A LEAP OF FAITH
Dear friends,

Just recently Eric Schmidt the executive chairman of Google visited Israel. Schmidt stated that there are two places which dominate our world in terms of innovation and research: Silicon Valley in California and Israel. Then he added, “however if you really want something to get done, you have to come to Israel.”

Israel today is a hub of technological advancement. There is virtually no major high-tech company without a research lab in Israel. Whether Microsoft, Apple, Google or Intel, they all hold major facilities in the land of the Bible. This also means that there are hardly any modern cutting-edge devices that do not depend on technology developed in Israel.

In other words, if you want to boycott Israel today, as some extremists are calling for, you have to live a life void of some of the most advanced developments in science, communication or medicine. It is safe to say that most of the appeals to boycott Israel were written on computers run by microchips developed in Tel Aviv or Haifa. In some very practical ways, Israel has become a blessing and a light to the world and it should not surprise us.

But there are even greater blessings we should expect in the future. Paul wrote in his letter to Romans that the “fullness of Israel,” its spiritual restoration, will usher far greater blessings to the world than everything we have seen so far. It will be nothing short of “life from the dead,” as he states in Romans 11:15. The season of restoration that we have recently seen in Israel is pointing to the great day to come, when “the Spirit is poured upon us from on high” (Isa 32:15). It will usher in a great season of spiritual transformation which Peter calls “the restoration of all things.” (Acts 3:21)

Until then, we are committed to do what God has called us to do, whether it is in the nations or in Israel. As ICEJ, we are committed to stand with and pray for Israel as never before.

I hope you enjoy reading the exciting reports in this latest issue of the Word from Jerusalem. Please continue to stand with us.

Blessings in Christ Jesus,

Dr. Jürgen Bühler
ICEJ Executive Director

COVER PHOTO: ICEJ young adults on top of Masada
FOR MAGAZINE ARCHIVES visit www.icej.org/media/word-jerusalem
CONTENTS

8 A LEAP OF FAITH

13 JEWISH MIGRATION ON THE SILK ROAD

14 SUMMER OF FRENCH ALIYAH

18 ICEJ-TV IN GERMANY

20 ISRAEL, TURKEY AND SYRIA: CONNECTED BY PRAYER
CONSUMER MADNESS

The BDS movement, commonly referred to as BDS (Boycott, Divestment, Sanctions) and developed to put pressure on the Israeli government, is currently causing trouble not so much for the Israeli economy, but for Palestinians.

THE BDS MOVEMENT:
A MANUAL FOR SELF-DESTRUCTION

BY LISA SCHMID
HE PALESTINIAN employees working for Israeli companies in the West Bank already pay dearly for the effects of this campaign promoting the delegitimization of Israel.

Once production facilities move out of the Palestinian territories, as will happen for the Israeli drink maker Sodastream by the end of 2015, those employees will lose a good salary and considerable benefits. German journalist Johannes Gerloff described the paradoxical situation, pointing out that the lack of alternative employment will force many of them to sell their land mainly to Jewish landowners and to move out of the area in order to survive.

A truly systematic boycott of Israel, however, would not only have profound impacts on the Palestinians, but even life-threatening impacts on the average Western consumer. Israeli journalist Michael Ordman, author of ‘List of Products & Services To Properly Boycott Israel,’ points out that the full rejection of Israeli goods and services in today’s world would paralyse many areas of our public and personal lives.

Based on his research, Michael Ordman suggests a short instruction manual for anyone who wants to harm Israel. If strictly followed, everyone serious about following the BDS movement will revert decades back into the pre-communication age and may even harm their own health.

**PART 1. TECHNOLOGY**

**Step 1.** Remove all Intel Pentium and Celeron computer processor chips from personal computers (desktops, laptops and notebooks) as these were either developed or manufactured in Israel.

Beware the revolutionary new Ivy Bridge processor, as this will be manufactured in Israel. Any computers running the Windows XT operating system must also be discarded immediately as this was developed in Israel. Similarly, all current Microsoft operating systems are not to be used as Microsoft is heavily reliant on its Israel R&D centre.

**Step 2.** If by some miracle you still have a computer that works, it will need to have its anti-virus software and personal firewalls removed, as this technology – again – was developed in Israel. As a matter of fact, any organisation’s firewall will need to be switched off as well. The staff should no longer open any external emails, considering most of them will now be infected by viruses. On top of that, no outgoing emails can be sent, as the algorithm (code) that is used today for sending emails is the work of an Israeli who worked at the Ben-Gurion University in Beer Sheva in 1980.

