



Bearing Faithful Witness' Part 1

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A Study Paper for an understanding of the Scriptures in their Jewish context and for an interpretation that is not anti-Judaic. Only the first, theological parts are at this site. The complete United Church of Canada document can be found at the Web site of the United Church of Canada: <http://www.united-church.ca/bfw/home.htm>

BEARING FAITHFUL WITNESS

A Study Paper (1)

Preamble: Why this Paper?

- Because many of us grew up thinking that Jesus had invented the Last Supper;
- Because in our churches Jesus is rarely referred to as a Jew;
- Because there is rising anti-Judaism, antisemitism, white supremacy and neo-Nazism in Canada and other countries in the name of Jesus Christ;
- Because we are finally understanding that Christian denial of Jesus' Jewishness contributed to pogroms, the Holocaust, the refusal to admit refugees and other horrors against Jewish people;
- Because a Jewish friend visiting in our churches could feel attacked by some of our Scriptures and interpretation of them;
- Because there is little general knowledge of the context in which the Scriptures were written and edited, and Bible study is not a priority for most United Church adults;
- Because our language and interpretation of Scripture has not kept pace with our evolving faith;
- Because there is little reaction from the Christian community when synagogues and Jewish cemeteries are desecrated;
- Because there is a growing interest in exploring other faith traditions, and Christianity has a special relationship with Judaism;
- Because many of us make the erroneous assumption that, having read the Bible, we know much about Judaism, both historical and contemporary;

Therefore we believe it is time to throw open the questions:

- Is our handling of the Bible consistent with the faith of Jesus?
- Is our handling of the New Testament consciously reflective of Christianity's Jewish roots?
- Do our Sunday morning services bear false witness against our Jewish neighbours today?

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