THE IMPACT OF
ISRAEL'S REBIRTH
1948 - 2018

COMMENORATIVE CABINET SESSION AT INDEPENDENCE HALL, TEL AVIV
DEAR FRIENDS,

Having lived here in Israel for 24 years, this current season is one of the most amazing I can remember. The historic anniversaries, embassies moving to Jerusalem, new alignments in the Middle East, and fast-growing interest in Israel from the church around the world all speak the same language: we are living in an exciting season of restoration!

I am reminded of what the prophet Isaiah declares: “Do not remember the former things, nor consider the things of old. Behold, I will do a new thing, now it shall spring forth; Shall you not know it?” (Isaiah 42:18–19). God is indeed doing many new things here in Israel, and we see God’s hand powerfully at work.

It was an unforgettable highlight to see the openings of the embassies in Jerusalem. On their visit to Jerusalem, we hand-delivered the new Cyrus award to the presidents of Guatemala and Paraguay. Guatemala’s ambassador shared a touching detail with me. She told me about the challenging crime situation in her country, but also stated that on the same day the Guatemalan embassy opened its doors, not a single crime was recorded in the entire nation for the first time in Guatemala’s history! Praise God for that. It is indeed true that God is faithful to His promises. Please continue to pray for Guatemala and all the nations that decide to recognize Jerusalem as the capital of Israel.

I pray that you are blessed reading this issue of the Word From Jerusalem. Thank you for standing with Israel and the ICEJ.

Many blessings from Jerusalem.

Dr. Jürgen Bühler
ICEJ President

FROM THE PRESIDENT'S DESK

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CONTENTS

4 THE IMPACT OF ISRAEL’S REBIRTH

7 CYRUS AWARD GIVEN TO GUATEMALA

10 ICEJ AID SCHOOL FOR THE DEAF

14 A LASTING LEGACY HERSCHEL GRAFF

17 CONFERENCE IN ISTANBUL
The rebirth of Israel 70 years ago had a tremendous impact throughout the world, especially among Jews, Christians, and Muslims. Each of these religious communities reacted in differing ways to the dramatic events of May 1948, which sent out shock waves that are still reverberating today.

When considering Israel’s reemergence as a nation 70 years ago, it must first be remembered that this did not happen in a vacuum. The world did not just wake up one day and find the Jewish state on its doorstep. Rather, Israel’s national rebirth occurred within a certain historic context, and that context is forever linked to the Holocaust. The miracle of restored Jewish sovereignty in Eretz Israel is only magnified when we take into account that it took place just three years after the horrific depths of the Nazi genocide against the Jews were exposed. The Holocaust marked the nadir of the Jewish people’s long and arduous journey of wandering among the nations. And yet, just three years after they hit their lowest point, the Jewish people were able to attain something that had eluded them for nearly two millennia—national independence back in their ancient homeland.

So it is fair to say that the rebirth of Israel came as something of a shock to the Jewish people. Their response was one of relief, a feeling of historic vindication. For centuries, the Christian world in particular had insisted that the Jews were cursed to endless wanderings for killing Christ, and yet here they were, in charge of their own country once again. This demonstrated that God still had an enduring covenant relationship with the Jews. The Israeli people also were determined to use their newfound freedom to defend themselves from another Holocaust.

In the meantime, for the Christian world, it must be noted first that the Holocaust came as a moral shock to Christianity. We knew that Christian anti-Semitic teachings had played a central role in the Nazi genocide against the Jews. After all, Hitler had many willing Christian accomplices to his inhumane crimes against the Jews—the established churches of Europe had taught the people for centuries to hold the Jews in utter contempt.
Still, if we only had the Holocaust, many Christians would point to it as just another example of the “curse” in operation against the Jews. Rather, it was the national rebirth of Israel just three years later that came as such a great theological shock to the Christian world. Suddenly, it was hard to defend the teaching of the permanence of Jewish exile. Therefore, many churches began to reconsider their antagonistic theological positions, such as Replacement theology and the odious charge of Deicide. The changes brought by the Vatican II Council are examples of the type of much-needed introspection within the Christian world.

However, some church leaders to this day refuse to adjust their theology to match the reality of a restored Israel. They would rather try to change the reality back to fit their theology of a scattered Israel. Thus, we find churches and theologians joining the BDS campaign and other efforts to delegitimize and destroy Israel. How long will they continue to resist God?

Finally, the rebirth of Israel in 1948 came a crushing theological and cultural shock to the Arab and Muslim world. This is because for centuries, Islam had taught Muslims that they belonged to a superior faith and therefore they were a superior people with a natural right to rule over Jews and Christians. This was the religious and legal basis for the unjust dhimmi system, which prevailed throughout the Middle East and North Africa for some 1,400 years, relegating Christian and Jewish minorities to second-class citizenship under Muslim domination.

