

The Prime Minister's Office,  
Public Enquiries Department  
Kiryat Ben Gurion, Building C  
Jerusalem 91950, Israel

October 23, 2020

Dear Honorable Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu,

We would like to take this time to congratulate you on the milestone anniversary of seven decades of the Israeli Bonds organization. This program for the Jewish State has become an economic cornerstone for the land of ancient heritage and modern achievement.

First and foremost, as clergy from multiple denominations across the Buckeye Bible Belt, we want to express our profound regret regarding a 2017 World Council of Churches' (WCC) policy. This policy calls Israel's sovereignty of Jerusalem, Judea, and Samaria "illegal" and the expansion of its construction and settlements as "illegal and unjust." (1) This same policy states its support of the Boycott, Divestment and Sanction (BDS) Movement in Jewish settlements of these listed areas.

We want to assure you Mr. Prime Minister, the World Council of Churches does not represent our local congregations nor does its unorthodox view on Israel carry any authority.

There is no doubt, despite the BDS Movement, Israel has proven to be resilient. In fact, the State of Ohio is known as the largest state holder (2) of Israel bonds in the United States. Recently at the request of the faith community, one of our local counties invested in Israel bonds for its first time.

In addition, clergy in our region have gone on record supporting U.S. recognition of Jerusalem as the Israeli capital, (3) and supporting Israeli sovereignty of the Golan Heights, Judea, and Samaria. (4)

**Having said this, as clergy from thirty-three (33) congregations in North Central Ohio, we are declaring our commitment to the Jewish State by personally purchasing Israel bonds. We want to formally express our support for Israel and to demonstrate our approval of the construction and expansion of Jewish settlements in its sovereign territories.**

As Deuteronomy 32:49 says, this is the land G-d is giving as your own possession.

We believe there is a dynamic bridge between Ohio and Israel. Together we are combatting anti-Semitism and building a brighter future. Thank you for your friendship.

Sincerely,

The following thirty-three (33) Ohio clergy are cosigners of this correspondence and have committed to the purchase of Israel bonds the week of September 21<sup>st</sup>, 2020: These congregations are located inside North Central Ohio in the counties of Richland, Ashland, Crawford, Morrow, and Wayne counties.

Pastor Bryan Schatzinger, Calvary Chapel	Pastor Russell Stanford, All Believers in Christ
Pastor Larry Hulver, New Liberty Baptist	Pastor Joe Maggelet, Ashland Fellowship Christian Athletes
Pastor El Akuchie, Godsfield House of Prayer	Pastor Dink Porter, First Church of the Open Bible
Pastor Louis Blevins, Latter Rain COGIC	Pastor Doug Tackett, Taylortown Community Church
Pastor Jody Odom, Ambassadors for Christ	Pastor James Marshall, Ganges Community Church
Rabbi William Hallbrook, Sar Shalom Center	Pastor J.C. Church, Victory in Truth Ministries
Pastor Howdie Burnette, Perrysville Baptist	Pastor Christopher Thomas, Diamond Hills Baptist
Pastor Dallas Waggle, Lucas Foursquare	Pastor John Temple, Loudonville Trinity Community
Pastor Jerry O'Brien, Faith Harvest Fellowship	Pastor Rick Wiseman, Promised Land Fellowship
Pastor David Bates, Unity Freewill Baptist	Pastor Art Kennard, Maranatha Christian
Pastor James Garrett, Ontario Christian Fellowship	Pastor Brian Phillips, New Beginnings Freewill Baptist
Pastor John Bouquet, Savannah Bethel Baptist	Pastor Tim Davis, Newville Baptist
Pastor George Lewis, Shelby Temple of GOD	Pastor Robert O'Brien, Apostolic Faith Assembly
Pastor Hank Webb, Belmont Community Church	Pastor Randy Raynes, Mansfield Fellowship Baptist
Pastor Steve Brenneman, Awakening Christian	Pastor Anthony Cooper, Shelby Life Church
Pastor Chad Hayes, Mansfield Caesarea Baptist	Pastor Les Vnasdale, Cornerstone Grace Brethren
Pastor James Spencer, Peoples' Baptist	

Cc: Israeli Knesset Speaker Yariv Levin  
U.S. Ambassador David Friedman  
U.S. Secretary of State Mike Pompeo

## REFERENCES:

1 "World Council of Churches policy on Palestine and Israel 1948-2016

<https://www.oikoumene.org/resources/documents/wcc-policy-on-palestine-and-israel-1948-2016-summary>

2 "Ohio buys \$35 million in Israel bonds," by Abby Cymerman, Feb 5, 2020,

[https://www.columbusjewishnews.com/news/local\\_news/ohio-buys-35-million-in-israel-bonds/article\\_f0ea6e84-479e-11ea-a0bb-17d03f69b52a.html](https://www.columbusjewishnews.com/news/local_news/ohio-buys-35-million-in-israel-bonds/article_f0ea6e84-479e-11ea-a0bb-17d03f69b52a.html)

3 "Clergy sound off on Trump's historic Jerusalem recognition declaration (VIDEO)," December 9, 2017,

<https://frontlinesohio.com/index.php/2017/12/09/clergy-sound-off-on-trumps-jerusalem-declaration-as-nations-capital/>

4 "Local leaders support Trump recognition of Golan Heights as sovereign Israeli land (VIDEO)" March 31, 2019.

<https://frontlinesohio.com/index.php/2019/03/31/local-leaders-support-trump-recognition-of-golan-heights-as-sovereign-israeli-land-video/>