

Wilshire Church Interfaith Trip to Israel 2018

October 29 – November 8, 2018

Proposed by Makor Educational Journeys

Sunday, October 28, 2018

- Departure from the U.S. to Israel

Monday, October 29, 2018

ARRIVAL

- Arrive at **Ben Gurion International Airport** with assistance upon arrival.
- Meet guide and driver and drive along the Coastal Highway to **Haifa**.
- Multi-faith Welcome to Israel, overlooking the Mediterranean from atop the **Bahai Gardens**.
- Check in to the hotel.
- Free time for rest and relaxation.
- Festive **Opening Dinner** at the hotel.
- Optional walk along the **Louis Promenade** atop Mont Carmel.

Overnight: Dan Panorama Hotel, Haifa

Tuesday, October 30, 2018

A MULTICULTURAL MOSAIC

Isaiah 56: 8 Saith the Lord God who gathers the dispersed of Israel: Yet I will gather others to him, beside those of him that are gathered.

John 1:45-46 Philip found Nathanael and said to him, 'We have found him about whom Moses in the law and also the prophets wrote, Jesus son of Joseph from Nazareth.' Nathanael said to him, 'Can anything good come out of Nazareth?' Philip said to him, 'Come and see.'

Luke 4:24 Then [Jesus] said, 'Truly I tell you, no prophet is accepted in the prophet's hometown.'

- Breakfast at the hotel.
- Begin the day with a special program in conjunction with the **Beit HaGefen** community center, which hosts the yearly **Holiday of Holidays**, a Muslim-Christian-Jewish celebration, including an intercultural walk through the **Wadi Nisnas** area of Haifa.
- Continue to the multi-faith city of **Acre**, for a guided visit through the ancient and contemporary towns, exploring the mosaic of Abrahamic faiths and their juxtaposition with the old and new, including the Underground Crusader city.
- Drive to **Nazareth** in the Lower Galilee, beginning with a visit to the Church of the Annunciation and continuing to the Nazareth Baptist Church.



- Conclude the visit to Nazareth with a special program at the Nazareth Music Conservatory, hosted by **Nabeel Abud Ashkar**, a world-class musician and founder of Polyphony Education, with some of his students (*pending confirmation*)
- Conclude the day with a visit to **Sepphoris**, known as the ornament of the Galilee and a vibrant multicultural city at the end of the Roman Empire and during the Byzantine Empire. (*Time Permitting*)
- Continue to the hotel and check in, followed by dinner.

Overnight: Merom Golan Resort, Golan Heights

Wednesday, October 31, 2018

HISTORICAL TRACKS IN THE NORTH

Judges 18:9 *For we have seen the Land, and behold, it is very good.*

Deuteronomy 3:5 *All these were cities fortified with high walls, gates and bars, besides a great many unwalled towns.*

Matthew 16:15-16 *[Jesus] said to them, 'But who do you say that I am?' Simon Peter answered, 'You are the Messiah, the Son of the living God.'*

- Breakfast at the hotel.
- Drive to the Galilee Panhandle for a walk along the Dan River to the Biblical **Tel Dan**, one of the most significant sites relating to the Davidic dynasty found outside of Judea.
- Continue to **Caesarea Philipi**, along the Baniyas River, where, according to some traditions, Peter made his confession of Jesus as the Messiah and Abraham crossed into the Land of Israel.
- Return to the Golan Heights for lunch at the home of **Naseeba Samara** in the Druze village of **Bukahta**.
- Continue to the Byzantine period **Umm el Kanatir** synagogue, which is being reconstructed from a literal pile of stones, using ground-breaking technology.
- Return to the hotel, followed by dinner at **Bokerim**, a Galilean restaurant.

Overnight: Merom Golan Resort, Golan Heights

Thursday, November 1, 2018

ALONG THE SHORES OF THE SEA OF GALILEE

Isaiah 9:1 *Nevertheless the dimness shall not be such as was in her vexation, when at the first he lightly afflicted the land of Zebulun and the land of Naphtali, and afterward did more grievously afflict her by the way of the sea, beyond Jordan, in Galilee of the nations.*

Matthew 5:2-3 *Then [Jesus] began to speak and taught them saying, 'Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.'*



Luke 4:31-32 [Jesus] went down to Capernaum, a city in Galilee, and teaching them on the Sabbath. They were astounded at his teaching, because he spoke with authority.

