

"LET THE CHILDREN COME TO ME"

Dear friends,

Shalom in His grace. Thank you for taking a few moments to read and reflect on the ministry and concerns of Celebrate Messiah: Your Mission to the Jewish People.

Our mission statement reflects the teaching of Scripture:

Giving all Jewish people the opportunity to hear, understand and follow Yeshua, the promised Messiah.

I am grateful for your prayers and support! Without you, we could not continue this great and historic work among Jewish people.

The Biblical Foundation for Jewish Evangelism



LAWRENCE HIRSCHExecutive Director
of Celebrate
Messiah

The Bible builds a powerful case for the importance and urgency of Jewish evangelism. We are all, hopefully, familiar with verses like Romans 1:16, 11:11, and the words of encouragement from the Savior Himself who told us,

"Salvation is from the Jews" (John 4:22). We can also learn from Paul's strategy in the book of Acts, where he

consistently went to the synagogue to reach his fellow Jewish people even as he exercised his calling as the apostle to the Gentiles.

Paul passionately expresses his broken heart for his own Jewish people in his letter to the Romans (Rom 9:1–3, Rom 9–11):

I am telling the truth in Messiah, I am not lying, my conscience testifies with me in the Holy Spirit, that I have great sorrow and unceasing grief in my heart. For I could wish that I myself were accursed, separated from Messiah for the sake of my brethren, my kinsmen according to the flesh. (Rom 9:1–3)

I deeply identify with Paul's sentiments. Passages like these from Romans and others form the biblical foundation for Celebrate Messiah, which has not changed in 28 years. And our US partner Chosen People

Ministries has a history of 129 years. History is important to understand as our past helps shape our future.

The History of Chosen People Ministries

Chosen People Ministries' founder, Rabbi Leopold Cohn, left his home in Hungary and immigrated to the United States in 1892. Soon after he arrived, the rabbi heard the good news about the Messiah from a young Polish Presbyterian missionary to the Jewish people. After receiving the Lord, Rabbi Cohn studied theology in Scotland and returned to Brooklyn in 1894 to begin what is now known as Chosen People Ministries. Celebrate Messiah formed a partnership with CPM in 2000.

God called Rabbi Cohn to reach out to his fellow Jewish people immigrating to the United States. At that time, the Mission served the material and spiritual needs of the growing population of Jewish immigrants.

Several decades later, CPM staff served the survivors of the Holocaust: a tragedy of astronomic proportions. Today, we still assist elderly Holocaust survivors. Most are in their nineties and living in Israel. Many live in Australia. In fact, Melbourne has the highest proportion of Holocaust survivors per head of population anywhere in the world outside Israel, estimated at around 3000 survivors.

Our staff love God's chosen people, and we do whatever it takes to support their needs and present the gospel message at the same time.

Our focus has always been on a people, not a particular country. In the 1990s, when millions of Russian-speaking Jewish people left the former Soviet Union for America, Germany, Canada, Australia, and, of course, Israel, we were there to help and show the love of Yeshua the Messiah to our people.

With God's help, Celebrate Messiah is eager to reach Jewish people of the twenty-first century. Our strategies, methods, and materials have changed with the times and will continue to adapt, which is part of our DNA. Yet, the gospel we proclaim remains the same: We preach an unchanging message of God's power to save, "to the Jew first and also to the Greek" (Romans 1:16). Through our partnership with Chosen People Global Ministries we preach this message in Hebrew, Spanish, Russian, Ukrainian, French, English, and as many languages as it takes to reach our people, throughout 19 countries.

CPM began as a global ministry, and by His grace, will continue this way until the great day when, as Paul writes, "all Israel will be saved" (Romans 11:26). Only then will our work be done.

"Helping Others Do the Same"

Celebrate Messiah relies on the help and partnership of our brothers and sisters in the Messiah to help us reach the 15 million-plus Jewish



people in the world today. Our mission statement affirms we not only reach Jewish people with the gospel but also help the church do the same. There are around 130,000 Jewish people in Australia.

