

**Lakeside Christian Church
invites you to experience the Holy Land**

ISRAEL

November 6 – 17, 2023

(As of 7/27/2023)

Join us on a tour of inspiration, exploration and connection with Lakeside Christian Church as we journey together to the Holy Land, Israel. As a traveling community, we will bond through our shared experiences and encounter the historical and spiritual wonders of this ancient and sacred land.



Day 1: Monday, November 6, 2023: DEPARTURE

- We depart from Cleveland on our overnight flight to the Holy Land, Israel.
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Day 2: Tuesday, November 7, 2023: WELCOME TO ISRAEL!

- We arrive at Ben Gurion Airport this morning and are met by an Ayelet Tours representative.
- Our tour begins as we travel through the **Valley of Elah**, the site of the famous biblical battle between David and Goliath.
- Lunch on own en-route.
- From there, we travel to **Tel Be'er Sheva**, whose name means 'Well of the Oath/the Seven', referencing the well of oath between Abram and Abimelech, the King of Garr.
- Later this afternoon, we view **The Fountain of Tears**, which has been described by its creator, artist Rick Wienecke, as "sculptured dialogue of suffering between the Holocaust and the Crucifixion."
- We transfer to our hotel to check in and refresh before joining for a **welcome dinner** together this evening in our hotel.

Overnight at the Inbar Hotel in Arad

Day 3: Wednesday, November 8, 2023: INTO THE WILDERNESS

- Breakfast and check out of our hotel.
- This morning, we travel to **Tel Arad**, an archeological site where remains of a fortified Canaanite city and fortresses from the time of the Kings of Judah have been unearthed.
- Next, we move to **Kibbutz Sde Boker** in the heart of the Negev and visit the gravesite of Israel's founding father, David Ben Gurion. As we stand on a cliff overlooking **Nahal Tzin** with an astonishing view of the **Advat highlands** encompassing us, we can begin to understand how he loved this land so much.
- Lunch on own en-route.
- We continue with a classic desert hike in the **Zin Valley**. As we view the amazing landscape that surrounds us, we have the chance to encounter the spring **Ein Akev**, a small Bedouin farm and an ancient Nabataean city.
- We transfer to our spa hotel at the Dead Sea to check in, followed by **dinner** together this evening.



Overnight at Prima Oasis Spa Club Hotel at the Dead Sea



Day 4: Thursday, November 9, 2023: THE DESERT AS A REFUGE

- Breakfast and morning at leisure at Prima Oasis Spa Club Hotel to swim or enjoy the spa facilities.
- We check out of our hotel and travel along the shores of the Dead Sea to **Masada**. Upon arrival, we ascend by cable car and tour the mountain fortress built by King Herod, where the Zealots of the first century made their last stand against the Romans. While here, we view the remains of the walls, palaces, synagogue, water cisterns, mosaic floors, roman baths and other findings.
- Stop for lunch on own.
- This afternoon, enjoy a short **hike** to the hidden waterfalls in the desert oasis of **Ein Gedi** and to view the **Qumran caves**, where the Dead Sea Scrolls were discovered by a local shepherd.
- Tonight, experience authentic Bedouin hospitality with **tea** in **Abraham's Tent**.
- We transfer to our hotel in **Jerusalem** for check in later this evening for dinner at our hotel.

Overnight at the Prima Kings in Jerusalem

Day 5: Friday, November 10, 2023: JERUSALEM'S HERITAGE

- Breakfast at our hotel.
- We begin our discovery of **Jerusalem** by exploring the **Western Wall tunnels**, the underground continuation of the Kotel, examining important archaeological discoveries that are revising our understanding of daily life in this ancient city.
- Lunch on own.
- Next, step back in time 2,000 years to the glory of King Herod's Second Temple and its majestic supporting structures at the **Southern Wall excavations**. We will stand on the **Southern Steps**, where hundreds of thousands of pilgrims ascended to the Holy Temple every year, walk under the remains of the enormous **Robinson's Arch** and along **Herodian Market Street**, where the enormous fallen ashlar attest to the immense destruction wrought by the Romans in 70 CE.
- We return to our hotel to relax before **dinner** together this evening.



