

December 2024

Dear Friend of Israel,

As I'm sitting here thinking about 2025 and reflecting on all that happened in 2024, **I can't help but remember the devastating phone call I received on January 1, 2024.** At first, I was slightly annoyed, but then I assumed that the caller had forgotten the office was closed. I never dreamed that someone was calling to tell me the devastating news that we had lost one of our own that day. As I answered the call, I heard what became a life-changing statement: **"I'm sorry to call you on a holiday, but have you heard the news?"** I immediately knew it wasn't good news.

As I heard the terrible news that Sondra's nephew Amichai had given his life while fighting evil in Gaza that day, I began to weep. Though I never met Amichai, his face and voice were very familiar. We had filmed him for one of our videos, which I had seen hundreds of times, talking about his love for the Land of Israel. **Even though I didn't know him personally, he was "my" nephew, too.** Because of my close relationship with Sondra, I've met his mother, father, aunts and uncles, cousins, and grandparents over the years. **By proxy, he is one of my extended family members in Israel. You probably feel the same way I do.**

One thing that I've come to appreciate is the Jewish phrase, **"May his memory be a blessing."** This isn't a phrase taken lightly; it becomes an action statement. **People usually build something to honor a loved one's memory, to answer death with life, and to make the world a better place.** The Oster and Baras families are no different. They are building a park in Karnei Shomron called Amichai Park. It will be at the entrance to one of his beloved hiking trails in the Kana River Valley. **And we at CFOIC Heartland are honored to be able to give you the opportunity to join us and help build this park in Amichai's memory.**

We have undertaken to plant the trees and purchase materials for the picnic tables in the park. Amichai's friends and fellow soldiers want to build the benches and picnic tables themselves as their way of honoring Amichai. **You and I can be part of ensuring that his memory will be a blessing forever by providing the materials for the picnic tables and the trees to enhance the park, and whatever else is needed to make it a place of beauty.** It is our dream that hikers and picnickers from all over Israel will connect with Samaria through the Amichai Park and will come to love this beautiful part of Israel that Amichai loved so much.

As 2024 comes to a close, **I'm so thankful that I am part of the incredible CFOIC Heartland family. A family that crosses faith boundaries as Jews and Christians across the globe connect with the Bible,** which we both love and hold sacred. The Land of Israel is an integral part of the Biblical story and narrative. We can connect and stand together in support of all that God is doing in our lifetime.

I want to wish you a Happy Hanukkah, Merry Christmas, and a Happy New Year. **May God's light shine upon you in 2025, and may we merit the blessings that He has bestowed on each one of us.**

*Kimberly Troup*

Kimberly Troup  
Director, US Office

P.S. if you would like to see a video about Amichai Park and make a donation to honor Amichai Oster's sacrifice please visit [www.cfoic.com/amichai-park](http://www.cfoic.com/amichai-park)