To understand how evangelicals perceive the Jewish people, CPM decided to study Christian involvement in Jewish evangelism by sponsoring a survey of more than 2,000 evangelicals.¹

This survey discovered approximately 70 percent of evangelicals look favourably toward Israel, and 86 percent agree proclaiming the gospel among Jewish people is important. We found this fact very encouraging. However, we also learned age makes a big difference. According to the survey, evangelicals age 65 or older are 10 percent more likely to agree "sharing the gospel with Jewish people is important" than evangelicals ages 18 to 34.²

We looked at other organisations' surveys to see if this interest in Israel and the Jewish people among younger Christians was waning, and how it might impact their willingness to be active in reaching their Jewish friends for the Lord.

A survey by the Brookings Institution in 2021 found support for Israel among young evangelicals dropped all the way to 34 percent from 75 percent in 2018. Within just three years, support for Israel plummeted 41 percent.³ So, our research and the results of others confirms younger evangelicals are becoming less favourable to Israel and are likely growing cooler toward Jewish evangelism as well.

We suspect support of Jewish missions increases when those engaged have a favourable view of Jewish people and the nation of Israel. Since this favourability is lessening among younger evangelicals, we should be concerned about Jewish evangelism decreasing among this group as well.

While this survey was done in the US, we can reasonably expect similar views here in Australia.

Inspiring a New Generation of Jewish Evangelists

How do we pass the baton to a new generation who might not necessarily embrace the full package of evangelical views and values cherished by previous generations? Though generations and cultures change, God's character and Word do not. We believe affirming the ongoing role of the land and people of Israel in God's plan is part of being faithful to Scripture. So, we should care about helping younger evangelicals appreciate this key theme in the Bible.

We asked our staff and friends to suggest some ways we can help a new generation of young believers care about the Jewish people.

To most effectively spur the next generation to support Israel and passionately proclaim the gospel among the Jewish people, we need to start educating at a young age. Childhood and adolescence are key times to learn about the world and form opinions about complex topics. We should reach children at home, through kid's programs at local churches, and at Christian camps. As kids mature, we can cultivate conversations about Israel and the Jewish people through youth groups and student ministries.

For this reason, we are producing new materials to help children learn about and love Jewish people. We are excited about our new animated video and teaching materials for children on the Feast of Tabernacles (Sukkot). This video is available now, and I hope you will watch it and pass it along to your children, grandchildren, children's pastors, and home-schooling groups. You will learn more about this project and future resources in this newsletter.

The video is by no means our only strategy for reaching younger generations! Celebrate Messiah congregations run Shabbat School programs and later this year we'll be holding a youth camp in conjunction with Simcha. These programs have shaped hundreds of young people's relationships with the Messiah and have influenced their understanding of Israel in the Bible. We plan to continue to grow our ministries for children and youth.

Another way to inspire younger generations toward Jewish outreach is through our new Host Israelis ministry. We are currently recruiting host families for this new ministry where you can have young Israelis stay in your home. This will not only be good for the Israelis who will see your love for the Lord through your hospitality, but it will also help your kids or grandchildren who might be meeting Israelis for the first time. You can then follow up by teaching these children about God's plan for Israel and the Jewish people. For more information on hosting visit www.hostisraelis.com.au.

We believe one way we can influence a new generation of young people for the Lord is to foster from a young age their interest in Israel and in outreach to their Jewish friends.

I am sure you will enjoy this newsletter, and please join us in praying for the next generation of young people who will carry the banner of the Messiah and Jewish outreach to a future day . . . until He returns!

Your brother,

Endnotes

1 LifeWay Research conducted the "Evangelical Attitudes Toward Israel and the Peace Process" study September 20–28, 2017. The survey asked 2,002 Americans with evangelical beliefs about a wide range of issues involving Israel—from its place in the Bible to its treatment of Palestinians. The survey focused on Americans with evangelical beliefs rather than self-identified evangelicals ("Evangelical Attitudes toward Israel Research Study," Lifeway Research, accessed August 4, 2023, https://allianceforthepeaceofjerusalem.com/wp-content/uploads/2018/02/Evangelical-Attitudes-Toward-Israel-Narrative-Report-Part-2-2_21_181.pdf).

