

# REPENTANCE, REPAIR, AND RECONCILIATION: Religious Resources for Tumultuous Times

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2026 ICCJ Conference  
July 12-15, 2026



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**German Ministry of the Interior, Berlin**

**REPENTANCE, REPAIR, AND RECONCILIATION:**

**RELIGIOUS RESOURCES FOR**

**TUMULTUOUS TIMES**

## **CONFERENCE PROGRAM**

**INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE - HANOVER 2026**

**JULY 12 - 15, 2026**

**INTERNATIONAL COUNCIL OF**

**CHRISTIANS AND JEWS (ICCJ)**

**IN COLLABORATION WITH**

**DEUTSCHER KOORDINIERUNGSRAT DER**

**GESELLSCHAFTEN FÜR CHRISTLICH-JÜDISCHE**

**ZUSAMMENARBEIT (DKR)**

**ICCJ WEBSITE:**

<https://www.iccj.org>

**ICCJ NEWSLETTER:**

<https://www.iccj.org/newsletter-registration.html>



**CONTENT**

<b>BOOKLET COVER: TWINS BY JOHANN TAHON</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>WELCOME TO HANOVER (ICCJ)</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>WELCOME (DKR)</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>INTERNATIONAL COUNCIL OF CHRISTIANS AND JEWS</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>GERMAN COUNCIL OF CHRISTIANS AND JEWS (DKR)</b>	<b>9</b>
<b>PROGRAM</b>	<b>12</b>
<b>PLENARY SESSIONS</b>	<b>16</b>
<b>WORKSHOP SESSION A</b>	<b>21</b>
<b>WORKSHOP SESSION B</b>	<b>27</b>
<b>WORKSHOP SESSION C</b>	<b>32</b>
<b>WORKSHOP SESSION D</b>	<b>39</b>
<b>EVENTS AND MEETINGS</b>	<b>45</b>
<b>SPEAKERS AND PRESENTERS</b>	<b>50</b>
<b>COMMITTEE, BOARD, AND STAFF</b>	<b>60</b>

## **BOOKLET COVER: TWINS BY JOHANN TAHON**

In 2015, the Evangelical Lutheran Regional Church of Hanover announced an art competition to design a sculpture on the theme of “Ecclesia and Synagoga” to be placed in front of its regional church office. The challenge was to express aspects of the current relationship between the Church and Judaism: What might the coexistence of the Church and Judaism, of Christians and Jews, look like in the 21st century? How is it possible to achieve a fraternal coexistence? The artists were not restricted to specific content or a figurative style of expression.

### **THE SCULPTURE**

A jury of experts in art and theology, with the participation of a rabbi, selected the design by Belgian artist Johan Tahon. His sculpture TWINS is a reinterpretation of the motif of Ecclesia and Synagoga, the Church and Judaism. This motif has been used in Christian art for one and a half millennia to denigrate Judaism. Arie Hartog, director of the Gerhard Marcks House in Bremen, explains: “Tahon’s figures are hybrids, never human beings... With this simple artifice, Tahon frees his figures from the stranglehold of the tradition of figurative sculpture. In other words: He harnesses their communicative power while negating all their contextual connotations.” The figures in the sculpture cannot be unambiguously assigned to Ecclesia or Synagoga. Each has its own heritage, its own path to God. The strength of the artwork lies in this ambiguity, which invites viewers into a dialogue and reflection.

### **THE ARTIST**

The artist Johan Tahon was born in 1965 in Menen, Belgium. He studied sculpture at the Royal Academy of Fine Arts in Ghent. He lives and works in Sint-Denijs-Boekel, Belgium.

[https://www.stories-e.de/twins\\_meet-the-artist#131](https://www.stories-e.de/twins_meet-the-artist#131)

## **WELCOME TO HANOVER (ICCJ)**

Welcome to Hanover and to the 2026 International Conference of the ICCJ. The theme for our conference, “Repentance, Repair, and Reconciliation: Religious Resources for Tumultuous Times”, seems to get more relevant every day. The planning committee, made up of representatives from the ICCJ and our partner organization the Deutscher Koordinierungsrat der Gesellschaften für Christlich-Jüdische Zusammenarbeit (DKR), chose this topic before the outbreak of the most recent war in the Middle East. The Hamas attack on Israel on October 7, 2023, and the lengthy war it precipitated, had already had profound implications for Jewish-Christian and Jewish-Christian-Muslim relations and had also created tensions between adherents of the same tradition. Dialogue groups collapsed and conflicts between friends and within families surged.

The war with Iran, which, as I write, is raging with no clearly articulated objective and no sense of when it might end, has further challenged relations. This certainly meets the definition of “Tumultuous Times”. We have seen that, for many, one’s position on the conflict has become a litmus test in deciding with whom to engage in dialogue, and with whom, one cannot engage. If interreligious dialogue is not a victim of this situation, it has certainly sustained a serious wound.

One option is to lose heart, give up, and withdraw. A different option emerges from the conviction that it is only through relationship and dialogue, even if it is sometimes difficult and painful, that misunderstandings and conflicts can be addressed and, with time, perhaps even resolved – at least among people if not among political entities.

While some would point to the traditions themselves as the sources of conflict, those of us who are committed to this work know that each of our traditions has within it the resources to address the profound issues that currently confront us. That is the goal of this conference: to remind us that we, who are convinced that promoting interreligious amity is a sacred duty, have at our disposal, within each of our traditions, scriptures, practices, strategies, and teachings that compel us to affirm the dignity of every human being and work together for peaceful

coexistence. We may not be the majority – yet! – but just like water one drop at time can wear away the hardest stone, we have faith that our efforts will make a difference.

May our discussions and deliberations in Hanover provide us with the courage, determination, and resources we need to rededicate ourselves to the sacred task harnessing our traditions so that together we can build the world of which we dream.

David Fox Sandmel (ICCJ President)

## WELCOME (DKR)

We are delighted and deeply honored to welcome you all here to the 2026 ICCJ Conference in Germany, in Hanover. We look forward to meeting our colleagues in Christian-Jewish cooperation from different continents, as well as those interested in continuing the work of Jewish-Christian understanding!

Germany is a country with a rich Jewish history spanning over 1,700 years. And it is a country marked by recurring persecution of Jews and the Shoah.

In the wake of the unimaginable crimes of the Shoah, a rethinking of the churches' relationship with Judaism began after 1945, albeit very hesitantly at first. It was not until the 1960s and 1970s that Christian-Jewish dialogue gained significance, spurred in part by the World Council of Churches' program "Consultation on the Church and the Jewish People" (CCJP), founded in 1961. And most importantly, by the Catholic document "Nostra Aetate" of the Second Vatican Council, published in 1965. All of this brought the need to reexamine Christian-Jewish relations back onto the agenda in the public sphere and within the churches. Step by step, a new theology emerged that rejected 2,000 years of anti-Jewish teaching, which Jules Isaac clearly described as "teaching of contempt."

Today we can say that the churches' attitude toward Judaism has been placed on an entirely new foundation. The President of the Central Council of Jews in Germany, Dr Josef Schuster, stated in 2021 during a meeting with the Council of the Evangelical Church in Germany: "For centuries, anti-Judaism was preached in churches. This has long since been overcome, and the churches are now partners in the fight against antisemitism. On the Protestant side, this was particularly evident in the handling of the Reformation anniversary. Christian-Jewish relations have never been as good as they are today. Together, we advocate for fundamental democratic rights such as religious freedom and the protection of minorities."

But then came the unimaginably cruel massacre carried out by the Palestinian Hamas in Israel on October 7, 2023. In the wake of Israel's subsequent war against the terrorist group Hamas, hostility toward

## INTERNATIONAL COUNCIL OF CHRISTIANS AND JEWS

Israel, anti-Semitic statements, and acts of violence also grew in Germany to an extent we had not thought possible.

Thus, we face a twofold challenge: On the one hand, the achievements of Christian-Jewish dialogue must be further deepened and disseminated. On the other hand, we must resolutely oppose contemporary anti-Semitism.

We hope that the ICCJ conference will also provide valuable impetus in this regard. In the context of Christian-Jewish and Jewish-Christian-Muslim dialogue, we must identify paths to understanding in these times of growing hostility.

A warm welcome to Hanover!

Dr Margaretha Hackermeier, Catholic President - Rabbi Prof. Dr Andreas Nachama, Jewish President - Rev. Friedhelm Pieper, Protestant President (DKR Board)

After an initial international post-war meeting of Jewish and Christian leaders in Oxford, UK, in 1946, another so called "emergency conference" as a reaction to the Holocaust, the Shoah, was held in Seelisberg, Switzerland in 1947. It was during this gathering that the following resolution was adopted: "In view of the world-wide nature of the task, it is mandatory that the suggestion of the Oxford Conference of August 1946 to establish an International Council of Christians and Jews should be implemented without delay, and that the Continuation Committee then appointed should take energetic action to organize and establish in as many countries as possible Councils of Christians and Jews linked with the International Council."

In the wake of the Seelisberg conference, the International Council of Christians and Jews was founded. Today, nearly 80 years later, it serves as the umbrella organization of 35 national Jewish-Christian dialogue organizations world-wide.

The ICCJ, together with its member organizations, has been successfully engaged in the historic renewal of Jewish-Christian relations over the last seven decades and has brought theologians, historians, educators, artists, and grassroots organizers together through its work.

In more recent years, the ICCJ and its members increasingly joined in the Abrahamic dialogue among Jews, Christians and Muslims. The ICCJ's efforts to promote Jewish-Christian dialogue provide models for wider interfaith relations in different contexts, given the specific religious and cultural landscape of a given location.

Through its annual conferences and various consultations, the ICCJ offers a platform where people from different religious backgrounds examine current issues across borders and boundaries, enabling face-to-face and digital exchanges of experience and expertise. The headquarters of the ICCJ is located in Heppenheim, Germany, in the house where the great modern Jewish thinker Martin Buber and his family lived until Nazi persecution forced them to flee in 1938.

## GERMAN COUNCIL OF CHRISTIANS AND JEWS (DKR)

The German Coordinating Council (DKR) is the umbrella organization for the more than 80 local societies for Christian-Jewish cooperation (GCJZ) in Germany, which have been working for over 70 years to promote understanding between Christians and Jews and to combat all forms of antisemitism and racism. The DKR is a registered association that, due to its nationwide activities, receives federal funding and is led by a board of directors and a three-member presidium comprised of a Catholic, a Protestant, and a Jewish representative. Its office is located in the Buber-Rosenzweig-Foundation-Building in Bad Nauheim, Hesse.

