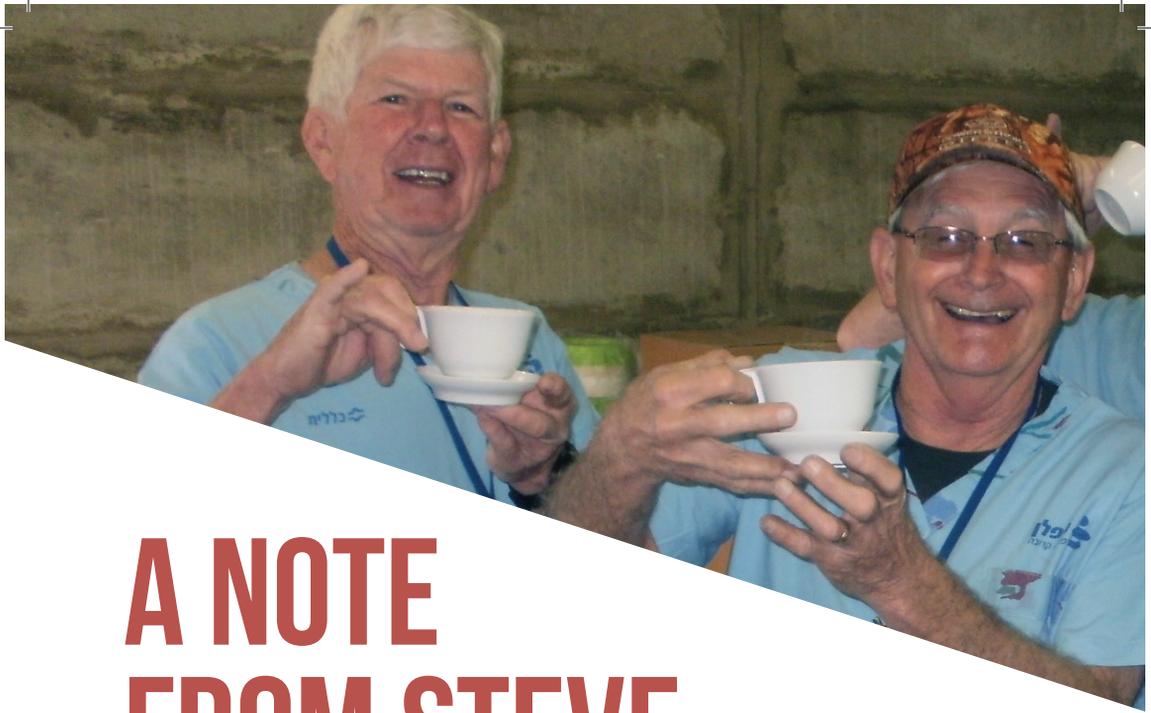


CANADIAN *Communique*

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A NOTE FROM STEVE

Tikkun Olam is a term most Jewish people will recognize. The concept is from 16th-century Kabbalist (mystic) Rabbi Isaac Luria. He was wrestling with the well-known Jewish prayer *Aleinu le-shabbeah*, “It is our duty to praise.” A portion of this prayer speaks of Jewish hope that rests in God to remove various abominations and idols from the world. A phrase reads, “when the world will be perfected under the kingdom of the Almighty.”

Rabbi Luria came up with a story to explain the condition of the world and to provide hope in dealing with it. In Luria’s story, God had several vessels that contained His essence or light. A heavenly calamity occurred when an explosion caused “divine light” particles to come into contact with evil matter.

The prevailing thought among extremely observant Jews at that time was that by living an upright life and

obeying God’s commandments, the Jewish people could free the divine sparks and repair the broken universe. Such thinking resulted in the concept and resultant phrase, *tikkun olam*, or “repairing the world.”

Although the more observant Jews birthed the concept of *tikkun olam*, it was the Reform Jewish movement that embraced and expanded it. They did so by tweaking the idea of “repairing” into simply making the world a better place to live. Many organizations are dedicated to such humanitarian causes as feeding the hungry, improving race relations, instituting social justice (organizations fighting social injustice), women’s rights, etc.

I once asked a Jewish woman if she had heard of *tikkun olam*. Her reply was that not only had she heard of it, it was all she heard about at her synagogue until that rabbi left. “He centered all the



work around *tikkun olam*,” she said, “helping God perfect the world.”

