



Bethlehem



St. George Melkite Church, Zababdeh

Living Stones Pilgrimage

Israel/Palestine Trip
sponsored by Pilgrims of Ibillin

January 29 – February 11, 2013

Cost: \$1,600/person, double occupancy, plus
airfare (\$1,119 from NY),* lunches, & insurance
Single Supplement: \$400.00

**Leaders: Rev Bob Sawyer, Executive
Director, and Mr. George Shalabi, Board of
Directors, Pilgrims of Ibillin**

pilgrims@triad.rr.com 336-499-5310

Registration Deadline:
October 15, 2012



Mar Elias Educational Institutions, Ibillin

Goals of the Trip:

- This is a listening tour! Get to know the “Living Stones” of Israel/Palestine. Meet Pilgrims of Ibillin’s partners in Bethlehem, Jerusalem, Ramallah, Zababdeh, and Ibillin. Hear from leaders and organizations in the West Bank and Israel who are seeking a nonviolent path to peace.
- Visit key biblical sites in Bethlehem, Jerusalem, and the Galilee (including Nazareth), and learn why the Holy Land is known as “the Fifth Gospel.” Share daily in worship and reflection on all we see and hear.
- Experience Palestinian hospitality, including during a home-stay in Zababdeh.
- Get to know students and leaders at Mar Elias Educational Institutions in Ibillin. Visit with MEEI founder and peace activist Archbishop Elias Chacour (if his schedule permits). With a native of Biram, visit the destroyed village where Abuna Chacour was born and lived until 1948.
- Be equipped to give presentations after returning home. Learn to share the story of new friends – Christians, Muslims, Jews, and Druze – who live with hope and work for peace despite great challenges.

**Airfare: Participants must book their flights through our travel agent, Cindy Walker, at Travel Leaders in Mukilteo, WA: 1-800 572-2138. You will choose your home airport for the connecting flight to New York (JFK), where we will meet and fly together to Tel Aviv. The sooner you register, the better the airfare cost will likely be! Expect \$1119 for the JFK-TLV-JFK portions, plus your connecting flight airfare.*

We also strongly encourage the purchase of travel insurance. All inclusive insurance at excellent group rates will be quoted by our travel agent at the same time as your total airfare cost.



Itinerary

(Note: Minor changes may be made as circumstances require during the pilgrimage.)

Tues. Jan. 29 Fly from home airport to JFK, New York, to meet group. Fly together from JFK to TLV.

Stay 6 nights at the Abu Gubran Guesthouse, International Center Bethlehem (Christmas Lutheran Church); dinner and breakfast daily at the ICB.

Wed., Jan. 30 Arrive in Tel Aviv mid-afternoon; travel by bus to Bethlehem. Meet host from Wi'am and check in at the ICB. Brief orientation, dinner at the ICB, get some rest!

Thurs., Jan. 31 Orientation at Wi'am Center about Wi'am's work and the socio-economic-political situation. Tour Aida Refugee Camp and learn about the separation wall and the settlements. Lunch at Wi'am with a person from the refugee camp. Tour Shepherd's Field and Church of the Nativity in Bethlehem. Dinner with guest speaker.

Fri., Feb. 1 Tour the International Center of Bethlehem and Dar al Kalima Schools and Wellness Center. Meet with Rev. Mitri Raheb or Rana Khoury from Diyar Consortium. Visit Herodium and Solomon's pools. Visit the Tent of Nations.

Sat., Feb. 2 Travel to Hebron to see the effect of Israeli settlements in the Old City; walk (and shop in) the souk. Visit the Ibrahimi Mosque and Tomb of the Patriarchs. Stop to see traditional glass-blowing and ceramic factory in Hebron. Return to Bethlehem for free time in Manger Square area.

Sun., Feb. 3 Sunday worship at Christmas Lutheran Church. Lunch in Bethlehem. Visit the dramatic canyon of Wadi Qelt, with a view of St. George's Monastery. Visit the Mt. of Temptation, Qumran, and the Dead Sea.

Mon., Feb. 4 Leave for Jerusalem to visit the old City with a Palestinian tour-guide. Visit the Dome of the Rock if possible; walk the Via Dolorosa; stop at Ecce Homo Convent (2nd Station of the Cross) to see the Roman cistern and street excavations below; visit the Church of the Holy Sepulchre; St. Anne's Church and the pools of Bethesda. Enjoy free time in the Old City. Visit the Mt. of Olives, walk the Palm Sunday path to Dominus Flevit, Garden of Gethsemane, and Church of All Nations.

