



The Bishop of Norwich  
The Rt Revd Graham James

 THE CHURCH  
OF ENGLAND  
Diocese of Norwich

7<sup>th</sup> February 2017

Dear Friends,

**Pilgrimage to the Holy Land led by The Bishop of Norwich  
and designed to visit pilgrimage places but also engage with the Christian communities,  
including our own Anglican Church.**

**Monday January 29<sup>th</sup> – Monday February 5<sup>th</sup> 2018**

This programme follows a pattern established in 2015 when I last led a group of curates to the Holy Land. It is designed so that we visit many of the sacred sites but see them in the context of the present day reality of life in Israel and the Palestinian Territories. Visits to such bodies as the Holy Land Trust and Bethlehem University are not on usual pilgrimage itineraries but will give a significant insight into life in the Holy Land today.

As you know, the number of Christians in the Holy Land has fallen considerably in recent decades. They long for their fellow Christians elsewhere in the world to come not just to the pilgrimage sites but to visit the “living stones” of the Church there now. This visit is designed to do that and I am sure you will receive a great deal which will inform and strengthen your ministry.

**We have secured a very reasonable price for an intensive tour, which includes all flights, transport, charges, hotel bills and most meals at £1,350. Further details are below.**

This pilgrimage is open anyone in the Diocese. There will be a number of curates for whom bursaries have been obtained and for whom it is part of their ongoing formation. But it will be good for there to be a much wider participation and last time the wide mix of people in the group added to everyone's enrichment. Do consider joining us. We need to book quickly to secure low air fares so I am asking for all who are interested to express an interest by 5th March 2017.

Please let Coralie Nichols, my PA, know as soon as possible if you wish to express an interest ([coralie.nichols@dioceseofnorwich.org](mailto:coralie.nichols@dioceseofnorwich.org)).

Yours sincerely,

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**Diocese of Norwich**  
**Curates' Pilgrimage to the Holy Land**

***Day one Monday 29<sup>th</sup> January 2018***

We will depart from Luton airport on our flight to Tel Aviv, arriving early evening. After clearing immigration and customs we will meet our guide and bus and will be taken to our hotel in Galilee for our evening meal and overnight.

***Day two Tuesday 30<sup>th</sup> January 2018***

We will begin our first day of pilgrimage on the shore of the lake of Galilee where Jesus shared breakfast with his disciples after his resurrection. After spending some time here we then visit the site of the feeding of the five thousand and the Mount of Beatitudes. We will then visit the town of Capernaum, central to the ministry of Jesus in this area; after which we will enjoy a boat ride across the lake and then stop for lunch at a local Arab restaurant. After lunch we will drive to the north and visit Caesarea Phillipi, here we can see the place where Peter acknowledged Jesus as "Lord" and then walk to the beautiful waterfall at the start of the River Jordan. We then return to our hotel for our evening meal and our overnight accommodation

***Day three Wednesday 31<sup>st</sup> January 2018***

After breakfast we travel to Cana where Jesus performed his first miracle. Then we travel on to Nazareth where we visit the Basilica of the Annunciation, built over the traditional site of the house of Mary. We will then tour Nazareth, visiting the site of Joseph's workshop and the synagogue where Jesus preached. We will call at Mary's well, now in a beautiful orthodox church, and then break for lunch. After lunch we will travel to Mount Tabor, the traditional site of the transfiguration; after a taxi ride to the top of the mountain we will visit the church and enjoy the spectacular views. We return to our hotel for our evening meal and overnight accommodation.

***Day four Thursday 1<sup>st</sup> February 2018***

After breakfast we will drive along the Jordan Valley towards Jericho, on route we will call at the Baptismal Site where tradition has it that Jesus was baptised by John. Here we can reach the water's edge and renew our own baptismal vows. We continue to the city of Jericho where we visit the church of the Good Shepherd and then have a tour of the city along with the opportunity to see the mountain where Jesus spent his fast of 40 days and nights. After our tour we will stop for lunch and shopping. After lunch we will leave for the Dead Sea where the brave can enjoy a swim and the faint-hearted can enjoy an ice cream! Then we will travel to our hotel in Bethlehem for our evening meal and overnight accommodation.

***Day five Friday 2<sup>nd</sup> February 2018***

After breakfast we visit the Church of the Nativity where we will have a guided tour of this, the oldest church in the world. Then we will walk to Bethlehem University to visit the campus, meet the students and staff and see how the Church is contributing to the hopes for education and peace in the region. After lunch we will go to the Shepherd's fields, here there will be the opportunity to visit a local co-operative souvenir shop; nearly 70 families make and sell their work here. We then visit the Aida Refugee Camp to see the work of the Lajee Youth Centre. We return to our hotel for our evening meal and overnight accommodation.

***Day six Saturday 3<sup>rd</sup> February 2018***

After breakfast the coach will take us for a full day walking tour of Jerusalem. We will visit the Mount of Olives, starting at the church of the Our Father and then re-tracing the steps of Jesus on the first Palm Sunday we will walk down to the church of Dominus Flevit (the Lord wept) where we can enjoy the panoramic view over the Old City. Then we will walk to the Garden of Gethsemane and the Church of All Nations. After lunch we will visit the church of St Peter built over the site of Caiaphas' House, continue to Mount Zion, seeing the Upper Room, the tomb of King David and the site of the Dormition of Our Lady. We conclude our day with a visit to the Garden Tomb. We then return to our hotel for our evening meal and overnight accommodation

***Day seven Sunday 4<sup>th</sup> February 2018***

After breakfast, we will travel to celebrate Sunday Eucharist with the community in one of the local villages. Afterwards we will have coffee with the parishioners and the opportunity to meet with the priest and families of the parish. We break for lunch. We then visit the town of Ain Karem, the birthplace of John the Baptist and the site of the Visitation. We then drive to Abu Gosh, the site of Emmaus. Here we will visit the Olivetan Benedictine monastery and beautiful 12th century Crusader church and the convent on top of the hill. The coach will take us back to Bethlehem for packing and in the evening we will have a farewell meal in a local Bedouin restaurant.

***Day eight Monday 5<sup>th</sup> February***

After breakfast we leave the hotel and visit the church of St Anne built near the pool of Bethesda and then we will follow the way of the cross to the Church of the Holy Sepulchre. We will tour the church and then walk through the souk calling at the Western Wall. We then break for lunch. After lunch we will drive to the airport where we will catch the afternoon flight to Luton arriving early evening.

**Price: £1350 per person sharing a twin/double room on a half-board basis. Single rooms are available at a supplement of £220. Price includes return airfare including hold baggage, accommodation in 3\* hotels on a half-board basis, all transport whilst in the Holy Land, services of a professional guide all entrance fees and gratuities. Please note that this itinerary is not suitable for the less able traveller. Price does not include lunches, drinks or items of a personal nature. Deposit of £400 on request.**