When Israel emerged victorious in 1948, the Arab and Muslim world could not accept it. How could a rag-tag band of inferior Jews, long rejected by their God, beat larger Muslim armies on the field of battle? And how could they do so just three years after suffering through the ravages of the Holocaust? This all had to be explained away! And thus emerged the endless string of bizarre conspiracy theories about Israel’s unlikely triumph 70 years ago.

For example, the Western colonialists are said to have conspired to implant Israel in the midst of the Arab world. And the Americans were actually fighting alongside the Jews in 1948. Or the Zionists and Nazis collaborated in the Holocaust to win world sympathy for the Jews and swindle the Arabs and Muslims. Or perhaps the Holocaust was not as bad as some claim, and maybe only 600,000 Jews died—as Palestinian leader Mahmoud Abbas has insisted.

Herein lies the root of Muslim attraction to Zionist conspiracy theories and even Holocaust denial. The evil Jews must have lied and manipulated their way to triumph and independence. Herein also lies the root of Palestinian rejection of Jewish sovereignty anywhere in the Land of Israel to this day. They simply cannot make peace on equal terms with an inherently inferior people, who follow an inferior faith. And the Israeli-Palestinian conflict will not be resolved until this superior Islamist mentality falls.

Having said all this, it is hard to deny that the rebirth of Israel seventy years ago was anything but a miracle that defies explanation. Indeed, there was a succession of miracles and inexplicable events, great and small, which led to Israel’s restoration. For instance, when Theodor Herzl finally had a brief encounter with the German Kaiser, it was not exactly what he planned yet it set off a competition among the Great Powers of Europe over who would be the patron of his proposed Jewish state. There also was the strange story of how the Ottoman Turks were drawn into World War I, eventually causing them to lose their vast holdings in Arab lands—including Palestine—to the British. And there was, of course, the improbable triumph of that rag-tag band of Jewish defenders over superior Arab forces, which gave us the reborn nation of Israel in 1948.

May the miracles continue! ☪
The twin celebrations of Israel’s 70th anniversary and the move of the US Embassy to Jerusalem made Washington DC a fitting venue for the ICEJ’s International Leaders Conference (ILC), our annual global leadership gathering. We began our conference by saluting the historic and prophetic decision by the Trump administration to recognize Jerusalem as the capital of the State of Israel and to move its embassy there.

The ICEJ will continue to lobby nations around the world to establish their embassies in Jerusalem, and we will honor the heads of state of the countries who move their embassies to Israel’s capital with the “Cyrus Award,” inspired by King Cyrus who said to Jerusalem: “Be built!” (Isaiah 45:26).

In recent issues, we have written about the embassy move, the 50th Jubilee of Jerusalem’s reunification, and the 70th Anniversary of Israel. We recognize that these events represent a new season of restoration and of new things that God is doing in Israel. Going forward, these are some of the major trends the ICEJ will be focusing on regionally, in the Middle East, and globally throughout the body of Christ.

The geopolitical Shift in the Middle East
The Middle East today has changed in ways that were unpredictable by any intelligence agency five to seven years ago. Israel has in recent decades become a global player that is contributing much in terms of scientific research and technological prowess. Instead of being perceived as a problem child, Israel is increasingly seen as a blessing and a light unto the nations.

Arab Alliances with Israel
The most astonishing regional development is the radical shift in attitude toward Israel in the Arab world. This is nothing short of miraculous. Some Arab states see Israel today more as an asset to the region than a threat. In the ICEJ, we need to ask God for divine strategies to pray effectively for these Arab nations and their relationship with Israel.

The Global Church
We continue to see the trend of the global church opening for Israel. This is true not only in the “global south” but also more and more in western countries. Interest in Israel is growing on every level. There are far more opportunities for our movement today than challenges.

Prayer Paves the Way
The world is shifting rapidly. It is a time of shaking that will reveal those things that are unshakable (Heb. 12:27). To stay relevant toward the purposes of God it is essential that we draw our global ministry closer to Jesus than ever before. I pray that we all hear the Lion of Judah roaring in these days, and that God places us in position to be ready for the next big thing He is doing.

Israel Gala
Following the ILC, many ICEJ leaders were able to attend the US Branch’s Seventy and Strong event. The sold-out Washington DC event began with a gala dinner on Sunday evening held at the beautiful, new Museum of the Bible. While there were many highlights to the evening, a letter from US Vice President Mike Pence and a video greeting directly from Prime Minister Netanyahu himself reminded everyone that our special marking of this day was noted in the highest halls of government. Keynote Speakers were Reuven Azar, Deputy Chief of Mission, Embassy of Israel in Washington DC; and Gary Bauer, Washington Director of the CUFI Action Fund.