Visit the upper West Bank, with home-stay for one night in Zababdeh.

Tues., Feb. 5 Breakfast, leave ICB, bus to Ramallah. Visit the Al Mukata Compound (including Yasser Arafat's tomb). See Friends' School campus area. Lunch in Ramallah.

Visit Seraj Library in Taybeh or other village. Bus to Nablus. Visit Jacob's well, the city's famous market and Old City; possibly St. Joseph well and Sebastia. Continue to Zababdeh for home stays. Dinner and next-day breakfast with host families from St. George's Melkite Catholic Church.

Wed., Feb. 6 Zababdeh activities: visit St. George's Melkite Catholic Church and meet with Abuna Firas Khoury Diab; visit soap-making, sewing, and other employment projects. Visit Church of Ten Lepers in Burqin. Tour Canaan Fair Trade factory to see olive oil processing at this cooperative farming venture. Bus through Jalame checkpoint into Israel and travel to Ibillin. Dinner and orientation to Mar Elias by hosts at MEEI.

Stay four nights in the Guesthouse on the 6th floor of the Elementary School at Mar Elias Educational Institutions in Ibillin. Dinner and Breakfast provided daily.

Thurs., Feb 7 Go to Mar Elias High School to meet school leaders, attend English classes to converse with students. Travel by bus to the Sea of Galilee. Lunch at Fish Restaurant near Capernaum. Visit the Mount of Beatitudes, Tabgha (Loaves and Fishes Church), the Primacy of Peter, and Capernaum. Take a one-hour ride in Jesus boat on the sea; possibly visit the Jesus boat museum. Dinner at Mar Elias. (Lunch & dinner locations might be reversed.)

Note: This program requires walking on uneven surfaces including steps and inclines, at times for significant distances and periods of one to two hours. If you have any concerns about your abilities, please consult with the tour leader.

Questions? Contact Bob Sawyer, P.O. Box 21461, Winston Salem, NC 27120
Phone 336-499-5310 ~ pilgrims@triad.rr.com

Fri., Feb 8 After breakfast visit Mar Elias Gifted Program enrichment classes. Bus to visit Sepphoris/Zippori (1st century Roman ruins; this is possibly where Joseph and Jesus worked as stone cutters/carpenters). Lunch at Nazareth Village. Tour Nazareth Village, a first-century re-creation of what life was like in Jesus' day. Tour the Greek Orthodox Church and Basilica of the Annunciation. Visit the souk or Nazareth gift shops. Return to Ibillin and tour the Church of the Sermon on the Mount. Dinner at Mar Elias.

Sat., Feb. 9 Bus to Biram and tour Abuna Elias Chacour's native village with a guide who grew up in Biram. Drive on to stop at Jordan River above the Sea of Galilee. If weather is good, drive into Golan Heights (overlook with view into Syria, or to Druze village). Dinner and evening in Ibillin with Abuna Elias Chacour or other Palestinian Israeli guests.

Sunday, Feb. 10 Drive through Haifa for scenic overlook from Stella Maris and visit Elijah cave in convent. Possible lunch in Akko Old City. Visit Open House in Ramle, dinner together, then bus to Ben Gurion airport to begin security check for flight home.

Monday, Feb 11 Fly from Tel Aviv (leaving just after midnight) to JFK airport in New York and on home.

Tour Features and Considerations

TOUR FEE OF \$1600/PERSON includes accommodations based on double occupancy, breakfast and dinner daily except for dinner the last day, transfers between airports and hotels and travel in a comfortable tour bus, sightseeing and entrance fees, tips and taxes, and honoraria to organizations and speakers.

PAYMENT: Deposit of \$500, payable to Pilgrims of Ibillin, is due immediately to secure registration. Registration deadline: October 15, 2012. Final payment of \$1100 due December 14, 2012. To offer this group cost, we request deposit and final payment by check. Tour payment can also be made by credit card *if* surcharges of \$17 for each registration and \$43 for each balance are added.

PLEASE NOTE: The per person tour costs are based on shared occupancy, land costs and currency valuations as of May 2012, a minimum group size of 20, and are subject to availability and change.