**Step 3.** Discard all mobile phones. This technology was developed in Israel, where the first mobile phones were manufactured. The mobile chip technology from a single Israeli company has now been installed in over 100 million devices. The use of SMS (texting) is particularly forbidden, since that form of communication was also developed in Israel. No 4G devices can be used either – the chipset is an Israeli innovation.

**Step 4.** With whatever phone you may have left, turn off your voicemail service and delete any recorded messages. Israeli companies invented the voicemail system. Correspondingly, if you answer the phone to someone you do not know, you should probably hang up: Israeli call-centres and call-centre technology are in widespread operation in the UK.

**Step 5.** Before accepting any printed material, check that the supplier has not used the Israeli device which saves up to 50% of the ink.

**Step 6.** If you are still able to access Facebook, don’t. That and many other similar in-built and add-on applications are likely to have been developed by Israelis. Similarly, do not watch videos on the internet, as the platform used to upload them may well be from AOL: an Israeli company. Do not use the Internet to search for answers to your questions either, because it may involve Israeli-developed search engines. Better to remain unenlightened.

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**A PALESTINIAN ACTIVIST** places a sign to boycott Israeli products at a supermarket in Bethlehem, West Bank (AP)
Step 7. You should now still have your TV or home entertainment centre, but do not use Video On Demand (VOD) to watch movies – you may inadvertently see an advert displayed with Israeli software. And do not purchase any game devices at all, as these are very likely to use Israeli technology.

**PART 2: HEALTH**

**Step 1.** Destroy all personal medication. Israel’s Teva Pharmaceuticals, the largest generic drugs company in the world, will have manufactured many of your medicines. On top of that, individuals with the following illnesses will need to take specific precautions:

- **Cancer** – do not take any form of medication or treatment. Israeli scientists have been working at the forefront of oncology for decades.

- **AIDS and HIV** – beware: researchers at Israel’s Weizmann Institute or Hebrew University developed or improved AZT and Hypericin-based drugs. They have also developed a treatment that destroys HIV-infected cells without damaging healthy ones.

- **Diabetes** – do not measure or inject insulin using the devices which were developed by Israeli scientists.

- **Multiple Sclerosis** – stop taking Copaxone, one of the most efficient medicines and the only non-interferon agent: it was developed by Teva.

- **Parkinson’s Disease** – remove the Israel-pioneered brain pacemaker that stops tremors. Also you should discontinue the use of Israeli-produced Levodopa, which reduces motor disturbances, and cease sessions that involve Israeli-developed magnetic cortex stimulation.

- **Heart Disease** – even if you have a family history of heart disease and arteriosclerosis, you must not use the Israeli device for early detection of these. Rather, wait until onset of the disease.

This is merely a sample of what we owe to Israeli innovation today. Ordman lists a lot more suggestions on how to protect yourself from Israel, while impairing your own life and the lives of those around you. As the Italian Prime Minister Matteo Renzi put it: “Whoever thinks of boycotting Israel does not understand he is harming himself and betraying his future.”
IN EARLY JULY, the ICEJ delivered to Western leaders its “Not One Bomb for Iran” petition with 80,000 signatures collected from concerned Christians around the world.

The petition urged leaders engaged in negotiations with Iran to hold firm in demanding the complete dismantling of the Iranian nuclear facilities until any sanctions relief is given to Tehran.

In Europe the petition signed by over 30,000 Christians from several dozen Western democracies was delivered to UK Foreign Secretary Philip Hammond, French Foreign Minister Laurent Fabius and German Foreign Minister Frank-Walter Steinmeier, as well as to EU foreign policy chief Federica Mogherini and UN Secretary General Ban Ki-moon.

The ICEJ-USA branch handed over the final results of its USA petition, which was signed by over 50,000 American Christians and also endorses the right of Congressional review of any Iran deal.

Since then, details have come out of the deal the P5+1 countries reached with Iran, and it clearly appears to give away far too many concessions to Tehran, placing Israel and indeed the world in a far more dangerous position.

The deal will not dismantle Iran’s nuclear program. Instead, it will be put on ice until the agreement expires in about ten years. If Iran acts illegally, as it has in the past, that nuclear breakout point could be reached much sooner.

Regarding sanctions relief, this is in no way tied to Iran’s cessation of terrorism sponsorship, for which it is the global leader, having sowed discord throughout the Middle East via its proxies and serving Hamas and Hezbollah as their prime patron in opposition to Israel.