John 6:11 Then Jesus took the loaves, and when he had given thanks, he distributed them to those who were seated; so also the fish, as much as they wanted.

- Breakfast at hotel.
- Drive to the Sea of Galilee and visit the **Mount of Beatitudes**, site of the Sermon on the Mount, with time for personal reflection.
- Continue to **Capernaum**, a Second Temple Jewish community, where Jesus developed his teachings and Jews and Proselytes lived side by side.
- Continue to **Tabkha**, site of the Multiplication of the Loaves and Fish.
- Drive along the shores of the Sea of Galilee to Kibbutz Ginnosar in the Valley of Genezareth and view the **Fisherman's Boat**, which dates from the time of Jesus and was found on the shores of the Sea of Galilee.
- Visit the newly-renovated site of **Magdala**, home of Mary Magdalan and what has become a site of major pilgrimage with the recent exposure of the 1st century remnants of the town from the days of Mary.
- Drive to Tiberias and the ancient Synagogue of **Hamat**, which dates to the Byzantine period after Christianity had been adopted in the Holy Land.
- Conclude the day at the first kibbutz, **Degania**, for an introduction to the unique social experiment that formed one of the seminal foundations of modern Israel.
- Return to the hotel, followed by dinner at the hotel.

Overnight: Merom Golan Resort, Golan Heights

Friday, November 2, 2018

ASCENDING TO JERUSALEM

Psalms 48:1-2 Great is the Lord, and greatly to be praised in the city of our God, in His holy mountain. Beautiful in elevation, the joy of the whole earth, is Mount Zion on the sides of the north, the city of the great King.

Luke 19:9-10 Then Jesus said to [Zacchaeus], 'Today salvation has come to this house, because he too is a son of Abraham. For the Son of Man came to seek out and to save the lost.'

Matthew 26:40 Then [Jesus] came to the disciples and found them sleeping; and he said to Peter, 'Could you not watch with me one hour?' (KJV)

- Breakfast at the hotel.
- Guided walk through Kibbutz **Merom Golan**, for a glimpse at contemporary Kibbutz life.
- Drive along the Sea of Galilee to **Beit Shean**, with a guided visit through Beit Shean, also known as the Byzantine city of Scythopolis and the Biblical city of Beit Shan.



- Drive through the Jordan Valley and stop at **Qaser el Yahud**, traditionally seen as the site of Jesus' baptism and also where Joshua crossed the River Jordan in to the Promised Land.
- Enter into **Jericho**, seen as the gateway toward Jerusalem for generations, including stops at the **Zacchaeus Sycamore**, from the story praising Jesus mentioned in Gospel of Luke, and **Hisham's Palace**.
- Ascend to **Jerusalem** through the Judean Desert hills.
- Celebrate arriving in Jerusalem with a short interfaith ceremony overlooking the Holy Basin of Jerusalem from atop **Mount Scopus**.
- Drive across the city and check in to the hotel.
- Free time for rest and relaxation.
- *Optional* visit to the **Western Wall** complex, both the Orthodox wall and the Egalitarian wall, as Jerusalemites and guests welcome in the Sabbath.
- Festive Sabbath dinner at the hotel.

Overnight: Inbal Hotel, Jerusalem

Saturday, November 3, 2018

A JERUSALEM SABBATH

*The Sabbath is the presence of God in the world, open to the soul of man. God is not in things of space, but in moments of time. **Abraham Joshua Heschel, The Sabbath***

Mark 2:27 Then [Jesus] said to them, 'The Sabbath was made for humankind, not humankind for the Sabbath.'

