

THE OLIVE PRESS

Ramallah Friends School's Monthly Newsletter
ISSUE 04 YEAR 2018/2019

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RAMALLAH
FRIENDS SCHOOL

Our Quaker Testimonies



Simplicity
Friends believe that the most important things in life aren't things.

Peace
Friends believe that there is always a path that brings peace, justice, dignity and respect.

Integrity
Friends believe that our words and actions must reflect our truest selves.

Community
Friends believe that we need each other, since each and every one of us is precious to our community.

Equality
Friends believe that every person is equally beloved by God, no matter what.

Stewardship
Friends believe that all God's gifts are entrusted to us for the sake of future generations.

The Quaker Testimony of Peace

Letter from Head of School

As a Friends school we oppose and refuse violence – in any form. For us violence means conflict in our relationships. As a school in an occupied territory we are presented with many challenges. But it is those challenges in our immediate community that are foremost in my mind. In pursuit of lasting, sustainable peace, we seek to eliminate causes of conflict.

How as a school do we address causes of conflict?

In renouncing conflict Friends embrace the transforming power of love and the power of nonviolence, striving for peace in daily interactions with family, neighbors, fellow community members, and those from every corner of the world. As Head of School I think about what that means in our immediate community. We endeavor to see "that of God" in every person, regardless of nationality, race, gender, age, ability, or social status.

Our challenge is to be a practical expression of the Quaker peace testimony in our individual relations, our local community, our school and our country. We oppose violence in all forms and I believe that we are called to transform the institutions of society and RFS into instruments of peace and to be ourselves transformed.

Peace is the nurturing the capacity of individuals, our students, our teachers and our community to sustain harmonious relationships based on mutual respect and caring for the welfare of all. It was Martin Luther King Jr who said "True peace is not merely the absence of tension: it is the presence of justice." That is what RFS is about.

Adrian Moody - Head of School



Middle School students walking to Meeting for Reflection earlier this year.

Conflict and Resolution

By Abla Jabaji – 8th Grade English & Ethics Teacher

An essential part of RFS' teaching philosophy is to incorporate Ethics classes within the educational system. Ethics classes aim to support each student to develop a life-long capacity of critical thinking and moral reasoning. The main focus is for students to develop the skills to identify ethical issues and create a sense of willingness to engage in a respectful discussion with their peers.



Conflict & Resolution is one of the several topics in Ethics that is being introduced to Eighth graders this year. Students work in groups to tackle issues of a local and global context in nature such as gender inequality, bullying in schools, cyber bullying, child labor, school rules, environmental issues and other topics.

Students do their research on the topic under the supervision of the teacher; they use PowerPoints, posters, games, role-play, and videos to introduce the conflict, and then discuss the suggested resolutions with their peers. All shared different opinions or factual inputs are welcomed in class in a very respectful manner.

*Ethics plays an important role in a student's complete development, for a person with an ethical value can contribute to the positive development of his/her society and country.**



Stop by the Communications Office (Upper School) and get your 2019 CALENDAR!

Teaching Problem-Solving at the Lower School

Lian Derini & Khaled Saber – LS Counseling Department

Living in peace is the minimum for a decent life, and it is the right of every child to enjoy peace, whether domestically or in the surrounding environment.

We work at the Friends School to promote the use of dialogue and logical discussion during the solution of daily problems through a strategy we seek to stabilize from first grade so it can grow with them gradually to deepen the students' understanding and use during conflicts between each other. This strategy gives students the opportunity to express their feelings in conflicts and defend themselves accordingly. And this leads them to internal peace resulting from the confession of emotions within a comfortable space where they receive compassion. We encourage students to repeat this strategy three times to give an opportunity for the other person to think calmly and carefully. This enhances the value of patience and understanding of the emotional situations of others. If students do not succeed in solving the problem, one can choose to report to a special book for each class called "Problem Solving Notebook". A student expresses his/her feelings in writing and sometimes through drawing to explain what happened. This gives students different ways to express themselves and always strive to solve problems. We discuss problems written in the notebook in the problem solving class.

We start the problem solving class with a minute of silence, and we reflect on the feelings of each student during the week. We look for if they encountered problems and whether they succeeded in solving them or they did not have any problems



Peace

Friends believe that there is always a path that brings peace, justice, dignity and respect.



or faced a problem but they could not solve it. In the case of students not solving a problem, the classroom teacher and/or the counselor try to solve the problems written on the notebook only to enhance the students' demand for self-reliance first, and students are then asked to propose peaceful solutions to solve the conflict.*



Alumni in the Spotlight

By Lama Murra
Communications Officer

Meet RFS alumnus, Class of 2003, singer, producer and "Eka3" Music Business Manager, Tamer Abu Ghazaleh. Tamer launched his professional music career in 2007 after finishing his BA of Economics at the American University in Cairo in 2006.

