



the **Bridge** הגשר

Life in Messiah International

“Sharing God’s heart for the Jewish people”

Intent on One Purpose



For those of us involved in full-time ministry, it can sometimes feel like we are alone in our efforts to reach the Jewish people. While we joyfully see God working through Life in Messiah (LIFE) and like-minded organizations, it would be a mistake to assume we are the only ones who care about the Jewish people!

At LIFE, we have enjoyed over 135 years of partnering with and learning from believers from various backgrounds, vocations, and walks of life. These precious co-laborers may not wear a LIFE logo or work in full-time vocational ministry, but God is working through them to touch Jewish hearts with the Good News!

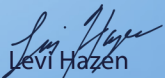
In this issue of *The Bridge*, you'll hear from a young woman who fell in love with Israel during a senior trip, a summer intern learning more about Jewish ministry, a Jewish-Gentile couple who met Jesus through prayerful neighbors, and a couple who led a short-term outreach in Brooklyn.

the BRIDGE הגשר

Although our writers come from diverse backgrounds and vocations, through the Holy Spirit they are “of the same mind, maintaining the same love, united in spirit, intent on one purpose” (Philippians 2:2). What common purpose do we have? Serving God by proclaiming the gospel – especially to the Jewish people (Romans 1:16).

Be encouraged! God is the ruler of all hearts. It is He who plants in our own hearts a love for the Jewish people and a desire for their salvation; it is He who opens Jewish hearts to receive the truth. He is at work through both the visible and invisible, through full-time evangelists and laymen, to save His chosen people.

Much love in Messiah,



Levi Hazen
Executive Director

- 3 | **A Senior Trip Opened My Heart to Jewish Ministry**
- 5 | **My Internship Gave Me Insights into Jewish Evangelism**
- 7 | **Our Loving Neighbors Introduced Us to Jesus**
- 9 | **Outreach in Brooklyn Inspired Us to Lead a Ministry Team**

* To protect our staff and those with whom we work, we will often alter names and faces in publications.

Issue 2 2023

Life in Messiah International

Want to serve in the Holy Land?
Learn about our YES! Israel
ministry trip by visiting
lifeinmessiah.org/yesisrael.

A Senior Trip Opened My Heart to Jewish Ministry

God used a routine senior trip to make a big difference in my heart.

My generous uncle traditionally funded a senior trip abroad for each of his nieces and nephews. After I'd graduated from high school and it was my turn, I signed up for a month-long adventure trip to Israel. Little did I know this trip would change my life.

While a portion of this trip involved touring biblical sites in Israel, the most important part of my experience was volunteering at a local hospital. I encountered many wonderful and intriguing aspects of Israeli culture as I worked odd jobs around the hospital and got involved in a local Messianic congregation.

This experience brought me face-to-face with Israel's cultural complexity and socio-political dynamics. It is a nation of contrasts. From the artsy atmosphere of Tel Aviv to the spiritual significance of Jerusalem, to the relaxed, hippie culture of Eilat, this nation can hardly be categorized or fully defined. Israelis seem to accept these dichotomies and diversities as normal, but to me as an outsider, this complexity was the very thing that made Israel beautiful.

All my amazing memories of Israel contribute to my heartfelt appreciation for its history and modern-day importance. This was where I first felt the calling from the Lord to love Israel and the Jewish people. I still have much to learn, but one thing I know for certain is that God cares

about His chosen people, and He seeks to draw them into a personal relationship with Yeshua the Messiah. The Lord has placed the same burden on my heart.

Today, some health concerns limit my ability to actively serve, but I keep praying for the Jewish people and looking for opportunities to serve them in the coming years. Although I do not know what the future may hold for me, I want to serve in any way I can.

What about you? How has God called you to support the Jewish people? As you continue to serve or look for more ways to get involved, I encourage you to ask God what the next step is in your journey!

— *Charity, Life in Messiah volunteer*



“Sharing God’s heart for the Jewish people”

Read Joyce's articles at lifeinmessiah.org/jewish-evangelism to learn how to share the gospel with your Jewish friends and coworkers.

My Internship Gave Me Insights into Jewish Evangelism

In summer 2023, I traveled to New York City to do an internship with Life in Messiah (LIFE). I had just finished my junior year as a Communications student at Moody Bible Institute. God had given me an interest in the Jewish people in high school, where books by Jewish authors like Chaim Potok opened a window for me into Jewish culture. At Moody I learned more about Jewish people and the Bible. I began to see God's love for His people and His intention for the Scriptures to point to the Messiah.

My interest in Jewish people started off as a desire to gain more knowledge in Jewish studies, but God was also growing in me a desire to use what I'd learned to serve Him. Through friends at Moody, God led me to an internship with LIFE. I would be writing a series of web articles to help ordinary believers (like me) learn how to share the gospel with Jewish people.

As part of my internship, I went to stay in Brooklyn, which was my first time being in close proximity to an ultra-Orthodox community. I had the chance to participate in outreaches and even join the YES! Israel team for a week of Jewish evangelism training. It was so encouraging to experience and hear how the Spirit was at work opening people's hearts to spiritual conversations.

Reaching out to Jewish people often feels intimidating – some of LIFE's staff who've been in Jewish ministry long term tell me the feeling doesn't go away. But through the example of those serving in Jewish ministry in Brooklyn, I saw the importance of faithfulness and prayer.

