

**East Liberty Presbyterian Church
and Temple Sinai
Shared Study Mission to
Israel, the Holy Land and
the Palestinian Territories
The Holy Land and the Palestinian Territories
Led by Reverend Dr. Randall Bush
& Rabbi Jamie Gibson
November 10-18, 2019**

(As of 2/21/19)



Join us as we discover Israel together. Our mission will explore all faiths and their connections to the land. We'll also hear from leading scholars and learn from locals of this very interesting land.

Day 1: Sunday, November 10, 2019: DEPARTURE

- We depart the United States on our overnight flight to Israel.

Day 2: Monday, November 11, 2019: WELCOME TO ISRAEL!

- We arrive at Ben Gurion Airport and are met by an Ayelet Tours representative.
- We travel to the **Galilee** to check into our kibbutz and refresh.
- This evening, we enjoy our **welcome dinner** and orientation together at our kibbutz, along with Rabbi Jamie Gibson and Rev. Dr. Randall Bush to discuss what we can expect to experience on our interfaith journey.

Overnight in the Galilee

Day 3: Tuesday, November 12, 2019: BIBLICAL PAST, POLITICAL PRESENT

- Breakfast at our kibbutz.
- This morning, we visit the **boat museum**, then set out on a **boat ride** on the **Sea of Galilee**.
- We continue to **Capernaum**, where Jesus taught his disciples during the days of the Second Temple. We see the ancient synagogue and church adjacent to each other. We pause to discuss interfaith relations both during the time of Jesus and today.
- Our next stop is at the **Mt. of Beatitudes**, where Jesus gave his Sermon on the Mount.
- We continue to **Banias - Caesarea Philippi**, at the base of Mount Hermon, where there is one of the largest springs which runs into the Jordan River. Here, Saint Peter made his confession of Jesus as the Messiah and the "Son of the living God". We see the excavations of the ancient Roman settlement.
- We continue on a **jeep tour** along the Syrian border, with key stops along the way, to take in the views of Syria and learn more about the current geopolitical situation.



- Next, we visit the **Druze village of Bukhata**, where we discuss their complex relationship with Israel in the wake of the Syrian Civil War. We enjoy traditional **Druze hospitality**.
- This evening, we return to our kibbutz for **dinner** together.

Overnight in the Galilee

Day 4: Wednesday, November 13, 2019: CO-EXISTENCE

- Breakfast and check out of our kibbutz.
- Our first stop is today is in **Nazareth**, where we visit the **Basilica of Annunciation** and **Kikar Hamerivah** (the fighting square), where Christians and Muslims fight to this day about building a mosque in the middle of the city.
- We pass by **Armageddon** on our way to **Caesarea**, the former Roman capital of the area, where we view the ancient inscription of Pontius Pilate and the ancient ruins, including the Roman theater and the aqueduct.
- We continue to **Old Jaffa** to visit the historic landmarks, including **St. Peter's Church** and the **House of Simon the Tanner**.
- We set out on a **co-existence tour** exploring the mixed city of Jaffa, where Arabs and Jews live side by side, tracing the different historical narratives as we explore the possibility of creating a common future and shared society.
- Following our tour, we enjoy **home hospitality** with local Christian families.
- We check into our hotel in **Tel Aviv** later this evening.



Overnight in Tel Aviv

Day 5: Thursday, November 14, 2019: THE PALESTINIAN-ISRAELI DIVIDE

- Breakfast and check out of our hotel.
- This morning, we depart for **Rawabi**, the new Palestinian city north of Ramallah, for a glimpse at this unique project, a synthesis between private enterprise and public resources to create a new urban reality in Palestinian society. We meet with developer **Bashar el Masri**.
- Next, we visit the settlement of **Shilo**, where Joshua divided the land between the tribes and the tabernacle stood for almost 400 years. We enjoy a very special presentation of this historic place and have **lunch with local Jewish residents** who speak about their settlement.
- Next, we visit the current capital of the **Palestinian Authority, Ramallah**. We visit the **Start-up Hub**, home to many new and innovative businesses.
- We travel south to **Jerusalem** and stop at an overlook to take in the panoramic views of the **City of Gold** and participate in a Jewish tradition of reciting the “Shehecheyanu” blessing. This is said when celebrating special occasions and to be thankful for new and unusual experiences.
- We check into our hotel., followed by **dinner and political discussion** with **Professor Paul Liptz** to sum up our day.

Overnight in Jerusalem



Day 6: Friday, November 15, 2019: THE CITY OF GOLD

- Breakfast at our hotel.
- We begin our day with a tour of **Yad Vashem**, Israel's memorial to the Holocaust, where we view the many moving exhibitions, including the Hall of Names and the Avenue of the Righteous Among the Nations. We complete our visit with a short **memorial service** for those we have recently lost.
- We continue with a stroll through the famous **Machane Yehuda**, where we take in the sights, smells and sounds of Jerusalem's bustling marketplace and watch the locals busily preparing for Shabbat.
- We return to our hotel for time to refresh.
- As the sun begins to set, we enjoy "**Shabbat of a Lifetime**", an authentic experience in the heart of Jerusalem. We join together with a local family for **Shabbat dinner**, and take part in the weekly rituals that Jews around the world have kept alive for thousands of years.

Overnight in Jerusalem

Day 7: Saturday, November 16, 2019: BETHLEHEM

- Breakfast at our hotel.
- This morning, we travel south to **Bethlehem**, and visit the **Church of the Nativity**.
- Next, we meet with a local family to discuss the wall, and feelings of oppression.
- We pass by **Shepherd's field**, where the angels announced Jesus's birth to the shepherds.
- Next, we visit the city of **Hebron**, home of Abraham, and the location of the covenant of circumcision. Here, we walk in the footsteps of Sarah and visit the **Cave of Machpelah**, where our ancestors are buried.
- We return to Jerusalem for **dinner** together at our hotel, joined by **Khaled Abu Toameh**, an Israeli-Arab journalist, lecturer and documentary filmmaker, to hear about the current state of Israeli-Palestinian relations.
- **Optional:** We join together later this evening and walk to the **Tower of David** to see the spectacular **Sound and Light show**.



Overnight in Jerusalem



Day 8: Sunday, November 17, 2019: ISRAEL THEN AND NOW

- Breakfast at our hotel.
- Morning **worship** at **St. George's Cathedral** home to the Episcopal diocese of Jerusalem.
- This afternoon, we set out on a **walking tour** through the **Old City**, including stops in the **Jewish quarter** and at the **Arab market**. We also visit the **Christian quarter**, where we stroll along the **Via Dolorosa** and end at the **Church of the Holy Sepulchre**.
- We complete our day in **Gush Etzion**, for a dialogue with the leaders of the **Shorashim/Roots program** that fosters a grassroots movement of understanding, non-violence and partnership between Israelis and Palestinians.
- This evening, we enjoy a **farewell dinner**, recalling all that we have experienced together.



Overnight in Jerusalem

Day 9: Monday, November 18, 2019: DEPARTURE

- Breakfast and check out of our hotel.
- We transfer to the airport for our flight back to the United States, landing later today.

The Memories Last Forever!!

**Itinerary subject to change*

