

Fall Newsletter 2013

Arab Episcopal School

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Again Jesus spoke to them, saying, "I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will not walk in darkness, but will have the light of life."
John 8:12



Morning announcements with all of the students

The new school year at the Arab Episcopal School (AES) began on the second of September, 2013. We just can't believe that it is already AES's 11th year!

In the school yard, all of the students were playing, looking forward to the new school year. They showed off their new backpacks, and chatted excited about what they did over the three month long summer vacation.

This Monday morning started, as usual, with the morning announcements. Our Headmistress Sabah Zurikat welcomed the students, and everyone sang the national anthem. After that, the students went to their new classrooms for the first time.

This year, we welcomed a high number of new students, 70 in total bring our student body to a record high of 255 students. We are pleased about the high number of students and hope that it is a reflection of the good we do here. We are ready to begin the 2013/2014 school year with motivation and fun.

Welcome, Welcome!



Headmistress Sabah

...70 new students; 10 are blind or low vision

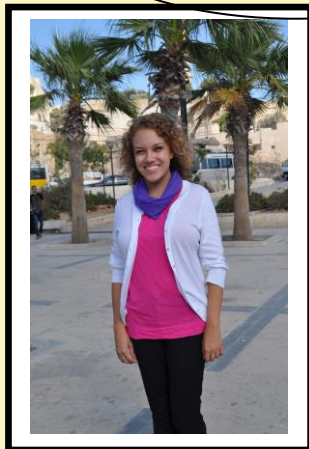
... Mr. Mohammed Khasawnen, our new blind, male teacher. He studied music, and will help the blind and low vision students in the 2nd, 4th, and 5th grades. He will help them with Braille and teach music and computer for the blind.

... New teachers: 1st Grade, Ms. Shatha; 2nd Grade, Ms. Huda; Science and Sports, Ms. Rem; Arabic for 7th, 8th, and 9th grades, Ms. Rabah; Islamic Religion and Arabic for 5th and 6th. Ms.

The new volunteers: Ina Fleischberger (20) and Judith Damian (19) from Germany, Hannah Kurtz (22) from the United States. The German volunteers help with sports, kindergarten (KG1), art, and in the office. Hannah helps as a native speaker in English classes and in the office, as



The Germany Volunteers
Judith & Ina



The American Volunteer Hannah

School begins with "Peace"



For the beginning of this school year, we have chosen the theme of peace, as part of our focus on peace education which is part of our mission here at AES.

Peace is an especially important topic this year because of the growing violent conflict in Syria, which is alarming to us all.

The following events, explained in the sections below, focused on peace.

First Week of School Events

● Kindergarten



Here at AES we have two Kindergarten classes. Kindergarten Grade 1 (KG1) is for 4 year olds, and Kindergarten Grade 2 (KG2) is for 5 year olds.

To celebrate the first day of kindergarten, the students were given popcorn. They had a lot of fun eating it in the court yard. After that, the kindergarteners began with their lessons: singing, crafts, coloring, dancing, English, Arabic, and religion. Later in the week, they made jello together. The children saw how it is made.

● School

The problematic situation in Syria prompted us to give the students an introduction to ways of handling various emergency situations. For example, they were shown how to use gas masks. We decided to do this so that the students are prepared, and can help each other, in case of an emergency. Two teachers developed the introduction.



In order to remember and support our brothers and sisters whose lives are affected by the conflict in Syria, the school fasted for a day. During the early morning celebration Reverend Samir Esaïd began the day of fasting by praying for peace in Syria and the safety of all the nation's residents and those who have fled to other countries. Fasting was on a voluntary basis for the students, but everyone prayed together for those affected by the violence. We continue to hope and pray for peace in Syria.

Parent-Teacher Meeting



The introduction of the teachers



On Saturday morning there was a meeting for the kindergarteners' and the students' parents. The meeting was planned especially for the new students, but all of the parents were invited.

Headmistress Sabah Zurikat introduced all the teachers and the German volunteers. The parents were told of the mission and the vision of the school, and introduced the concept of peace education. This was done to give the parents a better understanding of their children's lives at the school and the aims of the school so that they can include these goals in their home lives. The importance of integration of the blind and low vision students with the sighted students was also discussed in the meeting.

