WORD FROM JERUSALEM

6 DAYS • 5,000 PILGRIMS •

EIN GEDI JERUSALEM GARDEN TOMB • FEAST • MARCH

2019 FEAST HIGHLIGHTS

SPECIAL REPORT
The International Christian Embassy Jerusalem was established in 1980 in recognition of the biblical significance of Jerusalem and its unique connection to the Jewish people. Today the ICEJ represents millions of Christians, churches and denominations to the nation and people of Israel. We recognise in the restoration of Israel the faithfulness of God to keep His ancient covenant and its unique connection to the Jewish people. Today the ICEJ in 1980 in recognition of the biblical significance of Jerusalem was established in 1980 to be an active voice of reconciliation between denominations, churches and believers from every nation on earth.

Our vision is:
* To reach every segment of Israeli society with a Christian testimony of comfort and love, and
* To reach and actively represent to Israel the support of denominations, churches and believers from every nation on earth.

The Christian Embassy is a non-denominational faith-based ministry supported by the voluntary contributions of our members and friends across the globe. We invite you to join with us as we minister to Israel and the Jewish people worldwide by donating to the ongoing work and witness of the ICEJ.

The Hebrew word mo‘ed is not just a term that signifies a holiday, but it can be correctly translated as an “appointed time”. It is like an appointment that a person places in his calendar for a certain date and time. Succot is thus a date that God Himself placed in His calendar to meet with His people.

This also was the case for us this year. As the first team members and pilgrims arrived, I heard it again and again: “We sense so much the presence of God from the day we arrived.” Yes, God was already waiting for His people to show up in Jerusalem!

God spoke powerfully through His servants, but people also heard the still whisper of His voice giving very personal callings to them. Healings, signs and wonders also took place! One lady from Belgium who was healed from a severe back problem she had from birth.

One highlight was how God confirmed in a very public way the first-time arrival of an Egyptian delegation to the Feast. In Zechariah, Egypt is the only nation mentioned by name that must come to Jerusalem for the Feast of Tabernacles. “And if the family of Egypt does not go up and present themselves, then on them there shall be no rain…” (Zechariah 14:18). The very evening the Egyptian delegation presented themselves on stage at the Pais Arena in Jerusalem, we received a text message from Egypt saying it was raining at that very moment in Cairo. Then, on the day they flew back to Cairo, they were welcomed by unprecedented rainfall for this time of the year, with schools and businesses closed and roads flooded all across Egypt.

In addition, to be connected via Skype from Jerusalem to the very first official Christian tour group in Saudi Arabia was truly miraculous. Then, at our closing prayer meeting at the Tower of David in the Old City, one of the brothers came to me and pointed to the sky. Through sunglasses I could see the sun ringed by a double rainbow. I personally saw it as a sign that God had covenanted with us during this year’s Feast.

Yes, I also felt it was the best Feast ever, because Jesus was here! And I hope to see you next year in Jerusalem to worship with us at God’s appointed time.

Yours in Christ Jesus from Jerusalem,

Dr Jürgen Bühler
ICEJ President

**FROM THE PRESIDENT'S DESK**

Dear friends,

In the Bible, the Feast of Tabernacles is called a mo‘ed Adonai, a feast of the Lord (Leviticus 23:1, 44). Every year, we are reminded that the Feast of Tabernacles is not the ICEJ’s feast, but it is the Lord’s feast. Neither does the Bible call it a Jewish feast, but the feast of the Lord. God takes possession of this holiday.

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If God is in the house, then great things take place. He speaks, people’s lives are transformed, and miracles take place. God had an appointment with His people and He met them right here in Jerusalem. Throughout the years at the Feast of Tabernacles, I have heard many times: “This was the best Feast ever!” In 2019, Jesus showed up once more in a powerful way. And if Jesus is present, that alone makes it the best time ever.

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**COVER PHOTO:**
Collage of moments from the Feast of Tabernacles

**FOR MAGAZINE ARCHIVES**
visit www.icej.org/media/word-jerusalem
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From the shores of the Dead Sea to the heart of Jerusalem, ICEJ’s Feast of Tabernacles 2019 blessed and challenged thousands of Christians from nearly 100 nations during the week of Sukkot!!

Called to Worship
As the sun slipped behind the Ein Gedi cliffs and the full moon began to rise, a blow of the shofar summoned hearts of Christians around the world to worship the Lord!

American singer/composer Eddie James and his team of young performers led the crowd in energetic, joyful worship to Jesus. Thousands of voices united together to proclaim, “You are worthy of it all.”

An Offering of Thanks
Pastor Alberto Magno from Bolivia emphasized the importance of presenting an offering of thanks to our Lord. Joshua Aaron, a local Israeli musician, then brought a lively ukulele vibe to traditional Jewish worship music.

A Heavenly Perspective
In this refreshing atmosphere of praise and worship, Brother Yun, former leader of the underground Chinese church and author of the book “The Heavenly Man”, recounted the miraculous ways God showed up during times of intense persecution for preaching the Gospel.

“If God comes into your persecutions and challenges, then everything is possible”, Yun told the pilgrims. “I have had the great honor to serve Jesus and was in prison four times over 12 years for preaching the gospel... But God said to me, ‘The prison is the reality but I am the truth.’”

Hundreds came forward in response to Brother Yun’s message seeking personal ministry from this proven servant of God.

“If God comes into your persecutions and challenges, then everything is possible.”

BROTHER YUN WITH HIS SON/TRANSLATOR, ISAAC LIU
WE NEED A NEW BEGINNING WITH THE LORD EVERY DAY... TO GO LOWER IN A PLACE OF HUMILITY, TO WALK IN THE NEW BEGINNING THE LORD HAS FOR US.

CAROLYN CLELAND • AUSTRALIA

NEW IN 2019

THE ‘AFTER GLOW’

A n old Feast tradition known as the “After Glow” was revived at Feast 2019, as pilgrims were invited to stay around for an extended time of worship at the end of the evening services. After the main program drew to a close, pilgrims were encouraged to linger at the foot of the stage as the Feast music team led them in a special time of worship and soaking in the presence of the Lord.

BROADCAST WORLDWIDE

I n addition to livestreaming on our social media outlets, this year’s Feast was broadcast worldwide through four networks (Vision Norway, Daystar, GodTV, and LMTV). YouTube also actively promoted morning and evening sessions to viewers.

Bring the Feast with you! Download the full set* of Feast seminars and speakers at icejstore.com

*Also available individually and in CD format
COMMUNION & CONFESSION IN THE GARDEN TOMB

After the exciting evening of worship in the desert setting of Ein Gedi, hearts were awake early Monday morning and ready to commune with Jesus at Jerusalem’s tranquil Garden Tomb.

The garden was full of God’s people and His sweet presence and peace were evident. To one side, the empty tomb stood as a reminder of our resurrected Lord and King, as pilgrims raised their voices in unison to proclaim, “This is amazing grace.”

The One New Man - In Unity
Local pastors Berlie Belay (Jewish) and Saleem Shalash (Arab) together led the gathering in a beautiful time of sharing communion. Saleem remarked, “What Jesus prophesied in His days, is happening in our days!”

The Freedom of Total Forgiveness
Respected Bible teacher RT Kendall shared a life-changing message on the importance of ‘total forgiveness’ in the life of every believer. In response, many pilgrims responded, and tearfully confessed away bitterness and unforgiveness.

“You may be waiting for vindication and you want the world to know what someone has done to you”, said Kendall. “But God says, ‘Totally forgive them and make sure that no one knows about it’... The proof of total forgiveness is that you don’t tell anyone. Total forgiveness is a life sentence. You don’t do it just once.”

Hearts Forever Changed
“I cried and cried, because I can feel that Jesus is here”, said an elderly woman from Fiji who has visited the Garden Tomb many times. “This is not history we are remembering; Jesus is alive and here with us today.”

PEACE IN THIS PART OF THE WORLD IS A RARE THING. BUT THERE IS ONE PEACE PLAN FOR THE MIDDLE EAST AND THE NAME OF THIS PEACE PLAN IS JESUS.

MOJIMIR KALLUS, ICEJ VICE PRESIDENT FOR INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS
Monday evening, thousands of pilgrims from nearly 100 nations assembled at Jerusalem’s Pais Arena, many wearing their national attire and proudly waving their country’s flag.

New Nations at the Feast
Some of the new or unusual nations represented at the Feast this year were Macedonia, Iraq and our first-ever large delegation from Egypt!

