When Jew and Christian Meet:
Prelude To Dialogue

November 11 and 12, 1976

...an opportunity for Jews and Christians in the Greensboro area to discover a new dimension in our relationship as we share our concerns and strive for a deeper understanding of each other...
WHEN JEW AND CHRISTIAN MEET: PRELUDE TO DIALOGUE
November 11-12, 1976
A Conference Co-Sponsored by: First Presbyterian Church
Holy Trinity Episcopal Church
Temple Emanuel
The American Jewish Committee

---Persons of all faiths are cordially invited---

DATE AND TIME
Thursday, Nov. 11, 7:30 p.m.

EVENT
Opening Ceremonies

PLACE
First Presbyterian Church

Keynote Addresses:
- Dr. Albert T. Mollegen
- Rabbi Marc H. Tanenbaum

DR. ALBERT T. MOLLEGEN
The Reverend Albert T. Mollegen is Professor Emeritus of New Testament Language and Literature at Virginia Theological Seminary in Alexandria. A native of Wisconsin, Dr. Mollegen was educated in Electrical Engineering at Mississippi State College and went on to earn theological degrees at Virginia Theological Seminary and Union Theological Seminary in New York. He also holds the Doctor of Divinity degree from the University of the South in Sewanee, Tennessee, and the Doctor of Sacred Theology degree from the General Theological Seminary in New York City. Affectionately known as "Mollegen," he is widely known as a lecturer and teacher of adult lay persons as well as a spokesman for classical Christianity to modern intellectuals. He is founder of, and editor of, a theological college for lay persons which has become a Washington center for relating Christianity to psychoanalysis, modern art, and contemporary social, political and economic problems.

Dr. Mollegen has long been a leader in ecumenical work and was a member of the Joint Consultation on Ecumenical Relations in the Episcopal Church. He also served as the Episcopal representative of the Consultation on Church Union. In addition to being one of the founding editors of Anglican Theology Today, Dr. Mollegen is the leading member of the Board of Directors of the Washington School of Psychiatry and Psychotherapy. He is also one of the editors of the Journal of the Department of Psychiatry of the American Psychiatric Association, and he is a member of the editorial board of the American Journal of Psychotherapy.

Dr. Mollegen is a widely renowned lecturer in university faculties, and in the Episcopal Faculty Institute of Theology at Trinity College in Hartford, Connecticut. He has also lectured at the Cambridge University Faculty Summer Schools, and he has been the summer lecturer in Christian Ethics and Theology at Union Theological Seminary in New York.

---The congregation of Temple Emanuel extends a special invitation to the members of Holy Trinity Episcopal and First Presbyterian churches to come and worship with them at this Sabbath service.---
Memo from EUGENE FISHER

Date: 10/18/46

Mare,

Thought you might be interested in this article from the Michigan Academician, especially since I quote you rather extensively (and accurately, I hope).

P.S.

Yours,
Interreligious meeting planned

GREENSBORO - Three local houses of worship are joining the Southeast Area Office of the American Jewish Committee in a major interreligious conference Nov. 11-12.

The conference, entitled "When Jews and Christians Meet - Prelude to Dialogue," is co-sponsored by First Presbyterian Church, Holy Trinity Episcopal Church, Temple Emanuel, and AJC.

All sessions are free, and the public is invited.

Activities commence on the 11th at Holy Trinity Episcopal Church, with opening addresses by two prominent theologians, Dr. Albert T. Mollegen, professor of New Testament and Christian ethics at the Virginia Theological Seminary, and Rabbi Marc H. Tanenbaum, national interreligious affairs director of the American Jewish Committee.

On Friday morning at 9:30, activities will begin at Holy Trinity Episcopal Church. Theme for the morning will be "What You Would Have Us Know." There will be a panel discussion with audience participation covering major items of concern to the three faiths.

At lunch, William A. Gralnick, SouthEast area director of AJC, will give an address entitled, "Israel - A National Not A Cousin." Mr. Gralnick will be reflecting on the meaning of the UN resolution equating Zionism with racism.

Friday afternoon, there will be roundtable discussions on the subject "Beyond Fisher Park." Using the Fisher tri-faith program as a jumping off point, an attempt will be made to discuss the state of interreligious affairs in Greensboro, and what meaningful programs can be developed to enhance them. The co-sponsors stress audience participation will be the key to success of the day's proceedings.

On Friday evening, the conference will be marked by two unique events, both at Temple Emanuel. The Temple Sisterhood, under the direction of Mrs. Didi Abenberg, will host a Sabath meal for invited guests from the congregations of the First Presbyterian Church and Holy Trinity Episcopal Church. Rabbi Emanuel Will leadership services at 8 p.m. will follow dinner, and the Temple is inviting congregations of the two churches to attend. Instead of a sermon, the service will feature a "Trilogue," where the three host clergymen will reflect on the meaning of the two-day proceedings.

The American Jewish Committee, founded in 1906, is the pioneer human relations agency in the United States. It protects the civil and religious rights of Jews here and abroad, and advances the cause of improved human relations for all people.
Local Christians, Jews exploring faiths

By Abe D. Jones Jr.

An unlearning experience, designed to remove old stereotypes and substitute new realities; began among three Greensboro congregations this month at a convention called "When Jew and Christian Meet, Prelude to Dialogue.

At the opening session, William A. Graulick, of the American Jewish Committee in Atlanta, was introduced. He mounted to the pulpit in the cathedral atmosphere of First Presbyterian Church, its stained glass windows dimly glowing in the light of the chandeliers.

