



MEJDI TOURS

Pilgrims and Peacemakers - Rev. Chris Bedding Group 17-30 Nov, 2021

Itinerary:

Day 1: Wed, Nov 17, 2021 (No Bus, No Guide)

- Arrive on own schedule, and meet up at hotel.
- Begin the program with a group welcome dinner, convened by your group leader.

Overnight: St. George's College Guesthouse or Similar, Jerusalem

Meals: Dinner included. Any other meals on own.

Day 2: Thr, Nov 18, 2021 (Bus, Two Guides)

- Meet your two guides - one Jewish Israeli and one Palestinian Arab - and learn about their biographies as you overview the importance of Jerusalem to its two people groups and three major faith traditions.
- Ascend to the Noble Sanctuary / Temple Mount. Take an up-close view of the Dome of the Rock (from outside currently), and meet with a representative of the Islamic Waqf that oversees the site.
- Visit the iconic Western Wall, discuss its history, and take a time for prayer at the site.
- After a break for lunch, visit sites revered by many over centuries of tradition as the tomb of King David and site of the Last Supper.
- End the day with an introduction to modern East and West Jerusalem, as you travel the "seam road" with modern history 101 and overview of geopolitics.
- Over dinner, welcome Rabbi Daniel Roth as available to speak on religion and peace.

Overnight: St. George's College Guesthouse or Similar, Jerusalem

Meals: Breakfast and Dinner included. Lunch on own.

Day 3: Fri, Nov 19, 2021 (Bus, Two Guides)

- In the morning, tour Israel's Holocaust Memorial, Yad Vashem, with a specialist guide - Tamar Avraham if available. Also include Mt. Herzl, located on the same site.
- Stop at nearby Ein Kerem, a depopulated Palestinian village pre-1948, now a predominately Jewish Israeli community of West Jerusalem.
- Debrief with both guides to end the day, and include a time of prayer in the evening.

Overnight: St. George's College Guesthouse or Similar, Jerusalem

Meals: Breakfast and Dinner included. Lunch on own.

Day 4: Sat, Nov 20, 2021 (Bus, Two Guides)

- On Saturday, continue discussing the "seam road" narratives as you travel along the

“Green Line” to the barrier separating Jerusalem from Bethlehem.

- Visit the Banksy Museum alongside the cement wall before heading into Aida Refugee Camp for a Palestinian cooking class, tour of the camp, and lunch.
- In the afternoon, visit with Sami Awad of Holy Land Trust, as available, before bidding farewell to your Israeli guide.
- Then break out to meet your Bethlehem host families for dinner and overnight.

Overnight: Bethlehem homestays

Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, and Dinner included.

Day 5: Sun, Nov 21, 2021 Christ the King Sunday (Bus, One Guide)

- On Sunday, worship with a local Christian church in Bethlehem.
- Then head to the Church of the Nativity, a UNESCO world heritage site built over the site pilgrims have associated with the birth of Christ since the time of some of the earliest Christian communities.
- Following a break for lunch, head out to speak with a Jewish resident of the Israeli settlements to hear their perspective on Jewish connection to the land.
- Then hear a Palestinian perspective on the issue of settlements at the Tent of Nations, a farm owned by a Palestinian Christian family.

Overnight: Bethlehem homestays

Meals: Breakfast and Dinner included. Lunch on own.

Day 6: Mon, Nov 22, 2021 Caesarea, Baha’i Gardens, Atlit (Bus, One Guide)

- On Monday, drive north to Herod’s port city of Caesarea Maritima, seat of government of Pontius Pilate, and site where Paul stood trial before Felix. Explore the relationship between Rome and Judea around the beginning of the Common Era.
- From Caesarea, continue north to Haifa for a tour its stunning Baha’i Gardens, and an overview of the Baha’i faith. (Note there are almost no practicing Baha’is in Israel, but guides are specially trained for the site.)
- After a break in Haifa’s German Colony, tour the nearby Atlit Detainee Camp, reflecting on the plight of Jews fleeing Europe during the 1930s, and connections between realities there and the complex situation that was British Palestine at the time.
- Finally, continue from Atlit to Nazareth - today, a bustling city with the highest population in Israel of its Palestinian Arab citizens.

Overnight: Villa Nazareth or Similar, Nazareth

Meals: Breakfast and Dinner included. Lunch on own.

Day 7: Tue, Nov 23, 2021 Nazareth Village and Sepphoris (Bus, One Guide)

- On Tuesday, return to reflection on Jesus’ First Century context. As a point of contrast with Caesarea, visit Nazareth Village, a re-creation of small-town life in the Galilee at the beginning of the Common Era.
- Stop at the nearby Sabeel Liberation Theology Center, Nazareth Office, for a discussion on its ministry in Nazareth.
- Break for lunch before heading to tour Sepphoris, a large city that was being built during Jesus’ childhood, just a few miles from Nazareth.

Overnight: Villa Nazareth or Similar, Nazareth

Meals: Breakfast and Dinner included. Lunch on own.

Day 8: Wed, Nov 24, 2021 Today's Nazareth and the Annunciation in Context (Bus, One Guide)

- On Wednesday, continue to consider the First Century context as you focus on the Annunciation, tour modern Nazareth, and look ahead to Advent. Stop by Mary's Spring inside St. Gabriel's Orthodox Church, and at the Church of the Annunciation, with its global collection of depictions of Mary and Jesus. Consider all you've seen and heard, and how this context would have shaped the way the annunciation would have sounded to first century Jewish hearers.
- Before leaving Nazareth, stop at Christ Church Nazareth to visit Rev. Nael Abu Rahmoun and to hear about his complex sense of identity.
- Then head out to the Galilee to meet with a speaker on the history and present Kibbutz movement, and check into a kibbutz hotel.