Faith is The Purpose
Jerusalem’s Deputy Mayor, Fleur Hassan-Nahoum, delivered a short and encouraging welcome to the city: “We don’t take it for granted that we have friends dedicated to Jerusalem, Israel, and the Jewish people. Thank you for your support, love, and advocacy in your own countries. Today in synagogue, we read Ecclesiastes, but the essence of this book is very clear: Faith is the purpose of why we are here in this world... Our faith comes above everything else. Thank you for your love and support. Come back again.”

Singing, dancing, and vibrant music filled the arena throughout the evening, which culminated with a message on the Feast theme “Beginnings” from ICEJ President Dr Jürgen Bühler.

God’s Word is our Foundation
“This year’s Feast of Beginnings is, in one sense looking back at where things started, but also looking forward to new beginnings”, exhorted Dr Bühler. He also stressed the importance of having the right foundation with God before stepping into a new beginning, which starts with a hunger and respect for the Word of God. Holding his Bible aloft, he declared, “Ladies and gentlemen, this is the most precious book in the world.”

Relive your favourite moments from Opening Night with Dr Jürgen Bühler on DVD at icejstore.com
EMBRACING A NEW START WITH GOD

The first morning in the arena kicked off with worship, prayer and powerful sessions covering our relationship with God and the new beginnings He has for us.

Pastor Andrew Kou from Taiwan emphasized the Feast as a time to rest and rejuvenate through worship. “God’s word to us this morning is to let go of the things we manage at home... Our role now is to rest and rejoice.”

God’s Endings and New Beginnings
ICEJ Vice President David Parsons pointed out with every beginning, something must end; a principle reflected in the sad ending to the ancient world as told in the story of the Flood. In his new book Floodgates, Parsons noted that Jesus likened the ‘Days of Noah’ to the end of this age, but also gave hope of the glorious new beginning ahead.

Israeli Bible teacher Peter Tsukahira spoke on new beginnings based on Abraham’s binding of Isaac and the new lease on life it offered his beloved son. Pilgrims embraced the promise of a new start with God.

To the Ends of the Earth
The ‘God in the Nations’ panel then took a deeper look at how Christians around the world are standing with Israel. ICEJ Vice President of International Affairs, Mojmir Kallus interviewed Christian leaders from three diverse countries on what God is doing in their nations: Apostle Apollinaire Gboagnon (Ivory Coast), Pastor Stephen Mirpuri (Philippines), and Apostle Fabio Abbud (Brazil).

NEXT GENERATION:
High Energy Worship and the Word of God
From the ends of the earth, the Fiji band led off the evening service with an island-style time of worship. The atmosphere shifted as South African evangelist Angus Buchan took the stage with a message of great conviction, repentance, passion and intimacy with God.

Angus decreed: “If you take the Bible out of your faith, then you have nothing, and the enemy knows this.” He emphasized the importance of daily time in God’s Word, adding he spends five hours reading the Bible every day.

At his invitation thousands of pilgrims offered a prayer of repentance, confessing their areas of unbelief in the Word of God, and expressed their commitment to read the Bible each day. The evening closed with a powerful time of singing, dancing, and prayer. Many hearts were impacted and changed forever!

WHEN MEN WORK THEY WORK, BUT WHEN MEN PRAY GOD WORKS.

ANGUS BUCHAN

GOD IS GIVING ME A NEW VISION AND A NEW MENTALITY.

JOHN • TOGO, AFRICA
Youth Day at the Feast

BY LILY SIRONI

EGYPTIAN PILGRIMS AT THE FEAST
A foreshadow of the Isaiah 19 Highway

For the first time ever, a delegation from Egypt came to represent their nation at Feast 2019. They belong to a network of Egyptian Christians who embraced the vision of the Isaiah 19 Highway, as well as the prophetic summons of Zechariah 14:16-18 that Egypt should come to Jerusalem each year to keep the Feast of Tabernacles, so there will be rain in their country. As they stood on our stage in Jerusalem praying for their nation, it started raining in Egypt! And when they landed back in Cairo, the country was inundated by unusual heavy rains – to the point that schools and businesses were closed. This outpouring of favour on Egypt affirmed to the group that God indeed was pleased with their ascent to Jerusalem to celebrate the Feast!

"WHEN I WALK IN THE STREETS IN ISRAEL AND TALK WITH THE JEWISH PEOPLE, THEY DO NOT BELIEVE I AM HERE, BUT HERE I AM. IT IS TIME... FOR THE WALL BETWEEN US TO DROP DOWN AGAIN. IT IS TIME TO LOVE AND WORSHIP TOGETHER."

FEAST PILGRIM • EGYPT

Dr Naim Khoury pastors the largest evangelical Christian Arab congregation in the Holy Land, which faces intense persecution from Muslim neighbours for standing with the Gospel and with Israel, including numerous firebombs. The Feast youth gained a new love for these Christian Arab brothers and sisters and a burden to pray for their safety.

A taste of the Middle East

After a delicious lunch of traditional local fare in Bethlehem, the group journeyed to the Mahane Yehuda Market, Jerusalem’s busiest outdoor market. Once in the “shuk”, they teamed up for a grand scavenger hunt, called a “Shuk Dash”.

Following a list of items to find in the crowded Israeli market, the young people had tons of fun weaving through the crowds of people. By the end of the day the group was all laughs and smiles and bubbling with questions about Israel.

Feast Youth Day was a perfect mix of fun and education on Israel, all wrapped into one “next gen-friendly” package.

Young adult delegates to the Feast enjoyed a special day excursion to Bethlehem. The purpose was to challenge and equip them to better understand and represent Israel in their nations.

One Family’s Story of Fearless Faith

Moises Vasquez, a youth pastor from Brisbane with ICEJ-Australia, “loved seeing young people deeply connect their childhood faith with the Land where the Bible was written. Each place in Israel tells a story and Bethlehem Pastor Naim Khoury’s story is one of fearless faith and a family’s commitment to loving a community into God’s Kingdom.”

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PROPHETIC PROMISES FOR THE REGION

The fourth day of the Feast began with anointed worship and a time of prayer, followed by excellent seminars on Israel and beginnings still to come.

Rev. RT Kendall tackled the timely topic of a godly response to transgenderism and same sex attraction, which rests on the biblical belief that God as Creator made them male and female, and only He assigns gender. “Every generation has the stigma, to test what the Believer is”, Kendall stated. “Are you ready to be embarrassed by your friends, because of what you stand for? We must be ready to be embarrassed and face the stigma.”

Daniel Yahav, pastor of Israel’s largest Messianic congregation, delivered a bold message on God’s Word as ultimate truth. Yahav gave a powerful analogy: “The Titanic is sinking and some people are still painting the rails, although the Lord is standing at the gate. However, we lift up our hands because we know He is coming soon and we want to be found faithful.”

Back to our First Love

Mosy Madugba, National Director for ICEJ-Nigeria, spoke on rediscovering our first love and the power of the Holy Spirit: “Some of you may be saying, ‘I am not praying as I ought to pray. I am not fasting as I ought to fast’. Some of us are growing stagnant in our faith.” He urged attendees to “go back to the beginning where fire fell down… It was in this city where it all began. The baptism of the Holy Spirit took place here.”

The Isaiah 19 Highway seminar discussed the Middle East’s anticipated spiritual harvest.

• Yosef Sarig related what God has showed him regarding highways and borders for us believers: “We are called to be a blessing and this will only happen when we can break down the borders in our hearts.”

• Milad Khoury, a young Arab Christian believer born in Gaza, yearns to see reconciliation between Jews and Arabs; he stressed the importance of unity and praying for our enemies.

• Tom Craig, instrumental in bringing the group of Egyptian Christians to this year’s Feast, walked delegates through Isaiah 19 and closed by stating: “This is a time when Jesus is moving powerfully in the Middle East and all over earth to see His kingdom come.”

“EVERYTHING YOU NEED, I HAVE ALREADY PREPARED FOR YOU.

RENE TERRA NOVA”

“THIS FEAST MARKS MY FIRST TRIP TO ISRAEL AND FOR ME IT IS THE BEGINNING OF GAINING A RIGHT PERSPECTIVE ON GOD’S CHOSEN PEOPLE.”

TY LE • VIETNAMESE-AMERICAN
FEAST BUS TOUR: A WALK THROUGH TIME
BY MATTHEW STARK, SOCIAL MEDIA FEAST TEAM, USA

As the bus left Jerusalem and headed north, I was curious to visit the controversial, yet biblically significant Judea/Samaria or “West Bank”. A short drive and entry through a small checkpoint, surrounded by watchtowers and barbed wire-topped stone walls, and we were there.