Although there are wonderful things being done throughout the world because of *tikkun olam*, the Hebrew Scriptures do not teach it. In fact, they teach that God is perfect and righteous and mankind is sinful and unrighteous. God does not need our help. We need Him.

I tell you this not to endorse the teaching of Rabbi Isaac Luria but to give you a history of this important idea that the Jewish people today hold close.

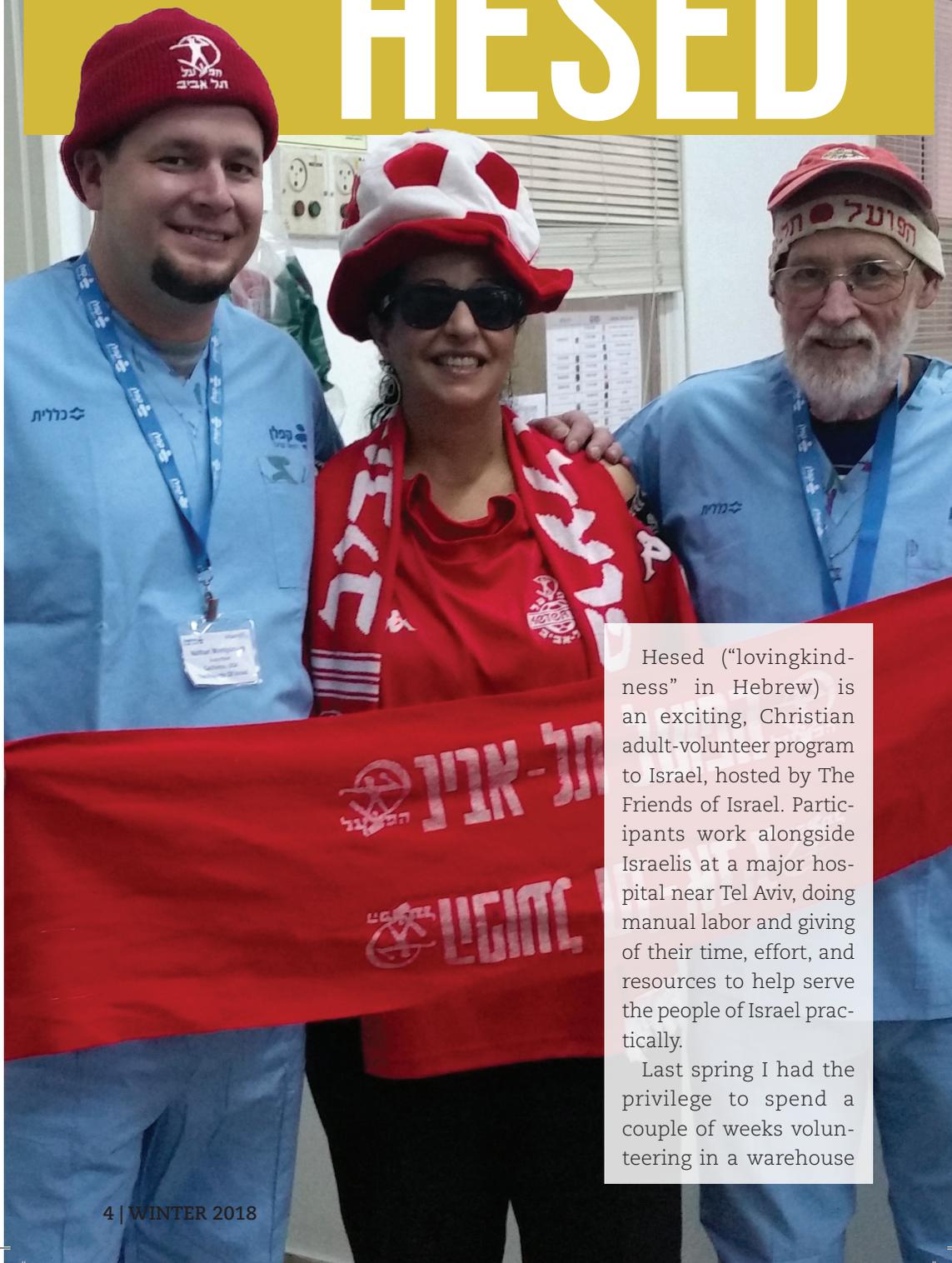
Interestingly, The Friends of Israel Gospel Ministry was also organized to serve the Jewish people. Begun as a relief society to help Jewish people fleeing Nazi persecution in 1938, The Friends of Israel has maintained a friendship with Israel and the Jewish people for 80 years, and we still send various forms

of aid when needed. Although we are an evangelical Christian organization, we are, nonetheless, unequivocally committed to helping and supporting Jewish people and their biblical, God-given right to live in the land given to their forefathers. You will see in the coming pages how our workers are helping the Jewish community and you'll also see how you too can help by going to Israel with our adult-volunteer program, Hesed.