Participants from over 40 countries—including leaders from dozens of American Christian organizations, as well as over 50 millennial leaders—demonstrated that the movement of Christian support for Israel is global, broad-based, and is positioning itself for the future. 😊
This year’s Jerusalem Day on May 13 was the last for the ICEJ as Jerusalem’s lone embassy. The next day, we were joined by the United States and shortly thereafter by Guatemala and Paraguay.

Guatemala Repeats Brave Historic Act
This is why on May 16 the International Christian Embassy Jerusalem delivered its new Cyrus Award to President Jimmy Morales of Guatemala in honor of his nation’s decision to recognize Jerusalem as the capital of Israel and to move its embassy to the Holy City.

The Cyrus Award is a special honor bestowed on those national leaders who distinguish themselves by officially recognizing Jerusalem as the capital of Israel and by moving their embassies to the city, out of respect for its historic status as the center of Jewish national, religious, and cultural life and aspirations.

ICEJ national director, Dr. Luis Solares, was instrumental in his nation’s decision to move its embassy, and it was a joy and honor for him to join the opening ceremony. The ICEJ’s Spanish translator, Claudia Fierro, was on scene for the opening of the Guatemalan embassy, and recounts the excitement from the historical event:

“The opening of the new embassy is an event unparalleled in Guatemalan history since Jorge García Granados, ambassador of Guatemala to the United Nations, cast the very first vote for the creation of the State of Israel, making Guatemala the first Latin American country to recognize Israel after the State was proclaimed in 1948. Indeed, it takes courage for a small, third world country to make such a decision and jeopardize its already precarious diplomatic ties to nations more powerful and prosperous. Yet 70 years later, Guatemala did it again, President Jimmy Morales went against the current and made the move, and the embassy of Guatemala raised its flag in Jerusalem.”

Paraguay Sprints to Third Place
In a surprise move, Paraguay cinched third place among the nations moving their embassies to Jerusalem on Monday, May 21, 2018. In honor of Paraguay recognizing Jerusalem as the capital of Israel, ICEJ President Jürgen Bühler personally presented the Cyrus Award to Paraguay’s president, Horacio Cartes. Prime Minister Netanyahu was also present at the opening and promised that now is the time for the cooperation between the two countries to “flow like water.”
FAITHFULLY SUPPORTING ISRAEL

Be a part of that future generation spoken of in Psalm 102 that is partnering with the Lord in His work to restore Zion, for the set time has come.

PARTNER LEVELS

Covenant Partner
Show your love and support for Israel by partnering with the ICEJ. Become a Covenant Partner at a giving level of at least $30 a month. In appreciation, you will receive the following resources:

- A Partnership Certificate
- The Word From Jerusalem magazine
- A year-end gift of appreciation

Ambassadorial Partner
Partnership in ministry is a gift God gives to strengthen and undergird His work. Become an Ambassadorial Partner with the ICEJ at a giving level of at least $100 a month. In appreciation, you will receive everything in the Covenant Partnership level plus:

- Exclusive access to ICEJ’s quarterly Mid-East ministry update conference call from Jerusalem
- An invitation to attend our ICEJ-USA leadership briefing during our national conference

Builder of Zion Partner
Isaiah declared the Lord will call Zion’s walls "salvation" and her gates "praise" (60:18). As we walk together side by side, the ICEJ would be honored if you would become a Builder of Zion Partner at a giving level of $2,500 a year or more. In appreciation, you will receive everything in the Ambassadorial Partnership level plus:

- A discount of $200.00 on a pilgrimage tour to Israel during the Feast of Tabernacles or other qualifying tour
- An additional gift acknowledging you as a Builder of Zion Partner

Gateway of Zion Partner
Show compassion for Zion and bless the people of Israel. The ICEJ would be honored if you were to become a Gateway of Zion partner at a giving level of $20,000 a year or more. In appreciation, you will receive everything in the Builder of Zion Partnership level plus:

- The opportunity to meet with ICEJ leadership and/or receive personal briefings on ICEJ projects that are of interest
- Special invites to exclusive events such as pastors’ lunches and VIP meetings that are held in your area or community
- An additional gift acknowledging you are a Gateway of Zion Partner

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LEARNING TO REMEMBER
A VISIT TO YAD VASHEM

BY DAN HERRON

The ICEJ has developed a ground-breaking partnership with Yad Vashem, the World Holocaust Remembrance Center, called Christian Friends of Yad Vashem (CFYV). Israel’s memorial to the six million Jews killed in the Holocaust is also an impressive museum and a state-of-the-art educational center, where CFYV hosts seminars for Christian leaders. Its symbolic architecture subtly leads you through an insightful and dreadfully sobering experience of history’s darkest hours but ends in the open vistas overlooking the Judean hills.

Stepping into Yad Vashem’s main building you immediately notice the inward-sloping walls that join in the skylight running the ridge of the building’s roof. The walls are meant to convey a sense of the steadily increasing desperation and despair crushing the Jews of Europe, while the skylight symbolizes the fact that their persecution and suffering took place in broad daylight.