Passing Ramallah, administrative capital of the Palestinian Authority, put into perspective the close proximity of the players in this modern-day conflict.

Soon after, we stepped into ancient history on the Hill Road, the “Way of the Patriarchs” where Abraham would have travelled. The quiet rolling hills, covered in terrace-farmed olive trees, give no outward indication of the lingering dispute over this territory.

Mount of Blessings
Mt. Gerizim overlooks the modern Palestinian-controlled city of Nablus, where ancient Shechem rested between Gerizim and Mt. Ebal (Deuteronomy 11:29). Looking down, we could see Jacob’s well (Genesis 33:18-20) and Joseph’s Tomb (Joshua 24:32). I stood overlooking this nexus of the ancient world in awe.

At Shiloh, the path was lined with rich archaeological discoveries: A recreated Byzantine basilica, the orphan mosque of the Mamluk period, and an olive press from the early Islamic period were interspersed with the remains of Jewish mikveh baths, water cisterns and storage for food and grain.

Reaching the top of a hill, archaeological remains from the Tabernacle lay before us. The twelve tribes would have gathered on these vine-covered hills to meet with the Lord; from the time of Joshua (chapter 18) through Hannah’s prayer in 1 Samuel, until the Ark of the Covenant was captured by the Philistines in 1 Samuels 4:11.

A Journey Worth Taking
Time and again, I was awestruck by the profound significance of this land. From Gerizim, to Shiloh, and back to Jerusalem... this tour was a “walk through time” along key locations in Israel’s early history.

I highly encourage all future Feast pilgrims to consider investing an afternoon exploring Israel’s rich history through the guided bus tours available each year during ICEJ’s Feast of Tabernacles.

CHECK OUT ICEJ AID’S BUS TOURS, FEATURED ON PP 27 & 29

“BEHOLD I MAKE ALL THINGS NEW”
Apostle Rene Terra Nova brings “Faithful and True” Word

Wednesday night at the Feast of Tabernacles was full of worship, dancing, singing and an inspirational word from Apostle René Terra Nova of Brazil. Opening the evening was our own Vesna Bühler with a poignant song about the peace of Jerusalem. Then the nations began to pray for the regions of the world led by representatives from the four corners of the earth: Fiji, Liberia, Canada and UK.

Local attorney and Messianic leader Calev Myers spoke about the incredible favour that God has placed over Israel’s economy and business sector. “The top three nations with companies listed in NASDAQ are America, China and Israel”, he explained. Eliahana Eli then led the crowd in a powerful performance of intimately singing the word of God back to the Lord, as beautiful white flags waved in the background.

Apostle René Terra Nova came to the stage with great excitement, passion and authority. “God is working on our character, defining our vision, and our dreams so that He can establish this new beginning in your life”, he declared. “Everything you need, God has already prepared for you.” Pilgrims gathered around the stage as René spoke forth in faith: “Today, God will begin something new in your life.”

The ICEJ looks forward to expanding the ICEJ Academy and making more teaching sessions available in the near future.

NEW IN 2019
ICEJ ACADEMY MAKES DEBUT
BY AARON HECHT

Feast 2019 saw the launch of the ICEJ Academy, with senior leaders of the ICEJ giving presentations on the history of Christian Zionism, the foundational principles of the movement, its biblical underpinnings, and the growing relations between Jewish and Christian communities both within Israel and in the nations. They also shared from their own pursuits and experiences; both the basic knowledge and practical steps needed to grow the movement and enhance its effectiveness worldwide.

Those attending the ICEJ Academy eagerly took notes and engaged both the speakers and each other in dialogue about the material. Many spoke of finishing the sessions with a renewed sense of purpose, and were excited to bring what they had learned back to their home churches and communities and share it with others.
THE WINDS OF CHANGE ARE BLOWING

Pilgrims arrived early Thursday morning for prayer and worship ahead of the day’s rich and thought-provoking seminars.

Rev. Mats-Ola Iskhoel oversees a network of 400 churches in Russia and brought a hope-filled challenge: “Sometimes, we start off in life with a dream and it doesn’t work out, but God takes the clay and starts over and He makes something beautiful. This is the story of Israel... If the clay of your life is marred, He can take it and start over and make something beautiful despite what came before.”

Winds of Change in the Middle East

In Breakthrough in Saudi Arabia, CBN’s Mideast Bureau Chief Chris Mitchell discussed Saudi Arabia’s incredible transformation, such as the Saudi Crown Prince’s recent meeting with Evangelical Christian leaders, and ‘Vision 2030’, the government’s initiative to diversify their economy and attract Christian tourism. Chris’ interview with three young Saudis highlighted the impact of these sweeping reforms, especially for women.

Then in a dramatic moment, author Joel Richardson addressed the audience from the possible site of Mt. Sinai in the Saudi desert via a live Skype call and openly displayed a Bible, reading from Isaiah 60. Richardson led this first-ever tour for Christian tourists to the Saudi Kingdom.

Ingolf Ellssel, ICEJ Board chairman, gave a prophetic perspective on current events, stressing: “If God is doing something new, He first reveals it to His prophets.” Ellssel pointed to Deuteronomy 30:3, explaining God will first gather His people and then redeem them. Christian involvement is so crucial, since every revival requires prayer beforehand. Despite dark times, Ellssel encouraged prayer and time in God’s Word as our highest priority, adding: “God is still sovereign; these difficulties will not destroy us, they will bring us back to God.”

Local Believers and their challenges were addressed by a panel of Jewish and Arab pastors living in the Holy Land.

- Messianic pastor Berlie Belay described the Ethiopian community in Israel’s unique situation: “God is using the Ethiopian Jews for a new revival” and thanked the attendees “for what you are doing [through the ICEJ] in bringing the Ethiopian Jews back to Israel.”

- Ashdod pastor Israel Pochtar said, “When I share with my neighbors about the love of Christians... my neighbors have a hard time believing me.”

- Discussing the spiritual life of the local Christian Arab community, Jerusalem pastor Basaam Adranley reported “seven Arabs were baptised last month and many are coming to know the Lord... There is a big struggle against what God is about to do” but they continue to persevere: “When we feel like we have lost our vision, God tells us to stand because He is faithful.

THE WINDS OF CHANGE ARE INDEED BLOWING THROUGH THE MIDDLE EAST ONCE AGAIN, AND WE WITNESSED THIS NEW BEGINNING LIVE!

JOEL RICHARDSON - VIA SKYPE FROM SAUDI ARABIA
Each year, the festive Jerusalem March is a highlight for both our Feast pilgrims who march and the tens of thousands of Israelis who line the streets of Jerusalem to greet them. This year, thousands of Christians from over 100 nations, attired in national costumes and waving their flags, paraded once more through the streets of Jerusalem to express solidarity and love to the people of Israel.

**Nations of the Earth**

As the nations lined up in Sacher Park, Chayapat from Thailand, dressed in his traditional Thai costume, said: “We appreciate so much to walk and see all the nations as one family, and to show all of the Jewish people that we love them because of Yeshua.”

**All Together**

The Jerusalem March is an event that must be experienced to fully understand the impact, both on the Israeli spectators and Christian marchers. Petra Gorny, Headsets Feast Team Member from Germany, shared: “The March was awesome because it was a witness of just how many people from the nations love Israel. One could see how the local Israelis were touched by this, and sense how much they desired to be accepted by their neighbours and other nationalities, and the Jerusalem March is proof this can be achieved.”

**Young and Old**

Rene from the Cook Islands was the youngest in her group: “This is my first year at the Feast and I am 14 years old. It is nice and I want to come back next year. It has been fun to interact with other people. God has a new beginning for me. I’m not sure yet what it is, but I’m excited.”

**Marching LIVE**

Moises Vasquez, Social Media Feast Team Member from Australia (pictured above) marched with other Aussies while using his phone to live-stream through ICEJ’s official Facebook page, allowing our friends and followers from around the world to virtually walk amongst the pilgrims. “The waves of people from every tongue, tribe and nation set the city abuzz, and smiling faces of all ages lined both sides of the streets”, recalled Moises. “It’s become one of my best highlights and why wouldn’t it when I get to yell out ‘Aussie, Aussie, Aussie’ in Jerusalem and hear back the response ‘Oi, Oi, Oi!’”

**Impacting Israel’s Families**

As thousands of Christians declared God’s love for the Jewish people and Israel, thousands of Israelis lined the streets to receive this “hug” from the nations. One family expressed, “It’s beautiful and they come here every year. They come only because they love Israel. It is amazing!”

