



# THE HOLY LAND

March 7-17, 2023 11 Days

With optional extension to Jordan  
March 17-20, 2023

Hosted by Pastor Rhodes Woolly and Michael Connor



## DAY-BY-DAY ITINERARY

**TUE, 7 MAR** **Depart U.S.**  
Depart Charlotte, NC on the overnight flight to your connecting flight in Europe. (Meals in-flight)

**WED 8 MAR** **Arrive Tel Aviv**  
Connect with the continuing flight to Ben Gurion Airport, where you will be met by your guide and driver. Transfer to hotel for check-in, dinner and overnight. Overnight in Tel Aviv. Grand Beach Hotel. (Meals in-flight, D)

**THU 9 MAR** **Tel Aviv/Galilee**  
Drive to Caesarea Maritima and past the Roman Aqueduct. Continue to the valley of Megiddo. See the shaft and tunnel made by one of the twenty civilizations that built cities on this land. Meet with Fr. Chacour either in Haifa or Ibilin. Continue Nazareth and see the Church of the Annunciation and Mary's Well. Arrive later today in Tiberias. Royal Plaza Hotel (B,D).

**FRI 10 MAR** **Galilee**  
Today focus on Jesus' ministry around the Galilee area. This morning stop to see the Jesus Boat – a first-century boat discovered in the mud of the Galilee. Then embark on a boat ride across the peaceful Galilee waters. Visit the Ancient Synagogue and St. Peter's House at Capernaum; this is where Jesus healed Peter's mother-in-law and others.

Travel to Tabgha for visits to the Church of the Primacy of Peter, the Church of Multiplication, built on the site of the Miracle of the Loaves and Fishes, and the Church of the Beatitudes for one of the most beautiful views of the Galilee. Continue to Banias Springs (Caesarea Philippi, where Jesus went to get away from the crowds), one of the three sources of the Jordan River. View Mt. Hermon and the Golan Heights before returning to your lodging for dinner and overnight. Royal Plaza Hotel (B,D)

**SAT 11 MAR** **Galilee/Bethlehem**  
Travel to Hebron for a meeting with a local organization such as the Ecumenical Accompaniment Programme in Palestine and Israel (EAPPI) or Hebron Rehabilitation Committee. Visit a Bedouin village: Susyia or Um al Kheir. Continue to Bethlehem for hotel check-in and dinner. Saint Gabriel Hotel (B,D)

**SUN 12 MAR** **Bethlehem**  
Note: Today's programming can be adjusted to accommodate an activity with Pr. Munther Isaac and his congregation. If it's a bible study, perhaps before worship at 10:30. If only the women participate, the men can take an early hike at Battir. This morning attend an Arabic worship service at Christmas Lutheran Church and enjoy some fellowship with the congregation. After lunch, meet

with a settler at Efrat Israeli Settlement followed by a visit to Deheishe Refugee Camp where Palestinians have lived since 1948. Enjoy the balance of the day on your own. Saint Gabriel Hotel (B,D)

**MON 13 MAR** **Bethlehem**  
Drive to Masada and ride the cable car up to the rocky plateau where the Zealots held their last resistance against the Roman conquerors, and explore the various remains of this mountaintop village. The Dead Sea is 1373 feet below sea level and is the lowest point on earth. There will be time for a float in the briny waters. Then drive to Qumran to see the actual caves where the Dead Sea Scrolls were found. Visit Qasr al Yahud on the Jordan River - this is the western site where according to tradition Jesus was baptized by John the Baptist. Stop in Jericho. Return to Bethlehem. Saint Gabriel Hotel (B,D)

**TUE 14 MAR** **Bethlehem/Jerusalem**  
Enjoy an early morning walking tour of the Old City, including a visit to the Church of the Nativity and Manger Square. Tour the region's only arts college, Dar al-Kalima University of Arts & Culture. Meet with The Rev. Dr. Mitri Raheb (subject to his availability), faculty, staff and students to learn how arts and cultural initiatives ensure that today's Palestinians have abundant life. This university also serves the needs of the broader community through a range of contextual and holistic programs via Dar alKalima's Outreach program for Older Adults, Youth and Families. DAK partners with Bright Stars of Bethlehem in the U.S. Enjoy lunch prepared by the students of the culinary program. Transfer to Jerusalem for a breathtaking first glimpse of the Golden City from atop the Mount of Olives. Here, too, is Augusta Victoria Hospital where you will meet with a representative of Lutheran World Federation which sponsors the hospital. Check in at your hotel for dinner and overnight. Ecce Homo Guesthouse (B,L,D)



