Dear friends,

Just a few days ago I was standing at the graveside of my father Albert Bühlle, who went to be with the Lord. He was a great man of God and a great father. In this issue is a tribute to him which tells of how his life was spared by two Jewish men and how he came to know Jesus while held in a Russian prisoner of war camp at the end of the Second World War.

Upon his return to Germany, my father answered the call of God into ministry and became a pastor and traveling evangelist. At the funeral, our family was amazed to see such a large attendance, and many whom we did not know were coming up to share how much he had impacted their lives. There are churches that founded that we did not know about. So many lives touched and changed by the Lord. So many hearts turned towards Israel and the Jews. He indeed left a powerful and lasting legacy that has shaped our lives as well.

As I write this I am in Dallas, and just heard the news of Hamas rockets landing just a few kilometers away from where I live with my family in Jerusalem. Thanks be to God that the family and all the Embassy staff and families are safe.

But this attack does represent a new escalation in the conflict in the Middle East. For the first time in over 40 years, Jerusalem has come under direct military attack. Residents of the South are under daily bombardment and many are fleeing. But our aid relief teams were already the first on the scene to help those in peril, especially elderly people. Among them are a number of Holocaust survivors who we have moved north to safety in Haifa and elsewhere.

As this magazine arrives in your hands, we do not know if the conflict will still be going on. But I ask you to stand with Israel as never before. Israel’s existence is still challenged by many of its neighbors, and our calling is even more necessary to show Israel that she is not alone. This nation indeed has friends around the world who stand with her in these difficult days.

So please keep us and our work in Israel in your prayers. We and our families need committed intercessors! Thank you for standing with us.

Finally, I want to wish you and your family a blessed and peaceful Christmas Season and God’s blessing and guidance for the coming year.

Faithfully yours,

Faithfully yours,

Jürgen Bühlle

Dr. Jürgen Bühlle

ICEJ Executive Director
ICEJ SPONSORS RELIEF EFFORTS FOR ISAURIANS UNDER FIRE

BY DAVID PARSONS

Last month, Israeli leaders ordered the IDF to take concerted action against the repeated launching of rockets and mortars from Gaza into southern Israel. The launching of “Operation Pillar of Defence” came after Hamas and other radical Islamic militias in Gaza had escalated their missile fire into the Negev region on three separate occasions in the previous month.

As we go to press, it is difficult to assess where this military confrontation will lead. So far, Israeli air forces have successfully targeted several top Hamas military commanders in Gaza and destroyed many of the terror militia’s rockets, underground launch sites, and weapons factories. Yet hundreds of rockets continue to land inside Israel, including several aimed at Tel Aviv and even at Jerusalem. The Israeli public has been told to be prepared for an extended conflict and IDF ground forces are being readied to enter Gaza if the rocket fire does not cease and a truce is not reached.

As a result of this rocket threat, more than one million Israeli civilians in southern Israel are having to constantly huddle in bomb shelters, schools are closed throughout the region, and scores of families are flee north. The International Christian Embassy Jerusalem is fully committed to helping those Israelis who have fallen victim to these rocket attacks from Gaza.

To accomplish this, the ICEJ activated its “Israel in Crisis Fund” and is now using it to meet urgent needs among those communities most impacted by the current violence. The Christian Embassy has extensive experience in humanitarian relief in Israel through our own projects as well as our long-standing partnerships with local Israeli charities and social workers in the areas now under fire, and we have been responding from day one of the hostilities to numerous urgent requests for help.

An ICEJ-sponsored relief team of nine volunteers was on the ground within 24 hours of the outbreak of the conflict, providing food, clothing, first aid kits, blankets, toiletries and shelter to those affected by the hostilities. Our team was first on the scene to give humanitarian aid to families in the apartment building and surrounding neighborhood of Kiryat Malachi where three Israelis were killed in a direct Grad rocket hit.

Special efforts are being made to assist children and the elderly. Toys, games, crafts, books and candy have been distributed to children in hospitals and community bomb shelters. Meals are being delivered to senior citizens and needy families. All of these efforts are being done in coordination with Israeli social welfare authorities and other local officials.

The ICEJ and its charitable partners arranged for four busloads of elderly people, among them many Holocaust survivors, to be evacuated from the South to temporary housing in assisted-living homes in Netanya and Haifa. We also can report that five of these dear survivors have now found a temporary home in the ICEJ-sponsored Home for Holocaust Survivors in Haifa. They are quite happy to be safe and warm and cared for by the dedicated staff.

The ICEJ’s relief efforts are being reported in the Israeli media, including a TV report on Channel 10 and an article on Ynet. In addition, the ICEJ is arranging to deliver humanitarian aid in coming days to the beleaguered Christian community in Gaza, which is currently caught between the two sides.

