EGYPT
MY PEOPLE
BY JÜRGEN BÜHLER
Dear friends,

As I write to you, I am returning from an amazing few days in Brazil with over 100,000 fellow Christians who gathered in Manaus to worship Jesus and to also show solidarity and friendship with Israel. Most believers in Brazil are excited about what God is doing with their new government. They say this a new day for their country. After decades of very liberal governments and after many years of prayer, they now have a government which wants to return to biblical values and align itself with Israel.

We will report more about these developments later. But what I witnessed in Brazil is the same as what I write about in this magazine about Egypt. Prayer can change a nation! In a recent visit to Egypt, we were amazed to see what God is doing in this key nation. Prayers are being answered beyond our imagination. I hope you will be as inspired as we were when you read about it in this issue of Word From Jerusalem.

We saw another example of this truth a few weeks ago when we prayed here in Jerusalem with Pastor Lee, senior pastor of Yoido Full Gospel Church in Seoul, South Korea. I was touched to see the unwavering faith of his leadership team that God will heal and unite their nation.

The Scriptures are clear: “If My people who are called by My name will humble themselves, and pray and seek My face, and turn from their wicked ways, then I will hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin and heal their land.” (2 Chronicles 7:14)

“If my people who are called by my name ...” The answer for national problems lies within the people of God. This is true also for your nation’s attitude towards Israel. If we earnestly seek Him, the Lord promises to heal our nation. I encourage you today not just to complain about the state of your country, but rather to start seeking the Lord in prayer. I saw with my own eyes the changes prayer has brought forth in Egypt and Brazil, and I know He can do the same in your nation. We do serve a prayer-answering God and nothing is too difficult for Him.

In this magazine, you will read about just some of the amazing things that are taking place within the ministry of the ICEJ in Jerusalem and around the world. Much more could be shared. We are blessed that God is opening so many doors for us and the ministry is growing. We thank God for that! Please keep us in your prayers, and please also consider supporting our ministry through your finances. Finally, if you feel our ministry is important for your friend or pastor to know about, then please send us their address and we will gladly send our Word magazine to them as well.

Thank you again for your support and prayers. May the Lord bless you richly out of Zion!

Yours in Christ Jesus,

Dr Jürgen Bühler
ICEJ President

COVER PHOTO:
Egyptian Christians at a mass prayer rally in the ‘Cave Church’ in Cairo (AP)  
(see article on page 4)
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A recent visit to Egypt by a group of ICEJ leaders opened our eyes about the amazing things God is doing there and the great plans He has for this ancient nation, including with regards to Israel.

After Israel, Egypt appears in the Bible more than any other nation. It is an extraordinary land with a widely influential culture which dates back earlier than even the history of Israel. Besides Babylon, Egypt was the first world empire to emerge after the Flood and in the following centuries it would greatly impact Jewish history. The Exodus from Egypt shaped the national identity of Israel like no other event. Egypt was also the only country besides Israel where Jesus lived. It thus has a rich Church history, with the Coptic Church as possibly the oldest existing church in the world. It takes its name from the Arabic word for Egypt, ‘qubt’.

No wonder the Hebrew prophets also predict a glorious end-time history for the nation of Egypt. But let us start from the beginning.

Israel’s ancient connection with Egypt
The biblical story of Egypt starts right after the Flood, when Egypt (or Mizraim) is introduced as one of the grandsons of Noah, and a son of Ham (Genesis 10:6). When God called Abraham out of Ur in Chaldea, he journeyed to the Promised Land. Yet soon after, a famine broke out in Canaan and he “went down to Egypt” (Genesis 12:10). When he arrived there, the great pyramids of Giza had already been built a few hundred years earlier – these massive stone structures which still puzzle engineers to this day. Once Abraham and Sara left Egypt, they returned with “male and female servants” (Genesis 12:16, 16:1). One of them was the woman Hagar, who birthed a son by Abraham named Ishmael, who became the main ancestor of the Arab tribes of the Middle East.

Isaac, too, was tempted to escape a famine towards Egypt but the Lord instructed him to stay in the land “because I will bless you” (Genesis 26:2). But Isaac’s son Jacob would die in Egypt, together with all the twelve patriarchs of the tribes of Israel. Joseph, one of these patriarchs, even became the prime minister of the Egyptian empire and through his wise leadership saved not only his family but the entire world.

In Egypt, Israel grew to become a great people counting over a million souls. According to the rabbis, it was only during the Exodus from Egypt, when God brought His people out ‘with an outstretched hand’ to Mt Sinai, that Israel became a nation. Because of its system of slavery and oppression, the Bible usually refers to Egypt from then on as a sinful nation, representing human strength and efforts which fail to deliver (Isaiah 31:1-3). Even the Book of Revelation refers to the fallen state of earthly Jerusalem as “Sodom and Egypt” (Revelation 11:8).

Yet throughout history, there was always a strong Jewish community in Egypt. The Bible reports Jews fleeing to Egypt during the Babylonian occupation of Israel (Jeremiah 40:6-8; 43:5-7). Later in the Greek period, a further influx of Jews to Egypt is reported. When Alexander the Great established the coastal city of Alexandria around 332 BC, a notable portion of its inhabitants were Jewish. The historian Josephus reports that the Jewish population of Alexandria and all of Egypt numbered up to one million people. It was so strong that Alexandria became a center of Jewish thought and philosophy, with Philo (20 BC-50 CE) considered one the most influential thinkers of his time. Josephus reports that even a replica of the Temple in Jerusalem was built by Onia, the son of a high priest, on the Nile island of Elephantine. This structure was destroyed by Titus in 71 AD, shortly after Herod’s temple in Jerusalem was leveled, in order to prevent the rise of a new center of Jewish worship.

But something else came out of Alexandria that would become a main tool to spread...
Christianity, and that was the first translation of the Tanach (Old Testament) into a foreign language – Greek. This translation was done on the order of Ptolemy II, an Egyptian ruler who felt strongly that the Hebrew Scriptures should be added to and made accessible in the legendary library of Alexandria. The translation is called the Septuagint, referring to the 70 Jewish translators. The Septuagint (or LXX) was then widely used by the early Church and many OT references in the Greek New Testament quote directly from this text. The significance of this translation of the Bible into a commonly-used language can hardly be overestimated and might be paralleled only by the translation of Luther almost 1800 years later into another common language – German. The Egyptian-spawned Septuagint became the book Paul and all the Apostles preached from when they travelled the world.

IN A VERY UNIQUE WAY GOD’S HAND SEEMS TO BE ON THE NATION OF EGYPT THROUGHOUT HISTORY. EGYPT BECAME AN AGENT OF DELIVERANCE FOR ISRAEL, BUT ALSO A SUBJECT OF GOD’S JUDGMENT BECAUSE SO MANY TIMES THEY FAILED THE PEOPLE OF GOD. BUT GOD ALWAYS SEEMED TO HAVE GIVEN SPECIAL ATTENTION TO EGYPT.
When Jesus was born, he in a way ‘relived’ the history of Israel in relation to Egypt. Like his ancestors he had to flee to Egypt – instructed by an angel – and would return only years later in order to fulfill the prophecy of Hosea… “out of Egypt I called My son” (Matthew 2:15, quoting Hosea 11:1). It is amazing to see the richness of the Coptic tradition today concerning the various places where the holy family lived and visited. Most of these places are linked to the extensive Jewish presence in ancient Egypt.

