



THE JACOB RADER MARCUS CENTER OF THE AMERICAN JEWISH ARCHIVES

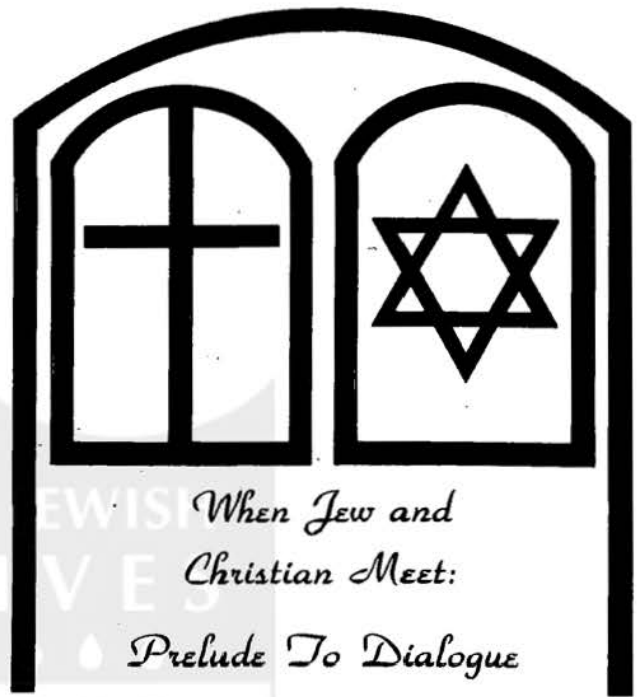
Preserving American Jewish History

MS-603: Rabbi Marc H. Tanenbaum Collection, 1945-1992.

Series C: Interreligious Activities. 1960-1991

Box 52, Folder 2, "When Jews and Christians Meet" [Greensboro, N.C.], 11-12 November 1976.

FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH
617 North Elm Street
GREENSBORO, N. C. 27401
Telephone 373-0445



*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 under-
standing of each other ...*

NON-PROFIT ORGANIZATION
U. S. POSTAGE
PAID
Greensboro, N. C.
Permit 95



DR. ALBERT T. MOLLEGEN

The Reverend Albert T. Mollegen is Professor Emeritus of New Testament Language and Literature at Virginia Episcopal Seminary in Alexandria. A native of Mississippi, 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 "Molle," Dr. Mollegen 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 lecturer in, 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 Commission 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 leading Anglican theologians today, Dr. Mollegen is a former member of the Board of Directors of the Washington School of Psychiatry and is the recent Chairman of the Episcopal National Commission on College Work. He is the author of three books, *Christianity and Modern Man*, *The Faith of Christians*, and *Christ and Everyman*, and has contributed numerous articles to periodicals.

Dr. Mollegen is a widely renowned lecturer to 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 has been the Summer Lecturer in Christian Ethics and Theology at Union Theological Seminary in New York.

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	EVENT	PLACE
Thursday, Nov. 11, 7:30 p.m.	Opening Ceremonies Keynote Addresses: Dr. Albert T. Mollegen Rabbi Marc H. Tanenbaum	First Presbyterian Church
Friday, Nov. 12, 9:30 a.m.	Panel Discussion: "What You Would Have Us Know" A presentation of each faith's priorities. (Audience participation encouraged.)	Holy Trinity Episcopal Church
Friday, Nov. 12, 12:15 p.m.	Luncheon Address: "Israel—A Nation, Not A Cousin" (Reflections on the UN resolution equating Zionism with racism.) —William A. Gralnick, S. E. Area Director, American Jewish Committee	Holy Trinity Episcopal Church
Friday, Nov. 12, 2:00 p.m.	Panel Discussion: "Beyond Fisher Park" A frank look at the future of interreligious affairs in Greensboro. (Audience participation encouraged.)	Holy Trinity Episcopal Church
Friday, Nov. 12, 6:30 p.m.	A Sabbath Dinner (by invitation only)	Temple Emanuel
Friday, Nov. 12, 8:00 p.m.	Sabbath Service** (A "tri-logue" sermon will be presented)	Temple Emanuel

****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.**



RABBI MARC H. TANENBAUM

Rabbi Marc H. Tanenbaum is the National Interreligious Affairs Director of the American Jewish Committee and has been a pioneering leader and thinker in interreligious relations for nearly 25 years.