Steve Herzig is the director of FOI Gospel Ministry, Inc.

HESED



Hesed (“lovingkindness” in Hebrew) is an exciting, Christian adult-volunteer program to Israel, hosted by The Friends of Israel. Participants work alongside Israelis at a major hospital near Tel Aviv, doing manual labor and giving of their time, effort, and resources to help serve the people of Israel practically.

Last spring I had the privilege to spend a couple of weeks volunteering in a warehouse



at Kaplan Medical Center in Rehovot. Before we left, each participant had to pass a medical test since some of the work can be physically demanding. I was hoping I would have the stamina required to complete my assignments. Those fears disappeared when I realised we spent almost an equal amount of time talking with our Israeli co-workers as we did working.

We stayed at moshav (like a kibbutz) Yad Hashmona, a Christian community established by believers from Finland. Our accommodations were clean, the staff friendly, and our meals were delicious and healthy. The moshav is located on the outskirts of Jerusalem, adjacent to several hiking trails going through the Judean mountains. We normally were back at our hotel by 4:00 pm, which gave me a couple of hours every evening to go for a hike, enjoying the hills and valleys and many flowers growing next to the trails.

As a group, we also visited some local attractions. One day we visited Bikkurim, a high school focusing on

the arts. The school is located on the border of Gaza and has been the target of many rocket attacks. We enjoyed a concert put on by the students, then visited a couple of bomb shelters The Friends of Israel has provided. On another evening we toured the Knesset (Israeli parliament). Other highlights of the trip would be a day spent in the Old City, ending with communion in the Garden Tomb, and a visit to the Friends of Zion Museum, which tells about several Christians who played a significant role in the birth of the modern State of Israel. We even planted a tree on the hospital grounds.

On Shabbat (Friday night, the beginning of Sabbath), our group was split between several homes of Israelis who work at the hospital. Some of the homes were very religious, others secular. Eating together, we all felt at home and more bridges were built with our new Israeli friends. Then on Saturday we joined a congregation of Jewish believers for worship.

We celebrated the

spring holiday of Purim, from the book of Esther, where God preserved the Jewish people—even participating by dressing up in costumes.

The Hesed Project goes beyond a normal tour of the Holy Land by providing unique opportunities to build bridges with individual Israelis. It provides a tangible way of showing one's love and support for the people of Israel. We made new friends, some of whom we keep in touch with via Facebook. It also has opened doors of ministry for Israelis living in Canada. I have met several Israelis in the malls from Rehovot. They are very excited to learn that I volunteered in the hospital where they were born.

Why not prayerfully consider volunteering for the Hesed Project? You will not be disappointed.

Learn how you can go on our 2019 Hesed trip for free! See the insert for further details.

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





Presented
 THE LARRY
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CANADIAN MAGEN DAVID ADOM

The LORD doth build up Jerusalem: he gathereth together the outcasts of Israel. He healeth the broken in heart, and bindeth up their wounds (Psalm 147:2-3).

It is a privilege to share with you about CMDA. What is CMDA you may ask? It is the Canadian Magen David Adom, the Israeli equivalent of the Red Cross. CMDA has 11 chapters across Canada. In 1976 CMDA became the sole authorized fundraising organization in Canada on behalf of Magen David Adom (MDA).

An interview with MDA medic Daniel Amzallag gave me some great insights into what happens in Israel. Daniel is CMDA National Media and Volunteer Coordinator.

Daniel said, “CMDA is dedicated to supplying ambulances, emergency medical scooters, medical equipment, supplies, blood testing kits, and much more, in the effort to give support and save lives” in Israel. CMDA is helping MDA meet disasters both in the land of

Israel and around the world. MDA was one of the first organizations to respond after the earthquakes in Haiti, Mexico, and Turkey. They are also called to terrorist attacks as front-line responders.

Daniel reminded me that MDA has 17,000-18,000 staff members in Israel, only about 2,000 of whom are paid employees, meaning that the rest are volunteers. All are trained and given uniforms and are treated as equals, whether paid or volunteers.