We ask that you prayerfully pray

- Pray for the safety of innocent civilians on both sides
- Pray for a swift resolution to this latest conflict which will ensure that the Hamas rocket threat is finally removed from over southern Israel.
- In addition, please speak out on Israel’s behalf to your local communities, media and government leaders, especially to stand with Israel’s right to defend its citizens.

DONATE AT http://int.icej.org/about/make-donation

Please get involved in this ongoing relief effort by donating today to our

ISRAEL IN CRISIS FUND

FOR A REPORT AND ANALYSIS on the latest Gaza rocket war, go to:
It is hard to believe that there are actually homeless, destitute Holocaust survivors in Israel today. But we have met them up close and their plight is real.

Recently, the International Christian Embassy Jerusalem was able to quickly provide housing for several aging Holocaust survivors caught in very difficult circumstances, with some even living on the streets. The accommodations became available because the ICEJ had just provided funds to finalize the purchase of the upper floor of an apartment building in Haifa to expand our nearby Home for Holocaust Survivors.

Thus we were able to provide places to live for homeless Holocaust survivors in urgent need of a roof over their heads as winter approaches. So thankfully, the timely help was there for these survivors, but we are receiving many more such requests at present from the social welfare department in Haifa to help elderly Jewish survivors of the Nazi genocide who are now homeless.

Shlomo is one of the newest residents of the apartments recently acquired by the ICEJ, but he had to move in while the renovations are still underway. He was about 14 years old when 8,000 Jews in his hometown of Yasi, Romania were rounded up and slaughtered en masse by Romanian police and German soldiers in 1941. Shlomo found himself among the more than 5,000 remaining Jews who were then loaded onto overcrowded, sealed “death trains” that were slowly driven back and forth across the countryside in the hot summer weather until most of the trapped passengers died of dehydration, suffocation, infection or blood loss. Yet somehow, young Shlomo managed to escape the massacre and survive these cruel train rides.

Another new resident in the emergency accommodations is Lev. He was nine years old when the Germans invaded the Ukraine. Lev’s father died in a forced labour camp while his mother and her three sons went into hiding. Lev was the oldest son and at night would go out and try to find scraps of food outside neighbouring homes. Many times he was
caught and suffered beatings so severe he could hardly walk because of the pain.

After six months of living underground, they were discovered and sent to a labour camp. Every few months, they were transported from camp to camp by train, not knowing where they were going. Lev refused to cry in spite of his extreme fear, trying to stay strong for his mother and younger brothers.

In 1990, Lev and two siblings left the Ukraine and made their way to Israel. He was never married and lived on his own. Because of a handicap, he was never able to work and recently he did not have enough money to pay the rent on his apartment any longer. Since then, Lev had been living on the street. But now he has a bed and meals and everything he needs at the Haifa Home for Holocaust Survivors.

Lev is now sharing an apartment with Shlomo and two other survivors even though renovations are still going on around them.

“Here, I at least have a place to sleep and something warm to eat”, Lev said gratefully.

The Haifa Home assisted-living facility is more than a roof over their heads. It has provided Lev and Shlomo with an entire community of residents and staff, backed by the ICEJ and our family of Christian supporters worldwide. But we need your help as never before to care for these deserving souls.

Besides the costs of the on-going renovations, the Haifa Home has monthly operating expenses of approximately 1000€ ($1250) per resident. These costs cover basic necessities such as meals, utilities, cleaning, laundry, transport to medical appointments, basic dental treatment and extras, such as birthdays, Jewish celebrations and outings.

Some residents also come to the stage of needing a live-in caregiver. When this happens, the cost is covered in part by a government subsidy and the rest generally by family members. But in cases where there is no family, the Haifa Home has to cover this private part, which is about 600€ ($750) per month.

Through our “Adopt-a-Survivor” program, the ICEJ provides badly-needed funds to cover the ongoing living expenses of Haifa Home residents. Participants in this adoption program give a monthly amount of their choosing and receive the personal story of one of the residents as well as a monthly email with a Haifa Home update.

WHAT YOU CAN DO TO HELP

PARTNER WITH US to finish renovating the apartments where Shlomo, Lev and other homeless survivors are now living! And consider adopting one of these precious Holocaust survivors through regular contributions to their care and the daily operations of our Haifa Home.

Donate on-line today at http://int.icej.org/aid/haifa-home-holocaust-survivors
At the ICEJ’s Home for Holocaust survivors, residents live as family, sitting together for hours to talk, eat meals and enjoy community activities. They may have different interests, but they enjoy each other’s company and the warm family atmosphere. Daily life at the Haifa Home can be full of little joys and surprises.