2 Ibid.

3 Shibley Telhami, "As Israel Increasingly Relies on US Evangelicals for Support, Younger Ones Are Walking away: What Polls Show," The Brookings Institution, May 26, 2021, https://www.brookings.edu/articles/as-israel-increasingly-relies-on-us-evangelicals-for-support-younger-ones-are-walking-away-what-polls-show/..



SUKKOT: GOD DESIRES TO DWELL WITH HIS PEOPLE

Yeshua is the fulfillment of all the Jewish festivals, including the Feast of Tabernacles (Sukkot). He is the consummation of the holiday as He is God in the flesh who "tabernacled," or lived, among us. As John wrote, "And the Word became flesh, and dwelt among us, and we saw His glory, glory as of the only begotten from the Father, full of grace and truth" (John 1:14).

This beautiful verse echoes the Tabernacle the Israelites built in the desert. Just as God dwelt with His people in the Tabernacle, God dwells in the flesh with His people through Yeshua. Yeshua is the true Tabernacle, God's manifest glory and presence, foreshadowed by God's glory and presence by which He led His people through the challenges of the wilderness.

Veiling His pure glory, God became human through the incarnation (Philippians 2:5–11); Yeshua took up residence among the people of Israel for a short sojourn. He now sits at God's right hand, where He intercedes for His followers. Soon, He will return to rule on earth from the new Jerusalem, when the King Messiah will pitch a far grander tent, encompassing Israel and the nations under His sovereign leadership.

Yeshua the Messiah and the Feast of Tabernacles

When Yeshua celebrated the Feast of Tabernacles, He made one of His greatest and most profound announcements about His identity as Messiah (John 7). On the seventh day of the feast, it was the custom of Jewish people during this period to send a group of Levities accompanied by musicians to the pool of Siloam to gather running water in giant vessels to bring to the altar.

They would march around the altar crying out, "Lord, save us! Lord, save us!" many times. Then, they would pour the water from the vessels at the base of the altar. This act symbolised the hope of the Jewish people looking toward the day when Messiah would come and pour His Spirit upon the people of Israel in fulfillment of Joel 2:28–29:

It will come about after this that I will pour out My Spirit on all mankind: and your sons and daughters will prophesy, your old men will dream dreams, your young men will see visions. Even on the male and female servants I will pour out My Spirit in those days.

According to Jewish tradition, these events in Joel were to take place when the Messiah appeared on earth. This pouring out of the water at the base of the altar in the Temple was a foretaste of the outpouring of God's Spirit. The water-drawing ceremony, as it was known, was a portrait of the day when God would send His Messiah and His Spirit, causing the Jewish people to come alive spiritually as never before.

Yeshua understood this tradition; therefore, on the seventh great day of the feast, He stood up and said:

"If anyone is thirsty, let him come to Me and drink. He who believes in Me, as the Scripture said, 'From his innermost being will flow rivers of living water.'" But this He spoke of the Spirit, whom those who believed in Him were to receive; for the Spirit was not yet given, because Jesus was not yet glorified. (John 7:37b–39)

The Feast of Tabernacles is one of the three biblical festivals on which God required Jewish men to visit Jerusalem. As a result, crowds of Jewish people from around the world were present to hear Yeshua make this statement. Yeshua was telling the masses *He* was the Messiah, the Spirit of God was about to be poured out, and *He* was the living water to which He referred. Those who drink – who believe in Him – will never thirst again!

The Ultimate Meaning of the Feast of Tabernacles

We must also mention the ultimate and eternal significance of the Feast of Tabernacles: God dwelling among humankind for all eternity. As the apostle John wrote.

And I heard a loud voice from the throne, saying, "Behold, the tabernacle of God is among men, and He will dwell among them, and they shall be His people, and God Himself will be among them, and He will wipe away every tear from their eyes; and there will no longer be any death; there will no longer be any mourning, or crying, or pain; the first things have passed away." (Revelation 21:3–4)

God will fulfill the kingdom promises to Jewish people and establish the throne of Yeshua in a literal but renewed Jerusalem. But this is not the end of the story; there is more to come. Ultimately, the whole earth will become the tabernacle of God as He reigns through His Son for all eternity. What greater joy can there be than to be in the presence of God forever?



