

ReflectionNZ

Christians for Israel New Zealand

Newsletter Issue 5
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Meet

Our NZ Team

Introducing: Graham Simpson



Graham is Christian For Israel's board chairman and legal adviser. He is also board chairman of Church Army NZ, and board member of Full Gospel Businessmen's Fellowship, Inspirational

Media and Christian Lovelink. With Bryce Turner, Graham escorted our NZ members on our 2015 and 2017 tours to Israel. Graham is a lawyer in private practice in Mt Eden. He attends St Margaret's Anglican Church, Hillsborough, a thriving evangelical church where he has various roles. As a guitarist and vocalist, Graham and his wife Sandy, who have been married for 45 years, are regular members of the church music team and lead music at various ministries.

Graham and Sandy have 4 children and 6 grandchildren with whom they keep strong close relationships. Graham and Sandy have been HIT (Hosting Israeli Travellers) for 7 years. 400 Israelis (mostly young) have stayed at their home to date. Graham finds support by attending a mid week life group at his church and a Friday morning men's group as well as a weekly workout at the gym. He is a regular blood donor, having donated 136 times so far.

By Bryce Turner, NZ National Executive Director

Milestone Tinged with Bloodshed

Welcome to ReflectioNZ, the newsletter of Christians for Israel New Zealand. We really appreciate you taking the time to catch up on some of our news and activities. Feel free to let others know about our work. You are welcome to visit our website too, where newsletters and past-editions of the Israel & Christian Today newspaper are always available.

Looking out through our office windows, you could be forgiven for thinking that we were still in the glow of summer. The sun is shining, it looks peaceful. It seems that the biggest news today - uniting both Britain and America - is the royal wedding. A quick glance through the newspaper or a few minutes of talkback radio, however, quickly brings our attention back to the Middle East. On our TV screens we see the tragic loss of life, apparently including some children, in Gaza. Regardless of what our political or faith-based position may be, as human beings our heart goes out to those who are suffering right now. It is such a shame that at a time when we celebrate with Israel this milestone of 70 years of independence, and even the USA finally recognising Jerusalem as Israel's capital, the celebration is tinged with protest, condemnation, and now bloodshed at the Gaza border. What is even more saddening is the speed at which various countries have totally ignored the facts and simply poured condemnation on Israel. Our own Prime Minister, rather than implore the Gazan protestors to remain on their own soil and refrain from firing weapons into Israel, instead summoned the Israeli Ambassador to voice her disapproval. Whilst New Zealand is intent on ensuring its borders are protected from boat people and others illegally entering the country, it appears that yet again there is another standard for Israel. It seems that when people firing guns, carrying knives and sending incendiaries by kite to set fire to Israeli crops decide to break down a border fence and invade, Israel is not allowed to respond with any force at all, let alone properly defend its borders. We pray that IDF troops will exercise as much restraint as possible, but we look also to the leaders of Hamas to call off this madness. We look to the leaders of our own country to open their eyes and speak the truth!

There have been celebrations around the country in recognition of this 70th anniversary, some getting much media attention due to the presence of protestors. The celebrations pale though, when we see images of the joyous singing and dancing in the streets of Jerusalem!

On behalf of Christians for Israel New Zealand, we congratulate Israel on 70 years of independence.

What's Happening in the Office?

By Cathy Eksteen, Office Manager

End of Financial Year...Again!

And just like that it's the end of the financial year! How time flies. I'm once again in awe and humbled by the financial support we have received this past year. You are all an incredible blessing to Israel, and we thank God for your kind and giving hearts. I am currently working frantically to collate and process all the acknowledgement 'Thank you's'. If you haven't received your letter by the end of May, please contact me. Just a friendly reminder that we are not a registered charity and donations are not tax deductible. We will again endeavour to approach the Charities Commission regarding our status. Your continued prayer in this regard would be greatly appreciated.

As you saw in the last newspaper edition we are taking pre-orders for the Israel 70th commemorative magazine, so drop me a line or email and book yours today. If you are donating online for general donations, projects or orders, please don't forget to include as much detail as possible or follow up with an email or phone call/message.