When the Gospel spread around the world decades later, it quickly reached Egypt, as Jews from Egypt had been present in Jerusalem to witness the unusual events on the Day of Pentecost (Acts 2:10). According to tradition, the Evangelist Mark became the bishop in Alexandria and he may even have been the founder of the very first ‘Christian’ Bible school in the world. Today, the oldest New Testament parchment, the Ryland P52 fragment, dating to possibly the first century, was found in Egypt. When the Council of Nicea later decreed to change the Passover celebration to Easter, it was the Church of the East – most prominently Alexandria – which resisted the longest this new anti-Jewish law from Constantine. But eventually, Egypt also was infected by the antisemitic trends of the Church and the Christian rulers of Alexandria expelled all Jews from the city.

**The Isaiah 19 Highway**

All this indicates that in a very unique way God’s hand has been on the nation of Egypt throughout history. Egypt became an agent of deliverance for Israel, but also a subject of God’s judgment because so many times they failed the people of God. But God always seemed to give special attention to Egypt. The prophet Isaiah, in chapter 19, foresees – like no other prophet – the purpose of God for Egypt and with it for the entire Middle East.

Isaiah’s vision starts with “God coming to Egypt” (Isaiah 19:1). The immediate result is not revival and blessing but a season of immense shaking and turmoil. Political chaos with ‘Egyptians turning against Egyptians” and the rise of a ‘hard master’ who will rule over the nation. The immediate result is not revival and blessing but a season of immense shaking and turmoil. Political chaos with ‘Egyptians turning against Egyptians” and the rise of a ‘hard master’ who will rule over the nation. In all this time of hopelessness, Egypt will call upon the Lord and this will trigger a sequence of seven astonishing developments (Isaiah 19:16-24):

1. Egypt will fear the Lord and the nation of Israel;
2. Five cities will speak the language of Canaan;
3. There will be an altar to the Lord;
4. He will send a saviour to defend and deliver them;
5. The Lord will make Himself known to the Egyptians;
6. The Lord will strike Egypt and they will call upon Him and He will heal them; and
7. There will be a highway of blessing reaching from Egypt to Assyria via Israel.

**ICEJ Leadership Team in Egypt**

While not the total fulfilment of the Isaiah 19 vision, during our recent visit we did see and hear first-hand some amazing developments in Egypt today which appear to be a powerful foreshadowing of the incredible things to come.

After the outbreak of the Arab Spring in 2011 and the turmoil which followed, many churches in Egypt were attacked by radical Muslim groups. The government initially did very little to protect the churches. Soon, an Islamist, Muslim Brotherhood-led government came to power (with Western support) which erased any hope for religious freedom in the nation. Yet amidst this persecution, on 11 November 2011 the Church of Egypt assembled for an historic prayer gathering attended by tens of thousands of believers in Cairo’s out-of-the-ordinary “Cave Church”. This was the beginning of a prayer movement which would spread over many cities of Egypt. Not just one altar, but many prayer altars have been built across the nation. God answered their prayers when in 2013 Egypt witnessed the largest political protests in world history, as some 30 million people went to the streets across the country to demonstrate for a new, freer government. The global media failed to report the true significance of these historic demonstrations, which led to the more open government of Abdel Fattah al-Sisi. The situation for the Church in Egypt became more tolerable and the country made a considerable shift in its attitude towards Israel.

While there is still pressure and occasional violence from Islamist groups, the churches are growing. Particularly among Muslims, God is revealing Himself in visions and dreams. But what is equally amazing is that a significant shift in theology has been taking place in recent years. While many of the churches held strong views of Replacement theology concerning Israel, today there is a refreshing shift. There are no cities yet who speak the ‘language of Canaan’, but there are many born-again believers – some of whom we met – who, because of the vision of Isaiah 19, now study Hebrew. One worship leader we met told us how, not long ago, he was praising and interceding with other Egyptian brothers when “the spirit of God took hold of me” and for almost an hour he sang in perfect Hebrew, a language that he never spoke before.

Another amazing thing we learned while in Egypt is that over recent years believers there have started celebrating the biblical feasts. For instance, a network of over 700 Egyptian Christians have been gathering in various places each year to hold Passover Seder meals during the Easter season.

This finally brings me to the main reason we travelled to Egypt this Spring. The Lord has been speaking to us in recent years about the prophecy in Zechariah 14:16-19 of the nations coming to Jerusalem to “keep the Feast of Tabernacles”. Interestingly, the only nation mentioned by name is Egypt.
“If the family of Egypt will not come up and enter in, they shall have no rain; they shall receive the plague with which the Lord strikes the nations who do not come up to keep the Feast of Tabernacles.” (Zechariah 14:18)

The Lord placed it on our hearts to pray that God would open a door for Egyptian brothers and sisters to come and celebrate the Feast of Tabernacles with us in Jerusalem. The word of God gives a warning about the nations not coming to celebrate the Feast and he mentions Egypt in particular. But I like to look at it the other way around: If they do come for Tabernacles, then God will give their nation rain. We took this to mean that it would release a special blessing on the nation of Egypt.

This is a historic year for Egypt and Israel, as 2019 marks the 40th anniversary since Menachem Begin and Anwar Sadat signed a peace treaty between their nations. We believe a strong delegation of Christians from Egypt at this year’s Feast of Tabernacles could be a prophetic declaration which would release tremendous blessing upon Egypt.

When we met with the leaders to share our vision with the brothers in Egypt, we did not know what to expect and were not prepared for what we experienced. As they introduced themselves, they came straight to the point: “We believe in the vision of Isaiah 19, as we know that Zechariah 14 speaks about Egypt needing to come to the Feast. Can you please help us to make it possible?”

The door could not have been more open. We all agreed that the Lord has something special in store for this year’s Feast of Tabernacles. It could be the beginning of something new, not only for Egypt but for the region.

We have it on our heart to bring 40 pilgrims from Egypt to join us at this year’s Feast. Many of the brothers and sisters need financial help, as the economic challenges will not allow them to come.

For that purpose, we have established the “Isaiah 19 Fund”. This special account will be used to assist believers from Egypt to join us at this year’s Feast of Tabernacles, as well as to enable us to rightly connect Egyptian pastors and ministry leaders with what God is doing here in Israel and especially within the Messianic body.

If you feel the Lord wants you to be part of what He is doing in Egypt, please prayerfully consider a donation towards the “Isaiah 19 Fund”. The costs for one person from Egypt to join us at the Feast will be around US$ 1,500. Please stand with us in this very timely and important matter. It will bless Israel, it will bless Egypt, and you will be blessed as well!

We also feel this initiative will need to be expanded in the coming year. Already now, we have similar requests from believers in Jordan, Iraq and Lebanon. For many of them, visiting Israel comes with a risk, but they believe it is important for them to be here, and we sense a strong leading to support them in this important mission.

Finally, please join us in praying for all the Arab countries. Pray with us for an outpouring of the Holy Spirit on these nations, and that we might have a greater understanding and revelation of God’s purposes for Egypt and Assyria in our day.

No doubt, the purpose of God for Egypt is to bring them to a point where God can say: “Egypt My people!” For the nations which comprise today the ancient Assyrian empire (Lebanon, Syria, Iraq, and even into Iran, Turkey, Jordan and Saudi Arabia), His declared purpose is to bring them to a point where God can declare: “Assyria, the work of My hands!” And all of them, together with Israel, will be a blessing in the midst of the earth (Isaiah 19:24-25). This gives us a strategic way to pray, as well as an incredible vision of hope for the future.

