

NEWS&VIEWS

2020: Issue 2

Editorial:

When I wrote the editorial introducing items for issue 1 (2020) of News & Views there was very little awareness of how all our communities would soon be impacted by the covid-19 pandemic. Clearly we are all 'in a battle' which has long-term political, economic and social consequences.

From a CMJ perspective I am pleased to report that key aspects of our ministry continue and for example encouraging mission openings can be discerned by our

Community Based Evangelists and by the generous enlarging of the mercy fund administered by our colleagues based at Christ Church, Jerusalem. However, a number of staff are currently on furlough and many events have been postponed or cancelled. This current edition and the somewhat 'slimmed down' mailing which accompanies it reflects the current challenges we are facing. In this edition may I draw your attention to three main items:
1) A theological reflection article 'What's Going On?'

2) A moving obituary to our dear colleague Linda Cohen and
3) Information about the online CMJ Conference taking place on 4th July. During these challenging times may I thank all CMJ members and supporters who have remained loyal and supportive to this ministry through your prayers and ongoing financial support - such commitment is so encouraging and significant for a 'time such as this'.

Shalom,
Alex Jacob

CMJ UK Online Conference 4th July 2020

***Join us for a special
one day Online
Conference!***

- An interview with Amir Tsarfati
- Teaching workshops
- Updates from CMJ UK staff
- Live worship!

For updates and further details please see
www.cmj.org.uk/cmj-online-conference-2020



The Church's Ministry among
Jewish People

Keep the Dates Free!

Wednesday 10th June - 2pm
Monthly afternoon Bible Study. Sue Aldridge will be bringing a bible study to us via Zoom.

Wednesday 10th June - 6.30pm
Prayer for Israel Prayer Meeting on Zoom with Rosemary Saunders from the Anglican International School Jerusalem.

Wednesday 24th June - 6.30pm
Prayer for Israel Prayer Meeting on Zoom with Idan Pinhas from the Heritage Centre at Christ Church Jerusalem.

Saturday 4th July
CMJ Online Conference!

Saturday 10th October
San Remo 100 Event

24th October - 2pm
CMJ Online AGM

If you'd like to be on our Mailing List for Prayer Updates please let us know by emailing Office@cmj.org.uk

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Join us in 2020!

CHEESE & WINE TOUR OF ISRAEL

Everyone knows that Jewish Culture is synonymous with food and drink!

Modern Israel produces some of the best wines in the world and it's now possible to pair them with craft cheeses and artisan bread, so why not join us as we tour the land and enjoy its produce?

The Rev. Aaron Eime from Christ Church in Jerusalem, an expert in early Church/Jewish relations and a fluent Hebrew speaker will be our guide and Paul and Janey Hames, who have long experience in organising trips to Israel and lived in Jerusalem for five years will be our leaders on this Shores Tour. If you've visited Israel before, and now want a different experience this is the tour for you!

£2,239 per person including flights

If 30+ people sign up the price comes down to £2159

Register your interest with Shores Tours UK

Office: Mark Madeley

mark@mibtravel.co.uk www.mibtravel.co.uk



Janey & Paul Hames

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2020**

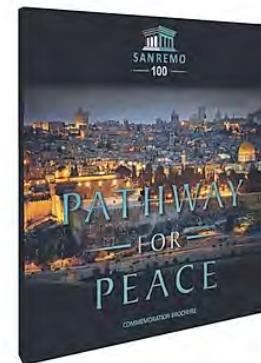


COULD YOU BE A TRUSTEE FOR CMJ UK?

The date for the 2020 AGM will be 24th October at 2pm. This will be held Online and further details will be published soon. This year CMJ UK have 5 vacancies for Trustees of varying terms from 3 to 5 years. We would love to hear from you if you are interested in becoming a Trustee. For further details please visit our website www.cmj.org.uk/agm

If you'd like to chat with someone about becoming a Trustee, please get in touch on Office@cmj.org.uk and we'll get back to you.

