

B'nai Chayim: Mission Statement

We are a caring community of Jewish and Non-Jewish believers in Yeshua, which functions in mutual accountability and for the administration of ordinances (Mikveh [immersion] and the L-rd's Table) and also for the purposes worship, prayer, Bible Study, fellowship, and outreach, as we observe the biblical and historical festivals of Israel.

This purpose is **fourfold**:

A. To Glorify G-d

Our highest calling in life is to glorify G-d. The *Shema* (Deut. 6:4, 5) articulates this obligation, which is also a privilege. "Shema Yisrael Adonai Elohaynu Adonai echad"- *Hear O Israel, the L-rd our G-d, the L-rd is one*". We are to love the L-rd with all our heart, soul and strength. Anything else we do or believe flows from this daily reality.

As a **Messianic Jewish Congregation**, we express our worship:

1. Corporately and individually worship in our weekly *Shabbat* (Sabbath) services, as well as at home and as families.
2. In a cultural context using Jewish liturgical forms and customs (i.e. *Siddur* [Prayer book], Jewish songs and dance, weekly Torah readings).
3. By observing all the Jewish Feasts according to the Jewish lunar calendar in a **Messiah** centered manner.
4. By regularly celebrating the L-rd's Table (Communion) as admonished by **Yeshua** in I Cor.11.
5. In corporate and individual prayer: Phil. 4:6, 7; I Pe. 5:7, Eph. 6:18; I Thess. 5:17; Ps. 5:4; Ps. 34:1.

B. To Build up the Body of Believers:

1. By loving one another and ministering to one another's needs. We are to value those whom G-d created in His own image.
2. So we may grow in **Messiah**, and to attain His likeness and character, through study of the word of G-d, prayer and fellowship.
3. By encouraging Jewish believers to embrace a Jewish lifestyle that reflects our connection with historical Judaism, while worshipping **Yeshua** (Jesus) as Messiah. Non-Jewish believers in our midst are encouraged to participate in, and even to embrace our expression of Messianic Judaism according to their conscience. *They are free to do so with liberty, but as sojourners among us, they are under no obligation* (Acts 15, Romans 14).

These Jewish customs and traditions have no bearing on salvation and are not to be interpreted as putting one in bondage or legalism. They are intended to enhance the worship of **Messiah** with freedom, according to a biblical expression of a **Messianic Jewish** style of worship and practice.

We recognize three kinds of traditional Jewish customs: biblical (which we observe), non-biblical (not mentioned in the Bible, and which are optional, and which we observe from a Messianic perspective), and unbiblical (we do not observe any that we feel go against the clear teaching of the Scriptures).

C. To Proclaim the Good News of Salvation

1. To the Jew first but also to the Gentiles (Rom. 1:16). We have a distinct mandate and calling to the lost sheep of the house of Israel (Rom. 9:1-5; 10:1; Ezek. 3:1-11; 34:1-8).
2. Our purpose is to also train and equip the members of our local body, so that we can have a part in advancing G-d's kingdom in a Messianic context (Is. 58:10-12; 61:1-3; Eph. 4:7-16).

D. To Proclaim the Jewish Roots of the Gospel.

1. To be a bridge of understanding to the Gentile Christian community by teaching about the inherent Jewish roots of our faith in **Yeshua**, the promised **Messiah** of Israel (Rom. 9-11; Eph. 2:11-22; 3:1-6).
2. To provide a venue of Jewish spirituality for Jewish believers and non Jewish believers who feel called to express their faith and commitment within the historical and biblical Jewish context of the Gospel.
3. To correct the mistaken theological perspective called Replacement Theology, because the church does not replace Israel, and to show both communities, Gentile and Jewish, that there are two equally acceptable expressions of faith in Yeshua of Nazareth, one Jewish and one Gentile.