When asked about being a student at RFS and part of the IB program, Tamer told the OP:

"I feel lucky to have taken the IB program, such a program that focuses on empowerment of one's own learning drive unlike traditional education models. I met dozens of brilliant teachers and colleagues in those years at the Friends, and whether it's a young or an experienced teacher, an A or an F student, I was amazed at how each person had their very own influencing charisma, and how many of my colleagues were able to be the coolest kids and had excellent grades at the same time."

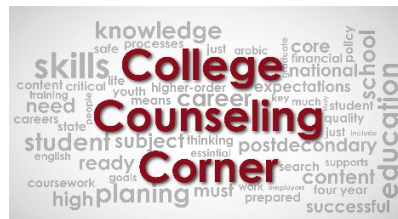
Tamer now works in the music production business. He runs Eka3 Band in Egypt and composes music and performs with the band. His latest release was a collaboration music album titled "Lekhfa", which you can listen to on [his website linked here](#).

When asked about what he enjoyed most about the school community Tamer says:

"It was beautiful how many of the teachers treated us like friends & family, especially in the high school."

Tamer ended our interview with a few words to future RFS alumni saying:

*"You should take things easy, have fun learning, and enjoy every day at school."**



By Chris Akel – College Counselor

Upcoming Deadline Dates:

IMPORTANT DEADLINE - December 15th: Request for any personal statement edits, recommendations, or documents sent to ANY schools from Dec. 10th - Jan. 15th (US/UK).

December ongoing: Some early and regular decisions for the US
January 15: UCAS deadline for all traditional UK/Wales/Scotland schools

Ongoing January/February: European and Canadian deadlines.

Upcoming Events/Announcements:

December 4: Virtual Information Session with Williams College Admission Officer (3-4pm, RFS library)

College Counseling General:

REMEMBER: All seniors are responsible for sending their applications by the deadline! With the exception of the final UCAS submission on January 15th. This applies to all Canadian and European institutions, as well as to the Common App, that can only be submitted from the student.

For US regular deadline applicants: Students should share the following with Chris over email:
Common App ID (CAID #)
Create a Bridge U account

A list of all colleges to which the student wants their documents sent
2018-19 CC Handbook: Last year's [College Counseling Handbook](#) has everything you need to know to apply to college and use the CC Office!

Contact Chris and the CC Office: cafel@rfs.edu.ps

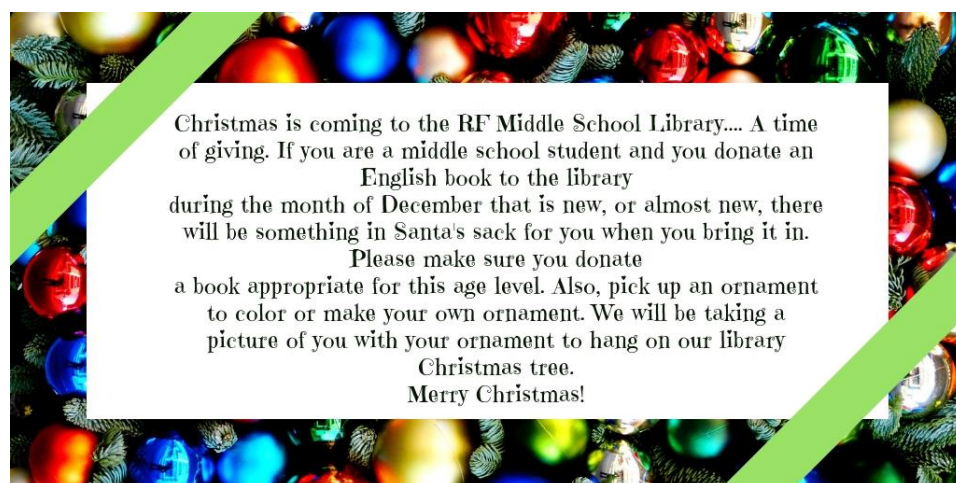
NOTE: December 12-24th - Chris out of office but available by email!

