



The Logo

| The National Workshop on Christian-Jewish Relations

Something about the Workshop Logo

NATIONAL WORKSHOP

ON CHRISTIAN-JEWISH RELATIONS

About the Logo

The Workshop logo is derived from the two most ancient symbols in Judaism and Christianity: the seven-branched candelabrum called the menorah, and the fish. The Jewish symbol, the menorah, antedates the more common six-pointed Star of David by many centuries. Likewise, the most common Christian symbol, the cross, is not the most ancient. The fish was used to identify brother and sister Christians during the early centuries of Roman persecution. Because it could be dangerous to identify oneself as a Christian to a pagan non-believer, the Christian would casually sweep a half circle with a foot while speaking. If the other person were a Christian, he or she would also sweep a half circle in the dirt or sand, creating a fish. Its use as a symbol for Christ is drawn from the Greek word for fish, *ICHTUS*, an acrostic for "Jesus Christ, Son of God, Savior."

With these symbols in mind, Mrs. Florence Bern, a Milwaukee Jewish artist, was inspired by the words "we must build bridges between our faiths. The arch between the menorah and the fish not only evokes the image of a bridge between us, but recalls the sign of the rainbow given to Noah after the flood as a sign of God's covenant and promises to all human kind."

The menorah's three branches from which the fish emerges evoke the Jewish tradition and teaching of the prophets that the world rests upon three things: justice, righteousness and deeds of loving kindness. The four flames represent the bringing of God's light throughout the world. For Christians, it also indicates that Christianity emerged from Judaism, but has neither exhausted the depths of Judaism nor superseded it. The artist explained that "the circle is not completed between Judaism and Christianity because there is yet work to be done to bring about the peace and justice of God's rule to all the world."

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