



Concordia University – Seward, Nebraska

The Holy Land

May 28 - June 11, 2026

Hosted by Dr. Mark Meehl, Professor of Theology



A tour of the Holy Land is the trip of a lifetime. During our Holy Land Study Tour 2015 you will encounter the land of the Bible on three levels. First, you will see the traditional sites associated with the Bible and visit archaeological excavations that will flesh out your picture of the ancient history of the region. Second, you will meet and talk with the people of the land – Palestinians and Israelis; Christians, Jews and Muslims – in a variety of settings to provide context and relevance to the events that occur in this land today. Finally, you will embark on a devotional journey that will add depth to your spiritual life for years to come. Our Holy Land Study Tour 2025 has been designed to be a pilgrimage in many senses of the word, uniquely tailored to the needs of Concordia's students, alumni, and friends.

The tour includes free time for you to explore and savor the atmosphere of Jerusalem at your own pace as well as experiencing a worship service in the thirteenth-century Crusader Chapel in the Old City. Come to the Holy Land with us, enjoy the camaraderie and fellowship of the tour, and return with a wealth of new insights into the Bible and its world.

Dr. Mark Meehl has participated in excavations in Israel, Jordan, and Syria. He lived in Jerusalem for two and a half years, serving as Program Director for the Albright Institute of Archaeological Research, before coming to Concordia University in 1991. This will be the seventh study tour he has led to the Holy Land.



DAY-BY-DAY ITINERARY

Day 1: THURSDAY, 28 MAY

DEPART USA

Depart Omaha and connect in Denver with the transatlantic, overnight flight to Tel Aviv (via Frankfurt). (Meals in-flight)

Day 2: FRIDAY, 29 MAY

ARRIVE TEL AVIV

Upon arrival at Ben Gurion Airport, your guide, driver and motor coach will be waiting to welcome you. Stop in Jaffa (biblical Japho) before checking in at your hotel. Gather this evening for a welcome dinner at the hotel. Grand Beach Hotel, Tel Aviv (Meals in-flight, D)

DAY3: SATURDAY, 30 MAY

TEL AVIV / GALILEE

After breakfast travel along the coastal road north to Caesarea, once the Roman capital of Palestine. See the Crusader fortifications, the Roman amphitheater, aqueduct, and the harbor from where St. Paul was taken to Rome. Proceed into the valley of Megiddo, one of Solomon's chariot cities. See the shaft and tunnel made by one of the twenty civilizations that built cities on this land. Continue to Bet She'an where current excavations have revealed ruins of major archaeological significance.

Check in for a three-night stay at a kibbutz hotel adjacent to the Sea of Galilee. Kibbutz Ein Gev or similar (B, D)

DAY 4: SUNDAY, 31 JUNE

GALILEE

Begin with a boat ride on the Sea of Galilee, then visit Capernaum to see the Ancient Synagogue and St. Peter's House. Continue to Magdala, hometown of Mary Magdalene, with its first-century synagogue and new church. Visit the Church of the Beatitudes and the Primacy of Peter. See the Jesus Boat at Kibbutz Nof Ginnosar and enjoy lunch on your own. In Nazareth, visit the Church of the Annunciation, the Greek Orthodox Church, and Mary's Well, then ascend Mt. Precipice for sweeping views of the Jezreel Valley. Dinner and overnight at Kibbutz Ein Gev or similar. (B, D)

DAY 5: MONDAY, 01 JUNE

GALILEE

Explore the Upper Galilee region today. Drive by Kursi and stop at the Church of the Multiplication of Loaves and Fishes before visiting Hazor, one of Solomon's chariot cities. Then to the Good Fence at Metulla on the Lebanese border. troll through peaceful Dan Nature Reserve and see the excavations of Tel Dan.

Visit the Cave of Pan and Springs of Banias, also known as Caesarea Philippi, where Peter said, "Thou art Christ."

The afternoon visits include the Valley of the Tears Golan overlook, Mt. Bental overlook, and the Peace Vista at Kibbutz Charuv. End the day with a St. Peter's fish dinner at the hotel. Kibbutz Ein Gev ro similar (B, D)

DAY 6: TUESDAY, 02 JUNE

GALILEE / BETHLEHEM

Drive to Belvoir Crusader Fortress for panoramic views of the Jordan Valley. Continue to Beit She'an to explore the impressive Roman ruins of ancient Scythopolis. Visit Qasr al-Yahud, the traditional baptism site of Jesus on the Jordan River. Arrive in Bethlehem for a tour of the Old City of Bethlehem including the Church of the Nativity and the Milk Grotto. Check in at your Bethlehem lodging for dinner and overnight. Sunrise Hotel (B, L, D)



DAY 7: WEDNESDAY, 03 JUNE**BETHLEHEM**

Travel to Herodion, the hilltop palace and tomb of Herod the Great. Continue to Hebron to visit the Tombs of the Patriarchs, sacred to Muslims, Jews and Christians alike. Stop to learn about the art of Hebron glassblowing. Tour the Separation Wall that encircles Bethlehem and cuts off Palestinian communities from their farms and families. See the Shepherds' Fields and end the day with a traditional Palestinian dinner at the Grotto Restaurant. Sunrise Hotel (B, D)

