Serious new developments threatening Jewish survival have prompted Jews for Judaism to expand its international efforts. In February 2008 we officially launched our Jerusalem center, to be directed by Penina Taylor who is uniquely qualified to counter the latest growth of missionary activity in Israel.

In recent years, the number of Christian missionary groups stationed in Israel and making substantial inroads has grown to alarming proportions. The recent parade in Jerusalem marking the 40th anniversary of the reunification of our Holy City is just one distressing example of their infiltration and recognition.

The parade was actually led by missionaries marching at the front. Their group was comprised of dozens of Messianic Jews and “Rabbis” from North America and Israel. Even more alarming was the sight of Raanan Gissin, Israeli government representative, marching alongside these missionaries – with pride and approval.

According to an Israeli news investigative report, Israel is now home to 15,000 Messianic Jews who have successfully established more than 130 congregations serving as missionary centers. In addition, many North American evangelical missionary groups, such as Jews for Jesus and Chosen People Ministries, operate aggressively throughout our Jewish homeland. Deceptively cloaking their Christian agenda in Jewish guise, these organizations have effectively reached out to growing numbers of vulnerable Jews. Hundreds of susceptible Israeli, Russian and Ethiopian Jews have fallen prey to proselytizers on Tel Aviv beaches and street corners, Jerusalem malls, army bases and through direct mail. With their custom designed Hebrew-language websites, missionaries aggressively target Israel’s technologically savvy youth and they even utilize radio and television to penetrate Israeli society.

“According to an Israeli news investigative report, Israel is now home to 15,000 Messianic Jews”

The good news is that our Jews for Judaism center in Jerusalem is piloted by an individual who is incredibly well-suited to meet these challenges. Driven by an extraordinary passion, Penina Taylor is committed to helping all Jews targeted by Christian missionaries. Penina has a unique first-hand knowledge about this insidious threat!

Converted to Christianity as a vulnerable teenager, Penina spent 17 years in leadership positions in the missionary world. As a result of the crucial involvement of our Jews for Judaism Baltimore branch, she decided to move beyond her Messianic beliefs and return to Judaism. For two years, Penina worked for us in Baltimore as an educational consultant and then, in December 2006, she made aliyah to Israel with her husband and four children. (See Penina’s full story on page 4.)

Without delay, Penina threw herself into the thick of the country’s missionary crisis. She learned first-hand about the unique nature of the Messianic movement in Israel and then advocated, networked, and assisted individuals and communities. During this time, she was also receiving extensive training and...

(continued on page 6)
New Initiative Empowers Students Against Deceptive Proselytizing

Exciting news for Jewish high school and college students and their families! Jews for Judaism’s Community Mobilization Initiative, sponsored by the Jewish Community Foundation and the Jewish Venture Philanthropy Fund, is in full swing with much more to come. Designed to make college and high school students less susceptible to Christian missionary proselytizing and their slick, student-directed tactics, the initiative includes a user-friendly website, prep kit, interactive DVD, Campus Rep Program, and an all-day conference and comedy night.

Since July 2007, our dedicated staff has been vigorously promoting our innovative program which has already been presented to more than 2,000 students at 34 different venues, including Jewish Culture Clubs, Hillel Student Boards, and college events at USC, SMC, UCLA and Cal State Long Beach.

Our consistent efforts have created an essential awareness of growing deceptive peer-to-peer proselytizing that targets Jewish students and threatens Jewish survival. As a result of our activities, students who previously knew nothing about proselytizing or Jews for Judaism now want to be on our mailing lists. They are eager to receive our materials, emails, as well as information about our Campus Rep Program, all-day conference and more.

Building on our collaboration with JSU (Jewish Student Union), LA Hebrew High, JCA Shalom Institute, and LA Hillel Council, Jews for Judaism is also reaching out to more organizations, such as BBYO, Aish Los Angeles, SULAM (a project of the BJE), AEPi, Hasbara Fellowships, the Temple Isaiah Youth Department, and the Temple Beth Am Youth department.

These important relationships are generating exposure to more Jewish high school and college students, and more requests for our programming, than ever before. We look forward to establishing additional associations and reaching out to our Jewish young people on a regular basis.

Jews for Judaism extends a very special thanks to the Youth Department at Temple Beth Am for inviting us to their wonderful USY Shabbaton in December. Our well-

The Mitzvah of Giving

Please support Jews for Judaism’s international efforts by contributing financially because your support enables us to save Jewish lives.

We also accept in-kind donations, including property and stocks, and you can help us in perpetuity by remembering us in your Will or Living Trust.

