



# The Center Chronicles

August 2017



With the summer ending and a new school year beginning, I am reminded of those learning moments all of us experience throughout our lives. Whether young or old we are always learning more about who we are as God's people, what our purpose is in life, and how we can teach what we learn to those who follow us.

Next summer, a faith learning opportunity has maybe presented itself. Over the past year, due to the Ray Vander Laan Bibles Study series and other scriptural and faith related discussions, there has been a growing interest for the possibility of taking a trip to the Holy Lands in 2018. To see if there is really an interest, I contact several tour groups and one company gave me an example itinerary From Maranatha travel agency and cost which will be given after this article. For every five people who commit to go, one free trip is offered to those who cannot afford such a trip. The cost includes, airfare, lodging, two meals a day, transportation, taxes and tips, and guide for 11 days for June of 2018.

I simply invite you to look at the schedule, pray about it, talk to me or go directly to the Maranatha travel website [MaranathaTours.com](http://MaranathaTours.com) for more information. If after reading the itinerary. The cost will be \$4268 mainly because we will be flying out of Nashville instead of New York and arriving during peak tourist season. If you are interested, please take time to sign you name and number on the clip board next to the copy office. Until then.

Peace,

Jon

## 11 DAYS IN THE HOLY LAND BEGINS HERE

### DAY 1 - Monday, June 04, 2018

#### NASHVILLE / ISTANBUL

Tour members are welcomed for our departing flight to Tel Aviv via wide-body aircraft arriving the next day. Meals served on board.

### DAY 2 - Tuesday, June 05, 2018

#### ISTANBUL / TEL AVIV / TIBERIAS

This morning we will arrive in Istanbul and transfer to our flight to Tel Aviv.

Upon arrival in Tel Aviv we are met by our guide who will be with us for the time we are in the Holy Land. Continue through Tel Aviv, the largest city in Israel. We proceed up the new toll road in Israel to the famous Tiberias on the Sea of Galilee where we check into our hotel for dinner and overnight.

### DAY 3 - Wednesday, June 06, 2018

#### HAZOR/ DAN / CAESAREA PHILIPPI

"The Head of all those Kingdoms" (Joshua 11:10) The Sources of the Jordan. This morning our drive takes us through the Hula Valley to Hazor, ruins of the powerful Canaanite city destroyed by Joshua and rebuilt by King Jabin and then by Solomon as a chariot city to command upper Galilee. Continue on to the northern limits of Jesus' travel as we cross the River Hatzbani to Dan, where we combine a nature walk beside the Upper Jordan with views of the ancient ruins, topped by the Israelite high place that supported a golden calf (1 Kings

12). Then a short drive to Banias (Caesarea Philippi, dedicated to the Greek god of pastures, flocks and shepherds; here Peter made his great profession of faith, recognition of Christ Jesus (Matthew 16). Driving along the foot of Mount Hermon, we ascend onto the Plateau for a magnificent view of upper Israel. On our return we stop at Chorazin and then on to Kursi, where Jesus healed the demon possessed men, before returning to our hotel for dinner and overnight.

### DAY 4 - Thursday, June 07, 2018

#### SEA OF GALILEE / CAPERNAUM / BETH SHEAN

This morning we enjoy a relaxing boat ride on the Sea of Galilee before returning to Nof Ginosar where we will see the New Testament fishing boats found below the sea. Continue our morning tour with a visit to Capernaum, Tabgha and the Mount of Beatitudes.

In the afternoon we stop at Magdala, one of the oldest Synagogues dating back to the first century AD. Home of Mary Magdalene, the fishing center where Peter would have brought his catch of fish to be sold or processed. We follow the Rift Valley the Rift Valley running north to the Jordan, along the route Jesus most frequently traveled to Jerusalem. We visit Bet Shean at the foot of Mt. Gilboa, where King Saul was slain, see the evidences of Egyptian, Roman and Byzantine occupations, and view the ancient tel, Roman Theater and mosaics. Our last stop today will be at the Jordan River where we have the opportunity to be baptized, then transfer to the hotel in Tiberias for dinner and overnight.

## **DAY 5 - Friday, June 08, 2018**

### **CANA / NAZARETH / CAESAREA / JERUSALEM**

"We are going up to Jerusalem." (Matt. 20:18). We drive west to Nazareth. Traveling through Cana of Galilee where Jesus performed his first Miracle, turning water into wine (John 2). We proceed to Nazareth and ascend the Mount of the Precipice at the brow of Nazareth overlooking the Valley of Jezreel, synonymous with Armageddon. We then drive through the valley to the mound of Megiddo, Har Megiddo in Hebrew, which gave its name to Armageddon. We then ascend Mt. Carmel, site of Elijah's confrontation with the prophets of Baal.

