



**The United Church
of Canada
General Council**

GC36 Bearing Faithful Witness

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Preamble: Why this paper?

Because many of us grew up thinking that Jesus had invented the Last Supper; Because in our churches Jesus is rarely referred to as a Jew;

Because there is rising anti-Judaism, antisemitism, white supremacy, and neo-Nazism in Canada and other countries in the name of Jesus Christ;

Because we are finally understanding that Christian denial of Jesus' Jewishness contributed to pogroms, the Holocaust, the refusal to admit refugees, and other horrors against Jewish people;

Because a Jewish friend visiting in our churches could feel attacked by some of our scriptures and interpretation of them;

Because there is little general knowledge of the context in which the scriptures were written and edited, and Bible study is not a priority for most United Church adults;

Because our language and interpretation of scripture have not kept pace with our evolving faith;

Because there is little reaction from the Christian community when synagogues and Jewish cemeteries are desecrated;

Because there is a growing interest in exploring other faith traditions, and Christianity has a special relationship with Judaism;

Because many of us make the erroneous assumption that, having read the Bible, we know much about Judaism, both historical and contemporary;

THEREFORE we believe it is time to throw open the questions: Is our handling of the Bible consistent with the faith of Jesus?

Is our handling of the New Testament consciously reflective of Christianity's Jewish roots? Do our Sunday morning services bear false witness against our Jewish neighbours today?

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