

CANADIAN *Communiqué*

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A NOTE FROM STEVE

“People don’t want statistics, people want stories about statistics!” our publishing team yelled when I told them about this issue of the *Canadian Communicqué*. I agree wholeheartedly but as FOI Gospel Ministry continues to expand in Canada, my desire is that your knowledge of the Jewish people in Canada expands. For instance, did you know the Jewish population in Canada has a rich but short history? Long before any Jewish people came to Canada, a group of Roman Catholics from France colonized the region as part of the larger area known as “New France” in 1608. New France was strictly Roman Catholic territory. In 1627, Cardinal Richelieu even decreed that only Roman Catholics could live in the area.

Jewish people did not arrive in Canada until 1760, when Jewish soldiers in the British army came to fight in the French and Indian War. Once Britain seized control of the area in that same year, Jewish officers, soldiers, merchants, and fur traders founded the first Jewish settlement in Canada. By the early 1800s, Canadian Jews had gained full rights as British subjects.

The Jewish population slowly grew throughout the 19th century as Jewish people emigrated from Eastern Europe and settled in Montreal, Toronto, and Vancouver. Today, the Jewish people of Canada thrive in one of the most diverse populations in the world.

Yes, statistics may not be what we all desire but they can give us a



deeper understanding of our country and areas around us. I have asked four of our workers and one of our board members to show a glimpse of Canada's Jewish population, five perspectives from five different locations: John McKim surveys Saint John's three waves of immigration. Richard Toviah discusses Ontario, the province with the largest Jewish population. John Plantz traces the Jewish people of Manitoba's journey from Russian persecution to settlement in Winnipeg. Larry Mitchell discusses Alberta's Jewish population by synagogue affiliation. Bill King, board member for FOI Gospel Ministry and longtime resident of Vancouver, provides insight into his city's Jewish population.

The Jewish population in Canada

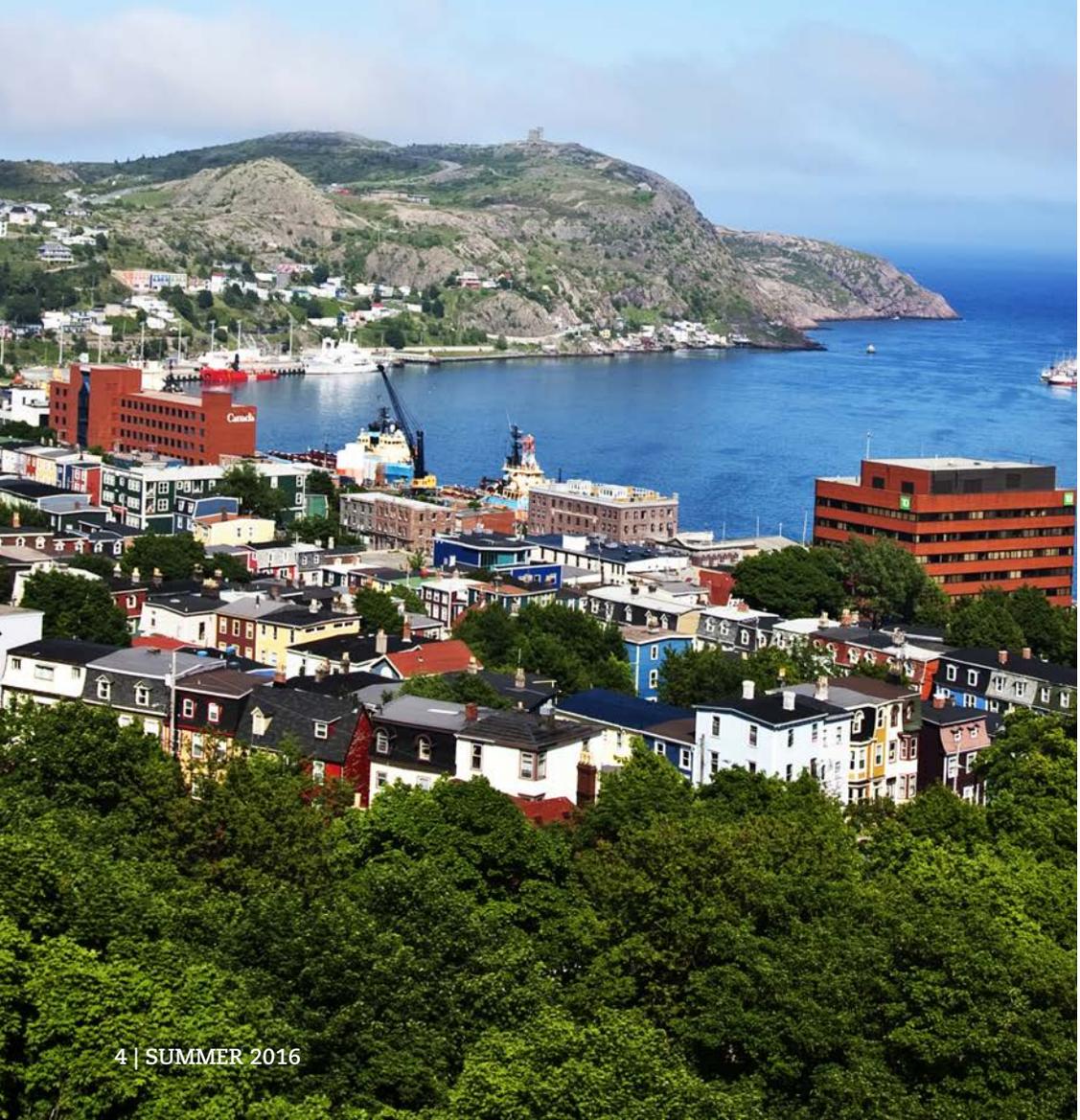
illustrates a wonderful picture of God's promise in Genesis 12:3: "I will bless those who bless you [the Jewish people], and I will curse him who curses you." Canada blesses the Jewish people by providing a safe place for them to thrive and prosper, and God in turn blesses Canada's rich culture and the Jewish contribution to it. By God's grace, we at FOI Gospel Ministry desire to bless and encourage our Canadian Jewish friends as we teach biblical truth and stand in solidarity with them.

