

LCJE Bulletin

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Networking Jewish Evangelism



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on Jewish Evangelism



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Editor: Kai Kjær-Hansen
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From the Coordinator

This is my last column as international LCJE coordinator. As editor of the LCJE Bulletin and member of ICC I wrote the first one in February 1990, and since the international conference in Zeist, Holland, in 1991 I have written it as coordinator.

Now this has come to an end. My parents were completely right when they said that life passes by so quickly. As a teenager I did not understand it. I do now.

In the mid-1990's I had a sabbatical in Jerusalem. While I was there I was called back to Denmark where I had to decide if I was willing to be nominated as a candidate for the episcopate. In the plane back to Denmark I reflected on what I wanted to stand for. In my newly purchased notebook I wrote on the first page three Scripture passages and a saying by a Jewish scholar:

For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life (John 3:16).

She will give birth to a son, and you are to give him the name Jesus, because he will save his people from their sins (Matthew 1:21).

Salvation is found in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven given to mankind by which we must be saved (Acts 4:12).

I my notebook I also wrote the following words by the American Jewish scholar and author, Arthur A. Cohen: "The test of tolerance is where men combat for truth but honor persons."

These words have followed me since. I wish that they may also be the words that characterize LCJE in the future. With these words I want to thank you for forbearance towards me as international coordinator. I also appreciate the many words of encouragement I have received over the years.

Perfection belongs to the world to come.

For the salvation of the Jews.

Kai Kjær-Hansen

God's Foolishness

By Gary Hedrick, LCJE North American Coordinator

"For the foolishness of God is wiser than men, And the weakness of God is stronger than men" (1 Cor. 1:25).

It's hard to imagine that a perfect and all-wise God could ever do or say anything foolish. The very idea seems somewhat blasphemous! Yet here the Bible very clearly talks about "the foolishness of God."

Upon reflection, of course, we come to understand that Paul is utilizing a literary device here. It's a paradox (a seeming contradiction in terms) intended to make a point – namely, that even the most "foolish" idea of God is infinitely superior to man's wisdom.

It's a point that strikes close to home for many of us. Have you ever had to choose between obeying God or following your own wisdom and logic? I have; and maybe you have too.

There are times when we have to trust in the foolishness of God and reject our own wisdom.

The divine paradoxes

Here are just a few of the divine paradoxes in the Bible where God challenges our human wisdom.

True freedom comes from being a slave (John 8:36; Rom. 1:1).

The less we trust in weaponry, the more effective we are in warfare (Josh. 6:9; 1 Chron. 16:35).

Life comes from death (John



Gary Hedrick at High Leigh

12:24).

Servanthood is the key to greatness (Matt. 19:30).

The best way to keep something is to give it away (Matt. 6:19–20).

Take the gospel to the Jewish people first if you want to win the world.

My favorite paradox

"For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ, for it is the power of God to salvation for everyone who believes, for the Jew first and also for the Greek" (Rom. 1:16, NKJV).

This is my favorite paradox. It's based on a very obvious priority of Jewish outreach lived out in the apostle Paul's ministry. Everywhere he went, he went first to the synagogue. This was true in Salamis (Acts 13:5), Antioch (13:14–16), Iconium (14:1), Thessalonica (17:1–3), Athens (v. 17), Corinth (18:1–4), Ephesus (18:19), and undoubtedly other places as well.

There are allusions to this order of priority even in the

ministry of Yeshua the Messiah. In Galilee, for instance, he told his own disciples to go first to "the lost sheep of the house of Israel" rather than to the Gentiles (Matt. 10:5–15).

Later, he instructed his Jewish disciples, "Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations" (Matt. 28:19). Notice the sequence in these two Matthew passages: first to Israel (chapter 10); then to the nations (chapter 28).

In fact, there appears to be a paradigm embedded in the fabric of Scripture that reflects God's intention to bless the world through Israel (Gen. 12:2–3; Isa. 2:2–4; 11:1–10; 60:1–3; Amos 9:11–12 [which the Apostles cite in Acts 15:16–17]; Zech. 2:4–5, 10–12).

To some people, this may not seem to make sense. Why devote resources to reaching Jewish people when it seems like there is so little in the way of responsiveness? Answer: Because God says this is how he wants it done.

Priority to the least responsive group

That's another aspect of the paradox: give priority to the least responsive group. It seems so . . . well, foolish. But guess what? When we obey him, he responds with blessing.

Missiologists tell us that the physical birth rate in the world today far outstrips the spiritual birth rate. That is, people are being born at a faster rate than we're winning them to the Lord, so we're losing

ground with each passing day. It's been this way for a very long time. So the church's current strategy for world mis-

sions clearly isn't working. I say it's time for a bold, "new" approach. Let's make Jewish evangelism a priority

in our churches and see what God does.

*Gary Hedrick
garyh@cjfm.org*

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A Note from the President

By Tuvya Zaretsky, LCJE President

Since 1991, Kai Kjær-Hansen has provided superb and wise guidance as the Lausanne Consultation for Jewish Evangelism (LCJE) International Coordinator. After two decades of dedicated service, Kai announced, before the 9th international meeting at High Leigh in 2011, that he would not stand for election to another term in that position on the International Coordinating Committee (ICC).

So, ICC members prayed. Some interviewed several excellent potential candidates. In the end we all declared our trust in the Lord and in the will of the LCJE membership. The votes were cast during the August meeting in Hoddesdon, England. And so, we are now delighted to welcome Jim Melnick to the ICC as our new LCJE International Coordinator.

Jim has been well prepared by God for his new responsibilities through his academic training, ministry experience, and government service to his country. On behalf of the LCJE, I am delighted to welcome Jim and to commend him to our network membership for prayer and your support and service.

Kai, we are grateful for your gracious standard of conduct and for your pursuit of excellence in managing the LCJE business. While providing your own excellent leadership, you



Tuvya Zaretsky at High Leigh

also enlisted help from a dedicated team of energetic, intelligent, servant-hearted volunteers and friends from the Danish Israel Mission, among others Flemming Markussen, Birger Petterson, Jeanette Wind, and Chris Skjøtt.