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**HISTORIC SKYPE CALL: SAUDI ARABIA TO JERUSALEM’S MAIN STAGE**

History was made when Feast pilgrims witnessed a live Skype call between Dr Bühler from the main stage of the Pais Arena in Jerusalem to Christian author Joel Richardson speaking LIVE from Al Bayad, Saudi Arabia, believed to be the actual site of the biblical Mt. Sinai.

During the Special Presentation: Breakthrough in Saudi Arabia, Feast pilgrims watched the big screens in amazement as Joel pointed out the possible Altar to the Golden Calf behind him, then turned 180 degrees to show Mt. Sinai – where Moses would have received the law directly from God’s hand – with the split rock clearly visible in the foreground. During the call, Joel openly held up his Bible and read from it, something which would have been unthinkable until now.

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**IT’S BEAUTIFUL AND THEY COME HERE EVERY YEAR. THEY COME ONLY BECAUSE THEY LOVE ISRAEL. IT IS AMAZING!**

AN ISRAELI FAMILY - JERUSALEM MARCH
THE NATIONS CELEBRATE WITH ISRAELI GUESTS

After an exciting afternoon of enthusiastic marching through Jerusalem, pilgrims filled the arena for a spectacular evening with our Israeli friends. Ray Sidney and his international choir knocked it out of the park with their explosive worship to the King of kings.

ICEJ & JAFI: Strategic Partners in Israel

Isaac Herzog, Chairman of the Jewish Agency spoke of the Christian Embassy's vital role in bringing the Jewish people back to Israel: “We are following in the footsteps of the Bible and the prophets in the redemption of the Jewish people, and therefore we are doing it with partners. And one of our most important strategic partners is the ICEJ”, he said. “It’s an incredible organisation that works with us, and personally, since I started my long political and public career I have found the ICEJ in many spheres of life in Israel.”

Herzog then presented Dr Jürgen Bühler with an award on behalf of the Jewish Agency for Israel. On the award was inscribed Isaiah 52:7: “How beautiful on the mountains are the feet of those who bring good news, who proclaim peace, who bring good tidings, who proclaim salvation, who say to Zion, ‘Your God reigns!'”

Nehemiah Award honors Lifetime Achievement

The ICEJ also presented its annual Nehemiah Award to Rev. Michael Utterback, a Christian leader with a lifetime of achievements in building support for Israel and the Jewish people.

An ordained minister with the Church of God of Cleveland, Tennessee, Rev. Utterback first established Ministry to Israel (MTI) in 1988 in response to a unique vision to become engaged in the great Ingathering of the Jewish people back to their ancient homeland in Israel.

Bringing them Home by the Thousands

In 1991, Utterback’s MTI began partnering with ICEJ and other organisations to assist Jewish families in making the journey home to Israel. Over the next 30-plus years, he thrust himself into facilitating Aliyah: From fishing activities across vast expanses of Russia, to sponsoring transport operations and airline flights, to planting new immigrants securely in the Land of Israel. Including Aliyah efforts of the ICEJ, Ezra International, and his own MTI, Michael Utterback assisted tens of thousands of Jewish people to return to Israel.

In receiving the award, Michael shared, “I am very honoured. The ICEJ has been in my heart for many years.” He also observed, “There is no other nation like the nation of Israel. This is a land of miracles. It is in the DNA of every Jew. Miracles are not a strange thing for Jewish people... The fact that Israel exists is a modern-day miracle. There is a good reason why.”

“You are a Miracle”

“Our dear Jewish friends that are here tonight, many of you have made Aliyah to this land. I want to tell you that YOU are a miracle. You are witnesses to the nations of the earth that the God of Israel keeps His promises. You had to come back to this land, so that the nations could know that the God of Israel is truly God.”

Quoting the prophet Jeremiah, he underscored the prophetic significance of Gentile involvement in Aliyah. “Hear the word of the Lord, O nations, and tell it to the isles far off, He who scattered Israel will gather them.”

Addressing Israeli guests, he added: “You are here tonight because it is God Himself who brought you. He brought you to Himself so He could embrace you and show you how much He loves you... Your God is watching over Israel tonight and He cares about you. I want you to know that I love you too.”

ONE OF OUR MOST IMPORTANT STRATEGIC PARTNERS IS THE ICEJ.

ISAAC HERZOG, JAFI CHAIRMAN

THIS IS THE BEST ISRAELI NIGHT WE’VE EVER HAD!
For over 30 years, Rev. Michael Utterback has travelled worldwide and spoken as an advocate for Israel. His roles with the ICEJ included Liaison to Churches, International Director, and member of the ICEJ’s International Board of Trustees.

Today, Michael remains active in Aliyah and absorption efforts with MTI and as International Director for Ezra International. Michael and his wife Gina live in Jerusalem and have two daughters and seven grandchildren.

Renowned violinist Serguei Popov came to the stage for his traditional Feast solo performance, yet this year he was accompanied on the piano by an old friend from musical college days. This was no ordinary “old friend”, but Roman Polanski, Director of Russian Aliyah for the Jewish Agency.

This past spring, Roman was a guest speaker at an ICEJ reception in Jerusalem, where he reconnected with Serguei after 35 years apart, only to find both were now fully involved in Aliyah work, with Serguei serving as ICEJ’s Coordinator for the Central Asian Republics.

A troupe of Taiwanese dancers brought excitement and cultural flavour to Israeli Guest Night. With exotic, colourful costumes, skilled dancers performed tribal dances of worship to the Lord, involving long bamboo sticks which fellow dancers moved in unison under their feet with speed and precision. It was truly a flawless performance which left the audience in awe of this unique Chinese tradition.

By Fiona Chow, Media Feast Team, Finland
The closing session at the Tower of David opened with songs of praise echoing off the Old City walls of Jerusalem, and powerfully sealed all that God had done throughout the Feast.

“This could be the most important session of the Feast, because we are going to pray”, ICEJ President Jürgen Bühler said in his welcome. “The basis of everything in our lives is the Word of God... Jesus fought the enemy by saying, ‘It is written.’”

As the crowd prayed in the Tower of David, near the very place where Jesus was tried before Pilate in Herod’s Palace, Jürgen declared: “I believe we will make decisions today that will change our lives and nations.”

Rev. Juha Ketola petitioned God to pour out His spirit of prayer, to pray in agreement with God’s heart. “I want him to roll off the shame of Egypt in my life”, Juha explained. “I want to walk in the supernatural power of prayer and His word.”

David Parsons led a time of prayer for Succot joy and laughter in the Holy Spirit, and Mojmir Kallus oversaw a series of prayers for the nations.

An Egyptian brother approached Jürgen during the time of prayer and said, “Put your glasses on and look into the sky. Do you see the double rainbow?” A God-given sign He truly was with us.

Through each day of the Feast, the Holy Spirit wove a common thread of truth: We must go back to the Beginning; we must go back to the Word of God!

God spoke and created; everything foundational in our faith is revealed to us in His Word, the Bible.

We pray God will bring you back to the great Beginnings in His Word, and launch you into a grand, new beginning with Him!
LOVE ABOVE ALL ELSE
BY RYAN TSUEN, ICEJ GRAPHIC DESIGNER

Love above all else. These were the first words that came to mind as I looked at the many people gathered around me on the final morning of ICEJ’s Feast of Tabernacles 2019. In this historic, iconic landmark of the Old City of Jerusalem – the Museum of the Tower of David – pilgrims entered into a powerful time of worship and prayer.

This closing session of the week-long festivities is always a cherished and precious time: To pray and reflect on what God had done throughout the week; to contemplate things He had spoken to us individually, and as a Body; and to “pray it forward” as we interceded on behalf of our own nations and the Body of Christ around the world.

Rabbi Shmuel Bowman, Executive Director of Operation Lifeshield and Torah Scribe (Sofer STaM) spoke on the mystery of the Hebrew “Alefbet”, the significance of how the Torah begins, and tied it together with the Hebrew Torah’s final word: Israel.

Daniel Goldstein, founder of Jerusalem-based Jewels of Judaism, walked through the various biblical and Jewish calendars and helped attendees begin to decipher – and embrace – the mystery of the biblical calendar, the Hebrew months, and the annual Feasts of the Lord.

Dr Jacob Keegstra, ICEJ-Netherlands National Director and author of “God’s Prophetic Feasts”, provided an excellent introduction to Succot, or the Feast of Tabernacles. Keegstra discussed the biblical background, what Jesus did, and the prophetic significance of this particular Feast of the Lord.

