



September 2023

Dear Friend of Israel,

**“Be strong and courageous!”** These words, spoken by God to Joshua, are repeated three times in the book’s first chapter and rightfully so. **Can you imagine what Joshua was feeling at the time, realizing the huge task Moses bequeathed to him to bring the people into the Land of Israel?** And think of the “shoes” Joshua had to fill. God therefore made sure to give Joshua all the encouragement he needed to succeed. Essentially, God told Joshua: “Be strong and courageous. I am your God, and you are worthy in my eyes of this role. I will give you the power to accomplish your mission just like I did for Moses.”

It is hard to believe, but on September 1st, after dedicating more than 25 years of work rebuilding the Biblical Heartland with committed and devoted Christian friends like you, **Sondra Oster Baras stepped down from her position as director of CFOIC Heartland. I am humbled to assume my new role as Director to lead the organization in its next chapter.**

Over the last five years working as CFOIC Heartland’s Director of Development, I have seen so many changes in the lives of the Biblical Heartland’s pioneers. I understand more than ever before, how much has been achieved, thanks to your help. **We are witnessing a unique time in history when the bonds forged between the people of Judea and Samaria and you, our dear Christian friends, are changing the reality on the ground.**

Under my leadership, CFOIC Heartland will continue advancing the mission and work begun by Sondra to build and secure the Biblical Heartland as well as to enhance the ties between you, our supporters, and the communities in Judea and Samaria. I will continue this work but I have to consider the changing realities of today’s world. The younger generation, growing up in an all too fast-moving, liberal, Godless world, no longer cares about traditional values. We must therefore use the tools that are most effective and inspirational for this next generation of Christians. **I envision CFOIC Heartland as the primary resource for everything going on in the Biblical Heartland. I want our organization to provide the next generation of Christians with “hands-on” experiences that no one else can provide.**

I would like to take this opportunity to thank Sondra for all her years of hard work and devotion. She is nothing less than a powerhouse and has done so much for the communities and the residents in the Biblical Heartland with the highest levels of humility.

Undoubtedly, CFOIC Heartland would not have achieved its successes without friends and supporters like you. **I am privileged to continue the organization’s partnership with you, today and for years to come. I pray that we will be able to embrace the challenges that lay ahead of us,** as the prophet Joshua did in his time, by being “strong and courageous.”

Shalom,

Shmuel Junger  
Director, Israel Office

P.S. Enclosed with this letter is our Nahala newsletter, I hope you will find the stories inside it inspiring and educational. It is also the time of year when we are asking for your help to bless families with food vouchers for the upcoming holiday season of Rosh Hashanah and Sukkot. Anything you can give is so appreciated!