Jewish Kitchen

Heavenly Cheesecake



Cheesecake is super popular in Israel, not just for Shavuot but year-round. You'll find it on dairy dessert menus, at hotel breakfasts, and served Shabbos morning in Israeli homes. It's one of the two to three cakes that most every homemaker knows by heart and has in regular rotation.

This heavenly cheesecake doesn't call for a complicated preparation, boasting a mild flavour and gentle texture. Citrus fruits such as lemon, orange, and lime can be incorporated as desired.

Ingredients

Crust

1 pkt biscuits (150g), finely ground
100g unsalted butter (100g), melted

Cheese Filling

2 tubs cream cheese (500g)
1 cup milk
½ cup sugar
Sour cream (400g)
1 instant vanilla pudding (80g)
2 large eggs
Zest from half a lemon or orange

Decoration

1 pint fresh blueberries or frozen
Powdered sugar

Preparation

Preheat oven to 150°C.

Prepare the crust: mix biscuit crumbs with butter. Flatten mixture into a 9-inch buttered dish and freeze.

Prepare the filling: Mix cream cheese with milk, sugar, sour cream, instant pudding, eggs, and zest in a large bowl. Pour mixture onto base.

Bake for 60 to 75 minutes until the cake is solid on the edge but slightly soft in the middle.

Chill. Cover with plastic wrap and refrigerate overnight. Decorate with blueberries and powdered sugar just before serving. Can be kept in refrigerator for up to one week.

Current Affairs

Courtesy of Israel Institute NZ

NZ Green MPs Show Selective Concern for Human Rights

New Zealand Green MPs Marama Davidson and Golriz Ghahraman demonstrated selective outrage at the beginning of April, suggesting that their concern for human rights in the Middle East extends only so far as Israel can be blamed.

In the space of one week they stridently and publicly condemned Israel for protecting its border and population from Hamas-instigated violent protests, while remaining silent about a horrific chemical weapon attack that occurred over in Syria.

The chemical weapon attack killed at least 42 people, including many children. This atrocity elicited nothing from the self-proclaimed human rights activists, not even a tweet.

In contrast, both MPs took swiftly to social media to condemn Israel following the violence on the Gaza border, taking care in both cases to choose a source from fringe anti-Israel group Jewish Voice for Peace, perhaps as a defence against potential accusations of anti-Jewish bias.

Both MPs appear to take a sloganeering and simplistic approach to a complex international conflict. Apparently less interested in facts than political virtue-signalling, neither appear prepared to engage on such issues when challenged.

Golriz Gharahman spoke at an anti-Israel protest recently, where she provided a small receptive audience with emotive pronouncements, which unfortunately bore little connection with reality. Gharahman likes to highlight her international legal experience in war crimes trials (although she has been accused of misleading the public over the precise nature of her work, which includes unsuccessfully defending Rwandan genocidaires). She should therefore presumably be well-versed in the legal definition of *'genocide'*.

However she pronounced that Israel has committed the *"grossest of war crimes, crimes against humanity, and I would say genocide"*.

Gharahman did not attempt to provide any evidence to back up her accusation that Israel *"has committed genocide"*. It is a reckless claim, a libel, that has no basis in fact whatsoever, as the rapid growth rate of the Palestinian Arab population and its increasing life-expectancy clearly confirm.

In fact the party with genocidal intentions is Hamas – a terrorist group that controls Gaza, and that Ghahraman and Davidson refuse to condemn and appear intent on implicitly defending. Should anyone be left in any doubt about Hamas' intentions the swastika flag its members planted on the border recently in between two Palestinian flags gave a clear message.

It is also surprising that Ghahraman, who often speaks of escaping the horrors of the Islamic Republic of Iran as a refugee, does not see the irony or contradiction in the fact that Hamas is backed by the same Iranian regime, which also often declares its genocidal intentions with respect to Israel.

An elected Member of Parliament, a refugee from Iran and a human rights lawyer, Ghahraman should know better. Her misuse of the language of human

rights is a gross perversion and undermines her credibility.