As leaders and representatives stepped forward to pray, the Lord ignited a fresh fire of passion and a deeper desire for His Word. Jürgen Bühlner released an exhortation to the Feast pilgrims “to be a people who treasure the Word of God...[because] the basis of everything in our lives is the Word of God”. It is this Word that existed in the Beginning; this Word that became flesh and atoned for the sins of the world; this Word that is God’s love letter to His people.

What a unique and memorable time to be standing side-by-side among the many people of the nations gathered here in Jerusalem, the city so dear to the Father’s heart.

NEW IN 2019

Thank you to Chris Mitchell, CBN News Middle East Bureau Chief, for serving as Emcee for the Feast’s evening celebrations in the Jerusalem Pais Arena.

Each year, in preparation for the ICEJ Feast of Tabernacles, an outdoor Succah is erected on the grounds of Jerusalem’s Pais Arena. The Succah is a “hidden gem” of the Feast, serving as a gathering place for pilgrims to intercede for their nations and each other, experience the festive atmosphere of this annual Jewish tradition of “sitting together in the Succah”, and gain greater perspective of the Feasts of the Lord through daily seminars.

ICEJ’S GLOBAL PRAYER INITIATIVE

Join this monthly Prayer initiative!

www.icej.org/isaiah62

“God’s Prophetic Feasts” by Jacob Keegstra and “The Third Temple” by Daniel Goldstein

TEACHINGS AND MORE AT ICEJSTORE.COM
NEW LANGUAGE SEMINARS AT THE FEAST

FRENCH SPEAKERS GATHER FOR A NEW BEGINNING • By Camille Troc

On the second day of the Feast, around 300 pilgrims from 19 different French-speaking nations gathered for a special French-language seminar in the Pais Arena.

The French-speaking world is varied and dispersed, so the goal was to come together and pray for unity. Speakers from Africa, Europe and several island nations shared briefly about the political, economic and spiritual state of their nations, followed by a list of specific prayer points. Then, to engage the whole room in active intercession, we split into small groups to pray for the specific needs.

It was encouraging to see their zeal and fire in prayer, and God’s presence was tangible. For two hours, we were actors in an historic moment and accomplished much through our prayers. Despite major cultural differences, our struggles are the same: We all face a serious attack on our Judeo-Christian values and imminent persecution, whether active or passive. So we came together as brothers and sisters in the Lord and proclaimed healing and salvation over our nations and concluded the meeting with the Aaronic blessing.

This is just the beginning of something greater: New relationships, a growing network of Spirit-filled, pro-Israel, French-speaking believers, and revival for our nations.

CHINESE BELIEVERS REJOICE AS ‘ONE NEW MAN’ • By Haifa Lu

On Wednesday afternoon, Chinese believers from Mainland China, Hong Kong, Singapore, Taiwan, Malaysia, USA, UK and Australia gathered together for the very first Chinese Feast Seminar.

Messianic Pastor Ariel Blumenthat shared about the vision of the One New Man. He explained to the attendees that the One New Man is not about taking a photo with a Rabbi, following the Jewish tradition, or having Shabbat meals with a Jewish...

PRAYER FOR THE NATIONS IN THE SUCCAH

BY TWYLA AYTON, PRAYER FEAST TEAM, CANADA

As a first-time prayer team member and Feast attendee, I was totally stunned at the fresh perspective God gave me on Zechariah 14:16-19.

Although already underlined in my Bible, the passage came to life this week as if I were hearing it for the first time. Here I was, praying in a Succah alongside delegates from over 100 nations – including Egypt – in the heart of Jerusalem. Something extra special happened when people from many nations came each morning before the Lord in the Prayer Succah and presented themselves on behalf of their country in prayer and petition.

I loved the prayer tent! Whether or not you understood the language being spoken, it was so natural to agree in Spirit. A fellow team member told me that because of knowing me, it gave her a heart for my country and enlarged her tent pegs.

One morning I arrived at the Prayer Succah totally exhausted and unsure how I was going to carry on. I petitioned God and asked a team member to pray for me. But when the first person began to pray in a completely different language than my own, it felt as though a lightning bolt went right through me, and I felt a heaviness break off me! I knew from that moment on, I was going to be okay and my perspective totally changed. Praise God!

I would encourage you to come to the Feast of Tabernacles to represent your nation and when you are here, join us in the Prayer Succah to stand in the gap for your country and others!

See you next year in Jerusalem! Shalom!

2020 Calendar

Israel’s Diversity 2020

2020 Calendar

Teachings and More at icejstore.com
family. It is about what Jesus accomplished on the Cross, when he broke down the dividing wall between Jews and Gentiles. Then Ariel brought a profound teaching on Ephesians chapter two. Living in China for two years gave Ariel a heart for the Chinese and a good understanding of their mindset and culture. He mentioned the peace Jesus made is also for the Chinese people: They are as one in Christ. At the end of the meeting, attendees prayed together for the next generation Chinese to fully walk in the unity and promised destiny they have received in Christ Jesus.

Through Pastor Ariel’s message and the time of corporate prayer, the Holy Spirit released great freedom and joy in the attendees’ hearts! All praise to Jesus for the peace He made on the Cross, for Jews and Gentiles, for the Chinese, and for all nations! All glory to Jesus! 🙌

AND IT SHALL COME TO PASS THAT EVERYONE WHO IS LEFT OF ALL THE NATIONS WHICH CAME AGAINST JERUSALEM SHALL GO UP FROM YEAR TO YEAR TO WORSHIP THE KING, THE LORD OF HOSTS, AND TO KEEP THE FEAST OF TABERNACLES. AND IT SHALL BE THAT WHICHEVER OF THE FAMILIES OF THE EARTH DO NOT COME UP TO JERUSALEM TO WORSHIP THE KING, THE LORD OF HOSTS, ON THEM THERE WILL BE NO RAIN...THIS SHALL BE THE PUNISHMENT OF EGYPT AND... ALL THE NATIONS THAT DO NOT COME UP TO KEEP THE FEAST OF TABERNACLES.
ZECHARIAH 14:16-19

ICEJ AID GIFTS AT FEAST BOOTH

Every year at the Feast of Tabernacles, the ICEJ AID has a booth in the Pais Arena and many pilgrims bring gifts for the Jewish people. Items are often homemade, and from locations around the world, bringing a wonderful intercultural flavour. When Israelis receive these gifts, they are greatly touched to know that Christians from all around the world are standing with them.

This year there were several gifts donated, and thus the ICEJ AID team was able to create care packages with these donated items and give them to the new Olim who were guests at the Feast on Israeli Guest Night. 🌟

Jannie Tolhoek and Lise Afele holding coloured pencils that were given for children.

Jannie Tolhoek and two Australians who gave homemade gifts.
At the Feast of Tabernacles 2019, the International Christian Embassy Jerusalem also celebrated reaching a new milestone in its Aliyah efforts, as the ICEJ has now assisted more than 150,000 Jews to make the journey home to Israel since our founding in September 1980.

In modern times, some 3.6 million Jews have returned to the Land of Israel from all over the world – from the north, south, east and west – in literal fulfilment of biblical promises. For example, a massive wave of over one million Soviet Jews have made their way home to Israel ever since the collapse of the Iron Curtain exactly thirty years ago in October 1989. In response, the ICEJ has been there to help with this historic Ingathering, not only from Russia but from many other regions of the world as well.

The ICEJ has engaged in a wide variety of Aliyah efforts, working closely with the Jewish Agency for Israel and other partners to help with the Jewish return to the Land of Israel.

As of October 2019, the ICEJ has provided substantial assistance to more than 150,000 Jews making the journey home to Israel. That represents more than ten percent of the Jews who have made Aliyah over the past four decades.

In addition to these Aliyah figures, the Christian Embassy also has provided generous assistance towards Absorption projects that have helped tens of thousands of new Jewish immigrants to settle into their new homes and integrate into Israeli society.

Meet the New Immigrants
To mark the occasion, the Christian Embassy invited forty of our recent olim (new immigrants) to attend the traditional Israeli Guest Night during the Feast of Tabernacles. This included individuals or families from Belarus, Brazil, China (Kaifeng Jews), Colombia, Ethiopia, France, India (Bnei Menashe), Russia, South Africa, and the Ukraine.