- Breakfast at the hotel.
- Free morning with optional Sabbath services at the **Kol Haneshama Synagogue**.
- Visit the **Israel Museum**, with its wide array of collections, including the Dead Sea Scrolls and the Model of Jerusalem from the days of the Second Temple.
- Continue to the **Bible Lands Museum**, which is focused on the peoples and stories of Biblical lands.
- Free time for rest and personal exploration.
- Free evening in Jerusalem, with dinner on your own.

Overnight: Inbal Hotel, Jerusalem

Sunday, November 4, 2018

THE LAYERS OF JERUSALEM I

***Psalms 137:5-6** If I forget you, O Jerusalem, let my right hand forget its skill! If I do not remember you, let my tongue cling to the roof of my mouth-- if I do not exalt Jerusalem above my chief joy.*

***Matthew 21:9** The crowds that went ahead of him and that followed were shouting, 'Hosanna to the Son of David! Blessed is the one who comes in the name of the Lord! Hosanna in the highest heaven!'*



Matthew 23:37 [Then Jesus said,] ‘Jerusalem, Jerusalem, the city that kills the prophets and stones those who are sent to it! How often I have desired to gather your children as a hen gathers her brood under her wings, and you were not willing!’

John 5:6-8 [Jesus] said to him, ‘Do you want to be made well?’ The sick man answered him, ‘Sir, I have no one to put me into the pool when the water is stirred up; and while I am making my way, everyone else steps down ahead of me.’ Jesus said to him, ‘Stand up, take your mat and walk.’

John 19:16-18 So they took Jesus; and carrying the cross by himself, he went out to what is called The Place of the Skull, which in Hebrew is called Golgotha. There they crucified him...

- Breakfast at the hotel.
- Ascend to the **Mount of Olives** for an overview of Jerusalem and an introduction to the multi-faith mosaic of the city.
- Continue into the **Old City** through St. Stephen’s Gate and visit the **Church of St. Anne** and the **Bethesda Pools**, continuing along the Crusader **Via Dolorosa**, concluding at the **Church of the Holy Sepulchre**.
- Exit the Old City via the New Gate for a visit to the **Garden Tomb**.
- Return to the hotel for free time.
- Dinner on your own at the Mamilla Mall, followed by a visit to David’s Citadel and **Jerusalem Night Spectacular Sound and Light Show**.

Overnight: Inbal Hotel, Jerusalem

Monday, November 5, 2018

THE DEAD SEA BASIN

Isaiah 40:3 A voice of one calling: ‘In the wilderness prepare the way for the Lord; make straight in the desert a highway for our God.’

... It (is) mandatory for any kind of scholar or thinker to spend time out in the desert in solitude. It's no coincidence that the desert has been a major part of the visionary or mystical experience from the beginning of time. **Bill Viola, artist**

John 1:23 [John the Baptist] said, ‘I am the voice of one crying in the wilderness, Make straight the way of the Lord,’ as the prophet Isaiah said.

Luke 4:1-2 Jesus, full of the Holy Spirit, returned from the Jordan and was led by the Spirit in the wilderness, where for forty days he was tempted by the devil.

- Breakfast at the hotel.
- Depart for the **Dead Sea Basin**.
- Drive around the Dead Sea to Masada.



- Ascend **Masada** via cable car for a guided visit through the Herodian Fortress, later used by Jewish Zealots in their last stand against the Romans, and explore how the story of Masada plays a role in contemporary Israeli society.
- Stop at a **Dead Sea Beach** for an opportunity to float in the sea, with lunch on own.
- Visit **Qumran**, where the Dead Sea Scrolls were found.
- Ascend to Bethlehem and meet with **Mitri Raheb**.
- Return to Jerusalem.
- Dinner at the hotel, followed by a free evening.

