

From Lake Balaton 2007, Via Cape Town 2010 To High Leigh, 2011

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Throughout his missionary journeys the Apostle Paul gave written accounts of what the Lord had done. His reports were to encourage the believers everywhere. His descriptions were honest, comprehensive and for the glory of the Lord. He wrote, “As servants of God we commend ourselves in every way: in great endurance; in troubles, hardships and distresses...through glory and dishonor, bad report and good report...”¹

So, as we gather here at High Leigh it is only right that we also give a report “in every way.” We will benefit from remembering what we have done together as God’s servants networking Jewish evangelism since our last international meeting in 2007 at Lake Balaton, Hungary. All glory to the Lord for His goodness.

Like ministers of the gospel in the First Century we labor “through glory and dishonor, bad report and good report.” For the *good*, we can praise the power of God and the sincere love of the Holy Spirit. For the *bad*, please don’t blame me. I’m just the messenger.

In all seriousness, it’s my pleasure to give an account of what we, as the members of the Lausanne Consultation on Jewish Evangelism network, have done to fulfill our purposes over the past four years.

Our purpose

I find it useful to remind us, each time we gather, that the LCJE is the only global organization in existence today that networks people who are involved in the field of Jewish evangelism. We come together for five clear purposes. They are to:

- Share information and resources
- Study current trends
- Stimulate one another’s thinking on theological and missiological issues
- Strategize on a global level so that more Jewish people will hear and consider the good news of Jesus
- Arrange consultations that will be useful to those engaged in Jewish evangelism.

Milestones

During the past four years, we observed the 30th anniversary of the LCJE. In June 1980 a group of 18 *Participants* and *Consultants* met in Pattaya, Thailand, as a mini-consultation on reaching Jewish people at the invitation of the Lausanne Committee for World Evangelization. That mini-conference produced its report as *Lausanne Occasional Paper #7: Christian Witness to the Jewish People*. Among their list of recommended strategies they wrote, “We propose the formation of an international task force” on Jewish evangelism. In their foresight, they commended the five purposes that are now at the heart of our LCJE network. Thirty-one years

later we are that international task force that was the dream of that committee. Whether we yield good or bad reports, it is on us to fulfill those purposes until the Lord returns or takes us home.

In these last four years, we have lost members. Each mission agency and congregation keeps its own necrology. I wish to remember two who have died since our last international meeting.

I miss seeing Flemming Markussen at this international meeting of the LCJE. Many of you will remember him as the gracious, joy-filled servant at the reception desk and at every plenary session at past internationals. It was too easy to miss that fact that he also served 14 years on the Danish Israel Mission board, for a time as vice chair. He was a parish priest at Gistrup Church in Denmark who, from the conviction of his faith, volunteered his time to help Jewish evangelism. Flemming died in January of 2009 at the age of 49. Along with his family and colleagues in ministry we will miss him.

I would quickly be in trouble if I tried to list all of the agency and congregational members who have died in the past four years. However, I would be remiss not to note the passing of one who was among the five original consultants at that Thailand mini-consultation in 1980. He was among the strongest advocates for the task force proposal that became the LCJE network. Of course, I note with loving respect the death of my friend and mentor Moishe Rosen in May of 2010. His life was a blessing to our network even as his death is a loss.

In 2009 CMJ, originally known as the London Jews Society, celebrated their bi-centennial. The following year, another of our member agencies, the Danish Israel Mission, celebrated its 125th anniversary. Also in 2010 the LCJE marked its 30th anniversary and published its 100th edition of the *LCJE BULLETIN*. We can celebrate these milestones in the field of Jewish evangelism as evidence of our willingness to be involved in the task of world evangelization. Ours is a tough field. However, every year that we persevere confirms our faith in the one exclusive way of salvation and the only gospel of the adequate Savior, Jesus.

Network functions

I return to what it is that we have done. Unlike an institution or an agency, the LCJE does not function independently from its purposes. Therefore, it is important to remember first of all the duly constituted network function of arranging consultations.

In the *LCJE BULLETIN* you receive periodic reports from our seven area coordinators. You would note the books published by member agencies and individuals. You are able to keep current on reports about mission activities, theological and missiological research, trends in Jewish evangelism and new resources that are coming available. You have received information about the six new member agencies that joined LCJE since 2007. Their profiles have appeared in the *BULLETIN* and through association at regional consultations.

The four elected members of the LCJE International Coordinating Committee meet before and after each international consultation. We stay in touch by email and phone. We meet in person annually to do the work of the LCJE network. Financial reports and independent auditor's review are published annually in the *LCJE BULLETIN*. I would like to extend a personal commendation to our colleague, Kai Kjaer-Hansen, for his faithful stewardship of our network finances, the

high quality of the LCJE *BULLETIN* and for his superb leadership of the LCJE International Coordinating Committee. He deserves our grateful acknowledgement and appreciation.

Regional networks

We receive reports from our Regional Coordinators about the growing cooperation and mutual encouragement. Earlier this year, we were reminded that when one part of the body is suffering, we all share in that pain. We, therefore, welcome representatives from our LCJE Japan network and acknowledge the suffering of our brothers and sisters who endured the natural disasters during March of this year. Your prayers on behalf of Jewish evangelism and your firm desire to stand for the cause of Christ among the Jewish people is an encouragement to us all. We are grateful for the reports by Teichiro Kuroda regarding their *monthly* prayer meetings in Japan on behalf of Jewish evangelism.

David Zadok gave good and encouraging reports from the Israel LCJE network. A seminar on evangelism was followed by a coordinated list compiling resources and ministries currently serving Jewish evangelism in Israel. In subsequent annual meetings, their network has strengthened itself. They made good representation at the LCWE meeting in Cape Town 2010. David, *todah raba*.

