

**Twenty first North American LCJE Meeting  
Toronto, 26-27 April 2004**

**International LCJE Report 2004  
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Greetings in the name of our Messiah. I am pleased that the North American LCJE chapter is holding its conference here in Canada. It underlines the fact that Canada is a part of LCJE North America, and it gives us an opportunity to make LCJE known and in this place to invite to fellowship about Jewish evangelism – regardless of what we might disagree about. A conference in a new place can also give us new insights and new boldness when we hear about the work carried out here – both today and in times past.

As far as I am concerned, my ignorance about what has been done for the salvation of Jewish people here in Toronto is almost complete. And I am looking forward to listening to Daniel Nessim's paper about this matter. In my library I have only been able to find one thin booklet related to Jewish evangelism in Canada. The title is *Missions to the Jews*. It was published by the Presbyterian Church in Canada in 1918 on occasion of the Tenth Anniversary for the inauguration of the Mission to the Jews in Toronto. In 1913 the 'Christian Synagogue' was solemnly dedicated for the preaching of the Gospel to Israel and for the service of Christ. Allow me to quote one paragraph from this booklet:

“... when we dedicated the Christian Synagogue, the Jews saw the beautiful building, and the visit of the General Assembly, which was then in session at Toronto, made quite a stir. Ordinary agitation failed completely, all threatening and boycotting proved of no avail to get the Jews away from the Mission, because hundreds had learned to love it and trust the missionaries. Their failure was particularly manifested in the open air meetings, when they tried to get the people away from us. They secured a new Rabbi, who started an Anti-Missionary League and secured premises facing our Mission from the north side. It was organized under very favorable circumstances, as the Rabbi was a young man and had the support of some wealthy orthodox Jews. In a short time he claimed to have over 600 members. These members watched all our movements, and said 'In six months the silly Presbyterians will be glad to give the Christian Synagogue away as a present.' But what has become of the 600 Anti-Missionary Leaguers? No one can tell. Their premises have long, long ago been given up, and the Rabbi – where is he?” (p. 21)

Now, about 90 years later – I assume that there have come some other rabbis. However, if we want to learn from history, it is necessary to ask some critical questions: And the Christian Synagogue – where is it? What has become of it? Does the meeting-hall still exist? Is it in use? The original inscription on the wall read, in large letters: “To the Jews first”! Was it at some time painted out?

Back to LCJE and our priority, “To the Jews first”. Since we were gathered in Dallas, LCJE has held its seventh international conference, this time in Helsinki, Finland, August 2003. The attendance was approximately 200, which means that it was the biggest LCJE conference ever. The many reports and papers were published in five conference booklets with a total of more than 300 pages – they are still available.

At our recent ICC meeting (25 April 2004) we started the planning of the eighth international conference to be held in the summer of 2007.

The next CEO conference will be held in France, close to Dijon, in the days 9-13 May 2004. It is meant for directors/general secretaries and board directors. A program will be drawn up at the end of this year.

Since last the vast LCJE area “Latin America” has been divided, so that Yosef Koelner is in charge of Central America while David Sedaca will be in charge of South America. Both are present at this conference and will later tell us about this.

So is Rich Robinson, who on behalf of Jews for Jesus has worked with the “Jewish Missions History Project”. This will be put on the LCJE website. We have great expectations of this project.

All through its history LCJE has seen itself as a part of the Lausanne Committee for World Evangelization (LCWE). LCJE’s history goes as far back as 1980, when LCWE hosted a conference in Pattaya, Thailand. In September 2004 LCWE will hold another conference in Pattaya, “Forum 2004”. Tuvya Zaretsky, who has been a member of the planning committee, will later at this conference give us more details about the conference and its aims.

Therefore I will only say this: The original plan was that the conference should consist of 24 issue groups – but no special issue group on Jewish evangelism. When we heard that new groups were being added, we expressed our wish to be represented, so that the 31<sup>st</sup> – and last group – is JEWS (= Jewish Evangelism Working Session). It will be the smallest group at the conference, only six persons. All groups are expected to produce a document. Our intention is to produce a small booklet, whose primary purpose is to address Christians and Christian churches on the following lines:

1. Speak to the church on the necessity of Jewish evangelism.
2. Provide an overview of Jewish evangelism worldwide and a paragraph describing Jewish opposition to Jewish evangelism.
3. Discuss the theological and ecclesiological issues being discussed among Jesus-believing Jews themselves.
4. Look at methodology and strategy for the future work in Jewish evangelism.

Our small LCJE group needs your prayers for this to succeed. And with this I will conclude this brief report. I am looking forward to a stimulating conference in the hope that we may leave it encouraged and enriched. And why not conclude with a couple of sentences from the booklet on the Tenth Anniversary for the work of the Presbyterian Church in Canada, which I began by referring to. It concludes with the following words:

“During the past ten years we have sought by every means possible to reconcile Israel with their Messiah, their only and brightest hope. We turn from the past to the unknown future in perfect confidence that He will continue to bless us.”