Overnight: Inbal Hotel, Jerusalem

Tuesday, November 6, 2018

THE LAYERS OF JERUSALEM II

Psalms 125:2 *As the mountains surround Jerusalem, so the LORD surrounds His people from this time forth and forever.*

John 2:16-19 *[Jesus] told those who were selling doves, 'Take these things out of here! Stop making my Father's house a marketplace!' His disciples remembered that it was written, 'Zeal for your house will consume me.' The Jews then said to him, 'What sign can you show us for doing this?' Jesus answered them, 'Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up.'*

- Breakfast at the hotel.
- Early morning visit to the **Temple Mount – Haram el Sharif**.
- Descend to the **City of David**, where the city of Jerusalem began, and walk through the excavated drainage tunnel, under the walls of the Old City to the Davidson Archaeological Park and the Southern Wall Excavations, exploring life from the days when the Jewish Temple stood and Jesus began his ministries, concluding with a visit to the **Western Wall**.
- Guided visit through the **Jewish Quarter**, exploring remains from 2,000 years ago through today.
- Return to the hotel.
- Dinner on your own, followed by a group study and discussion.

Overnight: Inbal Hotel, Jerusalem

Wednesday, November 7, 2018

THE LAYERS OF JERUSALEM III

A city is not gauged by its length and width, but by the broadness of its vision and the height of its dreams.

Herb Caen, journalist

Acts 10:28 *[Peter said to them,] 'You yourselves know that it is unlawful for a Jew to associate with or to visit a Gentile; but God has shown me that I should not call anyone profane or unclean.'*

- Breakfast at the hotel.



- Drive north of Jerusalem to the new Palestinian city of **Rawabi**, a private initiative by Palestinian developer Bashar el Masri, including a possible meeting with Mr. Masri.
- Continue to the Coastal Plain and the ancient city of **Caesarea Maratima**, with a guided visit through the Roman and Crusader ruins, concluding in the reconstructed Crusader city, with its cafes and galleries.
- Drive to **Jaffa** on the southern side of Tel Aviv for a guided walk through the alleyways, with stories from the days of the Bible and modern Arab-Jewish life.
- Final group dinner in **Tel Aviv**.
- Return to Jerusalem.

Overnight: Inbal Hotel, Jerusalem

Those going to Petra, stay overnight in Jerusalem.

Those returning to the United States, depart for the Ben Gurion Airport.

Thursday, November 8, 2018

THE ARAVA DESERT

*But in the desert, in the pure clean atmosphere, in the silence – there you can find yourself. And unless you begin to know yourself, how can you even begin to search for God? **Father Dioscuro, 6th c. Coptic poet***

- Breakfast at the hotel.
- Depart Jerusalem for **Sdom**, for an on-site Bible Study at the Mountain of Salt, followed by a drive through the Arava Desert.
- Drive to the **Arava Desert Research Center** for a glimpse at some of the agri-tech innovations in arid conditions.
- Visit **Kibbutz Ketura** and the **Arava Institute**, an environmental study center for Israelis, Egyptians, Jordanians and Palestinians.
- Drive to the Arava Border Crossing and cross in to Jordan.
- Drive through the Jordanian Araba to **Wadi Rum**.
- Check in to Wadi Rum – “**Full Star Hotel**.”
- Bedouin dinner in Wadi Rum.

Overnight: Wadi Rum

Jordan

Friday, November 9, 2018

JORDAN: WADI RUM

*I have always loved the desert. One sits down on a desert sand dune, sees nothing, hears nothing. Yet through the silence something throbs, and gleams... **Antoine de Saint-Exupéry, The Little Prince***

- Breakfast at Wadi Rum.



- Explore the vast expanse of **Wadi Rum**, where the movie Lawrence of Arabia was filmed, with jeep rides, camel rides and Bedouin hospitality.
- Drive north to Petra.
- Check in to Petra hotel.
- Festive Friday night dinner in Petra.

Overnight: Petra

Saturday, November 10, 2018

God has given us many faiths but only one world in which to co-exist. May your work help all of us cherish our commonalities and feel enlarged by our differences, Lord Rabbi Jonathan Sacks

- Breakfast at the hotel.
- Full day exploring ancient Petra, including a walk through Siq to the Treasury and on to the Petra Basin, using Biblical and Nabatean stories as a guide; with optional donkey rides and lunch in the Petra Basin.
- Drive to Amman airport for return flight to the United States.

Overnight: Flight /Amman