The San Remo 100 Event which was postponed this April is to go ahead on Saturday 10th October 2020.



Jane Moxon from CMJ UK is on the 'Loves Never Fails' committee who have organised the event to commemorate 100 years since the San Remo Conference where a mandate was given to the UK to implement the Balfour Declaration and to bring about a Jewish State in Palestine. For further information and tickets go to www.lnf.org.uk/tickets To buy the commemorative book from us for just £5 (+P&P) please email office@cmj.org.uk



PILGRIM FATHERS TOUR

Join Chris & Jane Moxon in search of the Pilgrim Fathers and CMJ's origins. Learn about the founding fathers of America and discover the founding fathers of CMJ Worldwide. Find out what these two groups had in common and listen to experts in their field as we visit North Nottinghamshire, Cambridge, Plymouth, London and many places in-between.



We are sure that after the tour, packed with exciting places and experiences never to be forgotten, the four nights in Hurley on Thames at an old Coaching Inn is just what you will need to unwind and absorb what you've seen. The Kesher extension will be expertly led by Robin and Sue Aldridge. Every afternoon you will be free to explore the area and the many riverside walks or relax in the hotel gardens.

Dates: September 12th – 20th 2020 with Kesher extension until 24th.
Please see www.cmj.org.uk/tours for the brochure and booking form.



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A Tribute to Linda Cohen - by Sue and Robin Aldridge

Some people are extraordinary. Some people are gifted and never seem to get noticed. Some people are strong and yet somehow winsome. Some people are very easy to love. Linda Cohen was one such person.

She was an extraordinary colleague and an irreplaceable friend. She understood the vital importance of the relationship between CMJ UK and CMJ Israel and worked tirelessly to ensure that the two organisations worked successfully together to

promote the aims of the Society and the Kingdom of God. We always knew how much we relied upon her and how powerful her witness and testimony was to the work of CMJ and most especially to the love she had for Yeshua, her Messiah. Linda was an ambassador for CMJ and toured the UK regularly to update supporters on the work in Israel. Her easy style and warmth of personality made her a popular speaker. She had many friends here and around the world, and her visits here were eagerly anticipated, as she had the knack of sharing the realities of life in Israel and the ongoing development of CMJ's work in a way that fuelled prayer and encouraged support.

She was dedicated to the education of Messianic Jewish children in Israel and served on the board of The Anglican International School, Jerusalem, chaired the board of Makor Hatikvah School, and sought to bring together Messianic educator throughout the Land. She was essentially a finance expert but because of her gifts and personality she became much more than that, working as CMJ Israel Administrator for many years.

She was at the very centre of the organisation, in fact she was the glue that held it all together.



Linda Cohen

In addition her work with the Jerusalem Institute for Justice involved her in supporting the civil rights of Messianic believers. Linda was a very intelligent woman who had the ability to see things clearly and think creatively in any situation, often coming up with solutions which brought about positive change and improvement. Although a self proclaimed introvert, she was always able to build strong working relationships with a wide variety of people. She was a 'networker'!

We had the joy of holidays with Linda and Flavia in the UK and Israel and the USA. Linda was a master of technology guiding us on road trips around America with ease, and making the most of every day we spent together.