Give Today to the ‘ISAIAH 19 FUND’
The ICEJ is expecting as many as 40 Egyptian pilgrims to come to Jerusalem for the Feast of Tabernacles 2019. This is an historic year as Israel and Egypt mark 40 years of their peace treaty. It also holds great prophetic significance, as these believers are coming in response to the vision of Isaiah 19 and the call of Zechariah 14:16-19 that Egypt should come up to Jerusalem to “keep the Feast of Tabernacles”! However, most of them will need help covering the costs. Please join us in assisting these precious brothers and sisters in Christ to make the journey to Jerusalem. It will cost approximately US$ 1,500 for each one from Egypt to attend the week-long Feast. Your gift to the Isaiah 19 Fund will help make it possible.

Please give your best gift today to the ‘Isaiah 19 Fund’. Donate online at int.icej.org/isaiah-19-fund

RECOMMENDED READING
LIVING FULLY FOR THE FULFILLMENT OF ISAIAH 19
By Tom Craig
What do current events in the Middle East have to do with the Kingdom of God — and why should believers care? Understanding the prophetic vision of Isaiah 19 brings sense to the seemingly nonsensical conflicts plaguing that vital region of the world. The Lord is preparing to propel Egypt onto a turbulent course of divine confrontation and spiritual breakthrough, leading to the entire nation of surviving Egyptians becoming worshippers of the Lord — and joining with the other nations of the Middle East including Israel to become — “a blessing in the midst of the earth” (Isaiah 19:24).

Order your copy today from our Embassy
Resources online at www.icejstore.com
Every year the ICEJ holds an annual International Leadership Conference (ILC) where branch leaders come together to share ideas, build relationships, and plan for the future. One exciting development which came out of our recent ILC here in Jerusalem was the launching of an International Young Leaders Advisory Council (IYLAC). The Embassy’s senior leadership will look to this council of young leaders for advice on how to relate to their generation more effectively. The IYLAC will seek to infuse a more youthful outlook within the ICEJ network worldwide while also assisting us to attract the next generation of believers and ministry leaders. Through personal engagement, Bible-based education, a revitalized social media presence, and an intentional ministerial shift, the ICEJ hopes to equip Christian millennials to become the Joshuas and Calebs they are called to be.

The next generation is facing a crisis of faith which is not necessarily one of doubt or questioning the Lord. Rather, it is one rooted in misinformation and the spread of unsound biblical interpretations. So the IYLAC will aim to instill within the next generation the solid Bible truths and Judeo-Christian values they will need to face the challenges ahead.

We want you involved as well! We want to meet Next Gen believers and help empower you to achieve all that God has for you. Connect with our IYLAC team at youth@icej.org.

In May, the International Christian Embassy Jerusalem was chosen by Keren HaYesod United Israel Appeal to receive its prestigious Yakir Award, in recognition of the ICEJ’s long-standing record of support and friendship for Israel and the Jewish people.

“I was humbled and honoured to receive the Yakir Award from Keren HaYesod on behalf of the Christian Embassy’s leadership and worldwide family,” said ICEJ President Dr. Jürgen Bühler. “This recognition reflects the hard work and commitment of scores of Christians around the globe who have expressed their support for Israel in so many ways through our ministry over the past four decades.”

The Yakir award is given to Keren Hayesod’s top fundraisers each year, as well as to those who have distinguished themselves by their contributions in pursuit of the same goals as Keren Hayesod, both in Israel and throughout the Jewish world. Keren HaYesod is a quasi-governmental body which raises private donations to supplement Israeli state funding in order to carry out charitable and social projects through the Jewish Agency.

At the gala banquet in Tel Aviv, the work of the ICEJ was introduced by an aspiring young attorney from the Ethiopian Jewish community whose parents arrived in Israel as part of the emergency airlift of thousands of Ethiopian Jews stranded in Sudan in 1984, known as “Operation Moses”. Over recent years, the ICEJ has sponsored the flights of some 2,000 Ethiopian Jewish immigrants in addition to our many other Aliyah projects.

The ICEJ leadership currently has very close relations with Keren HaYesod's new chairman, Samuel Grundwerg, as well as with Isaac Herzog, world chairman of the Jewish Agency, its sister organization.
Dear friends of the ICEJ,

For over 20 years, the International Christian Embassy Jerusalem was honoured to maintain our headquarters in one of the most beautiful buildings in Jerusalem. From 1996 until February 2019, we rented the property at 20 Rachel Imeinu from the Ivory Coast under very favourable terms. When our lease was ending in 2017, we sought to extend it or even to purchase the property. Those negotiations were quite positive and eventually took us to the President's office in Abidjan, while an official Ivorian delegation came one year ago to assess the sales value of the building. However, the Ivory Coast finally decided to keep the building.

One major reason for this decision is an old property law in Israel dating back to Ottoman times which holds that a tenant who rents a building for longer than 25 years can never be evicted after that, so long as they pay their rent. So the Ivory Coast's lawyers in Tel Aviv strongly advised that they ask us to leave as soon as feasible.

We had hoped to extend our stay at this beautiful property, but we are grateful that the Lord quickly provided us with new offices at 38 Pierre Koenig (Second Floor) in Talpiyot, which we are renovating and will officially open to the public sometime this summer. We enjoy a good relationship with our new landlord and once the remodeling is complete, we look forward to welcoming everyone to our new premises.

In that regard, we ask you to prayerfully consider making a special donation to help us cover the expenses of the move to the new site. We have been blessed with good, modern office space, but certain renovations are necessary to accommodate our staff and ministry needs, including work on a large meeting hall to host tour groups, receptions and other functions. The move and renovations are costing us approximately $150,000. Your special gift towards these extra-ordinary expenses will help us make sure our other projects and initiatives to bless Israel continue uninterrupted.

Please designate your donation for the “Renovations Fund.” You can also give online at int.icej.org/help-us-in-our-new-building

Many blessings from Jerusalem and thank you for standing with us over the years!

Dr. Jürgen Bühler
President
International Christian Embassy Jerusalem
Sari Granitza may be stepping into the shoes of Dr. Susanna Kokkonen as Director of Christian Friends of Yad Vashem, but she is no stranger to this revered institution and to the tragic legacy of the Holocaust which it seeks to memorialize in perpetuity. Her family on both her father’s and mother’s side lost many members to the Nazi genocide against the Jews of Europe. And she has now worked for well over a decade at Yad Vashem to help preserve the memory of the six million Jews killed in the Shoah. We recently asked Sari to share about her work with Yad Vashem, and her vision for its outreach to Christians going forward.

From childhood, the subject of the Holocaust always moved and interested Sari, who grew up in the Israeli city of Bnei Brak surrounded by Holocaust survivors. Even her kindergarten teacher had a number tattooed on her arm. This early introduction planted seeds deep in her heart which blossomed when she joined the staff at Yad Vashem more than 15 years ago.

“I feel that Yad Vashem is fulfilling an important mission and I am very proud to be a part of this great institution, which gives a voice to the Holocaust victims and survivors”, Sari explained. “As time goes on and the number of remaining survivors dwindles, we need to continue to pass on their legacy and to learn and teach about what happened, to ensure for a better world of acceptance and mutual respect for one another.”

