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Article 1

FEATURE TOPICS:
THE LAND AND STATE OF ISRAEL
PAUL AND CHRISTIAN-JEWISH RELATIONS

Editors' Introduction

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Welcome to the third volume of *Studies in Christian-Jewish Relations*. We are grateful the Council of Centers on Jewish-Christian Relations and the Center for Christian-Jewish Learning for the opportunity to serve as the journal's co-editors, and we are pleased to assume editorial responsibilities for a journal that was so successfully launched by its founding co-editors editors, Philip A. Cunningham and Edward Kessler and its managing editor, Audrey Doetzel. They set a high bar, and we are committed to maintaining their standard of excellence. Fortunately, Audrey remains part of our editorial staff, providing continuity and much wisdom. We are also delighted to welcome to our editorial staff Leonard Greenspoon, Creighton University's Phillip M. and Ethel Klutznick Professor in Jewish Civilization, as he replaces Ruth Langer as book review editor in September.

Our journal, through its feature topic section, has already marked several significant anniversaries: the fortieth anniversary of *Nostra Aetate* ([Vol. 1, 2005-2006](#)); the centennial of Dietrich Bonhoeffer's birth ([Vol. 2:1, 2007](#)); the centennial of Abraham Joshua Heschel's birth ([Vol. 2:2, 2007](#)), and the the sixtieth anniversary of the 1947 International Emergency Conference on Anti-Semitism, held in Seelisberg, Switzerland, and sponsored by the then newly formed International Council of Christians and Jews, ([Vol. 2:2, 2007](#)).

In this third volume, our special topics turn in two new directions. The first marks another anniversary, the sixtieth anniversary of the birth of the State of Israel in 1948. We reiterate our message in our [2008 call for papers](#):

While Judaism has historically presumed theologies of both the land and the State, elements of modern Jewish experience have demanded the emergence of new ways of thinking about them. Traditional Christian theology, on the other hand, justified the exile of Jews from the land, making it difficult for Christians to understand the signifi-

cance of these elements of modern Jewish experience and the need for a new Christian theology of Israel. We invite academic papers that present both historical and contemporary Jewish and Christian theologies of the land and State of Israel. We also invite responses to the papers published in this forum as well as conference proceedings on this topic.

The initial upload of items for this volume includes two peer-reviewed articles and one conference proceeding on this feature topic, as well as a forum of reflections on the text of the Declaration of the Establishment of the State of Israel by scholars engaged in Christian-Jewish dialogue. This special topic will remain open for the remainder of the year, and we welcome additional contributions to it.

In recognition of Pope Benedict XVI's proclamation of a jubilee year (June 28, 2008 to June 29, 2009) dedicated to Saint Paul, we have also issued a call for papers on the significance of Paul and of Pauline studies for Christian-Jewish relations. The call for papers invitation reads:

Traditionally, Christian scholars have portrayed Paul as having converted from Judaism to an already existing Christianity. Many modern scholars, both Christian and Jewish, have depicted Paul instead as the founder of Christianity. Scholars in both camps have usually viewed Paul as rejecting "the Law" in favor of the Gospel, thus providing the basis for the persistent Christian supersessionist approach to Jews and Judaism. Still other contemporary scholars question whether Paul was anti-Jewish and suggest that recovering the historical context of his letters and understanding his rhetorical techniques can provide a new perspective on Paul as a resource for improved Christian-Jewish relations. We invite academic papers that present both historical and contemporary Christian and Jewish approaches to Paul and their impli-

cations for Christian-Jewish relations. We also invite responses to papers published in this forum as well as conference proceedings on this topic.

Submissions for this discussion have begun to arrive and will be posted in the near future. Given the timing of the Jubilee Year, this special topic will extend into the 2009 volume.

After we posted this call for papers, one of our era's most influential Pauline scholars and pioneers of Christian-Jewish dialogue died: Krister Stendahl (1921-2008), Mellon Professor of Divinity Emeritus at Harvard Divinity School, Lutheran Bishop of Stockholm, and a great and beloved friend of many members in our Council of Centers on Jewish-

Christian Relations. Grieving his death and thankful for his life and work, we dedicate our feature articles on Paul and Pauline studies to Krister's blessed memory. We welcome articles that treat Krister's contributions to Pauline studies and to Christian-Jewish relations.

As always, we continue to welcome articles for peer review and conference proceedings on other topics relevant to Christian-Jewish relations. This initial upload includes essays of note responding to Pope Benedict XVI's revised Good Friday prayer for the Jews and its implications, and we expect more to follow. Please also benefit from our growing book review section!