By supporting Jews for Judaism, you not only get a wonderful mitzvah but also, at the same time, you benefit from a tax-deductible contribution. Every size gift is appreciated and tribute cards can be sent on your behalf.

If you are able, please consider joining our special Aleph Club, whose members contribute a minimum of $1,000 per year. Contact us at 310-556-3344.
received presentation to more than 120 students from the western United States and Canada incorporated role playing, scenario exercises and facilitated discussions. We also truly enjoyed our participation in LimmudLA and Jewlicious, and look forward to many more conferences, such as AIPAC, and to local Jewish festivals. And now, to report on some of the exciting elements of our program…

DESIGN AND BRANDING:
With the assistance of our designers, Reason Media Group (RMG), our Community Mobilization Initiative has a new name that rings true to our mission. “Be-True” is short, snappy and can ensure our programs remain fresh’n’hip. We plan to incorporate really cool Be-True taglines into all our individual campaigns. Working with our student committee, RMG has also developed innovative branding to reach our Jewish students through their own special media.

WEB SITE:
We’ve already compiled the content for our website. Separate links provide detailed information about Be-True, our sponsors, student initiatives, press releases, at-a-glance fact sheets, answers to FAQ’s about Judaism, the differences between Judaism and Christianity, basic answers to missionary text challenges, in-depth information about Christian and Jewish texts, materials for professionals who work with students, regularly updated event info, downloadable pamphlets, Campus Rep Program info and much more.

CAMPUS REP PROGRAM:
Our Campus Rep Program is already a winner! For starters, we’ve just completed our guidebook. Santa Monica College, UCLA, CSUN and USC have their Campus Reps in place. Applications from other colleges in the Greater Los Angeles area are currently under review. Several high school Reps are in place and potential new Reps were identified at our recent conference. All Campus Reps will have their own website login and the ability to post blogs. These Reps will be able to alert their peers to the proselytizing on campuses, warn their friends about devious missionary tactics, and announce and invite their friends to upcoming Be-True events.

CONFERENCE AND COMEDY NIGHT:
On April 6, 2008, at UCLA Hillel, Jews for Judaism hosted an exciting, enlightening all-day conference followed by a comedy era-Savvy Talents.” At a special presentation, Campus Reps were introduced to Be-True and received basic training in preparation for their new, vital responsibilities. To end on a lighter tone, a comedy night, featuring local talent, gave students a relaxed opportunity to meet’n’mingle with each other, the speakers and community leaders.

For Jews for Judaism, Be-True represents an extraordinary opportunity. Now we can reach out to an essential segment of the Jewish community, namely high school and college students, and we can do it on their turf, in their language. Be-True can empower our youth with vital information and invaluable tools designed to refute and repel the missionary onslaught. As well, Be-True can enhance their appreciation and understanding of our cherished Jewish values and timeless traditions.
Penina Taylor grew up in a secular Jewish home in Florida where Judaism had little meaning and was not taken seriously. In fact, because all her friends had Christmas trees, Penina's parents decorated their home with one, as well.

During her teenage years, while attending a typical American high school, Penina was confronted by many of the same issues that challenge most teens. In an attempt to escape the peer pressure of alcohol and drug use, she turned to a close friend for advice and eventually experienced a faith altering conversion to Christianity. Her mother and sister were so impressed with the success she achieved through her new spiritual direction that they also converted to Christianity.

As you might expect, Penina met a young man at church, and they began to date and eventually decided to marry. Although Penina had not seen her father since her parents' divorce 15 years earlier, she always dreamed that he would walk her down the aisle. She persuaded her mother to allow him to visit their home. Incredibly, her estranged parents fell in love again, but now, her mother's Christian faith was the roadblock to their reuniting. Slowly, with great determination, Penina and her sister convinced their father to believe in Jesus and their parents were remarried!

After Penina's wedding in a Southern Baptist church, she and her husband, an Air Force serviceman, were stationed in England. During this time, the inner voice of her Jewish soul, buried for so long, began to emerge. Penina started to light candles on Friday nights and observe some of the laws of Kashrut.

While preparing for her second child, Penina's parents came to England to visit her and revealed a startling fact. Over the past months, they had gravitated from their Christian church into the “Messianic Jewish” movement. Penina was thrilled to learn that her parents were leaning towards Judaism because she, too, believed that Messianic Judaism was a tremendous way to combine her Christian faith with her growing interest in her Jewish roots.

For the first time in her life, Penina heard the authentic Jewish perspective on the meaning of the passage.