### HISTORY

In light of 2,000 years of Christian anti-Judaism with its “teaching of contempt,” racist anti-Semitism, and the annihilation of European Jewry by Nazi Germany, the fact that a dialogue between Jews and Christians thrives in the land of the perpetrators borders on a miracle, as the former Jewish president of the DKR, Rabbi Dr Henry G. Brandt, once put it. Shortly after the end of World War II and the Shoah, the first societies for Christian-Jewish cooperation in Germany were established on the initiative of the American occupation authorities as part of the Reeducation Program (a program for the denazification and democratization of Germany).

The models for these were similar interfaith associations that had already existed in the United States for several decades. The first GCJZ was founded 1948, in Munich, followed that year and the next by chapters in Wiesbaden, Stuttgart, Frankfurt, and Berlin. On November 10, 1949, these five societies founded the German Coordinating Council (DKR) as an umbrella organization in order to make their voices heard on the political level and gain nationwide recognition. To this day, the incumbent Federal President serves as patron of the DKR. In the decades following their founding, the GCJZ and the DKR, as civic initiatives, played a significant role in building democratic culture and society in the Federal Republic of Germany and helped to make the changes taking place in the church and theology regarding Judaism known to the broader public. For example, through the “Week of Brotherhood”, which took place for the first time in Wiesbaden in 1952. To this day, the DKR’s most significant

## MISSION STATEMENT. THE ICCJ

- **PROMOTES** understanding and cooperation between Christians and Jews based on respect for each other's identity and integrity;
- **ADDRESSES** issues of human rights and human dignity deeply enshrined in the traditions of Judaism and Christianity;
- **COUNTERS** all forms of prejudice, intolerance, discrimination, racism and the misuse of religion for national and political domination;
- **AFFIRMS** that in honest dialogue each person remains loyal to his or her own essential faith commitment, recognizing in the other person his or her integrity and otherness;
- **COORDINATES** worldwide activities through a program of carefully structured conferences held regularly in different countries. The participants examine current issues across national and religious boundaries, enabling face-to-face exchanges of experience and expertise;
- **ENCOURAGES** research and education at all levels, including universities and theological seminaries, to promote interreligious understanding among students, teachers, religious leaders, and scholars;
- **PERFORMS** outreach in regions that so far have little or no structured Jewish-Christian dialogue, such as Eastern Europe, Africa, and the Far East;
- **PROVIDES** a platform for wide-ranging theological debate in order to add a religious choice to the contemporary search for answers to existential and ethical challenges.

## JEWISH-CHRISTIAN RELATIONS NET

The ICCJ owns and maintains the online platform “Jewish-Christian Relations Net”, established to publish and translate articles, reviews, reports, official statements, and study resources on Jewish-Christian relations from all over the world, making them available in English, French, German, Portuguese, Spanish, and Russian.

[www.jcrelations.net](http://www.jcrelations.net)

<https://www.iccj.org/>

annual event is a high-profile public occasion that receives extensive media coverage. It was modeled after the “Week of Brotherhood,” which was organized from 1934 until the early 2000s by the American “National Conference of Christians and Jews” to combat anti-Semitism, anti-Catholicism, and racism. Pursuant to a resolution adopted by the DKR General Assembly in 2023, the name “Week of Brotherhood” was replaced by the term “Year of Christian-Jewish Cooperation.”

During the Year of Christian-Jewish Cooperation hundreds of events—both large-scale and local—take place across the country, each addressing the annual theme. Since 1968, the Buber-Rosenzweig Medal—Germany’s highest award for Christian-Jewish understanding—has been presented at the central opening ceremony to individuals who are committed to dialogue and advocate for an open, non-discriminatory society.

## **PROGRAMS AND TOPICS**

The central focus is on a vibrant, respectful, and equal exchange between Jews and Christians as a process of encounter, getting to know one another, and understanding. This forms the foundation of Christian-Jewish dialogue, which addresses topics such as:

- Overcoming the doctrine of the alleged rejection of Judaism and the notion that the Christian church is the “new people of God” (Christian theology of replacement)
- The development of a Christology that is not anti-Jewish; a critical engagement with anti-Jewish passages in the Second Testament (New Testament)
- Recognition of Christian shared responsibility and guilt for the Shoah
- Developing and renewing the culture of remembrance
- Learning from and with one another, identifying commonalities and differences
- Jewish perspectives on Christian scriptures, beliefs, and teachings
- Embedding this new way of thinking in church and university theological education, as well as at the grassroots level of the church and in schools
- Shared responsibility for God’s creation and a society free of discrimination

These and other religious-theological, cultural, and philosophical topics are conveyed through various event formats: publications, commemorative events, trips, encounters, digital formats, and much more. To this day, and into the future, the individual GCJZs at the local level and the DKR at the federal level are continuously working to overcome.

<https://www.deutscher-koordinierungsrat.de/>

## PROGRAM SUNDAY, JULY 12, 2026

- 1:30 pm – 3:00 pm **On-Site Registration of Participants**
- 4:00 pm – 6:00 pm **Opening Event + Seelisberg Prize 2026  
Keynote Lecture**  
By awardee Rabbi Dr David Meyer,  
Cardinal Bea Centre for Judaic Studies –  
Pontifical Gregorian University, Rome
- BEWARE OF SOOTHING WORDS IN TUMULTUOUS  
TIMES - *SPEAK TO US SMOOTH THINGS, PROPHECY  
ILLUSIONS (ISAIAH 30:10)*
- 6:00 pm – 7:00 pm **Reception**
- 7:30 pm **Dinner**  
(for registered conference participants only)



Program on p. 45

## PROGRAM MONDAY, JULY 13, 2026

- 9:00 am – 9:30 am **Meditative Moment**
- 9:30 am – 1:00 pm **Plenary Session I. Terminological and  
conceptual Approaches:**  
  
**REPENTANCE, REPAIR AND  
RECONCILIATION EXPLORING COMMONALITIES  
AND DIFFERENCES**
- 10:45 am – 11:15 am **Coffee Break**
- 11:15 am – 12:00 pm **Small Group Activity**
- 12:00 am – 1:00 pm **Wrap-Up Round**
- 1:00 pm – 2:30 pm **Lunch**
- 2:30 pm – 4:00 pm **Workshops A1 A2 A3 A4 A5**
- 4:00 pm – 4:30 pm **Coffee Break**
- 4:30 pm – 6:00 pm **Plenary Session II. Liturgical Approaches:**  
  
**PERFORMING REPENTANCE, REPAIR AND  
RECONCILIATION: LEARNING FROM LITURGIES,  
RITUALS, AND CUSTOMS**
- 6:00 pm **Dinner**
- 7:00 pm **AGM Friends and Sponsors**
- 8:00 pm **Evening Event: “Go to the Movies”**

## PROGRAM TUESDAY, JULY 14, 2026

9:00 am – 9:30 am	<b>Meditative Moment</b>
9:30 am – 11:00 am	<b>Plenary Session III. Ethical Approaches:</b>  <b>HOW TO HARNESS OUT TRADITIONS TO STRENGTHEN OUR COMMUNITIES AND PROMOTE PEACE</b>
11:45 am – 11:30 am	<b>Coffee Break</b>
11:30 am – 1:00 pm	<b>Workshops B1 B2 B3 B4 B5</b>
1:00 pm – 2:30 pm	<b>Lunch</b>
2:00 pm – 6:00 pm	<b>Field Trips</b>

## PROGRAM WEDNESDAY, JULY 15, 2026

9:00 am – 9:30 am	<b>Meditative Moment</b>
9:30 am – 11:00 am	<b>Plenary Session IV. Practical Approaches:</b>  <b>EFFORTS AT REPENTANCE, REPAIR, AND RECONCILIATION IN THE “REAL WORLD”: REPORTS FROM ON THE GROUND ACTIVISTS</b>
11:00 am – 11:30 am	<b>Coffee Break</b>
11:30 am – 1:00 pm	<b>Workshops C1 C2 C3 C4 C5</b>
1:00 pm – 2:30 pm	<b>Lunch</b>
2:30 pm – 4:00 pm	<b>Workshops D1 D2 D3 D4 D5</b>
4:00 pm – 4:30 pm	<b>Coffee Break</b>
4:30 pm – 05:30 pm	<b>Plenary Session V. Closing Reflections:</b>  <b>DO WE HAVE A SAVIOUR? TOXIC LEGACIES AND PLANETARY RESPONSIBILITY</b>
6:00 pm	<b>Dinner</b>

## PLENARY SESSIONS

### Plenary Session I Terminological and conceptual Approaches:

(Monday, July 13, 9:30 am – 1:00 pm)

#### **REPENTANCE, REPAIR, AND RECONCILIATION: EXPLORING COMMONALITIES AND DIFFERENCES**

Those of us who engage in interreligious and intercommunal dialogue share a vision of a future in which both unity and diversity are valued and respected. Unfortunately, the world around us appears to be ever more contentious, creating angry rifts in society at large, as well as within families and among friends. This has impacted religious communities as well, leading to tensions within, and between, Jewish, Christian, and Muslim, and other communities. When relationships are strained, rebuilding them can be difficult. Over the last few generations, many Jews, Christians, and Muslims have sought to overcome difficult histories through dialogue, a process that often includes aspects of repentance, repair, and reconciliation. There have been, and will continue to be, crises and controversies to be confronted, each of which, it is hoped, will lead to greater mutual appreciation. Jews, Christians, and Muslims have their own vocabularies and unique approaches to the concepts of repentance, repair and reconciliation; all, however, are based on affirming the dignity of every human being. This raises several questions for exploration. Who can repent - individuals? Societies? Who can accept repentance or grant forgiveness? How do we prioritize the inclusive and universal aspects of our traditions over any tribalism or bias against others? This moment in history challenges us consider the specific meaning of these terms within each of our traditions both to deepen our knowledge of one another and to discover resources and strategies that we can put into practice to create or restore inter-communal harmony.

Speakers:

Elias H. Füllenbach (Germany) / Noam Marans (USA) /

Säida Mirsadri (Switzerland) / Axel Töllner (Germany)

Moderator:

Ursula Rudnick (Germany)

### Plenary Session II Liturgical Approaches:

(Monday, July 13, 4:30 pm – 6:00 pm)

#### **PERFORMING REPENTANCE, REPAIR AND RECONCILIATION: LEARNING FROM LITURGIES, RITUALS, AND CUSTOMS**

One of the richest sources for understanding repentance, repair, and reconciliation across different traditions lies in the ways these concepts are expressed through liturgy and ritual. This session examines how each tradition constructs repentance liturgically. We tend to think of repentance as something an individual does to atone and make amends for having done wrong or “sinned,” but the community itself can also sin by commission or omission. While the community often plays a role in an individual’s repentance, can the community itself repent? What might communal repentance look like, and are there examples of this within our traditions? What resources exist for the creation of multifaith rituals of repentance and reconciliation?