Each bend of the path through the museum’s displays represents a development and escalation toward the “Final Solution,” starting with the German race laws in the 1930s, continuing over to the ghettos of starvation in the conquered lands of Eastern Europe, the mass shootings in the deep forests, ending in the final phase of industrialized killing, representing the total, unbounded attempt to annihilate the Jewish people wherever they could be found.

The scale of hateful disdain and the increasing efficiency of the mass murder numbs the mind. How anyone could survive is beyond comprehension. Still more stunning is the notion that anyone could recover to build a new life after the Holocaust. Yet this is what the grandmother of our guide did.

One clue to why this was at all possible comes as our guide recounts her grandmother’s encouragement during difficult times of her childhood, “What beautiful thing happened today?” she would ask her granddaughter. When she would respond that absolutely nothing deserving that label had transpired during the school day, her grandmother would reply, “Come, tell me about your day, and I will help you find that beautiful thing.”

Imagine how hard it must have been for her grandmother to dig out that precious daily diamond in the squalor of the ghetto and ghoulish wasteland of the death camps. This is spiritual survival at its finest.

Our second-to-last stop is in a room of remembrance, containing 4.7 million confirmed names of Holocaust victims. The end is not here, though. The end is a beautiful vista overlooking the Judean hills, a stunning tangible reminder that Jerusalem, the symbol of Jewish life and existence is today the capital of the State of Israel, fulfilling the vision of Ezekiel 37.

In 1948, ten years after the Kristallnacht, which marked the onset of systematic destruction of Jewish buildings and culture, the Jewish people were still fighting for their lives. But now they were doing so in a Jewish army defending the Yishuv, the nascent State of Israel. An estimated 60% of the Jewish Army fighting in 1948, the most casualty-intense of all of Israel’s wars, were Holocaust survivors. Because of them and in their honor, we rejoice over Israel’s founding 70 years ago.

Please Send a Special Gift Today for Education of Christian Leaders at Yad Vashem
www.icejusa.org/yadvashem
LOVE WITHOUT A SOUND
BY KAYLA ELLINGSWORTH

Without a sound, I could hear love echoing down the hallways in the school for the deaf through the smiles and the interactions between teachers and students. Tucked away in a neighborhood here in Jerusalem is a spectacular school dedicated to educating deaf kids from ages 6–21. The principal of the school, Gila, is deeply passionate about helping young deaf students receive a great education, learn practical skills for everyday life, and impact society. The ICEJ has partnered with this school for over 20 years, and will continue to support this great work.

Uniquely, this school provides some teachers who are deaf to relate with the students because they know exactly how it feels to be deaf. The gym teacher, Lolik, was born deaf and was the only deaf person in his family. Every time his family would try to speak to him in sign language, they would be in a hurry or couldn’t think of a word, so they told him they would tell him later. Sadly, they never got around to talking to him later.

Having overcome these difficult experiences from social interactions, Lolik now teaches his students how to cope with feelings of loneliness and rejection. Lolik explained, “Being a part of a social community is very important because this is the hardest thing for a deaf person.” The community at the school provides a great opportunity for these kids to socialize and make friends with other kids and teachers.

The ICEJ has helped this school by providing for many different needs, such as purchasing commercial kitchen blenders for their cooking classes, purchasing a covering for the playground for extremely hot summer days in Israel, upgrading the internet system, purchasing furniture, and much more. Gila explained, “The Christian Embassy has given us breath to help them (the students) dream again!”

The nation of Israel has also recognized how special this school is, giving it the National Education Award for 2018!

DONATE ONLINE

Without a sound but with great love and care, you can show your support to the youth of Israel today at: www.icejusa.org/aid

STANDING WITH THE YOUTH OF ISRAEL

A significant segment of Israel’s youth has no family support while completing high school and transitioning into adulthood. These young people were removed from their families at a young age, due to an unsafe environment or because of their parents’ inability to care for them, and have grown up in boarding schools, children’s homes, and foster care systems. As soon as they turn 18, they must leave their temporary home—and they often have nowhere to go.

With only a few organizations in Israel that provide support and mentoring for these youths, the ICEJ sees a great need to provide practical assistance and vocational training for these young people, who are the future of Israel. We want to introduce you to two of the many young people we have assisted in finding a future and a hope.

Immediately after completing her national service, Dalit began studying education at a boarding school with a small grant from the national service. A young woman with no family support, Dalit started working two jobs as well as keeping up with her studies. The ICEJ heard about Dalit’s situation and helped her purchase a computer, gave her a scholarship for her studies, and paid for an evaluation for learning disabilities, which helped her succeed in her studies.

