Fritz VOLL (1930-2024)

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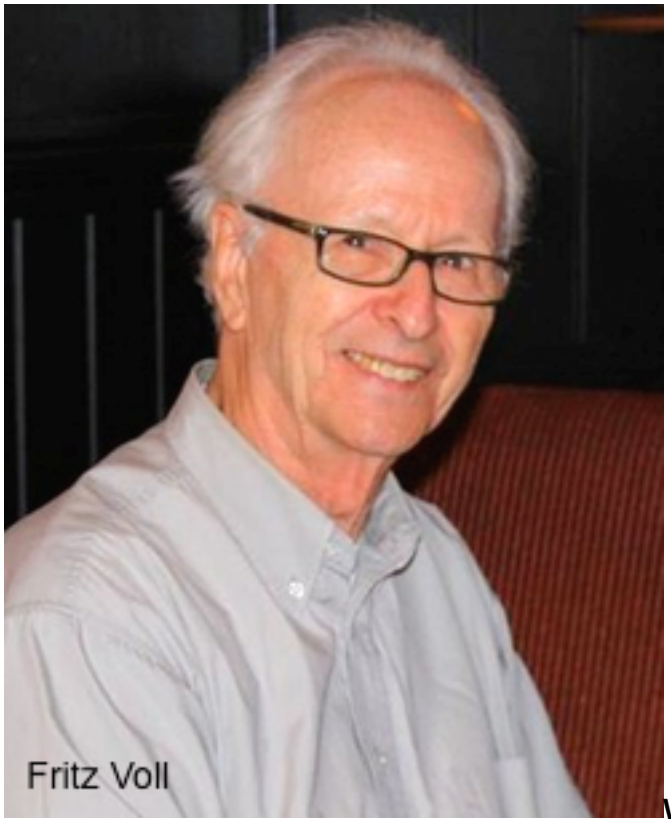
Obituary



We mourn the loss of Fritz Voll, the founder and architect of this website, who passed away in Toronto, Canada, in early February 2024 at the age of 93.

Born in 1930 in Naumburg an der Saale (Germany), he grew up in Nazi Germany and at the age of 8 saw the synagogue opposite his parents' house destroyed and burned down by Hitler's SA during Kristallnacht. Even as an adolescent, he wondered why church and Sunday school only ever talked about Jews of the Bible and never about Jews living today. After studying at theological schools in Denmark and England, he served as a youth leader in an Evangelical church in Germany for 25 years and emigrated to Canada in 1976 with his wife and three teenagers. In 1983 he became the Western Regional Director of the Canadian Council of Christians and Jews. Through his work he came into personal contact with Professors Paul van Buren, Lloyd Gaston, Clemens Thoma, Gerhard Bodendorfer and men like Dr. Hans-Hermann Henrix, Rabbi Dr. Pinchas Hayman, Dr. Allan Brockway, Dr. Eugene Fisher and many others who did fundamental theological work on the Jewish-Christian relationship.

These and other personalities made their own works available to him and encouraged him to publish them on the still young Internet. In 1994, already retired, he developed and founded this website: JCRelations.net. In the mid-1990s, thus, he created one of the first global platforms on the Internet dedicated exclusively to the relationship between Christians and Jews and to Christian-Jewish dialog. In the years that followed, he succeeded in effectively expanding the unique status of JCRelations.net by operating this platform in six languages with the help of volunteers: English,

German, French, Portuguese, Spanish and Russian. Voll financed and maintained the website entirely from his own resources for almost six years. In 2000, he finally handed it over to the International Council of Christians and Jews and remained its webmaster until 2004.

As a deeply devout Christian, he was already deeply shaken at a young age by the anti-Judaic orientation of Christian theology and the two-thousand-year anti-Jewish history of the Christian churches, which he held partly responsible for the National Socialist crime against humanity of the extermination of the Jews, the Holocaust. Deeply convinced of the need for a fundamental revision of Christianity, which could only succeed through a consistent return to its Jewish roots, he almost single-handedly realized his vision of an international Christian-Jewish platform on the Internet. Added to this was a growing love for the Jewish people and their homeland, the State of Israel, which increasingly became the driving force behind his tireless commitment. His conception and founding of JCRelations.net was and is a Christian-Jewish pioneering act in the context of the Internet, whose current five-language form makes it a unique place of information and understanding between Christians and Jews to this day. In this way, Fritz Voll can be regarded as an unsung hero of Christian-Jewish dialogue, as a worker in the vineyard of the Lord, whose fruits are of inestimable value, whose achievement is, of course, far too little appreciated, but should remain unforgotten forever.

May his memory be a blessing - ???

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