Speakers:

Engin Karahan (Germany) / Ruth Langer (USA) /

Geoffrey Ready (Canada) / Anne Marie Reijnen (France) /

Katarzyna Kowalska (Poland)

**Plenary Session III Ethical Approaches:**  
(Tuesday, July 14, 9:30 pm – 11:00 pm)

**HOW TO HARNESS OUR TRADITIONS TO STRENGTHEN OUR  
COMMUNITIES AND PROMOTE PEACE**

Each tradition's approach to repentance, repair and reconciliation is based on the idea that, despite what they teach about how to live an ethical life and contribute to creating an ethical society, human beings are fallible. When individuals or communities do not live up to their ethical obligations, a process of acknowledgement and reparation can play an essential role in allowing both those who have erred and those who have been harmed to find a way forward together. What can each of our traditions contribute to efforts of reconciliation on a societal level that involve both religious and secular actors (authorities, NGOs, etc.)?

Speakers

Mohammed Ibraheem Ahmed (UK) / Wibke Janssen (Germany) /  
Heather Miller Rubens (USA) / Frederek Musall (Germany)

Moderator:

Friedhelm Pieper (Germany)

**Plenary Session IV Practical Approaches:**  
(Wednesday, July 15, 9:30 am – 11:00 am)

**EFFORTS AT REPENTANCE, REPAIR, AND RECONCILIATION:  
PROJECTS AND INITIATIVES**

In this plenary, we will focus on the lived experience of interfaith activists who have been involved in projects or initiatives that focused on repentance, repair and reconciliation. There are important lessons to be learned about how the projects themselves were organized and what was involved in running them, including the initial motivation for embarking on the project in the first place, as well as what worked and what did not.

Speakers:

Shoshana Boyd Gelfand (UK) / Derviş Hızarcı (Germany) /  
Wolfgang Reinbold, (Germany) / Mark Walsh (Australia) / Ophir Yarden (Israel)

Moderator:

Pavol Bargár (Czech Republic)

### Plenary Session V Closing Reflections:

(Wednesday, July 15, 16:30 pm – 17:30 pm)

#### **DO WE HAVE A SAVIOUR? TOXIC LEGACIES AND PLANETARY RESPONSIBILITY**

As we close our conference, this plenary turns to the ecological and moral crises shaping our world today. In the face of climate devastation, war, displacement, and social fragmentation, we ask whether the language of reconciliation and repair is enough. What does repentance mean when the harm is collective, ongoing, and planetary in scale?

This session invites participants to reflect on the responsibilities carried by our religious traditions: responsibility for toxic legacies of exploitation and domination, but also responsibility as the creative capacity to respond differently. Together, we will explore how interreligious dialogue might become a shared practice of ecological awareness, accountability, and planetary responsibility.

Speakers:

Fariza Bisaeva (Austria) / David Castillo (Costa Rica) /  
Benjamine Kamine (USA) / Katharina von Kellenbach (Germany)

Moderator:

Héctor Acero Ferrer (Canada)

### A1

(Monday, July 13, 2:30 pm — 4:00 pm)

#### **A COMMUNION OF OTHERS: JUDAISM & ORTHODOX CHRISTIANITY — BUILDING BRIDGES, ADDRESSING CHALLENGES**

Mona Barbara, Barbara U. Meyer

This workshop proposes a new framework for Jewish-Christian dialogue by examining what Judaism and Orthodox Christianity share at their theological core: both traditions understand human identity as fundamentally communal. Rather than viewing humans as autonomous individuals, both teach that we are constituted through our relationships—with God, community, and the other.

Drawing on the patristic thought of John Zizioulas, whose concept of communion (*koinonia*) argues that otherness is not a threat but the very condition of existence, this workshop suggests that genuine repair between traditions is not about erasing difference. Instead, it begins with recognizing that we have never been alone. Both traditions speak this language of communal belonging, though expressed differently: Judaism through the concepts of the people Israel and repairing the world; Orthodox through the doctrine of the Trinity and the church as a communion of persons.

The workshop central claim is that repair is possible not because we become the same, but because we acknowledge an existing interdependence. This shifts dialogue from "how can we overcome historical conflict?" to "how do we recognize the communal belonging that already binds us?" While Orthodox Christianity inherited supersessionist theology, it did not enshrine this as the organizing principle of its theological identity, as occurred in the West. Its minority status in the Middle East created different patterns of Jewish-Christian engagement—less antagonistic, more lived alongside. Its liturgical continuity with ancient practices, geographical rootedness, and theological emphasis on otherness make it a natural interlocutor for Jewish thought.

The workshop is participatory, sensory, and theological. Participants will experience liturgy, engage with primary texts, and discover through their own inquiry how both traditions speak a common language of communion and repair—not as abstract theory, but as lived reality.

The workshop combines four core participatory elements. First, a sensory opening: participants hear Jewish evening prayers and Orthodox liturgy in sequence, experiencing how both traditions use voice and repetition to create communal presence. Second, a theological foundation through texts from Zizioulas and Jewish sources on communion and collective identity. Third, four active stations: participants explore embodied prayer, memory through repetition, and identify the language of "we" across traditions. Finally, a closing circle affirming communion that already binds them. The goal is embodied realization: true repair begins by acknowledging the communion that already exists.

## **A2**

(Monday, July 13, 2:30 pm — 4:00 pm)

### **OVERCOMING SPEECHLESSNESS: THE EMERGE OF CHRISTIAN-JEWISH DIALOGUE IN GERMANY AFTER THE SHOAH**

Elias H. Füllenbach, Friedhelm Pieper

The workshop recalls the situation for the Jewish and the Christian communities after the Shoah as a time of speechlessness especially between Jews and Christians. Churches were confronted with troubling questions of how to deal with the growing awareness of their guilt concerning the deep involvement of Christian teaching in the emerge of hatred and enmity against Jews. In this very situation groups for Christian-Jewish cooperation were founded. They enabled encounter and dialogue and thereby opened the way for a search for a new understanding of each other. They laid the ground for a wide-ranging complete transformation of the traditional Church's teaching about the Jewish people. How did this come about? Who where the central people involved? What steps had been taking? How did the churches confront their guilt that could no further be suppressed? How did the insights of

the dialogue reach the Church's decision-making bodies and the Theology faculties at the universities?

The workshop will begin with two inputs from a Protestant and a Catholic perspective by Friedhelm Pieper and Elias Füllenbach to lead into a general discussion about the transforming developments in the relations between the Churches and the Jewish People in Germany and what we can learn from this about working for transformation in the fields in which we find such developments necessary.

## **A3**

(Monday, July 13, 2:30 pm — 4:00 pm)

### **STAYING IN DIALOGUE: REPENTANCE AND REPAIR IN ISRAEL-PALESTINE?**

Hussam Elias, Erik Ross, Ophir Yarden

This workshop engages the question of how dialogue can be sustained in situations marked by deep conflict and mutual distrust, with particular attention to the Israeli–Palestinian context and to Jewish–Christian relations. With the help of an excerpt from an award-winning documentary, participants are invited to reflect on how one can speak honestly about deeply held convictions and present injustices without foreclosing the possibility of continued dialogue. This includes grappling with moments of breakdown, where silence, withdrawal, or escalation seem more natural than engagement.

Rather than presuming that dialogue is always possible or straightforward, we propose to ask, "What does it mean to remain in relationship when the conditions for trust appear to be eroding?"

At the heart of the workshop are repentance and repair. Repentance is approached not as an abstract moral ideal, but as a concrete and sometimes uncomfortable practice of self-examination. It involves recognising one's own reflexes and moral certainties and asking how these may contribute to the perpetuation of conflict. Repair, in turn, is explored as a fragile and partial process, one that does not erase disagreement but seeks to reopen the possibility of encounter where it has been damaged or closed.

While rooted in the lived experience of Israel–Palestine, the questions raised are not confined to this context. The dynamics of conflict, the challenge of self-critique, and the search for practices of repair resonate across many settings where communities struggle to remain in conversation.

**1. OPENING FRAMING:** Brief presentation situating the current context in Jerusalem and introducing key theological tensions in Christian–Jewish dialogue under conflict.

**2. AN EXAMPLE FROM THE ISRAEL-PALESTINE CONTEXT:** View, and react to, the nine-minute film *The Lemon Tree* presenting a case-study.

**3. EXERCISE 1: “NAMING REFLEXES”:** Participants reflect in pairs or small groups, on their immediate internal reactions to conflict situations involving Israel and its neighbours. What narratives do I instinctively reach for? Where do I feel defensive, silent, or morally certain? Goal: to identify the starting point for repentance as an examination of one’s own reflexes.

**4. EXERCISE 2: “DIALOGUE UNDER PRESSURE”:** Participants are given short, realistic scenarios (e.g., a tense interreligious conversation during wartime, or a breakdown in trust between partners). In small groups, they are asked to identify where dialogue fractures, propose concrete responses that aim at **repair**, reflect on what makes repair possible—or impossible—in that moment.

**5. EXERCISE 3: “STAYING IN THE ROOM”:** A plenary reflection focused on the question: What does it mean, concretely, to refuse to abandon dialogue in situations where coexistence itself feels threatened? Participants share brief insights, drawing connections to their own contexts.

**6. CONCLUSION:** Synthesis: toward a “situated practice” of repentance, repair, and reconciliation grounded in vulnerability, intellectual honesty, and sustained encounter.

#### OBJECTIVES

- Consider the conference theme in the context of the Palestine-Israel context.
- Move from abstract ideals of reconciliation to practical habits of dialogue.

- Explore realistic pathways of repair in strained relationships.
- Encourage participants to remain engaged in dialogue even under conditions of fear and division.

