



June 2021



A Longing Fulfilled is a Tree of Life

*“Hope deferred makes the heart sick, but a longing fulfilled is a tree of life.”
(Proverbs 13:12, NIV84)*

Dear friends,

After more than 35 years of dreaming, 10 years of planning and fundraising, and a long and eventful year of construction throughout 2020, the Caulfield Messianic Centre is now a reality. Praise the Lord that we now have a wonderful facility, in the heart of the largest Jewish community in Australia, as a strategic tool in our hands from which to continue the mission of Celebrate Messiah, and from which to launch new and exciting ministries to reach Jewish people with the message of Messiah. To find out more, please read on.

The new facility in Caulfield was formally dedicated at a well-attended, live-streamed function on the 1st of May (you can view the Dedication Service on our YouTube channel). The Caulfield Messianic Centre features:

- 200-seat Sanctuary with an overflow of another 50 or more seats.
- Dining and function room
- Breakout rooms for children’s ministry and creche.
- Art gallery.
- Upstairs office space with computer workstations.
- Dual-purpose board and conference room with media facilities.

Louise and I are so incredibly thankful to the Lord for His gracious blessing upon the ministry of Celebrate Messiah, and for the faith and generosity of many wonderful believers and organisations across the globe – but mostly in Australia – for enabling us to complete the ambitious project totally free of debt. Hallelujah!

Many times, Louise and I wondered if this Messianic Centre would ever become a reality. We had first dreamed of such a facility soon after we came to faith in Yeshua in 1984. As excited new believers, Louise and I would share

our faith with our Jewish friends and others whom we met, they would naturally ask us where we worshipped. In those days, there were no Messianic congregations in Australia at all. We had no place to bring enquiring Jewish people, other than the local church we were attending. However, we found that most Christians knew very little about Jewish people, and were often culturally insensitive. We knew we had to have a place in which to worship Messiah in a spiritually and culturally relevant way to Jewish people, and one that could be a welcoming and uplifting gathering place for Messianic Jewish believers.



After we returned from five years of missionary and theological training in South Africa, we planted the Celebrate Messiah ministry, in February 1995, as an outreach to Jewish people with the mission statement Bringing the Message to the Original Messengers.

Soon after that, Beit HaMashiach was officially launched as a Messianic congregation, and services began strategically located in the heart of Caulfield. Beit HaMashiach faithfully conducted services and outreach in an old church building in Caulfield for more than 20 long years. We continued to hope and pray that one day we could transform the premises into our very own Messianic centre and synagogue. Often, I would look at the old run-down building and cry out aloud to God, 'Lord, will we ever be able to build our own synagogue?'"

In 2010, after a series of studies in the Book of Nehemiah, the Lord was challenging us to move forward and rebuild the broken-down walls of Beit HaMashiach. In March 2011, plans were drawn up, fundraising began, and we started the lengthy and difficult process of gaining planning and building approval from local authorities.

For the next nine years, we continued with much prayer and faith, frustration and discouraging setbacks, design changes and moments of doubt, and finally, in August 2019, construction commenced.

Then, in early 2020, COVID-19 hit. But the Lord continued to bless the building of the centre. Miraculously, most of the money needed to complete the project came in during 2020. I am totally amazed that this happened, and still to this day I am in awe of the Lord's provision and blessing. This project is a testimony to the Lord's faithfulness, and the generosity and commitment of his saints.

People from across Australia, and many from other countries too (even from Papua New Guinea), Jews and Gentiles, people in Beit HaMashiach Messianic Congregation and others who never attended a service, contributed to the Centurion's Legacy Project (see Luke

chapter 7). You are Celebrate Messiah's Centurions, who love the God of Israel and the people of Israel, and who have helped us build our Messianic centre and synagogue in the heart of the largest Jewish community in Australia.

The centre is strategically located in the heart of an area designated by Orthodox Rabbis as the Melbourne Eruv, which contains around 40 synagogues.

Through you, God has provided us with wonderful new facilities to host the ministries of Celebrate Messiah, our benevolent ministry Tikken Olam, and to house the congregation of Beit HaMashiach.

We are now poised to continue the ministries of Celebrate Messiah and to initiate many new projects from our new centre. Let me tell you more about that:

Training and Equipping

We believe that one of the most urgent ministries that we need to undertake is the training and equipping of believers to effectively reach out to Jewish people in Australia and overseas. We need to be intentional about raising up and training the next generation of leaders for the Messianic movement, and to encourage those already involved.

For this reason, Celebrate Messiah will be launching the very first Messianic Training Centre in Australia that will be conducted from our new facilities at the Caulfield Messianic Centre. The Messianic Training Centre will offer courses for those who would like to be equipped for Jewish ministry and evangelism as well as for those who want to simply study the Bible from a Messianic Jewish perspective.

In late June we will be offering our first 5-week course on Jewish evangelism: "Bringing the Message to the Original Messengers." For more information on this, please visit our website at <https://www.celebratemessiah.com.au/mtc/>.



Evangelism

This year we are working on three strategic evangelistic projects. I present these to you for your prayers and support:



1. Jewish Testimony Project

A few years ago, our partner ministry, Chosen People Ministries, initiated a truly wonderful and effective evangelistic project called "I Found Shalom," presenting dozens of video testimonies of Jewish people who have come to believe in Yeshua as the Messiah. These videos have received hundreds of thousands of views on the internet. Other than mine, there are no other Australian testimonies represented.