WFJ: As the new director of Christian Friends of Yad Vashem, what is your basic message to Christians about the importance of Holocaust education and of supporting the mission of CFYV?

SARI: In the Bible, we are commanded to remember and pass on to future generations: “Remember what Amalek did to you on the way as you were coming out of Egypt...” (Deuteronomy 25:17); Tell your children about it, let your children tell their children, and their children another generation”, which is exactly what the Christian Friends of Yad Vashem does . . .

It is important to recognise and be vigilant when we see hatred and antisemitism rising. Being a bystander is not an option as that just endorses them. In order to stand up to antisemitism it is crucial to know the facts, to recognise it and to know how to fight back within our communities. I believe this starts with education – to arm people with historically accurate facts in order to combat distorted and false facts.

Yad Vashem is the spiritual home of the victims - those who were murdered and those who survived. They asked us never to forget and to continue telling their story. We see countries, institutions and individuals that are not necessarily denying the Holocaust, but are distorting the facts. Through the artifacts, documents and testimonies which Yad Vashem is collecting and the research Yad Vashem is conducting, we serve as a voice to the victims and survivors and will continue to be their voice when they are no longer with us.

WFJ: What is your vision for CFYV going forward? What has worked best so far and what new initiatives do you want to pursue?

SARI: It is crucial to reach out to Christians in all corners of the world. Our mission is a common one and we want and need the Christian world as our partners. As the generation of Holocaust survivors dwindles, people of all faiths must now join forces to carry on the torch of remembrance, and build bridges of understanding, cooperation and friendship between the Christian world and the Jewish world.

It is our obligation as religious believers to learn from the past and educate future generations with the facts. We must empower the younger Christian generations with accurate and reliable historical information, teaching them to follow the example of the Righteous Among the
Nations, who took it upon themselves not to be bystanders but to actively choose good over evil.

In a private conversation with Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, he mentioned that we often see that there is a lack of general knowledge in the current generation. When we look at the survey conducted by the Claims Conference published on Holocaust Memorial Day 2018, some very worrying statistics were revealed:

- over two-thirds of Americans had never heard of Auschwitz;
- half could not name a single concentration camp or ghetto;
- one third claim that less than 2 million Jews were murdered in the Holocaust;
- 58 per cent believe a similar event could take place again.

Some of our new initiatives include:

- A new representative of CFYV in the US, Rev. Mark Jenkins, who will regularly travel to different churches and communities to spread our message.
- For the first time, we had a CFYV booth at the 2019 NRB Convention.

My vision is to try and change these statistics and make the world more knowledgeable about the Holocaust. To do this, we will continue to partner with the ICEJ and host many visitors and groups like the Christian Leadership Seminar, and travel globally to lecture and provide ready-to-print exhibitions for display in schools, churches, universities, libraries and community centers around the world.

A major tool to combat the rise of antisemitism is access to complete and accurate information. The work carried out by the Yad Vashem Archives and Research Department today is crucial. As time passes, countries and institutions are distorting the facts. Yad Vashem is currently engaged in an urgent eleventh-hour project to recover and document the truth from the generation that witnessed the events; collecting testimonies from survivors is more important now than ever before. We want to encourage our Christian friends to partner with us in this project.

I invite Christian leaders from around the world to participate in the ICEJ-sponsored Christian Leadership Seminar at Yad Vashem in Jerusalem, becoming ambassadors equipped with the tools to educate their communities to stand up against antisemitism.

We are all created in the image of God and I believe that with this premise in mind, it is important for us to continue building bridges between the Jewish and Christian worlds to advance towards our common goals.

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- For the first time, we had a CFYV booth at the 2019 NRB Convention.

WFJ: How troubled are you by the growing rise in antisemitism worldwide? What will CFYV be doing to combat it?

SARI: It amazes me that antisemitism still exists and is thriving in the world after the Holocaust and in the 21st Century with all its advancements. We must remember wherever there is antisemitism there is also hatred, xenophobia, racism and consequently violence. It is not strictly a Jewish issue.

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A major tool to combat the rise of antisemitism is access to complete and accurate information. The work carried out by the Yad Vashem Archives and Research Department today is crucial. As time passes, countries and institutions are distorting the facts. Yad Vashem is currently engaged in an urgent eleventh-hour project to recover and document the truth from the generation that witnessed the events; collecting testimonies from survivors is more important now than ever before. We want to encourage our Christian friends to partner with us in this project.

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We are all created in the image of God and I believe that with this premise in mind, it is important for us to continue building bridges between the Jewish and Christian worlds to advance towards our common goals.
VISIT OUR ONLINE STORE AND RECEIVE A 10% DISCOUNT ON ALL PURCHASES!
Go to: ICEJSTORE.COM and use the discount code: ICEJ2019WFJ – The special 10% discount for your purchases at Embassy Resources is valid throughout 2019

ISRAEL RISING
DOUG HERSHEY
A unique book sharing the visual story of Israel's miraculous journey from unforgiving desert land to thriving nation.

15 USD

ISRAEL RISING
MUSIC CD
DOUG HERSHEY
INTRODUCING the Israel Rising - 70th Anniversary Commemorative CD!

This CD contains 14 powerful songs filled with a heart for Israel. The listener will be taken on a musical journey, blending Hebrew and English vocals with ancient and modern music, all celebrating Israel's 70th Anniversary in song! (Various Artists)

15 USD

DARE TO DREAM
MUG
A unique mug that will inspire you to “Dare to Dream” with every sip!

14 USD

DARE TO DREAM
T- SHIRTS
Official T-Shirt of the Feast of Tabernacles “Dare to Dream” 2018

12 USD

JERUSALEM NOTEBOOK
Free Shipping
The Jerusalem Notebook comes with 140 lined pages on high-quality Italian paper. Each page is trimmed with beautiful gold foil edges. The hard cover is luxuriously embellished with the skyline of Jerusalem design and ICEJ’s logo in a gold color. This notebook comes in two different colors: black and white. (16 x 16 cm)

30 USD
ICEJ SHOMER PENDANT, 24K GOLD PLATED

This unique pendant is designed with a replica of the ‘Zion Mule Corps’ symbol on the front and the ICEJ logo encircled by Isaiah 62:6a in Hebrew on the back. This reminds us to be a ‘shomer’ or watchmen for Jerusalem.

30 USD

MADE IN BETHLEHEM - ANOINTING OIL SET OF FIVE

This set includes a unique assortment of five anointing oils that were made in Bethlehem: Rose of Sharon, Spikenard, Queen Esther, Myrrh and the Oil of Joy!

15.99 USD

FLOODGATES BY DAVID R. PARSONS

FLOODGATES unravels precisely what happened in the Flood of Noah and explains why this important biblical event is such a fitting analogy for our day. This book offers a clear biblical paradigm for determining where we are on the prophetic timetable, based on the actual teachings of Jesus and the apostles.

16.99 USD

THE BEAUTY OF THE HEBREW LANGUAGE BY NATHALIE BLACKHAM

Nathalie’s interest in Israel started in 1997 when she began to intensively study and investigate the Hebraic Roots of the Church. This led her to teach and explain the significance and wonders of the Hebrew letters by way of television and conferences. She is passionate about people discovering for themselves the hidden secrets from this amazing language.