From there we drive towards the Mediterranean coast traveling south along the coastal highway to Caesarea by the Sea. We enter Caesarea Maritima to explore this Roman bridgehead to the east, which became the Christian springboard to the west. After the visit to this ancient harbor, we board our bus and we head up the historic Beth Horon road (Joshua 10:10) to the Benjamin Plateau, passing ancient Gibeon and continuing on to Jerusalem. Finally, atop Mt. Scopus, we behold majestic Jerusalem. Check in to our hotel for dinner and overnight stay.

## **DAY 6 - Saturday, June 09, 2018**

### **MASADA / QUMRAN / DEAD SEA / JERICHO**

Today we drive to Masada and ascend by cable car to the magnificent ruins of the fortress where, from 70 to 73 AD, Jewish defenders made their last stand in the Judean revolt against Rome. We see the remains of storehouses, cisterns and a sixth-century Byzantine church.

Continuing alongside the Dead Sea, 1300 ft. below sea level -- the lowest spot on earth -- we proceed to Ein Gedi where time permitting we will walk the path to see the waterfall in the desert.

This afternoon we continue to Qumran and the caves where the Dead Sea Scrolls were found. We will have a stop for lunch and time for those that want to swim in the Dead Sea. We travel to Jericho, the world's oldest city. From the excavated tel atop the ruins of ancient Jericho we view the lush green Jordan Valley, Elisha's spring and Qarantal, the Mount of Temptation. We will head up to Jerusalem and return to the hotel for dinner.

## **DAY 7 - Sunday, June 10, 2018**

### **MT. OF OLIVES / GARDEN OF GETHSEMANE / HERODIUM / SHEPHERD'S FIELDS / BETHLEHEM**

"If you, even you, had only known on this day what would bring you peace" (Luke 19:42)

Our drive this morning takes us past the Chapel of Ascension and Paternoster to the Mt. of Olives for an orientation view of Jerusalem and the opportunity of a group photograph overlooking Jerusalem. We then walk the traditional Passion walk. We descend to the church known as Dominus Fleuit ("Our Lord weeps"). After viewing the Golden Gate, we walk downhill to Gethsemane, where we take time to meditate on the Gospel text and view the Church of All Nations. Next we visit the Upper Room and the Tomb of King David, enter the Zion Gate and proceed to the Steps that entered the temple and the Southern Wall. It was here that Jesus would have taught the disciples. See a video that shows the temple as it was at Herod's (or Jesus') time. I bring you good news of great joy that will be for all the people. Today in the town of David a Savior has been born to you; he is Christ the Lord. (Luke 2:10-11). We drive south to the region of Bethlehem Bethlehem passing Rachel's Tomb on the outskirts of Bethlehem. We drive to a hilltop for a view of Bethlehem, noting its relation to the rest of the central mountain range, including Jerusalem, as well as to the desert and the area of ancient Moab. This is Herodium, the palace set in a conical mountain built by Herod to mark his tomb. Note the juxtaposition of the two Kings of the Jews. The King Herod buried in great opulence and the King of the Jews born in a humble manger in Bethlehem sitting in the background of the Herodium. We then drive to

one of the possible sites for Shepherds' Fields. We continue Bethlehem itself, walking through the restored old town to the site of the Nativity and visiting the manger and see the cave of Sion. We drive back to Jerusalem for dinner and overnight.

## **DAY 8 - Monday, June 11, 2018**

### **OLD CITY / VIA DOLOROSA / GARDEN OF GETHSEMANE / TOMB**

"He has risen!" (Mark 16:6) After breakfast we transfer to the Garden of Gethsemane, where we walk via the Western Wall, Judaism's holiest site, ascend to the Dome of the Rock and the al-Aqsa Mosque, one of the third holiest sites of Islam, located on the site of the ancient Temple Mount. Here the first and second Temples once stood. Just west of the Temple Mount we find the Pools of Bethesda (John 5) and St. Anne's Church. The Church of St. Anne is perfectly preserved from the Crusader period -- with its remarkable acoustics. Continuing on we see Pilate's Judgment Seat, the Chapel of Flagellation, Lithostrotos, and the Arch of Ecce Homo (Behold the Man). We then follow the Way of the Cross (Via Dolorosa) through the bazaars as far as the Holy Sepulcher. From there we proceed to the Christian Quarter along the Arab Souks through the Armenian Quarter and past the Armenian Quarter. Continuing to Mt Zion we visit the grounds of a church called Peter in Gallicantu, which affords the best view of early Jerusalem from the west. (Here, the Assumption of the Virgin Mary, as the Fathers suggest, was the house where the High Priest Caiaphas interrogated Jesus). We board our bus to the Garden Tomb. We will end our day with a special visit and the possibility of having a private communion on the grounds outside the city walls. Return to the hotel for dinner and overnight.