The 150,000th oleh assisted by the ICEJ is Danyl Godim, a medical doctor from Ukraine who made Aliyah in 2019 with his wife Ana, a nurse, and their two children. Their son Elia, 16, came ahead of the family on the Naale youth pre-army program supported by ICEJ. The parents and younger daughter Oliana, 10, came on the Jewish Agency’s “Profession for a New Life” program for medical doctors, also supported by ICEJ. Thanks to this unique program, Danyl will receive his license to practice medicine in Israel in less than a year.

Danyl and his wife decided to make Aliyah because they feel Israel is their true home and here they can give their children a better future.

“We are grateful for all the assistance we have received, and could not have made Aliyah without it”, said Danyl. “We now want to begin giving back – me as a doctor, Ana as a nurse, and Elia as a soldier in the Israeli army.”

“I really have a hope that my family will find a good future and a good education here”, added Ana. “And I’m really thankful so much for everyone who helped us. I’m talking now about not only money, not only about some food, it’s also about moral support.”
ICEJ ALIYAH

MAIN ROUTES OF ALIYAH

The ICEJ’s main routes of Aliyah have included:

St. Petersburg-Helsinki: The ICEJ’s first major route of Aliyah was through St. Petersburg and Helsinki, and we have now transported over 35,000 Jews from Northwest Russia to airports in St. Petersburg and Helsinki and over 4,000 Jews to the airport in Belarus – all bound for Israel.

Kaliningrad: Another 5,000 Jews have been transported from the Kaliningrad enclave in Poland for flights to Israel since the early 1990s.

Ukraine: During the years when ICEJ was the main sponsor of Exobus in the 1990s, we bused over 35,000 Jews to Kiev and other locales for flights or voyages by ship to Israel. Since the crisis with Russia erupted in 2013, the ICEJ has sponsored flights, pre-Aliyah seminars, Aliyah programs and transportation efforts for over 2,000 Ukrainian Jews.

Central Asia – ICEJ has assisted over 8,000 Jews coming home from Uzbekistan and neighboring Muslim republics since 1996.

Western Aliyah – Over the past decade, ICEJ has assisted with the upswing in Aliyah from France and Germany, as well as from North and South America.

Ethiopia – After sponsoring numerous absorption projects for Ethiopian Jewish immigrants for many years, the ICEJ has sponsored direct flights to Israel for 1,920 Ethiopian olim arriving since 2016.

Bnei Menashe – ICEJ has partnered with Shavei Israel to bring 1,065 Bnei Menashe from northeast India since 2012.

AN ARRAY OF ALIYAH EFFORTS

Over the past forty years, the types of Aliyah assistance provided by the ICEJ have included:

- Sponsoring flights to Israel for Jews making Aliyah.
- Offering grants to needy Jewish families moving to Israel.
- Providing transport by bus, train and other means to the airport for Aliyah flights.
- Paying for travel, lodging and other expenses for Jews to complete their documentation with the Jewish Agency.
- Providing special medical care and ambulance service for the handicapped on their way to Israel.
- Organizing ‘fishing’ efforts, such as concerts, seminars and mobile exhibits, to locate Jewish communities and encourage their move to Israel.
- Sponsoring Aliyah seminars and camps organized by the Jewish Agency for Israel.
- Funding Hebrew language classes and computer courses for young Russian Jews preparing to make Aliyah.
- Sponsoring Aliyah Fairs, ‘Red Carpet’ welcomes, and other events for Jewish immigrants just arriving in Israel.

40 olim at Feast 2019.

The Godim family.
TIMELINE OF ICEJ ALIYAH

1980

ICEJ launches the “Mordechai Outcry” campaign, a series of demonstrations by Christians in numerous world capitals to protest the plight of Soviet Jewry.

1981

ICEJ launches Aliyah work in Belarus.

1984

ICEJ-Finland, under the leadership of Dr. Ulla Järvilehto, begins supporting a hospitality center in Vienna set up by Eva Huber to assist Jewish families leaving the Soviet Union via Austria. ICEJ branches in Germany and the Netherlands soon joined the effort, which assisted over 60,000 Jews over the next seven years with clothes, shoes, toiletries and other needed items.

2000

ICEJ sponsors the return of the Jin family, the first Chinese Jews from the ancient Kaifeng community to make Aliyah.

2003

ICEJ begins sponsoring assistance grants for Russian Jews making Aliyah from North America.

2006

The International Christian Embassy Jerusalem is founded by Christians from 32 countries during the Feast of Tabernacles.
In May 1990, the ICEJ welcomed its first Aliyah flight, a full Boeing 747 planeload of Soviet olim sponsored by its German branch. Since then, the ICEJ has funded over 53 direct charter flights with Jewish families coming from the former Soviet Union.

ICEJ becomes the main sponsor of the Exobus Project and transports over 35,000 Jews to airports in Russia, Ukraine, Belarus, and Eastern Europe for flights to Israel.

ICEJ opens an Aliyah route via Hungary, with ICEJ-Switzerland using van convoys to bring over 7,000 Jews from western Ukraine to Budapest for flights to Israel over the next two decades.

The Berlin Wall falls and the door opens wider for Jews to leave the Soviet republics via Finland and other routes.

ICEJ opens an Aliyah office in St. Petersburg managed by Howard Flower, who was later appointed ICEJ Aliyah Director in 2006.

ICEJ initiates the ‘Far Distant Cities’ program to help Jewish families moving to Israel from Siberia and other vast reaches of the former Soviet Union. ICEJ launches the first of many Aliyah bus trips to the Central Asian republics to transport Jews to airports.

ICEJ opens the Raoul Wallenberg Center in Budapest to assist Jewish families on their way to Israel.
The Work of Aliyah Continues
The ICEJ rejoices in having assisted more than 150,000 Jews in making Aliyah to Israel. Yet the great Ingathering of Israel continues. By the end of 2019, Israel expects to take in another 35,000 new Jewish immigrants this year. And once again, the ICEJ will be assisting roughly ten percent of these Jews in moving to Israel. Indeed, the Christian Embassy is on schedule to help around 3,500 Jews to make the journey home to Israel this year. Plus, the Jewish Agency has told us to expect the Ethiopian Aliyah to resume and even accelerate in 2020. So give today to the Aliyah work of the ICEJ.
Donate at icej.org/aid/aliyah

2009
ICEJ begins sponsoring Aliyah flights for Jews from Sweden and other Western countries.

2010
ICEJ begins Aliyah efforts in Latvia and Lithuania.
ICEJ sponsors its first Aliyah flights for Jews from France.

2012
ICEJ partners with Shavei Israel to bring over 1,000 Bnei Menashe from northeast India.

2013
ICEJ responds to Ukraine crisis with ‘fishing’ efforts and sponsored Aliyah flights for Ukrainian Jews.

2016
ICEJ sponsors the renewed wave of Ethiopian Aliyah.

2018/19
ICEJ increases support for JAFI’s Aliyah summer and winter camps throughout Eastern and Central Europe.

2008
ICEJ starts sponsoring ‘Red Carpet’ welcomes for new immigrants with the Jewish Agency for Israel.
ICEJ’S ENCOUNTER ISRAEL TEAM ENCOUNTERS NEW STORIES IN GERMANY

BY KAYLA MUCHNIK

The ICEJ TV Production team, headquartered in Jerusalem, travelled to Germany this summer to report on the dark history of anti-Semitism and how Christians can stand with Israel today! As a German native, ICEJ President Dr Jürgen Bühler personally shared stories about his family helping Jews during the Holocaust. He also interviewed German Christians who saw God move mightily when the city of Berlin was divided by the Berlin Wall. Many new Encounter Israel programs are currently in production highlighting this time in Germany, so subscribe to our YouTube and Vimeo channels, as well as email updates to see these new and powerful episodes! 😊

NEW OFFICES OPEN FOR VISITORS

The ICEJ has completed renovations at our new offices at 38 Pierre Koenig Street, in Jerusalem’s Talpiyot neighbourhood and we are now ready to receive visitors, including tour groups. If you would like to pay us a visit or bring your tour group, we would be glad to host you! Please write us at icej@icej.org and give us details on your group and when you would like to visit. Or call us at +972-2-539-9700. 😊

NEW EPISODES NOW AIRING ON GOD TV

ENCOUNTER ISRAEL

Visit GOD.TV/VOD/ENCOUNTERISRAEL to watch “Encounter Israel” episodes on demand!
A HAPPY JEWISH NEW YEAR FROM ST. PETERSBURG TO JERUSALEM

BY MAXINE CARLILL

Rosh Hashanah, known as the Jewish New Year, is a time of prayer and celebration. This year it fell on the first days of October, and the weeks before were especially busy for ICEJ’s Homecare. It is traditional to give and receive gifts during this holiday, so a group in the Netherlands with hearts for Holocaust Survivors ensured that 90 elderly Russian Jews, mainly in poor health, would not be forgotten. Therefore, on their behalf, 90 gifts were prepared and 90 extra home visits were made.