Shula the poet
Shula is a survivor originally from Poland who arrived at the Haifa Home very shy and timid, but now is very much settled and does her best to be a blessing to others. She has a great interest in writing and a special flair for poetry. Several recent poems she wrote for staff members at the home were a delight to all. Shula also penned a poem expressing her love and appreciation for Yudit Setz from ICEJ AID.

“I love Yudit every moment of my life”, said Shula. “She is an angel, a wonderful person!”

Recently, Yudit delivered a batch of letters and cards to Shula from caring Christians and spent some time reading them with her. Shula appreciated it very much to receive greetings from abroad. Her son lives in the United States and she rarely sees him. “It is hard being without family”, she said.

Sarah the art lover
Most residents gather in the dining hall for lunch. One day after the meal there was a surprise visitor. Dutch painter Marc de Klijn, himself a Holocaust survivor, came by and delivered six new paintings to the Haifa Home. He and his wife had previously visited the residents to assess their levels of artistic talents.

Marc de Klijn presenting one of his paintings.

“The paintings are so beautiful and colourful and they make me feel happy”, she said. “They are wonderful as they symbolize the hope for the future.”

Sarah has been at the Home for Holocaust Survivors for one-and-a-half years and shared her feelings about living there.

“In the beginning it was a bit hard for me because I find change difficult. But it’s good now, as no one suffers here”, she explained. “Elderly people usually only speak about their sicknesses and compare who has the most pain and aches, but here there is a lot of humour. Not that you always feel great, but it’s better to laugh than to cry and doctors also say that it’s healthy to laugh.”

“I go as little as possible to the doctor”, she added, chuckling at herself. “It is good to do some exercise and so I walk every day and I do a crossword puzzle every day.”

Sarah also noted how nice it is to be part of a community and yet still have her own little apartment where she can be by herself when she wants.

Nahum the handyman
On another recent visit, Yudit Setz of ICEJ AID met Nahum outside the Home busily fixing some broken chairs. He enjoys these kinds of jobs, fixing whatever his hands find to do! In addition, Nahum visiting a resident.

Over the past three years, the International Christian Embassy Jerusalem has established a unique assisted-living facility in Haifa that has become a special place of love and warmth for the dozens of Holocaust survivors who now reside there.

By BIRTE SCHOLZ

To watch a video online about the Haifa Home, go to: http://int.icej.org/aid/haifa-home-holocaust-survivors

Birte Scholz of the ICEJ visits Benjamin.

Sarah enjoys taking walks and crossword puzzles.

Shoshannah, another resident visiting.

Karol and Fanny (front) with visiting group from the USA.

To watch video online about the Haifa Home, go to: http://int.icej.org/aid/haifa-home-holocaust-survivors

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Nahum has made the garden his very own responsibility, including the daily watering of the plants.

He and his wife Clara have been in the Home for closer to two years. At first they found it strange to move into a community living arrangement and never imagined that it would be so nice to live together with others. Clara can be found each evening enjoying a card game with one resident or another. They readily expressed to Yudit how happy they are at the Haifa Home.

Genia the big sister
Another dear Haifa Home resident is Genia, who was born in Poland in 1923 and was 15 years old when the Germans invaded. She lived at the time with her mother, father, older brother and younger sister, only eight.

Her father was immediately taken to a concentration camp and never returned. Her brother fled to the forests to join the Underground. Then her mother was sent to a forced labour camp. This left Genia to look after her little sister and the two were hidden by kind neighbours. About six months later, Genia got word her mother had died and the body was at the regional hospital.

“I travelled to the hospital to look for her and they took me to a big room where there were about 150 Jewish corpses”, she recounted recently. “I looked for my mother and finally discovered she was in a bag on a shelf. I ran home to bring new clothing and to clean and dress her, but when I returned to the hospital the room was completely empty. They told me they had buried everyone in one big grave.

Until this day I have no idea where she is buried.”

Genia continued to raise her sister until the war ended and then moved to Israel in 1957. She started a family, but lost a son in one of Israel’s wars.

When Isaac was only ten years old, he had avoided deportation to a Nazi death camp by convincing the German authorities that he could work like an adult. He worked in a steel factory for the length of the war while living in the Lodz ghetto in Poland. At night he would sneak off into the city to find food for his family.

Isaac endured terrible suffering, hunger and cold as a child, but somehow survived and immigrated to Israel at age 19. Later he met Fanny and they enjoyed a long, happy marriage together. When his health deteriorated, they were very thankful to be able to move into the Haifa Home, where Fanny will continue to live among a loving family.

