

INTRODUCTION

A new organization has opened up in Israel called—
The Center for Jewish-Christian Understanding & Cooperation.

The purpose for this organization is best expressed in the words of its founder, Rabbi Shlomo Riskin of the Israeli Chief Rabbinate.

“The Center for Jewish-Christian Understanding & Cooperation (CJCUC) was established in 2008 and is history-making. The Center is the very first Orthodox Jewish institution to take the initiative of setting the agenda for rich conversation and cooperation between Christians and Jews who are both deeply committed to their faiths. The campus of CJCUC is located 5 miles south of Jerusalem in Efrat, Israel and by the end of 2009 will house 36 rooms for lodging, 5 classrooms, and a convention center. Through CJCUC, Rabbi Shlomo Riskin of the Israeli Chief Rabbinate is providing hospitality and the opportunity for honest interfaith dialogue in the hope of creating greater understanding and cooperation between Judaism and Christianity. Both faith communities are under siege today, from radical Islam on one side to pervasive materialistic secular culture on the other. These dominating trends threaten the ethical monotheism that is fundamental to both Judaism and Christianity. By better understanding and cooperation with each other, Jews and Christians together can send out a unique message of peace and hope to the world in our troubled times.”

“CJCUC strives for a religious symmetry between both faiths that believe the Bible is the Word of God and that have deep theological and moral commitments. While the primary function of CJCUC is to nurture relations between the Jewish people and all Christians by hosting educational missions in Israel, it also directs three other institutions: The Institute for Jewish-Evangelical Relations, The Institute of Judeo-Christian Values & World Affairs, and The Institute for Theological Inquiry.”

“The Institute for Jewish-Evangelical Relations is committed to promoting dialogue of both lay and scholarly levels with members of the Evangelical community. The dialogue will clarify the theological and religious areas in which Jews and Evangelicals agree and disagree to cement our common goals of Religion for Peace and security for the embattled state of Israel. This is the first such serious dialogue between religious Jews and Evangelicals. The dialogue will be based on principles of mutual respect for each other’s faith, rejection of any conversion objectives and insistence of

theological integrity that ensures an absence of compromise on theological convictions in difference to the dialogue partners. The Institute deeply appreciates the Evangelical community for its firm and public support of Israel and the Jewish people and now wishes to be their “watchman on the wall.”

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In a Jerusalem Post article (*The Universal Covenant*, Aug. 28-Sep. 3, 2009) Rabbi Riskin has further stated—

“It’s no secret that during the past two years I have become seriously involved in Jewish-Christian dialogue. In fact, here at Ohr Torah Stone in Efrat we’ve established the Susan and Roger Hertog Center for Jewish-Christian Understanding & Cooperation, and many hundreds of Christians regularly attend classes and seminars to gain a better understanding of the Jewish roots from which Christianity sprouted...

Now that we as a people and a nation have returned to history, and the Christian world is beginning to recognize the continuing legitimacy of its elder brother’s Covenant, grafting itself onto us as a branch is grafted to the roots, we must complete our return to God, join hands and bring a religion of love, morality, pluralism and peace to a desperate, thirsting world. The God of Compassion must overcome the Satan of Jihadism, and our revived dialogue and historic, even sacred, union must bring the light of freedom and security to the farthest corners of the world.”

As a result of this organization’s desires and my subscription to the *INSIGHT* monthly news letter, I have made the following responses to articles—