

Dispatches from Seraj

2022 TOUR



Ramallah

Tuesday, October 18

On the West Bank Visiting Ramallah and Kufr 'Aqab

Anne Cordes, Seraj Palestine Tour Participant



Ramallah is one of the oldest cities in Palestine. Today it is home to Christians and Muslims, Palestinians from throughout the region who have been forced out of the territories occupied since 1967 as well as those returning since the Oslo Accords were signed in the 1990s. In the old city center, the city proudly displays its motto, *We Ramallah*, signifying its dedication to being an inclusive community for Palestinians from a range of cultures. We heard the muezzin's call to prayer during our tour and fell asleep to the ringing of church bells. (It was quite a contrast to the noise of drones flying overhead the previous night in Jerusalem.)

Kufr 'Aqab is another special city on the West Bank. It lies outside the constructed barrier wall, easing access to other areas, and at the same time inside the Jerusalem municipal boundary, with the benefits of Israeli IDs unavailable to Palestinians living elsewhere. In this densely populated and under-resourced area, Seraj has renovated a beautiful old stone building, providing a safe space for children and cooperating with other organizations to rebuild a sense of community.

The Seraj Storytelling Center, built in loving memory of Rev. Dr. Cotton Fite, reclaims and transmits to a new generation the lost narratives of Palestinian life, a light emerging from among the ruins.

Enjoy some pictures from the day. Watch for continuing updates on our journey!

PS. Unfortunately, our original scribe, Amelia Miller tested positive for COVID on the day she was to fly. She had to cancel and Anne Cordes has stepped in. Thanks Anne



Walking the streets of Ramallah



Birzeit Center courtyard



Young library patron in Kufr 'Aqab



The new library in Kufr 'Aqab



A visit to WeRamallah



Young Palestinians in Kufr 'Aqab

18 PEOPLE are exploring Palestine up close and personal with our SERAJ executive director, Laurie Salameh, and her dedicated staff. October 16 -25. We hope you enjoy these reports.

REMEMBER we are dependent on your support for the programming and the maintaining of the libraries.

JOIN US and learn more at our Benefit on November 13. Space is limited, buy your tickets today. On-line cut off, Tuesday, November 9. www.serajlibraries.org

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