

The following statement was affirmed by the
Delegates to the 26th Annual UMJC Conference on July 20, 2005.

DEFINING MESSIANIC JUDAISM

Basic Statement

The Union of Messianic Jewish Congregations (UMJC) envisions Messianic Judaism as a movement of Jewish congregations and groups committed to Yeshua the Messiah that embrace the covenantal responsibility of Jewish life and identity rooted in Torah, expressed in tradition, and renewed and applied in the context of the New Covenant. Messianic Jewish groups may also include those from non-Jewish backgrounds who have a confirmed call to participate fully in the life and destiny of the Jewish people. We are committed to embodying this definition in our constituent congregations and in our shared institutions.

Expanded Statement

Jewish life is life in a concrete, historical community. Thus, Messianic Jewish groups must be fully part of the Jewish people, sharing its history and its covenantal responsibility as a people chosen by God. At the same time, faith in Yeshua also has a crucial communal dimension. This faith unites the Messianic Jewish community and the Christian Church, which is the assembly of the faithful from the nations who are joined to Israel through the Messiah. Together the Messianic Jewish community and the Christian Church constitute the *ekklesia*, the one Body of Messiah, a community of Jews and Gentiles who in their ongoing distinction and mutual blessing anticipate the shalom of the world to come.

For a Messianic Jewish group 1) to fulfill the covenantal responsibility incumbent upon all Jews, 2) to bear witness to Yeshua within the people of Israel, and 3) to serve as an authentic and effective representative of the Jewish people within the body of Messiah, it must place a priority on integration with the wider Jewish world, while sustaining a vital corporate relationship with the Christian Church.

In the Messianic Jewish way of life, we seek to fulfill Israel's covenantal responsibility embodied in the Torah within a New Covenant context. Messianic Jewish halakhah is rooted in Scripture (Tanakh and the New Covenant writings), which is of unique sanctity and authority. It also draws upon Jewish tradition, especially those practices and concepts that have won near-universal acceptance by devout Jews through the centuries. Furthermore, as is common within Judaism, Messianic Judaism recognizes that halakhah is and must be dynamic, involving the application of the Torah to a wide variety of changing situations and circumstances.

Messianic Judaism embraces the fullness of New Covenant realities available through Yeshua, and seeks to express them in forms drawn from Jewish experience and accessible to Jewish people.

UMJC Theology Committee; affirmed by delegate vote, July 20, 2005.