We are especially grateful to Bodil F. Skjøtt, General Secretary of the Danish Israel Mission, for her faithful and voluntary service to the International Coordinating

Committee as assistant to the International Coordinator and secretary for all ICC official business meetings. Bodil, thank you for your service to the LCJE network too!

We are now in a period of transition. Kai, Jim, Bodil, and I are enjoying working together as responsibilities are being transferred from one very capable International Coordinator to another. A Philippians 2:3 spirit prevails – “regard one another as more important than yourselves.”

The LCJE was formed in 1980. It is now the longest functioning and best run Special Interest Group within the entire global Lausanne Movement. I thank God for the continuity of leadership that he has provided for our network and ask his blessing on our new International Coordinator, Jim Melnick.

*Tuvya Zaretsky
twovya@aol.com*



At an LCJE conference there is freedom to lift one's arms in worship – and not to lift one's arms

Introducing Myself

By Jim Melnick, new LCJE International Coordinator

Overview

My understanding that there was something special about the Jewish people began even before I came to faith in Yeshua as my personal Lord and Messiah.

As a young man and aspiring violinist, I was always intrigued by the fact that my childhood musical heroes – people like Isaac Stern and David Oistrakh – were almost all Jewish. And the best violinists in the world, of course, were nearly all Russian (or Ukrainian) Jewish! “Why is that?” I thought. It always seemed quite extraordinary to me. As I continued to notice Jewish achievements in the first ranks of the arts, sciences, and literature around the world, again it seemed amazing to me that one relatively small group of people percentage-wise should accomplish so much as compared with all of the other nations and ethnic groups in the world. I didn’t understand at the time why so such a high number of Jewish people were so incredibly gifted, yet it always seemed to me to be a wonderful, inexplicable fact of life, one that I found intriguing.

Coming to faith; meeting my first Jewish believer; my “life-prayer” for Messianic ministry

Though raised in the church, it wasn’t until I was 13 that I clearly heard the gospel for the first time. This was in 1967 at a Leighton Ford cru-



Jim Melnick at High Leigh

sade near Youngstown, Ohio, where I was born. As a new believer, as I grew to better understand the Scriptures I began to apprehend the Jewish roots of our faith and biblical prophecy. My love for the Jewish people deepened, but I had still never met a Jewish believer in Jesus (or even knew that they existed).

Then, in 1975, at an impromptu meeting of our small Christian group at the college I was attending in western Pennsylvania, I met an older Jewish evangelist who was passing through town that day and heard his testimony. I was cut to the quick. It was on that day that I prayed a simple but heart-felt prayer that changed my life: “Lord,” I said, “help me to be a blessing to these people [meaning Jewish believers in Jesus], and may I be blessed by them.” God answered this prayer – and continues to answer it over and over – more abundantly than I ever could

have imagined.

A Gentile with a “Jewish heart”

I am often asked if I am Jewish (since “Melnick,” which means “miller” in Russian, is also a common Jewish last name). My common answer is: “I have a Jewish heart.” Though Gentile, I may have some distant Jewish background. When visiting my grandfather’s town in Ukraine more than fifteen years ago, I found an inscription for an “Avram Mel’nik” at a war memorial, so I think there were probably some Jewish “Mel’niks” from that town. I also heard about a heated debate that my grandfather’s Ukrainian relatives once had some years back over whether our family was part-Jewish or not, with one side arguing strongly that, yes, we were, while the other, just as heatedly, insisted that, no, we were not Jewish!

My grandfather left Russia and came to North America before the outbreak of World War One, which was followed by the twin horrors of Communism and Nazism. Some of his remaining relatives were sent to labor camps in Siberia under Stalin. In the fall of 1942, during World War Two, there was a mass shooting in my grandfather’s town; about four hundred Jews from the town and nearby regions were killed by the Nazi SS, SD (Security Service), and Ukrainian police. Entire families were slaughtered

together, their bodies thrown into a mass pit.

This horrible event, documented in great detail in Ilya Ehrenburg and Vasily Grossman's *The Black Book* (about the events of the Holocaust in the former Soviet Union), was translated from Russian and published in English in 1981 by Yad Vashem. Most people have heard of Babi Yar in Kiev, but that slaughter was by no means unique, only much larger in scope. These early events of the Holocaust – which took place all across Ukraine in many cities and towns – occurred long before the dreaded names of Auschwitz and Treblinka became known around the world.

Ministry to Russian Jews came under siege in Chicago

My wife Karen and I were called to full-time Russian Jewish ministry in Chicago in the late 1970s and early '80s, working with the Slavic Gospel Association. This was our initial "baptism of fire," so to speak, in Jewish evangelism. We and those serving with us came under intense attack from the Lubavitchers and the local Jewish community, but we saw God work in mighty ways in calling Russian Jews to himself. One of them, Anna Portnov – a confirmed atheist at the time – years later came to faith in Yeshua, and together we eventually founded the first worldwide Russian Messianic newspaper in 1994.

Another, a Russian Jewish teenager who hung out with the Orthodox Jewish op-

ponents who were smashing our windows and threatening the other Russians in an attempt to shut us down, later came to faith himself and even married one of our co-workers! It was through such intense opposition that God also began to give me a heart for seeking to reach the Hasidim with the gospel, as in, "Who are these people who are opposing up so much?" Sometimes we must realize that those who oppose us the most may be wrestling the most with the message that we bring. Paul himself, we should recall, was a member of the Yad L'Achim of his day!

