

Optional Extension to Jordan

The rest of pilgrims will depart for Jordan via the historic Allenby Bridge and visit Mount Nebo and Madaba on the way to Petra. Lunch at Haret Jdouna Madaba. Dinner and overnight in Petra.

For Jordan, visas are required. We will assist you in obtaining the required visa. The two-day trip to Jordan is optional and not included in the price for Israel/Palestine.

Tuesday, January 16

Day 11: Petra

Petra is the “rose city,” a World Heritage archaeological site in Jordan’s southwestern desert from about 300 BC. This is one of the great wonders of the ancient world. Seeing Petra takes a very full day. You can walk (preferred); take a donkey cart; or ride a horse. We will have lunch within the ancient city. Dinner and overnight in Petra.

Wednesday, January 17

Day 12: Return to Israel

Depart for Israel via the historic Allenby Bridge. Late evening flights from Tel Aviv to the U.S.

Note: Dinner before departure is not included. Optional supplement for dinner at local restaurant in Jerusalem is 65 USD per person (City View Restaurant or similar).

THANKS BE TO GOD!



VIRGINIA THEOLOGICAL
SEMINARY



Epiphany Pilgrimage to the Holy Land

January 6–17, 2024

Led by The Very Rev. Ian S. Markham, Ph.D. and
The Rev. J. Barney Hawkins IV, Ph.D.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

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Itinerary

Saturday, January 6

Day 1: Arrive Tel Aviv, Israel

With great joy on January 6, we will welcome you in the Arrivals Hall at Ben Gurion Airport, where we travel together to Tiberias, on the Sea of Galilee. Before we know it, we will be there!

When making your flight arrangements, please clear dates and times with us. If you arrive on January 6, you must arrive before noon. If you arrive on January 5 or earlier, please plan to be in the Arrivals Hall at Ben Gurion at the appointed time—no later than noon on January 6, 2024. The Sadot Hotel Tel Aviv works well for arrivals before January 6.

We travel the coastal highway to Tiberius. There we will stay at the Magdalena Hotel and enjoy unforgettable Galilean moments. While staying in the Galilee, we will visit many places associated with Jesus’ earthly ministry. We will have a good night’s rest.

Sunday, January 7

Day 2: Jesus’ Glorious Public Ministry

Giving thanks for our several journeys and the pilgrimage before us, we will have a cruise (included) on the fabled Sea of Galilee by a private boat which will include a Celebration of the Holy Eucharist. We will visit Capernaum (included), the site of the synagogue where Jesus taught. We will see St. Peter’s House, now

a converted church; Tabgha, where the miracle of the loaves and fishes is said to have occurred; and the commemorative fifth-century mosaics in the Church of the Multiplication. We will have a view of the Golan Heights. We will go to the Mount of Beatitudes, the site of the Sermon of the Mount. Dinner and overnight in Tiberias.

Monday, January 8

Day 3: Ruins, Water and Food

We set north to Caesarea Philippi (included), to enjoy the scenery of the Jordan River source. Then we will return to the Lake of Galilee to visit Magdala (included) with its beautiful chapels, set within a current archeological dig. We will enjoy lunch (included) at the “best Arab restaurant in Israel”, Magdalena Restaurant in Migdal, and then have some time to rest and enjoy the Galilee area. Dinner and overnight in Tiberias.

Tuesday, January 9

Day 4: Nazareth and Sites of the New Testament

We go today to Sepphoris or Zippori (included), that Josephus called the “ornament of all Galilee.” Then to Nazareth, where Jesus spent much of his life. We will see the Basilica of the Annunciation, built on the traditional site of Joseph’s home; the Church of Gabriel; Mary’s Well where an angel is said to have visited. After

lunch we’ll set to visit Mt. Tabor (taxi included), above the clouds, with its stunning Church of the Transfiguration where we will mark the Lord’s Day with a Celebration of the Holy Eucharist. There will be a brief meditation or homily at each of our services. Dinner and overnight in Tiberias.