Steve Herzig is the
North American
Ministries Director of
FOI Gospel Ministry.



NEW BRUNSWICK

by John McKim



The Jewish community of Saint John in New Brunswick, Canada, historically grew in three waves.

THE FIRST WAVE

The first wave of Jewish people to settle in Saint John were from England. Since they actively participated in English life and institutions, they blended easily into Saint John society.

The founders of Saint John's Jewish community, Solomon and Alice Hart, arrived in 1858. Solomon was an affluent cigar maker and operated a factory in the city. Alice was well-educated and taught Hebrew school in her home, began a daytime nursery, and founded the Daughters of Israel, a group of women dedicated to helping the poor, needy, and new immigrants in the city.

English and other Western Europeans also founded the Ahavith Achim (Hebrew, "Brotherly Love") Synagogue in 1898.

THE SECOND WAVE

Persecution caused the second wave of Jewish

people to flee Eastern Europe in the 1890s and come to the city. Authorities expelled Jewish people from their homes in the Russian Empire; so many sought shelter in the ghettos of Saint John. They were poor and unfamiliar with the culture, spoke Yiddish, wore traditional Jewish clothing, and had different customs.

As the community grew, so did their differences. These differences urged the original Jewish settlers to found a second synagogue, Hazen Avenue, in 1906, and give Ahavith Achim Synagogue to the new arrivals. During this time, 300 Jewish families and about 1,500 Jewish individuals lived in Saint John.

In 1918, the two congregations joined together to purchase a building for a new synagogue, Shaarei Zedek (Hebrew, "Gates of Righteousness"). Shaarei Zedek changed traditions throughout the years. At its founding, the synagogue was an Orthodox Jewish community, where women sat separate

from men. In 1950, the congregation adopted the tenets of Conservative Judaism, which allows families to sit together. Then, in fall 2001, the congregation became egalitarian, allowing both men and women to share the same roles. Women even became included in the minyan, a quorum of 10 individuals older than 13 who must be present to conduct a religious service.

THE THIRD WAVE

The third wave of Jewish immigration to Saint John is happening now. The synagogue has been welcoming new, young Jewish families from Israel—most who are originally from Russia—seeking new opportunities in Canada. They hope these new families will integrate, attend services, and rejuvenate the Jewish community again in Saint John.

John McKim is the Saint John, New Brunswick, field representative for FOI Gospel Ministry.



ONTARIO

by Richard Toviah



Approximately 227,000 Jewish people currently live in Ontario, making up 1.8 percent of Ontario's total population. The story behind their immigration to the province is remarkable.