#### A4

(Monday, July 13, 2:30 pm — 4:00 pm)

#### TRANSLATE HATE – CATHOLIC EDITION

Rebecca Cohen, Noam Marans, Allyson Zacharoff

*Translate Hate: The Catholic Edition* was previewed at the ICCJ 2024 conference in Salzburg and published later that year. This edition of the respected AJC glossary of antisemitic tropes includes Catholic teaching responses to antisemitic terms and post-Nostra Aetate resources. Developed in an American Jewish Committee (AJC) and U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops’ (USCCB) partnership, it equips Catholic leaders and communities with tools to recognize and respond to contemporary antisemitism as a concrete expression of Catholic commitment to the Jewish people as elder brothers and sisters in faith. This booklet, which will be available to workshop attendees, is now being utilized as the main source for a developing series of educational sessions for Catholic leadership across the U.S. This workshop will explore how interreligious dialogue can move beyond theological ideals into practical tools for real-world situations and help us all become stronger allies in the fight against hate. Participants will engage directly with the draft educational materials being designed for Catholic settings, examining the importance of language and how it can either reinforce prejudice or affirm human dignity, and we will particularly consider how Jewish and Christian traditions can inspire this important work.

#### A5

(Monday, July 13, 2:30 pm — 4:00 pm)

#### RUPTURES AND PIVOTS: CHALLENGES TO INTERRELIGIOUS RELATIONS IN AN ILLIBERAL AGE

Dan Joslyn-Siemiatkoski, Heather Miller Rubens

The work of the International Council of Christians and Jews, as well as the broader interreligious movement, is grounded in assumptions rooted

in the post-World War Two liberal political order. This included social and political commitments to universal human rights, religious toleration, and the rule of law. Many religious institutions were vital to the propagation of these liberal commitments and replicated them in activities like interreligious dialogue and education.

Today though, both illiberal politics and illiberal religion are ascendent—threatening not only the established political order but also the commitment to positive relations between religions. This session will focus specifically on the ruptures to interreligious relations that have occurred in the context of the United States of America and the pivots that might be necessary to ensure a renewed commitment to fostering the ongoing work of reconciliation between Jews, Christians, Muslims, and others.

This session will be led by two presenters with differing institutional contexts in the United States. One leads an independent, educational nonprofit focused on Jewish-Christian-Muslim relations while the other directs an academic research center focused on Jewish-Christian relations at a Research One university. From these two different perspectives, the presenters will discuss the current challenges that they perceive in this current political and cultural moment. They will each provide vignettes that offer a glimpse into how they are considering the ruptures to interreligious relations caused by rising religious nationalism, disengagement and disillusionment by partners from dialogue initiatives, and a shifting political realignment around the value of combatting religious bias and bigotry, including antisemitism and Islamophobia. Following this presentation, attendees will be invited into critical reflection upon and discussion of ruptures they discern in their own context and pivots that can be made.

### B1

(Tuesday, July 14, 11:30 am – 1:00 pm)

#### **CHRISTIAN ZIONISM – AN INTRODUCTION TO A COMPLEX AND CONTROVERSIAL PHENOMENON**

David Fox Sandmel

“Christian Zionism” – or to be more precise, “Christian Zionisms” – has become a contentious topic among Christians, among Jews, and between Christians and Jews since the advent of the Zionist movement in the second half of the 19th century. While today it is most closely identified with conservative Evangelical Christianity, “Christian Zionism” can be found among both liberal Protestants and Catholics. After presenting an overview of the history, definitions, politics, and controversies surrounding this phenomenon, the group will discuss the place of Zionism (in its Christian and Jewish forms) in Jewish-Christian relations.

### B2

(Tuesday, July 14, 11:30 am – 1:00 pm)

#### **CAN EVEN DEVARIM/DEUTERONOMY SERVE THE REPAIR NEEDED IN INTERFAITH DIALOGUE?**

Guillermo Bronstein, Patrick Morrow

A central question of the conference is: “How do we prioritize the inclusive and universal aspects of our traditions over any tribalism or bias against others?” Many do find tribalism in the Hebrew Bible. This is perhaps at its most insistent in Devarim/Deuteronomy (D). This brings us the Shema’, thought to be the purist insistence on the oneness of God. It also contains the (apparent) command to sevenfold genocide, and utter opposition to the perceived constant existential threat from “other gods” (mentioned at least 18 times). This threat is so strong that many see polytheism. Is that right? Must D simply be left to one side, when Jews and/or Christians bring resources to interfaith dialogue, or can our readings themselves be repaired?

The workshop will test the hypothesis that D is open to a different reading. This is that the genocidal command (*cherem*) is – within the text

itself – seen as a legal fiction. The ban on relations with the “other gods” is part of this fiction. Since the People of Israel should in their own minds and lives not be able to find out about the other gods (their adherents are effectively “dead” to them) their only “knowledge” is in fact fantasy. This is destructive fantasy, because it takes the people away from the true and normative story of liberation by the Living God. Worse, the other gods are threats because they come with the power of people’s unrestrained imaginations of unknown powers. They are explicitly linked to complacency, pride, and irrational spiritual lust. This is why they are always plural, never singular. D, while surely not a primary text for exemplary interfaith relations, may nevertheless say something vital to the work of intra-faith dialogues, leading us to ask: Where have our own “other gods” led us astray?

The workshop is offered as an example of Biblical Theology. It will look at key texts within Deuteronomy. They will be available in Hebrew (Masoretic text) and English.

D 6.4 The Shema’. How do we read this sentence, and in particular “Echad”?

D 7.1-6. Core question: Can this be read as other than a divine command to sevenfold genocide? What of the ban on intermarrying?

D 12.29-32. How does the writer envisage the People of Israel would find out about the “other gods”?

D 6.10-15. What does the writer think is the motivation to worship “other gods”?

On these, a dialogue between a Christian priest and a Jewish rabbi will lead on to Interactive work for all participants, to test the broader hypothesis.

### **B3**

(Tuesday, July 14, 11:30 am – 1:00 pm)

#### **MIGO WRITING workshop – writing flash fiction through tight orders, based on Levinasian perception of the story**

Orian Assayag

MIGO writing workshop is a flash stories writing workshop. MIGO is a term in Aramaic that is used during the Talmud study in order to indicate that one thing is learned from another.

It starts with a reflection on the place of laws in our individual and collective life, through Talmudic texts reading. MIGO portrays law as an element that is in friction with the story. Made of flash, the story created by provocation of the iron law. Inspired by Levinas' Talmudic readings – MIGO claims that where laws cease to serve individuals and groups – stories will appear.

The workshop will be based on the Jewish Havruta study method – units of two participants sharing with each other their stories, one on one (no group reading), with the tight guidance of the teacher.

### **B4**

(Tuesday, July 14, 11:30 am – 1:00 pm)

#### **FORGIVENESS AND JEWISH AND CHRISTIAN REPRESENTATION IN POP CULTURE – CASE STUDY: DINA IN *THE LAST OF US* AND FR JAMES IN *CALVARY***

Peter Admirand, Pavol Bargár

This interactive workshop encourages participants to reflect upon and discuss Jewish, Christian (and Muslim) representations in various pop culture mediums, particularly through themes of repentance and forgiveness. To help initiate the discussion, two short case studies will first be presented. Case Study One focuses on the Jewish character Dina in *The Last of Us Part 2* video game (whose Jewishness is later erased in the HBO version). Amidst apocalyptic conditions, protecting those you love at any cost leads to unjust and often immoral actions, and yet Dina’s understanding of her Jewishness seems to provide some space for

repentance. This openness is further tested by Dina's lover, Ellie, who suffers from a trauma and betrayal that she can only understand through vengeance.

Case Study Two explores the representation of a Roman Catholic priest in the contemporary post-Christian western context. Fr James will be introduced as a religious leader that contemporary Westerners can relate to. This will be suggested through the image of his face: marked with age and experiences, exhausted, wrinkled, but also uncondemning and accepting. James may well be laconic, sometimes harsh and even vulgar with a peculiar sense of humor, but people are always close to his heart. His spirituality will be characterized as one of witnessing presence, solidarity, self-reflection (repentance), and forgiveness.

Subsequently, the participants (in small groups, ideally with a good mix of interfaith, geographic, and gender identities) will be asked to reflect upon and then share with the larger group, their thoughts on the following questions: How do you understand repentance and/or forgiveness in the faith tradition(s) you are part of and/or work in? What are your main sources or personal benchmarks in framing your understanding (i.e., a text, a person, an experience, etc.)? Building upon your insights on question one, how are Jewish and Christian characters (and where relevant their faith, practices, and traditions) represented in the tv shows, films, and other mediums of pop culture you are familiar with? Are such depictions becoming more realistic, negative, positive, or absent? Where such characters or stories also have some kind of arc of moral redemption (or falling) and themes of reconciliation and repentance, do the stories implicitly or explicitly draw upon a character's (or creator's) faith and worldview?

## **B5**

(Tuesday, July 14, 11:30 am – 1:00 pm)

### **FROM REPENTANCE TO RECONCILIATION**

Hussam Elias, Benjamin Kamine, Melody Amal Khalil Kaban

This trilateral interactive workshop, titled "From Repentance to Reconciliation: Religious Resources for Tumultuous Times," is a 90-

minute facilitated session developed for the IAF Forum. It brings together participants from three religious traditions—Judaism, Christianity, and Islam—to explore the resources their faiths offer for addressing harm, responsibility, and conflict, and to examine how these traditions can support processes of repair and reconciliation in a challenging contemporary moment.

The workshop is structured around three interlocking themes: repentance, repair, and reconciliation. Participants are invited to reflect on what their tradition demands when harm has been done, what concrete actions and responsibilities follow from repentance, and under what conditions reconciliation becomes possible—or remains limited. Rather than staging a theological debate, the workshop positions itself as a space for reflective exploration, where religious difference is acknowledged and respected rather than erased or flattened into false equivalence.

The session is designed to foster greater empathy and mutual trust among participants across religious and communal divides. It aims to surface the connection between deep religious conviction and civic responsibility, and to build participants' capacity to sustain meaningful religious dialogue even in the face of genuine disagreement. The workshop is facilitated collaboratively, with guided questions, small-group breakouts organized by religious affiliation, plenary sharing, and a closing personal reflection. Participants leave with at least one concrete resource from their own tradition that they can carry forward into their wider lives and communities.

The workshop employs an experiential, dialogue-based pedagogy rooted in structured reflection and interfaith encounter. It begins by establishing a safe, non-judgmental space before moving participants through individual tradition-based small groups, then into cross-religious plenary dialogue. This sequencing—from within-tradition reflection to across-tradition conversation—allows participants to first articulate their own religious resources before encountering those of others. The facilitation model is collaborative and non-didactic, prioritising participant voice over expert instruction. A closing personal reflection ensures learning is embodied and carried beyond the session.