Disturbingly, the deal will almost immediately release hundreds of billions of dollars into Tehran’s coffers through sanctions relief and the unfreezing of assets, emboldening the once fragile regime and further fueling its campaign of terror.

The final fate of the deal now rests in the hands of the United States Congress, which has sixty days (until the end of September) to oppose it through legislation. A two-thirds majority is needed to overcome President Obama’s promise to veto any opposition, making this especially difficult. The ICEJ’s US Branch will be continuing its petition campaign in the hope that more people of influence can be convinced to take a brave stand against this dangerous deal.
“Open the floodgates of heaven, let it rain!” - the resounding chorus of the popular worship song filled the bus as it made its way through the desert. Welcome to the Arise Summer Tour 2015!

IN JULY, ICEJ Arise once again had the privilege of hosting 45 young adults from around the world for a tour of Israel. The diverse group represented five continents - some travelled from as far as China and Australia. For many of the young people, the tour proved to be life changing, where God would transform their hearts, renew their minds by His Word, and set their lives ablaze for the spreading of the Gospel.

This year’s theme, ‘A Leap of Faith’, resonated with many of the participants, who testified that their journey to Israel was exactly that. Aaron from Canada has been wanting to visit the land since coming to faith at a young age. In 2014, he was left heartbroken after a chance to tour Israel with his home church failed. For a whole year, he had to deal with obstacles and discouragement from other people, who told him that maybe it just wasn’t meant to be.

A breakthrough came in April of this year, when Jani Salokangas, the ICEJ Arise International Director, visited Canada to meet with young adults across the country. Jani often spoke of the upcoming Arise Summer Tour, which to Aaron sounded like an answer to prayer. His dream to visit Israel could finally come true.

In true Arise fashion, the air-conditioned but, more importantly, Wi-Fi-enabled bus was transporting the group, not merely to historical sites, but also to projects that make a difference in the land, where each participant could contribute to helping the needy in Israel.

The first project was at a moshav (agricultural community) near Tiberias in the Galilee, where the young adults gleaned vegetable fields set apart especially for feeding the poor and...
Underprivileged in Israel. The owners of the field informed the group that they broke a record by picking 2,000 kilos of tomatoes in 90 minutes! A verse from Leviticus was an encouragement to the whole group: “When you reap the harvest of your land, you shall not wholly reap the corners of your field when you reap, nor shall you gather any gleaning from your harvest. You shall leave them for the poor and for the stranger: I am the LORD your God.” (Leviticus 23:22)

In Bethlehem, the Arise group visited a local Arab church to learn about the challenges in the area, and hear testimonies about how God is using the local Christians to minister to the people of Bethlehem. The time of fellowship was followed by a visit to a couple of orphanages in Bethlehem, which touched many in the group. The heartbreaking stories of the children were often too hard to comprehend.

An important element of the tour was stopping by the Jordan River, where several tour participants decided to get baptised. It’s an unforgettable experience to follow in Jesus’ footsteps with this powerful declaration of faith. Other highlights included rafting on the Jordan River, swimming in the natural water springs of Gan HaShlosha, sunrise devotions at the top of Masada, a night in a Bedouin tent in the desert, a camel ride and much, much more!

The tour wouldn’t be complete without a time to learn and discuss serious topics. Special guest speaker and human rights activist lawyer Calev Meyers met with the group to share his knowledge and experience about Israel from a legal and political perspective, Israel’s relations with the UN, and the reality of life in the West Bank and Gaza.

For Kit from China, coming to Israel was an appointed time with God. Kit is the first, and so far the only one, in her family to become a Christian, so coming to Israel had a tremendous impact on her. “Before coming to Israel, I knew nothing about the country except its wars,” Kit shared. “But throughout the tour, I just felt peace and joy. Every moment of this trip was a memorable one!”

**THIS YEAR’S THEME, ‘A LEAP OF FAITH’, RESONATED WITH MANY OF THE PARTICIPANTS, WHO TESTIFIED THAT THEIR JOURNEY TO ISRAEL WAS EXACTLY THAT.**

**JOIN THE ARISE MOVEMENT! VISIT US ONLINE: WWW.ARISEGENERATION.ORG**
THE SOUTHERN TOWNS OF ISRAEL continue to be targeted by rockets from Gaza, but because of the increased frequency over the years the international media finds little interest in reporting about this life-threatening situation. The ICEJ has recently donated more bomb shelters to these dangerous areas, in hope that our support can not only save lives, but also bring encouragement to those that live in constant fear.