Teaching Peace

By Frieda Dahdah – Lower School Principal

When we talk about Peace, the definition of peace is the first thing that comes into our minds. As a Quaker School in Palestine, RFS always finds a way to find peace, equality, integrity and respect, especially that we as Palestinians live in a continuous conflict. The Palestinian is always going under struggle, violence and instability, leading to lack of inner and outer peace, although we live in the land of love and peace, the land where Jesus Christ was born. In spite of our painful reality, we always strive to achieve a decent life for our children and all segments of society through the development of positive feelings and attitudes within us and to interact with each other to ensure a sense of safety and satisfaction for all.

The Friends School is teaching our children and trying to build a new generation based on peaceful ways to solve their problems and express their opinions and move away from the use of violence. RFS does so by providing activities and strategies through teaching students the necessary and intellectual life skills. Our students often express their lifestyles by using communicative skills in their homes, school and society. Many times students adopt attitudes and initiate their actions on the ground and strive to provide a safe and healthy society, in order to enhance their self-confidence and others to cope with life in all its aspects.*



How we resolve conflict is what makes us achieve peace.

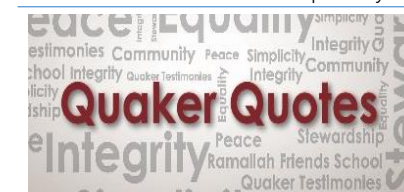
By Riyam Kafri-AbuLaban – Upper School Principal

Conflict is bound to arise between members of any community. It is how we choose to go about resolving the conflict that sets Quakers apart. In the education of children, conflict and differences in opinion will arise for sure. That we revert to dialogue, openness and honesty is what will help bring about resolution and peace to any situation. This I believe is what the testimony of peace attempts to represent in Quaker education. We try and aim to teach our students that openness and dialogue are the best approaches to resolving any conflict or disagreement. We hope that parents and teachers will also follow suit. As the Upper School Principal and the educational leader for the upper campus, I want to reemphasize that how we resolve differences is what makes us a Quaker school. And to that end and inspired by the Quaker

value of peace, I invite you to visit your children's teachers and dialogue with them. I also ask teachers to reach out to parents sharing with them perspectives, opinions and potential solutions when their children are struggling. I also invite them to share their success stories with you, because there are plenty of them.

I welcome you to visit me and the deputy principals of the upper school so we may engage in dialogue and resolve differences that will put us on the right path to achieve peace within our community and peace within ourselves.

Please visit teachers during their office hours, and do not hesitate to reach out to me directly at rkafr@rfs.edu.ps to set up an appointment. I am here to serve our community to the best of my abilities.*



December Lower School Library Book

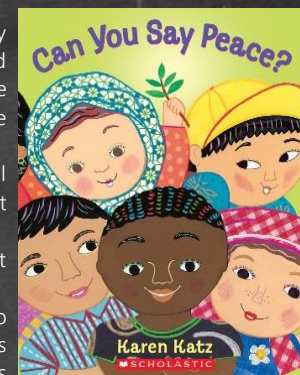
By Nadine Haj Abed – Lower School Librarian

The testimony of peace focuses on the importance of creating harmony within oneself and within one's community. Quaker educators understand that nothing fortifies children and helps them achieve excellence as does the ability to find peace and actively share it with others amidst the natural noise and conflicts of life.

Children around the world and despite their language and cultural differences, share many of the same desires. Most importantly, children want to feel safe, and want peace in their world.

This colorful picture book teaches readers how children in 11 different countries say "peace" in their native languages.

Peace and peaceful behavior are the foundational concepts of all people who believe in peace. By increasing students' understanding of what peace looks like, sounds like and feels like, this book can help students visualize peace as a common classroom goal.*



Upcoming Dates & Events

Dec 10th
US: Start of Midterm exams for grades 6-10

Dec. 20th
LS: 4th & 5th Grade Christmas Performances

Dec 15th
LS: KG Christmas Performances

Dec 22nd
US: End of Midterm exams.

Dec 17th
Tuition payments due (Plan C)
LS: 1st & 2nd Grade Christmas Performances

Dec 24th – Jan. 9th
Christmas Holiday

Dec 18th
LS: 3rd & 4th Grade Christmas Performances

Jan. 10th ,2019
Frist day back to school.

Dec. 19th
LS: 3rd & 5th Grade Christmas Performances

Jan. 14th
Tuition payments due (Plans B & C)

*** LS – Lower School
*** US – Upper School

[Press here for RFS Calendar 2018/2019](#)

When everything seems dark,
consider you may be the light.
Quaker Proverb

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