FLIGHT RESERVATIONS: The flight from JFK airport in New York to TLV Ben Gurion Airport & return will cost \$1119. Your connecting flight from your home airport will be an additional cost and will be quoted within a week of receiving your registration. **The sooner you sign up, the lower your total airfare will likely be!**
Travel payment by credit card or check will be made directly to our travel agency: Travel Leaders in Mukilteo, WA. Payment due date: October 15, 2012.

NOT INCLUDED IN TOUR COST, Luggage handling at Tel Aviv airport and guest houses, single room supplement of \$400, lunches, beverages with meals, passport fees, insurance, excess baggage, items of a personal nature. If participants choose land-only registration, fee does not include arrival and departure transfers if different than group.

PASSPORT, VISA & VACCINATIONS U.S. citizens need a passport valid at least six months beyond the tour return date. Get Passport applications at <http://www.travel.state.gov>. No vaccinations are required. Non U.S. citizens are responsible for their own passport and visa requirements; without proper documents entry can be denied at tour member's expense.

TRAVEL INSURANCE Optional insurance for baggage, health and trip cancellation is available and strongly recommended; an application is provided at time of registration. Call Cindy Walker at Travel Leaders for further information (800-572-2138).

REFUND POLICY (LAND PORTION) Cancellations received in writing by December 14, 2012, a \$100 fee applies plus unrecoverable deposits for air and land service payments. After December 14, no refund. No refund for any unused portion of the tour, due to the special contracts for tour features, commitments to other tour members, and the services rendered on behalf of all tour members. Optional insurance is highly recommended. (Airline tickets are issued in advance and are nonrefundable.)

RESPONSIBILITY Neither Pilgrims of Ibillin nor its employees or agents, nor any other person, party, or entity associated with it shall be responsible or liable for any injuries, damages, accidents, expenses, delays, schedule or itinerary changes, damage to person or property, or any other loss or inconvenience arising out of or in connection with any transportation, accommodation, meals, tours, or other services that relate to the travel program or are referred to herein, or that occur during free time the members may have on the tour. Pilgrims of Ibillin reserves the right, at its sole discretion, to make changes in the itinerary whenever changes are warranted or deemed appropriate and withdraw participation of any tour member whose conduct is incompatible with the group.

In the ever-changing world situation, Pilgrims of Ibillin recommends personal monitoring of news about Israel/Palestine. For the latest country information and travel warning from the US Dept. of State, visit <http://www.travel.state.gov/travel>. By signing my registration application, I affirm that I have been advised and am aware of the U.S. State Department Travel Warning to Israel and the West Bank.

Reservation Form

“Living Stones” Pilgrimage - January 29 to February 11, 2013

Sponsored by Pilgrims of Ibillin www.pilgrimsfibillin.org

**Led by Rev. Bob Sawyer - Pilgrims of Ibillin Executive Director
and**

Mr. George Shalabi – Board of Directors and native of Haifa

**To be assured of reservations, please complete and mail this form, along with
your deposit of \$500 per person* to:**

Pilgrims of Ibillin, P. O. Box 21461, Winston Salem, NC 27120.

Name (as it appears on passport): _____

Passport # _____ Expiration date _____

Preferred home airport for my connecting flight to JFK: _____

You will be contacted within a week with a quote for total airfare from your home airport through New York to Tel Aviv.

Name (as preferred for name badge) _____

Address: _____

City, State, Zip: _____

Phone: (evening) _____ (days) _____ (cell) _____

Email : _____ Birth date: _____

Please enclose a clear photocopy of the photo/signature page of your passport.

Room Type: _____ single (\$400 single supplement) _____ double

Rooming with: _____

____ **I would like assistance in finding a roommate.** (An attempt to find a roommate will be made; however, it cannot be guaranteed and the single supplement would apply.)

____ Enclosed is my check for \$ 500.00 Make check payable to *Pilgrims of Ibillin*.

____ *Please charge my credit card **\$517** (*Registration fee plus card processing fee*)

(circle one): Visa MasterCard Discover American Express

Card Number _____ Expiration Date: _____

Signature (name as it appears on the card) _____

I understand that travel insurance is strongly recommended. I _____ will _____ will not purchase travel insurance.

I have read the Notes and Conditions for this tour and agree to the terms listed therein.

Signature: _____ Date _____