Thanks to a significant contribution from ICEJ-USA, and in cooperation with Operation Lifeshield, two bomb shelters have been placed in the Eshkol region. The city was targeted even just a week before our team’s visit. The sound of the sirens brings back the trauma from last year. At that time it was too dangerous to leave one’s house. When looking for shelter, the Regional Council noticed that some critical locations lacked places of safety.

One of the shelters donated by the ICEJ has been placed near the Council offices, by the main parking lot. The second one was provided for local bus drivers, at the bus maintenance site near a gas station. Until recently the drivers and garage workers were forced to hide just behind a concrete wall. It did not provide enough protection, especially considering the close proximity of petrol pumps.

“The residents are very concerned and constantly on guard,” shared Gadi Yarkoni, the head of the Eshkol Regional Council. “They are very much aware of their surroundings, and as soon as they hear the siren, they relive the distress of last year.”

Gadi Yarkoni took on his leadership position just recently. He was severely injured last year during the Gaza Operation, right before the final ceasefire went into effect. He lost both his legs to a barrage of mortars fired from Gaza that hit Kibbutz Nirim where, together with other workers, Yarkoni was repairing a power line. One of his colleagues was killed on impact and another died in the hospital.

He sees his role in the Council as his calling. He said that his vision is to give hope to the people, and to help them feel safe where they are. He hopes that there will come a day when Jews and Arabs can live together peacefully. He expressed great gratitude to the ICEJ for playing a pivotal role in protecting others from going through experiences like the one he went through.
The International Christian Embassy is the main sponsor of this reopened center.

In the July issue of Word from Jerusalem, we mentioned our efforts to support the dental clinic for the poor in Beit She’an. Because of the difficult economic situation in the area, about 30% of the residents depend on social welfare and cannot afford proper dental care.

The ICEJ has made a minimum two-year commitment to support the dental clinic, trusting this initiative will better the lives of Beit She’an residents. The clinic will be open to the public twice a week, receiving patients referred by the Welfare Department of the Municipality.

At the opening ceremony, ICEJ International Director, Juha Ketola, stressed the importance of a partnership between Jews and Christians to better the lives of Israel’s citizens: “The calling of ICEJ is to be a blessing for the people of Israel. We represent more than 80 nations, and this is a gift of love and support from Christians in all those nations. We are doing something practical here, together!”

Shavtai Simchi, Director of the Social Welfare department in Beit She’an, thanked the ICEJ for its generosity, which has made it possible for the clinic to reopen, saying: “Before, we had to send our patients to Afula (70km away) for treatment. Thanks to you, we have appropriate services available here!”

Choose to donate today and your contribution will help with the costs of the equipment, office expenses and salaries needed for the clinic to operate.

BLESS THE PEOPLE OF ISRAEL TODAY AND MAKE A DONATION AT:  
HTTP://WWW.ICEJ.ORG/RELIEF-WORK
ICEJ UPDATE ON THE SITUATION IN UKRAINE

BY SERGUEI POPOV, HOWARD FLOWER

THE CIVIL WAR continues to rage in Eastern Ukraine, despite the Minsk cease-fire agreements, and many Jewish families find themselves in difficult conditions – even in refugee centers – torn between their desire to return home and the reality that they would be better off moving to Israel to start their new lives.

Many admit that they look to Israel mainly because of the war. At the same time, just the process of leaving Ukraine is not an easy one. To leave the regions of military operations, sometimes they have to go through 16 checkpoints, and on the way they face many risks. The situation in Ukraine is very serious. At the end of June, aliyah was up by 69% and the ICEJ was quick to respond to this emergency.

ICEJ has assisted in the aliyah of nearly 1,000 Ukrainian Jews fleeing the conflict since the civil war broke out in 2014. Our assistance includes financial support for: fast track preparations, including seminars to prepare them for life in Israel; some flights with extra baggage; and especially, immediate and urgent absorption upon arrival in Israel. Jobs, places to live and language training are all high on the priority list for the new immigrants. The ICEJ provides support in all these areas.

As believers, we are still waiting for some of the Bible’s regathering prophecies to be brought to complete fulfilment, even though they were written thousands of years ago. Today we see the Jewish people returning home and, as history unfolds before our eyes, the ICEJ tries to actively participate in God’s plan. Our vision in Ukraine is both to provide practical help to the Jewish people, as well as to meet with pastors and educate churches on the great plans of God for His people and the land of Israel.