Overnight at the Prima Kings in Jerusalem



Day 6: Saturday, November 11, 2023: IN THE STEPS OF JESUS

- Breakfast at our hotel.
- This morning, we stop atop the **Mount of Olives** for a stunning overview of the city before embarking on a **walking tour** through **Kidron Valley**, just as Jesus crossed many times travelling between Jerusalem and Bethany.
- We enjoy time to visit the **Chapel of the Ascension** on own, where tradition holds that Jesus ascended to Heaven after his resurrection, and today is a mosque.
- Next, view the **Tomb of the Prophets**, an ancient burial site located on the upper western slope of the Mount of Olives. According to a medieval Jewish tradition also adopted by Christians, the catacomb is believed to be the burial place of Haggai, Zechariah and Malachi, the last three Hebrew Bible prophets.
- Lunch on own.
- Onwards to the **Garden of Gethsemane**, a beautiful green space believed to have been a garden even in biblical times. It is believed that Christ and His disciples retreated to the garden after the Last Supper, and it is here that Christ gave his last sermon to his students.
- We continue to explore **Saint Anne's Church** and the **Pool of Bethesda**, where Jesus cured the lame man, and then stroll along the **Via Dolorosa**. The final station of the Via Dolorosa is the **Church of the Holy Sepulchre**, the place where Jesus is traditionally believed to have been crucified. This church is one of Christianity's great pilgrimage sites and a testament to the remarkable diversity of the Christian world.
- Our last stop takes us to the **Garden Tomb** for an unforgettable **Communion worship service**. The Garden Tomb was unearthed in 1867, and archeological findings such as an ancient wine press and cistern indicates to some that this land once contained a garden, and along with the account of John the Evangelist, this site has become identified as the "garden tomb" of Jesus.
- We return to our hotel and enjoy **dinner** together this evening.



Overnight at the Prima Kings in Jerusalem

Day 7: Sunday, November 12, 2023: FREE DAY IN JERUSALEM

- Breakfast at our hotel.
- Entire day at leisure to explore and discover **Jerusalem** on own (*suggestions to be provided*).
- Lunch on own.
- We meet this evening for **dinner** together at our hotel.

Overnight at the Prima Kings in Jerusalem



Day 8: Monday, November 13, 2023: BIRTHPLACE OF CHRIST AND ISRAEL'S HEARTLAND

- Breakfast at our hotel.
- We begin our day atop the **Temple Mount**, known as *Har Habayit* and *Haram al-Sharif*, to stand on the ancient platform that once held the Jewish temples and today hosts mosques, the Islamic shrine and the **Dome of the Rock**.
- Next, we drive past the **Shepherd's Fields** and continue to **Bethlehem**, a modern Palestinian town, and the place where, according to Christian tradition, Jesus was born. Here, we walk through the **Old City** to the **Church of the Nativity**, his traditional birthplace.
- Lunch on own.
- We continue to **Shiloh**, an ancient city and central sanctuary of the Israelites during the pre-monarchic period, before the First Temple in Jerusalem was built (*pending security approval*).
- We return to our hotel in Jerusalem to relax before **dinner** together this evening.

Overnight at the Prima Kings in Jerusalem

Day 9: Tuesday, November 14, 2023: THE JORDAN VALLEY

- Breakfast and check out of our hotel before our early morning departure to the **Jordan Valley**.
- We begin at **Tel Jericho**, a historical site that was continuously populated from the time of hunter-gatherers of 10,000 BCE through the late 6th century. Among the numerous discoveries made here, the most notable is the conical **Tower of Jericho**. This 28-foot-tall stone structure contains an internal staircase of 22 steps and dates from 8,000 BCE, making it one of the earliest stone monuments made by man (*pending security approval*).
- We view the **Mount Temptation**, where Jesus fasted for 40 days and 40 nights to successfully resist Satan's temptations.
- We pause at the **Qaser El Yehud baptismal site** situated on the banks of the **Jordan River**.
- As we drive amongst the amazing surroundings of the desert, we get to view ancient Roman ruins, Beit Shean, and the Arbel Cliffs. We stop at **Ein Harod**, and hear of the incredible stories that took place here.
- We continue to **Nazareth**, where the angel Gabriel revealed the coming birth of Jesus, to visit the **Basilica of the Annunciation**. We stop on the outskirts of Old Nazareth to visit **Nazareth Village**, an open-air museum that attempts to recreate a Galilean village. This place is considered to be holy as Jesus spent nearly 30 years of his life in this region.
- Later this afternoon, we travel to the **Galilee** to check into our kibbutz and enjoy **dinner** together this evening.



