



MEJDI TOURS

Israel & Palestine: Stories of the Past, Struggles in the Present, Hopes for the Future

Faith Presbyterian Church, Sacramento, California, April 20 - May 2, 2017

Take a deep, fresh, and unique look at this amazing and holy land, with a multiple-perspective tour of Israel and the Palestinian Territories. Facilitated by two guides, one Israeli and one Palestinian, this tour will allow you to experience ancient holy sites, cosmopolitan cities, scenic landscapes and political realities of this diverse region through the eyes of its residents. Participants will be invited to look to the message of the Christian faith and the Jewish and Christian scriptures to reflect on the things that might make for peace in this complex and compelling land.

Beginning with the religious histories of Jerusalem, continuing into the towns and villages of the West Bank, and ending on the shores of the Mediterranean, this tour offers travelers the opportunity to meet religious leaders, artists, activists, and ordinary citizens and learn about contrasting national narratives, religious perspectives, and political points of view.

During our visit, we will share in fellowship with local Christians, meditate on mountaintop outlooks, and build relationships with local families from the country's diverse Jewish, Muslim, and Christian communities. As we move through this holy land, our experiences will compel us to tackle the difficult questions of faith in a broken world even as we trace Jesus' footsteps. Even more, this tour will offer the opportunity to celebrate the hospitality, deep faith and vibrant cultures of the people of this land.

Unique elements of this tour:

- **Dual narrative** - led by both a Palestinian and Israeli guide
- **Study beforehand** - before the tour, we will share readings and meet several times with fellow travelers to think and talk together about what we will experience
- **Grounded in the Christian faith** - while all people are welcome, we will consciously seek to understand this land and its people from a Christian perspective
- **Community building** - we will be visiting and supporting groups and organizations that seek to bring peace and reconciliation to Israel and Palestine

- **Personal connections** - while we will see many stunning locations and historical sites, we will also be in conversation with many people who live and work in this land
- **Jewish, Muslim, and Christian holy sites** - walk in the footsteps of men and women who have gone before us in faith and life
- **Ancient history and present politics** - consider both past and present social, religious and political realities

Religious and Historic Sites:

- Mount of Olives
- Via Dolorosa (the Way of Sorrows)
- Church of the Holy Sepulcher, traditional site of Jesus' crucifixion & burial
- Pater Noster Church
- Masada
- Dead Sea
- Site where John the Baptist baptized at the Jordan River
- Jericho
- Bethlehem
- Nativity Square
- Shepherd's Field
- The Church of the Nativity
- Temple Mount
- Yad Vashem (Holocaust Museum)
- Rachel's tomb
- Abraham Mosque and Synagogue
- Mosque of Omar
- Jacob's well
- Nazareth
- Church of the Annunciation
- White Mosque
- Mount Precipice
- Plain of Jezreel and Valley of Megiddo
- Sea of Galilee
- Tabgha, site of miracle of loaves & fishes
- Capernaum
- St. Peter's Primacy Church
- Mount of Beatitudes
- Caesarea Maritima

People and Experiences:

*individual speakers pending confirmation of availability

- Shabbat Dinner in Jewish Israeli Homes
- Friends of the Earth Middle East
- Worship with Palestinian Christians
- Pastor Mitri Raheb, Christmas Lutheran Church
- Rabbinical Scholar
- Holocaust Survivor
- Machne Yehuda Market
- Orthodox Jewish Neighborhoods
- Rabbi Naamah Kelman, Hebrew Union College
- UN Office of Coordination for Humanitarian Affairs
- Muslim religious leader
- Separation Barrier Tour with Colonel Danny Tirza
- Sami Awad, Palestinian Christian Peacemaker
- Hebron's Shuhada Street
- Settler Museum and meet with Israeli Settler
- Lunch with Palestinian Family
- Christian Peacemakers Team
- Rooftop Dinner, International Center Evangelical Lutheran Church
- Deheishe Refugee Camp
- Bethlehem Bible College
- Tent of Nations Farm