We later left Slavic Gospel, and I accepted a job with the U.S. government as a Russian affairs analyst. Soon after, I also started our own ministry, called Friends of Soviet Jewry (now Friends of Russian Jewry), founded with Eliezer Maass. Friends of Russian Jewry (FRJ) has its own missions board, but Eliezer and Wes Taber later asked if I would join with them under Life in Messiah International (then AMF International), which I was very happy to do. As president of FRJ, I serve as a tentmaker missionary, with FRJ as a sort of Russian Jewish ministry arm of Life in Messiah. For now, I also continue to work in the computer security field – tracking the activities of Russian hackers and the like – for a private computer security company.

"Coordinating" already

I have been "coordinating" one way or another in Jew-

ish ministry for many years, starting in the late 1980s and early '90s, when I would come to Brooklyn to seek to bring together various ministries and individuals who were involved in Russian Jewish ministry in the greater New York area, setting up times of fellowship and sharing in order to network together and to encourage those missionaries who were ministering there.

I have also been very honored to work for the past number of years with Mitch Glaser and much of the team at Chosen People Ministries in setting up international conferences of Russian Messianic leaders. This has been a very important dynamic in seeking to build up leadership for the next generation, if the Lord tarries, of Russian Messianic leaders in congregations around the world. Our first international conference was held in Berlin in 2006, the second in Jerusalem in 2009, and we plan a third, Lord willing, in Ukraine in 2012.

Another area of coordination has been ministry to the Hasidim. Along with several others, in 2002 I co-founded a small network of individuals and ministries called H.O.P.E., which stands for "Hasidic Outreach Partnership for Evangelism." We began by meeting in Brooklyn during times of outreach to the Hasidic communities and later became a coordinating group taking on specific projects together, seeking ways to encourage ministries involved with gospel outreach to the Hasidim.

My first connections with LCJE

I was originally recommended for LCJE membership by Avi Snyder of Jews for Jesus. "Jim," he said, "this is a group that would really be good for you to be a part of." I am very thankful to Avi for introducing me to the LCJE "family" and also for our joint burden in reaching Russian Jews with the gospel.

As I shared at High Leigh, my first LCJE conference was at Zeist in 1991. I vividly remember being dropped off by a bus on the side of a road, and the Dutch bus driver pointing up a long driveway that seemed to me to be in the middle of nowhere. I thought, "What if this is the wrong place?!" Dragging my suitcases, I eventually made it up to a main building, still wondering where I was exactly. Just at that moment, someone came to the door and welcomed me. That person was Moishe Rosen! It was a very memorable moment, and I immediately felt I was "home." My first LCJE article, titled "Friends of Soviet Jewry," appeared in Bulletin issue 25 (August 1991).

My hopes and dreams for LCJE, responding to opposition, Kai's legacy

What are some of my goals and hopes and dreams for LCJE in the future? I will have much more to say on this in future articles in the Bulletin, but for now I think that the first order of business must be to keep everything running as smoothly as possible during this transition, while



Jim Melnick at the Fourth International LCJE Conference in Zeist, 1991.

over time building up our network in new ways. It is clear that there is increasing interest in Asia and Latin America in the LCJE vision, though that growing interest is by no means confined to those regions. I also hope that we can bring in more of our brethren from the former Soviet Union, as well as our Israeli brothers and sisters, and more young leaders – we do not know when the Lord will return, but we need to do more to build up the next generation of LCJE leadership.

I am also very passionate about defending religious liberty. We all know that some level of opposition to the gospel is to be expected and "comes with the territory," so to speak. And Jewish evangelism, of course, has its own unique sets of obstacles and challenges! There is a time to be quiet and simply "take it" when opposition comes, but there is also a time to stand up, to be loud, and to become like the persistent widow with the unrighteous judge (Luke 18:1–8).

As I write this, I am in Israel. Yesterday I visited

with the David Ortiz family in Ariel in the heart of biblical Samaria. David came to his first LCJE conference at High Leigh and enjoyed it very much. Most of you know the story about the bomb meant to kill them planted in the fake Purim gift basket in March 2008 (if not, please read about it at <http://ami-ortiz.com/home.cfm>). It is vitally important that we cry out for justice in this case and make our voices heard around the world; otherwise, perhaps there are other anti-missionaries out there who may think they now have a "green light" to take their opposition to Jewish evangelism to a new level. Additionally, government officials are more inclined to sweep situations like this under the rug unless we make our voices heard.

As citizens, we need to be very bold at times, while also being respectful and humble. We have every reason to stand up for justice and to use the religious liberty rights granted to us in the countries where we live. Those rights were very hard-won by previous generations. Shame on us if we neglect to use them! At the same time, we know

that our most important “weapons” are spiritual ones, through prayer and utilizing the spiritual gifts that God has given us. So we must use both!

I am very thankful for the confidence that you all have placed in me as your new International Coordinator, and I earnestly seek your prayers as I serve you in this role. I am also thankful for Paul Rood’s willingness to serve. I wish him the best and may call upon him from time to time as various needs arise. I am very thankful for Tuvya Zaretsky’s leadership as our president and have already benefited from his wise counsel as Kai and I work through the transition process. We have a very strong team in the rest of the ICC, with Mitch Glaser and Ann Hilsden as at-large members who are also helping to “break me in.”

As to Kai Kjær-Hansen – where to begin? I don’t know how everyone else feels, but even for me, it is still somewhat strange to think of LCJE without Kai at the helm. Kai leaves such an enormous legacy, it is hard to think of “filling his shoes.” So, without trying to “fill those shoes” exactly, I think the most important thing I can do is to stress continuity, to honor the excellent foundation that he and Bodil and so many others have laid, and to build upon that foundation as we look forward to new opportunities for our LCJE network in the future. Kai has told me more than once – with his characteristic half-smile, of course – “Jim, the age of the Vikings has passed!” Well,



Fred Klett and Jim Melnick at the North American LCJE meeting in Philadelphia, 1997.

yes, I understand that, but I do not want “the Vikings” to disappear over the horizon!

Little known facts about me

A few personal notes: I now live in Virginia, about an hour south of Washington, DC. I have been married for 33 years to my best friend, Karen. God has given us four wonderful children, adopted from various countries – Paraguay, Guatemala, and China.