FEAST OF TABERNACLES RESOURCES FOR KIDS

As you read in the testimonies to the right, the biblical festivals are a great way to teach kids how Yeshua fulfills the Hebrew Scriptures. This season, we are launching a children's lesson plan all about the Feast of Tabernacles. It will have an accompanying animated video detailing the adventures of a Messianic Jewish boy named Hilly (short for Hillel) and his friend Valentina, a Gentile believer in Yeshua. Hilly wants to help his family prepare for their Feast of Tabernacles festivities, but he must first find some essential items. The ensuing quest includes a fun café owner, a wise Messianic congregational leader, and an adorable Corgi dog.

We want to turn this video into a series called *The Olive Treehouse*. This series will help teach the next generation how Yeshua fulfills the biblical festivals. Central to all biblical festivals is God's loving plan for Israel and her redemption, why Jewish evangelism is essential, and our unity in the Messiah.

There are many ways to teach the Bible to children. The festivals are one of the ways God provided meaningful lessons to His children. The Feast of Tabernacles demonstrates God's provision and desire to dwell with His people. These are themes ultimately fulfilled in the Messiah, Yeshua. If you want to use the lesson plan and video to start a conversation about this holiday with your children, visit **chosenpeople.com/tabernacles.**

The Feast of Tabernacles and the Next Generation

Israel's fall festivals contain layers of biblical understanding imperative for the next generation to embrace and make their own. As Deuteronomy 6:7 implores, "You shall teach [God's Word] diligently to

your sons." Within the Jewish community, the annual observance of these festivals helps solidify these biblical truths deeper and deeper into our children as they experience them each year.

Here are some real examples of how families in Messianic Jewish congregations celebrate the fall festivals with their children in a Yeshuaglorifying way:

From an early age, our kids loved celebrating Sukkot (the Feast of Tabernacles)! We would gather every year with friends and congregation members to build and decorate the *sukkah*, share a big meal together, and sing loudly into the night. The kids latched onto the fun and excitement associated with the holiday, and we would use it as a way to teach about God's presence with us as well as the glory of His coming kingdom.

When the kids were younger, my wife would use the holidays to show the powerful connections between each Jewish holiday and all the Messiah did for us. What a joy it was to help our children better understand how Yeshua the Messiah is at the very centre of the Hebrew Scriptures as well as the New Testament.

Traditionally, on the Feast of Tabernacles, my children and I erect a "funny-looking" tent in the backyard that inevitably starts conversations with neighbours. As we put together the poles and the joints for the temporary booth, I tell my kids the story of how our people had to rely on the Lord in the wilderness after He brought us out of the land of Egypt. I tell them how our people both listened to God and made mistakes while they were in the wilderness for forty years. And I explain how there are plenty of lessons to learn from the

wandering generation; the first and foremost is

that we had to rely on God for everything. He guided us through difficult times, provided food, and gave us shelter, and He still guides us in all these ways today.

During Rosh Hashanah (New Year), called the Feast of Trumpets in Leviticus, I have our three kids take turns blowing the shofar (ram's horn). I follow up with a question about what they think the shofar is for. Over the years, they have had a variety of answers, but after hearing my explanation of it so often they now know what it means. We talk about how the ram's horn warned of impending danger



The characters (above) and a set from the The Olive Treehouse

or the anointing of a king in the Old Testament. And I help them to understand that, in the future, we will also hear the sound of a great trumpet at the return of the King of kings: the Messiah.

When Yom Kippur (Day of Atonement) rolls around, we have plenty of conversations about this biblical holy day described in Leviticus, especially about the need for blood atonement, and about Yeshua's atonement. Many of the points we discuss around Yom Kippur have really helped my kids consider Yeshua and His atonement.

We observe all biblical holy days in our home with an emphasis on imparting biblical truth to the kids especially. During each holiday, we use our lewish traditions to communicate the gospel.

WHAT'S HAPPENING AT HAMERKAZ*

USE OF THE CAULFIELD MESSIANIC CENTRE CONTINUES TO GROW

It's been almost three years since the Caulfield Messianic Centre was completed and in that time the scope of activities has grown miraculously.