We can act in obedience by sowing the seeds of the gospel, but ultimately God is the one “who gives the growth” (1 Corinthians 3:7).

Moving forward, I desire to yield to God’s leading, including any role He has for me in reaching the Jewish people. The Bible is clear that God’s love for the Jewish people is enduring, and it’s amazing to see how He can use people from all walks of life to share the Good News of Jesus the Messiah.

— *Joyce, Life in Messiah summer intern*



The Fall Feasts present a great opportunity to engage with your Jewish neighbors. Check out our biblical feasts page (lifeinmessiah.org/feasts) to learn how to ask the right questions.

Our Loving Neighbors Introduced Us to Jesus

How unlikely is it for a 40-year-old Jewish man to fall in love with a 40-year-old Gentile lady? Well, “with God, all things are possible” (Matthew 19:26).

I (Jeff) was raised in a Reform Jewish home among an exclusively Jewish community. I attended Hebrew school, was bar mitzvahed, and worked on a kibbutz in Israel for six months as a teen. However, I never understood the traditions we were observing or why we observed them.

As an adult I worked at a psychiatric hospital where I met a beautiful, gentle, and kind Gentile woman. We each were raised in dysfunctional homes where we’d felt unloved and disconnected; both previously divorced, we were two sad and broken people in need of true love. We married in 1997, blending our families.

The Lord was arranging for witnesses in our lives. Far away in Virginia, a believing family was praying with their church about a house for sale in their neighborhood, asking God for opportunities to witness to its future owners.

We became that family when we moved from Connecticut to Virginia in 2005. Our new neighbors soon befriended us and invited us to their church for a Christmas event. Urged by their three young children, we continued attending on Sunday mornings. The congregation welcomed us with unreserved love and kindness, which we soaked up like dry sponges.

In March 2006, the pastor asked our Sunday school class to close our eyes – no peeking! – and raise our hands if we wanted to invite Jesus into our lives. I (Susan) raised my hand and felt a

lifelong weight lifted from me; I was freed from the burden of sin and felt Jesus' love freely given to me.

There was just one problem: my husband was Jewish. Wondering how we would make this work, I stealthily peeked at Jeff. My heart burst with joy when I saw his hand raised too! We were baptized together three months later. Together at age 50 we were born again; justified, redeemed, and sealed forever.

Today we are "equally yoked" in our faith, grateful that both our names are written in the Lamb's Book of Life. Through the Holy Spirit we can shine bright lights to our church and community. I (Jeff) am proud to be a Christian Jew without having to give up my Jewish faith and heritage, with Jesus leading my life.

Sadly, distance remains between us and our unsaved families, but we know the Lord is always at work. When our families think of us, they have to think of Jesus, too!

— *Jeff and Susan, friends of Life in Messiah*



“Sharing God’s heart for the Jewish people”

Interested in planning a **To Brooklyn with Love** trip for your church? Learn more at lifeinmessiah.org/ministry-in-brooklyn.

Outreach in Brooklyn Inspired Us to Lead a Ministry Team

Through our To Brooklyn with Love short-term ministry trip, believers don't have to leave the US to get a ministry-oriented, cross-cultural experience.

The trip is based out of Immanuel House, a ministry facility run by Life in Messiah (LIFE) staff and strategically situated beside one of Brooklyn's largest Jewish communities. It's where I (Levi) was first introduced to Jewish ministry back in 2010.

Recently, a church from Goshen, Indiana, sent their third ministry team to Brooklyn for training and outreach. The team members, who don't normally serve in vocational ministry, desired to partner with LIFE in sharing Yeshua (Jesus) with the Jewish community.

We were excited to see previous participants Kent and Loranne Nash leading the group! After participating in two 2017 Brooklyn trips, the Nash family was moved to recruit and shepherd others in the same experience.

Kent and Loranne were kind enough to share their reflections on the trip they led:

On each trip there is something new to learn or experience. Every evening there was a new name to pray for or a new idea to explore.

We loved seeing bridges being built. Each bridge carries two-way traffic: Christians have much to learn from our Jewish friends, and they have much to learn from us!

One of the best moments was in Williamsburg, where our team was able to sit and visit with Orthodox families, learning about their way of life and sharing our own life experiences.

Another highlight for us was meeting *Avraham. To hear him say he was curious enough to read the New Testament was amazing. We admired his willingness to investigate the possibility of Messiah Yeshua. Our prayer is that God will continue to pursue him!

We are so grateful for the Nash family and the other team members who came alongside to help us reach the Jewish community with the Good News. The mission is too big, and too important, to accomplish on our own. Whether you support the work financially, through prayer, or join one of our ministry teams heading to Brooklyn, Israel, or South Florida – thank you!

— *Levi Hazen, Life in Messiah Executive Director | Kent and Lorraine, To Brooklyn with Love team leaders*



Make my joy complete
by being of the same mind,
maintaining the same love, united in spirit,
intent on one purpose.

Philippians 2:2



U.S. PO Box 5470 Lansing, IL 60438 (708) 418-0020 LifelnMessiah.org Office@LifelnMessiah.org
Canada 190 Mulock Dr. PO Box 251 Newmarket, ON L3Y 4X1 (905) 235-3717 LifelnMessiah.ca Info@LifelnMessiah.ca
Hong Kong PO Box 71155 Kowloon Central Post Office (852) 5974-1868 LifelnMessiah.hk Info@LifelnMessiah.hk