– I play violin in praise and worship, classical music in a string quartet, as well as Scottish and other Celtic fiddling, and I hope to someday learn more of the Klezmer Jewish style of violin-playing.

– I served as a Russian political-military affairs analyst at the Pentagon during the last years of the Cold War, getting a “ring-side seat” to many of the historic events of those years.

– We have had a small flock of sheep on our property over many years (also, in

the past, llamas and an alpaca, and, of course, cats and dogs!). Our family has learned many important scriptural lessons over the years from raising sheep. (As I write this, I can’t help wondering what Rob Styler, for example, could make of all this in some potential future LCJE skit. Oy vey!)

– For a number of years I have been writing a biography of the first president of Harvard, Henry Dunster, who along with his successor, Charles Chauncy, was a great Hebraist and very committed to infusing a generation of Harvard students with a deep knowledge of biblical Hebrew. This was the heritage of earlier American higher education, an area that has deeply caught my interest.

– I have climbed Masada numerous times, including a couple of times via a path that few have used – the path that the troops of the Roman Tenth Legion followed when they finally broke through Jewish defenses by building a ramp to the top

of the mountain. Today, that path crosses near the open amphitheater where young Israeli officers are commissioned. . . . Speaking of which, if I sometimes use military analogies, it is in part because I am also a retired colonel in the U.S. Army Reserves. My dear friend Dan Rigney, who is now with the Lord, used to

affectionately call me "the Colonel." I learned a tremendous amount from Dan and his widow Arlene, who served with Ariel Ministries. Through his faithfulness and incredible foresight, Dan was one of the giants of our movement in many areas.

May the God of all wisdom and power bless our LCJE network more than we can

even imagine, and may our hands be strengthened as we serve our Lord together in this great adventure of faith. I will close this introductory article in the same way that Kai often closes his email letters: "For the salvation of the Jews." Amen. Am Yisrael chai! The torch is passed!

*Jim Melnick
fsjimin@infionline.net*

Already at the international LCJE conference at Lake Balaton, Hungary, 2007, there were some informal discussions with Mark Lam about heading a new LCJE chapter for Hong Kong. At the conference at High Leigh this summer Mark Lam declared that he was willing to become LCJE coordinator for Hong Kong/China.

Mark Lam is executive director of Chosen People Ministries, Hong Kong. We welcome Mark Lam as new area coordinator and rejoice that LCJE now has another chapter in the global East.

A New Page at LCJE Hong Kong/China **By Mark Lam, LCJE Hong Kong/China Coordinator**

"Brothers, my heart's desire and prayer to God for the Israelites is that they may be saved" (Rom. 10:1) is the cornerstone of the new page of LCJE Hong Kong/China. While a great number of Christians here still think Jewish evangelism is distant to our culture and proximity, it is a burden on our Lord's heart and is an urgent gospel need. LCJE Hong Kong/China is now established to respond to God's calling to advance the cause of Jewish evangelism in this region.

Hong Kong – my place

Let me first tell you a little bit about my place. Hong Kong began as a fishing village a



The synagogue in Hong Kong

century ago, and has developed into an international city, comparatively well-known for its financial and tourism sectors. Hong Kong evolved from a British colony into a special administrative

region of China 14 years ago, witnessing its vibrant flexibility in an ever-changing world. We have recently exceeded a population of 7 million in a small city area, whereas our adjacent mother country, China, has about 1.3 billion people. Therefore, if there is a place in the world that should not allow Christians to forget about the value of precious souls, Hong Kong/China should be at the top of the list.

By the abundant grace of God, Hong Kong has enjoyed very much religious freedom. We can lawfully do any kind of evangelistic campaign in Hong Kong, and about 4% of the people have become

Protestant Christians. Sadly this figure is relatively low due to worldly materialism. However, we are excited about the fact that there are tens of millions of Christians inside adjacent China, despite its being a Socialist country.

Because of various historical and economic reasons, nearly three thousand Jewish upper-class people, a rather closed community, reside in Hong Kong. A main Jewish community lives within walking distance of the orthodox synagogue. In the past, numerous Jews settled in Chinese cities such as Kai-feng, Shanghai, and Harbin. But almost all of them have emigrated or assimilated.

Jewish ministries in Hong Kong

I first heard about Jewish evangelism work from my home church in Hong Kong. My home church network, in a low-profile for decades, has financially supported three different precious international Jewish ministries, all of which are also currently part of LCJE's network. I have had the privilege and opportunity to know and volunteer with all of these previously, although now I work full-time with one agency.

I believe the heritage of biblical teaching and application to Jewish evangelism worldwide is what we should carry on in Hong Kong/China.



The population in Hong Kong exceeds seven million; among them are three thousand Jewish upper-class people.

Above all, the Gentile Chinese churches owe a spiritual debt to God's chosen people. We need to share the good news with them.

In fact, the general awareness of Jewish evangelism and Israel started to grow deeper about ten years ago among Chinese circles. The overall interest gradually increases. Various Jewish or Israeli ministries have been established in Hong Kong, but mostly in a very small scale. In 2009, CPM and CWI with other two agencies hosted the first larger-scale Jewish missions conference in Hong Kong, and we will organize the second one in May 2012.

I have a vision for LCJE Hong Kong/China

God willing, we would definitely endeavor that LCJE Hong Kong/China have a role in two main areas. First, we are committed to advance the cause of Jewish evangelism with and on behalf of the platform of LCJE among

Chinese churches and believers. Second, we defend and promote our position against any kind of anti-Semitism and anti-Israel prejudice, bearing in mind the need to have a Christ-like attitude and show meekness and resolution. We firmly believe that such prejudice is absolutely biblically wrong and not pleasing to our Lord Jesus.

I have a vision for LCJE Hong Kong/China. The vision is to build an accurate understanding of the Scriptures and a Christ-like attitude among Chinese Christian circles toward God's heart for Israel and the Jewish people, in order that, practically, more Jewish missions work can be done and more Jewish people will come to faith in the blessed Lord.

