fully aware of that. Thanks in part to the program that the

Foundation has set up in cooperation with the school, we were able to find out more about this minority within a minority. We did an internship, at both a Christian-Arab and a Jewish school in Haifa. In addition, we did research on Christian education, and have been to several other Christian-Arab schools in Israel.

Each time, the difficult position of the Christian-Arabs in Israel was brought to the forefront. The parents have dreams for their children, and at the same time they realize that these dreams probably have no chance of becoming a reality. Also, the Arab youth find themselves searching for their identity. Each time our views and knowledge about Israel are refined and then refined again. Our adventure in Israel has been short. We are very happy and grateful that we have had the opportunity to get this “behind the scenes” look. We came with a lot of questions, that we hoped to have answered. And we did! But one thing is for sure, in a few weeks when we find ourselves once again at the Haifa train station, we will have as many questions in our suitcase as when we came.

Maybe even more ...

If you want to read more about the experiences of Arianne, Liesbeth and Lisa? Please read their blog (only in Dutch):

<http://ariannevdplicht.reislogger.nl/>

Privacy statement

The foundation of the friends of Sisters of Nazareth-Haifa considers the protection of personal data part of its policy. Our privacy policy is based on and is in accordance with the data protection act. On request, we will send you a paper copy.

Finally

We are grateful for the donations that we have received. Will you continue to support us? Your

help is very much appreciated by us and by the Christian-Arab community in Israel!

To become a sponsor, please contact us at info@vriendenvanhaifa.nl. Would you prefer to make a donation? You can do that too! Our account number is: NL36 RABO 0163 6489 80 in the name Vrienden van de Sisters of Nazareth-Haifa.

The Foundation has an ANBI (non-profit) status. This means that your contribution is tax-deductible (this only applies to the Netherlands).

Thank you for your support!