15.99 USD

HEBREW/ENGLISH BIBLE NASB

This leather-bound Bible features Hebrew and English side by side. The Hebrew in the Old Testament has been taken from the Masoretic text, while the New Testament Hebrew is from the Modern Hebrew translation. The English text is from the NASB.

85 USD

JERUSALEM COMPASS

The Jerusalem Compass was developed in Jerusalem and is patented in the US. Instead of pointing north, it points only in the direction of Jerusalem from any point on the globe. Fashioned from pure solid brass, the lid is deeply embossed in the center with a Jewish Star of David and the words “Jerusalem” in Hebrew and English. The outer edges are encircled with a delicate floral design of Pomegranates found on many ancient carvings in Jerusalem around the first temple period.

43 USD

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85 USD
MUCH HAPPENING AT THE HAIFA HOME!

BY KAYLA MUCHNIK

To be honest, there is always something happening at the ICEJ’s Haifa Home for Holocaust Survivors! This is what makes it so difficult to share all of the amazing events that occur. So, let’s offer a taste of the variety of activities going on at the Haifa Home.

The Joy of Good Food

Hunger has been something that every Jewish survivor experienced during the Holocaust. Therefore, many still live today with the fear of going without food. This is one reason why it is so important to provide nutritious meals for the Home’s residents in the dining hall every day. Another reason is because it brings the community together over some tasty food, and really makes everyone feel like family. In June, we were able to welcome a talented young cook to the community kitchen. He not only gave the kitchen a new look, but also cooks the most colorful and delicious meals to the delight of the residents.

Adopt a Survivor

The ICEJ’s Adopt a Survivor Program enables us to have a steady source of income arriving monthly for the many ongoing needs of the Home. This financial support is greatly needed, and yet the adoption program offers so much more. Special relationships have been established between resident survivors and their adoptive Christian families through letters, cards and sometimes presents sent by post or even brought in person. Mania, a survivor of the Transnistria concentration camps, was deeply touched by the lovely letter and gifts she received from one of her Finnish adopters. An elated Mania said, “Isn’t this beautiful? Look at the colours. Look how it suits me!” It is not only the gifts or the words that make the residents happy, but also the fact that someone abroad thinks of them and has not forgotten them in their old age. To adopt a survivor today, visit our website at: int.icej.org/aid/adopt-holocaust-survivor

Sharing the Past to Make a Better Tomorrow

So far this year, there have been 20 ICEJ-linked groups visit the Haifa Home. Some of the nations represented were Taiwan, Canada, USA, Norway, Netherlands, Finland, Hong Kong, Iceland, Faroe Islands, England, Switzerland, Germany, and more! When possible, the groups hear from the Holocaust survivors themselves, but we also recognize that it is very difficult for survivors to share their horrific story over and over again. Therefore, all of the groups get to go through the unique on-site museum which displays many of the personal stories of the Home’s residents. This allows the survivors to share their stories with visitors without having to relive those atrocious memories time after time.

Once the visitors hear and see some of these tragic moments from the past, they can meet the residents, better understand their deep wounds...
and minister to their hearts with compassion and grace. The challenge many groups then face when returning to their own countries is how to respond to the rising tide of anti-Semitism throughout the nations.

To enjoy life at the beach
One of the best ways to forget the daily aches and pains that come with getting older is to have a little fun! Recently, a new van was donated that gives the residents, including those in wheelchairs, the opportunity to go on leisurely outings around Haifa. One day, we took the residents to a nice restaurant at the beach, where they enjoyed not only a refreshing drink, but also each other’s company. With many of the physical restrictions that come with old age, it’s a breath of fresh air for most of the residents to go out for an adventure around town.

New arrivals in coming months
Our “out of the ordinary Home” presents different challenges with the aging and physical restrictions of the residents. Some people who came healthy, independent and mobile, are now in need of a caretaker or unable to climb the stairs anymore. In the coming months, some residents will make a move to an apartment on the ground floor, which also makes room for new residents to move in upstairs. With the help of volunteers from the UK and Israeli staff, two new apartments being remodelled in one of our buildings are almost ready to receive their new residents.

Celebrating the Feasts
The Haifa Home is intentional about celebrating all of the biblical Feasts. The most recent Jewish holiday that we celebrated was the Feast of Weeks, or Pentecost. This Feast is also called the Feast of the Giving of the Torah. According to Jewish tradition, God gave the Law to the people of Israel at Sinai on this specific date.

We celebrated at the Haifa Home with a special gathering for the residents, which included an explanation of the Feast and the Jewish traditions that have been added throughout history. We also enjoyed a delicious meal and cheesecake for dessert, which is the traditional food for this holiday. The atmosphere was joyful and festive, and it gave residents another opportunity to rejoice and come together as a family!

A Time to Dance
Every Wednesday night at the Haifa Home, you will find many residents gathered in the dining hall for an evening of music and dancing. This is such a special time for the residents, staff and volunteers to bond together over some great tunes and some awesome dance moves.

Dance and music are very important in Israeli culture, therefore this weekly event is highly popular with many of the residents. Dancing has always been part of Jewish culture. At every wedding or celebration, dancing is part of the program. For our survivors, dancing is something they treasure, because it gives them joy and brings back memories of the good times. Therefore, every Wednesday night after dinner when the music begins, everyone moves their bodies to the rhythm of the different styles of music. They dance together and they dance alone. Genia, even at 94 years old, is often the first to start dancing!

“Everything hurts, but when I dance I feel young again. It reminds me of the good times and gives me joy”, she said.

Not everyone is physically able to dance, but that doesn’t stop them from coming to enjoy the music and watch the others dancing. This is such a special weekly event, that people and soldiers from the community will often join in on the dance party!

“It’s an evening they look forward to, and on Tuesday they are already asking us if we will come to dance”, noted Tamaris, the Haifa Home’s longest serving volunteer.

The Haifa Home for Holocaust Survivors is in great need of finances for the best care for the residents and general upkeep of the Home! Send your most generous gift today and impact the lives of Holocaust Survivors while we can!

To donate, go to:
int.icej.org/aid/haifa-home-holocaust-survivors
THE COMFORTS OF A FURRY FRIEND
ICEJ ASSISTS BEIT SINGER PETTING ZOO
BY KAYLA MUCHNIK

Walking through the gate of Beit Singer (“Home of the Child”) at Kfar Yehezkael, one may not initially guess at first glance that the youth there are in great need of love and healing. Boys are playing soccer in the courtyard. Music and dancing are taking place on a stage in a nearby playroom. It all gives the impression of life and joy.

However, for these children, “home” has been anything but a safe and welcoming place. If one inquires a bit further, you learn that these children were removed from their families by court order to protect them from ongoing neglect, abuse and violence. Upon arrival, the children are welcomed to their new home by a house parent, professional counselors and teachers who are all dedicated to helping them grow and develop properly. Part of the therapeutic program means having fun. Some activities include horseback riding, karate, theater, electronics, physical exercise, music, enjoying the petting zoo, and more.

The petting zoo at Beit Singer is a particularly beneficial asset for many of the children. Through taking care of the animals, the children learn values of love, trust, loss and nurturing. Conversations with the children on these topics help them find answers and comfort for their own traumatic upbringing. Yet, over time the animal pens have become worn and unstable. Thus, the ICEJ is enabling the home to renovate and provide a safer, cleaner area for the children to interact with the therapeutic animals. Thank you for your donations, which have brought comfort through these furry animal friends to some of Israel’s most vulnerable children.