Miriam is a creative young woman with great talent in sewing and a passion for clothing design. She has a mentor who helps her pursue her own business, and the ICEJ also helped Miriam pursue this dream by providing a scholarship for a sewing course. Already eager to begin marketing her own clothing designs, Miriam started selling her clothing independently online. In the future, the ICEJ would like to help Miriam take a clothing design course and assist her in opening a small business at home.

These young people may not have a biological family to provide the critical support they need, but they have a family of Christians all around the world who are willing and able to support them. 😊
A SYMBOL OF HOPE

BY YUDIT SETZ

The Haifa Home has become a symbol of hope to the nation of Israel as a demonstration of Jews and Christians working tirelessly together to surround Holocaust Survivors with the love and care they need in their later years. According to Director Shimon Sabag, this hope is witnessed by many Israelis. Many groups visit the Home and the newly opened museum, which are stark reminders of the deep wounds in the hearts of these people. The Holocaust took place in “Christian” Europe, so the strong partnership between Jews and Christians gives hope for a better future.

Christian love is tangibly displayed with names of donors from around the world who planted a tree in our FOREST OF LIFE. Our Christian volunteers and the regular presence of ICEJ staff also provide a living witness of support and care for the Survivors.

The Haifa Home has a variety of staff members, Jews and Arab alike, who do everything possible to make the Haifa Home a place where the residents feel loved and cared for. One of those special people is Tami. As a daughter of Holocaust Survivors, she understands the lasting impact of the Holocaust on Survivors and their children. Growing up, she didn’t have a regular childhood. Instead of children’s stories at bedtime, her father related the horrors of Auschwitz. Tami’s sensitive heart was impacted forever.

How is it that Tami ended up at the Haifa Home among Holocaust Survivors? “I wanted to flee from the subject all my life, to get the Holocaust out of me, but somehow I never managed,” said Tami.

She became acquainted with the Haifa Home through graphic design and slowly became more involved. “Even though it is not easy for me, I feel committed to help them. They are all like my parents, and I want to give them as much as I am able. This desire is very strong in me.” Tami’s loving heart ensures that every resident receives the help and attention from her that they need. We are privileged to have people like Tami on staff who make the Haifa Home a real home, where giving love and care to each Survivor is the most important value.

To be a part of this great work, please visit: www.icejusa.org/haifa

A FAITHFUL FRIEND

BY MAXINE CARLILL

ICEJ Homecare often hears stories from aging Russian immigrants who have lived through war and tyranny. As their trust in the ICEJ staff grows, more of their stories come to light.

In Soviet Russia, Stalin’s harsh repression meant any expression of faith was forbidden; therefore, Sofia’s family lit the Sabbath candles in secret. When she was three years old, she and her older brother and mother fled to escape the German invasion of Russia. After the war, they returned to find their house taken over by others, along with a shocking discovery of a heap of skeletons nearby. Despite being surrounded by death, Sofia’s mother gave birth to a baby girl named Faina. Shortly after, Sofia’s father died, so her mother remarried a widower with four children. He lovingly cared for the family, despite sharing a home with other families in the bitter cold.

Growing up, Faina was restricted in her studies because of her Jewish identity, yet she managed to train and qualify as a teacher.

In 1990, following the Chernobyl nuclear disaster, Sofia and Faina finally came home to Israel! Faina could not find a teaching job, so she accepted a factory job and was thankful just to be in Israel. She recounted, “My father always said, ‘Go to Israel.’”

When dear Sofia became ill, ICEJ Homecare nurse Corrie Van Maanen visited her each week to assist her during her two years of illness. After Sofia passed away, Faina could not bear Homecare’s visits to cease, so Corrie continued her friendship with her. Corrie was a special person for Faina and someone with whom she could share her heart. Above all, Corrie was a faithful friend who had helped care for Faina’s beloved sister.

The faithful service of ICEJ Homecare, provides not only practical assistance, but also deep friendship that powerfully displays the love of God!

To be a part of this great work, please visit: www.icejusa.org/homecare
The amicable relationship between Israelis and Druze is a remarkable testimony to both parties. From its inception Israel has offered peace to the Arab populations in the land, but the majority of Arabs rejected this offer. The Druze chose a different path. Like the Jews, the Druze have historically suffered as a minority because even though they are ethnically Arab, they adhere to a non-Islamic faith. This has resulted in a sense of solidarity reflected by high participation rates in the Israeli Defense Forces (IDF). Today 83% of all Druze men perform army service, and 56% serve in the IDF’s combat units. This percentage is even higher than what is normal for the Jewish population.

It is important to reward and encourage this loyalty. This is why the ICEJ supports scholarships for outstanding students who meet rigorous criteria in terms of academic performance and urgent need, as in the following case.