Karol the amputee
Karol was sitting recently in his wheelchair in the garden under a shady tree when Yudit dropped by with a group of American ladies in Nebraska who wanted to bless the residents beautiful quilts made by Jewish Holocaust survivors. Karol had to have a foot amputated due to diabetes and now needs a live-in caregiver. He often feels depressed.

“Put some parameters on me, but I am still surrounded by caring people.”

“I have problems with my hips, but a care giver comes and helps me. It is good to live here”, he assured.

Hopefully, Benjamin has many good days left at the Haifa Home and each one will be full of little joys and surprises.

To support the vital and compassionate work of the ICEJ at the Haifa Home for Holocaust Survivors, please donate on-line today at http://tinyurl.org/aid-icej/haifa-home-holocaust-survivors

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ICEJ AID UPDATE

A hug on behalf of the ICEJ family. She received great support as well from fellow residents at the Haifa Home when they came together for a moving memorial ceremony to remember Isaac. The special prayers and the love expressed were a comfort to her and their son and daughter.

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Karol was sitting recently in his wheelchair in the garden under a shady tree when Yudit dropped by with a group of American ladies in Nebraska who wanted to bless the residents beautiful quilts made by Jewish Holocaust survivors. Karol had to have a foot amputated due to diabetes and now needs a live-in caregiver. He often feels depressed and lonely. But the visit cheered him up.

“In this place I have found a home. I can never be grateful enough for it”, said Karol.

He is grateful because, although he has a sister in Israel, she is very sick and there is no other family to take care of them. So he appreciates visits from ICEJ AID staff and other Christian visitors sent by the ICEJ. Haifa Home director Shimon Sabag and other Christian visitors sent by the ICEJ.

Karol is grateful for his family, the volunteers and the staff at the Haifa Home, for his friends and loved ones.

Finally, Benjamin has lived for two years now in the Haifa Home – one of its oldest residents. In October, he celebrated his 95th birthday, thrown by home director Shimon Sabag.

“Shimon gave me a nice party”, he recalled.

“We had music and we sang songs.”

“When I turn 100, we will have a big feast. Shimon promised me”, smiled Benjamin.

He was born in Lithuania but left his native country before the Russians and then the Germans invaded. A refugee in Holland, he survived the Holocaust using forged documents. In 1946 he made aliyah to Israel on the illegal immigration ship “Tel Chat”, which managed to evade British patrol boats and arrive in the port of Haifa.

“I have problems with my hips, but a care giver comes and helps me. It is good to live here”, he assured.

Hopefully, Benjamin has many good days left at the Haifa Home and each one will be full of little joys and surprises.

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13 | WORD FROM JERUSALEM
In recent weeks, the International Christian Embassy Jerusalem has conducted speaking tours in a number of countries worldwide, demonstrating the reach and activeness of our global ministry and the collective depth of our roster of speakers going forth from Jerusalem.

**SOUTH AFRICA, ITALY, USA**
In recent weeks, ICEJ Executive Director Jürgen Bühler paid visits to South Africa, Italy and the United States to speak to churches and conferences on our work in supporting Israel and the biblical truths under-girding it.

**FRANCE, IRELAND, FINLAND, SIERRA LEONE, USA**
ICEJ International Director Juha Ketola was invited to France and Ireland to speak at local branch events, and also had stops in Finland and the United States. In addition, he also visited Sierra Leone along with staff member Emanuel Mfoukou to launch a new ICEJ branch there (see separate report in this issue).

**DENMARK**
ICEJ Media Director David Parsons travelled to Denmark last month to speak to a number of churches about current events in the Middle East in relation to Bible prophecy.

**GERMANY, AUSTRIA**
ICEJ international speaker Doron Schneider also has made three ministry trips to Germany and one to Austria since the Feast of Tabernacles ended in early October.

**DENMARK**
ICEJ-Arise director Jani Salokangas toured through Finland last month to speak about Israel and the need to raise up the next generation of Christian Zionist leaders and activists.

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ICEJ-Arise director Jani Salokangas toured through Finland last month to speak about Israel and the need to raise up the next generation of Christian Zionist leaders and activists.

**Embassy cookout with ‘Lone Soldiers’, ISRAEL**
Recently, the International Christian Embassy Jerusalem dished up a tasty outdoor meal on its grounds for some 60 IDF “Lone Soldiers” – young Jews from around the world who have come to serve in the IDF while their families remain abroad. The Embassy staff joined the cookout as well and mingled with the soldiers. Many of our Christian volunteers found they came from the same countries as some of the soldiers and were able to “break the ice” by speaking in their native languages. “This is the best outing ever”, one soldier insisted.

Another soldier told a staff member how his time in Israel has impacted him dramatically.