"if my mother could see me now," he observed with a smile.

The tone of the sessions was set. There would be humor, a sense of new departures, a feeling of fellowship, and a reverence for the God all worshipped in different ways.

The three congregations—First Presbyterian, Holy Trinity Episcopal and Temple Emanuel—have been working together for some time. Their Fisher Park Progm Program, under the auspices of a neighborhoo beginning in 1968 and continuing with year-round activities of broader scope.

In the beginning, a volunteer in the program noted. "Children grow in the shadows of the three buildings and never have entered them."

Current Fisher Park President Jean Mullen pointed out that opportunity has been given them. Now, in the sessions held last week, the community of interest has been broadened to include adult members of the three congregations.

A sermon in January, 1976, by Dr. Joseph B. Mullen, First Presbyterian's pastor, furnished the idea for the meeting as well as the first part of its title.

Discussing the misunderstandings as well as the shared beliefs of Christian and Jews, Dr. Mullen concluded; "As Jew and Christian meet, let us both seek God's will. Let us both discard our prejudices. Let us both share God's love and to Him our relationships for His blessing, to bear fruit in His time as He ordains."

The sermon unstates a response in the neighborhood churches and beyond, Southeastern Area Director Graulick of the AJC, to which Dr. Mullen, Rabbi Arnold of Temple Emanuel and the Rev. John T. Brooks of Holy Trinity in organizing the conference, to which all interested persons in the community were invited.

It was "a prelude to dialogue," according Rabbi Task's phrase: There are centuries of misunderstanding, centuries of caricatures of each other to be removed, as both a distinguished rabbi and a noted Christian theologian said at the gathering.

Rabbai Marc Tanenbaum of New York, National Interreligious Affairs Director of the AJC, spoke of the unlearning process which is needed. He saw a need to "be frank and honest, in love" as beliefs are explored. "We have both been victims of reciprocity, caricatures," he explained. If Jews are to be condemned as a group because their forebears are wrongly charged with killing Christ, then neither must Jews hold Christians collectively responsible for the persecutions they have endured, climaxing in the Nazi holocaust, the rabbi concluded.

Dr. Albert T. Mullen, professor emeritus at Virginia Seminary, stated the Christian debt to the Jewish people—an "inescapable debt," he said —"Jesus the man in history is unthinkable except as a Jew, impossible against any other background." And from the Jewish side of a Man, must come the Christian concept. Indeed, Rabbi Tanenbaum suggested, what the Christian looks forward to is the second coming of the Messiah, "God's grace." So the First Coming to the Jews. Both understand the same God, share the Gospels, read the same Bible—the, as the Rev. Mr. Brooks observed, Christian and Jew, as Rabbi Tanenbaum and Dr. Mollen emphasized, see themselves as chosen people of God.

"Both Jew and Christian can make their witness to each other without arrogance or religious imperialism," said Dr. Mollen.

Rabbi Tanenbaum, who brought down the house when he described himself as a "born-again Hebraic," said Jews and Christians are united by far more than we will ever acknowledge."

The knowledge which is prerequisite to real understanding does not come quickly. Sessions were held in the places of worship of each congregation, beginning Thursday and ending Friday evening with a Sabbath service at Temple Emanuel. The Sabbath meal at the Temple, to which representatives of the three Christian congregations were invited, was an opportunity for fellowship and friendship, as well as pleasant instruction in each of Jewish belief.

All learned something in the sessions, if only how much there is to learn about the neighbors. Areas of agreement were sought, but there was no concealing the fact that differences must also be explored if a genuine dialogue is to take place. Bill Graulick suggested the sessions purpose was for its participants to become friends. And friends know what concerns each other, have some idea of what helps or hinders each other, and can approach differences in a spirit of love.

Graulick noted the AJC was founded 70 years ago amid the shock and outrage which followed persecutions of the Jews in Russia. It is a sad index of anti-Semitism's staying power that a concern today is the treatment of the Jews in the Soviet Union.

Another concern among American Jews is the future of Israel. The concept of the homeland, the land of refuge, is bound into Jewish life and thought. It was highlighted during the nightmare of Jewish oppression and the horrors of the death camps. Some three million Jews in Israel today are a product of that tradition, and are a kind of barometer showing the state of the world's feeling toward its 14 million Jews around the globe.

Speaking on the first anniversary of the United Nations General Assembly condemnation of Zionism as racism, Graulick rejected that charge as a gross falsehood. The action, he said, signifies U.S. abandonment of its own principles and standards. It deepened Jewish concern over the future of Israel, and showed to have disturbed Americans concerned over the world organization's goals of peaceful coexistence, and over a fate of close alliance.

The heart of the conference, suggested Mullen, Task and Graulick, is the "Beyond Fisher Park" program on Friday afternoon. Where did the congregations go next? Should they build upon the Fisher Park base? How? Should they study together, celebrate together such events as Thanksgiving (which has deep roots in Jewish tradition), perhaps have a kind of Fisher Park Program for Adults? Jointly they might combat secularism, which Rabbi Tanenbaum defines as a kind of death of the spirit, a belief that Christianity and Judaism are irrelevant today.

Concrete suggestions for collaboration were made, and the group was assured will be followed up. A new spirit of understanding seemed to emerge in the concluding service, the observance of the Sabbath at the Temple, in which the leaders of the three congregations spoke of what the gathering had meant to them.

As Rabbi Task prayed: "May God give strength to all of His people."