- Zoughby Soughby,
Palestinian Center for Conflict
Transformation
- Kate Taber, PCUSA Mission Co-Worker
- Nathan Stock, Carter Center
- Cremisan Winery
- The Tent Restaurant, Beith Sahour.
- West Bank towns of Zababdei & Nablus
- Canaan Fair Trade Market, Burquin/Jenin
- Overnight and dinner
with local families in Burquin
- Father Elias Chacour,
Palestinian Pastor, Author, Activist
- Local peacemakers, Nazareth
- Mediterranean Coast

Contact: Jim Zazzera

Date: April 20 – May 2, 2017

Price: \$3089 per person (airfare not included)

Included:

- 12 Nights lodging at St. George Guesthouse (Jerusalem), Homestays/Grand Park Hotel (Bethlehem), Ma'agan Kibbutz (Galilee), the Cinema Hotel (Tel Aviv) or similar accommodations (double occupancy)
- 2 Full-time MEJDI-trained guides (1 Israeli & 1 Palestinian) for 12 days
- Private bus and driver for 13 days, including one group transfer from and one group transfer to Ben Gurion Airport
- Breakfast every day
- 16 Additional meals, as indicated on itinerary
- All speakers, sites, and entrance fees
- Dedicated customer service representative in USA and Jerusalem

Not Included:

- Airfare
- Travel Medical or Cancellation Insurance - **STRONGLY RECOMMENDED**
- Individual airport transfers to and from Ben Gurion Airport (Tel Aviv)
- Additional meals, snacks, water bottles
- Customary tips to drivers, guides, and hotel staff
- Single Supplement (\$718)
- Credit card processing fees for final payments
- Anything not explicitly mentioned in included section

Daily Itinerary:

Day 1 – Thursday, April 20: Arrival in Jerusalem

Arrive at Ben Gurion Airport and transfer to your hotel in Jerusalem. Enjoy a free afternoon to relax and explore on your own. In the evening, meet your MEJDI guides, who will give you an overview of your tour during a welcome dinner at the hotel.

Hotel: Jerusalem (D)

Day 2 – Friday, April 21: Historical Context of Jerusalem

Begin the morning with an overview of Jerusalem's religious history from the Mount of Olives. Then, take a full day alternative tour of the Old City and learn about the Jewish, Christian, and Muslim holy sites with two guides: one Arab and one Jewish. Visit historic religious sites such as Pater Noster Church and Via Dolorosa (Way of Sorrows). Tour the Church of the Holy Sepulcher, the traditional site of Jesus crucifixion and burial, have communion there, and discuss the many conflicts over the site. Participate in an evening Shabbat Service at Western Wall and end your day with dinner in Jewish Family Homes.

Hotel: Jerusalem (B, D)

Day 3 – Saturday, April 22: Jericho & Dead Sea

Explore Herod's mountaintop fortress of Masada, with its breathtaking views of the Judean Desert and Dead Sea. There, discuss the role archaeology plays in Israeli national narrative. Following a dip in the mineral-rich waters of the Dead Sea, stop in Jericho to meet with Friends of the Earth Middle East and hear about their joint Arab-Jewish environmental initiatives. Close the day with dinner in Jericho.

Hotel: Jerusalem (B, D)

Day 4 – Sunday, April 23: Bethlehem Holy Sites

Worship with Palestinian Christians at Bethlehem Lutheran Christmas Church. Join members of the church community for lunch afterwards including Pastor Mitri Raheb. Then, travel to Shepherd's Field, the Church of the Nativity, and other Holy Sites in Bethlehem. Enjoy dinner back at your hotel in Jerusalem with a Rabbinical Scholar.

Hotel: Jerusalem (B, L, D)

Day 5 – Monday, April 24: Israeli Perspective, Jerusalem

Begin your morning with a visit to Temple Mount and then to Yad Vashem, Israel's moving memorial to the Holocaust, meet with a Holocaust survivor for a personal glimpse into one of the darkest moments in history. After that, travel to the Machne Yehuda market where you can visit Orthodox neighborhoods and then enjoy lunch and free time in the market. Afterwards, return to your hotel for a facilitated discussion about the day and dinner.