Wednesday, January 10

Day 5: Prayer and Lavishness in One Desert

We will travel through the Jordan Valley to the Decapolis city of Beit Shean. On to Qasr El Yahud, the site on the Jordan River near Jericho to see the place where John the Baptist baptized Jesus. Then we will continue to Jericho, the oldest continuously inhabited city in the world, dating back nearly 10,000 years. Lunch in a restaurant in Jericho. After Jericho we will visit an off-the-beaten path monastery, Saint Gerasimos. We arrive in Jerusalem in the afternoon. Dinner and overnight in Jerusalem.

Thursday, January 11

Day 6: Jerusalem the Holy

We will begin our day by attending services at St. George’s Cathedral (Anglican). Today we visit St. Anne’s Church (included) and then will stroll the Via Dolorosa where Jesus carried the cross to Golgotha. We will visit the Lithostrotos (included), where Pontius Pilate tried Jesus. We will encounter the Stations of the Cross of the Via Dolorosa in the teaming bazaars of the Old City, arriving at the Church of the Holy Sepulcher, the site of Jesus’ crucifixion

and resurrection. Lunch overlooking the Old City at Notre Dame (included). In the afternoon, we will visit Mount Zion and pause to pray in the place of the Upper Room where Jesus gathered with his followers for the Last Supper. We might also visit the “second” site for the Garden of Gethsemane which is near our hotel. Dinner and overnight in Jerusalem.

Friday, January 12

Day 7: Bethlehem and Environs

On to Saint Saba Monastery: yet, we will not take a tour because women are not allowed. We thought it unlikely that the women going on this trip would sit quietly on the bus and “mind their knitting” while the men are welcomed with open arms. Afterwards we head to Herodium (included), a volcano-like hill and Herod’s palace and tomb. Later we proceed to the Shepherd Fields in Beit Sahour, a small town east of Bethlehem: There we see the Shepherds’ grottos and then have lunch at a restaurant there. In the afternoon, we will drop by a cooperative shop for those who still need a souvenir from Bethlehem, and then we will visit the Church of the Nativity (and read the night before Reynolds Price’s story about this sacred place) and the Milk Grotto. Towards the end of the day, we will see the gross wall or West Bank barrier which separates Israel and Palestine (with some of the art of Banksy, an English-based graffiti artist). Dinner and overnight in Jerusalem.

Saturday, January 13

Day 8: Jerusalem the Holy City of the Messiah

In the morning, we will visit the Mount of Olives and remember Palm Sunday. In Jewish tradition, the Messiah will descend the Mount of Olives on Judgement Day and enter Jerusalem through the Golden Gate. The catacombs of the Mount include the graves of the prophets Haggai, Zechariah and Malachi. From the Byzantine times, the Mount, one of the three hills of Jerusalem, became a place of church buildings. We will visit the Church of All Nations (Basilica of the Agony) in Gethsemane; Church of St. Mary Magdalene (Russian Orthodox); Church of Dominus Flevit (associated with Jesus weeping for Jerusalem); Church of the Pater Noster (included), that recalls the Lord’s Prayer; Dome of the Ascension (included), a small shrine, now a mosque where Jesus is believed to have ascended to heaven. We will also see the garden and grotto of Gethsemane and the Tomb of Mary (where tradition says the Mother of Jesus was buried). Lunch at Notre Dame (included). We will return to the American Colony, and there will be time for last-minute shopping or a pleasant walk to the Rockefeller Museum. A festive dinner in the evening as we prepare to say farewell to Jerusalem. Overnight in Jerusalem.

Sunday, January 14

Day 9: Jerusalem, a City of Culture and History

This morning we will explore the fascinating, history-rich city, built by King David in 1004 BC (included). We will visit the Western Wall for prayers. We will view the Temple Mount area (Al Haram el-Sharif) with its Dome of the Rock, El Aksa Mosque and the Davidson Centre (included), where artwork and archaeological discoveries are housed. Proceed to see the Chagall Windows at Hadassah Hospital and visit Ein Karem, an ancient village in what is now southwest Jerusalem. On our way to Yad Vashem, a Holocaust memorial and institution for Shoah research, we will see Israel’s parliament building, the Knesset. Lunch (included) will be at Israel Museum (visit included) which hosts a selection of the Dead Sea Scrolls in a fascinating building which recalls architecturally the clay vessels which protected the ancient scrolls in their original caves. Dinner and overnight in Jerusalem.

Monday, January 15

Some pilgrims may depart to Tel Aviv for their homebound flights.