## **DAY 9 - Tuesday, June 12, 2018**

## **JERUSALEM / RABBI TUNNEL /SIFTING PROJECT / YAD VASHEM / SHRINE OF THE BOOK**

This morning we will board our bus for our exciting tour to the famous Rabbi Tunnel . Here we will enter by the Western wall plaza and go down to the foundation of the Second Temple. We will see a model that will demonstrate where we are in location to the Temple in the time of Christ. Continue along the tunnel as we proceed to the Gateway of the Priest entry to the Holy of Holies. We continue to the Temple Mount Sifting Project on the slopes of the Mount of Olives. Here we have the opportunity to sift through rubble that originated in ancient buildings from the Temple Period and learn about findings from archaeologists and expert guides at the site.

This afternoon we will head to Yad Vashem and see the Museum of the Holocaust. Continue to Shrine of the Book and the model city of Jerusalem at the time of the Second Temple. Return to our hotel for dinner and overnight.

### **DAY 10 - Wednesday, June 13, 2018**

#### **JERUSALEM / FREE DAY**

The entire day is free to explore this famous city, take any private sightseeing excursions desired, shop or just relax. Dinner and overnight at our hotel.

### **DAY 11 - Thursday, June 14, 2018**

#### **JERUSALEM / TEL AVIV / USA**

We transfer to the Ben Gurion airport for our flight home with unforgettable memories to cherish always. Knowing we have walked in the footsteps of Jesus and the early Christians on such a memorable tour will bring new meaning to our Bible reading

## **Clip Board Ministry Opportunities**

On the wall outside of the church office, are four clip boards that represent four different opportunities to share in ministry. They change from time to time so it is important to periodically check on them. Above each clip board is a brief description of what the ministry opportunity is and if you are interested, simply sign your name and phone number.



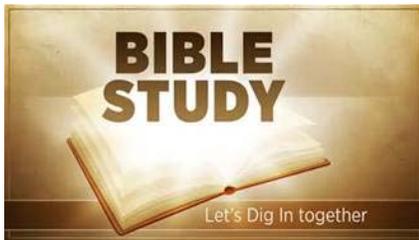
The following opportunities are being offered at this time:

**PDA** is set up in Gatlinburg. If there is an interest in putting together a mission team to locally help some others in need, please sign up at the church office bulletin board outside church office and we will contact them to see what dates are available. Right now there are two people signed up. We need six to sign up if we want to do a week long trip later in the summer.

**Shelter My Sheep-** The electrical is complete and the plumbing is in process of being completed. Soon after the plumbing is finished, volunteers will be needed to insulate the building and hand drywall. The outside of House #2 also needs to be painted. House #1 still needs some trim painting and house . If you are interested in helping in any of these projects, please sign up on Bulletin board outside the church office.



**Hike around Indian Boundary lake** and have lunch. An invitation is given to any who would like to go hiking around Indian Boundary and enjoy a cookout at the pavilion at the beach. Sign up on the Board marked Indian Boundary! Right now only three people are signed up for the hike.



**Men's Bible Study** meets at 9am at the church with Fenton McCahill leading an indepth study on the book of Romans

A **Women's Bible Study** group meets on Thursdays at 10-1:30pm. This study is led by Peggy Payne. They just started a two year in depth study on the Book of Romans. For more

information, please **contact Sandra Black at 253-3876.**

A study on James continues to meet at the Charahala Campground with Wayne and Kellie Friedburg hosting. They meet at 6pm.

**Tellico Trail Blazers!** Get on Facebook and see when the next hike is going to take place or contact Shannon Harris for more information as we prepare for our October trip to Mt. LeConte.



**August 13,** we gather at the river to celebrate the continued celebration of Michele and Kori's Hamilton's first baptism as they declare the significance of their baptism in the Tellico River following worship. This experience does not negate their baptism as infants, but celebrates it as they take the next step in their faith journey.

## **YOUTH NEWS**

**August 4-** Movie night at the Preachers house. For more information, talk to him after church.

**A special thanks** for all the volunteers who made VBS such a great experience this year! Know that you made a difference in a child's life by telling them about the Lord as our Shepherd.

