

MCC East Coast Palestine/Israel Learning Tour: March 1-13, 2019

Draft Schedule

Friday, March 1

4:30 p.m. Depart from Toronto, Pearson to Tel Aviv (Flight Air Canada 84)

Saturday, March 2

10:15 a.m. Arrive at the airport and go to Bethlehem (Flight AC 84)

12:00 p.m. Arrive in Bethlehem, lunch at Shawarma King

1:00 p.m. Time to rest and explore

3:00 p.m. Orientation

5:00 p.m. *Tour of the Church of the Nativity* – Elias Ghareeb

6:00 p.m. Dinner at Holy Family Hotel

Night at Holy Family Hotel

Sunday, March 3

8:30 a.m. Breakfast

10:10 a.m. Gather in hotel lobby to walk to church

10:30 a.m. Worship with local Christians in Bethlehem with Pastor Munther Isaac

12:00 p.m. *Lajee Center* – Mohammed al-Azzeh

Lajee Center is a community center in Aida Refugee Camp. Aida Camp is one of three refugee camps in Bethlehem. While at Lajee, we will hear about the life of Palestinian refugees and take a tour of the camp. Lunch will be prepared by women from the camp.

2:00 p.m. Time to rest, explore, shop

5:00 p.m. *Meeting with Sahar Vardi, American Friends Service Committee*

Sahar Vardi is a Jerusalem based activist. She publicly refused her military service and was imprisoned in 2008. Since then she has been active with Israeli anti-militarist groups such as New Profile and today works as the Israel Program Coordinator for the American Friends Service Committee based in Jerusalem. We will hear from Sahar about militarism in Israeli society and the role of Israeli peace activists.

7:00 p.m. Dinner at Holy Family Hotel

Night at Holy Family Hotel

Monday, March 4

- 8:00 a.m. Breakfast
- 8:30 a.m. Devotions
- 9:00 a.m. *Applied Research Institute of Jerusalem (ARIJ)* –Dr. Jad Isaac
ARIJ represents 20 years of combined organizational experience in the occupied Palestinian territories in the fields of economic development, social development, natural resources management, water management, sustainable agriculture and the political dynamics of development in the area. We will see a presentation at ARIJ and then head out for a field visit to meet farmers.
- 12:00 p.m. Lunch at Afteem
- 1:30 p.m. *Oded Revivi, Mayor of Efrat*
We will meet with Oded Revivi who is the Mayor of the illegal Israeli settlement of Efrat to hear about his reasons for moving into the West Bank.
- 3:00 p.m. Time to rest, explore, shop
- 5:00 p.m. Debriefing at hotel
- 6:00 p.m. Dinner at The Square Restaurant
- Night at Holy Family Hotel

Tuesday, March 5

- 7:00 a.m. Breakfast
- 7:30 a.m. Devotions
- 8:00 a.m. Leave for Southern West Bank
- 10:30 a.m. *Tour of Hebron – Abdallah Maraka*
Hebron is considered one of the holiest sites of both Judaism and Islam because the city houses the tombs of the patriarchs Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob and the matriarchs Sarah, Rebekah, and Leah. At the same time, the old city serves as one of the most intense examples of Israeli settlement in the West Bank, with about 500 settlers often occupying upper floors of buildings housing Palestinians. We will tour the old city of Hebron and see the effects of settlements and the Israeli military presence on local life.
- 1:30 p.m. Lunch in Hebron
- 2:00 p.m. *Tent of Nations – Nassar Family*
The Nassar family farm sits in Area C, surrounded on all sides by settlements. The Nassar family's motto is "we refuse to be enemies" and they embody this by living out creative resistance to stay on their farm. We will tour the farm and hear their story.
- 3:30 p.m. Return to Bethlehem

4:00 p.m. *Kairos Palestine & Bethlehem Bible College* – Dr. Munther Isaac
Bethlehem Bible College (BBC) is an evangelical Christian Bible college. Dr. Munther will speak about Christian Zionism and alternative ways to interpret the Bible.

Kairos Palestine is Christian Palestinians' message to the world about what is happening in Palestine. The Kairos Palestine committee and document call the Christians of the world into action, including advocating for the beginning of a system of economic sanctions and boycott to be applied against Israel.

6:00 p.m. Debriefing at Central Restaurant

7:00 p.m. Dinner at Central Restaurant

Night at Holy Family Hotel

Wednesday, March 6

7:00 a.m. Breakfast

7:30 a.m. Devotions

7:45 a.m. Drive the Wadi Nar to Ramallah

9:30 a.m. *Sam Bahour*

Sam is an American-Palestinian businessman. He will speak to us about the challenges of moving his family to Ramallah and trying to start a telecommunications company in the years after the Oslo Accords.

11:00 a.m. *Military Court Watch* – Gerard Horton and Salwa Duaibis

Military Court Watch is an NGO working to document the treatment of children in Israeli military detention. It offers recommendations, based on international law, to help stop abuses from occurring and to protect children who are arrested.

12:30 p.m. Lunch in Ramallah at Samer

2:00 p.m. *Stop the Wall* – Jamal Juma'

Stop the Wall is an umbrella organization for many of the activist communities in villages around Palestine. We will visit the community of Bir Nabala to see how the construction of the Separation Barrier affects daily life and to meet the nonviolent activists who are trying to stop the incursion of the wall.