## WORKSHOP SESSION C

### C1

(Wednesday, July 15, 11:30 am - 1:00 pm)

#### **WHO SPEAKS FOR US? NAVIGATING INTERNAL DIVERSITY AND EXTERNAL DIALOGUE BETWEEN JEWS AND ORTHODOX CHRISTIANS**

Shoshana Boyd Gelfand, Geoffrey Ready

This session addresses a fundamental challenge facing interfaith engagement in tumultuous times: how do we conduct meaningful dialogue when neither community speaks with a single, authoritative voice?

Both Orthodox Christianity and Judaism are characterised by decentralised authority structures, theological diversity, and vigorous internal debate. Neither tradition has a single leader or magisterium that can definitively speak for all. This organisational reality becomes particularly acute when addressing contentious contemporary issues—from the Israeli-Palestinian conflict to questions of religious nationalism, from bioethical challenges to how ancient liturgical and scriptural texts should inform ethical choices and behaviour today. This lack of universal consensus, often perceived as a weakness in interfaith work, can paradoxically become a strength. When dialogue partners acknowledge that they speak from within their traditions rather than for their entire tradition, conversations can become more honest, nuanced, and productive. The ability to say “within Orthodox Christianity, there are multiple views on this” or “Jewish perspectives range from... to...” can foster deeper mutual understanding and prevent the false expectation that dialogue will produce unified “Christian” or “Jewish” positions.

This workshop will explore both the challenges and gifts of this reality through Orthodox Christian-Jewish engagement. Panel presenters will address: How theological diversity within each tradition shapes interfaith methodology, what positions or behaviours fall outside acceptable diversity, who has authority to represent tradition in dialogue, how acknowledging internal plurality can actually strengthen reconciliation efforts and practical strategies for conducting dialogue when partners cannot claim consensus. By examining how two ancient, decentralised

traditions engage across difference whilst managing internal diversity, this workshop offers insights relevant to all interfaith work in our fractured times.

The workshop will employ a structured panel discussion followed by facilitated small-group conversation. Three or four panellists will offer brief presentations (10 minutes each) examining specific case studies of navigating internal diversity whilst maintaining dialogue, including reflection on what constitutes the boundaries of acceptable pluralism within each tradition. This will be followed by facilitated table discussions where participants identify parallel challenges in their own contexts and share strategies. The session will conclude with collective reflection on what can be learned from traditions that have long experience managing theological diversity. Participants will leave with both theoretical insights and practical tools for conducting dialogue amidst disagreement.

### C2

(Wednesday, July 15, 11:30 am - 1:00 pm)

#### **"YOUR KINGDOM COME." A DISCUSSION OF THE NEW POLICY PAPER OF THE PROTESTANT CHURCH IN THE NETHERLANDS REGARDING RELATIONSHIPS WITH JEWS AND PALESTINIANS**

Geert de Korte

In November 2024, the General Synod of the Protestant Church in the Netherlands accepted a new policy paper addressing the church's relationship with Jews and Palestinians. This document was a new contribution after the paper published in 2008, called 'The Israeli-Palestinian Conflict in the Context of the Arab world of the Middle East'.

The new policy paper takes its title—and its point of departure—from the prayer “*Your Kingdom come.*” Its subtitle, “*As pilgrims on the way with Jews and Palestinian Christians,*” captures its central aim: to chart a path in which the church remains faithfully connected both to the Jewish people and to Palestinians, especially Palestinian Christians. By insisting on relationships with both communities, the paper embodies a form of repair that rejects zero-sum thinking. Instead, it invites the

church into a posture of shared pilgrimage, walking alongside Jews and Palestinians alike.

Central to the document is the notion of facing the wounds carried by both communities, as well as to acknowledge the role the church has played, historically and in the present, in inflicting or deepening these wounds. The church's openness to confront the church's own complicity in the suffering of both Jews and Palestinians resonates strongly with the conference's focus on repentance as a necessary step toward repair. In this workshop, we will read and discuss key passages from the policy paper. Together we will reflect on its underlying theology, its language, and also its practical implications. We will also consider how this document may serve as a constructive resource for conversations on a topic that is highly polarized in Dutch society and within the Protestant Church in the Netherlands, a situation that is far from unique globally.

### **C3**

(Wednesday, July 15, 11:30 am - 1:00 pm)

#### **REPAIR IN PRACTICE: CONFRONTING ANTISEMITISM IN ACADEMIC AND INTERRELIGIOUS CAMPUS LIFE**

Héctor Acero Ferrer, Mia Theocharis

Universities and colleges across North America are experiencing emerging forms of antisemitism that challenge existing educational, interfaith, and institutional frameworks. These dynamics are unfolding in contexts marked by declining religious literacy, generational distance from Holocaust memory, heightened political polarization, and the projection of broader societal conflicts—such as war, settler colonialism, and Christian nationalism—onto Jewish students and communities. Practitioners working directly with students are increasingly encountering conceptual confusion: antisemitism is misidentified as political critique, Jewish history is flattened or misunderstood, and dialogue structures often fail to create space for meaningful engagement.

This workshop is grounded in qualitative, practitioner-based experience from university and college settings in North America. Rather than focusing on the diagnosis of antisemitism alone, it centers

on promising practices: tools, approaches, and strategies that are showing measurable impact in campus environments. Workshop facilitators and participants will explore together how practitioners are navigating the limits of traditional interfaith dialogue (particularly when they are being developed to sustain education, relationship-building, and student support. By inviting participants to compare practices across geographic and institutional contexts, this workshop aims to generate transferable insights and practical tools for responding to antisemitism while remaining faithful to the spirit of repentance, repair, and reconciliation central to the conference theme.

This workshop adopts a co-practitioner approach, valuing participants as active contributors rather than passive recipients of information. Together, facilitators and participants will examine case studies drawn from campus life (including challenges related to social media, student activism, and the extrapolation of external conflicts onto Jewish identity), and will address the need for shared conceptual baselines around the following questions: What core historical, religious, and social understandings are increasingly in question? How can educators and practitioners re-establish foundational literacy without depoliticizing lived realities?

The session will begin with a concise contextual framework based on current campus experiences. Subsequently, participants will work in small groups on concrete case studies and practical tools currently in use at university and college levels. Group activities will focus on: Assessing the applicability of these practices within their unique contexts, identifying potential barriers to successful implementation and surfacing common conceptual challenges. The session will conclude with a collective reflection and synthesis phase. The aim is to generate a shared set of promising practices and guiding principles that can be applied across various educational settings.

#### C4

(Wednesday, July 15, 11:30 am - 1:00 pm)

##### **DEEP LISTENING: BRIDGING THE DISTANCE BETWEEN US**

Mark Walsh

In the more than two years since October 7, relationships between Jews, Christians and Muslims have become deeply strained and require healing and repair. In some cases, both reconciliation and even conciliation are needed. Jews, Christians, and Muslims each have their own distinctive ways of engaging in repentance, repair, and reconciliation, but we don't always understand one another. We often begin from different points and hold different expectations of one another. Given the distance between us, where might we start? The first step is recognising our shared humanity, believing in the dignity of all, and practising deep listening. The bridge between us can't be repaired without first listening to one another and then reflecting on our own reactions. Given our diverse contexts, languages, histories, and expectations, there are gaps between us that must be bridged to achieve this. This isn't easy work and can often be uncomfortable and confronting, particularly when we disagree, when we realise we have caused hurt, or when we fail to listen deeply to one another. Deep listening requires humility, vulnerability, and compassion.

This workshop will draw on insights from the ACCJ-ICCJ Interfaith Gathering, "Heads, Hearts & Hands: What can dialogue do for us?", held in Melbourne (Naarm) in February 2025. Over three days, Jews, Christians and a small number of Muslims were able to address October 7, the conflict in Gaza, and the rise in antisemitism in ways they had not been able to. Sensitive facilitation created a space for deep listening and open dialogue, fostering empathy, understanding and much-needed repair and healing. In this workshop, you will be invited to take part in a similar process to explore your ability to listen deeply as a way to bridge the gaps between us and create safe spaces to explore repentance, repair and reconciliation.

Participants will be invited to enter into a process that encourages them to listen and speak with an open mind, an open heart, and openness to the emerging future—one that involves a shift in consciousness from

ego-centric to eco-centric awareness. Participants will be invited to reflect on this experience and share their insights with one another. For further background, please read "Closing the distance between us: Reflections on the National Gathering of Jews and Christians in February 2025" by Mark Walsh and Emmanuel Nathan in *Gesher* (CCJ Victoria, November 2025).

#### C5

(Wednesday, July 15, 11:30 am - 1:00 pm)

##### **FOR THE SIN OF IGNORANCE: REPENTANCE, REPAIR, RECONCILIATION THROUGH RELIGIOUS LITERACY**

Shaul Osadchey

Religious illiteracy is one of the major contributing factors to intolerance, prejudice, and conflict between people and nations. Ignorance of others' religious beliefs and practices leads to stereotyping, misinformation and conflict. The antidote is building positive interfaith relations on the individual and communal level that enhance personal enlightenment and communal collaboration leading to the embrace of respect, dignity and trust as cornerstones of all interactions.

"*Our House is Your House*" is a program designed to engage six congregations in geographic proximity from diverse religious traditions to participate in a two-year program during which they will jointly explore their respective faiths in consecutive three-month blocks. Three faith traditions would be studied in the first year and the remaining three in the second year. A clergy or scholar from that tradition would be engaged to offer lectures, write articles for the congregational bulletin and arrange visits from the other five traditions to that congregation. Other types of activities would include holiday celebrations and hosting family dinners. At the end of the two-year program, a concluding convocation will be held with a goal of continuing the relationships between the six congregations *and finding opportunities for future collaboration*. Metrics could be used to determine the extent of improvement in individual's religious literacy quotient as one means to measure the success and efficacy of the program.

The workshop would begin with participants taking a basic religious literacy quiz about the major world religions followed by conversation that identifies questions and areas of interest that a religious literacy program might address in their communities. A panel composed of clergy from the Christian, Jewish and Muslim traditions who would respond to the question, *“A Rabbi, Priest and an Imam walk into the room. What question have you always wanted to ask them?”*

### D1

(Wednesday, July 15, 2:30 pm — 4:00 pm)

#### **STRESS TEST: DESIGNING SHARED SACRED JOURNEYS IN "THE LAND" – NAVIGATING FAITH, POWER, POLITICS AND PARTNERSHIP**

Ophir Yarden

This interactive workshop invites participants to examine Jewish–Christian relations through the practical and often delicate process of designing and implementing a joint interreligious study tour in “The Land.” Framed as a “stress test,” the session explores how theological commitments, historical memory, and contemporary political realities converge when Jews and Christians (and Muslims and others) travel, learn, and reflect together in a context charged with meaning and tension.