Hotel: Jerusalem (B, D)

Day 6 – Tuesday, April 25: Palestinian Perspective, Bethlehem

Begin your day meeting with Rabbi Naamah Kelman of Hebrew Union College and then meet with the UN Office of Coordination for Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) in Jerusalem for a briefing on current politics. Check-out of your Jerusalem hotel and drive to Bethlehem where you will cross the check-point on foot and take a walk along the separation barrier with Col Danny Tirza. Stop at Rachel's tomb to hear a briefing on the separation barrier from your guide. Then travel to Nativity Square and hear from Palestinian Christian and Peacemaker, Sami Awad.

Hotel: Bethlehem (B)

Day 7 – Wednesday, April 26: Hebron

Start your day with a visit to Shuhada Street and see the work being done by United States Agency for International Development (USAID) with Palestinian shopkeepers. Next, visit the Settler Museum and have a conversation with a Hebron Settler. Meet with a local Muslim scholar or leader. From there, visit the Abraham Mosque and Synagogue. Enjoy Lunch with a local Palestinian family and then meet with members of the Christian Peacemakers Team. Have dinner on the rooftop at the International Center of the Evangelical Lutheran Church.

Hotel: Bethlehem (B, L, D)

Day 8 – Thursday, April 27: Bethlehem

Learn about Palestinian Refugees during a morning visit to Deheishe Refugee Camp. Then, travel to Bethlehem Bible College for coffee and a meeting with a member of the school's leadership. After that, visit The Tent of Nations farm where you can learn about the peacemaking work of a local family, share in communion, and have a light lunch. Your afternoon will be free for you to walk through Old Bethlehem or re-visit Nativity Square. Members of the group can choose to spend the night and have dinner with local families in Bethlehem or meet back up with your group for dinner at your hotel.

Hotel: Homestays or Bethlehem (B, L, D)

Day 9 – Friday, April 28: Bethlehem

Begin your day at the Palestinian Center for Conflict Transformation with founder and director Zoughby Zoughby. Have lunch with Kate Taber of PCUSA and her husband Nathan Stock from the Carter Center to discuss their work in the Holy Land. Then, Stop by the Cremisan Winery in Bethlehem. Next, visit the Mosque of Omar and have dinner at The Tent Restaurant in Beith Sahour.

Hotel: Bethlehem (B, L, D)

Day 10 – Saturday, April 29: West Bank Visits

Check-out of your hotel and drive north on Begin Highway for a visit to the Palestinian town of Zababdei. Then, head back to the road to drive to Nablus where you will have lunch and hear from a local Non Governmental Organization (NGO). After lunch, visit Jacob's well and visit the Cannan Fair Trade market in Burquin/Jenin. If time allows, you may also be able to visit the church in Burqin. Have dinner with a local leader or scholar. Our hope is that here we will meet with Father Elias Chacour.

Hotel: Kibbutz in Galilee (B, L, D)

Day 11 – Sunday, April 30: Nazareth

Spend Sunday morning worshipping in Nazareth. Next, meet with local peacemakers, a tour of the White Mosque and Church of the Annunciation, and hear about life in the city. On Mount Precipice, get a spectacular view of the Plain of Jezreel and Valley of Megiddo, and discuss the different theologies of the book of Revelation. End the day with a boat ride on the Sea of Galilee.

Hotel: Kibbutz in Galilee (B, D)

Day 12 – Monday, May 1: The Holy Sites of Galilee

Visit Tabgha, the place of the miracle of the loaves and fishes. Explore Capernaum, home of Peter and a seat of Jesus' ministry. Visit St. Peter's Primacy church, and enjoy a hilltop prayer with communion in the gardens at the Mount of Beatitudes. Have lunch at St. Peter Restaurant. Last, head to the Mediterranean coast to Herod's port city of Caesarea Maritima, for free time to tour the ruins, enjoy the ocean breezes, and enjoy some coffee or ice cream.

Hotel: in Netanya or Tel Aviv Area (B, L)

Day 13 – Tuesday, May 2: Departure

Check-out of your hotel and transfer to Ben Gurion airport for your flight home.

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