When she returned to the United States, Penina began attending a Bible college and became a counselor for the Billy Graham Crusade. Because Penina's parents felt so strongly about the need to follow Jewish law along with their faith in Jesus, they asked their daughter and her husband to start a Messianic congregation with them. At the same time, they launched the Association of Torah Observant Messianics to promote Torah observance among Messianic Jews.

One weekend, while Penina and her husband were visiting another active Messianic congregation in Baltimore, they heard that a home much larger than theirs, in the heart of Baltimore's Orthodox Jewish community, was up for sale. They grabbed it and their Messianic friends were thrilled. Because the Taylors lived and dressed like observant Jews, their friends believed they represented an exceptional opportunity to establish a Messianic presence and outreach within this community. The family happily moved into their new home. On Shabbat, they attended an Orthodox synagogue and on Wednesday evenings, they attended the local Messianic fellowship.

While spending Shabbat at the synagogue, the Taylors met some warm, wonderful people including some, like themselves, who were home-schooling their children. As Penina and her husband developed closer relationships with several synagogue members, they felt the need to tell their Orthodox rabbi about their Christian beliefs. As expected, the rabbi was very shocked. Fearing they would be thrown out of the synagogue and lose their new friends, Penina began to cry.
The rabbi explained to Penina that she was still a Jew, even though her beliefs were certainly not Jewish, and he also requested that Penina meet with a Jews for Judaism counselor. Although her husband was not Jewish, the rabbi allowed Penina and her children to continue attending his synagogue.

“After spending 17 years in Christian leadership, Penina realized she could no longer continue with her Christian beliefs.”

During her meeting with Mark Powers, who at the time served as Jews for Judaism’s Baltimore director, Penina outlined her beliefs and tried to demonstrate their validity by showing him how they were based upon passages in the Jewish Bible. Now, for the first time in her life, Penina heard the authentic Jewish perspective on the meaning of these passages. When she learned that the foundational Christian doctrine of the Messiah’s “virgin birth” was based upon a blatant mistranslation of the Hebrew, she was shocked. And when she discovered that Christianity totally disregarded the context of this key passage in the book of Isaiah, she was stunned.

After spending 17 years in Christian leadership, Penina realized she could no longer continue with her Christian beliefs. With the assistance of Jews for Judaism, she began to study authentic Jewish teachings and rebuild her spiritual life. Her children, raised as Christians, also began to study with her.

Slowly and surely, their lives moved in the direction of true Judaism, and one year later, the Taylor’s son celebrated his Bar Mitzvah at an Orthodox synagogue. Penina’s parents attended this event, and while in Baltimore, met the Jews for Judaism counselor who impacted so positively upon the lives of their daughter and grandchildren, bringing them all back to true Judaism.

Throughout the next year, Penina shared the process of her amazing transformation with her parents, and together, they all spent many hours in counseling. History can repeat itself! After a period of intense study, Penina’s parents realized that they, also, could no longer cling to Christianity. Their full return to Judaism included moving to Baltimore to be part of the city’s traditional Jewish community. Two years later, Penina’s parents made aliyah and moved to Israel.

During this same time, Penina’s husband realized that he felt much closer to traditional Judaism than to Christianity. After considerable thought and study, he converted to Judaism. Soon after, he and Penina joyfully celebrated their traditional Jewish wedding.

For two years, Penina worked for the Baltimore office of Jews for Judaism, using her remarkable experiences to help the Jewish community in its battle against the threat of Messianic Christianity. In January 2007, she and her family made aliyah and moved to Israel. At last, reunited with her parents and her Jewish roots, Penina continues to work hard as a newly appointed director of Jews for Judaism’s Jerusalem center, dedicated to helping other Jews discover and stay connected to their precious Jewish heritage.

Penina Taylor reaches out to Jews for Jesus missionaries ensnared in the same movement she was once part of.
Jews for Judaism Fights Back! Opens Office in Jerusalem
(continued from page 1)

support from our Jews for Judaism offices in Los Angeles, Toronto, and Baltimore.

We immediately recognized Penina’s unique background in the Messianic world, her extensive counter-missionary educational and counseling experience, along with her profound desire and commitment to the cause. And we knew that Penina Taylor possessed the ideal blend of qualities to represent Jews for Judaism in Israel.

Among the many glowing testimonials we received is a letter from a former Jew for Jesus convert, profoundly touched by her involvement.

