

THE *Centurion's* Legacy

The Caulfield
Messianic Centre Project



Celebrate **MESSIAH**

Volume 18 * Issue 4 * December 2012

In Partnership with Chosen People Global Ministries



Celebrate **MESSIAH**

Dear Friend,

Shalom and blessings to you in Yeshua our Messiah. I would like to introduce you to a most exciting and strategic mission opportunity in the heart of the largest Jewish community in Australia - the building of the first custom-made Messianic Centre and Synagogue in the Southern Hemisphere.

This project is a partnership between Celebrate Messiah Australia and Beit HaMashiach Messianic Congregation for the purpose of providing a mission and ministry facility as a vital means of reaching out to Jewish people in Australia and abroad.



www.caulfieldmessianiccentre.org.au

Building the first custom-made Messianic Centre and Synagogue in the Southern Hemisphere



Lawrence and Louise Hirsch
Founders of Celebrate Messiah and
Beit HaMashiach Messianic Congregation

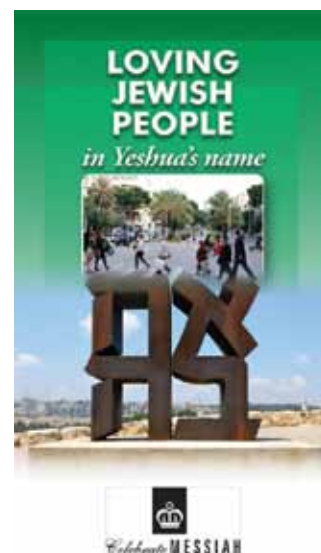
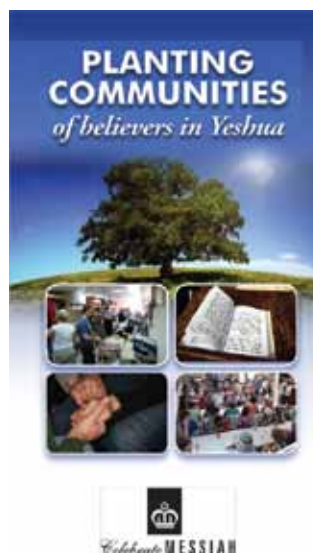
Our Story

Allow me to share with you a little of our spiritual journey that has brought us to this time: My wife, Louise, and I were born in South Africa. I come from a traditional Jewish family and had a religious Jewish education culminating with my Barmitzvah at the age of 13. Shortly after that I met Louise and we became childhood sweethearts. My family then decided to leave South Africa and much to our disappointment, Louise and I were parted when I moved to Australia in 1983.

It was during this time of separation that the Lord revealed himself to Louise and I at the very same time. Both of us became believers in Yeshua (Jesus) as the Messiah on the very same Sunday night in March 1984 – Louise in South Africa and myself here in Australia. One year after that in 1985, Louise and I were married.

In 1990 Louise and I were called into fulltime missionary work amongst Jewish people. For 5 years we served in South Africa and then returned home to Australia to establish the work of Celebrate Messiah in February 1995.

Celebrate Messiah Australia in partnership with Beit HaMashiach Messianic Congregation



Our Mission

Celebrate Messiah's expressed mission is "Bringing the Message to the Original

Messengers" – i.e. to share the Gospel with God's ancient people, the Jewish people, the first messengers of the Good News.

In 2000 Celebrate Messiah joined in partnership with Chosen People Ministries, a worldwide ministry that was started when Rabbi Leopold Cohn, came to faith in Messiah in 1894.

Together with Chosen People Global Ministries we have mission work amongst Jewish people in 16 countries around the world. Celebrate Messiah's particular focus is in Australia, as well as ministry to Jewish people in New Zealand, Russia, South Africa and Israel.

Our Strategies

Celebrate Messiah has three main strategies in reaching out to Jewish people.

- ✧ Making Disciples through Creative Outreach
- ✧ Loving Jewish People in Yeshua's Name
- ✧ Planting Communities of Believers in Yeshua

Beit HaMashiach Messianic Congregation

In 1995, at the same time as establishing the work of Celebrate Messiah, we started an outreach service that later became known as Beit HaMashiach (*House of Messiah in Hebrew*) Messianic Congregation – a place where Jewish people could come and hear the Gospel in a culturally and spiritually relevant way.