Finally, we sincerely ask the intercession of all our LCJE network co-laborers so that we can fight a good fight for the Lord in both this spiritual service and spiritual battle.

*Mark Lam
marklam99@yahoo.com.hk*

At www.lcje.net

All papers and contributions from High Leigh and conference photos

“Jew Town” and High Leigh

By Grace Mathews, Vice Chair, the Lausanne Movement

In my home state of Kerala, India, stands an ancient Jewish synagogue in Cochin. It is over 500 years old – testimony to the extent to which the Jewish nation was dispersed over the years of their history. The Jewish Synagogue in Cochin exhibits a rich amalgamation of architectural and decorative styles representing Chinese, Dutch, Belgian, Portuguese, English, Indian, and of course, Jewish influences – perhaps a reflection of the complex tapestry that marked the history of the Jewish people.

Yet, in spite of all the various influences and cultural and religious pluralism around them, there was something distinctly “Jewish” about the structure and community, so much so that even in a place where they were such a small community, the area soon became known as “Jew Town”! I have always wondered at the ability of the Jewish people, such a small minority, to be vastly influential beyond their numbers. The promise of the Lord that his people are graven on the palm of his hand could not be more evident!

I was impressed at High Leigh

So it was with great joy and expectation that I accepted the invitation to represent LCWE at the 9th LCJE conference in High Leigh. LCJE



Grace Mathews

has always been a prototype for Lausanne related networks, and as I participated, I understood the reasons why! It was a good learning experience for me as I became aware of the wealth of information and resources at LCJE. I wish more Lausanne folks could attend such conferences for a greater awareness of what is happening with Jewish evangelization.

I was impressed with the organization of the conference and the precision with which the planning was executed. Jewish identity was unmistakable in song and dance. It was a privilege to see the caliber of the leaders and hear the richness of their talks. The papers were not only informative but also thought provoking. Participants did not shy from debate, but it did not lead to conflict because there was a sweet spirit of unity and purpose.

What was evident was the overwhelming desire to take the gospel to fellow Jews and to see many accept Yeshua as the Messiah. It was interesting to learn about current trends in Jewish evangelization. Hearing about the efforts in the airports of Delhi and North India to reach out to Israeli tourists brought back



Interior of the Paradesi Synagogue in Cochin (Photo: Wikimedia Commons)

nostalgic memories of my homeland and "Jew Town." Because of my involvement at the conference, I have visited the LCJE website many times for new articles, to read about the folks I met, or to see photos.

It was exciting

It was exciting to meet long-time missionary friends such as Bob Mendelsohn, to interact with Susan Perlman and others who had worked tirelessly for the Cape Town 2010 Congress, and to network with delegates from all over the world. It gave me an opportunity to explore future interactions both with individuals and with LCJE. More than anything else, it was simply fascinating to hear stories about how God

is working in and through Jewish believers – for indeed, as Paul wrote, "Because of their transgression salvation has come to the Gentiles to make Israel envious. If their transgression means riches for the world . . . how much greater riches will their fullness bring!" (Rom. 11:11–12).

Interacting in the spirit of Lausanne

LCWE will continue its commitment to support the work and vision of LCJE. We welcome opportunities to interact and fellowship "in the spirit of Lausanne." Some suggestions for collaboration would be international consultations, especially pertaining to the six Cape Town 2010 congress themes

(33 issues in the Cape Town Commitment). David Bennett is coordinating this effort while working with an implementing partner. We hope LCJE will benefit from the Lausanne Global Briefing – a publication being developed to inform Christian leaders on important mission and evangelization topics. LCWE is also keenly interested in identifying and developing younger leaders for world evangelization. In sum, we pray for and commit ourselves to the fulfillment of that great promise made to Abraham, that through his seed all nations of the world would be blessed.

*Grace Mathews
gmathews@lausanne.org*



At the High Leigh conference David Sedaca offered to post reports and minutes from the international meetings, held by the International Hebrew Christian Alliance in the period 1928-1997, on LCJE's homepage. This has now been done so that the valuable material is available at www.lcje.net – under resources.

Early History of the Hebrew Christian Movement and the Founding of the Hebrew Christian Alliances
By David Sedaca, LCJE Latin American Coordinator and former Secretary General and Director of the International Hebrew Christian Alliance and the International Messianic Jewish Alliance

We cannot fully understand present day Jewish missions or Messianic Judaism unless we understand how it came about. As the founders of the early Jewish missions and leaders of the movement have passed away, we need

to be reminded of their vision and what moved them to stand up and establish organizations, which in different forms remain active today and in which many of today's ministries have their roots.

The tremendous value of our history

The last LCJE conference was held in High Leigh, near London, and in the main hall there was a photograph of the Conference of the Inter-

national Hebrew Christian Alliance held there July 17–24, 1931. As I was looking at those present at this conference I began to think of the tremendous value our history has and how beneficial it is for us to know what our predecessors have done. I also value that at the last conferences of the LCJE, each day Kai Kjær-Hansen brought a brief history of those who played significant roles in our history.

Almost two decades ago, at a gathering of the International Hebrew Christian Alliance in England, some of us of the younger generation who had assumed leadership roles in the organization felt the need to know about the early years and why the International Alliance was formed. At the time we still had with us the late Rev. Harcourt Samuel, who had been present at the first conference in 1925 and was gifted with a wonderful memory. For almost two hours he gave us a recollection of the early years, which we later wrote down and asked him to do the same.

What follows is taken from Harcourt Samuel's recollections,¹ Sir Leon Levison's biography,² The History of Jewish Christianity by Hugh Schonfield,³ and minutes of the International Hebrew Christian Alliance. Much of this material is in my private collection of notes and letters from my 35 years of service in the International Hebrew Christian Alliance, now the International Messianic Jewish Alliance.



