



January 2024

Dear Friend of Israel,

The renowned Israeli composer Meir Ariel provided the lyrics for a most iconic song sung by many of Israel's biggest musicians like Michael Jackson's "*We Are the World*." In the song "*The Technicolor Dreamcoat*," Ariel metaphorically describes Israel's diverse tapestry. Despite appearing at first glance to be homogenous, the nation of Israel is, in fact, a mosaic comprising a wide variety of colors, symbolizing many different backgrounds, nationalities, and countries. Over 75 years ago, different groups of people from every corner of the world united in the Land of Israel. Each of them has contributed their unique traditions and perspectives. Amidst this rather diverse and heterogeneous mixture of people, a common thread binds them all together—their Jewish identity and ancestry.

Embracing these differences has empowered Israel, exemplified by its status as a startup nation. However, recent political turmoil and internal divisions have challenged and threatened this harmonious unity. The metaphor of the technicolor coat underscores the critical importance of solidarity, especially in the face of external threats. Recognizing the shared bonds between every member of the People of Israel, irrespective of nationality, is crucial. From the story of Joseph and his brothers selling him into slavery, we learn that hate and ego can lead anyone down a disastrous path with devastating consequences.

As the new year begins, we have yet to see an end to the current war in Israel, it is important to take stock of what the People of Israel have come to understand very well over the past several months. The enemy makes no distinction between the residents of Sderot and the kibbutzim around Gaza from those who live in Tel Aviv, Galilee, Jerusalem, or Judea, and Samaria. Rather, all of Israel is collectively under attack. This undeniable reality has ignited a strong sense of unity among the People of Israel that connects and binds everyone together as one. No matter their “color,” everyone in Israel is part and parcel of the same coat.

The call for unity should also extend to Jews and Christians worldwide, emphasizing the need for us all to stand together and be united during such challenging times. As we welcome 2024, I pray we succeed in fostering unity and a brighter future for us all. The outpouring of your love and support over the past few months has strengthened and encouraged us. Your gifts to purchase vital surveillance equipment and protective gear will continue to save lives for many years to come. The Shabbat meals you brought to families whose husbands and fathers have been deployed since October 7th gave them hope and encouragement like a warm hug. Thank you for standing steadfastly with the people of Israel.

Shalom,

Shmuel Junger
Director
Christian Friends of Israeli Communities

P.S. For those who want to do more, we are bringing a small solidarity mission and team in March. Register today to join us in Israel for an unforgettable trip, standing with the people of Israel and helping those in need. For information visit www.cfoic.com/solidarity