

Late Rabbi's Daughter Continuing Father's Work of Uniting Jews, Christians

When the International Fellowship of Christians and Jews (The Fellowship) President Yael Eckstein met Jewish immigrants from Ukraine today in Israel, she did it under a gigantic banner that read, "Rabbi Yechiel Eckstein Memorial Freedom Flight."

In all, nearly 750,000 immigrants to Israel (*olim*) have been assisted through the organization Rabbi Eckstein, Yael's father, founded in 1983. But this particular flight took on special significance in the storied history of the organization's On Wings of Eagles program, as it was the first arrival overseen entirely by Yael, who took over as the organization's president after Rabbi Eckstein's Feb. 6 passing.

The plane included 116 families, including 57 children.

While her father's efforts to facilitate *aliyah* (immigration to Israel) began with approximately 1,000 Russian Jews between 1992 and 1994, the Ukrainian community has held a special place in the heart of Yael Eckstein. She's visited the country on multiple occasions in order to provide humanitarian assistance to impoverished Jews, and since 2014, The Fellowship has funded and facilitated *aliyah* for more than 11,000 Ukrainian Jews. This work has been made possible through the generosity of hundreds of thousands of Christians in the U.S. and Canada who have supported Rabbi Eckstein's vision and legacy of Christian-Jewish cooperation and reconciliation.

The program, however, supports the immigration of *olim* not just from Ukraine, but throughout the world, including from 24 different nations in 2018 alone.

As the *olim* build their new lives in Israel, they will do it with the assistance of representatives from The Fellowship in their local communities who will assess and help provide for their financial, educational, health and housing needs throughout the *klitah* (resettlement) process.

To date, The Fellowship's program facilitating the immigration of persecuted and impoverished Jews to Israel has invested more than \$200 million in their livelihood, almost all given by Christians around the world who are friends of the state of Israel and of the Jewish people.

Yael Eckstein welcomed the Ukrainian *olim* by thanking the thousands of supporters of *The Fellowship* around the world who made it possible, "Because of you, my father helped bring nearly 750,000 Jews back to Israel—that's an entire city of people, the size of Seattle or Denver."

And she promised to not only continue the work of her father but to expand it: "With your help, we will bring another 750,000 to the Holy Land. Rabbi Eckstein's legacy is our foundation, and it is ours to build upon. This holy work was begun by my abba, but it will continue with us. We will remember the past while we move boldly into the future. The Jewish people need the support of our Christian friends as much as ever before. We cannot slow down. We will not slow down."

The timing of the flight was particularly poignant given comments by the French President Emmanuel Macron a few days earlier that Europe and other Western countries are experiencing a "resurgence in anti-Semitism unseen since World War II."

The Fellowship has long been on the forefront of combatting anti-Semitism around the world in addition to its wide-reaching humanitarian work on behalf of Holocaust survivors, orphaned and vulnerable children, the elderly, the oppressed,

the persecuted and victims of war and terror.

View and download photos of the event [here](#).

The International Fellowship of Christians and Jews (The Fellowship) was founded in 1983 to promote better understanding and cooperation between Christians and Jews and build broad support for Israel. Today, it is one of the leading forces helping Israel and Jews in need worldwide—and is the largest channel of Christian support for Israel. Founded by Rabbi Yechiel Eckstein, The Fellowship now raises more than \$120 million per year, mostly from Christians, to assist Israel and the Jewish people. Since its founding, The Fellowship has raised more than \$1.6 billion for this work. The organization has offices in Jerusalem, Chicago, Toronto, and Seoul. For more information, visit [. {eo}](#)

Yael Eckstein is the president of the International Fellowship of Christian and Jews. As president, Eckstein oversees all ministry programs and serves as the organization's international spokesperson. She can be heard on The Fellowship's daily radio program airing on 1500 stations worldwide. Prior to her present duties, Yael served as global executive vice president, senior vice president and director of program development and ministry outreach. Based in Jerusalem, Yael is a published writer, leading international advocate for persecuted religious minorities and a respected social services professional. As president of The Fellowship, she also holds the rare distinction of being a woman leading one of America's largest religious not-for-profit organizations.