The pogroms and anti-Semitism in Russia in the late 19th and early 20th centuries forced millions of Jewish families to emigrate. Although the majority immigrated to the United States, many also came to Canada due to the Canadian Pacific Railway and our government's efforts to develop Canada after the Confederation.

Between 1880 and 1930, the Jewish population of Canada grew to more than 155,000. Most of these immigrants established communities in the larger cities.

Canada's first-ever census in 1871 recorded 1,115 Jews: 409 in Montreal, 157 in Toronto, 131 in Hamilton, and the rest in small communities along the St. Lawrence River.

Most of Canada's Jewish people live in Ontario and Quebec, followed by British Columbia, Manitoba, and Alberta. More than half (57.9 percent) of the Canadian Jewish population resides in Ontario, and of those, most—188,710—live in Toronto, which houses 83.3 percent of Ontario's Jewish population. Ottawa has the second largest Jewish population in Ontario, with 13,355.

Many do not know

that Toronto holds the largest number of Holocaust survivors in the world. More than 40,000 Holocaust survivors live in Canada, concentrated particularly in Montreal, Winnipeg, and Toronto. As of 2015, 8,930 Holocaust survivors live in the Toronto metropolitan area, and 5,795 live in Montreal.

Overall, Ontario has rich Jewish history, a vibrant Jewish community, and many Jewish people for whom we can pray, love, and serve.

Richard
Toviah is the
Winnipeg,
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MANITOBA

by John Plantz

The Winnipeg Jewish community in Manitoba began with just a few people in the fur trade in 1880. Today, around 16,000 Jewish people live in Winnipeg. An influx of Jewish people came to the area between 1875 and 1888 because of religious persecution in Russia and Europe. As anti-Semitism rose, they searched for a place to start anew.

Many Jews fled to Canada, and a small number came to Manitoba, to the city that would later become Winnipeg, their "New Jerusalem." They faced numerous hardships in an area that seemed like it was in the middle of nowhere. But due to their determination and industriousness, they soon established synagogues, stores, and businesses.

In the early 1900s, the Jewish Colonization Association encouraged many Jewish families to move to rural areas and establish farm colonies. I spoke with Mr. Levine at the Jewish Public Library in Winnipeg about the town of Camper, where my parents, Gomer and Dorothy Plantz, had lived. In 1911, Jewish people established a farm colony there called New Hirsch, 100 miles north of Winnipeg on Highway 6.

Our conversation piqued my interest to research more about this colony and area. During that time, about 300 families moved to Camper; each family bought 160 acres for \$10.00. Of those acres, 40 needed to be cleared

and seeded. This was difficult because the land was infertile and full of rocks. When the Great Depression hit, most families left the area, leaving few in Camper by 1944.