“I was in Ashkelon visiting with my girlfriend’s family recently when I stepped out of the door to smoke a cigarette”, he related. “Suddenly, a rocket came down right next to me and landed behind the house. The building saved my life! Since that time I believe that there is a God. Thank you that you pray for us.”

**ICEJ on board of Jerusalem Chamber of Commerce, ISRAEL**
The International Christian Embassy Jerusalem has been a member of the Jerusalem Chamber of Commerce for over five years. At its most recent board meeting, the Chamber decided that the representative of the ICEJ, our Israeli liaison Mr. Avi Golan, would also have a seat on its ruling body, the Presidium.

“The Christian Embassy contributes many positive things to the Jerusalem Chamber of Commerce”, said Golan, former managing director of The Jerusalem Post and ICEJ liaison for the past eight years. “Being a member is a contribution in itself. We expand the Chamber’s reach into the Christian world. We also give the city of Jerusalem and its commercial life a big boost through the annual Feast of Tabernacles celebration, which alone infuses more than $15 million into the local economy. In addition, we bring our moral and religious values to the Chamber, as a voice and reflection of the great well of love and care for Jerusalem shared by Christians worldwide. So the city and its business leaders value greatly our membership on the Chamber of Commerce.”
ICEJ BREAks nEw GROunD IN West AfrIca & MexIco

One of the chief missions of the International Christian Embassy Jerusalem is to serve as a bridge builder between local churches worldwide and the nation of Israel, which we accomplish largely through our global network of national branches.

BY EMANUEL MFOUKOU

In early November, ICEJ International Director Rev. Juha Ketola set out on a visit to Freetown, the capital of Sierra Leone, to dedicate a new Embassy branch in that country and explore openings for our ministry in other West African nations.

Under pressure from the Arab bloc, Sierra Leone broke off diplomatic ties with Israel in 1973 and was only able to renew relations with Jerusalem in 1992. But the next year a devastating civil war erupted which would last 11 years and rob the nation of countless lives. With normalcy now restored, the Christian community in Sierra Leone has been praying earnestly for closer bonds with Jerusalem, and many local church leaders were thrilled to attend the opening of an ICEJ chapter in their country. On the day of the inauguration, 40 different ministries from across the country were present. The event started with a prayer of repentance, led by a former vice president of Sierra Leone and a former national police commissioner, to ask forgiveness for the break in relations with Israel in the 1970s.

Rev. Joseph Francis Williams was then appointed by Rev. Ketola as the new National Director of ICEJ-Sierra Leone. Williams is already well-known in church circles across Western Africa as a pastor and itinerant minister. He expressed confidence that the new ICEJ branch in Sierra Leone will strengthen the local churches, and quickly identified a team of 24 church leaders to help organise the work in his country.

“It has been our heart cry over the years that God would heal the gap that broke out between Sierra Leone and Israel”, insisted Rev. Williams. “But thanks to prayer, God has opened up the doors for the ICEJ to come and launch a branch here. I believe this is a divine visitation. We have repented and would like to let Israel know that we are sorry.” Rev. Ketola also gave a series of Bible teachings on Israel for more than 100 pastors and ministry leaders which were well received.

New leadership for ICEJ-Mexico

The Christian Embassy’s work in the nation of Mexico received a fresh start when ICEJ Executive Director Jürgen Bühler hosted 100 Mexican pastors at our Jerusalem headquarters in early November. The group of Evangelical ministers were in Israel for a week-long visit to tour the Bible sites and show support for the Jewish state. During their meeting, Bühler officially appointed Dr. Carlos Quiroa as the new national director for ICEJ-Mexico, a branch which was first founded some ten years ago.

Dr. Quiroa is a respected Evangelical figure in his native country and is best known as a key organiser of the annual rally for Jesus in Mexico City, known as “Marcha de Gloria”, which draws over one million Christians to the capital each year. Dr. Quiroa accepted his appointment as national director with tears of gratitude and spoke of the rapid growth of Evangelical churches in Mexico and the burning love which many Mexican Christians have for Israel.
One of the most powerful statements in the biblical narratives on the birth of Christ is the proclamation made by the angel to shepherds in the fields outside Bethlehem.

"Do not be afraid, for behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy which will be to all people. For there is born to you this day in the city of David a Saviour, who is Christ the Lord. And this will be the sign to you: You will find a Babe wrapped in swaddling cloths, lying in a manger." (Luke 2:10-12)

It was a first declaration of the evangelium, the Good News of the redemptive Gospel of Jesus Christ. It is remarkable to see that this first declaration was not made to the religious or political rulers of Israel but to shepherds keeping their flocks.