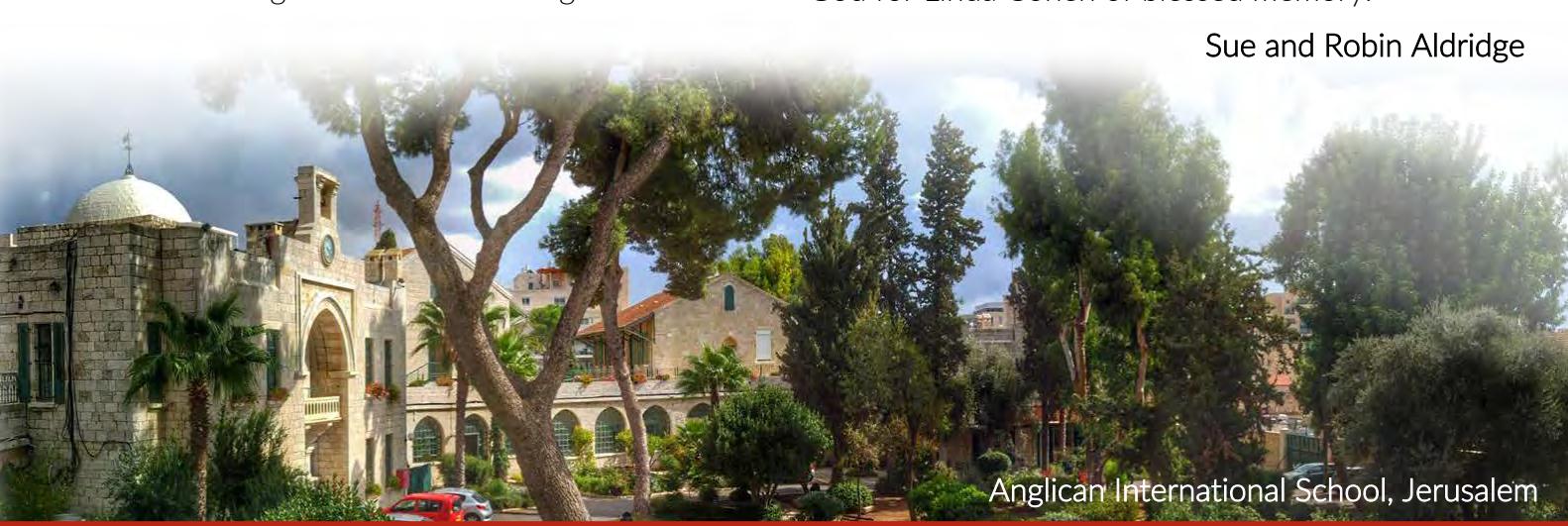
We shall always treasure happy memories of visiting boutique wine growers in Israel, bus tours around London, theatre visits, walking to the Lincoln Memorial and the White House and having to watch Lucille Ball on her iphone doing the Vitameatavegamin sketch (check it out it was Linda's favourite and she knew it off by heart!).

We spent Passovers together in Israel and Linda and Flavia spent a wonderful Christmas with us here in the UK performing a sketch in our Christmas 'Family's got Talent' show. To lose her at such a young age is a great tragedy, yet we know that she is secure in the presence of the Saviour she loved and served for so long. We join friends around the world in mourning her. We will miss her - always. Praise God, however, that Heaven is not only a place of rejoicing but also - reunions. Until we meet again, however, we thank God for Linda Cohen of blessed memory.

Sue and Robin Aldridge



Friends on their travels:
Linda, Sue, Robin & Flavia



Anglican International School, Jerusalem

What's Going On?

Some initial theological reflection upon the current covid-19 pandemic.

Introduction: Over the past few weeks, I have spoken with many people, both within the 'CMJ network' and beyond, and I have listened carefully to their stories relating to the covid-19 pandemic. In this, there are many encouraging signs of the LORD's grace at work, as many Churches and individual Christians seek new ways of sharing the Gospel and new ways of serving those in need. Yet alongside this, there is much evidence of suffering and loss as the death toll rises. No-one is immune, yet, as so often is the case, it is the vulnerable and the social marginalised who suffer most.

Hopefully when we return to a 'new normal' there will be a 'collective ambition' to do things differently - this will hopefully be true both for the Church and for the wider society. This 'doing things differently' should include acting in ways which will result in a 'levelling up' in our society and a renewed care for the vulnerable and for the environment.

