

Out of Bethlehem

Sunday, December 16 at 9:00 am in the Bloom Room

Because the U.S. media tends to portray Palestinians in a particular negative light, this talk will focus on the realities and struggles that Palestinians face on a daily basis living under occupation. But the occupation is not all there is to Palestinians' lives, so we will also include topics such as their festive celebrations and customs and traditions. And while most Americans assume that all Palestinians are Muslims, this talk will highlight the lives of the, now small, Palestinian population living in Bethlehem and how they celebrate Christmas. If you want to know more about what it's really like to live in Palestine, please join us for this talk!

Saed Rishmawi is a Palestinian Christian from the town of Beit Sahour, which is next to the city of Bethlehem and not far from Jerusalem. Saed is a machinist and metal worker. He loves Eastern music, plays the Oud, and in his free time enjoys barbecuing, going to the beach, and traveling. Saed was born and raised in Palestine and came to the U.S. in July 2018 after receiving his long-awaited green card. He is now reunited with his wife Renee and daughter Carmen.

Renee Spellman is a graduate student at the University of Arizona, in the PhD program in the Middle Eastern Studies Department. Her major is Linguistics of Middle Eastern Languages. Her future doctoral research will include sociolinguistic and ethnographic work on the Palestinian dialect of youth in Bethlehem. She lived in Palestine for ten years, both studying (she received her M.A. there) and teaching English and Arabic as a second language.