The shepherds’ fields outside Bethlehem, to this day, play a central role in the Christmas celebrations in the Holy Land. Countless tourists have visited the fields between Bethlehem and Jerusalem. The church historian Eusebius linked these fields to a unique biblical location called Migdal Eder, which translated means the “tower of the flock”.

The first time Migdal Eder is mentioned in the Bible is in the account of Rachel, who died giving birth to Benjamin, the youngest son of Jacob. “Then Israel journeyed and pitched his tent beyond the tower of Eder”, records Genesis 35:21.

This area on the outskirts of Bethlehem is also mentioned in the Talmudic writings. According to the Talmud, all livestock found in the area surrounding Jerusalem “as far as Migdal Eder” were deemed to be holy and consecrated and could only be used for sacrifices in the Temple, in particular for the Passover sacrifices. There was thus a special, consecrated circle around the city of Jerusalem.

This means the shepherds in the fields of Bethlehem who first heard the Good News from the angels were not ordinary shepherds but served the sacrificial system of the Temple.

These men served the Mosaic covenant, a foreshadowing of the new covenant. And these men were now confronted with the reality of the eternal light to which their ministry had been pointing all these centuries. It was declaring a new era of salvation!

The Hebrew prophet Micah also refers to Migdal Eder. “And you, O tower of the flock, the stronghold of the daughter of Zion, to you shall it come, even the former dominion shall come, the kingdom of the daughter of Jerusalem.” (Micah 4:8)

Based on that prophecy, prominent Jewish writers concluded in the Midrash that from all of the places in Israel, it would be the Migdal Eder where the arrival of the Messiah would be declared first.

That means when the angels appeared that night to the shepherds in the fields outside Bethlehem, it was not just a declaration of the Good News to simple shepherds. It was a powerful prophetic sign to all of Israel. The news of that night must have spread like wildfire through the surrounding villages.

Luke records: “Now when they had seen Him, they made widely known the saying which was told them concerning this Child. And all those who heard it marveled at those things which were told them by the shepherds.” (Luke 2:17-18)

What does this all mean for us?

Jewish Context

First, it is always beneficial for the Church to see that Jesus did not arrive into a vacuum, but was born into an entirely Jewish context. When Christ came in the flesh, he was born first and foremost to the Jewish people but would then also bring his favour and good pleasure to all men. Even though the celebration of Christ’s birth has become a feast marked almost exclusively by the gentle Church, it is important for us to see it in its historical and biblical context – as a message intended to give hope to Israel. As Zacharias prophesies at the birth of John the Baptist, this all happened to “perform the mercy promised to our fathers and to remember His holy covenant, the oath which He swore to our father Abraham…” (Luke 1:72f).

Passover Sacrifices

Second, already from the moment Jesus entered the world the ultimate reason for his arrival was alluded to. These were the shepherds who took care of the sheep and cattle offered in the Temple – in particular the Passover sacrifices. And it was they who were confronted with the announcement that the ultimate sacrifice, which would carry away not only the sins of Israel but of the whole world, was born. Just thirty three years later, no further sacrifice was to be needed, as all those who believe in him have been “sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all” (Hebrews 10:10).

Shepherd of All

The angelic announcement gave these simple shepherds a profound revelation of who this Messiah would be. He was proclaimed to be both King (born in the city of David) and Priest. That he was both Christ and Lord, the son of man but also the son of God. He would be the saviour of humanity but also the shepherd of all those who would follow his voice.

It was truly good news which the angels proclaimed that night long ago. But as with the shepherds, the mere knowledge of this news is not enough. They needed to act upon it and they did. They went personally to see that child and then proclaimed his birth wherever they could.

Let us follow the example of the shepherds of Bethlehem and rededicate our lives afresh to that great saviour who was born in Bethlehem. He is the shepherd of our souls (1 Peter 2:25) who died for our sins and who redeems us to reign and rule with him for eternity! This is Good News indeed! ✝️
A Song to Lift the Soul

BY ESTERA WIEJA

The walls of Anna and Evgeni’s living room are covered with framed photographs. They are all of the same beautiful woman. My attention was quickly drawn to a specific one, a black-and-white image closest to the window of the same lady, sitting at a type writer. In the picture she looks happy and fulfilled, and the company of a typewriter made her look powerful. Sunlight reflected off the clean glass frame, adding a sparkle to the woman’s eyes.

Right below the windows stood a wheelchair and a special bed for a person with limited mobility and physical strength. They belong to Julia, the pretty blonde in all the pictures, Anna and Evgeni’s daughter.