Two girls from a family with average income started to study medicine, but after the first year the family experienced financial hardship and had to pull them out of their studies. That very year, the ICEJ awarded five scholarships of NIS 10,000 to five outstanding students in medicine. One of the sisters was among the five who received this scholarship. The other sister received NIS 2,000. Because of this, the father encouraged both daughters to continue their studies. Today the first daughter has finished her degree and is working as a doctor in a hospital, while the second daughter is close to finishing her studies.

Because of these scholarships, the number of Druze students who start their academic studies increases year by year. “The ICEJ plays a very important part in this success and the fruits we are already seeing. We still have a way to go together to reach the point where we have bridged the gap between young Druze and the rest of the population in Israel. We appreciate you, commend you and love you,” says Mofied Amar from our Druze partner organization.

The Druze community is a strategic blessing to Israel, so we hope that you will consider blessing and encouraging their next generation in return.

To help Israel’s Druze minority, please go to: www.icejusa.org/minorities

Despair is an overwhelming feeling for those trapped in the grip of drug or alcohol addiction. The ICEJ has partnered with Oasis of Hope, a program that provides practical help and restoration for addicts seeking a new path in life. Raja Salameh knows personally what it is like to struggle with addiction, which is why he has a deep passion and calling to help others overcome their struggles. He shared with us, “Over thirty years ago, God set me free. Now, I want to help others find that same release from bondage.”

The ICEJ has come alongside Raja to help him begin a formal ministry in his Arab community. Born and raised in the Old City of Jerusalem, Raja sees the reality of the lives and families that are being destroyed by addiction. With this passion in his heart, Raja faithfully interacts with the men in his community to help them receive freedom.

Raja mentors, prays for, and encourages Arabic-speaking men who are making the difficult choice to start anew. Some succeed, and yet, with great heartache, we see others slip back into the trap of addiction. Many remain stuck in a pit of despair and are longing for freedom, so join us in this powerful work so we can hear more people say: “He brought them out of darkness and the shadow of death, and broke their chains in pieces” (Psalm 107:14).

To help many more discover hope, please go to: www.icejusa.org/aid
Vacations are a time for families to get away from their daily routines so they can have fun and enjoy one another. But what happens if you are a child that is unable to live with your family due to an environment that is traumatic and unsafe? The 125 children at a therapeutic center in Jerusalem that the ICEJ partners with know how it feels to be without a family. These children have suffered severe emotional, behavioral, and learning disabilities caused by abuse and trauma. Many are removed from their family and home as early as age eight, and may remain at the center until they turn 18.

While many of the children may be able to visit their families for an occasional weekend vacation, others aren’t able to be in contact with their families at all. Naturally, this leaves them feeling abandoned and alone when they see others leave for family visits. Those children, with nowhere to go, began asking the staff if they could go home with them. The idea to give these children a special vacation experience was born, which includes special programs, excursions, and entertainment while staying in a vacation cottage.

ICEJ AID was able to provide furniture for the new vacation cottage due to the generosity of the late Herschel Graff, an American ICEJ supporter, who loved Israel and her people, and this is why we would like to share about Herschel’s life and honor his legacy (see next article). 🌟

FRESH COAT OF PAINT BREATHES NEW LIFE INTO FAMILY HOME

NICOLE YODER  
ICEJ AID DIRECTOR

Beginning life in a new land is challenging, and successful integration can be a process of several years. This is where ICEJ AID steps in by providing mentors, encouragement, and practical help essential for new arrivals. This recently involved taking our paint brushes and several staff to repaint the apartment of a young single Ethiopian immigrant mother of two. Working hard in elderly care leaves her with minimal resources making it difficult to invest in home repairs.

A few days later, we left with the make-over completed, the apartment sparkling clean, and a huge smile on the face of our new friend. The family’s mentor, Birtukan, conveyed in words what the mother’s smile had already spoken to our hearts, “The family was very excited and happy with the assistance they received. It was like getting into a new house for them! Thank you for your generous giving to families in need. You are doing a holy work. We hope you will continue to assist families. Heartfelt thanks!” In fact, the next families are already waiting in line.

To bless a new immigrant, please donate at www.icejusa.org/new-immigrant-assistance

A HOME AWAY FROM HOME

BY KAYLA ELLINGSWORTH
We know God sees everything and that nothing we do is beyond His attention. Sometimes God gives us a glimpse of the hidden things that take place in people’s lives to inspire us and give us pause. Learning about Herschel Graff’s life is sure to instill inspiration and provide food for thought.

In 1927, two important arrivals took place. Charles Lindbergh landed in Paris after completing history’s first transatlantic flight, and Herschel Graff made his arrival into the world on the American side of the Atlantic that same year. The impact of the second arrival was not historic, but Herschel’s life would prove to have great spiritual impact on the world.