The ICEJ is donating funds to renovate the petting zoo area with clean, sturdy cages to safely house the friendly animals.

ICEJ SUPPORTING DAY CARE IN SAMARIA
BY YUDIT SETZ

Tucked away in the ultra-Orthodox community of Immanuel, in Samaria, you will find a special day care center for children three months to three years old. Immanuel Day Care Center was built 40 years ago in response to a dire financial crisis which caused great poverty among this strictly observant community, including their many children. The ICEJ heard about this nursery project back then and sought to help, and to our amazement this highly religious ‘settlement’ has been openly receiving our support and love for many years. Not only this, but a wonderful friendship of respect and appreciation has grown over the 19 years that ICEJ has partnered with them.

“We helped where they could not help themselves, with food, clothing and care”, explained Yossi, director of the Immanuel day care center. “God has sent us messengers in the form of ICEJ, who has helped us over the years to keep our head above the water. When I see you here today, it touches me anew.”

In May, we were able to bring a group from ICEJ-Finland to see this center which provides care, meals, and love for 70 children from 7AM to 4 PM every day. They even send each of the children home with sandwiches and fruit, as a small way to help their community.

Much help is still needed to keep the center running, such as playground equipment, a new fence, toys, new chairs, and the overall running of the facility! Join us in support and love today.

Make a donation to ICEJ AID at: int.icej.org/aid
As the summer dry season arrived, terrorists in Gaza recently resumed their launching of incendiary kites and balloons over Israel’s border, causing fields and agricultural lands to go up in flames. ICEJ AID continues to work closely with local Israeli community leaders and security chiefs along the Gaza border to provide essential firefighting equipment, including newly-designed All-Terrain-Vehicles (ATVs). These ATVs are fully equipped with a water tank, pump, hose and other fire extinguishing tools, and have the advantage of being able to reach quickly even the remotest parts of the fields and orchards. This mobility and speed is essential, because if they can reach the fire within the first 10-to-15 minutes, there is a greater likelihood that the flames can be doused before they get out of control. The generosity of our donors has allowed us to provide five ATVs to date, together with 17 all-terrain fire-fighting wagons. These newest ATVs, dispersed among the four regional councils near the Gaza border, were immediately put into action.

During the ICEJ’s International Leaders Conference in mid-May, a group of 50 ICEJ global leaders and Jerusalem staff saw firsthand the battle these Israeli communities face every day. On a tour to the region, they visited a farmer’s wheat field that had just burned the day before. Only a few hundred meters from the Gaza border, the ICEJ delegation stood on the burnt crops covered in black ash listening as Rafi Babian, the security chief for the Sadot Negev Region, passionately expressing his gratitude to the ICEJ for donating an ATV that already has helped them fight several similar fires. Then, in a beautiful moment of solidarity, he led our group of Christians in a prayer for his land and blessed us for supporting them in this time of crisis.

Israel needs your support this summer, so please join us in continuing to stand with Israel for such a time as this! [int.icej.org/aid/israel_in_crisis]

RENOVATING HOMES AND HEARTS
BY KAYLA MUCHNIK

Whether it is young Jewish immigrant children making Aliyah on their own ahead of their parents or young people from at-risk backgrounds, Kfar Galim is an open home for them. Located in the northern Hof Carmel Region, this youth village serves as a regional high school, agricultural training center, and an educational dormitory/boarding school for over 1,000 students. Of these, about 250 students live on-site in dorms. The dedicated staff at the youth village equip students with leadership skills, a strong work ethic, and love for their land, while also encouraging them to live in peace with their neighbours.

Many youth villages throughout Israel face budget shortages, especially for renovations or upgrades of infrastructure. Thus, they are constantly seeking outside financial help for these needs. In the case of Kfar Galim, shifts in the earth had caused damage to the housing dorms for the 7th and 8th grade students, while other urgent repairs were required, including to combat a persistent mold problem. ICEJ AID saw an opportunity to substantially improve the standard of living for the youth and jumped at the chance to help.

“It was very moving to see the kids coming back from Passover vacation and enter into the building shouting with joy”, shared Danny Gildin, the general director of the village. “I think the renovation is very pretty, comfortable and it surely makes all the difference to enter the rooms”, enthused one student. Another added: “It is like a home now. It is much more comfortable to live in a room that is welcoming. The new bathrooms and floors are amazing. Thanks a lot.”

Thank you to our donors for your generous gift of a sparkling new home which lets these youth know they are remembered and valued.

Life-changing renovations under-way at the Kfar Galim dormitories which house new Jewish immigrants and Israeli youths-at-risk.

SAVING LIVES ON TENNIS COURTS
BY KAYLA MUCHNIK

Have you ever thought that playing tennis could endanger your life? Well, we discovered it can when we visited a branch of Israel Tennis Centers (ITC), which have been teaching and training children in life skills through the sport of tennis for almost 30 years! ICEJ-Germany recently donated a bomb shelter to the ITC facility in Ofakim, a community not far from the Gaza border. At the beginning of May, a Kassam rocket launched from Gaza landed just 50 meters from the tennis center. Thankfully, several children taking tennis lessons were able to seek refuge in the ITC-provided bomb shelter before the rocket exploded. Your donations are saving lives!

Send your gift today: [int.icej.org/aid/israel_in_crisis]
AN ALIYAH TO CELEBRATE

BY MAXINE CARLILL

Earlier this year, Luda and ICEJ Homecare director Corrie van Maanen met for a special celebration. Perhaps not many who are wheelchair-bound, with deteriorating health and without family, would find anything to celebrate. However, this was the 25th anniversary of Luda’s Aliyah from Ukraine. Together with her father, who has since passed away, she came to Israel with hopes of finding better treatment for her health condition which had put an end to her university degree and dreams of a career. Corrie and Luda were also celebrating the 25th anniversary of a warm connection to the ICEJ including a quarter century of faithfully attending Israeli Guest Night during the Feast.

Two weeks after arriving in Israel and in need of special assistance, Luda heard about ICEJ’s Homecare program. The support she received continues to this day, as does the friendship that was born between Luda and Corrie. “Through knowing Corrie and ICEJ, the whole world is in my hand,” Luda recently stated, referring to the many Christians who have helped or visited her from all over the world. A bright smile on Luda’s face may mask the tears that are often shed, but her friendly nature endears her to all who meet her.

Luda is thankful she came home to Israel. She overcame the challenges of a new language and a different culture, and today she participates in Israeli society. Throughout her 25 years here in the land, Homecare’s help and friendship were vital to giving hope and emotional healing to this often-overwhelmed new immigrant. Therefore, it was with joy that coffee and cake, memories and stories, were shared to celebrate a wonderful relationship.

Visit GOD.TV/VOD/ENCOUNTERISRAEL to watch “Encounter Israel” episodes on demand!
The ICEJ is now in the eighth year of our Isaiah 62 Prayer Initiative, and we are thrilled to report that thousands of churches, prayer groups and individual intercessors from around the world have been joining us every month to pray for Israel according to the command of Isaiah 62:

I have set watchmen on your walls O Jerusalem;
They shall never hold their peace day or night.
You who make mention of the Lord do not keep silent,
And give Him no rest till He establishes And He makes Jerusalem a praise in the earth (Isaiah 62:6-7).