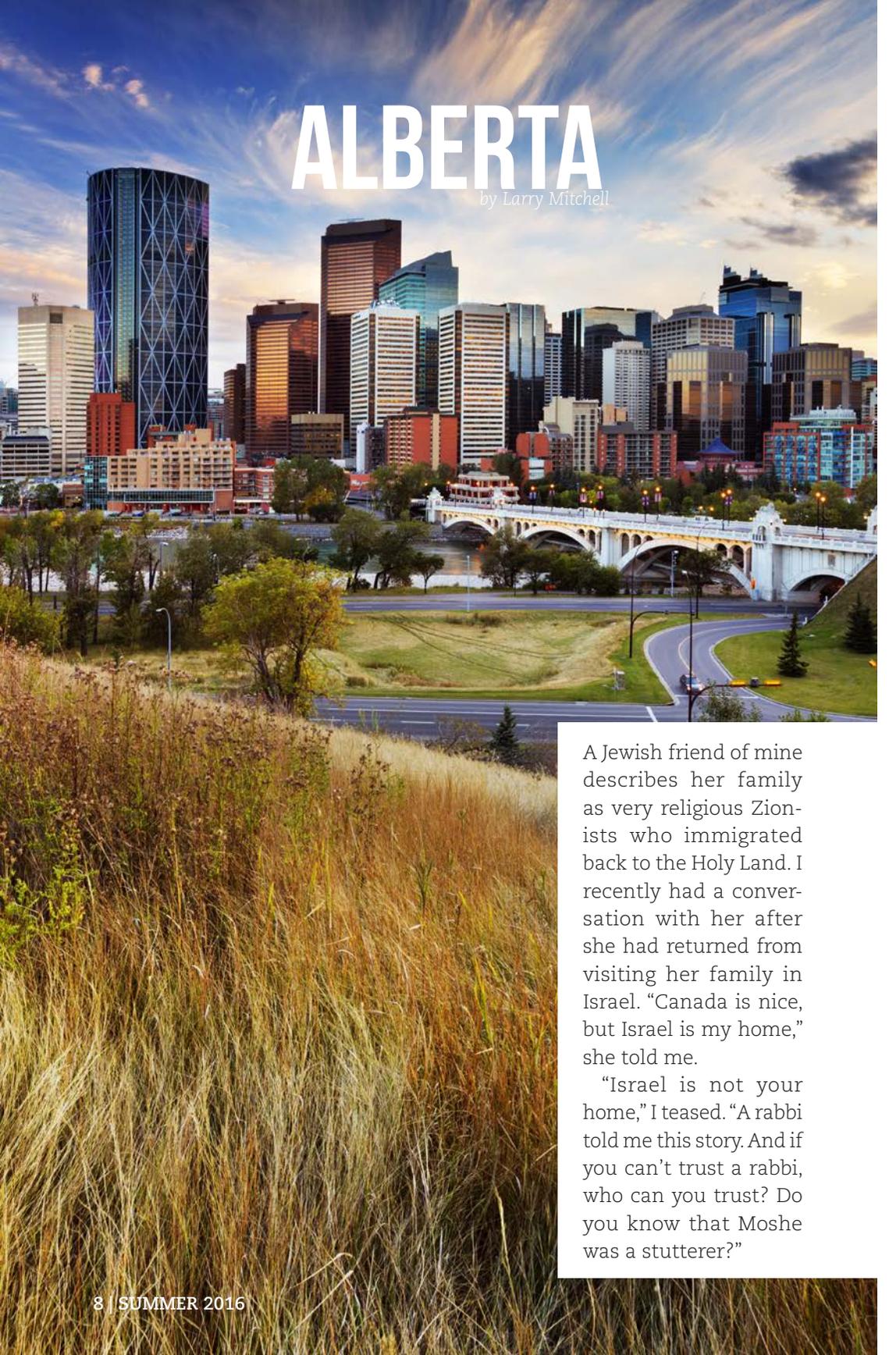
Today's Jewish community in Winnipeg is active, with much philanthropy and synagogue activity. Synagogues in Winnipeg range from Orthodox to Reform. Also in Winnipeg is the widely-circulated *Jewish Post and News*.

The Jewish Asper Center stands as the gem of Winnipeg's Jewish community. The center includes a school, Holocaust museum, the Jewish Historical Society, the Jewish Federation of Manitoba and its museum, a gymnasium, library, theater, Schmoozer's Restaurant, and the famous Folklorama's Israeli Pavilion.

In this area, The Friends of Israel collaborates with The Jewish National Fund, Canadian Magen David Adom, the Canadian Ben-Gurion University, and Israel Bonds. We continue to communicate biblical truth about Israel and the Messiah and to stand in solidarity with the Jewish people and the State of Israel.



John Plantz is the Winnipeg, Manitoba, Church Ministries representative for FOI Gospel Ministry.



ALBERTA

by Larry Mitchell

A Jewish friend of mine describes her family as very religious Zionists who immigrated back to the Holy Land. I recently had a conversation with her after she had returned from visiting her family in Israel. “Canada is nice, but Israel is my home,” she told me.

“Israel is not your home,” I teased. “A rabbi told me this story. And if you can’t trust a rabbi, who can you trust? Do you know that Moshe was a stutterer?”

She nodded her head. “When he asked God where he was to lead the children of Israel,” I continued, “the Lord told him to go to Canada. When Moshe came down the mountain, the children of Israel wanted to know where God was going to send them. Moshe tried to say ‘Canada,’ but his stuttering made it sound like Canaan. The children of Israel were too impatient to let Moshe clarify his statement, so they packed up their tents and headed to Canaan. Moshe shrugged his shoulders and followed them.”

I told her that Canada has the fourth largest Jewish population in the world.¹ Only Israel, the United States, and France have larger Jewish populations.

“Yes. But soon Canada will have more Jews than France,” she replied. “Thousands of French Jews are fleeing to Canada or Israel because of the Islamic threat. I believe all the Jews of Europe will be going home soon. Then the Jews living in America and Canada

will also be forced to return home because of anti-Semitism.”