David Sedaca at High Leigh

Beni Avraham and the Hebrew Christian Prayer Union

After the formation of the London Jews Society in 1809, a large number of Jewish mission societies came into existence in 19th-century Europe.⁴ A significant turning point was the newly created Anglican See of Jerusalem in 1841, when Michael Solomon Alexander became the first Jewish Christian Bishop of Jerusalem since 135 A.D.!

Although there were informal gatherings of Hebrew Christians throughout Europe, it was in England that their voices began to question the then-prevailing principle that in order to believe in the Jewish Messiah one had to, for all practical purposes, forfeit one's Jewish identity.

It was then that in London, on September 9, 1813, a group of 41 Jewish believers formed the first formal association, calling themselves Beni Avraham – Children of Abraham. They met for prayer every Sunday morning and Friday evening and, in teams of twos, visited Jewish believers during the week.

When their work was extended, in 1935 they formed The Episcopal Jew's Chapel Abrahamitic Society.

Another group was formed in England under the leadership of Dr. H. A. Stern – The Hebrew Christian Prayer Union. Its membership rose from 143 in 1883 to 600 in 1890! Other countries followed and branches were formed in Germany, Norway, Romania, Russia, Palestine, and the United States.

Although these organizations were active, their main purpose had been fellowship and charity. Another step needed to be taken to develop these nascent organizations into a more formal and unified body.

One common concern was that the church would consider these organizations as "judaizers," so voices for independence of thought and the right to be called both Christians and Jews began to be heard. John Mark Levy in America brought forth this issue before Hebrew Christian organizations, Jewish missionary societies, and the church in general. In Galatia,

Poland, there was Christian Theodore Lucky, in Hamburg Paulus Grun through the columns of his magazine Ephrata, organ of the Jewish Christian Association, and in South Africa Philip Cohen, who edited The Messianic Jew and gave three reasons for the need to change attitudes toward Hebrew Christians:

1. *Deep love to our own nation, to its history and traditions.*
2. *A deep conviction that we who are Hebrew Christians can best serve the cause of Christ by demonstrating to our people that we still belong to them.*
3. *The conviction that Jewish Christianity can only impress the Jewish mind by taking on a distinctively Jewish coloring.*⁵

The Hebrew Christian Alliance of Great Britain (1867)

Echoing all these voices, the time had arrived to establish formal organizations. It was under the encouragement of Dr. C. Scharz, minister of Trinity Chapel, Edgeware Road, London – built by another Jewish believer, Ridley Herschell – that a formal letter of invitation to consider the formation of a Hebrew Christian Alliance was sent out. The letter was sent on April 25, 1866, and its opening statement reads as follows:

*Dear brother,
It has occurred to us that it would be desirable and profitable that as many Israelites*

who believe in Jesus as can be brought together should meet in London on the 23rd of May.

Our object is to become acquainted with one another and to be built up in our holy faith. There are special ties that bind us together as descendants of Abraham.

And we believe that this conference for prayer and consultation might issue in a permanent union of Jewish Christians in the land.

We do not come before you with a definite plan of action, but would simply say that, as there exists an Evangelical and a Jewish, an Hebrew Christian Alliance might be formed.

The letter was signed by A. D. Herschell, H. Liebstein, M. Margoiouth, T. E. Newman, A. Pitowsky, J. Steinhart, A. Saphir and C. Schwartz.

Following this conference, another conference was called, and on May 14, 1867, under the presidency of Dr. C. Schwartz, the Hebrew Christian Alliance of Great Britain was formed. Among its distinguished presidents were, in addition to Dr. Schwartz, Dr. Rosedald, Aaron Bernstein, Ben-Oliel, Isaac Levinson, Samuel Schor, and E. Bendor Samuel.

Dr. H. A. Stern, who had served as missionary to the Jews in Bagdad and Constantinople, after his release from prison for preaching the gospel in Abyssinia, in 1882 founded The Hebrew Christian Prayer Union. Since there was no competition with the Hebrew Christian Alliance, they both joined into

one alliance, thus the Hebrew Christian Alliance of Great Britain became the Hebrew Christian Alliance and Prayer Union.

In the years that followed, similar alliances were formed in Germany, Holland, Russia, Palestine, France, Romania, Poland, Sweden, Norway, Bessarabia, Czechoslovakia, and Hungary. In 1915, the Hebrew Christian Alliance of America was established, appointing the Rev. S. B. Rohold as its president. This American alliance also included Canada.

From national alliances to the International Hebrew Christian Alliance (1925)

It was only logical that these national alliances of Hebrew Christians should form an international fellowship. The idea originated with the American alliance, and after consultations with the British alliance, it was agreed that the time had come to form such an international organization. The Rev. Mark John Levy, born in London but who had become an American citizen, was put in charge of coordinating an international conference. It was also agreed that said conference should take place in London, since the first alliance had been born there.

A letter of invitation to the fifteen national alliances was sent, signed by Samuel Schor, J. J. Lowe, and E. Bendor Samuel, which expressed the desire to form an international body. Among other things, the letter said,

We believe that the time of the Gentiles are being fulfilled and that the God of our fathers, according to His gracious promise, is about to restore Israel to her ancient heritage. We also believe that as Hebrew Christians, though a remnant weak and small, we have a share in the building up of "The Tabernacle of David that is fallen down." The national alliances responded enthusiastically, thus on September 5, 1925, The International Hebrew Christian Alliance was born. Sir Leon Levison became the Alliance's first President.

Said in occasion of the 100th anniversary of the British alliance

Today, the vision of these Hebrew Christians continues to be carried out by the many

evangelical Jewish ministries, Messianic Jewish Alliances, and Messianic Jewish Congregations around the globe that in one way or another are heirs of these early organizations.