The ICEJ has been actively helping Ukrainian Jews since the fall of the Soviet Union, and we will continue to help as long as needed. Please join us as we bring thousands of Ukrainian Jews home this year. Winter comes all too quickly to Ukraine, so your help is vital at this time!

For more information and to make a donation go to: http://www.icej.org/ukraine
The same was true when He brought the captives out of Egypt – it was a sign to the Gentiles. The Lord even called the Gentiles to help, when Egyptians gave silver and gold to the departing Israelites. Centuries later, King Cyrus played a pivotal role in helping the Jews return to their land from Babylonian captivity.

Today we are witnesses and often contributors to more waves of aliyah, some of them miraculous. The return of the descendants of the Kaifeng Jewish community in China has stirred up great interest from all over the world. The prophet Isaiah proclaimed: “Behold, these shall come from afar; and, lo, these from the north and from the west; and these from the Land of Sinim.” (Is. 49:12)

This summer another group of Chinese Jews from Kaifeng is getting ready to move to Israel. They are descendants of Jews who have lived in Kaifeng, China, continuously since the Song Dynasty (960-1279). A stone tablet in the Kaifeng Municipal Museum serves as a reminder today that the first synagogue in the city was built in 1163, on the corner of Earth Market and Fire God streets in Kaifeng.

Even before the formal establishment of the Kaifeng community of Jews, other Jews had visited China during the Han Dynasty and perhaps even earlier. They were known to have traveled along the Silk Road and they had come to Central Asia following the Babylonian captivity. There are even legends that the Chinese had contacts with the ancient Israelites in King Solomon’s time.

The Jewish and Chinese people have enjoyed a long and harmonious relationship over the years. Both old civilizations, they have existed uninterrupted for thousands of years. The first Jewish family from Kaifeng made aliyah to Israel through Finland in the year 2000. Today the ICEJ assists the Kaifeng Jews in making their way home. We invite you to become a part of their journey as well, as many cannot afford to make the move without our support. 🌟

Help the Chinese Jews start their new lives in Israel!

Visit: www.icej.org/kaifeng-jews

The Kaifeng Jews keep Shabbat and celebrate Biblical feasts in China

ALIYAH

JEWISH MIGRATION ON THE SILK ROAD

BY HOWARD FLOWER

IN THE MIDDLE of the summer, in an atmosphere of joy and excitement, more than 200 French olim (new immigrants) landed at the Ben Gurion Airport in Tel Aviv, Israel. The International Christian Embassy Jerusalem had sponsored part of the group that arrived in their new home with singing and dancing.

France is home to the third largest Jewish community in the world, right after Israel and the USA. Today there are still about 550,000 Jews living in France. In the last five years more than 20,000, mostly young people and families, made Aliyah (immigration to Israel). Last year alone a record of 7,237 French Jews made the move, which was more than 1 percent of the community at the time.

In 2014, and for the first time in history, the biggest number of immigrants to Israel came from France specifically. This year Israeli headlines dub the summer months to be the “Summer of French Aliyah”. By the end of the year there could be as many as 8,500 new French olim in Israel.

Dov Gavizon, who just arrived from France, shared his excitement to be in Israel, but also his concern over the remaining Jews in France. His decision to make Aliyah was triggered by the rise of antisemitism, which forced every Jewish school and synagogue to hire security guards. “It’s life in constant fear”, recalled Gavizon. “Parents are scared to let their children go out, because of the attacks that happened in the past.”

The mostly Islamist antisemitism in France is on the rise. In 2006, a Jewish Parisian cell phone salesman named Ilan Halimi was kidnapped and brutally tortured to death by a gang of North African Muslims. They planned to hold him for ransom because of the widely spread prejudice that all Jews are rich. But Ilan Halimi was of modest means and his family could not persuade the French Police to act quickly and decisively. Ilan Halimi died in a horrible way leaving the Jewish community in shock.

Sadly, it was not an isolated incident. In March 2012, four Jews – three of which were children – were killed by a Muslim extremist in front of a Jewish school in Toulouse. In January 2015, a Muslim terrorist murdered four Jews in a kosher supermarket in Paris. And these are only the most violent incidents of anti-Semitism in France: countless lower profile incidents and attitudes contribute to a daily climate of fear and intimidation within Jewish communities.

Currently the ICEJ already sponsors seminars, where families get to know each other and begin the process of aliya. Ths ICEJ also covers flight tickets, extra baggage, initial absorption costs and other expenses involved in the process of immigration. The average cost is $1,100 per person.