Similarly, Marama Davidson, the new Greens co-leader, condemned Israel in a Facebook post for a *"disproportionate and brutal violent backlash"* against *"protesters marching peacefully inside Gaza"*. When taken to task for misrepresenting protesters trying to storm the border, and hurling rocks and Molotov cocktails, and firing guns as *"peaceful"*, and for failing to recognise the culpability of terrorist group Hamas in any of the violence, Davidson refused to back up her assertions. Instead, replying, *"I stand by my words and actions. Thanks. And I won't be dragged into the endless cycle of meaningless debate..."* She then followed this with a stream of news and video clips featuring further *"acceptable"* Jews on the far fringes of the debate, including Gideon Levy.

When the questioning of her *"facts"* continued, she responded, *"Hi everyone. Don't get tied up in knots with the organised attempts to confuse this post..."* And when asked what her repeated mantra *"peace through justice"* actually means she refused to answer. In the past she has said that her party's official position is a *"two state solution"*, but declined to say whether that was hers personally.

From the time Marama Davidson decided to champion the Palestinian cause in her flotilla to Gaza stunt, she has displayed a distinct unwillingness to grapple with the complexities of the Palestinian/Israeli conflict. To Davidson, it appears that debate based on fact is simply a distraction to her ideological convictions, and *"meaningless"*. For a university undergraduate this attitude would be thought poor, but a Member of Parliament and co-leader of a political party taking this approach should cause alarm.

Both Ghahraman and Davidson ignore or downplay the role of Hamas – the terror group that controls Gaza – in the current conflict, and Israel's security concerns. Davidson was asked repeatedly whether she will condemn the use of violence the next time a Jew is killed by a Palestinian, which she refused to answer. Ghahraman characterised Hamas violence as *"standing up once in a while holding rocks"*, while the reality of Hamas' actions against Israelis and its own people is infinitely more grim and disturbing. In doing so the Green MPs absolve the terror group of responsibility and arguably implicitly condone its tactics of endangering its own civilian population – which it brutally suppresses – while pursuing its goal of destroying Israel.

The lack of condemnation for Hamas casts doubt over how committed the Green MPs are to protecting universal human rights, or whether that commitment is limited to certain ideologically *"correct"* groups.

For Marama Davidson and Golriz Ghahraman, it's a simple black and white matter of Israeli aggression and Palestinian victimhood. Sadly, their refusal to see the degree to which the people of Gaza are victimised by their own leadership, and their blind adherence to an ideological position prevents them from seeing what is really going on in the conflict and helps nobody, nor advances the cause of peace.

Youth Perspective

Always in Your Heart

By Maurice (Moses) Gilligan



Grace and peace to you in the name of Jesus.

I am writing this article to encourage those young and old, particularly the young. Be it at school or starting out in a new career, or you may be studying for your

future in what God has called you to do. Blessings to you.

You have heard and will continue to hear of the importance of sharing our faith. In all of our day to day activities, we must continue to give God glory through disciplining ourselves to Godliness, reflecting this to others and choosing not to live self-directed but through the guidance of the Holy Spirit. He will give you wisdom and guide you to share the gospel with friends and those who are strangers to us.

"Therefore whoever confesses Me before men, him I will also confess before My Father who is in heaven. But whoever denies Me before men,

him I will also deny before My Father who is in heaven." Matthew 10:32-33

You will also hear many people at work, school and in your hobbies speak in their daily conversations about recent news topics, most of these involving the Middle East. More than likely, their news source and information is watered down and filtered. I encourage you to study these things more in-depth, look at the signs of the times about the revelations and prophecy in the Bible. You may also use this as a means to interject into a conversation and speak the truth, moving hearts to compassion. Continue to pray for Israel, for wisdom among the leaders, for the softening of their hearts to receive the gospel and seek to connect with our Jewish brothers and sisters, role modelling to them the ever-present love of Jesus.

"I will bless those who bless you, And I will curse him who curses you, And in you, all the families of the earth shall be blessed." Genesis 12:3

Being so far from conflict does not mean that we can only watch through the window of distance. We must pray and continue to pray

for our persecuted brothers and sisters, that they can shine brightly in the deep darkness and that our father will give them peace, love and the supernatural ability to forgive their persecutors in their situations. Our intercessory prayer is powerful with the blood of Jesus.