Julia grew up with her family in Moscow, and due to having Jewish heritage she was a testimony to what it means to succeed in life despite great obstacles – in her case, anti-Semitism. After completing her education at the nation’s best schools, she started working as a journalist for one of the most prominent newspapers in the capital of Russia. As a correspondent assigned to the parliament, she was not afraid to report on difficult topics and was a witness to what it means to succeed in life despite great obstacles – in her case, anti-Semitism. After completing her education at the nation’s best schools, she started working as a journalist for one of the most prominent newspapers in the capital of Russia.

In 1998, she made aliyah and sought help from Israeli medical experts. The first diagnosis she received was inaccurate and everything spiralled down from there. Now she was struggling to stay alive. After another operation, in which Israeli doctors tried to reverse the damage done to her brain back in Russia, Julia did not wake up from her anesthesia for about a month. Few believed she would make it.

At that point, God arranged a divine appointment for this distraught family. As the parents were coming to the hospital every single day to care for their frail daughter, it just so happened that Corrie van Maanen of ICEJ Homecare was at the same hospital that day. Corrie and Anna met in the corridor. Something prompted Anna to ask Corrie, “Will you be able to help us?”


Although the moment occurred almost ten years ago, both ladies remember clearly Corrie’s one-word response.

When Julia came home after a long period of being hospitalised, the ICEJ Homecare team began to help with her needs. She was now completely dependent on others, which was often a frustration to her and many times overwhelming to Anna and Evgeni. Corrie and others started coming regularly to help Julia shower and retain her mobility.

Due to the generous and faithful giving of the Finnish branch of ICEJ, Julia was able to get a special chair and a customised bed for her needs. This equipment is a good example of how the Christian Embassy has brought comfort to her and the entire family.

The physical and medical care is not all we do. Many pray for them and Corrie organises special surprises, like a recent concert for the holiday of Rosh HaShana, the Jewish New Year. Corrie’s flute teacher, Esther, and her friend Julia, who is a professional cellist, asked Corrie if they could bless this family with their music.

Thanks to ICEJ Homecare, the two ladies performed a special holiday concert at the family’s home, just for Anna, Evgeni and Julia. The pair of gifted musicians put their hearts into the performance and renewed the family’s love for art, longing for beauty, and most of all their sense of self-worth and desirving of someone’s time and talent.

ICEJ Homecare is supported by your donations.

Make a contribution on-line today at: http://int.icej.org/aid/immigrant-homecare

MEMBERS working with ICEJ give a special concert for Julia and her family.

Passing of Albert Bühler

It is with great sadness that we announce the passing of our father Albert Bühler, who died in early November after a short period of illness at the age of 86.

Our father was surely the most influential person in our lives, not only because he raised us as children in a godly manner but more importantly he set an example for us of what it means to seek first the Kingdom of God.

Our father was drafted as a soldier into the German army in World War II and was held as a Russian prisoner of war for more than four years after the war ended. Most of his comrades died during that time, but God spared his life miraculously through two Jewish men. One was a Jewish doctor who selected him from more than twelve thousand prisoners to receive special care and the other was a Jewish farmer who provided him food when the camp’s food was not enough to survive on.

While imprisoned in Russia, our father, had a unique visitation from Jesus and committed to serve the Lord for the rest of his life. Soon after his return to Germany, he answered the call of God and became a pastor. At least eight churches were established under his ministry, and thousands of people were saved and headed through his international travels as an evangelist.

It was our father who first brought us to Israel in 1970, at which time we also attended our first Feast of Tabernacles. With that visit, our calling for Israel also became clear and just a few years later Jürgen and Vesna moved to Israel.

Our father always told us that we, as a family, owed our lives to the Jews. First, because of the Jewish people who spared him in Russia, but also because of the Jew, Jesus, who saved our entire family.

As sons of Albert Bühler, we will always be thankful to God for giving us a father like him and we are at peace that he is now seeing what he hoped for. Even on the morning before he died, he felt that he was going home to be with the Lord and reconnected his life to Jesus. It is this blessed hope which also carries us in this difficult time, as we know that we will see him again one day.

Our father Albert Bühler, National Director of ICEJ-Germany, with wife Vesna and children Silas, Keith, Noam and Timon

Jürgen Bühler, ICEJ Executive Director, with wife Vesna and children David, Nathaniel, Simon and Yael

Also, our mother Ruth Bühler and our sister Brigitte and Jürgen Single and Mark
Called to Public Service

In recent years, the Christian Embassy has expanded its cooperation with the Knesset Christian Allies’ Caucus by partnering with its global arm, the International Israel Allies Foundation, which has established a network of sister pro-Israel caucuses in some two dozen national parliaments worldwide.

For instance, ICEJ representatives in several countries have helped identify many of the pro-Israel parliamentarians in their nations and placed them in contact with the IIAF for the purpose of building inter-parliamentary ties.