“For the first time, I felt truly listened to and understood by a member of the traditional Jewish community. She showed the patience and exemplary counseling skills to be of true assistance to me during the initial phone call. Her judicious use of her own background in the Messianic movement and return to Judaism inspired me and gave me hope…. I was impressed by her knowledge of Judaism and ability to counter missionary claims and doctrines. Eventually, Penina invited me to stay in her home for Shabbat and spoke to me in-depth about the issues I was still struggling with. She even arranged for me to meet with other former Messianics. It was during that special Shabbat that I officially ‘returned home’ to Judaism.

Penina and her family’s aliyah was especially meaningful to me. Months later, as I started my own aliyah process, Penina was again a resource for me. She even met my Nefesh B’Nefesh flight and welcomed me to Israel.”

There were many critical reasons to establish a Jews for Judaism center in Israel. Of particular importance is the fact that most missionaries originate from English speaking countries. Our familiarity with Western values and mentality, combined with over 30 years of North American counter-missionary experience, positions us to better understand the intricacies of the missionary mindset and motives than native Israeli counter-missionaries.

As well, because many North American rabbis and Jewish educators pursue studies in Israel, our Jerusalem office will provide training to enable them to more effectively deal with the missionary problem. When they return to their communities, they will have powerful resources and information to enable them to help vulnerable Jews drawn to Christianity through missionary proselytizing. Our respected working relationship with all denominations will help us introduce our unique preventive education programs to a diversified spectrum of Israeli society.

“The Jewish Response to Missionaries” by Rabbi Bentzion Kravitz, our most popular educational publication newly translated into Hebrew. Efforts such as these and more have earned Jews for Judaism the endorsements of former Minister of Defense Moshe Arens and Chief Rabbi Simcha Kook.

This February, Rabbi Bentzion Kravitz, the founder of Jews for Judaism, visited Israel and met with community leaders including Jerusalem City Counsel women Mina Fenton and Rav Kook. He also provided strategic planning and advanced counseling training to Penina and to Darryl Frankel and Darren Sevitz of our Johannesburg center.

The opening of our office in Jerusalem is certainly not taking place in a vacuum. For the past 20 years, Jews for Judaism’s international centers have closely monitored missionary activities in Israel and assisted counter-missionary efforts there. Our staff has traveled to Israel numerous times to meet with government and rabbinic officials, deliver educational programs and help individuals in need of counseling.

In 2003, our entire staff from Los Angeles, Toronto, Baltimore and Johannesburg went on a mission to Israel to explore the possibility of opening a branch. We presented lectures at dozens of venues throughout the land and met with many counter-missionary activists. We distributed thousands of “The Jewish Response to Missionaries” by Rabbi Bentzion Kravitz, our most popular educational publication newly translated into Hebrew. Efforts such as these and more have earned Jews for Judaism the endorsements of former Minister of Defense Moshe Arens and Chief Rabbi Simcha Kook.

Among those who also come to Israel for further study are people who have returned to Judaism after embracing Christianity and, unfortunately, the schools they attend may not fully understand their particular needs. We plan to organize a support and follow-up system to help reintegrate these individuals of all ages and backgrounds back into the Jewish community.
An educational evening featuring Penina, Darryl and Rabbi Kravitz served as the official opening of our Jerusalem Center. More than 150 people attended the program that explored persuasion techniques, Penina's life story and gripping details of missionary activity in Israel.

Our new center is located in the Clal Building, walking distance from Ben-Yehudah Street in the heart of Jerusalem. Ironically, there are several messianic groups and a messianic congregation operating in this building.

Stay tuned for exciting developments to be reported in the coming months. Pray that our vital new center in our eternal homeland will help to keep Jews Jewish...forever!

Jews for Judaism Denounces Statement Made by World Evangelical Alliance

In a release sent out April 1st, Jews for Judaism denounced as offensive the March 28 statement by the World Evangelical Alliance (WEA) that defends the targeting of Jews for conversion to Christianity and reaffirms that Jews need Jesus for salvation.

WEA is a global ministry described as a network of churches in 128 nations that have formed an evangelical alliance, with over 100 international organizations, representing more than 420 million evangelical Christians.

WEA claims in its statement that it deplores the use of deception and coercion. It also considers “good and right … those ministries specifically directed to the Jewish people.”

Jews for Judaism founder, Rabbi Bentzion Kravitz calls these claims hypocritical. “You can’t deplore deception and coercion and at the same time call ‘good and right’ ministries who attract converts by masquerading themselves as traditional Jews, misquoting and fabricating Jewish sources and using fear of damnation as a form of coercion.”

WEA also states they “reject the notion that it is deceptive for followers of Jesus Christ who were born Jewish to continue to identify as Jews.”