We believe that it is of utmost importance that when Jewish people come to faith in Messiah they be

discipled in a way that fosters their God-given Jewish identity. A Messianic Congregation provides such an environment. Messianic congregations also typically have Gentile believers worshipping together with Jewish believers as a testimony of what God has done for us through faith in Yeshua the Messiah.

In October 1998 Beit HaMashiach took up ministry in the heart of the Jewish community of Melbourne, Caulfield – a suburb that we affectionately call the "holy land" of Australia because it has a community of over 75,000 Jewish people, the largest in Australia.

A sister congregation, Dom Missi'ee (*House of Messiah in Russian*) was also established to reach out to the many Jewish people in Melbourne who were originally from the Former Soviet Union. Over a period of a few years we saw more than 300 Russian speaking Jewish people come to faith in Yeshua as Messiah. This was nothing short of an unprecedented move of God in Australia amongst Russian speaking Jews that was parallel with what God was doing amongst Russian Jews in other parts of the world like the USA and Israel. Still today hardly a week goes by in Melbourne without a Russian Jewish person praying to receive Yeshua as Messiah.

**Bringing the
message to the
original messengers**

www.caulfieldmessianiccentre.org.au



The Building of the Caulfield Messianic Centre

In 2010 I began to teach a series of sermons from the Book of Nehemiah. As a community, we were challenged to the core that we needed to rebuild the walls of Beit HaMashiach both spiritually and physically.

We began to seek the Lord more earnestly, praying for revival amongst our Jewish people and praying for forgiveness and reconciliation between Jew and Gentile. Beit HaMashiach Messianic Congregation started experiencing a growth in both numbers attending services as well as people coming to faith in Messiah.

This year we have seen several Jewish people come to faith in Yeshua and, remarkably, we have also seen several people from Muslim backgrounds receive Yeshua as Lord. I wish you could have been at a baptism service we held earlier this year when three Jewish people, four Muslims and one Australian were baptised together as believers in Jesus. It was truly an amazing experience.

Rebuilding the Walls

"Then I said to them, 'You see the trouble we are in: Jerusalem lies in ruins, and its gates have been burned with fire. Come, let us rebuild the wall of Jerusalem, and we will no longer be in disgrace.' I also told them about the gracious hand of my God upon me and what the king had said to me. They replied, 'Let us start rebuilding.' So they began this good work." (Nehemiah 2:17-18, NIV)

The Lord used this verse to encourage us to trust Him in the building of a Messianic Centre and Synagogue that will facilitate the growing mission of Celebrate Messiah and house the worshipping community of Beit HaMashiach.

We were also challenged that just as Nehemiah had motivated the inhabitants of Jerusalem to rebuild the walls for future generations, that the

Lord is challenging us to build the *Caulfield Messianic Centre* to provide for needs of the growing messianic community in Melbourne and to leave a lasting legacy for future generations.

The Vision for the Caulfield Messianic Centre

To build a multi-purpose facility that will enable the ministries of Celebrate Messiah and Beit HaMashiach to fulfil their mission of taking the *Message to the Original Messengers*.

The Purpose of the Caulfield Messianic Centre

- ✧ To create a facility that will be; a worship centre (synagogue), community centre (proximity space), creative hub, providing a place of outreach, education, hospitality, and training for local, national and international missions amongst Jewish people.
- ✧ To provide a place of identity and refuge, giving validity and dignity to the messianic community and leaving a legacy for future generations.
- ✧ To make a public declaration that Yeshua is Israel's Messiah and the Saviour of Jew and Gentile alike.

The Caulfield Messianic Centre will be a beacon of light for the Messiah in the most strategic location in Australia.





The Facilities of the Caulfield Messianic Centre

The *Caulfield Messianic Centre* will feature a 250-seater auditorium and synagogue as well as a café and outdoor area for community events, as well as a fully functioning Art Gallery which provides a very effective way to engage with the community around us exploring issues about life, faith, culture and the Bible.

The *Caulfield Messianic Centre* will also provide for:

- ✧ Messianic Bible School and Jewish Evangelism Training Programme for the raising up the next generation of missionaries and congregation planters amongst the Jewish people.
- ✧ Children's and Youth Programme
- ✧ Hebrew Language classes
- ✧ A Messianic Resource Centre catering for the needs of the messianic movement

The Centurion's Legacy

One of the most noble and amazing characters in the Gospels is a nameless person known only for his compassion, great faith, generosity and sacrificial love. I am talking about the surprising Centurion of Luke chapter 7 and Matthew chapter 8.