Doing some theological thinking:

As Christians we are all involved in theological thinking and reflection. We may not always be aware of this but every time we try to share our faith or to seek understanding about the implications of our faith, we are doing theology. I am sure most of us have heard lots of voices trying to 'make sense' of the current pandemic. The internet and wider media is full of such voices. In terms of Christian voices I think there can be two major approaches - namely those who speak of God 'sending' the virus for a range of reasons, and those who speak of God 'using' the virus for a number of purposes. How we navigate between 'sending' and 'using' involves how we perceive God's sovereignty over His creation. For those who speak of God sending the virus, the reasons for this can be categorised either as a 'wake-up call' or as a 'punishment'. As I said, the reasons for such a call or punishment can be numerous, but always the identification flows from a particular insight, concern or calling held by the person speaking.

So far I have heard four passionate cases been presented where the prime reason is perceived to be one of the following: our failure to support the State of Israel, our failure to stand against abortion, our failure to care for the environment (and to mitigate against global warming) or our failure to engage with the fight against poverty and the pursuit of social-justice.



Such presentations demand careful consideration and robust questioning. Those who see this crisis as something God allows rather than initiates, tend to see what is going on as simply the 'downside of normal'. In this challenging period there are unprecedented opportunities for Christians to witness and to serve. Perhaps, within this, there is a tendency to avoid being side-tracked into speculating about the 'why' and a commitment to focus on the practical ways to respond? In this I have been encouraged and challenged by many who have, in the light of this crisis, deepened their prayer life, renewed their compassion, engaged with practical acts of service and doubled their efforts in terms of being ready to: "...always give an answer to anyone who asks you a reason for the hope that is in you" (1 Peter 3:15). In reflecting on some of the practical and theological responses my mind was drawn recently to how Hassidic Jewish leaders interpreted the actions of God in the immediate period following the horrors of the Holocaust (Shoah) (I think the reason for this connection in my mind is that during this time of social distancing I am investing some time in studying the Hassidic Jewish world.¹) Many Hassidic leaders simply 'fell back on silence', reflecting a stance articulated by Job and in part of the book of Lamentations. Others found insight from the theological idea of '*hester panim*' (the hiding of God's face, based on a traditional interpretation of Deuteronomy 31:17-18). While others (probably the majority) embraced the common interpretation that the Holocaust was punishment for sin (and a goad to repentance), the 'sin' identified in most cases can be identified as being rooted in one or more of the following: assimilation, apostasy, communism or Zionism. A few saw the Holocaust as the violent 'birth pangs' which will bring forth the Messiah and the Messianic Age. Finally, some who veered to a more pantheistic understanding of 'God' saw the Holocaust in purely 'mythic' terms as a process within God 'himself' or as a cosmic struggle between God and the forces of evil. In all of the above there was a profound searching for a 'framework of meaning'. A framework which made sense of the Scriptures, Jewish tradition and Jewish 'spirituality' - a spirituality which honours both '*Kiddush ha-shem*' (martyrdom) and '*kidush ha-hayim*' (sanctification of life).

Maybe some of this Hassidic led reflection has some echoes with your own theological thinking at such a time as this? I would be pleased to hear of your thinking about such issues. In the meantime I can assure you that all of us linked to CMJ will do all we can to seek the LORD anew at this time and to be open to the witness of Scripture and the promptings of the Holy Spirit. Above all the CMJ UK team are determined to do all we can to live out and to share the Gospel to the Jewish world at this time - and especially with those who are searching for a true 'framework of meaning' and those who are hurting as this crisis unfolds.

Alex Jacob

¹ This study has included studying the writings of Paul Levertoff, the reading of the major new work- Hasidism - A New History (Princeton University Press, 2018) and the re-reading of two Olive Press Research Papers by Michael Eldridge titled Understanding Hasidic Jews (Issues 29 and 30, 2016) - both these Olive Press Research Papers can be downloaded for free from www.cmj.org.uk/olive-press-research-papers