

Wishing you a very joyful Christmas



It has certainly been another challenging year, but still there have been plenty of things to enjoy and celebrate. For both Richard & JulieAnn the pandemic has brought many difficulties relating to work. The College planned at least two re-openings both of which were cancelled because situations took turns for the worse. Nevertheless, historic reserves continue to mean that the College can function on a skeleton operation until the prospects are brighter. JulieAnn's work at the Jerusalem Princess Basma Centre has struggled with reduced funding, but they too have been creative in the use of what is available. It remains a continual source of inspiration for her with a deep sense of fulfilment.

Travel restrictions have meant no visits from friends and family except joyfully, Eliana came for ten days in the autumn. We took the opportunity of a travel window in the summer to return to England for a month which was both fortuitous and blessed because of the wonderful weather and the opportunity to see many people. Political unrest in Jerusalem meant that we were especially glad to be able to escape for rest and recuperation. A glorious week in Aberdovey in West Wales (above) with JulieAnn's side of the family was wonderful. This was followed by a happy week in Plymouth with Richard's family and the usual important trips to Dartmoor and the coastline.



Nathaniel's work with the charity, Hestia, in their Modern Slavery Team has been challenging and fulfilling in equal measure. Supporting refugees around London helping with their physical needs and advocating for their refugee status has been an exercise in understanding the odds stacked against vulnerable people in the UK as they seek a new start in life. He continues with multiple active interests: cricket, hockey and tag rugby. His partner, Maddie continues with Pfizer, mostly in the marketing department, and has found them a good company to work for.



Eliana's musical career with the Indie Rock band 'Beabadoobee' was thwarted at various times by the pandemic restrictions but they were able to record and release some new material. In the latter part of the year, a major headline tour of the USA was a significant high point. There are great plans for next year which hopefully won't be too badly impacted by the continuing spread of the virus. Eliana's partner, Oscar's musical career is also on the rise - his first album, 'Chewing The Scenery' got favourable reviews and his UK tour was a success.

Our inability to travel and a very different work pattern owing to the pandemic, has given

Richard & Julieann ample opportunity to explore the amazing land of Palestine and Israel. For our 25th wedding anniversary (what do you mean we don't look old enough for that landmark?!), we had two days at the beautiful Ein Gedi Kibbutz beside the Dead Sea. This was followed by two nights at the most remarkable Mitzpe Ramon in the Negev Desert. Words and pictures can barely do justice to both of these amazing sites.

All in all, life continues to be full if sometimes disappointing owing to the present circumstances. However, we still feel called to be where we are. The struggle of the Palestinians to be afforded their due rights and dignity is important to us. So, from this land of Jesus's birth we send you Christmas wishes for justice & peace.