In his adult life, Herschel became an inhabitant of Jerusalem where his love for Israel brought him to the newly liberated city back in the late 1960s. He cared deeply for its people and their wellbeing. Even when he returned to his native Texas, he remained a staunch supporter of Israel in word and deed, contributing his time toward prayer for Israel and his finances to the betterment of the Jewish people.

At the end of his life, Herschel entrusted the ICEJ to bless Israel one final time by leaving a generous bequest to ICEJ AID. His decision enabled us to:

- sponsor a leadership and educational program for 50 youth at risk, which assures these youths will successfully complete school and receive assistance starting out in life as young adults;
- purchase furniture for a vacation cottage for a youth village providing therapeutic care for traumatized youth (see article on previous page);
- provide vital practical aid, counseling, and hope and healing for addicts, the homeless, and women in crisis;
- design a physiotherapy room and provide equipment for the Haifa Home for Holocaust Survivors;
- purchase computers for a new computer room in a Druze middle school in the Golan Heights;
- provide scholarships for disadvantaged young people to give them a better future; and
- provide funding for an after-school enrichment program for Ethiopian Israeli immigrant children.

Throughout Herschel’s life, the downtrodden and outcast were objects of his concern and affection, both in Israel and in countries around the world. He had a great impact on the Israeli people by showing God’s love to them.

The US Branch of the ICEJ honors the memory of a great member of the American family of the ICEJ, Herschel Graff, and is thankful for his legacy.

Please prayerfully consider including the ICEJ in your will. For more information: Call 800-379-3897.
Join the ICEJ’s
Shomer Society
(Keeper of Israel Society)

Consider the ICEJ
in Your Will or Estate Plans

With proper foresight and planning, it is possible for you to leave a legacy of blessing Israel. The ICEJ has worked tirelessly on behalf of the people of Israel for more than 38 years and with your help will be doing so for many more to come. Your planned gift of cash, stocks and bonds, mutual funds, life insurance, excess in retirement funds, property, or a gift annuity are excellent ways to help the ICEJ carry on your love for Israel.

Call Us: 800-379-3897

✔️Give a Donation! ✔️Make a critical difference!

The Lord has placed before us a great calling to bless His chosen and beloved people and we simply cannot do it without your help. Your donation will make a measurable difference for God’s purposes here in Jerusalem and beyond. The International Christian Embassy Jerusalem – USA, Inc. is classified by the I.R.S. as a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization. Corporate and personal contributions to the ICEJ’s US Branch, to the extent allowed by law, are fully tax-deductible.
In the beginning of May, 1,500 Christians from various church backgrounds gathered in Stuttgart for a 70th anniversary celebration of the State of Israel, sponsored by the German Branch of the ICEJ. Among the special guests from Israel were Shaya Ben Yehuda, managing director of the International Relations Division at Yad Vashem, Rabbi Yitzhak Naki from Jerusalem, and Pastor Daniel Yahav from Tiberias.

“Anti-Israel sentiment and anti-Semitism are gaining momentum again,” stated Gottfried Bühler, Director of ICEJ Germany. “But the God of Israel is bigger than any kind of anti-Semitism. We stand with the God of Israel and His people, and we will continue our fight against anti-Semitism.” The festive program included times of worship and intercession for Israel, the rendition of parts of Händel’s Messiah sung in Hebrew, and a dynamic dance performance by a local dance troupe. The special representative for the fight against anti-Semitism of the State of Baden Württemberg, Dr. Michael Blume, addressed the gathering along with other Jewish and Christian leaders from ministries and organizations across Germany. The outpouring of support and love for Israel left a deep impression on the Jewish guests.
After the successful launch of regional meetings last October, we held the ICEJ’s second regional conference in Istanbul for Russian-speaking branches. Twenty-one participants from Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia, Kazakhstan, Moldova, Mongolia, Russia, Turkey, Ukraine, and Uzbekistan attended. In addition to myself, the international team included our two regional coordinators, Serguei Popov and Kari Niemi.

Most of the leaders were new members of the ICEJ family, so they appreciated detailed presentations and discussions about our DNA—as well as practical steps explaining how to grow a branch. On this occasion, our new Russian website was launched to serve Russian speakers in many parts of the world.

There was enough time for all participants to share about their work, get to know each other, and pray for one another. The same excitement and team spirit that characterized the regional meeting in Belgrade was felt again in Istanbul.

The ICEJ Italy Branch is positioning itself for the next stage in its contribution to the ICEJ’s work for Israel. The branch is working toward setting up a regional structure in Italy with three centers, in the north, in Rome, and in Sicily. The national branch office will relocate to Rome—a strategic move to engage members of the Italian parliament.