It is important to mention that ambulances purchased with Canadian donations are manufactured by a company in Beloeil, Quebec. This is good for the Canadian economy! After manufacture they are transported by ship from Halifax to Israel.

Magen David Adom has a program called the Wish Ambulance. MDA gives terminally ill patients one wish. Then they pick them up in an ambulance that is equipped to handle the patients’ specific needs and take them out to fulfill their wish. Requests vary from patient



to patient—like going to a wedding, a Bar Mitzvah, or even traveling to the beach.

MDA also helps reunite Holocaust

survivors with family through volunteers who continually check databases.

A phone interview with local philanthropist Larry Vickar put a more hometown spin on things. Larry is the owner of the Vickar Auto Group here in Winnipeg. Larry and Tova were instrumental in helping CMDA Winnipeg get their second ambulance through their very generous contribution to this project.

When asked why he supported CMDA, Larry responded, “MDA is supported by volunteers, therefore donations from around the world are vitally important in order to sustain its ongoing viability. Israel has many unfriendly neighbours and thus many instances of incursions causing bodily harm. Readily available ambulances for quick responses are critical.”

Larry also said that living in the diaspora (Jewish people living all over the world), it is hard to help by being volunteers, but you can help in this way. He would like others to get involved in this organization and receive a blessing as they have.

Larry and Tova have been a real encouragement to many in the Jewish and Christian world. They are a real blessing to me and I am thankful to count them as my friends.

My FOI co-worker, Richard Toviah, and I are honored to be board members of this wonderful organization.

Since I came to be part of this work in 2013, our committee in Winnipeg has had the joy of seeing three ambulances and two scooters go to Israel! We are now working on the fourth ambulance. The ambulances from Winnipeg, Manitoba, have saved thousands of people in the last five years and they have responded to more than 10,000 calls for help.

Maybe you would like to become a partner with CMDA. Genesis 12:3 says, “I will bless them who bless thee, and curse him that curseth thee: and in thee shall all families of the earth be blessed.”

Be a blessing and receive a blessing with an interest in the land of Israel. Whether you can help save one life or 20 lives, your support enables Magen David Adom to provide lifesaving and humanitarian services to anyone in the State of Israel, regardless of race, color, or religion.

We are asking you to prayerfully consider donating toward the fourth Winnipeg ambulance. FOI Gospel Ministry has set up a fund and is accepting donations on behalf of CMDA. Please specify on your cheque memo “CMDA” to ensure the proper allocation for your tax-deductible donation. You can also give online at www.foi.org/CMDA. Please know that 100% of your donation goes directly to CMDA. Israel needs our help at this time.

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





JEWISH NATIONAL FUND

It all started in 2016 when I attended my first prophecy conference in Winnipeg. I helped with the FOI ministry table and there directly across from the table, the JNF (Jewish National Fund) had their own table. It was there that I was able to connect with Ariel and Cynthia. We had a great rapport. They invited me to visit the JNF office and about two weeks later, I took them up on their offer.

I wanted to do more than just visit and chat, I wanted to volunteer and help with anything or anywhere I could. One of their staff members had to leave due to illness, and they were falling behind on their workload. By me volunteering my time, I ended up counting coins from the JNF pushkes (donation cans), making photo copies, typing letters, making phone calls, helping with telethons, promoting their annual galas and other events.

I now have my own desk at the JNF office. Depending on the project and workload, I'm there one to three days a week.

New staff became part of JNF after I began volunteering—Rima and Candace are a wonderful addition. I have developed a love for all of these people and feel honoured and privileged to help not just JNF but also Israel. Because Israel is where JNF plants and grows trees and produces food and water irrigation, literally participating in the fulfillment of biblical prophecy,

I will open rivers in desolate heights, and fountains in the midst of the valleys; I will make the wilderness a pool of water, and the dry land springs of water. I will plant in the wilderness the cedar and the acacia tree, the myrtle and the oil tree; I will set in the desert the cypress tree and the pine and the box tree together, that they may see and know, and consider and understand together, that the hand of the LORD has done this, and the Holy One of Israel has created it (Isa. 41:18–20).

The ever-expanding technologies and projects implemented by JNF are often shared with other

countries struggling with water and food problems. What an amazing blessing. Whenever I start getting fatigued with the many coins from those cans, I remind myself that I am truly blessed to be a part of this blessing and I somehow find renewed energy to continue counting.

What can you do to become part of this blessing?