The construction of the first custom-built Messianic centre in the Southern Hemisphere was a long-held dream of Celebrate Messiah founders, Lawrence and Louise Hirsch. From when they started the ministry with a Friday night Shabbat service on the 3rd of February 1995, they dreamt of it. Then on Rosh Hashanah, 20th of September, 1998 the first service was held at the current site in Bambra Rd, Caulfield South.

The old building, part of which was built in 1922, deteriorated over the next 10 years and plans began for a new centre. It became apparent that architectural plans for a complete demolition and rebuild were a little ambitious, and new plans were drafted to incorporate the main 1930s brick building.

A fundraising program started in 2013 and over the next seven years all the funds required were raised from an amazing support base: mostly from faithful local supporters but also donations from all over the world including the US and Israel.

The COVID pandemic could not stop God's plan to build the centre. The initial inspiration came from His word in the Book of Nehemiah Chapter 2:17 –

"Come! Let us rebuild the wall of Jerusalem so that we will no longer be a disgrace."

The first service at Hamerkaz was livestreamed on the 3rd October 2020 during Melbourne's third and longest lockdown. The first live service with people attending was on the 20th of March 2021, and the centre's formal dedication took place before a packed house on the 1st of May 2021.



Now, after two years of solid use, momentum continues to build with frequent commencements of new services, events and activities. These include:

- Weekly Shabbat morning services and the Mayim Chayim afternoon prayer service.
- **Special services** for Jewish festivals and High Holy Days.
- **Chavurah** (friendship) groups and Bible studies throughout the week.
- Prayer meetings.
- Special events: Passover Seders, Simcha conferences.
- Other conferences and events: Yom Shabbat conference, LCJE conference, donor events, Russian/ Ukrainian community events.
- Life cycle events such as weddings and bar and bat mitzyahs.
- Offices for Celebrate Messiah: base for missionaries; administration staff; conference room for board and staff meetings; private counselling rooms.
- **Resource shop** and dispatch for online orders.
- Art classes; Art gallery display of Chagall prints of the 12 tribes.
- *Tikkun Olam* (Repairing the World) benevolent ministry: packing festival and staple food hampers for delivery; hosting monthly lunches. (See team picture below.)



* The centre is also known as Hamerkaz, which is transliterated Hebrew for 'The Centre'.



APPOINTED TIME AT AIRPORT SHOWS PROMISE

Robert was traveling home from a ministry conference in Melbourne and had a spare hour at Melbourne airport. He bought a snack and sat next to the window with no intention to speak to anyone.

About 10 minutes later four young travellers came up and sat next to him and started chatting with each other. Robert noticed that one of them sounded like a fellow American, so he said hello. It turned out that one of the guys was from Canada, the other was from Italy, one of the girls was from Mexico and another from South America. They started chatting to Robert about where they had been and where they were going.

After a short time, they asked about him, and why he was in Australia. He said he'd come to plant a congregation. "What type", they asked, and so he told them that it was a Messianic Congregation named Hineh Yeshua. The Canadian, Jake*, piped up, "Hey I'm Jewish, but I haven't been in a while. I usually go for my grandfather's sake." Robert asked about his grandfather, and both of his grandfathers were holocaust survivors, but he had chosen a more secular path.

Shortly after this, they had to leave to catch their plane, and to Robert's pleasant surprise, Jake asked for his WhatsApp number so that they could continue the conversation.

COURAGE TO SHARE FAITH WITH FAMILY

A not-yet-believing Jewish friend Yvonne* came to pick up a Tikkun Olam hamper, and stayed for a cuppa and a chat with Eleanor and others from Hineh Yeshua Congregation. Yvonne said that if it weren't for the congregation, she wouldn't be celebrating the Feast Days. When she last saw family in Israel, she enjoyed telling them that she celebrated the chagim (Jewish festivals) at a church, just to see their reaction. Please pray that Yvonne will continue to grow in faith and accept Yeshua.