A graduate of Yeshiva University and the Jewish Theological Seminary, Rabbi Tanenbaum holds five doctorates, honors causa. He has also been the recipient of numerous awards and honors, the latest being from the Religious Heritage of America, "for building bridges of understanding between people of all religions, for exercising religious leadership in the struggle for social justice and charity, and for uplifting the true dignity of man under God."

A religious historian and authority on Judaism and Jewish-Christian relations, he has written and lectured extensively on the history, theology, and sociology of Judaism and Christianity. Rabbi Tanenbaum is a founder and co-secretary of the joint Vatican-International Jewish Consultative Committee, and of a similar liaison body with the World Council of Churches. He was the only rabbi at Vatican Council II, where he was widely consulted by Catholic and Protestant authorities during the deliberations that led to the Vatican Declaration of Non-Christian Relations, which repudiated anti-Semitism and called for fraternal dialogue between Christians and Jews.

Rabbi Tanenbaum has been co-author and co-editor of numerous publications; he has also authored numerous monographs and essays, among them, "Holy Year 1975 and the Jewish Jubilee Year," published in seven languages as an official document by the Vatican office for Holy Year.

He has served as visiting professor at the Graduate Ecumenical Institute in Bossey, Switzerland, and has lectured at major universities and seminaries in the United States, Europe and Israel. During an interview with Newsweek magazine, Rabbi Tanenbaum was described as "the American Jewish community's foremost apostle to the gentiles . . . who has been able to solicit support from all factions of the Jewish community."

Memo ~from EUGENE FISHER

Date 10/18/76

Marc,

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

pdf

Gene

Interreligious meeting planned

Special to The Record

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 Jew and Christian 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 7:30 p.m. at the First Presbyterian Church, with opening addresses by two eminent 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 au-



Dr. Mollegen

dience 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



Rabbi Tanenbaum

Not A Cousin." Mr. Gralnick will be reflecting on the meaning of the UN resolution equating Zionism with racism.

Friday afternoon, there will be round table 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 closing will be marked by two unique events, both at Temple Emanuel. The Temple Sisterhood, under the direction of Mrs. Ken Eisenberg, will host a Sabbath meal for invited guests from the congregations of the First Presbyterian Church and Holy Trinity Episcopal Church. Rabbi Arnold Task will preside. 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.

e/k R. Tanenbaum

Local Christians, Jews exploring faiths

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

At the opening session, William A. Gralnick, 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 Program for children of their neighborhood began in 1968 and continues now with year-round activities of broader scope.

In the beginning, a volunteer in the program noted, "Children grow up in



By Abe D. Jones Jr.

Editor
at
Large

the shadows of the three buildings and never have entered them."

Current Fisher Park President Joan Falk 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, 1975, by Dr. Joseph B. Mullin, 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 Jew, Dr. Mullin 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 offer to Him our relationships for His blessing, to bear fruit in His time as He ordains."

The sermon met a response in the neighborhood churches and beyond. Southeastern Area Director Gralnick, of the AJC, worked with Dr. Mullin, Rabbi Arnold Task of Temple Emanuel and the Rev. John T. Broome of Holy Trinity in organizing the conference, to which all interested persons in the community were invited.

It was "a prelude to dialogue," in 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.

Rabbi 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 recipro-

cal caricatures," he explained. If Jews are not 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. Mollegan, professor emeritus at Virginia Episcopal Seminary in Alexandria, noted the Christian debt to the Jewish people—an "inestimable debt"—for "Jesus the man in history is unthinkable except as a Jew... impossible against any other background."

And from the Jewish idea of a Messiah came the Christian concept. Indeed, Rabbi Tanenbaum suggested, what the Christian looks forward to as the Second Coming may—in God's good grace—be the First Coming to the Jews. Both worship the same God, share the Old Testament and the concept of man as a servant of God and of his fellowman, as the Rev. Mr. Broome observed.

Christian and Jew, as Rabbi Tanenbaum and Dr. Mollegan 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. Mollegan.

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

The knowledge which is prelude 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 two Christian congregations were invited, was an opportunity for fellowship and friendship, as well as pleasant instruction in a part 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 Gralnick 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.

Gralnick 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 Hitlerian oppression and the horrors of the death camps. Some three million Jews in Israel today are trustees 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, Gralnick rejected that charge as a gross falsehood. The action, he said, meant U.N. abandonment of its own principles and standards. It deepened Jewish concern over the future of Israel, and should have disturbed Americans concerned over the world organization's goal of preserving peace, and over the fate of a close ally.

The heart of the conference, suggested Mullin, Task and Broome, was 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 festivals 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 defined 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."