Afterwards, the parents were able to mingle amongst themselves and with the teachers and administrators.

Awards Ceremony



All the students with their awards

On the same evening as the Parents' Meeting, the students with the highest grades on their report cards received awards. The top four students in each class received award, these students all at least 90 out of 100 points on their report cards. All in all 46 students received awards.

The ceremony began with a procession the students, in front of their applauding parents. Headmistress Sabah Zurikat and Reverend Samir Esaid gave a speech praising the students for their hard work and their achievement, while encouraging them to continue in this fashion.



An award for one of the blind students

After the speech, each student was called to the stage, where they individually received a certificate of achievement and a present.

The evening concluded with a celebration, including the traditional Jordanian dessert: Knafe!

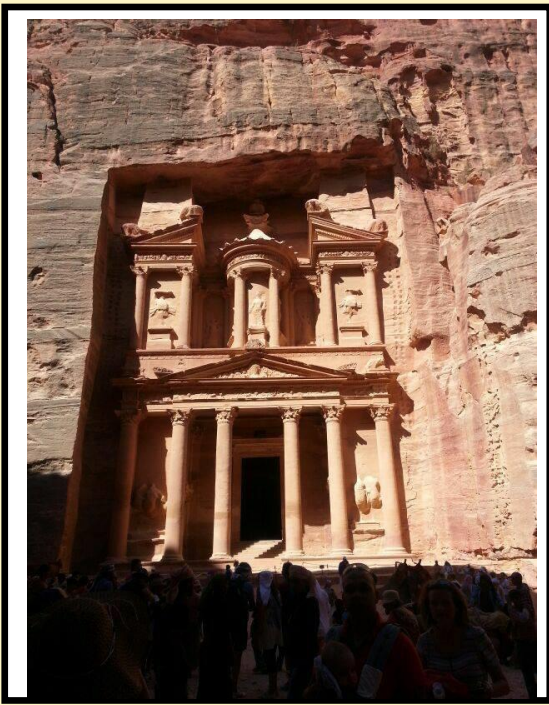
The Teachers

● Trip to Petra

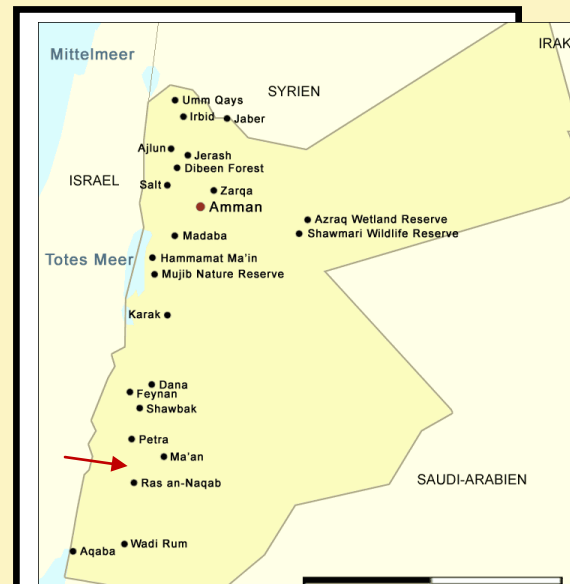
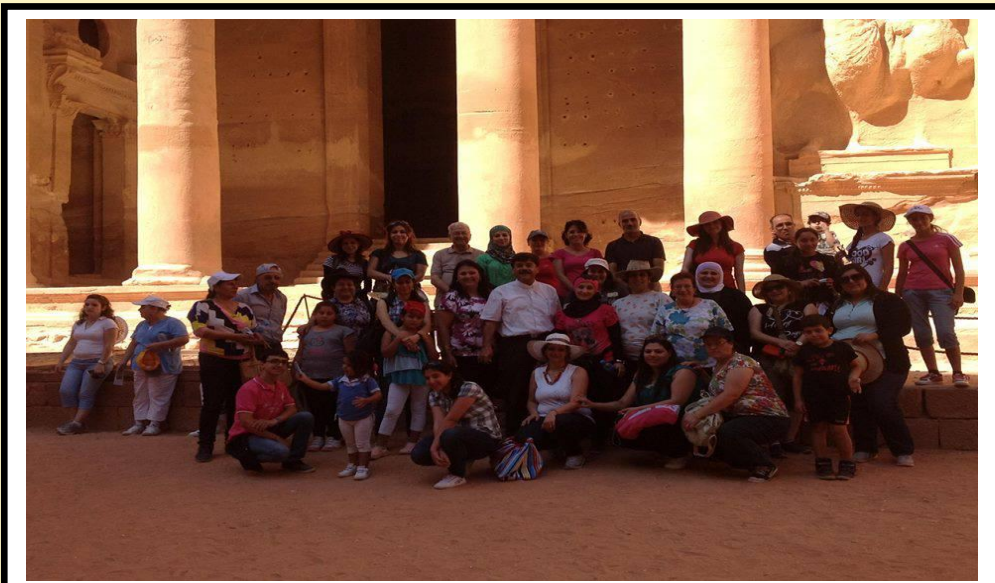
Shortly before the beginning of the school year, the teachers from AES, and some members of the congregation, were given the opportunity to rejuvenate themselves with a trip to Petra, so that they could start the new year with energy.