As part of these efforts, ICEJ International Spokesman David Parsons was invited by National Director Rev. Tony Rozzini to speak at a one-day regional conference in Bergamo in Italy’s northern region. ICEJ VP for International Affairs Mojmir Kallus followed up with a weekend of ministry where he spoke at Alfa-Omega Church in Rome. Here he also met with Rev. Tony Rozzini to share ideas and offer support for the new push. With a good team on the ground and a sound regional structure in place, we expect good news from our Italian branch.
Much of the world disagreed with President Trump’s decision to move the US Embassy from Tel Aviv to Israel’s capital, Jerusalem. In the face of such overwhelming opposition, it’s worth dissecting the arguments used to figure out who’s right in this debate.

**Politically**

From a purely US perspective, Trump was merely fulfilling Americans’ wishes as codified in the 1995 Jerusalem Embassy Act passed by Congress and signed into law by President Bill Clinton. This law affirms that the American people recognize Jerusalem as the capital of Israel and that consequently the US Embassy should be moved there.

It is to be noted then that political opposition to the implementation of the Jerusalem Law from both within and without the United States stems from two positions.

First, opponents have long claimed a security risk exists thus making the move unwise. This idea was even added to the Jerusalem Embassy Act, and used as a six-month waiver by successive presidents to delay the move. But are we really to believe there has been a valid security risk for the United States in making this move? Or is the United States going to allow the threat of terrorism to dictate its foreign policy? Yes, Hamas attempted mass violence at Israel’s southern border in response to the move, but none of that can be considered a serious security threat, especially not to US interests. This position has already been proved false.

Second, those who fought the move claimed it would harm any “final status agreement” on Jerusalem between Israel and the Palestinians. But this position makes no sense unless you support the outrageous idea that no part of Jerusalem should remain under Israeli sovereignty. Or, put another way, even if you did support a divided Jerusalem, surely you would still expect a US Embassy to be in the city—unless other sinister motives are at play.

**Historically**

Those who oppose Jewish sovereignty over Jerusalem, rejecting Trump’s recognition of the city as Israel’s capital, are usually doing so because they support the Palestinian claim to at least half the city. The problem is that this claim has no historical justification as the city was formerly part of the Ottoman Turkish Empire for hundreds of years and then illegally occupied by the Jordanians from 1948 to 1967 when it was liberated by Israel. During Jordanian rule, the Old City of Jerusalem was designated Judenrein (Jew-free), synagogues were destroyed, and Jewish tombstones from the Mount of Olives were used to build latrines.

Opponents totally ignore these inconvenient facts while also failing to research the city’s history. Records show that by the turn of the twentieth century the population of Jerusalem actually had a Jewish majority. In addition, we know that the Jewish connection to Jerusalem goes back much further and is deeper than that of any other people. Israel’s father, Abraham, met God there 4,000 years ago, and 1,000 years after that King David made it the capital of a united Jewish kingdom. It has never been the capital of any other nation since and certainly not of the Palestinians.

**Spiritually**

Most of our modern world attempts to draw equivalence between competing religious claims over the holy city of Jerusalem. But, of the three great monotheistic faiths, Judaism undoubtedly has the strongest claim to the city, especially to the Old City—or East Jerusalem—going back to the biblical period.

Jerusalem is mentioned in the Bible some 660 times and Jews always pray facing Jerusalem.

Muslims pray facing Mecca (with their backs to Jerusalem), while the Koran does not contain a single mention of Jerusalem by name. In fact, the entire Islamic claim to the city is built upon a tale of Mohammed ascending to heaven upon a mystical steed from the “farthest mosque” which is assumed to be Jerusalem.
Christians of course hold Jerusalem dear to their hearts because of the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus there. And Christians are called to preach the good news to the world in expectation of Jesus’ return and the establishment of a New Jerusalem. So, while Christians should pray for the peace of Jerusalem now, that does not translate into a claim over the city for religious purposes.

When Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu spoke at the opening of the US Embassy in Jerusalem, he quoted from Zechariah 8:3 which reads:

I will return to Zion, And dwell in the midst of Jerusalem. Jerusalem shall be called the City of Truth, The Mountain of the Lord of hosts, The Holy Mountain.

An important note must be made that God Himself has laid claim to Jerusalem as His dwelling place and He is deeply concerned about the issue of truth, regardless of the world’s majority opinion. US Ambassador to the United Nations Nikki Haley remarked recently that, “America did not make Jerusalem Israel’s capital. What President Trump did, to his great credit, was recognize a reality that American presidents had denied for too long.”

God has warned the nations, through the prophet Joel, that judgment is coming for those who divide the land of Israel and remove her people from it (Joel 3:1–2). The US Embassy move to Jerusalem was not only the right thing to do politically, but it recognized historical truth and realigned the United States with God’s restorative purposes for Israel at this time. ☺
Travel to Israel for the Christian celebration of the Feast of Tabernacles and tour the land of the Bible. Join thousands of Christians from more than 90 nations to worship the King of kings in Jerusalem! There is no better time to visit Israel than during this Feast of the Lord!

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