As a professional soldier in the Roman army officer he had to be brave and fearsome. The soldiers under him had to fear him more than they feared the enemy.

Roman citizens normally regarded their slaves as mere human household implements. Yet this Centurion is portrayed as kind and compassionate and truly concerned about his sick servant.

Even though the Centurion represented the occupying force that was oppressing Israel, it is apparent that his love and noble virtues were well known by the local Jewish community of Capernaum. So much so that the elders of the community were prepared to go, on his behalf, to Jesus to plead with him to come and

heal the Centurion's servant.

In Luke 7:4-5 it says that the Jewish delegation came to Jesus and pleaded; "... *This man deserves to have you do this, because he loves our nation and has built our synagogue.*" (Luke 7:4-5, NIV)

We don't know how or when this Centurion became a believer in the God of Israel. But we do know that his love for God compelled him to love God's Chosen People so much that he was prepared to build them a synagogue that he himself could not be a member of. Now that is real love and amazing commitment and later in the story Yeshua commended him as man of great faith; "... *I tell you, I have not found such great faith even in Israel.*" (Luke 7:9, NIV)

Visiting Capernaum today you will be able to see the ruins of the ancient synagogue built upon the foundations of the synagogue that the Centurion built for the Jewish people.

This Centurion has left for us a legacy of love, faith and generosity that has spanned two thousand years being recorded for us in God's eternal Word. His good deeds continue to challenge us today.

The Centurion's Challenge

As supporters of Celebrate Messiah we know that you love the God of Israel and the People of Israel, as did this great Centurion. And I want you to know that we so appreciate your vital support for the ongoing mission work of Celebrate Messiah.

However, can I ask you to please prayerfully consider giving a special, over and above, love offering to help us build our "synagogue" in the heart of the Jewish community of Caulfield in Melbourne as a testimony that Jesus is the Messiah of Israel and Saviour of the world, for both Jew and Gentile alike?

Please prayerfully consider partnering with us to see the *Caulfield Messianic Centre* become a reality.

Sponsor a Levenah ("Brick") in the Synagogue Programme

You, together perhaps with your family, your friends or even your church or congregation may want to consider sponsoring a levenah ("brick") or a number of levenim ("bricks") in the building of the *Caulfield Messianic Centre*. As our way of honouring and remembering you, we will create a wall of names of those who have sponsored this project.

Each levenah will represent a \$1,000 donation towards the building of the *Caulfield Messianic Centre*. Donations of a lesser amount towards this project are also very much appreciated. Together we can build this synagogue one "levenah" at a time.

"Eliashib the high priest and his fellow priests went to work and rebuilt the Sheep Gate. They dedicated it and set its doors in place, building as far as the Tower of the Hundred, which they dedicated, and as far as the Tower of Hananel." (Nehemiah 3:1, NIV)

"So we rebuilt the wall... for the people worked with all their heart." (Nehemiah 4:6, NIV)

Counting the Cost

Yeshua taught us that prior to taking on a project such as this that we should always "count the cost" (cf. Luke 14:28-30, 33).

In order to undertake this project and ensure its successful completion, we have engaged the services of a very reputable and capable Christian architect who has helped us with our concept development as well as the estimation of costs. This we have done with much prayerful consideration and consultation with our community.

Currently the estimated costs of the project is \$4 million. That is 4,000 levenim ("bricks") that need to be sponsored. If you would like to view information about this project online, visit caulfieldmessianiccentre.org.au and you will be able to see the architect's drawings of the *Caulfield Messianic Centre*.

Financial Accountability

We have appointed a very capable, prayerful and committed Building Committee to oversee this project under the oversight of the Boards

of both Celebrate Messiah and Beit HaMashiach.

The building fund for the *Caulfield Messianic Centre* will be managed by the Boards of Celebrate Messiah Australia and Beit HaMashiach Messianic Congregation and audit will be done by accredited Christian accountants, Renshaw Dawson Lang. A separate bank account has been opened for this project.