“We should not make the mistake and think that French Jews are all wealthy and do not need our help,” urged Howard Flower, the ICEJ Aliyah director. “Many of them live in fear and in poverty, on the outskirts of Paris together with Muslim immigrants. ISIS is there now too, and the situation is getting worse. We must not forget that it was the poor Jews who perished in the Holocaust – the ones that couldn’t afford to leave. We must help today!”

Please consider making a contribution to our Aliyah work, in order to assist the threatened French Jews who long to come home. They depend on our support!

TO MAKE A DONATION, VISIT: http://www.icej.org/french-aliyah
THROUGH A NEW INITIATIVE of the Czech branch of the ICEJ, a group of young adults from Czech Republic, Germany and Israel gathered together in Prague to learn from history and become active agents of reconciliation.

Looking back at the Holocaust and the years that followed, the group discussed the dangers of prejudice and studied examples of courageous individuals who had the moral strength to stand against the tide of hatred. The group also had the honor to meet a Holocaust survivor during their trip, Doris Grosdanovicova, who was incarcerated in Terezin during the war.

For the Israeli participants, the gathering in Prague was a good opportunity to visit some of the places of historical significance and to meet their European peers. The German and Czech participants were eager to get to know their Jewish guests and to learn about their perspective on history. Together they also shared a special time of reconciliation during the program. It was impossible to not get emotional, as the Europeans asked for forgiveness for their nations and as the Israelis could speak that forgiveness out.

The purpose of this unique program is for young adults to better understand their history, to draw lessons from it and to apply these lessons to current situations. As we got to know each other in this multicultural and multilingual setting, we grew very hopeful for our nations and for our friendship with Israel.

TO LEARN MORE ABOUT THE ICEJ BRANCHES AROUND THE WORLD, VISIT OUR WEBSITE: http://www.icej.org/world
FINLAND

WHILE MANY CHOOSE TO REST IN THE SUMMER MONTHS, several of our branches become even more active! ICEJ-Finland organized numerous church seminars around the country, inviting some special guests to speak at their events. The former Executive Director of the ICEJ, Malcolm Hedding, visited Finland to minister at the annual national Pentecostal conference in Keuruu, where his book “Understanding Revelation” was published in Finnish. While in the country, he also visited several churches and shared his heart for Israel with the Finnish people. At a special ICEJ event in the city of Jyvaskyla, the Deputy Ambassador of Israel to Finland, Arezoo Hersel, gave a greeting on behalf of Israel. In western Finland in the city of Pori, ICEJ International Director, Rev. Juha Ketola, was invited by the local Pentecostal church as the main speaker at a 5-day summer conference, sharing his passion for the Word of God and bringing encouragement to the attendees. Rev. Ketola also shared the platform in a large gathering in the city of Seinäjoki with Dr. Paul Enenche from Nigeria and evangelist Marko Selkomaa.

PHILIPPINES

WE ARE HONORED to present to our readers the new Board of Directors of the ICEJ branch in the Philippines. After years of quiet operation, our ministry partners in the country of more than seven thousand islands are starting afresh with a new team and a clear vision. The photograph, taken at the Embassy of Israel earlier this year depicts, from left: Adam Levene (Deputy Chief of Mission), Mercy Cabiles, Apostle Rolando “Joshua” Blas (National Director), Israeli Ambassador Effie Ben Matityau, Sally Maddatu (Representative), Rev. Steve Mirpuri and Maxie Goloy.

GERMANY AND AUSTRIA

OVER THE SUMMER, Doron Schneider of the ICEJ traveled from Jerusalem to Germany and Austria to encourage and inspire believers at the local churches. In most cases, the churches were too small for the many visitors, so some had to sit on the floor and even on stage! We are noticing a great hunger among Christians in Europe, with interest in Israel-related topics increasing continuously. Despite the rise of anti-Semitism worldwide, the concern and love for Israel in many European churches is growing tremendously right alongside it. Many churches are seeking out ways to support Israel and they have a desire to connect with the Jewish people in any way they can. It is a blessing to see the deep desire of the believers in Germany and Austria to be a part of God’s salvation plan for Israel.
ICEJ-CANADA HOSTED some of the original Christian Embassy founders and friends in three events on Canada’s beautiful west coast British Columbia, as organized by the West Regional Director, Bonnie Traversy. The events held on July 18, 19, & 20th were also live streamed.