On August 21st, 40 teachers and members of the congregations set off in two buses to Petra. The group took a three hour long tour of the ancient, stone carved city. Everyone was impressed by the beauty of this unique wonder. There was a lot for everyone to discover, even for those for whom this was not their first visit to Petra. The group spent the night in a hotel in the town of Petra.

AES subsidized the price of the trip, because the school administrators believe that it is important for the teachers to re-energize themselves and to develop a sense of comradery. The time they spent together will stay with them for a long time.



One of the famous sites in Petra



Our New Bus



After a half year of work, the new, smaller, 14 passenger, school bus has arrived! We have used it since the beginning of the school year. Thank you to Landeskirche Wuerttemberg of Germany for your financial support. They covered the cost of 70% of the bus; the rest was covered by the school. Normally, school buses are tax exempt, but since we are a private school we are not part of this exemption so the school had to pay more than originally expected.

The new bus is for transportation of students, especially for the blind and low vision students. The old buses were sometimes too big for the little streets in Irbid, which made it so that some students had to meet the bus farther from their homes. Now, we are happy that the students have an easier and safer way to get to school.

Our deepest gratitude to Landeskirche Wuerttemberg, if it was not for their support we would not have been able to afford this bus.

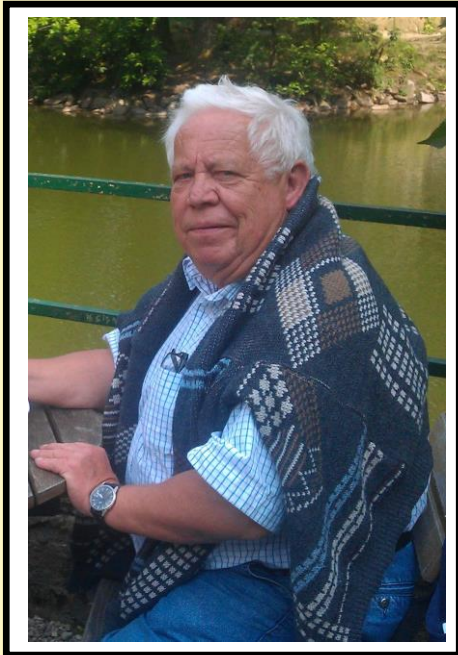
***Praise the LORD!
Oh give thanks to the
LORD, for he is good,
for his steadfast love
endures forever!
Psalm 106:1***

Thank You!

We cannot thank you enough for your support and generosity.

Without your contributions, none of the work here would be possible.

We are truly blessed to have such great friends and support from all over the world.



We also want to send a special thank you to Deacon Gunter Hell. He is an old friend and supporter of AES. Gunter Hell organizes Reverend Esaid's visits to Germany, and always drives Rev. Esaid around while he is there, totaling more than 5,000km per visits. Sometimes Deacon Hell organizes more than one trip a year for Rev. Esaid.

Deacon Hell also volunteers his time to help the school with all of our relationships in Germany, including keeping in contact with our funders and working with the bank account for the donations from Germany. He is always available if we need to call or email him for assistance.

Gunter, we are thankful that you are so willing to help the school and that you keep in contact with us. Thank you!

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<http://www.aeschool.org>



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