All Jewish denominations agree that the bible teaches it is idolatrous for a Jew to believe God exists as a trinity and becomes incarnate in bodily form. A Jew who maintains these beliefs separates himself from Judaism and cannot identify himself as a Jew until he denounces these false beliefs and reconnects to his heritage.

According to Rabbi Kravitz, “To avoid this association with idolatry, Messianic Jews intentionally and deceptively fail to divulge that they believe Jesus is God incarnate and part of a Trinity when they proclaim that he is the Messiah. This is exactly what Jews for Jesus founder Moishe Rosen advises in his book, Share the New Life with a Jew.’ To quote Rosen, ‘Don’t get sidetracked for the moment with discussions of the deity of Christ and the virgin birth…. Important as these may be, correct theology is not what will save your friend.’”

Jews for Judaism is dedicated to exposing this type of deceptive proselytizing and to helping Jews reconnect to their heritage.

Check out our new student website and spread the word...

www.Be-True.org
In addition to counseling, an essential component of Jews for Judaism’s mission is presenting inspiring educational programs. During the past year our six international centers provided 35,000 client services including 20,000 participants in our educational programs. Our most popular lectures include:

- **Missionary Impossible** - The Jewish Response to Missionaries
- **The Power of Persuasion** - What Do Cults, Telemarketers & Terrorists Have in Common?
- **Kabbalah and The Red String** - Cult or Consciousness?
- **A Rabbi Cross-Examines Christianity** - Discovering the Real Messiah!
- **Evangelicals and Israel** - Trojan Horse or Knight in Shining Armor?
- **Messianic Fever** - Redemption, Enlightenment or Vision?
- **Is Religion Killing Judaism?** - The Search for Happiness and Spirituality

Jews for Judaism offers these programs and more in coordination with organizations of all denominations. Some of our recent presentations were held at:

- Adat Ariel
- American Jewish University
- Chabad Centers in Mission Viejo, Mt. Olympus, Summerlin, UCLA and University of Florida
- Chai Center
- Hebrew Discovery Center
- Hillels at SMC, USC and University of Las Vegas
- JSUs at several public high schools
- Kehilat Ma’arav
- Kol Tikvah
- LA Hebrew High
- Limmud LA
- Maimonides Day School
- Northwestern University
- OU Center Jerusalem
- Temple Beth Haverim
- Temple Ramat Tzion
- University of Chicago
- University of Illinois
- University of Wisconsin
- USY Temple Beth Am
- Valley Beth Shalom
- Yeshiva Ohr Elchonon Chabad
- Young Israel of Century City
- YULA Girls School

Thank you again for the wonderful program you conducted for our middle-school students. The session was most educational and informative.

I do appreciate that you took the time to create a participatory presentation, which facilitated an open session filled with discussion. Due to your fine preparation, our students will no doubt retain the information presented. Our community is quite fortunate to have your fine organization as a resource.

Hazon Keith Miller
Kehilat Maarav
Santa Monica

We felt lucky to find you given how few other resources exist for those in our situation. What’s mind boggling is how many more families seem to be confronting situations like ours, though many are ashamed or hesitant to admit it and most have no idea of where to turn for help.

As someone who was brought up in a traditional Jewish home on the East Coast, I never in a million years thought that I personally would need the services you offer. Growing up, we all knew the dangers of “Jews for Jesus,” but we had no concept of the subtlety with which other small and less identifiable cults would try to take advantage of those we love.

In our situation, we are combating a cult that entices members in at their most vulnerable moment with promises of a special relationship with god and dreams fulfilled... Over time, members become isolated, humiliated, fearful and dependent. Concepts of Judaism are perverted, with visits to a Messianic Temple, and the absurd proposition that you can be Jewish and still believe in Jesus. In our case, the results have been tragic—a family torn apart; parents from children, husband from wife and sisters from each other.

Your experience and resources have helped us to gain a better understanding of the forces at work—which include insights into how mind control is used. This has helped us make sense out of our situation and allowed us to form a more effective response. Your work in the community to help families and educate young people is invaluable. We owe you a debt of gratitude for working against unthinkable odds and we remain hopeful that, with your help, one day our family member will reclaim all that she has sacrificed.

With thanks for all the work you do.

J.R.
Los Angeles, California

Our USYers were so interested in what you had to offer and what you had to teach them. They were active and involved. You definitely captured their attention. They continued to talk about your session long after you left.

Becky Baron
Youth Director, Temple Beth Am
Los Angeles