We are delighted also by reports from Cecelia Burger regarding the growth of the South African LCJE network. When, in 2008, they gathered for prayer and reports they had 16 people present. In October 2010 one hundred thirty people attended their annual meeting. In fairness, they had a good number of out of town visitors who were present for the LCWE international conference. Nevertheless, they really have grown in their love, prayer and active supporting interest for Jewish evangelism in South Africa. Cecelia, those of us who visited in October appreciate the job you are doing.

And in addition to the European Regional network, our brothers and sisters in Finland formed a working group for prayer and worship in 2008. Out of that came the “Jesus to Israel” Seminar. Their purpose was to encourage theological and missiological understanding about Jewish people and Jewish evangelism.

In December 2008, the European Regional network sponsored a conference particularly for German speakers. In November 2010, the 9th European Meeting of the LCJE network met in Krakow, Poland. Eighty-four people came from 18 countries. The theme for the consultation was “The Uniqueness of Christ, Post-Holocaust Theology, and Anti-Semitism in Europe.” Reports from that consultation and the reflection on their optional tour of Auschwitz are reported in the *BULLETIN* #103. We’re delighted also to commend the Conference Statement that they published, also published in the *BULLETIN* and on the LCJE website. Thanks to Jean-Paul Rempp for his work as Coordinator of the European Network.

We also acknowledge the reports from the Latin America network provided by David Sedaca. We note in particular their Latin American ecumenical meeting in Buenos Aires during October 2008. Bob Mendelsohn, thank you for the reports from the Australasia network. We were glad

for the reports in July 2009 regarding the first Australasia conference and the report in the May *LCJE BULLETIN* from the second regional network meeting.

Jim Sibley has provided annual reports for each of the North American LCJE network meetings. Of note was their statement out of the 26th Annual Meeting in 2009 titled “Resolution on Christian Zionism and Jewish Evangelism.” It clearly stated that Christian affirmation of Jewish people and of the State of Israel ought not preclude also a clear proclamation of the gospel to Jewish people everywhere, including within the State of Israel.

LCJE CEO conference

In addition to the international meetings and the area network consultations over the past four years, your ICC also took responsibility to stage another conference at the request of agency leaders. Therefore, in May of 2009, we hosted a conference near Avignon, France, as the Third LCJE CEO Conference. In light of prevailing economic concerns at the time, much of the discussion was around ministry in times of global recession.

LCJE in other networks

WEA Network Functions

Between Lake Balaton and High Leigh, many of our LCJE members were involved in notable and important conferences that were not specifically sponsored by the LCJE network. However, they are worth noting as contributing efforts in the field of Jewish evangelism.

In March of 2008, the World Evangelical Alliance published an affirmation of Jewish evangelism in the *New York Times*. Some of our membership participated in and have made good use of “The Gospel and the Jewish People – An Evangelical Statement.”

In 2008, the World Evangelical Alliance, Theological Commission, also sponsored a consultation just outside of Berlin. It was a follow-up effort to the well-regarded Willowbank Consultation on the Christian Gospel and the Jewish People of 1989. This small conference brought together 13 theologians, church leaders and missiologists to discuss the uniqueness of Jesus and Jewish evangelism in Europe.

While LCJE had no official role in that consultation, a few of our members were invited participants. Out of that meeting, the WEA Theological Commission has published *The Berlin Declaration on the Uniqueness of Christ and Jewish Evangelism in Europe Today*. The Declaration is now included, along with other useful statements for our field, on the LCJE website. The papers from the consultation were published this year in *Jesus, Salvation and the Jewish People: The Uniqueness of Jesus and Jewish Evangelism* (Paternoster Press).

Borough Park Symposiums

Stimulating discussion and valuable theological thinking have come out of two events in North America called the Borough Park Symposiums. Two events have been held in October 2007 and in April 2010. The primary interest is ministry within the context of Messianic congregational life. Jewish evangelism was part of the discussion and LCJE members were prominently involved among the attendees and presenters.

LCWE: Cape Town 2010

And finally in October 2010 the Third Lausanne Congress on World Evangelization took place in Cape Town, South Africa. Discussion and reports have been produced in the LCJE *BULLETIN*, and much more will be reported here in High Leigh. Perhaps the most significant outcome from that international meeting, for our network, was the statement on Jewish evangelism that was featured in Section II of *The Cape Town Commitment: A Confession of Faith and a Call to Action*.

The cause of Jewish evangelism has seen positive progress and growing appreciation within the Lausanne movement. At the original Lausanne Congress on World Evangelism in 1974, little mention was made of Jewish evangelism, and there was scant recognition of the growing international movement of Jewish believers. As you will hear, the Third International Meeting of the Lausanne Congress not only prominently featured Jews and Jewish evangelism, but the Cape Town Commitment itself included a very strong supporting statement: “We continue, therefore, strongly to affirm the need for the whole church to share the good news of Jesus as Messiah, Lord and Savior with Jewish people. And in the spirit of Romans 14-15, we urge Gentile believers to accept, encourage and pray for Messianic Jewish believers, in their witness among their own people.”²

So from Lake Balaton to High Leigh “as servants of God we commend ourselves in every way” and the report seems mostly good. We praise the power of God and the sincere love of the Holy Spirit for all that that he has done and is doing to unite us in the grace of the Son of God, strengthening our network for the cause of Jewish evangelism.

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¹ 2 Corinthians 6:4, 8a

² *The Cape Town Commitment* Section IIB, “Building the Peace of Christ in Our Divided and Broken World”, IA