## WED 15 MAR **Jerusalem**

Early this morning visit the Temple Mount/Haram al Sharif to view the golden Dome of the Rock, an important symbol of the Muslim faith (inside visits not permitted). Stop at the Western Wall. Continue to the Crusader Church of St. Anne and the ancient Pool of Bethesda where Jesus healed a man on the Sabbath. Stop at the Church of the Sisters of Zion (Ecce Homo) to see the original street level pavement from the time of Jesus. Arrive at the Church of Holy Sepulchre which houses the final five Stations of the Cross. At some point during the day, meet with the English language pastor of Lutheran Church of the Redeemer to learn about the various ministries of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Jordan and the Holy Land (ELCJHL) and see how the world's only Arabic-speaking Lutheran church ministers to its context. Ecce Homo Guesthouse (B,D)

## THU 16 MAR **Jerusalem**

Today is yours to explore Jerusalem. Gather tonight for a farewell dinner and overnight in Jerusalem. Ecce Homo Guesthouse (B,D)

## FRI 17 MAR **Jerusalem/Return to U.S.**

Those returning to the USA will have an early morning transfer to the Tel Aviv airport. Arrive home today enriched and enlightened by your time spent in the Holy Land. (Meals in-flight)

Code: **Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner**  
Itinerary subject to change.  
Speakers subject to availability.

## OPTIONAL EXTENSION TO JORDAN

### FRI 17 MAR **Jerusalem/Petra**

This morning transfer to the Allenby Crossing to Jordan and meet your Jordanian guide, driver and coach. Visit Bethany beyond-the-Jordan, which has received recognition as the likely site where John baptized Jesus. Continue through the vast desert to the village of Wadi Musa, which embraces the entrance to Petra - one of the Seven Modern Wonders of the World. Petra Guest House (B,D)

### SAT 18 MAR **Petra**

Two thousand years ago the Nabateans carved a city out of rose red rock and it was rediscovered in 1812. Today you will discover the formerly lost city of Petra during a half-day guided tour. Begin by walking through the dramatic "ciq" or canyon that opens upon the Treasury, El Khazneh, one of the most elegant remains of antiquity. Beyond El Khazneh the visitor is surrounded on both sides by hundreds of Petra's carved and built structures. Enjoy a full day of touring this amazing, once hidden world. Petra Guest House (B,D)

### SUN 19 MAR **Petra/Dead Sea**

Depart on the northbound journey to the village of Madeba to see the ancient mosaic map of the Holy Land. Drive to Mount Nebo where Moses viewed the Promised Land and enjoy the dramatic view of the Jordan Valley, Jericho and the Judean hills beyond. Travel to Amman for a short city tour before checking into your hotel for dinner and overnight. Bristol Hotel (B,D)

### MON 20 MAR **Tel Aviv/Return to U.S.**

Depart to airport for final departure back home to USA (Meals in flight)

Code: **Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner**  
Itinerary subject to change.  
Speakers subject to availability.



## TOUR CONDITIONS

**PAYMENT SCHEDULE:** Your reservation and deposit of \$500 per person are requested immediately to fulfill the group deadline requirements. Note that space is limited and reservations are taken on a first come, first served basis. A second payment of \$1000 is due November 1st, 2022. Final payment is due no later than January 5th, 2023. The fee for late payment is \$50 per traveler. For credit cards, STT accepts Visa and MasterCard (1.5% service charge). PayPal is also an option if needed (subject to service charge of 3 % processing fee).

**REFUND POLICY:** All cancellations must be in writing. There is no refund for partial or unused land arrangements. Note: Airline tickets will be issued well in advance of departure and may be nonrefundable. The following penalties will apply: Up to November 1, 2022 - \$150 per person administrative fee plus any unrecoverable deposits; November 02, 2022 - February 14, 2023- De-posit plus any unrecoverable payments to hotels, tour operators or airlines; February 15th, 2023 or after- No refund.

**CHANGES TO GROUP FLIGHTS:** The group air-fare contract for this tour may not allow travelers to make any date or itinerary changes. If you are considering other dates or cities, please submit your request in writing well in advance to secure the best rates and schedule, but no later than June 04, 2022. A minimum fee of \$100 per person will apply for changes to group flights in addition to a possible airfare increase.