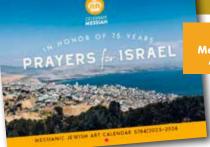
FRIEND GROOMED FOR LIFE WITH YESHUA

Rabbi Lawrence conducted a wedding for a friend of one of his sons who he and Louise had known since primary school. During the ceremony Lawrence weaved in the Gospel – as he always does – and then prayed a special Hebrew blessing over the newly wed couple. After the ceremony, Lawrence was surprised when a young lady said to him, "Thank you for praying that Hebrew blessing, I really appreciated it because I am Jewish." This young Jewish lady turned out to be a family member of the groom. A long conversation ensued, and Lawrence and Louise were able to share about their faith in Yeshua the Messiah and invited her to Beit HaMashiach services. Please pray that God will continue to minister to her heart through the Holy Spirit and that Lawrence and Louise will have further opportunity to speak with her.

ANOTHER MINISTRY HELPS OUR HOST ISRAELIS NETWORK

Unbeknownst to our Host Israelis team, an evangelistic mission organisation heard about the Isaiah 62 fast, a global prayer initiative of praying for the land and people of Israel for twenty-one days. The goal of the prayer initiative was to get 100 million Christians praying for the salvation of Israel leading up to the harvest holiday of Shavuot (Pentecost). In response, this other ministry orchestrated prayer specifically for Israeli backpackers! With that focused prayer, there was also a call to action. Somehow, they knew about us and promoted our Host Israelis network as a way to minister to traveling Israelis. As a result, we added a Christian family in Uganda to our hosting network. So far, we have hosts in five countries: Australia, New Zealand, Japan, the United States and Uganda. It is thrilling to see what God has done. Please pray for us as we wake this "sleeping giant" in Jewish evangelism: hosting Israelis!

*names have been changed



\$22.95^{AUD}
Messianic Jewish
Art Calendar

\$110^{AUD} Ram's Horn Shofar

Immerse your eyes and your spirit in the Holy Land with breath-taking photography and heartfelt intercessory prayer with our new 2023–2024 Messianic Jewish Art Calendar. It notes major Australian and Israeli holidays, and includes weekly Torah readings.

This X-large ram's horn shofar (40-45 cm) evokes the memory of the ram caught in the thicket and then sacrificed by Abraham in place of his son, Isaac. It is traditionally blown during the High Holy Days.

Fill in the order form or visit our online store at www.celebratemessiah.com. au/shop for these and other great resources. Due to ongoing delivery delays with Australia Post, we ask that you would be patient in receiving your order. It may take up to 4 to 6 weeks. All prices include postage and handling.

Sukkot Celebration[®] Service

6.30pm Saturday 30 September

Join Celebrate Messiah for a special celebration of Sukkot, also known as the Feast of Tabernacles, at Beit HaMashiach in the Caulfield Messianic Centre. If you can't be there in person, a livestream will be provided.

Celebrate Messiah now has an Instagram page. Follow us to learn more about our ministries, online store, and outreach to the Jewish people around the world. Be sure to follow our Facebook page, too, as we continue to update you there on what's happening within Celebrate Messiah.

Instagram (@celebratemessiah): https://www.instagram.com/celebratemessiah/

Facebook (@CelebrateMessiah): https://www.facebook.com/CelebrateMessiah/





Join us at the Caulfield Messianic Centre for our annual Simcha conference from November 24 - 26.

Come and be encouraged and equipped as we pray and work together for revival amongst Jewish people worldwide. It will be a transformative weekend of worship and teaching suitable for the whole family. Special guest speaker is the new Co-CEO of Ariel Ministries, Dr Tim Sigler, as well as Lawrence Hirsch and Paul Cohen, on the theme Behold My Servant.

A youth camp will also be held.

See our website for details at www.celebratemessiah.com.au/events

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 with a Christian solicitor about including Celebrate Messiah in your will, please call our office on (03) 9563 5544 or contact us at

enquiries@celebratemessiah.com.au for more information.



MESSIAH

"Bringing the Message to the Original Messengers"

Serving together with Chosen People Ministries in: Argentina, Australia, Canada, Finland/Baltic States, France, Germany, Hong Kong, India, Israel, Japan, Netherlands, New Zealand, Poland, Russia, South Africa, South Korea, Taiwan, Ukraine, United Kingdom, United States.

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Donations can be deposited directly into the Celebrate Messiah bank account. Account name: Celebrate Messiah Ltd; BSB: 633-000; Account: 161768080 Please include name and purpose of gift in direct deposit reference.

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