Celebrate Messiah would like to do our own Jewish Testimony Project, filming the testimonies of Australian Jewish people who have become followers of Yeshua the Messiah. We will be using these testimonies in an evangelistic campaign through the internet and social media. Please would you pray and support this strategic project.

2. Outreach to Inter-Marrieds

Despite the huge effort of the Jewish community worldwide to combat the rate of assimilation, the number of Jews marrying non-Jews is increasing every year. For a variety of social and spiritual reasons, this group of people are generally very open to the Gospel. This can be clearly seen in the fact that so many of us as Jewish believers in Yeshua are married to non-Jewish spouses.

Since this is a growing group of people here in Australia and all around the world, we are developing a strategy to reach out to this unique people group. The anonymity of using platforms like Zoom really lend a hand to this kind of outreach. So, we would like to ask you to please pray for Celebrate Messiah as we develop an effective outreach program to Inter-Marrieds this year.

3. Planet Zula

Our wonderful partner ministry "across the ditch," Celebrate Messiah New Zealand, have developed a new mobile app called Planet Zula which is a highly effective tool in bringing Israeli Backpackers and believing hosts together all around the globe.

We are looking to adopt this for Australia, train new hosts, and roll this out sometime this year in 2021, as Israeli backpackers start coming back to Australia once COVID-19 is in check. Please can I ask you to pray and support this project.

4. Planting New Messianic Congregations

It has always been my belief that one of the most effective ways of reaching Jewish people with the Message of the Messiah is through the ministry of healthy and vibrant Messianic Congregations made up of Jews and Gentiles who love the Lord. For this reason, Celebrate Messiah planted two Messianic congregations here in Melbourne, another congregation is being developed in Sydney and we have an affiliated congregation in Canberra. We also have two congregations that we have planted in the Far East of Russia, in Artyom and Birobidzhan.

Now that we have a well-established congregation and Messianic centre in Caulfield, we are praying and believing that in the years ahead, we will be able to help plant and grow more Messianic congregations in strategic locations around our country, wherever there is a significant Jewish community. Please pray for this long-term goal.

Prayer and Support

God has given us a big vision and ambitious goals, and I hope you are ready and willing to partner with us as we step out in faith this year, and in the years ahead. We believe that this is the time for training, equipping and evangelism.



We do expect to receive quite a bit of opposition, and we need to have the prayer support and financial resources to press on. I am also concerned, of course, about antisemitism that is on the rise all around the world. We need to pray and stand with the Jewish people at this time.

This year, we hope to raise enough funds to provide for these new ministries, as well as continue to support the general ministry of Celebrate Messiah and our existing missionaries in the field. Your continued prayerful support will be greatly appreciated.

Please prayerfully consider giving a generous End-of-Financial Year gift to Your Mission to the Jewish People.

In the context of Jewish evangelism, the Apostle Paul said:

“How then will they call on him in whom they have not believed? And how are they to believe in him of whom they have never heard? And how are they to hear without someone preaching? And how are they to preach unless they are sent? As it is written, “How beautiful are the feet of those who preach the good news!”” (Romans 10:14–15, ESV)

Your brother in the Messiah,



Lawrence Hirsch
Executive Director of Celebrate Messiah Australia

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One Way of Helping to Repair our World

Throughout the past year of COVID restrictions, Tikkun Olam was able to provide basic, monthly food hampers to Jewish families in Victoria, and throughout the country for the Jewish festivals. It was challenging to meet the task, as the Messianic Centre was effectively closed for Purim and Passover. But our volunteers were not deterred in any way. We were able to increase and continue our supply of Tikkun Olam food hampers. Once again, the extraordinary example of two Chinese churches here in Melbourne to donate produce has deeply moved us and those who received the hampers. Following are a few testimonies from recipients:

- The food hampers we receive from Tikkun Olam are so helpful for the kids and I. Tikkun Olam provides a huge amount of relief financially for our family. My weeks aren't so demanding and stressful, being a busy single mum of two and a part time student, knowing I have groceries at home. We are so grateful to the Tikkun Olam team.

- What a tumultuous year it's been! Thank you for your kind and generous sponsors and lovely volunteers in looking after the Jewish people in times of great stress and turmoil. You give us hope, faith and strength. May you be blessed with a Kosher Le Pesach, health and happiness.
- Once again, a very generous hamper for Passover and a gorgeous card was delivered to me. Thanks a lot for always thinking of me. People are so kind; I really appreciate it very much.
- We appreciate the Kosher food hampers. I am so happy that we in the Jewish community can help each other, especially as I am a single parent and I look after my daughter full time. Baruch Hashem.

Please consider an end of year, tax deductible gift to this wonderful ministry that helps so many needy individuals and families in such a practical, loving way.

Giving to Jewish Ministry in Your Will

When you remember Celebrate Messiah in your will, you become a partner in our life-changing work amongst God's Chosen People worldwide, as we await the Messiah's return.

If you would like to speak to a Christian solicitor about including Celebrate Messiah in your will, please call our office on 9563 5544 for more information.



PLANET·ZULA

Reaching Israel from the
comfort of your own home!