**LATE BOOKINGS:** Passengers registering within thirty days of tour departure will be charged a \$50 per person fee. Tour payment in full is required before we can request and confirm space. This fee does not cover any additional airline or ground service charges.

## TO REGISTER FOR TOUR

To register for this tour, please complete the **Reservation Application online at: [www.Shepherdstours.com/package/stjohns\\_lutheran\\_church/](http://www.Shepherdstours.com/package/stjohns_lutheran_church/)** or send us an email to [tours@shepherdstours.com](mailto:tours@shepherdstours.com) and we will email you the Online Application Form.



## WHAT'S INCLUDED?

- ✓ **AIRFARE:** Round-trip economy class airfare from Charlotte NC to Tel Aviv on an ARC/ IATA approved scheduled carrier
- ✓ **ACCOMMODATION:** Nine (9) nights' accommodation in superior tourist class hotels, double occupancy, with private facilities. Hotels as listed or similar
- ✓ **MEALS:** Breakfast and dinner daily.
- ✓ **GROUND TRANSPORT:** Transfers and transportation by deluxe motor coach throughout.
- ✓ **SIGHTSEEING:** Extensive sightseeing throughout; entrance fees included as per program.
- ✓ **PORTERAGE:** Luggage handling of one piece per person.
- ✓ **EXPERT GUIDES:** An experienced English-speaking tour guide from arrival in Tel Aviv through departure from Tel Aviv.
- ✓ **GUIDING WHISPER SETS:** Individual guide whisper sets for participants and two transmitters (guide and Tour Leader) throughout the tour (\$15 per person).
- ✓ **GRATUITIES:** Gratuities to drivers and guides (for your convenience, \$150 per person has been included).
- ✓ **SPEAKER HONORARIUMS:** All honorariums for special speakers are included and will be provided to the Tour Leader on arrival (\$1,050 allocated from group's budget)
- ✓ **TAXES:** Airport/foreign departure taxes (currently estimated at \$735 per person).
- ✓ **ALL THE INFO YOU NEED:** Comprehensive documentation including travel accessory, bag tags, name badges, flight and land itineraries, destination literature, customs information, travel tips and more.

This tour requires considerable walking. Please check with your tour leader if you have any questions.



## COST SUMMARY

**\*\$3925**

Group Flights From Charlotte, NC

Tour Gratuities (\$150)..... Included  
\*Costs per person based on double occupancy in USD

### Optional Individual Supplement

Single Room (in addition to base tour cost).....\$525

### Optional Jordan Extension.....\$1090

Includes: Three nights in first class hotels, double occupancy with private facilities; Breakfast and dinner daily as outlined in the itinerary; Transfers and transportation by deluxe motor coach; Extensive sightseeing throughout; entrance fees; Luggage handling of one piece per person; An experienced English-speaking tour guide from arrival in Jordan to departure from Jordan; local assistance in Israel; Gratuities to drivers and guides (for your convenience, \$52 per person has been included); Border taxes and Jordanian Entry Visa. Single Supplement for Jordan +\$325

**Costs:** The tour cost is per person based on current airfare from Charlotte NC (other cities available), double occupancy, tariffs and currency valuations as of March 2022 a minimum of 25 travelers, and subject to confirmation. While we will do everything possible to maintain the listed price and/or itinerary, they are subject to change due to circumstances beyond our control. Single room supplements may have limited availability and are on a request basis only. *Not all bookings have been made and all space/rates are subject to availability at time of booking.*

### Items Not Included

- Fuel surcharges and/or tax increases levied since the pricing of this tour.
- Beverages other than coffee/tea at breakfast.
- Any meal or sightseeing item not listed in the itinerary.
- Items of a personal nature.
- Optional Travel Protection: trip cancellation/interruption, baggage delay/loss, emergency accident and sickness medical expense, and emergency evacuation/repatriation. Please refer to the Travel Protection section.
- Passport fees. A passport valid six months beyond date of reentry to the U.S. is required.
- No entry visa is required for U.S. citizens; non-U.S. citizens may require an entry visa.
- COVID related testing (PCR test on prior to arrival, upon arrival and prior to departure, serology) Estimated at \$140 per person (might not be applicable in Mar. 2023)



## TRAVEL PROTECTION

Travel protection is optional, but we encourage all travelers to purchase a plan. STT offers an extensive and competitively priced plan from Seven Corners Insurance. Travel protection can help provide coverage for trip cancellation/interruption, baggage delay/loss, emergency accident and sickness medical expense, and emergency evacuation/repatriation. If you decline coverage at the time of reservation, you may purchase it later, but the Pre-existing Conditions Waiver is available only if the plan is purchased within 20 days of the initial trip deposit. To review the full plan, get a quote and purchase please visit: <https://purchase.sevencorners.com/policygroup/HW7C6WH/HGP5DXM/>

You may contact our Sales Agent at Seven Corners Travel Insurance for further information before making your decision.