In closing, it is fitting to quote the Rev. Harcourt Samuel, who was appointed to be the first secretary of the International Hebrew Christian Alliance in 1925 and continued serving as an elected officer without interruption until 1992(!). On the occasion of the 100th anniversary of the British alliance, he said,

And what of the future? The aims of 1866 remain those of today. The years ahead may bring greater changes even than those behind, but until the glad day comes when all

Israel shall be saved, those aims will remain. Neither a church nor a missionary society, neither a congregation nor a sect, we are a fellowship in Christ, ready to help one another spiritually, and if needs be, materially too, the better to bear our God-given witness towards our Jewish brethren. To the former, we confess "we have found Him of whom Moses in the Law and the prophets did write, Jesus"; to the latter we offer visible proof that "God hath not cast away His people which He foreknew," that "at this present time there is a remnant according to the election of grace." (Romans 11:2, 5)

David Sedaca
dsedaca@chosenpeople.com

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- 1 Samuel, Rev. Harcourt, O.B.E, *These Hundred Years* (The International Messianic Jewish Alliance, 1966).
 - 2 Levison, Fredrick, *A Christian and a Jew: The Life of Sir Leon Levison* (Edinburgh: The Pentland Press, 1989).
 - 3 Schonfield, Hugh J., *The History of Jewish Christianity* (London: Duckworth Press, 1936).
 - 4 See Kai Kjær-Hansen "Urgent Issues in Jewish Evangelism Around the Year 1900," in *Jesus, Salvation and the Jewish People* (ed. David Parker), Glasgow, Paternoster, 2011, pp. 133-135.
 - 5 Schonfield, p. 170.

Correction

In the LCJE Bulletin 105, September 2011, on page 6 I listed the individuals who were re-elected as LCJE coordinators at the High Leigh conference for the following four years. Unfortunately David Sedaca's name had fallen out. He is still area coordinator for Latin America, which we appreciate.

I am sorry about this error.

Kai Kjær-Hansen

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Meeting for Leaders of Jewish Missions – LCJE Europe
By Bodil F. Skjøtt, General Secretary, Danish Israel Mission

These are some of the words given as a reason for the planned meeting for general secretaries of Jewish mission

organizations and congregations in Europe, March 26–27, 2012.

Encouragement, information, and coordination
 The idea came up at the LCJE regional meeting for

Europe during the High Leigh conference last August. The initiative came from Rolf Gunnar Heitmann, general secretary of NCMI, Norway. As a model for his suggestion, Rolf referred to the annual meeting held years ago under the name "Geschäftsführer Konferenz." Here leaders from mainly German and Nordic Israel missions came together to exchange ideas, coordinate activities, and learn from one another. For different reasons this network no longer exists, but Rolf asked if the time had come to have such a meeting again.

Leaders present at the High Leigh European regional meeting responded positively to the suggestion, and Rolf was asked to take his suggestion a step further and initiate plans for such a meeting, preferable in spring 2012. It was made



Bodil F. Skjøtt

clear that this was not to be another LCJE CEO conference. Rather, the focus for this group was to be on coordinating activities mainly in Europe but also in Israel, where several of the organizations already are involved in the same congregations and ministries.

Furthermore, it was to be a short meeting – where participants would arrive in the afternoon one day and

leave after lunch the next. It was to be for people with responsibility for the daily running of the organizations more than for political leaders of organizations. The focus was to be on information, coordination, and encouragement. The meeting is not to be by invitation only, but at the same time there is a desire to keep the group small in order for it to be relevant and to allow time for everybody to share.

The dates are set to be March 26–27, 2012, and the place will be somewhere in Berlin, Germany. The final information will be posted on the LCJE website. For more information please contact Rolf Gunnar Heitmann at rolf@israelmissionen.no.

*Bodil F. Skjøtt
general@israel.dk*



Yachad – An Introduction

By Erika Medendorp-Noordhof, Yachad, Committee Netherlands

We are very glad to become an agency member of the LCJE. In this article we would like to introduce ourselves.

Yachad is an organization of the Free Reformed Churches in the Netherlands. We have about 20 members, spread over 4 committees. Our Israel committee has contacts with some congregations in Israel, for example the Kol baMidbar congregation lead by Anthony Simon. Every year, we try to make



Erika Medendorp-Noordhof

a working visit to Israel to support our contacts and to make new contacts. We have also a Netherlands committee, which has contacts with Christian Witness to Israel and many other Christian organizations in the Netherlands that are in some way connected to Israel and the Jews.

Intention

The intention of Yachad is to raise awareness among the

New LCJE Agency Member

yachad



members of our congregations about the following things:

- The importance of the Jewish people in the eyes of God.
- That it is God's intention to save the Jewish people, and that he wants to use us, believers in Jesus Messiah, to that end.

As the apostle Paul says in Romans 11: "If some of the branches have been broken off, and you, though a wild olive shoot, have been grafted in among the others and now share in the nourishing sap from the olive root, do not consider yourself to be superior to those other branches. If you do, consider this: You do not support the root, but the root supports you." And further: "After all, if you were cut out of an olive tree that is wild by nature, and contrary to nature were grafted into a cultivated olive tree, how much more readily will these, the

natural branches, be grafted into their own olive tree!"

Logo

You can see this also in the logo of Yachad. Yachad means "together" in Hebrew. Jews and Christians together. The Jewish people cannot be replaced by the church or the Christians, with the Christians being the new people of God, but both, Jews and Christians, are connected. The people of Israel are our elder brother. The roots of the church are in the Jewish people.

Mission

Therefore, our mission is:

- To share the witness of Jesus Messiah with the Jewish people by supporting the preaching of the gospel to win followers to Christ.
- To teach the special place of the Jewish people in salvation history. From the beginning, God had a plan for Israel. Jesus was a Jew, born in Bethlehem. On each

of the gates of the New Jerusalem is written the name of one of the twelve tribes of Israel.

Concerning the relationship between the Christian church and the Jewish people, the New Testament people of God includes both Jewish and non-Jewish believers. Both groups are descendants of Abraham, by blood or by faith. So there is a relationship between the Christian church and the Jewish people through Abraham. Jews who believe in Jesus Messiah should have a place of honor in the Christian church. Other descendants of Abraham unfortunately have not found the Way in the person of Jesus Christ himself. We hope God will use us to bring them back to the right path and to find their Messiah.