6:30 p.m. Dinner and night with families in Bethlehem (Grace Tours, Elias Ghareeb)

Night at Homestays

Thursday, March 7

8:00 a.m. Meet at Grace Tours office, Beit Sahour

8:30 a.m. Walk through Bethlehem checkpoint

9:00 a.m. Devotions on the bus

- 11:00 a.m. *Sabeel Nazareth* – Violette Khoury
Sabeel is a Palestinian liberation theology center that seeks to support local churches in Palestine. Sabeel Nazareth works among the population of Palestinian citizens of Israel (20 percent of the population of Israel), hosting events for youth, women, and the broader Christian community.
- 12:30 p.m. Lunch
- 2:00 p.m. *Tour of Nazareth with Jonathan Cook*
Jonathan Cook is an award-winning British journalist based in Nazareth since 2001. He is the author of three books on the Israeli-Palestinian conflict and has contributed chapters and essays to several edited volumes on Israel-Palestine as well. Jonathan will lead us on an alternative tour of Nazareth focusing on historical, political, social, and economic themes related to the wider Israeli-Palestinian conflict.
- 6:30 p.m. *Dinner at Sisters of Nazareth Guesthouse – Meet with Garry Denlinger of Mennonite Mission Network*
Mennonite Mission Network works across the globe, sharing faith through actions and working through many varied ministries. MMN in Israel has had a hand in such initiatives as Nazareth Village and Israel College of the Bible.

Night at Sisters of Nazareth Guesthouse

Friday, March 8

- 8:00 a.m. Breakfast
- 8:15 a.m. Devotions
- 9:00 a.m. *Nazareth Village tour*
Nazareth Village in an open-air museum that seeks to reenact what daily life was like in the Galilee during the time of Jesus.
- 12:00 p.m. Lunch at Scots Hotel
- 1:00 p.m. *Galilee tour*
We will visit various sites, including Capernaum and the Mt. of Beatitudes. Devotions in Capernaum.
- 3:00 p.m. *Boat ride on the Sea of Galilee*
- 6:00 p.m. Dinner at Sisters of Nazareth Guesthouse

Night at Sisters of Nazareth Guesthouse

Saturday, March 9

- 7:30 a.m. Breakfast
- 8:00 a.m. Devotions

- 8:30 a.m. Leave Nazareth for Jerusalem
- 12:00 p.m. Lunch in Jericho
- 3:00 p.m. Check in to Guesthouse
- 6:00 p.m. Dinner at the house of MCC Palestine Representatives
- 7:15 p.m. Leave for West Jerusalem
- 8:00 p.m. *Rabbi Ian Pear of Shir Hadash Synagogue (meet at his house)*
Rabbi Ian Pear is the founder of the Shir Hadash synagogue in Jerusalem, an Orthodox, Zionist, primarily English-speaking congregation.

Night at LWF Guesthouse

Sunday, March 10

- 7:30 a.m. Breakfast
- 8:15 a.m. Leave for church
- 9:00 a.m. Worship with English-speaking congregation at *Lutheran Church of the Redeemer* in the Old City – Pastor Carrie Smith
- 10:30 a.m. *Political tour of the Old City of Jerusalem – Daoud Ghoul*
We will be exploring the current situation in the ancient city of Jerusalem. We will see the current living situation of people in the Old City.
- 12:30 p.m. Lunch
- 2:00 p.m. Free time to rest, explore
- 4:30 p.m. *Human Rights Defenders Fund – Alma Biblash*
The Human Rights Defenders Fund (HRDF) was founded in 2011 amidst increasing violations of the rights of Human Rights Defenders (HRDs) and restrictions on the work of HR organizations in Israel and the oPt. Concerned for the safety and well-being of HRDs who are faced with attempts to silence and intimidate them, or interfere with their actions through legislation, military and police brutality, and legal prosecution, the Fund provides HRDs with the support they need to fend off attacks on their bodies, persons and work.
- 6:00 p.m. Debriefing
- 7:00 p.m. Dinner at the house of MCC Palestine Representatives

Night at LWF Guesthouse

Monday, March 11

- 6:30 a.m. Breakfast
- 7:00 a.m. Leave LWF Guesthouse

- 8:00 a.m. *Tour of Canada Park* – Umar Ighbariyyeh, Zochrot
Zochrot, which means “remembering” in Hebrew, is an Israeli NGO working since 2002 to raise awareness in Israel of the Nakba, the Palestinian catastrophe of 1948. We will tour Canada Park, which sits between Jerusalem and Tel Aviv, built on top of three Palestinian villages that were destroyed in 1967.
- 10:30 a.m. *Yad Vashem*
Yad Vashem is Israel’s Holocaust museum and memorial.
- 12:45 p.m. Lunch at Guesthouse
- 1:30 p.m. Free time to rest, explore
- 6:00 p.m. Debriefing
- 7:00 p.m. Dinner at LWF Guesthouse
- Night at LWF Guesthouse

Tuesday, March 12

- 7:30 a.m. Breakfast
- 9:00 a.m. *Contemporary Stations of the Cross* – Omar Haramy and Cedar Duaybis
Sabeel is a Palestinian liberation theology center that seeks to support local churches in Palestine. We will take a tour of the contemporary Stations of the Cross, as experienced by Palestinian Christians, traveling through Jerusalem with prayer and devotions.
- A founding member of Sabeel, born in Haifa before the Nakba, Cedar Duaybis is a retired schoolteacher who spent most of her life supporting her husband’s ministry as a clergy member of the Episcopal Church in the Diocese of Jerusalem. She has co-authored several books with Rev. Naim Ateek.
- 1:00 p.m. Lunch on your own and free time
- 4:00 p.m. Final Debriefing
- 6:00 p.m. Dinner at Az-Zahra
- Night at LWF Guesthouse

Wednesday, March 13

- 8:00 a.m. Depart from guesthouse
- 11:45 a.m. Departure from Tel Aviv airport on Flight AC85
- 4:25 p.m. Arrive Toronto, Pearson airport