And you will hear of wars and rumours of wars. See that you are not troubled, for all these things must come to pass, but the end is not yet. For nation will rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom. And there will be famines, pestilences, and earthquakes in various places. Matthew 24:6-7

May Christ be forever in your hearts both young and old, the first thing on your mind. Evident and attractive to all as delicious fruit. Giving you depth in wisdom and fullness of joy, guiding you in spiritual maturity. May the love of God give you a boldness to proclaim the gospel to those in whom the spirit leads you, use every opportunity to be a witness and an ambassador for Christ.



Prayer Points

- Pray for Cathy Eksteen in the office, and Denis Smith our treasurer, as they work to finalise our fiscal year-end. This involves processing all the receipts – thousands of them - as well as preparing all the records for our auditors, and is a lot of work.
- Preparations are well underway now for our next study tour of Israel in March 2019. We will again be supported by our friends at Rhema Media, and we look forward to being able to take another group of New Zealanders to the Holy Land. Please pray that the myriad of plans will come together to deliver the best possible tour.
- Pray for the various events being held around New Zealand and the South Pacific in celebration of Israel's 70th Anniversary of Independence.
- We see more and more opposition, more anti-Semitic comments and behaviour, right here in New Zealand. Please pray for the protection of our Jewish brothers and sisters, and for courage and maximum effectiveness for those organisations – including Christians for Israel New Zealand – that is tasked with informing and educating. May more people, and indeed more of the wider church, learn the truth about Israel.
- Following on from a fantastic ministry trip to Fiji and the Cook Islands, pray for our Christians for Israel representatives in Samoa, Fiji, Tonga, Niue, Vanuatu and the Cook Islands.
- Pray for the situation in Israel at the moment, especially on the Gaza border and also in Syria. May the IDF continue to act with 'Purity of Arms' as they respond to these threats. Pray also for those suffering, in particular under Hamas. While we do not believe Israel is responsible for this suffering – and there is obviously much emotion and strong opinion on this - it is nevertheless a very painful situation where people are in hardship and being used for political gain.

Did You Know?

Israel Among the Happiest Nations

The annual "World Happiness Report" has for the fifth year in a row highlighted the tiny Jewish state as one of the happiest nations on earth. In breaking the top 10, Israel proved itself to be happier than even Australia, which took 11th place, and Austria, which came in at number 12. First place went to Finland, followed by Norway, Denmark, Iceland, Switzerland, The Netherlands, Canada and New Zealand. The 2018 World Happiness Report also charts the steady decline of the US, coming in at rank 18, as the world's largest economy grapples with a crisis of obesity, substance abuse and depression.

Among the top 20 countries on the list, Israel was the only one experiencing a state of war. That would usually curb a nation's happiness. But it's the only reality Israel has ever known, and her citizens won't allow the threats to bring them down.

WATCH THIS SPACE...

JOURNEY TO ISRAEL 2019

Israel Study Tour - Departs 11 March 2019

CHRISTIANS FOR
ISRAEL
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Christians for Israel's Publications

Christians for Israel New Zealand produces two publications on a bi-monthly cycle. Our main publication is *Israel & Christians Today*, a bi-monthly 12-page newspaper that is distributed internationally, and it's FREE.

Within this newspaper, is an 8-page insert that is written especially for New Zealanders and the South Pacific. It features articles from New Zealand and South Pacific authors and speakers, plus 'down-under' based news.

Christians for Israel New Zealand also produce *ReflectionNZ*, a bi-monthly 4-page newsletter that is distributed around New Zealand and the South Pacific - FREE. It also features specialised news from our team in New Zealand, including upcoming events and points of interest.

The distribution of these two publications has been carefully scheduled so that you receive news from us at Christians for Israel on a

monthly basis. The dates below show you when you will receive each publication. Historical publications are also on our website.

Israel & Christians Today is published in February, April, June, August, October and December.

ReflectionNZ is published in March, May, July, September and November. There is no newsletter in January due to summer holidays.

FREE - Subscribe to *Israel & Christians Today* newspaper and *ReflectionNZ* newsletter!

Complete the form to subscribe **FREE** to Christians for Israel's newspaper, *Israel & Christians Today* and newsletter, *ReflectionNZ*.

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