Erika Medendorp-Noordhof
Erika@hccnet.nl
www.yachad.nl

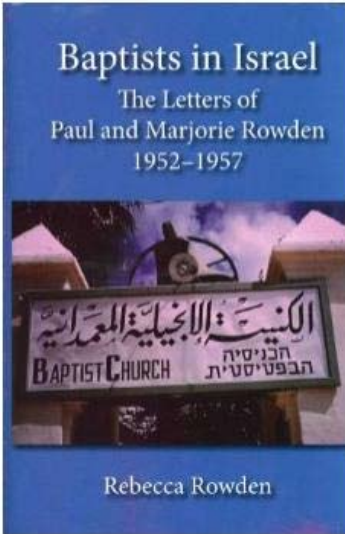
LCJE Bulletin – Printed Version or Online?

The LCJE Bulletin will continue to appear in a printed version in 2012. Most LCJE members receive the Bulletin by snail mail while a few receive it only online. If more members would like to receive it only online, please notify LCJE at lcje.int@gmail.com

Book Review

Baptist in Israel: The Letters of Paul and Marjorie Rowden 1952–1957

Reviewed by Theresa Newell, Chairman CMJ USA



Rebecca Rowden: Baptist in Israel, Nashville: Fields Publishing, 2010.

Rebecca Rowden, the author of this book, was not among the 180 participants at the historic ninth LCJE International Conference held August 7–12, 2011 at High Leigh Conference Centre in Hertfordshire, England.

However, searching the LCJE website while doing research, she found Dr. Kai Kjær-Hansen's talk about a lady who served 53 years with CMJ in Israel. The evening talk was titled "Ruth Clark in the Land." Why did the story of Ruth Clark catch Ms. Rowden's eye? As she explained to Kai in an email, "Miss Ruth Clark . . . was the headmistress and my teach-

er at the Anglican school in West Jerusalem 1954–1955. . . . At that time there were about 20 students and most of us were missionary children and children of the consulate staff. Classes were taught in English."

She wrote that she had recently published a book about her parents, Paul and Marjorie Rowden, who had served with the Baptist Convention in Israel from 1952–57. During those years, Rebecca's family served in Nazareth, Jerusalem, and Haifa. The bulk of the book is selected correspondence written by her parents to their families and friends in Atlanta, Georgia. Interspersed are helpful geo-political and mission history mini-chapters covering events from each year of their service.

A unique contribution to mission archives

Besides being a labor of love telling her family's story, the book is a unique contribution to mission archives not only for Southern Baptists but also for all of us who have either labored in Israel or who work in ministries which do. (The only earlier documentation of Southern Baptist Convention work in Israel is a small book by Mrs.



Rebecca Rowden

J. W. Watts, *Palestinian Tapestries*, published in 1936, which recounts the history of the previous 15 or 16 years of Baptist work in Israel. The Watts and Dr. and Mrs. F. B. Pearson were the first missionaries sent by the SBC to Palestine and Syria, in 1923.)

Reading other people's mail filled with details of everyday life on the mission field is a genre which is both pleasurable and informative. The Baptist mission team (13 at its maximum in the 1950s and headed by Dr. Bob Lindsey) in Nazareth, Jerusalem, Haifa, and Tel Aviv in the young state of Israel documents the 24/7 daily work in schools, Bible camps, and churches while border skirmishes, rationed food, and shortage of living

space was routine.

The Rowdens' letters are full of sacrificial realities but also the daily joys of sharing the gospel with Arabs and Jews with whom they formed warm friendships. Rebecca Rowden has not only honored her mother and father but has documented

mission history which would have been lost without her research and work. In the age of email and Internet, I wonder if and how the story of mission workers will be told in the future. I pray we will think twice before hitting the delete key!

So even someone who did not attend the LCJE International Conference was able to find something very meaningful on the LCJE website!

Theresa Newell
theresa@cmj-usa.org



Mishkan

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LCJE Meetings

LCJE North America

March 5–7, 2012, in San Diego
March 4–6, 2013, in Florida
March 3–5, 2014, in Chicago
Contact Gary Hedrick
garyh@cjfm.org

LCJE AustralAsia

Third LCJE AustralAsian conference
August 7–10, 2012
Collaroy Conference Centre,
Collaroy (Sydney) NSW
Contact Bob Mendelsohn
australia@lcje.net

Leaders of Jewish Missions

– LCJE Europe

March 26–27, 2012
Berlin, Germany
Contact Rolf Gunnar Heitmann
rolf@israelsmisjonen.no

LCJE CEO Conference

May 27–31, 2013
St. Chrischona, Basel, Switzerland
Contact Kai Kjær-Hansen
lcje-kai@post4.tele.dk

Visit LCJE's website at
www.lcje.net

Networking Jewish Evangelism



Lausanne Consultation
on Jewish Evangelism

President Tuvya Zaretsky twovya@aol.com

International Coordinator Kai Kjær-Hansen lcje.int@gmail.com

International Committee Members

Ann Hilsden ahilsden@kkcj.org

Mitch Glaser MitchGlaser@aol.com

Area Coordinators

AustralAsia Bob Mendelsohn australia@lcje.net

Europe Jean-Paul Rempp jpnremppbn@wanadoo.fr

Hong Kong/China Mark Lam marklam99@yahoo.com.hk

Israel David Zadok David@ha-gefen.org.il

Japan Teiichiro Kuroda lcjehome@hotmai.com

Latin America David Sedaca david@chosenpeople.com

North America Gary Hedrick garyh@cjfm.org

South Africa Cecilia Burger simchaministry@gmail.com

International Coordinator & International Mailing Address

Kai Kjær-Hansen, Box 11, DK 8520 Lystrup, Denmark

lcje.int@gmail.com

Website www.LCJE.net

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