DAY 8: THURSDAY, 04 JUNE**BETHLEHEM**

Tour the region's only arts college, Dar al-Kalima University of Arts & Culture. Meet with The Rev. Dr. Mitri Raheb (subject to his availability), faculty, staff and students to learn how arts and cultural initiatives ensure that today's Palestinians have abundant life. This university also serves the needs of the broader community through a range of contextual and holistic programs via Dar al-Kalima's Outreach program for Older Adults, Youth and Families. DAK partners with Bright Stars of Bethlehem in the U.S. Visit a refugee camp for displaced Palestinians, followed by a visit to the Jewish settlement of Efrat. Sunrise Hotel (B, D)

DAY 9: FRIDAY, 05 JUNE**BETHLEHEM**

Arrive on the Mount of Olives for a panoramic, first glimpse of the Golden City. Tour the Augusta Victoria Hospital, supported by the Lutheran World Federation and the Church of the Ascension on the Mount of Olives.

Continue with a slow walk down the Palm Sunday Road to the Garden of Gethsemane and the Church of All Nations. Return to Bethlehem for dinner and overnight. Sunrise Hotel (B, D)

DAY 10: SATURDAY, 06 JUNE**BETHLEHEM / JERUSALEM**

Make an early start to travel through the Judean wilderness to Jericho, the world's oldest and lowest lying city. View the Mount of Temptation and Hisham's Palace. Depart for Masada where the Zealots held their last resistance against the Roman conquerors in the 1st Century A.D. Take the cable car up to this rocky plateau followed by a swim at the Dead Sea. Make a short stop at Qumran where the Dead Sea Scrolls were discovered. Stop in Bethany to see Lazarus' tomb. Check in at your hotel located inside the Jaffa Gate of the Old City. Gloria Hotel (B, D)

DAY 11: SUNDAY, 07 JUNE**JERUSALEM**

Worship at Lutheran Church of the Redeemer in the Old City, then visit the scale model of Jerusalem in Jesus' time. Enjoy time to explore the Israel Museum and see the original Dead Sea Scrolls in the Shrine of the Book. On return to the Old City visit St. Anne's Church and the Pools of Bethesda then follow the first nine Stations of the Cross to the Church of the Holy Sepulchre in which the last five Stations of the Cross are housed. Along the way, stop at Ecce Homo to see pavement from Jesus' time. Gloria Hotel (B, D)

DAY 12: MONDAY, 08 JUNE**Jerusalem**

Spend the day in the Coastal Plain area, visiting the Valley of Elah, Emmaus (near Latrun), Tel Beth Shemesh, Tel Gezer, and Ashkelon. Excavation site visit(s) arranged by Mark Meehl. Gloria Hotel (B, D)

DAY 13: TUESDAY, 09 JUNE**JERUSALEM**

This morning visit the Temple Mount/Haram al Sharif, then see the Western Wall and visit the Jerusalem Archaeological Park. Drive through the New City and stop at Yad Vashem for time to tour this national memorial to the Holocaust. This evening join the group for a farewell dinner at an Armenian restaurant a short walk from the Jaffa Gate. Gloria Hotel (B, D)

Day 14: WEDNESDAY, 10 JUNE**FREE DAY**

Free day for individual exploration. Gloria Hotel (B,D)

DAY 15: THURSDAY, 11 JUNE**JERUSALEM / DEPARTURE**

Check out of the hotel this morning. Depending on flight departure schedule, this day at your leisure to explore Jerusalem or enjoy some quiet reflection.

Arrive home this same day enriched with a new understanding of the Bible and the people of the Holy Land. (Meals in-flight)

Code: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner
Itinerary subject to change.



TOUR COST

\$4,850

- Group Flights From Omaha
- Costs per person based on double occupancy in USD
- Single Room Supplement: **\$1,055**

Costs: The tour cost is per person based on current airfare from Minneapolis (other cities available upon request), double occupancy, tariffs and currency valuations as of September 2025, a minimum of 25 travelers, and subject to confirmation. While we will do everything possible to maintain the listed price and/or itinerary, they are subject to change due to circumstances beyond our control. Single room supplements may have limited availability and are on a request basis only.

[CLICK HERE TO REGISTER](#)

PAYMENT TERMS AND REFUND POLICY

PAYMENT SCHEDULE:

Your reservation and deposit of \$500 per person are requested immediately to fulfil the group deadline requirements. Note that space is limited and reservations are taken on a first come, first served basis. A second payment of \$1000 is due on **February 12, 2026**. Final payment is due no later than **March 12, 2026**. The fee for late payment is \$50 per traveler. For credit cards, STT accepts Visa and MasterCard (add 2 % credit card fees). PayPal is also an options if needed (add 4% service fees)

PAYMENT METHODS

Participants may pay securely online via credit card through our encrypted payment gateway. Alternatively, payment can be made by bank or wire transfer. Bank details will be provided upon request. For bank transfers, please ensure your name is clearly referenced with the payment.