Some of the special guests at the events were Merv and Merla Watson, Canadians living in Jerusalem, who were the 2013 recipients of the prestigious ICEJ Nehemiah Award. The Watsons shared the original vision of establishing a Christian Embassy in Jerusalem, when 13 of the political embassies left Jerusalem due to the threat of an oil embargo in 1980. Also present were Drs Jay and Meridel Rawlings, Jewish Canadians who made Aliyah to Israel in 1969 and founded Jerusalem Vistas/IsraelVisionTV, and Serguei and Helena Popov, the world renowned classical violinist and Prima Ballerina from Finland who are also the directors of ICEJ-Georgia and some Russian speaking states.

Donna Holbrook (pictured right), ICEJ Canada’s National Director, joined in the hosting, as the ICEJ-Canada members and friends came out in large numbers. Marcus Unger, Watson’s pianist, and Dr. James Lunney, friend and long serving Christian MP from BC who participated in the original Jerusalem Feast of Tabernacles in 1980, also joined the celebrations.

To learn more about ICEJ branches around the world, visit our website: http://www.icej.org/world
RECENTLY, a three-person video production crew from the ICEJ in Jerusalem traveled with Dr. Jürgen Bühler to Eastern Germany to capture footage and interviews for an upcoming series of episodes for the Word from Jerusalem TV program.

The production team traveled thousands of kilometers over a five day period to film in unique places, such as the picturesque Wartburg Castle in Eisenach. From a small room, typically used for detainment of knights at Wartburg, Martin Luther translated the New Testament from Greek to German. His translation in printed form would have a significant impact on Germany in the decades that followed.

The team also spent time in the city of Erfurt where Martin Luther studied and later became a priest of the Catholic Church at Erfurt Cathedral, and in the city of Wittenberg where in 1517 Luther nailed his 95 theses against the selling of indulgences on the door of the All Saints Castle Church.

The series of episodes being produced by the ICEJ will focus on the history of Reformation; it’s existence in early biblical accounts, it’s impact upon western culture and ethics; the failing of early reformers to understand the role of the Jewish people in God’s redemption plans; and the need for Reformation in our day.

When production is completed in the coming months, the series will be aired on GOD TV. You can watch the ICEJ’s weekly 30-minute Word from Jerusalem program on Sundays at 5:30pm on the GODTV network. (NOTE: broadcast times vary by region, so check the GODTV website for specific times in your region) 😊
ICEJ REITERATES SUPPORT FOR ISRAEL AT KNESSET CHRISTIAN ALLIES CAUCUS RELAUNCH

ICEJ Worldwide

THE INTERNATIONAL Christian Embassy Jerusalem joined the Knesset Christian Allies Caucus in late July to launch the initiative in the current 20th Knesset of Israel. Founded by the late MK Yuri Shtern 11 years ago, the caucus has to be re-launched in each new government.

The event was attended by 25 Israeli parliamentarians, including three ministers, Knesset speaker Yuli Edelstein, former Foreign Minister Avigdor Lieberman and Michael Oren, former Ambassador to the US. A special welcome was given to Rabbi Benny Elon, a former head of the caucus, who has been recovering from cancer.

Since its inception the ICEJ is a key partner of this historic caucus. In his address at the opening meeting Executive Director of the ICEJ Jürgen Bühler quoted former president Shimon Peres saying Jewish-Christian relations today were the best they have been in 2000 years.

“Nowhere in the world do we have a parliament with a caucus that reaches out specifically to Evangelical Christians,” Bühler said. “Our support for Israel is strategic at this time!”

The KCAC underlines the historical development of Jewish-Christian relations and it was established to build direct lines of communication, cooperation and coordination between the Knesset and Christian leaders around the world. Sister caucuses have been launched in the parliaments of some 32 countries.

In the new Knesset, the caucus will be chaired by Yisrael Beytenu faction chairman Robert Ilatov, assisted by his deputy from the Zionist Union, Deputy Knesset Speaker Yoel Hasson.

In his address, Ilatov said the caucus would focus on four main areas in the 20th Knesset: strengthening KCAC’s 32 sister caucuses worldwide; combatting the Boycott, Divest and Sanctions movement; working against the nuclearisation of Iran; and striving for recognition of Jerusalem as Israel’s eternal capital by countries around the world.