During our Feast of Tabernacles celebration in October, the ICEJ hosted 25 members of parliaments from 17 different nations who are affiliated with the International Israel Allies Foundation, which is chaired by Israel’s former tourism minister Benny Elon. The lawmakers were also in Jerusalem to attend the Feast and the IIAF conference, which is chaired by Israel’s former tourism minister Rabbi Benny Elon. The lawmakers were also in Jerusalem to attend the Feast and the IIAF conference, which is chaired by Israel’s former tourism minister Rabbi Benny Elon.

Two of these parliamentarians, MEP Hannu Takkula of Finland and MP James Lunney of Canada, share a common testimony about why they entered public service. Both were inspired to run for office after hearing talks about Israel by Dr. Ulla Järvilehto, the former national director of ICEJ-Finland and a member of the Finnish parliament for many years.

Dr. Järvilehto has spoken often about the need for ordinary Christians to enter politics to impact society for good and also to stand with Israel. Both Takkula and Lunney answered that call soon after listening to her challenge. During this year’s “Israelti Guest Night” at the Feast, with over 1,000 local Israelis in attendance, each shared about their decision to enter government service and to support the Jewish state. Here are excerpts from their addresses:

**Hannu Takkula**

“Shalom my friends! For me, there is no city like Jerusalem. No other city compares to it. This city is and will be the undivided capital of the state of Israel.”

“So some may ask why I’m a friend of Israel and why I’m here tonight. It all started when I first attended a celebration like this one in Finland. At those seminars people were talking about Bible prophecy, and how things might work out in the near future. They said that we must prepare for the collapse of the Soviet Union, and helping the thousands, maybe millions of Jews wanting to immigrate to Israel. None of those things made sense to me at the time, but we can look back now and see everything that has happened since then. So in 1983, I decided that I was going to be part of restoring the Jewish people back to their land.”

“New I’m here in the role of the politician and have been part of both the Finnish parliament and the European Parliament on behalf of Finland.”

“Jerusalem is an extremely important religious center. It is holy for the three great monotheistic religions, Judaism, Christianity, and Islam. And according to the Bible, this city of Jerusalem has been given to the Jews. It is significant for me to be here with you in Jerusalem. To pray for this city, but not only this city, but also that Israel as a nation will enjoy the blessing of peace and security. Moreover, we are also called to do whatever we can do to help bring about that security.”

“At a responsible politician and as citizens, we must maintain hope and optimism even in times of unrest and difficulties. And even when we go through troubled times, God’s protecting hand can still be seen. So bearing in mind that the Lord still watches over Israel, we can continue our support for this nation. God bless you all.”

**James Lunney**

“In all these countries from around the world, I just want to say that it is a thrill to see you come and attend the Feast of Tabernacles. My friends, 20 years ago I came here also to attend my first Feast of Tabernacles, sponsored by the International Christian Embassy Jerusalem. The ICEJ has been walking with Israel since 1980. So for the last 32 years—that’s half of Israel’s modern history as a nation—we have walked with you.

“There are thousands of you here tonight and to our Israeli friends, I say there are thousands and thousands of Christians that have been here at the Feast and whose hearts have been changed, and are being impacted for Israel by coming to these events.”

“I’m very pleased to be here as a member of the Canadian parliament, and I’m very proud that Canada has taken a stand in defence and support of the state of Israel. Canada has come to say that we have had enough of the double standards, and the demonization, and the de-legitimization of Israel, which seems to be the persistent preoccupation of so many international forums.”

“Canada and some of our allies are upping the restrictions and sanctions on Iran and we are encouraging other nations to do the same. We closed our embassy in Tehran and asked the Iranian embassy to close in Canada.”

“I want to come back and talk about this celebration. Tomorrow is the day of the Jerusalem March... I want to say to our Israeli friends that the people marching with you in the Jerusalem March... we have all come to bless Israel. Those are our marching orders. We Christians want to say: ‘God bless Jerusalem! May there be peace in thy gates and joy in thy streets.’”
FEAST of TABERNACLES
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Experience a life-changing event in the city of Jerusalem. 6 days of dynamic teaching, ministry, and worship that will equip and empower you for a new season of harvest in your nation.

Join the nations as we celebrate the Feast and gain a global perspective on what God is doing in the Nation of Israel and around the world today.

There is no better time to travel to Israel than during the Feast of Tabernacles!

Airfare, transfers to and from Ben-Gurion International Airport, additional meals and tips are not included in the package price. PLEASE NOTE: The price of Land Packages are subject to change.

For information contact our Feast Registration Team via email at: feastreg@icej.org

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