I agreed with her and told her that the return of God’s Chosen People is one of the birth pangs of the Messiah. I shared with her Isaiah 11:11–12:

It shall come to pass in that day that the Lord shall set His hand again the second time to recover the remnant of His people who are left, from Assyria and Egypt, from Pathros and Cush, from Elam and Shinar, from Hamath and the islands of the sea. He will set up a banner for the nations, and will assemble the outcasts of Israel, and gather together the dispersed of Judah from the four corners of the earth.

I rejoice that we had the opportunity to openly talk about Israel, the Bible, and the Messiah.

Jewish Population Numbers

As of 2011, 15,795 Jewish people live in Alberta, according to jewishdatabank.org. Most live in Calgary

(8,335) and Edmonton (5,550), with the remainder (1,900) living throughout smaller provincial communities.

Both Calgary and Edmonton have Jewish centers. Calgary has four synagogues: one Conservative (700 families); one Reform (340 families); one Orthodox (200 families); and a small ultra-Orthodox synagogue.

Edmonton has five synagogues: two Conservative (350 families and 40 families); one Orthodox (280 families); one Reform (87 families); and a small ultra-Orthodox synagogue. There is also a small Conservative/Reform (18 families) synagogue in Lethbridge.²

¹ “World’s Jewish Population Nears Pre-Holocaust Levels, New Report Says.” Jewish Free Press, August 28, 2015, p. 19.

² Shirley Brodt, ed., “National Synagogue Directory—Alberta, 5772/2011-2012,” Canadian Jewish Congress Charities Committee <<http://www.cjarchives.ca/media/9541/cjccc-synagogue-directory-5772-alberta.pdf>>.

Larry Mitchell is the Calgary, Alberta, field representative for FOI Gospel Ministry.



BRITISH COLUMBIA

by Bill King



I have been involved within the Jewish community of the Greater Vancouver area both professionally and personally for 26 years, and I am extremely excited that The Friends of Israel (FOI) is establishing its presence here. A groundswell is beginning to take place.

In this brief article, I wish to provide

you with some background information about Greater Vancouver and then update you concerning our recent developments in the region. I hope this information will bless and challenge you to pray for our Jewish friends.

Background of Greater Vancouver

According to a 2014 census, more than 2.4 million people live in Greater Vancouver.¹ It is the third most populous metropolitan area in Canada and the most populous in Western Canada. World Population Review reported Vancouver is the most densely populated city in Canada, with more than 5,249 people per square kilometer. Yet 74 percent of people in Greater Vancouver live outside the city.²

The Jewish Federation of Greater Vancouver reported that 26,255 Jewish people—1.2 percent of the area’s population—lived in Greater Vancouver at the time of the 2011 census. This number reveals an increase of 14.2 percent from 2001. The Canadian Jewish population at large, however, only increased by 4.7 percent during those years. Greater Vancouver has the third largest Jewish community in Canada, comprising 6.7 percent of our nation’s Jewish population.³

Regarding age distribution in the Greater Vancouver Jewish community, the 45–64 age group population increased significantly from 2001 to 2011—from 6,610 to 7,740. Children increased from 3,835 in 2001 to 4,690 in 2011; and seniors aged 65 and older will likely increase by 2021. The median age of the Greater

Vancouver Jewish community is 40.3.⁴

Approximately 1,000 Israelis in Greater Vancouver view themselves as distinct from the Jewish population. According to Rabbi Philip Bregman, president of Hillel at the University of British Columbia, these Israelis are mostly secular Jews who do not attend synagogue or participate in any religious activities.

FOI’s Presence in Greater Vancouver

The Friends of Israel Today radio program over Radio KARI in Blaine, WA (AM 550), covers approximately 3.5 million people, reaching as far south as Bellingham, WA, and the lower mainland of British Columbia.

We will hold our first Prophecy Up Close conference on November 12, 2016, and we have put together a team of dedicated people who will be reaching out to all of these areas on both sides of the border. With much prayer and hard work, we anticipate a successful conference and envision this becoming an annual event.

¹ “Vancouver Population 2016,” World Population Review, September 13, 2015 <<http://worldpopulationreview.com/world-cities/vancouver-population/>>

² Ibid.

³ Shelley Rivkin and Charles Shahar, “2011 National Household Survey: The Jewish Community of Greater Vancouver,” The Jewish Federation of Greater Vancouver, June 2014 <<http://www.jewishdatabank.org/Studies/downloadFile.cfm?FileID=3135>>

⁴ Ibid.

Bill King is an FOI Gospel Ministry board member from Vancouver, British Columbia.





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