The faithful participation of the global Body of Christ in this unique prayer campaign has been very encouraging for our ministry. For instance, ICEJ-USA national director Dr. Susan Michael reports that there are now Isaiah 62 prayer groups standing with us in all 50 States. Gottfried Bühler, our national director in Germany, also has been able to establish Isaiah 62 prayer groups in 100 German cities. Indeed, from Jerusalem to the islands of the Pacific, from the Equator to the Arctic Circle, there are precious saints lifting up Israel, the region, the nations and our ministry in collective, coordinated, focused and effectual prayer. And we truly sense this covering of prayer support here in Jerusalem when our staff gathers to pray every Wednesday.

We recently invited some of these Isaiah 62 prayer groups to send us photos of their prayer times together – here is a sampling from a variety of places. We invite you to join this global movement of prayer by using our monthly prayer points whenever you pray corporately or individually. Also, if possible, join with us in prayer on the first Wednesday of every month as intercession resounds around the globe throughout the day.

Get involved in the Isaiah 62 Prayer Initiative at: int.icej.org/isaiah-62-prayer-initiative

In May, we celebrated the one-year anniversary of the ICEJ PrayerWave with 24 hours of prayer and intercession here in Jerusalem and around the globe. Prayer houses and worship teams from all over Israel came together in Jerusalem to take part in this round-the-clock prayer watch, as we united with our 600 committed intercessors around the world to seek the Lord on many vital prayer points. It was a blessing to connect with these local prayer houses and to draw closer together with our family of intercessors worldwide. Thank you so much to all who joined us in prayer and to those who sent in their prayer requests for us to lift up here in Jerusalem. The Lord was truly with us, and when we are unified in prayer, the impact is powerful!

If you want to commit to join us in this unique, global prayer wave, please visit our webpage and submit the form at: icejprayerwave.com

PRAYER INITIATIVES

PRAYERWAVE MARKS ONE-YEAR ANNIVERSARY

BY JOSHUA GOODING, ICEJ PRAYERWAVE COORDINATOR

ISAIAH 62 PRAYER INITIATIVE

REACHING HEAVENWARD FROM AROUND THE GLOBE

BY ICEJ STAFF

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ISAIAH 62 PRAYER INITIATIVE

REACHING HEAVENWARD FROM AROUND THE GLOBE

By ICEJ Staff
ICEJ PREPARES FOR SURGE IN FRENCH ALIYAH

BY AARON HECHT

In recent months, there have been major headlines warning of a mass exodus of Jews from the United Kingdom due to rising antisemitism there. Germany’s Jewish community is also said to be wary of antisemitic elements gaining wider acceptance in their nation. But France remains the country in Western Europe facing the greatest physical threats to its Jewish community, and the highest number of Jews fleeing to Israel and other locations.

France still has the fourth largest Jewish community in the world, and over the past decade many of them have been moving to Israel. This exodus hit a peak of over 7,000 immigrants to Israel in 2015 and has diminished somewhat, but the Jewish Agency still expects 2,700 French Jews to make Aliyah to Israel in 2019. The Christian Embassy has been asked to help fund flights for those needing assistance with their journey home to Israel, which costs $440 per person.

“The Jewish Agency has informed us that olim from France are coming on regularly scheduled flights almost daily, one family at a time as soon as they are ready,” said ICEJ’s Aliyah Director Howard Flower. “We believe another large wave of Aliyah from France and Western Europe could be imminent due to rising concerns about antisemitism and the generally unsettled political and economic situation.”

Please help us sponsor flights for needy French Jewish families seeking to rejoin the Jewish nation in their ancient homeland. Your donation will make a huge difference in their future.

Give to the ICEJ’s Aliyah fund today! Go to: int.icej.org/aid/aliyah

ICEJ-SPONSORED SEMINARS FUELLING NEW WAVE OF ALIYAH

BY AARON HECHT

Many Jewish families still living in the former Soviet republics are interested in making Aliyah to Israel but need help in finding out how the process works. Long before a Jewish person ever boards a plane headed for Tel Aviv, a long list of paperwork must be filed to satisfy the requirements of both their home country and Israel. This takes time! Plus, most potential immigrants must take Hebrew language classes and job training courses to be better prepared to live and work in Israel.

The ICEJ is helping meet this need by sponsoring Aliyah Seminars in a number of East European and Central Asian countries, including Russia, Belarus, Ukraine and the Baltic States. These are areas where recent geopolitical events and economic factors have resulted in a major surge in Aliyah. Last year, Russian-speaking immigrants accounted for 64% of the worldwide Aliyah to Israel.

In Ukraine, the seminars are held away from the fighting in the East, so the families can have a peaceful, relaxed atmosphere to prepare for the move to a new country. The Ukrainian conflict triggered a regional economic recession, which increased Aliyah from Russia and Belarus as well. The ICEJ also has organised Aliyah seminars in Finland for Jews from Northwest Russia and in Latvia for Jewish families from Belarus, considered the last dictatorship in Europe. Both Finland and Latvia provide secure locations with the air of freedom.

The Christian Embassy has teamed up with the Jewish Agency to facilitate this latest wave of Aliyah in new and innovative ways, according to ICEJ Aliyah Director Howard Flower, such as the new fast-track weekend Aliyah seminars. These provide comprehensive pre-Aliyah programs aimed to alleviate concerns, answer questions, and educate participants using trained Aliyah counsellors. Most attendees are young family members who move to Israel ahead of their parents and must be ready to live alone there until the rest of the family arrives.

Weekend Aliyah seminars are effective tools to prepare Jewish people for the most significant journey of their lives. During the three-day seminars, the focus is on real life lessons about Israel, such as the economy, job market, the education and health systems, absorption programs and much more. At these seminars, participants receive personal attention from Aliyah representatives, most notably Israelis themselves. The needs of each individual are addressed, ensuring that everyone receives the information and advice they need for a successful Aliyah.

Right now, the ICEJ is planning at least seven more Aliyah seminars in 2020, including in Berlin, Munich, Alma Ata (Kazakhstan) and Russia, along with Helsinki, Kiev and the Baltic states. Please help us meet the needs of future Jewish immigrants from the former Soviet republics. Partner with the ICEJ in sponsoring weekend Aliyah seminars that will set Jewish families on a completely new course in life back in the land of their forefathers. The average cost per person, including meals and accommodations, is US$ 150.

Please make a generous donation today, even by sponsoring an entire Jewish family. Give online at: int.icej.org/aid/aliyah
ICEJ REUNITING ETHIOPIAN JEWISH FAMILIES

BY AARON HECHT

In June, several ICEJ staff members were on hand at Ben Gurion Airport to welcome the latest group of Ethiopian Jews as they arrived in Israel on flights sponsored by the ICEJ. This flight brought to 634 the number of Ethiopian Jews the Christian Embassy has assisted in making Aliyah to Israel in 2019. We have committed to bringing a total of 1,000 Ethiopian Jews this year, and the remaining 370 are expected to arrive over coming months.

However, the Jewish Agency recently asked the ICEJ for an extra $50,000 to fund efforts to sustain the Jewish communities still in Ethiopia until their immigration to Israel can be arranged, as many are in need of basic food and medical supplies. In addition to answering this call for emergency funds, we have been providing other assistance to help with the absorption of hundreds of other Ethiopian newcomers, including housing costs, Hebrew-language courses (ulpan) and job training. So the Christian Embassy is fully engaged in the historic return of the ancient Ethiopian Jewish community to Israel.