I asked my dear friend, Manitoba/Saskatchewan Executive Director Ariel Karabelicoff, what I could tell you that would bless JNF. This was his response:

“Answer the Call and Make the Desert Bloom!”

You can have trees planted in Israel with JNF through The Friends of Israel! Plant a tree on behalf of a loved one. Call our office (888.664.2584) and someone will walk you through the process.

Be blessed.

Richard Toviah is the Winnipeg, Manitoba, field representative for FOI Gospel Ministry, Inc.



SAINT JOHN JEWISH MUSEUM

Several years ago, my wife, Dorothy, and I were burdened regarding how we could become involved in reaching our local Jewish community. After praying, the Lord directed us to the Saint John Jewish Museum to see if they would accept us as docents. This involved giving tours not only to walk-ins, but also meeting hundreds of Jewish people who come in on the cruise ships from May to November.

To our delight, we were welcomed and are now very much involved in this wonderful opportunity. We have met thousands of Jewish people from all over the world.

Through the museum we have become well versed in the history of the Jewish community in our city and we impart that knowledge to the visitors that come through. The synagogue is housed in the same building and has opened up a variety of areas for us to minister. During the course of our time spent at the museum, we have come into contact with the local Jewish community and have met dozens of Israeli immigrant families. Our Jewish friends from the synagogue are taken aback that we would give of our time to serve them and they seem to have taken a liking to us. God has given us favor in their eyes.

Volunteering at the museum has been

such a delight with much interaction. We show the visitors the various rooms featuring Jewish life from the cradle to the grave; Jewish businesses in the city; history of the first Jewish immigrants to arrive in Saint John; and last but not least, we take them to the synagogue and point out items of interest. All who enter the building are charmed by the house, which dates from 1898 and has maintained many of its original features. Many interesting conversations have ensued and on a regular basis we have been asked if we would consent to keeping in touch via email.

We began this volunteering opportunity with a view to giving back to the Jewish people, but we are the ones who have been blessed. It brings such joy to our hearts, to have much interaction and to observe what has evolved from simply volunteering one day a week. God has expanded this outreach as we are invited to all synagogue events and also to the Israelis' homes. We are so blessed to be very involved in these lives. It is a privilege to serve in this way.

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



A MINUTE WITH MENO

ISRAELI BELIEVERS CELEBRATE CHRISTMAS TOO!

Reflecting back over the holiday season, I thought many of you would like to know and understand how Israeli Christians celebrate Christmas.

While Christmas is the most important holiday in the Christian world—celebrating the birth of the promised Redeemer—it is the most neglected date in Israel's Jewish community. While the streets of Bethlehem and Nazareth are decorated with colorful lights, there is hardly one colorful light in any Jewish city.

Most Jews consider Christmas a feast of an idol-worshipping religion. So, when we as Israeli Jewish believers in Jesus are gathered to celebrate God's faithfulness in bringing the Messiah Yeshua to the world, our neighbours mark us as those who left the Jewish faith and adopted a relatively new and strange religion—Christianity! That is the environment where we work and minister, and this is the social pressure our children experience.

Since Christmas and Hanukkah (Feast of Dedication) are usually set close to the same dates, our children enjoy a long vacation from school. We use that vacation for a youth conference somewhere in Israel. During the week, our youth group enjoys in-depth Bible lessons, godly fellowship, good food, and walking trips in remote places in the desert or in the green Galileen area.

Since our children are under spiritual attack from their peers, we invest much time during the lessons defending our faith in the Lord Jesus (Yeshua), the promised Messiah, and Son of God. Many of the kids are requested by their teachers to present their faith in Jesus before their classmates. We are always so delighted to hear how they defended their faith at class and stood for Christ Jesus.

On December 24, Christmas Eve, we usually have a special event at the church. We celebrate God's

faithfulness in providing us a Redeemer Saviour. We do not publish it as a Christmas party. It's an event to worship God. We study one of the prophecies concerning the birth of the Messiah, sing praises to God, and end the evening with a tasty potluck.

So, where are the tree and the gifts? You will not find them in our church. We keep man's traditions away from the pulpit. Some may keep such tradition in their homes but even then it is usually our Gentile brothers and sisters in Christ who are part of our congregation.

All in all, our Christmas in the church is Christ-centered. All events are used to proclaim the gospel for the salvation of the lost and to equip the saints for ministry, for the full image of Christ.

Many blessings,
Meno

Meno Kalisher
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