Rather than offering a fixed model, the workshop engages participants in a guided, participatory exercise simulating key decision points in planning such a journey. Small groups will be tasked with shaping elements of a shared itinerary while navigating real-world constraints and sensitivities. Through this process, participants will encounter—and critically reflect on—the competing priorities, implicit assumptions, and potential fault lines that arise.

Key themes include preparing participants to share ownership of the experience, including negotiating the loss of a purely uni-religious agenda; cultivating openness to religious difference and political discomfort; and fostering conditions for meaningful encounter without erasing asymmetries. The workshop will also address the challenge of balancing religious and political content in itineraries, the impact of current events on group dynamics, and approaches to visiting both shared and distinct holy sites with integrity and respect.

In addition to pre-program preparation we’ll discuss post-program follow-up as an essential component of a successful program and sustained dialogue. We will consider what transformative outcomes are realistic and how relationships can be deepened beyond the initial encounter.

By foregrounding practice over theory, this session offers a candid space to grapple with the complexities of interreligious engagement in situ. It aims to equip educators, clergy, and dialogue practitioners with both conceptual tools and practical insights for designing encounters that are honest, challenging, and constructive.

## D2

(Wednesday, July 15, 2:30 pm — 4:00 pm)

### **THE EISENACH “DEJUDAIZATION INSTITUTE” 1939-1945: SILENCING, SUPPRESSING, COMING TO TERMS WITH THE PAST**

Torsten Lattki

From 1939 to 1945, the “Institute for the Study and Eradication of Jewish Influence on German Church Life” existed in Eisenach, Thuringia. The scientific director of this institution was the New Testament scholar and pastor Walter Grundmann (1906–1976). He and the approximately 180 voluntary staff were deeply convinced of Hitler and National Socialism and pursued the goal of creating a “Christianity appropriate to the German people.” By constructing Jesus as an ‘Aryan’ and rewriting and reorganizing the Bible, hymnbook, and catechism, they “de-Judaized” Christian theology and church practice.

The workshop shows how the institute came into being and developed. How did it work and what were the consequences? How did Grundmann and his colleagues construct a non-Jewish Jesus in the fight against Judaism? How did they create a Christianity in National Socialist categories?

Soon after 1945, Grundmann once again held various positions in the church and theology and became one of the most successful theologians in the German Democratic Republic. He continued to regard Judaism as a rejected religion with no right to exist and held fast to his inhuman views. His commentaries on the New Testament and other books influenced numerous theologians and pastors.

In the workshop, the participants learn that Grundmann's anti-Semitism and his role in the “Dejudaization Institute” were long silenced and

repressed, and that theological, historical, and ecclesiastical reappraisal only took place many decades after the Shoah.

After a brief keynote speech on historical and theological context, participants will work with texts from the rewritten Bible. This will give them concrete insight into the methods used to “de-Judaize” Christianity. In view of the dramatic increase in anti-Semitism in our time and in all areas of society, it is necessary to recognize these practices and goals in order to counter any renewed hatred of Jews in the church, theology, and beyond.

## D3

(Wednesday, July 15, 2:30 pm — 4:00 pm)

### **BEING A REFUGEE – FILM, DISCUSSION, AND INTERFAITH PERSPECTIVE ON REFUGEEHOOD, DIGNITY, AND RESPONSIBILITY**

Lisbeth Blickle, Hasan Dadelen

The workshop focuses on the documentary film *Being a Refugee*. The film will be shown in English and gives refugees a space to share their experiences in their own words—beyond political slogans, abstract debates, or mere statistics. It reveals what it means to have to leave one’s homeland, to live in uncertainty, and yet to maintain hope, dignity, and humanity.

Following the approximately 45-minute film screening, Hasan Dadelen and Lisbeth Blickle invite participants to a moderated discussion. The discussion will focus not only on the film’s content but also on the question of how religious and interreligious education can contribute to empathy, responsibility, and social cohesion. The workshop views flight and migration as a human, ethical, and spiritual challenge and creates a space for exchange, personal reflection, and shared learning.

The workshop is designed as a dialogic film and discussion format. After a brief introduction, the film *Being a Refugee* will first be shown in its English version. The second part will feature an interactive film discussion with the participants. The discussion segment is designed to be interactive: After an initial round of reactions to the film, participants engage in small-group discussions based on selected guiding questions.

Subsequently, impressions are brought together in a plenary session and linked to interfaith perspectives on human dignity, hospitality, vulnerability, and social responsibility. A concluding reflection explores the implications of the film for educational work, dialogue initiatives, and practical engagement.

The format combines film viewing, personal reflection, and moderated dialogue, and is particularly well-suited for an international audience with an interest in interfaith dialogue.

#### **D4**

(Wednesday, July 15, 2:30 pm — 4:00 pm)

#### **IN YOUR SHOES: CO-CREATING DIGITAL DIALOGUE IN AN AGE OF POLARIZATION**

Melody Amal Khalil Kabalan

In turbulent times, conflict unfolds not only in physical spaces but also in digital ones. Social media, podcasts, and emerging AI tools increasingly shape how communities construct narratives, encounter difference, and express their values. This interactive workshop explores how new media can become a meaningful resource for interreligious dialogue and responsible public discourse.

The session is inspired by *En tus zapatos* (“In Your Shoes”), a successful Argentine podcast and dialogue initiative created and hosted by the facilitator of this workshop. Through carefully facilitated conversations across political, religious, and cultural differences, *En tus zapatos* has created a public space where participants articulate their perspectives with depth, dignity, and curiosity. Drawing on this methodology, participants will work in small, interreligious groups to co-create a short podcast episode outline. Each group will choose a theme connected to the conference focus—such as repentance, repair, reconciliation, memory, responsibility, dignity, coexistence, or interreligious engagement in times of conflict—and develop a structured conversation in which diverse voices are meaningfully heard. The aim is not to produce consensus, but to practice thoughtful articulation, deep listening, and collaborative storytelling across differences.

Selected groups will share excerpts of their co-created “episodes,” followed by a collective reflection on how digital storytelling can serve as a contemporary tool for dialogue, relational awareness, and constructive engagement in both local and global contexts. Participants will leave with both an experiential understanding of the process and a replicable framework for designing structured digital dialogue spaces within their own communities.

#### **D5**

(Wednesday, July 15, 2:30 pm — 4:00 pm)

#### **MANY LANGUAGES OF REPENTANCE: SCRIPTURAL REASONING AS A TRILATERAL PRACTICE OF REPAIR**

Fariza Bisaeva, Julia Verbeek, Willy Weisz

Repentance stands at the heart of Jewish, Christian, and Muslim traditions, yet each community approaches it through distinct theological vocabularies, narratives, and spiritual grammars. Teshuvah, metanoia, and tawba resonate across traditions as movements of return, transformation, and responsibility, while also expressing different understandings of sin, accountability, divine mercy, and the work of repair. In times of social fracture, political violence, and moral exhaustion, these differences matter—not as obstacles to dialogue, but as religious resources that can deepen it.

This workshop proposes Scriptural Reasoning (SR) as a trilateral practice for engaging the plurality of repentant languages through sustained encounter with sacred texts. Rather than harmonizing traditions or reducing them to shared ethical statements, SR creates a disciplined interpretive space in which convergences and tensions can be held together. Participants will explore how repentance is articulated in moments of communal crisis, moral failure, and broken relationship, and how different traditions imagine both the possibility and the limits of repair.

Grounded in the conference theme “Repentance, Repair, and Reconciliation: Religious Resources for Tumultuous Times,” the workshop responds directly to the call’s emphasis on the distinct vocabularies of

the traditions and their shared affirmation of human dignity. By approaching repentance through trilateral text study, the session frames interreligious reading itself as a relational practice: one that requires attentiveness, vulnerability, and interpretive humility.

The workshop will be co-designed and co-led by a trilateral facilitation team, offering participants not only a dialogue experience, but an embodied exploration of how repentance can be practiced across religious difference in ways that open pathways toward repair.

After a brief introduction to Scriptural Reasoning, passages from scripture of each tradition will be introduced. Each text will be briefly contextualized by a workshop facilitator from that faith tradition, then read aloud and explored through moderated open discussion focused on attentive listening, interpretive questioning, and close engagement with the text. This shared textual grounding will establish a common dialogical space. In a second phase, participants will move into small (if possible, trilateral) groups to continue the conversation more personally, reflecting on how the different vocabularies of repentance resonate, challenge, and inform practices of repair today.

### SUNDAY, JULY 12, 2026

4:00 pm – 6:00 pm

#### **Opening Event and Seelisberg Prize 2026**

Awardee: Rabbi Dr David Meyer (Italy)

#### **Welcome**

Rabbi Dr David Sandmel,  
International Council of Christians and Jews  
Rev. Friedhelm Pieper,  
Deutscher Koordinierungsrat  
Rev. Dr Ursula Rudnick,  
Evang.-luth. Landeskirche Hannovers

#### **Greeting Addresses**

#### **Laudation**

Dr Massimo Gargiulo,  
Pontifical Gregorian University, Rome

#### **Award Ceremony**

#### **Keynote Lecture**

Awardee Rabbi Dr David Meyer,  
Cardinal Bea Centre for Judaic Studies –  
Pontifical Gregorian University, Rome

**BEWARE OF SOOTHING WORDS IN TUMULTUOUS  
TIMES - *SPEAK TO US SMOOTH THINGS, PROPHECY  
ILLUSIONS (ISAIAH 30:10)***

#### **Musical Interludes**



## SEELISBERG PRIZE

The SEELISBERG PRIZE is named in memory of the ground-breaking gathering that occurred in the small Swiss village of Seelisberg from 30 July to 5 August 1947 to address perennial Christian teachings of contempt for Jews and Judaism. It issued the very influential "A call to the churches: The Ten Points for Seelisberg" which is widely recognized as inaugurating the transformation in relations between Jews and Christians that has unfolded over the past seventy years.

The SEELISBERG PRIZE is awarded annually (since 2022) by the International Council of Christians and Jews (which originated out of the Seelisberg conference) and the Center for Intercultural Theology and Religions at the University of Salzburg. It honors individuals who have played major roles through their scholarship and teaching in advancing the rapprochement between Jews and Christians.