Overnight at Maagan Holiday Village Kibbutz in Maagan



Day 10: Wednesday, November 15, 2023: SEA OF GALILEE AND NORTHERN ISRAEL

- Breakfast at our kibbutz.
- Today, we venture to **Capernaum**. Often called the “town of Jesus,” this ancient fishing village was a mixed Christian-Jewish area where Jesus and his disciple Peter were based. Explore the church and synagogue that have been discovered here and see the many pilgrims who flock to the area.
- We visit **Tabgha**, site of the **Church of Multiplication**, where the mosaic floor depicts a basket with loaves and two fishes, a symbolic reference to the miracle where Jesus was able to feed the multitudes. We also stop to see the **Church of the Primacy of Saint Peter**. Next, we travel to **Caesarea Philippi** (Banias), the site where Jesus revealed his mission to Peter and the other disciples.
- We travel to the **Mount of Beatitudes**, where Jesus is believed to have delivered one of his most influential sermons, the “Sermon on the Mount.”
- Lunch on own en-route.
- This afternoon, we take a short hike through the **Tel Dan Nature Reserve**, where lies the source of the Jordan River and is a site of early archaeological finds.
- Our day ends with a **boat ride** on the Sea of Galilee using a boat inspired by the fishing vessels used here over 2,000 years ago. Don’t worry, the safety precautions and comfort levels will be modern rather than ancient!
- We return to our kibbutz for **dinner** together this evening.

Overnight at Maagan Holiday Village Kibbutz in Maagan

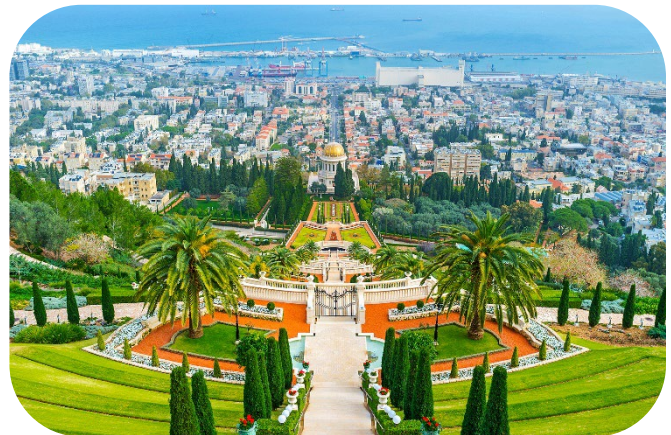
Day 11: Thursday, November 16, 2023: LIGHT TO THE NATIONS

- Breakfast and check out of our kibbutz this morning.
- We continue with a short review of the ancient Hellenistic city of **Hippos-Sussita**.
- Next, we drive along the top of **Mount Carmel** to a panoramic overlook of **Haifa** revealing the beautiful **Bahai Gardens**, a UNESCO World Heritage site adorning the descent to the sea.

- Lunch on own en-route.
- Later this afternoon, we venture to **Caesarea Maritima**.

This city and harbor were built under Herod the Great near the site of a former Phoenician naval station and later became the provincial capital of Roman Judaea. Here, in 1961, the Pilate Stone was discovered – a piece of limestone bearing an inscription that mentions the Roman prefect Pontius Pilate, by whose order Jesus was crucified.

- This evening, we enjoy a **farewell dinner** at a local seaside restaurant, recalling and sharing all that we have experienced on our journey together through the holy land of Israel.
 - We transfer to Ben Gurion Airport for our late-night flight to the United States.
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Day 12: Friday, November 17, 2023: UNTIL WE MEET AGAIN!

- We arrive home this morning.

THE MEMORIES LAST FOREVER!!

**itinerary subject to change*