Tiffany Day  
Digital Sales Agent  
Seven Corners Travel Insurance  
Direct Phone: (317) 582 2627  
Email: [tiffany.day@sevencorners.com](mailto:tiffany.day@sevencorners.com)

### TRAVEL PROTECTION INCLUSIONS

Trip Cancellation
Trip Interruption
Travel Delay (6 hours)
Missed connection (3 hours)
Baggage
Baggage Delay
Medical Expense
Emergency Dental Expense
Medical Evacuation & Repatriation of remains
Political Emergency Evacuation
ID Theft Resolution Services
Assistance Service

Note: If you prefer to purchase your travel insurance from a different company, please make sure that the Policy includes coverage for any COVID related illness as this is now a prerequisite for entry into Israel.

## CONDITIONS AND RESPONSIBILITY

Shepherds Tours & Travel (STT) provides customized travel planning throughout the world for group travelers who have a variety of reasons and goals for travel. The goals and/or opinions of these groups do not reflect or imply the position of STT in any matter. Brochure contents may not be duplicated without permission from STT. In offering these travel arrangements, Shepherds Tours & Travel (STT) acts solely as an agent for the sale of air transportation and other travel related services. STT maintains no control over the personnel, equipment or operations of any entity furnishing services, products or accommodations. STT assumes no responsibility or liability for, and shall not be expected, asked or required to pay for any injury, damage, expense, personal injury, property damage, inconvenience or any other loss experienced by reason of: (1) any intentional, wrongful, negligent or unauthorized act or omission on the part of any supplier, its agents or employees; (2) any defect, breakdown or other failure of any vehicle, equipment, service, product or other instrumentality which is owned, operated or otherwise used by a supplier; (3) any intentional, wrongful, negligent, or unauthorized act or omission on the part of any other party not under the direct control of STT; (4) financial problems causing nonperformance by any supplier; or (5) any other cause, condition or event whatsoever beyond the direct control of STT. STT cannot guarantee any rates, bookings or reservations of any supplier. Your retention of tickets, reservations or bookings after issuance shall constitute a consent to the foregoing provisions. All prices quoted are subject to change if airlines or ground operators increase their prices, the U.S. dollar is devalued significantly against foreign currencies, the group falls below minimum numbers, or a fuel surcharge, government tax or user's fee is imposed. Baggage and personal effects are the sole responsibility of the owners at all times. STT reserves the right to withdraw from any tour any tour member whose conduct is incompatible with the interests of the group as a whole. The above Conditions and Responsibility also covers the group leader(s) and their respective organizations, their respective organizations.

### NOTE TO OUR TRAVELERS:

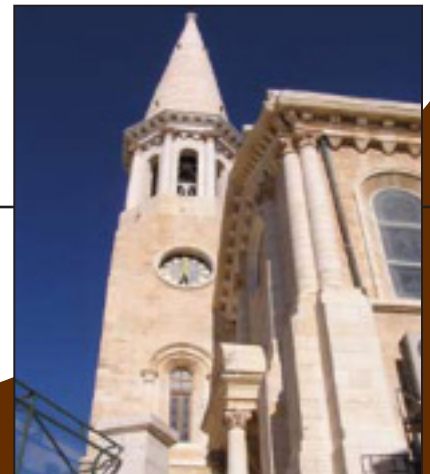
*Be assured that Shepherds Tours and Travel (STT) continually monitors travel industry developments (strikes, etc.) as well as world events. If any such matters affect your tour, you will be notified. At the time this tour was developed the U.S. State Department Travel Advisory for this destination was Level 2 (Exercise Increased Caution); refer to the following website for current information or call STT & Travel. <https://travel.state.gov/content/travel/en/traveladvisories/traveladvisories.html>*