Overnight: Kibbutz Ginosar, Galilee

Meals: Breakfast and Dinner included. Lunch on own.

Day 9 Thr, Nov 25, 2021 Golan and Capernaum (Bus, One Guide)

- On day 9, head north to the Golan Heights. Discover the temples and altars of Caesarea Philippi, sites of the Great Confession. Then, take a short walk to the Baniyas Waterfall.
- Discuss the modern Golan Heights, and enjoy a traditional lunch with a member of the area's Druze community.
- Head back to Tiberias, Capernaum, hub of Jesus' Galilean ministry. Discuss the dynamics of the communities alongside the Sea of Galilee (Lake Kinneret) in Jesus' time.
- Finish the day with a group boat ride on the Galilee, followed by a traditional St. Peter Fish dinner.

Overnight: Kibbutz Ginosar, Galilee

Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, and Dinner included.

Day 10 Fri, Nov 26, 2021 Jordan Valley and Jericho (Bus, One Guide)

- On Friday, check out and head south through the Jordan Valley to Qasr al Yehud. The site has been associated since the earliest centuries of the Common Era with the baptism of Christ, as well as the crossing of Israelites into Canaan.
- From there, head into Jericho for a lunch at Limonah Restaurant, and an ascent by cable cars to the desert monastery on the Mount of Temptation.
- Conclude the daytime program with a visit to the ruins of Hisham's Palace, an early Islamic palace with surprising features and spectacular mosaic floors.
- At dinner, meet a speaker from EcoPeace Middle East, an organization of Palestinians, Israelis, and Jordanians working together on shared environmental concerns.

Overnight: Jericho Village or Similar, Jericho

Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, and Dinner included.

Day 11 Sat, Nov 27, 2021: Masada and the Dead Sea (Bus, One Guide)

- Begin Saturday with a visit to Qumran, site of the discovery of the Dead Sea Scrolls. Discuss religio-political movements of the First Century, the community associated with

the site, and various theories about why the scrolls may have been stored there.

- Continue south to Herod's desert fortress, Masada. Take the gondola to the top for a discussion of theories about its history, as well as about its ongoing significance as a national symbol for many Israelis today.
- Finally, take a float in the Dead Sea at Ein Gedi before ascending through the Judean desert to Jerusalem.

Overnight: St. George's College Guesthouse or Similar, Jerusalem

Meals: Breakfast and Dinner included. Lunch on own.

Day 12 Sun, Nov 28, 2021 (Advent I): Way of Christ (Bus, One Guide)

- Begin the Season of Advent with morning liturgy at St. George's Cathedral, Jerusalem.
- Then head to the top of the Mount of Olives for a walking descent to the Garden of Gethsemane. Along the way, make a stop at Dominus Flevit - "the Lord wept" - a church built in a beautiful spot to recall Jesus' tears over the struggles of Jerusalem in his days.
- From the Garden of Gethsemane, continue along the via Dolorosa to the Church of the Holy Sepulchre. Discuss the history of the church, reasons it has long been believed to be a possible site of the crucifixion, and its present fragile ecumenical situation. As time permits, make a stop at Bethesda Pools and St. Anne's Church for a hymn sing.

Overnight: St. George's College Guesthouse or Similar, Jerusalem

Meals: Breakfast and Dinner included. Lunch on own.

Day 13: Mon, Nov 29, 2021 (Hanukkah Day 1) (Bus, Two Guides)

- On Monday, return to dual narrative guiding as you head out to engage two of the most troubled locations in the Holy Land. First, drive south to Hebron for a dual narrative tour of this highly divided city, associated most closely with Abraham.
- From there, head west to the Gaza border. Discuss issues related to Gaza and neighboring communities in Israel's southern coast, including Sderot. As available, engage in a call with speaker from al Ahli Hospital in Gaza and visit with a Jewish participants in Sderot's peace-seeking organization Other Voice.

Overnight: St. George's College Guesthouse or Similar, Jerusalem

Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, and Dinner included.

Day 14: Tue, Nov 30, 2021 (Hanukkah Day 2) (Bus, One Guide)

- In the morning, head west to a special community called Neve Shalom / Wahat al Salaam - "Oasis of Peace" - a village built as a rare intentional community of both Jewish Israelis and Palestinian Arabs, located in the "seam" area of 1948-1967, and in sight of one of a few ancient villages thought by some to be the biblical Emmaus. Hear about this community's accomplishments and challenges from one of its residents, including a walking tour of the village.
- Enjoy lunch at Neve Shalom / Wahat al Salaam, followed by a time of sharing and devotion inside the village.
- Break in Jerusalem - rest, pack, final souvenir shopping, etc.
- Finally, head out for a celebration dinner in Bethany with traditional Palestinian meal and a small group of Israeli and Palestinian musicians.

Overnight: St. George's College Guesthouse or Similar, Jerusalem

Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, and Dinner included.

Day 15: Wed, Dec 1, 2021 (Bus Transfer, No Guides)

- One bus trip available in morning to the airport for anyone departing this day.
- End of MEJDI program. Breakfast included.*