"At that time men were appointed to be in charge of the storerooms for the contributions, firstfruits and tithes..." (Nehemiah 12:44, NIV)

Join us in Prayer and Action for the Caulfield Messianic Centre

Please prayerfully consider partnering with us to see the *Caulfield Messianic Centre* become a reality. We invite you to join with us in financial support as well as in prayer for this strategic building project:

"From that day on... Those who carried materials did their work with one hand and held a weapon in the other." (Nehemiah 4:16-17, NIV)

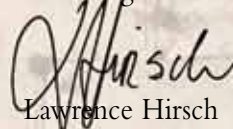
"So the wall was completed... When all our enemies heard about this, all the surrounding nations were afraid and lost their self-confidence, because they realized that this work had been done with the help of our God." (Nehemiah 6:15-16, NIV)

Our Promise

Finally, I do want to make a promise to our prayerful supporters that we will not allow this *Caulfield Messianic Centre* Project take our focus away from our mission – continuing to share the Gospel with our Jewish people. Our mission work will continue both here in Australia and overseas (New Zealand, Russia and Israel) as a priority. We will not neglect the preaching of the Gospel nor use funds given for mission work, for this new Messianic Centre.

Your ongoing support for this mission work is thus much appreciated.

Yours together for the salvation of Israel,


Lawrence Hirsch

Executive Director, Celebrate Messiah Australia



www.caulfieldmessianiccentre.org.au

NEWS BRIEFS

LIFE STILL LEFT IN BOOKSHOPS

One of the Sydney Celebrate Messiah outreach workers reports that recently when wearing her necklace with the Hebrew word for 'life' pronounced " " but it is not the tea!) the manager of a bookshop commented on it. The conversation led to sharing how Yeshua is the Way, the Truth and the Life. The manager closed the shop for 20 minutes in order to continue the conversation. Please pray for "M" as she is now reading the Gospel of Matthew and will be meeting again with our Sydney staff.

FROM ONE HOLY LAND TO ANOTHER

Celebrate Messiah missionary Barry reports that on his last day in Jerusalem in September this year he met with an elderly Jewish gentleman who is a Messianic believer. He told Barry of a friend of his who lives in Caulfield who is also a Messianic believer, and asked if he would visit her and pass on his best regards. On returning to Melbourne, Barry went to visit this Jewish lady. It turns out that she is 81 years of age and loves Yeshua. "What astounded me was that the Lord allowed me to go half around the world to meet this gentleman, who would introduce me to a friend of his who lives in the same city where I work." Barry said it also made him think how many other Jewish people are out there in our community who are believers in Yeshua that we don't yet know of.

SIMCHA BRINGS MORE JOY EACH YEAR

This year's Simcha conference on Phillip Island was one of the biggest and best ever. We had over 350 people throughout the weekend, who danced, sang, prayed, ate, schmoozed and worshiped Jew and Gentile under one Messiah, Yeshua the Messiah. President of Chosen People Ministries Dr Mitch Glaser led the way with four deep and humorous sessions around the theme of the conference, Messianic Unity – Behold How Good and How Pleasant It Is. Mitch was ably supported by Dr Ashley Crane, Kelvin Crombie, Lawrence Hirsch, and Russian speaking Jerusalem- based Maxim. This year we had over 70 Russian Jewish believers and non-believers attend, as well as a group of about 30 Iranians. An interesting mix that fitted into the theme of Muchan so well. Music was led by messianic maestro Phil Plotnek and the Celebrate Messiah worship team. If you missed the conference this year, it's not too early to express your interest for Simcha 2013, which will feature an evangelical extravaganza of speakers, with representatives from Chosen People Global Ministries throughout the world.

VOLUNTEERS HELP GROW RUSSIAN MINISTRY

Celebrate Messiah missionary Rita reports that Dom Misiee Russian Jewish speaking fellowship is growing. "Also my husband Elia Ivenskis was helping to bring Russian Jews to the fellowship and serving them with great love." Rita says she has a very committed team of people from Beit HaMashiach who were



serving and showing great love for the people. "We had about 70 Russian speaking Jewish people attend, not only for lunch but coming to hear the Word of God, and many of them gave their lives to the Lord towards the end of the service when they prayed a prayer of repentance," Rita said.