Often referred to as the Falash Mura back in Ethiopia, this religious-ethnic group has a long and unique history. The Ethiopian Jewish community actually dates back to the time of Moses, who married an Ethiopian woman (Numbers 12:1). But in modern times, as Ethiopian Jews sought to rejoin their nation and people back in Israel, rabbinic authorities had serious questions about their Jewishness. Many of the Falash Mura had converted to Christianity under duress over recent centuries, beginning with the arrival of Portuguese colonists in the 16th century. The chief rabbinate eventually recognised their community as Bnei Israel, or “Sons of Israel,” meaning they were descended from one of the twelve tribes and could come into Israel under the Law of Entry. Yet they were required to undergo a semi-conversion process to re-attach them to mainstream Rabbinic Judaism.

Since then, tens of thousands of Ethiopian Jews have come home to Israel over recent decades, many in emergency airlifts. But approximately 9,000 were refused entry to Israel because they were still considered Christians. This came as a shock to them, since they had long before left their farms and villages behind and were waiting in transit camps to come to Israel. After strong protests from Ethiopian relatives in Israel, the Israeli government decided in 2015, as a humanitarian gesture, to allow this last remnant of the Falash Mura to come home for the purpose of family reunification. And the Jewish Agency has looked to the ICEJ for help in covering their flights. We have now brought around 2,000 of them to Israel, but some 7,000 still remain in transit camps in Addis Ababa and Gondar, living under very difficult conditions.

Please help us bring all the remaining members of the ancient Ethiopian Jewish community home to Israel, where their families are desperately waiting to welcome them with open arms.

Give today to the ICEJ’s Aliyah fund!
Send your gift online at: int.icej.org/aid/aliyah
GERMAN CHRISTIANS CELEBRATE 70 YEARS OF ISRAEL-GERMANY RELATIONS

In May, some 1,200 Christians from various church backgrounds gathered in Stuttgart to celebrate Israel and Germany’s 70th anniversary, an event hosted by the German Branch of the ICEJ. Among the special guests from Israel were Holocaust survivor Erika Teller from Jerusalem, Sam Grundwerg, World Chairman of Keren Hayesod, Rabbi Shmuel Bowman, Director of Operation Lifeshield, and Pastor Colin Mitchell from Haifa.

“We are thankful for God’s grace towards the Federal Republic of Germany”, Gottfried Bühler, national director of ICEJ-Germany, told the gathering. “He blessed us - that’s why we are living in freedom, peace and prosperity. We also want to thank the US for starting us off economically with the Marshall plan. But it is the greatest miracle that the Jewish people and the State of Israel were willing to hold talks and establish diplomatic relations with Germany – just a short time after the Holocaust.”

The program included a memorial event to mark Yom HaShoah (Israel’s Holocaust Remembrance Day), as well as prayer for Israel, Germany and the nations, an excellent Klezmer concert by a chamber orchestra, and a dynamic time of worship and dance performances. The outpouring of support and love for Israel left a deep impression on the Jewish guests.

My recent ministry trip to the nations of Georgia and Armenia was very fruitful and encouraging, thanks in large part to the great work being done there by the ICEJ’s regional coordinator Serguei Popov. Both of these ancient countries have a long, rich Christian heritage, and the Evangelical movement is breathing new life into the churches, stirring a heart for Israel as well as a passion for missions into the Arab/Muslim world.

In Georgia, I spoke and Serguei performed on violin at the Central Presbyterian Church of Tbilisi, where the bishop also serves as the national director of ICEJ-Georgia. The church was filled with close to 1000 people. We then traveled to two Word of Life churches in other Georgian towns which were equally supportive of the ICEJ.

We then traveled to Yerevan, in Armenia, where we were hosted by local Word of Life and Pentecostal pastors. The two weekend services at the Word of Life congregation each drew between 1500 and 2000 believers. In one service, we recognised the new ICEJ representative for Armenia, Pastor Arsen. His church is particularly amazing, as besides loving Israel, they also are sending out workers and church planters into Iran, Lebanon and Syria, as well as into much of the former Soviet Union. It was a great joy to fellowship with these Christians on fire for God’s purposes for both Israel and the nations.
In May, I travelled with our President, Dr. Jürgen Bühler, as well as Messianic Jewish pastor Jacques Elbaz to the Ivory Coast in order to strengthen our ties with local Christian leaders in this key country at the center of French-speaking West Africa.

We were warmly received by Dr Apollinaire Gboagnon, President of the Evangelical Federation of Ivory Coast, and his team. Jürgen then preached to a large crowd at a Sunday service in his church. We later met the outgoing Israeli ambassador, followed by a time of ministry in the Word with about 50 pastors and denominational leaders. We also were interviewed on LMTV about the ICEJ and gave a warm invitation for its viewers to attend our Feast of Tabernacles. (Last year, over 600 West African pilgrims came to Jerusalem for the Feast with LMTV founder Dieudonne Gollet and other tour leaders). Finally, we held another gathering with about 30 pastors in the city of Yamoussoukro.

Today, Christians are showing support for the Jewish people in many nations. This is because God is increasingly speaking in many ways to the Body of Christ in our day. They pray for Jerusalem because the Holy Spirit has impressed upon them the words of Isaiah: “I have set watchmen on your walls, O Jerusalem; they shall never hold their peace day or night. You who make mention of the Lord, do not keep silent, and give Him no rest till He establishes and till He makes Jerusalem a praise in the earth” (Isaiah 62:6-7). They donate money because the urging of the Apostle Paul from Romans 15:27 has spoken to them: “For if the Gentiles have been partakers of their spiritual things, their duty is also to minister to them in material things.” And they show solidarity with the Jewish people according to the words written in the book of Isaiah 40:1-2: “Comfort, yes, comfort My people! Says your God. Speak comfort to Jerusalem, and cry out to her that her warfare is ended, that her iniquity is pardoned; for she has received from the Lord’s hand double for all her sins.”

One way of comforting Israel is by organizing public events in which Christians march through the streets of their cities and express love and solidarity with the Jewish people. I recently had the privilege of participating, within two weeks, in two such marches. One took place in Prague, in the center of Europe, in unusually cold and rainy weather; the other occurred in Suva, the capital of Fiji, along the shores of the Pacific, in tropical climate and under palm trees. In spite of the differences in temperature and culture, however, the experience was strikingly similar. In both cities, hundreds of Christians marched with Israeli and local flags, danced, and prayed for the peace of Jerusalem. The march and rally in Fiji was joined by Christians from several surrounding Pacific island nations, as well as Australia and New Zealand, all attending an ICEJ regional conference.

This is happening because these diverse Christians share the same Holy Spirit and read the same Word of God. This Word indeed was sent forth out from Jerusalem and has literally reached the ends of the earth.

Jacques Elbaz, a French-Israeli pastor, was very helpful in preparing our visit in coordination with Dr Apollinaire, a highly respected national leader who understands the objectives of the ICEJ and wants to continue building our work there. We look forward to welcoming many Ivorian pilgrims again at this year’s Feast, as well as returning with a strong delegation in April 2020 for a nationwide rally to support Israel and pray for the Ivory Coast.
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