KCAC director Josh Reinstein acknowledged that Israel is dependent on Christian support, while former KCAC chairperson, Minister Gila Gamliel, pointed to the Bible saying that God will bless the Christian supporters of Israel for their devoted work.
IN JULY, the International Christian Embassy Jerusalem welcomed at its headquarters special guests from Turkey: one of the nation’s leading pastors and a mayor of one of Turkey’s largest cities which has a rich historical heritage. For their protection, we have refrained from using their names in this article. The two pioneers came to Israel to build bridges but also to seek prayerful support for their philanthropic work with minorities in Turkey and with Syrian refugees.

The pastor from the Kurdish part of Turkey came to faith thinking that becoming a Christian would help him leave the country. Yet as soon as he started reading the New Testament, he realized that the Scripture was answering his many questions about God and about his own life. His perspective changed, and after deciding to serve the Lord full time in his home country, he soon became acquainted with God’s heart for Israel.

“It’s hard to read the Bible and not love Israel,” he said straightforwardly. “The replacement theology doesn’t come naturally, you’d have to be taught to think that. If you read to understand, you must understand Israel’s place in God’s plan.”

The pastor and the mayor share a vision that one day the minorities in Turkey – the Kurds, Armenians, Jews and more – will live together in their land as friends. The mayor has begun a process of restoration in his city of the historical sites that remind the residents of their rich cultural heritage. The mayor helped restore more than 10 Armenian churches in Turkey, which is unheard of in his country. They hope the next step will be to restore the relationship between Turkey and Israel.

Last August they started working with the Syrian refugees in Turkey. With support from the Kurdish municipalities, the local churches have welcomed many families fleeing from the war-torn regions in the Middle East.

“We have a saying in our country that we can understand each other because we share in the suffering,” the mayor explained. “In the Middle East, all too often people live by the slogan ‘kill or be killed’. We don’t share in that attitude – we want life! So we need to teach our people that this is the principle we want to live by: everybody has the right to live.”

The mayor added that if we want freedom and democracy, women need to share in that freedom too. He admitted that in this part of the world it is the women that suffer the most: “What many people don’t understand is that as long as the women don’t have full rights, we won’t be able to enjoy human rights as a society.”

The ICEJ Executive Director, Dr. Jürgen Bühler, thanked the visitors for their testimonies and assured them of the ICEJ’s prayerful support.

“It’s a privilege to have you with us,” Dr. Bühler said. “What you shared with us today touches our hearts. The Bible inspires us to love all people, so with that in mind we want to support you and we want to pray for the people in Turkey.”
THERE MAY COME A TIME in our lives when we lose heart and become discouraged. The sadness, caused by our disappointments, begins to rise in us and soon robs us of any joy or courage to take initiatives and be pro-active in life. Our dark feelings make us lose sight of the bright promises in the Word of God, even though they are still available to us, unaffected in their power to give life, shining like stars in the night.

There is real power reserved for us in the promises of the Bible, but we need the presence of the resurrected Lord Jesus to make them come alive to us and revive our spirit. In the gospel of Luke we can read a beautiful story about Jesus’ ability to take the eternal Word of God to comfort the sad and the discouraged.

Two disciples on their way to a village called Emmaus were engaged in a conversation about all the things that had happened to Jesus in Jerusalem three days prior (Luke 24:13-35). While they were talking, Jesus Himself drew near and started walking with them. Their eyes, however, were ‘restrained so that they did not know Him’ (v. 16). They shared with this ‘stranger’ accompanying them the latest news about the crucifixion and death of their Master. They spoke with great sadness, as all they knew was this: Jesus had died.

And then something wonderful started taking place. Like only the resurrected Lord could do, Jesus takes His companions on a journey through Scripture, from Moses and through all the Prophets. Luke records that their hearts began to burn while in the presence of Jesus who was showing them what was said about Him throughout the Bible.

As a result of being in His presence and studying the Word of God, their countenance began to change. They once again grasped the eternal value and power of the Word, and the sadness within them vanished. Their spirits were filled with fresh life and new hope. Finally, the two disciples recognized that the ‘stranger’ among them was no one else but Jesus Himself.

Life had returned to their souls and spirits. They were once again overcome with grace. They had been completely revived by the Living Word and by the presence of the resurrected Jesus. They received the latest news directly from Him: He was alive!

Your road today may be dry and hot like the one leading from Jerusalem to Emmaus 2000 years ago. You may be struggling with heaviness in your heart just like the two disciples. But our Master is alive and He is drawing near to you. Open the Gospel of Luke to chapter 24, welcome His presence through prayer, and start reading. Allow the Master Himself to speak to you through His eternal Word. Receive the latest news in your spirit: Jesus is alive and He is with you! ☀️
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