2026 awardee: **Rabbi Dr David Meyer**

## MONDAY, JULY 13, 2026

7:00 pm **Friends and Sponsors  
of the Martin Buber House (FaS)  
Annual General Meeting (AGM)**

8:00 pm **'Go to the Movies'**

**I WILL BUILD THIS WORLD FROM LOVE. A RADICAL  
ACT OF FAITH: THE PEACE PROJECT (A FILM BY  
GOLAN BEN CHORIN)**

THE PEACE PROJECT stands as a powerful example of faith and interreligious cooperation. Located in Tbilisi, Georgia, in the Caucasus, it brings together separate Christian, Muslim, Jewish, and Buddhist places of worship—and their autonomous congregations—under one roof. Their interactions demonstrate the possibilities of genuine interfaith harmony. The documentary, which premiered at the Montclair Film Festival in New Jersey and aired on PBS across the United States, explores what can be achieved by living THE PEACE PROJECT'S motto: responding to hatred with beauty. It follows three visionary leaders—Georgian Bishop Malkhaz Songulashvili, Israeli Rabbi Golan Ben-Chorin, and New Jersey Cantor Meredith Greenberg—as they nurture the project's communities. Alongside the successes and challenges of interreligious engagement, the film chronicles the pioneering liberal Jewish community in Tbilisi and its emerging local leadership. A central focus is a group of young adults preparing for their B'nai Mitzvah, including four women who will become the first in 2,600 years of Georgian Jewish history to publicly read from the Torah. Their identity formation, intra-faith struggles with the local established Jewish community, and emerging passion for interfaith work, along with their international fellowship with Greenberg's community in New Jersey, weave a story of hope.

**Rabbi Golan Ben-Chorin** is the founding rabbi of THE PEACE SYNAGOGUE, the Jewish partner within THE PEACE PROJECT.

<https://members.nertamid.org/fromlove>

## THURSDAY, JULY 16, 2026

09:00 am – 1:00 pm **International Council of Christians and Jews (ICCJ)  
Annual General Meeting (AGM)**

**Welcome  
Present  
Apologies  
Confirmation of quorum  
Confirmation that the meeting was duly convened  
Adoption of the agenda previously circulated  
Matters arising not covered under present agenda  
Agreed changes of the agenda**

*Topic 01* **Minutes of AGM, Warsaw, July 2, 2025**  
(previously circulated with the invitation letter)

*Topic 02* **President's Report**

*Topic 03* **General Secretary's Report**

*Topic 04* **Treasurer's Report:**

- Auditor's report 2024
- Auditor's report 2025
- Budget 2026 / 2027
- International Martin Buber Foundation
- Association "Friends and Sponsors of the Martin Buber House" (FaS)
- Auditors 2026

*Topic 05* **Exoneration of the Board**

*Topic 06* **Councils and Committees:**

- International Abrahamic Forum (IAF)
- Network of "Early Career Researchers"
- Theology Committee (TC)

*Topic 07* **Future of ICCJ Programming**

*Topic 08* **80<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Seelisberg Conference**

*Topic 09* **ICCJ Conferences and Gatherings:**

- 2027 Switzerland (ICCJ MembOrg gathering)
- 2028 Canada (ICCJ conference)
- 2029 Belgium (ICCJ MembOrg gathering)

*Topic 10* **Review of ICCJ Membership Regulations**

*Topic 11* **Member Organizations:**

- Suspensions of membership
- Membership applications and new members
- Reports from Member Organizations

*Topic 12* **Any Other Business**

## SPEAKERS AND PRESENTERS

### **Acero Ferrer, Héctor**

Canada, Héctor Acero Ferrer is an associate of Notre Dame de Sion. Currently, Héctor serves as Director of Lifelong Learning at the Institute for Christian Studies and Associate Director of the Centre for Philosophy, Religion, and Social Ethics. He is also Adjunct Faculty at Martin Luther University College's BA in Christianity, Interfaith Dialogue, and Community Engagement.

### **Admirand, Peter**

Ireland, Peter Admirand is an Associate Professor of Theology and the Director of the Centre for Interreligious Dialogue at Dublin City University. He also serves as the Christian Co-Chair of the Irish Council of Christians and Jews. He is the author or editor of 8 books including: *The Last of Us and Theology: Violence, Ethics, Redemption?*

### **Ahmed, Mohammed Ibraheem**

UK, Dr Mohammed Ibraheem Ahmed is Head of the Secretariat for the Commission on Interfaith Relations, which seeks to address how global conflicts impact communities in the UK. He is also a Postdoctoral Research Associate at St Edmund's College, University of Cambridge. His work focuses on religion in public life, social cohesion, interfaith relations, UK policy and the domestic impacts of international conflict.

### **Assayag, Orian**

France, Writer of fiction, Orian Assayag holds M.A. in religious studies from Copenhagen University where she gave tutorials in Talmud for M.A. students for a few semesters. A Jewish Moroccan cantor, based in France.

### **Barbara, Mona**

Israel, Mona Barbara is a prospective Ph.D. candidate in Religious Studies, research and teaching assistant in Religious Studies at Tel Aviv University, specializing in Eastern Orthodox interpretations of Pauline texts and their implications for Jewish-Christian dialogue.

### **Bargár, Pavol**

Czech Republic, Pavol Bargár is associate professor at the Protestant Theological Faculty of Charles University in Prague. Pavol serves on the executive board of the ICCJ. In addition to numerous articles and book chapters, he is the author of *Embodied Existence: Our Common Life in God* (Cascade Books, 2023) and co-editor, with Peter Jonkers, of *The Faith and Beliefs of "Nonbelievers"* (CRVP, 2024).

### **Bisaeva, Fariza**

Austria, Fariza Bisaeva is a Ph.D. candidate in Islamic Religious Education at the University of Vienna, where she teaches introductory courses in Religious Education and Gender Studies. She is a former member of the interfaith group "Dialog:Abraham" and also appears on "Frag Imam," a 2024 initiative of the Institute for Islamic Theological Studies across Instagram (@frag.imam), TikTok and YouTube.

### **Blickle, Lisbeth**

Germany, Lisbeth Blickle is the managing partner of BLICKWEITE / K.H. Blickle Förder-gGmbH and has shaped the work of the Stuttgart Center for Interreligious Dialogue for many years. Together with her late husband, Karl-Hermann Blickle, she has been dedicated for decades to fostering encounters, mutual understanding, and peace efforts among religions, cultures, and people.

### **Bronstein, Guillermo**

Peru, Rabbi Guillermo Bronstein is a rabbi emeritus in Lima. He is a former Co-President of the Peruvian Interreligious Committee. He has served as a Visiting Lecturer at various institutions of Theological Education, and is a member of the ICCJ Theology Committee.

### **Castillo, David**

Costa Rica, David Castillo holds a Ph.D. in Biblical Studies from the University of KwaZulu-Natal in South Africa, as well as a Master's degree in Biblical Studies from the same university. He is a member of the Biblical Formation Team at the Center for Jewish-Christian Studies and Relations

of the Congregation of Our Lady of Sion in San José, Costa Rica, and a member of the Faculty of Theology at the Latin American Biblical University, in the Department of Biblical Studies.

**Cohen, Rebecca**

USA, Rebecca Cohen is the USCCB Secretariat for Ecumenical and Interreligious Affairs' Program/Research Specialist.

**Dadelen, Hasan**

Germany, Hasan Dadelen is a Muslim advisor and project director at the Stuttgart Lehrhaus – Center for Interreligious Dialogue. He develops the Lehrhaus's programs, events, publications, and media formats, with a particular focus on Jewish-Muslim and interreligious dialogue. He is especially interested in educational initiatives that bring together religious traditions, social responsibility, and personal encounters.

**de Korte, Geert**

Israel, Geert de Korte serves as the Israel representative for the Dutch Center for Israel Studies, an organization dedicated to fostering Jewish-Christian dialogue. Since 2025, he has also represented the Protestant Church in the Netherlands in Israel. He is currently pursuing a Ph.D. at the Theological University of Apeldoorn, focusing on Ambrose of Milan's attitude toward the Jews.

**Elias, Hussam**

Palestine/Israel, doctoral student at the University of Haifa researching Identity Formation of Arab Christian Youth in Israel, M.A. in Sociology from the Hebrew University of Jerusalem, executive secretary of the International Christian Committee in Israel (ICCI) based in Nazareth, affiliate of the Middle East Council of Churches and the World Council of Churches, Christian Steering Team Member of the International Abrahamic Forum.

**Füllenbach, Elias H.**

Germany, Father Elias H. Füllenbach OP is a Catholic theologian and

Church Historian. In addition to his pastoral work in Düsseldorf, he is also an archivist of the Dominican Province in Germany and Austria and heads the order's Historical Institute in Cologne. He is a member of various Christian-Jewish committees in Germany.

**Gelfand, Shoshana Boyd**

UK, Rabbi Shoshana Boyd Gelfand; Visiting Scholar at Sarum College in Salisbury and representative to ICCJ from IJCIC (the International Jewish Committee on Interreligious Consultations).

**Hisarci, Dervis**

Germany, Derviş Hızarcı is an expert on Antisemitism and chairman of Kreuzberger Initiative gegen Antisemitismus – KIGa e.V. and has played a key role in developing the organization's international orientation and fostering Jewish-Muslim dialogue. For his commitment to Germany's immigration society, he was awarded the Medal of Merit by the President of Germany.

**Janssen, Wibke**

Germany, Rev. Dr Wibke Janssen, ordained minister of the Protestant Church in the Rhineland, senior church councilor / member church leadership, head of the department for theology and ecumenism including the work area of Christian-Jewish dialogue.

**Joslyn-Siemiatkoski, Daniel**

USA, Daniel Joslyn-Siemiatkoski, Kraft Family Professor and Director of the Center for Christian-Jewish Learning at Boston College, priest in the Episcopal Church, participant in National Council of Churches-National Council of Synagogues Roundtable, and ecumenical and interreligious relations officer for Episcopal Diocese of Massachusetts.

**Kamine, Benjamin**

USA, Benjamin Haber Kamine holds a joint appointment at the Jewish Theological Seminary, Union Theological Seminary, and Columbia University. At JTS, Assistant Professor in Rabbinic Literatures and Cultures

and Associate Director of the Milstein Center for Interreligious Dialogue; at Union, Assistant Teaching Professor in Interreligious Engagement; and at Columbia. 2nd vice-president of the executive board of the ICCJ; Jewish Co-chair of the International Abrahamic Forum.

