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| [aei logo](https://aeicenter.org/)  **Arab Educational Institute**  **Newsletter - December 2021** | |
| christmas | |
| **Christmas and Palestinian Sumud**  The Christmas tree has been lightened at Nativity Square in Bethlehem, a symbol of hope. Yet in 2021 the ongoing coronavirus crisis and the occupation had a deep, negative impact on the Bethlehem and Palestinian communities. The economy including tourism has been greatly affected. Public life is characterized by a lack of law and order, a surge in domestic violence, and a general atmosphere of hopelessness. Apartheid is a key term used by international human rights organizations to characterize the situation not just in the West Bank and Gaza but also that of Palestinians in Israel.    The Arab Educational Institute continues to work on sumud or steadfastness as a response to the challenges in daily life and Palestine. In one of the articles of this newsletter you can read more what the practice of sumud has involved over the course of AEI’s history. A major project is “Christian-Moslem Living Together” which continues at some 30 private and governmental schools in order to strengthen the cohesion of the community.  [*Read more*](https://aeicenter.org/christmas-and-palestinian-sumud/)  Rania Murra  Director AEI | |
| DSC06308 | **The shepherds’ joy of Christmas**  Christmas wish AEI – member of Pax Christi International  [*Read more*](https://aeicenter.org/aeis-christmas-message/) |
| IMG_2226 | **Stories of sumud in AEI’s group and advocacy work**  In a speech for the last public meeting of the Ecumenical Women’s Group Twente-Bethlehem (9/12/2021, Enschede), AEI staff Toine van Teeffelen gave a bird’s eye view of the history of the Arab Educational Institute using hope and sumud as guiding concepts. [*Read More*](https://aeicenter.org/stories-of-sumud-in-aeis-group-and-advocacy-work/) |
| IMG_3363 | **Citizenship and Diversity: Christian-Moslem Living Together**  During the last school year in total 984 Palestinian Moslem and Christian students were trained in inter-religious education as part of AEI’s long standing program Citizenship and Diversity. [*Read More*](https://aeicenter.org/citizenship-and-diversity-christian-moslem-living-together/) |
| image-2 | **Youth and women workshops on trauma**  AEI held this year 15 face to face sessions on dealing with trauma for two young women groups and one youth group at the Sumud Story House. Each session involved 10 – 15 persons and took two hours.  [*Read More*](https://aeicenter.org/youth-and-women-workshops-on-trauma/) |
| IMG_1803 | **Winning back the innocent smile**   A poem by all AEI staff  [*Read More*](https://aeicenter.org/winning-back-the-innocent-smile/) |
| **In Bethlehem, a sense of sumud keeps peace workers pursuing their vision**  Interview Rania Murra and Fuad Giacaman on the World Council of Churches website, at the occasion of the World Week for Peace in Palestine Israel (WWPPI) 2021.  [Read more](https://aeicenter.org/sense-of-sumud/) | **Wall Information Project**  Claudette Mubarak, AEI staff, tells about her work at the Sumud Story House and the Wall Museum. [Read more](https://aeicenter.org/out-of-the-cage/)  Toine van Teeffelen recently wrote an article about the Rachel’s Tomb area for the *Jerusalem Quarterly* - Rachel’s Tomb: Narrative Counterspaces in a Geography of Oppression. [Read more](https://www.palestine-studies.org/en/node/1651900) |