The beautiful packages contained handmade soap, a ceramic soap tray and small towel. Each gift included a greeting card with words of encouragement and Scripture for those who may feel lonely and uprooted in the land in which they were not born, but to where they made Aliyah. Each visit was warm and welcoming with various stories shared. There were happy childhood memories of how Rosh Hashanah was celebrated within their family, but also some painful memories of the loss of loved ones. “You bring us always, light and joy,” said an elderly couple with tears in their eyes. “You bring the world into my life,” said a lady who is wheelchair bound and without family, as she stretched her arms wide open to indicate the love she was receiving.

Meanwhile, back in their former homeland, ICEJ’s Russian Branch Director Howard Flower, was also busy preparing for Rosh Hashanah. He visited a Jewish Community Centre to distribute gifts of clothing, food parcels and pharmacy vouchers. The Holocaust Survivors, war veterans, and invalids who received these gifts of love, struggle economically with inadequate pensions. Their particular circumstances make it impossible for them to immigrate to Israel, but, “We try to do what we can for them,” says Howard.

In the old homeland of St. Petersburg and the new homeland of Jerusalem, hearts were touched on this significant Jewish holiday by the love of Christians from the nations.

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In the old homeland of St. Petersburg and the new homeland of Jerusalem, hearts were touched on this significant Jewish holiday by the love of Christians from the nations.
This Christmas ICEJ Aid is giving gifts to Christian Arab churches in Jerusalem, Bethlehem and Nazareth. We will give gifts to the children, food for the churches to host Christmas meals, and personal food baskets for families to have a very special Christmas.

Please partner with us to bring comfort and joy to those who need our love and encouragement this holiday season: ICEJ.ORG/HOLIDAYS

VISIT TO HAIFA HOME IMPACTS FEAST PILGRIMS FROM THE NATIONS

BY CARINA RIEGER, TRANSLATION FEAST TEAM, ICEJ-GERMANY

A trip to the Haifa Home for Holocaust Survivors is never easy, but always deeply rewarding. “We are so happy someone travels here to visit us. I love all the people who come to listen to our stories”, Esti Liber, survivor and resident in the facility gratefully told a group of 32 Christians from 13 different nations, many of whom had never before met a Holocaust survivor.

On 16 October, these Feast of Tabernacles pilgrims joined ICEJ Aid’s Haifa Home bus tour. What better way to bless Israel than by showing love and care for its most wounded inhabitants? “The home has become a symbol of hope in all of Israel”, Yudit Setz, Deputy Director of ICEJ Aid, and Jannie Tolhoek, ICEJ Aid Administrator, told the group on their way to Haifa. Shimon Sabag, Founder and Director of the Home, warmly welcomed the visitors at the facility.

The home currently accommodates up to 70 residents, yet a new building under renovation will provide more advanced one-on-one care for 12 elderly survivors. Furthermore, three precious volunteers from Germany joined the ICEJ Haifa Team in September: Debora Wanner, Marlen Degen and Kerstin Hoffmann. “With the little help that we give, we can do a lot of good. That is so exhilarating”, Debora rejoiced. Volunteers face the challenges of adapting to a new culture, building relationships with the survivors and being available around the clock, and the ICEJ is most grateful for these young women. Prayers for them are much appreciated.

“We only have around ten years left to affect the lives of the remaining survivors who have suffered more than we could ever imagine”, Yudit Setz pointed out. The question is: What will we do with these years? One possibility is to support the work of ICEJ at the Haifa Home.

We also need more volunteers at the Haifa Home, especially for social media. If you desire more information, please contact Yudit Setz at yudit.setz@icej.org.

Thank you for supporting us in comforting the Jewish people! 🙏

“It was very informative and heart-breaking at the same time.”
• Nancy Kora, Cook Islands •

“Now I understood what really happened during the Holocaust.”
• Sitiveni Naciriyawa, Fiji •

“I recommend the small Haifa Home Museum. They did an amazing job there.”
• Matthias Schönfelder, Germany •

“I am impressed by the work of ICEJ in giving hope to these survivors. You restore their dignity as human beings. I hope that I will have the opportunity to come back to the Haifa Home. From now on, I will be praying for the survivor I talked to every day.”
• Ethel Nhleko, Eswatini •

Send your best gift or adopt a survivor today:
ICEJ.ORG/AID/HAIFA-HOME-HOLOCAUST-SURVIVORS
Five short kilometers from the Gaza border sits Kfar Aza, a small community regularly targeted by Gaza terrorists. Early September, ICEJ Aid received a grand tour of this strong and humble community from 75-year-old resident, Shai Hermesh. A former Knesset member who served in Israel’s parliament for seven years, Shai is down-to-earth, yet extremely resilient and passionate about people, politics, and the rights for Israelis to live in the land that belongs to Israel. He has been a mighty defender of his community and nation, even in the most life-threatening moments where Gaza continually launched rocket, mortar and fire raids at their homes and land.

As we walked the streets of this beautiful and peaceful area, we realized this place is not always so tranquil. Shai explained, “It is so peaceful, and yet it can be interrupted in a second.” Due to the continual attacks from Gaza, there are shelters every 150 meters throughout the kibbutz. The ICEJ has donated several shelters and a sheltered room, and we have recently donated to the reconstruction of their park which was destroyed by fire kites from Gaza.

The people in this community were not willing to let their destroyed piece of land remain desolate; therefore, they asked for help to turn their burnt fields into a beautiful park. The park will serve as a gathering place for the kibbutz and is expected to be completed in February 2020.

Thanks to God and your generous gifts for turning what the enemy meant for evil into something great: A beautiful park full of new trees, plants, fruit, and life!

ISRAELI SECURITY OFFICIALS RECEIVE 21 FIRST RESPONDER KITS

Sadot Negev security officials came together just outside an army base in the southern region of Israel to receive First Responder kits, donated by the ICEJ. As each officer received a backpack filled with tools and equipment to help them better respond in a crisis, they gave the ICEJ heartfelt thanks. Our ICEJ Aid Director Nicole Yoder explained that Christians are providing these emergency response tools to Israeli communities because “We love this nation and we know that you as security officials have a challenging job to protect your communities along the border. We pray for you often, however, we also want to help in a practical way. May these tools help those first on the scene of crisis to respond quickly to save lives.”

The Security Chief of the Sadot Negev Region, Rafi Babian, shared his deep gratitude towards the ICEJ by saying, “Thank you very much for the first responder equipment, but also for all the calls from you to see how we were doing during times of crisis. It warms our hearts that there are people standing with us. We have many trained people, but we needed the right equipment. And now we have it. Thank you very much. Please continue to pray for the peace of the residents and the blessing of God.”

Thank you for your generous gifts to bless the Jewish people, allowing them to better prepare for times of crisis. Help us continue to stand with Israel today: INT.ICEJ.ORG/AID/ISRAEL_IN_CRISIS
During the Feast of Tabernacles, 45 delegates hailing from different parts of the world took the opportunity to visit one of Israel’s most vulnerable regions: Eshkol and Sha’ar HaNegev. These areas are bordering the Gaza Strip from where terrorists fire missiles, mortars and balloons equipped with flammables and explosive devices towards Israeli towns on a regular basis. The tour was accompanied by ICEJ-Aid Director Nicole Yoder and Executive Director of Operation Lifeshield, Rabbi Shmuel Bowman, with whom ICEJ cooperates in setting up bomb shelters in areas under attack.

The light of hope shining in the darkness
In Kibbutz Magen a karate club trains children as young as four to defend themselves with their mere bodies. But as this form of self-defence is not sufficient in case of a rocket fired from the Gaza Strip, they now also have access to a bomb shelter located right outside the building, thanks to a generous donation from ICEJ Switzerland.

Following a presentation of a firefighting ATV, Ilan Isaacson, Head of Security of the Eshkol region, briefed us on the current security situation. Overlooking Khan Yunis, Gaza’s second largest city, we could sense Ilan’s sympathy towards the people of Gaza who are being held hostage by terror organisations Hamas and Islamic Jihad, and his deep hope that one day, Israelis and Gazans would be able to freely engage with each other as they had done in the past. As we were listening, a report came in that a fire balloon had just landed near the Kibbutz we had visited moments before.