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## Our Purpose

To provide opportunity for:

- Pilgrimage. We'll visit biblical sites related to the life of Jesus and other Old and New Testament events. The Bible will come alive as never before as we look more carefully at the stories of faith and make space for personal and community meditation through prayer and worship.
- Partnership. We'll spend quality time with our ministry partners at Christmas Lutheran Church and Dar al Kalima University, enjoying Bible study with a women's group from the church and a meal cooked by our friend, Dar al Kalima chef/teacher Bassem Hazboun.
- People. We'll meet with "living stones" in urban and rural Palestine, spending time in locations that are off-the-beaten-path for most tourists. We'll spend time with Jewish, Christian, and Muslim residents to consider their perspectives on life under occupation.

## Your invitation

We're excited to invite you to a special St. John's Pilgrimage to the Holy Land, March 7-17, 2023. Join us as we journey into the stories of our faith, walking where Jesus walked, boating along the Sea of Galilee, quietly sitting where crowds listened to Jesus' Sermon on the Mount. The itinerary is outlined in this brochure, but suffice it to say, you'll be amazed at how the story of faith will come alive in new and exciting ways.

A special feature is the chance to spend time with our friends and partners in Palestine. St. John's has a unique relationship with Christmas Lutheran Church (our partner congregation in Bethlehem) and Dar al Kalima Lutheran University. Through these partnerships, we'll have access to a deeper part of the story and the chance to form relationships that could last a lifetime. We'll also encounter some of the "living stones" that make up daily life in Palestine. Time will be spent with Jewish, Muslim, and Christian residents to consider life under occupation, enjoying conversation that goes far beyond the average nightly newscast. And for those who can't get enough, an optional extension trip to Petra is available.

There will be many highlights of the pilgrimage, but we're sure food will be near the top of the list, especially while we're in Bethlehem enjoying meals prepared by Chef Bassem Hazboun. Bassem was the lead chef at the 2014 St. John's culinary event. What a treat!

Interested? More details are on our website, [stjohns-salisbury.org](http://stjohns-salisbury.org). Click "Pilgrimage to the Holy Land." If you have further questions, please contact Mike Connor, [mjconnor1982@gmail.com](mailto:mjconnor1982@gmail.com). We hope you can join us!

- Pastor Rhodes Woolly and Mike Connor

## Your Hosts

Dr. **Michael Connor** first visited Israel and the West Bank in October 2012 as part of a mission trip arranged by Mission Opportunities Short Term (MOST) and Christmas Lutheran Church, Bethlehem. He was inspired by community initiatives led by Dr. Rev. Mitri Raheb to provide hope and purpose in Palestine. Dr. Connor currently leads the Palestine Ministry at St. John's Lutheran Church in Salisbury, North Carolina, which partners with Bright Stars of Bethlehem and Christmas Lutheran Church in Bethlehem. In 2017, Dr. Connor spent three months in Palestine and Israel as a volunteer Ecumenical Accompanier, providing "protective presence" for people like bedouin shepherds and schoolchildren in the South Hebron Hills area of the West Bank. The Ecumenical Accompaniment Programme is under the auspices of the World Council of Churches. Dr. Connor is a retired biostatistician with over forty years of professional experience in health care analytics and research. He earned a bachelor's degree in business administration from Grove City College in Pennsylvania, and master's and doctor of public health degrees in biostatistics from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill.



**Rhodes Woolly** first visited the Holy Land in 1995 on a seminary study tour, but interest was piqued several years later when he met Father Elias Chacour during a conference in Virginia. "I'll never read the Beatitudes in the same way," he says, referring to Chacour's translation of Jesus' sermon into Aramaic, his native language. Since then, he's enjoyed exploring the interaction between Word, land, context, and history. Global mission has always been an interest for Rhodes, especially his local congregations' partnerships in Tanzania, Guatemala, India, South Sudan, and, more recently, Rwanda because of his son's experience there with the ELCA's Young Adults in Global Mission program. Part of his interest comes from graduate work in International Studies and an early career as a lobbyist in Washington, DC. Since 1996, he has served in full-time parish ministry, carefully incorporating grass-roots mission engagement along the way. He is currently the senior pastor of St. John's Lutheran Church in Salisbury, NC. Rhodes is a graduate of Lenoir-Rhyne University, the University of South Carolina, Lutheran Theological Southern Seminary, and Emory University.