#### **Karahan, Engin**

Germany, Engin Karahan is Managing Director of EP Ethos & Polis UG and co-founder of Alhambra Gesellschaft e.V., a Muslim civil society organisation based in Cologne, Germany. With over two decades of experience in community and association work, he advises organisations on institutional development, crisis communication, and the prevention of digital extremism. He currently leads Digitale Resilienz, a federally funded project analysing extremist content and online radicalisation.

#### **Kellenbach, Katharina von**

Germany, Katharina von Kellenbach is professor emerita of religious studies at St. Mary's College of Maryland (2021) and Visiting Fellow in Christian-Jewish-Relations at the Boston College (2021-2026). She coordinated *Bildstörungen* an der Evangelischen Akademie zu Berlin (2020-2024). Her areas of expertise include Christian-Jewish relations, Holocaust Studies, feminist theology, women's history, and interreligious dialogue.

#### **Khalil, Melody**

Argentina, Melody Amal Khalil Kabalan is a KAICIID Fellow and a member of the Religions for Peace Latin, she is the co-creator of the podcast "In Your Shoes / En Tus Zapatos", developed together with her Jewish colleague and friend, Barbara Zeifer a platform that fosters deep listening, narrative-sharing, and trust-building between Jewish and Muslim communities in Argentina.

#### **Kowalska, Katarzyna**

Poland, Dr Katarzyna Kowalska, NDS; sister of Notre Dame de Sion, levturer in the fields of Jewish-Christian relations. Co-chair of the Polish CCJ (PRChiŻ) and First Vice-President of the ICCJ.

#### **Langer, Ruth**

USA, Ruth Langer is Professor of Jewish Studies in the Theology Department at Boston College and Associate Director of its Center for Christian-Jewish Learning. She received her Ph.D. in Jewish Liturgy in 1994 and her rabbinic ordination in 1986 from Hebrew Union College - Jewish Institute of Religion in Cincinnati. She writes widely in two primary areas: the development of Jewish liturgy and ritual from antiquity to today; and Christian-Jewish relations.

#### **Lattki, Torsten**

Germany, Dr Torsten Lattki; Study director for interfaith dialogue and against anti-Semitism at the German Coordinating Council of Societies for Christian-Jewish Cooperation, Deutscher Koordinierungsrat der Gesellschaften für Christlich-Jüdische Zusammenarbeit (DKR).

#### **Marans, Noam**

USA, Rabbi Noam Marans is American Jewish Committee's (AJC) Director of Interreligious Affairs. He served as chair of IJCIC, the International Jewish Committee for Interreligious Consultations, world Jewry's official dialogue partner with the Vatican, Ecumenical Patriarchate, World Council of Churches, World Evangelical Alliance, and other bodies. He is a graduate of Columbia University and the Jewish Theological Seminary, where he was ordained.

#### **Meyer, Barbara U.**

Israel, Dr Barbara U. Meyer; Professor of Religious Studies and chair of the Program for Religious Studies at the Graduate School of Philosophy, Tel Aviv University.

#### **Miller Rubens, Heather**

USA, Dr Heather Miller Rubens, Executive Director and Roman Catholic Scholar at the Institute for Islamic, Christian and Jewish Studies in Baltimore, Maryland.

#### **Mirsadri, Saïda**

Switzerland, Saïda Mirsadri is a philosopher of religion and scholar of interreligious dialogue. She received her M.A. and Ph.D. in Philosophy of

Religion from the University of Tehran. Since 2011, she has been actively engaged in academic interreligious dialogue in Iran, Germany, and Switzerland. She is currently a Research Fellow in the project Towards a Theology in Encounter with Religions at the Protestant Faculty of Theology of the University of Geneva.

**Morrow, Patrick**

UK, Rev. Patrick Morrow is a priest in the Church of England in both parish ministry and mental-health chaplaincy. He is Secretary to the ICCJ Theology Committee. He has some 32 publications in a variety of periodicals and 3 books.

**Musall, Frederek**

Germany, Dr Frederek Musall is a scholar of Jewish studies and philosophy. Since 2015, he has been Professor of Jewish Philosophy and Intellectual History at the Hochschule für Jüdische Studien Heidelberg. In 2023, he was appointed Professor of Jewish Studies at the Julius-Maximilians-Universität Würzburg. His research focuses on Jewish philosophy, intellectual history, and interreligious studies.

**Osadchy, Shaul**

USA, Rabbi, Interfaith Consultant; Past President Calgary CCJ; Recipient of King Abdullah II World Interfaith Harmony Week Gold Medal in 2017 and Silver Medal in 2025; co-founder Calgary Jewish-Muslim Council; Faith Leader-in-Residence for the American Leadership Forum- Houston.

**Pieper, Friedhelm**

Germany, Rev. Friedhelm Pieper is a retired Protestant Pastor. He is engaged as Protestant President in the leadership of the German Council of Christians and Jews, the umbrella organization of over 80 member organizations in all of Germany, and serves as vice-chair of the International Martin Buber-Foundation.

**Ready, Geoffrey**

Canada, Very Rev. Fr Dr Geoffrey Ready; Orthodox Christian presbyter

and director of Orthodox Christian Studies at Trinity College, University of Toronto, chair of Orthodox Christians in Dialogue with Jews (OCDJ).

**Reijnen, Anne Marie**

France, Anne Marie Reijnen is a Protestant theologian, emerita Chair of Dogmatics at the Brussels FUTP and former *Kairos* Chair at the Catholic University of Paris/ Institut catholique de Paris. She continues teaching in both institutions. Professor Reijnen was ordained as a minister in the United Protestant Church of Belgium (1986) and is the Vice-President of the Amitié judéo-chrétienne de France (AJCF).

**Reinbold, Wolfgang**

Germany, Dr Wolfgang Reinbold, professor of New Testament at the Georg-August-University Göttingen, Commissioner for Interreligious Dialogue of the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Hanover and chairman of the House of Religions in Hanover.

**Ross, Erik Michael**

Israel, Erik Michael Ross is a Dominican priest and Luxembourgish/USA binational. He lives at the Priory of St Stephen in East Jerusalem, which hosts the École biblique et archéologique française. Neither a Palestinian nor a Jewish Israeli, Erik has experienced the conflict as a Jerusalemite and through his involvement in the Christosemitism (christosemitism.com) research project directed by Prof. Karma Ben-Johanan at The Hebrew University of Jerusalem.

**Rudnick, Ursula**

Germany, Rev. Dr Ursula Rudnick is an ordained Lutheran Theologian. She studied Protestant Theology at the Universities of Tübingen and Göttingen where she earned an M.A. She received a Ph.D. from the Jewish Theological Seminary of America in New York. She taught at the Universities of Aachen and Hanover where she is a professor at the Institute of Theology and Comparative Religion. Furthermore, she serves as a commissioner for Jewish-Christian Relations of the Evangelical-Lutheran Church of Hanover.

**Sandmel, David Fox**

USA, Rabbi Dr David Fox Sandmel is a scholar and long-time interfaith activist and president of the ICCJ. He is immediate past chair of the International Jewish Committee on Interreligious Consultation. He served as Director of Interreligious Engagement at ADL from 2014-2022. From 2003-2014, he held the Crown-Ryan Chair in Jewish Studies at the Catholic Theological Union in Chicago.

**Theocharis, Mia**

Canada, Dr Mia Theocharis is a course instructor at the University of St. Michael's College (U of T), where she teaches interreligious dialogue and communication. She also serves as Director of Advocacy, Emerging Campuses at Hillel Ontario, leading initiatives to address antisemitism on university and college campuses.

**Töllner, Axel**

Germany, Rev. Dr Axel Töllner, since September 1, 2014, Regional Representative for Christian-Jewish Dialogue of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Bavaria and Executive Director of the An-Institute for Christian-Jewish Studies and Relations at Augustana University in Neuendettelsau, since 2023, Chairman of the Conference of Regional Church Working Groups on Christians and Jews (KLAK) within the EKD.

**Verbeek, Julia**

Austria, Julia Verbeek has a background in Cultural and Social Anthropology as well as Religious Studies, with a focus on interreligious dialogue and lived religions. She works for the Austrian Coordinating Committee of Christians and Jews, and is a member of the ICCJ Theological Committee.

**Walsh, Mark**

Australia, Mark Walsh is the Director of Formation and Mission with the Sisters of Our Lady of Sion, Australia and a member of the Notre Dame de Sion Jewish-Christian Relations Team. He is the chair of the Australian Council of Christians and Jews and secretary of the Council of Christians

and Jews (Victoria). He was the co-convenor of the Heads, Hearts and Hands Interfaith Gathering with Emmanuel Nathan.

**Weisz, Willy**

Austria, Dr Willy Weisz, Jewish Vice-President of the Coordinating Committee for Christian-Jewish Cooperation, the Austrian ICCJ member, lecturer on Judaism and Jewish ethics, takes care of Jewish patients at the General Hospital of Vienna.

**Yarden, Ophir**

Israel, Ophir Yarden; teaches Jewish and Israel studies at Brigham Young University's Jerusalem Centre and other Christian study programs in Jerusalem. On behalf of the Rossing Centre for Education and Dialogue (ICCJ's affiliate in Israel-Palestine), he directs *ADASHA: The Jerusalem Centre for Interreligious Encounter*, which conducts study programs for groups visiting Israel/Palestine. Ophir serves on the Executive Board of the ICCJ.

**Zacharoff, Allyson**

USA, Rabbi Allyson Zacharoff is AJC's Associate Director of Interreligious Affairs.

## THE 2026 HANOVER PLANNING COMMITTEE

### Members (in alphabetical order):

Anette Adelmann  
Liliane Apotheker  
Pavol Bargár  
Elias Füllenbach  
Katarzyna Kowalska  
Nina Pape  
Friedhelm Pieper  
Ursula Rudnick  
David Sandmel

## ICCJ EXECUTIVE BOARD

David Sandmel, USA	President
Katarzyna Kowalska, Poland	1st Vice President
Benjamin Kamine, USA	2nd Vice President
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Ophir Yarden, Israel	Member
Liliane Apotheker, France	Immediate Past President
Anette Adelmann, Germany	General Secretary

## CONFERENCE STAFF

Charlotte Carl	ICCJ Staff member
Susanne Janka	ICCJ Staff member
Leonie Adelmann	Student Assistant
Andrea Huggler	Student Assistant
Vincent Pueschel	Student Assistant
Fiete Tirrel	Student Assistant

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