Alleviating an ongoing trauma
Our final stop was Hetz Shachor, where we met with the Deputy Head of Security of the Sha’ar HaNegev region. He explained how the local population stands together in administering trauma treatment and developing programs to build resilience. Their biggest challenge is not the missiles themselves, but the ongoing trauma which the population, children and adults alike, experiences as a result. Since the first missiles were fired in 2001, there has not yet been a return to normal life. An entire generation of children has grown up under a persistent missile barrage. People are suffering from sleepless nights, depression and continue to relive their trauma without finding closure. Nevertheless, Israelis from all parts of the country are moving to these areas and the population is steadily growing. Many are stirred by a deep love for the land and by the strong sense of community felt throughout these regions.

Please support the ICEJ Israel in Crisis fund so we can continue to provide life-saving bomb shelters and equipment for Israel’s communities who live on the frontline of terrorism.

The stresses they live through put my problems into the shade, yet they still have the same everyday problems also. The people who live here are true Zionists, they live in the spirit of the pioneers of one hundred years ago. What really struck me was that they have kept their hearts sweet, they showed no sign of bitterness, instead they even have sympathy for the people living in Gaza.

- Paul Coulter, Ireland •

“Most of all I was impressed by the locals’ resilience. They could easily leave the area but they choose to stay. I was very reluctant to join this trip today. During the morning devotion I suddenly felt an impulse that I had to come and see how the people here live. What caught my attention was that in Gaza, children are being trained to fight and kill, in Israel we saw children being trained in karate to defend themselves. Children on both sides are being deprived of their childhood.”

- Petra Winter, Germany •

“I am very moved by the fact that we can encourage Jewish people who live in such close vicinity to their enemies. We help them to feel safe. The people we met today seemed to be really nice people, although tired of the situation they live in. They are brave because they choose to stay.”

- Lucie Karlus, Czech Republic •
SHAPING HISTORY THROUGH PRAYER IN THE BALKANS

BY MOJMIR KALLUS, ICEJ VP

Macedonia, a federal state in former Yugoslavia, occupies a small area in the Western Balkans, between Serbia, Bulgaria, Albania and Greece. After the breakup of Yugoslavia, the name “Macedonia” became a problem for the Greeks who could not accept that the name, historically associated with Greece, should be used by another country.

The impasse lasted for more than two decades until, in 2018, the leaders of Greece and the former Yugoslav republic agreed the country would be called North Macedonia. Local Christians shared with ICEJ a fascinating story behind this breakthrough which does not get reported in secular media.

A group of intercessors from the Balkan countries had been meeting in different locations throughout the region to pray for healing, reconciliation and forgiveness; something this blood-drenched part of the world really needs. A few months ago, these intercessors met at a small town on the shores of the Prespa Lake and, during the prayer time, sensed spiritual breakthrough. Soon afterwards, the leaders of Greece and Macedonia met in the same town at the very same hotel and announced they had reached an agreement regarding the name of the country.

When an international team and Mojmir Kallus, ICEJ Vice President of International Affairs, visited the region in September, they met several of the intercessors, and discovered the involvement of several ICEJ national leaders in this group. We rejoice at having found such faithful partners.

Against this backdrop, we are full of confidence that the recently established branches in Bulgaria and Albania will continue to prosper. The newest addition is ICEJ-Macedonia, which was opened after a short preparatory work on 10 September 2019. National Director and professional musician, Asparuh Hadji Hristov, is supported by a board of pastors representing the Body of Christ in the country. We wish them much blessing for their work on behalf of Israel.

The Board of ICEJ-Macedonia, with National Director Asparuh Hadji Hristov (left), ICEJ VP Mojmir Kallus (second from left) and Czech Board member Jaroslav Sloboda (second from right)

Holocaust Museum in Skopje, the capital of North Macedonia

Musical performance at the festive opening of the branch in Skopje

HOLLAND BRANCH HOSTS SUMMER CONFERENCE

Recently, ICEJ-Netherlands held its annual Summer Conference at a Christian retreat center in southern Holland which drew nearly five hundred Dutch believers from all over the country. National Director Dr. Jacob Keegstra (right) and his wife Hennie hosted the three-day gathering and David Parsons (left) came from Jerusalem to be the featured speaker.

Want als God […] de oude wereld niet gesegraaf heeft, maar het geloof in prediking en de gerechtvaardigde zondvloed; er was een aardigheid, die door de hele jooden leven; de oude wereld niet gesegraaf heeft, maar het geloof in prediking en de gerechtvaardigde zondvloed; er was een aardigheid, die door de hele jooden leven; de oude wereld niet gesegraaf heeft, maar het geloof in prediking en de gerechtvaardigde zondvloed; er was een aardigheid, die door de hele jooden leven; de oude wereld niet gesgra..
AN UNUSUAL COMMEMORATION
Tracing the Steps of Two Auschwitz Escapees
BY MOJMIR KALLUS

“Here we are again, one year later: visiting Auschwitz, and then walking these 120 kilometers to commemorate the exceptional act of two Slovak Jews, Rudolf Vrba and Alfred Wetzler. During the walk, old friends meet again and new friendships are struck up. Remembering those who never escaped from Auschwitz. Deep thoughts, light conversation, laughter and attentive listening to excerpts from books written by the two heroes. Anger, disappointment and reconciliation. New plans and ideas. Whatever you imagine.”

These are the words of a participant of the annual memorial walk from Oswiecim, Poland to Zilina, Slovakia. Since 2014, this walk has been organized by the Czech and Slovak branches of the ICEJ, to commemorate a heroic escape from the death camp in April 1944, motivated by the effort to save Hungarian Jews. The two Slovak escapees, Vrba and Wetzler, are credited with saving up to 200,000 lives; definitely something worth commemorating.

This commemoration is unique because it is not a ceremony or a classroom lecture, but it is action. People walk for six days, following in the footsteps of these heroes; exposed to the elements, sleeping in tents or simple mountain cabins. They spend time together, listen to the story of the escape, discover the authentic places, enjoy beautiful nature and have plenty of time for reflection. And, surprisingly, almost all of them return the next year to repeat this arduous, and yet richly rewarding experience.

Their feedback might tell you why they return year after year:

“... Thank you for the wonderful week. Great cleansing of mind in the company of nice people. This year has been the best of all. I look forward to seeing you again next year.”

“Dear friends, thank you for your pleasant company of exceptional people during the walk in August. We will certainly see each other again.”

“Thank you for everything. It is wonderful that even after the walk is over, this community lives on. We are looking forward to the next meeting.”

“Next year in Auschwitz” might sound strange, but actually, it is not a bad idea. Try it out. Check out the project website at www.vrbawetzler.eu where you will also find the application. I hope to see you there.

ICEJ-GERMANY HOSTS YAIR NETANYAHU AT NATIONAL CONFERENCE
BY ICEJ STAFF

ICEJ-Germany held its annual national conference in Stuttgart in August, and invited Yair Netanyahu as a special guest to address the issue of German government funding of anti-Israel causes.

In recent months, German media outlets have been reporting extensively on the Berlin government’s direct and indirect grants to radical left-wing NGOs in Israel that seek to undermine Israeli policies and its democratic processes. The issue came to the fore after Yair Netanyahu, son of Israel’s prime minister, challenged German Foreign Minister Heiko Maas in a tweet to stop the funding.

In his well-received speech to the gathering of over 1,000 German Christians and Jewish community leaders in Stuttgart, Yair Netanyahu provided more background on the German government’s funding of leftist NGOs in Israel and the Palestinian territories. He asserted that Germany does not provide similar funding to NGOs in any other democratic country except for Israel. He also noted persistent reports of German support of Iran over recent years. In other remarks, Netanyahu gave a review of modern Israel’s rebirth, and spoke of Israel’s favorable treatment of its Christian community in contrast to the plight of Middle East Christians in neighboring Arab countries.
At Feast 2020, the International Christian Embassy Jerusalem will be celebrating forty years of ministry here in the Land of Israel. You can win valuable prizes by entering our Feast Drawing 2020.

First Prize — A free trip for two to next year’s Feast, including economy airfare, 4-Star Feast Land Package, and free Feast Registration for next year’s gala celebrations. (> $5,000 Value)

Second Prize — Five winners will receive free Registration to next year’s Feast. (> $480 Value)

Third Prize — Ten winners will receive a free set of audio teachings from Feast 2019. ($30 Value)

This Feast Drawing will remain open until 31 December 2019, and the winners will be announced and notified on Monday, 6 January 2020.

Enter today to win! feast.icej.org/giveaway