REFUND POLICY:

All cancellations must be in writing. There is no refund for partial or unused land arrangements.

Note: Airline tickets will be issued well in advance of departure and may be nonrefundable. The following penalties will apply:

- Up to January 15, 2025 – \$150 per person administrative fee plus any unrecoverable deposits
- January 16 – May 01, 2026– Deposit plus any unrecoverable payments to hotels, tour operators or airlines
- May 01, 2026 or after– No refund..

WHAT'S INCLUDED?

- **AIRFARE:** Round-trip economy class airfare from **Omaha** on an ARC/IATA approved scheduled carrier
- **ACCOMMODATION:** Thirteen (13) nights' accommodation in superior tourist class hotels, double occupancy, with private facilities. Hotels as listed or similar.
- **MEALS:** Breakfast and dinner daily in addition to one lunch as outlined in itinerary
- **GROUND TRANSPORT:** Transfers and transportation by deluxe motor coach throughout.
- **SIGHTSEEING:** Extensive sightseeing throughout; entrance fees included as per program.
- **PORTERAGE:** Porterage on 1 bag at the Hotels
- **EXPERT GUIDES:** An experienced English-speaking tour guide throughout
- **WHISPER SETS:** Individual guide whisper sets throughout the tour.
- **GRATUITIES:** Gratuities to drivers , guides and hotel staff (for your convenience, \$180 per person has been included).
- **SPEAKER HONORARIUMS:** All honorariums for special speakers are included and will be provided to the Tour Leader on arrival (\$1,150 allocated from group's budget).
- **TAXES:** Airport/foreign departure taxes



WHAT'S NOT INCLUDED?

- Fuel surcharges and/or tax increases levied since the pricing of this tour.
- Beverages other than coffee/tea at breakfast.
- Any meal or sightseeing item not listed in the itinerary.
- Items of a personal nature.
- Gratuities to guide, driver, hotel and restaurant staff (we recommend a budget of \$150 per person for gratuities for guide, driver and hotel staff).
- Optional Travel Protection: trip cancellation/interruption, baggage delay/loss, emergency accident and sickness medical expense, and emergency evacuation/repatriation. Please refer to the Travel Protection section.
- Passport fees. A passport valid six months beyond date of re-entry to the U.S. is required.
- Electronic Travel Authorization for Israel: There are new procedures for entry to Israel. You will need to apply for the ETA entry permit which is very straight forward. Cost around ILS 25 so \$7 per person. You need to do this before the trip. Here is the link <https://israel-entry.piba.gov.il/apply-for-an-eta-il-1/>

TRAVEL PROTECTION

Travel protection is optional but strongly recommended. It can provide important coverage for trip cancellation or interruption, baggage loss, medical emergencies, and other unexpected events.

For travel to Israel and Jordan, we recommend the Israel travel insurance plan offered by Insurance Consultants International (ICI): <https://www.insuranceconsultantsintl.com/israel>

Please note: Shepherds Tours and Travel acts only as a third-party tour operators and is not affiliated with or responsible for the sale, coverage, or claims process of any travel insurance policy. Travelers are responsible for reviewing the policy details, speaking directly with the provider, and purchasing coverage independently.

Conditions and Responsibilities

Shepherds Tours and Travel (STT) provides customized travel planning services to Israel, Palestine, Jordan and Egypt for group travelers who have a variety of reasons and goals for travel. The goals and/or opinions of these groups do not reflect or imply the position of STT in any matter. Brochure contents may not be duplicated without permission from STT. In offering these travel arrangements, (STT) acts solely as an agent for the sale of air transportation and other travel related services. STT maintains no control over the personnel, equipment or operations of any entity furnishing services, products or accommodations. STT assumes no responsibility or liability for, and shall not be expected, asked or required to pay for any injury, damage, expense, personal injury, property damage, inconvenience or any other loss experienced by reason of: (1) any intentional, wrongful, negligent or unauthorized act or omission on the part of any supplier, its agents or employees; (2) any defect, breakdown or other failure of any vehicle, equipment, service, product or other instrumentality which is owned, operated or otherwise used by a supplier; (3) any intentional, wrongful, negligent, or unauthorized act or omission on the part of any other party not under the direct control of STT; (4) financial problems causing nonperformance by any supplier; or (5) any other cause, condition or event whatsoever beyond the direct control of STT. STT cannot guarantee any rates, bookings or reservations of any supplier. Your retention of tickets, reservations or bookings after issuance shall constitute a consent to the foregoing provisions. All prices quoted are subject to change if airlines or ground operators increase their prices, the U.S. dollar is devalued significantly against foreign currencies, the group falls below minimum numbers, or a fuel surcharge, government tax or user's fee is imposed. Baggage and personal effects are the sole responsibility of the owners at all times. STT reserves the right to withdraw from any tour any tour member whose conduct is incompatible with the interests of the group as a whole. The above Conditions and Responsibility also covers the group leader(s) and their respective organizations.

[CLICK HERE TO REGISTER](#)

FOR MORE INFORMATION

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