GOD OF ISRAEL LOVES IRANIANS

Praise God for the hunger among new Iranian refugees in Australia who are searching for true peace through worshipping the God of Israel. We are blessed to have a growing number in our Beit HaMashiach congregation, and our volunteer outreach worker Roya says at least six churches in Melbourne now have Iranian groups. "Each group is growing by God's grace, and I know many more Iranians are believers now but are 'hiding' in English speaking churches." Roya says they can't grow in their faith as they don't understand English. "We desperately need strategic discipleship for these people to grow and be equipped properly in their language so they can evangelise the large number of Muslims coming to Australia. Roya urges people in our ministry and the wider body of believers to respond to this urgent need.

READY, SET, GO FOR 10 AUSSIES

Ten young Australians will head off with Lawrence and Louise Hirsch in December to attend the second Muchan Conference in Paris. Muchan (meaning 'ready') is a messianic conference for Messianic Jews and Gentiles aged 18-35. They will join 150 other young adults from Germany, Hungary, Ukraine, Russia, Holland, France, Switzerland, Poland, Finland, Israel, Australia, Canada, USA, Mexico, South Africa and the United Kingdom. The conference, themed "Ready to Leap: Cultivating a Faith that Dares, will hear from young speakers involved in front line opportunities within the Jewish Community in academics, business, politics, the arts and in youth work. The idea for the Muchan conference was first birthed when Lawrence and Louise visited Auschwitz a few years ago and witnessed a large group of young Israelis engaging with their Jewish heritage and history in a very moving way. As a result of this, the first Muchan conference was held in Berlin in 2009 and had over 120 in attendance. Please pray for this conference, that God would continue to pour out His Spirit upon the next generation of leaders in the Messianic community and that there would be great unity.



JOIN US FOR AN EXQUISITE NIGHT OF
CELEBRATING A MESSIANIC JEWISH
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(BOOKING DEADLINE 18 MARCH)
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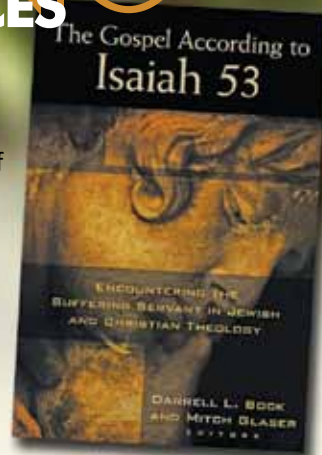
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MESSIANIC RESOURCES

The Gospel According to Isaiah 53

Equip yourself to present the redemptive work of the Messiah. Exploring issues of atonement and redemption, respected scholars show how Jesus is the fulfillment of Isaiah's "suffering servant"—and offer suggestions on how to share this Good News with our Jewish brothers and sisters. Edited by Darrell Bock and Mitch Glaser.

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Webpage: www.ift.net.au



Hanukkah Service at Beit HaMashiach 15 December 2012, 10.30am

206 Bamba Road
Caulfield South.
All are welcome!



Outreach Israel 2013 1-16 July, 2013

Is there a special place in your heart for Israel? Do you want to be part of ministering on the edge in a place that is desperate for authentic peace? Are you between the ages of 18-35?

Outreach Israel is a short-term missions program designed to bring you face to face with Israelis for the primary purpose of relational evangelism as well as encouraging the local believers in Messiah.

Time will be spent in practical activities – like meeting and encouraging believing young people (Jewish and Arabic believers), helping the poor and needy, reaching out to Holocaust survivors, and supporting local messianic congregations. We will be staying in communal accommodation where we will cook together, live together and travel as we minister in the Promised Land. We will also make sure we have some time to play and explore some of the major sites of Israel. The Lord will use you mightily as you reach out to Israelis, hear their stories, and share yours!

Please call the office for more
information or log onto
www.celebratemessiah.com.au to register.



Celebrate MESSIAH

"Bringing the Message to the Original Messengers"

Serving together with Chosen People Ministries in: Argentina, Australia, Canada, China, England, Finland, France, Germany, Israel, Mexico, New Zealand, Poland, Russia, Ukraine, United States.

In Australia contact: Celebrate Messiah Australia, PO Box 304, Caulfield South, VIC 3162, Australia. Phone: +61 3 9563 5544
Fax: +61 3-9563 5544 Email: enquiries@celebratemessiah.com.au

In New Zealand contact: Celebrate Messiah New Zealand, 276 Danseys Pass Rd, 12 CRD, Oamaru 9491, New Zealand,
Phone: +64 3431 2564 Email: scottsodc@gmail.com

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