Accommodations:
Our May Terms Groups stay in no-frills, but clean and safe dormitory style housing.

Jerusalem: Ecce Homo Convent located on the Via Dolorosa in the Old City. The hospice is located on the rooftop of the convent of the Sisters of Zion which offers the most spectacular view of Jerusalem with the Dome of the Rock before us, the Mount of Olives to left, and Church of Holy Sepulcher to right. In the basement we can explore the ruins of the Roman street and cisterns. Its magnificent chapel is built around a Roman arch.

Galilee: Kibbutz Ginnosar located on the West shore of the Sea of Galilee between Tiberias and Capernaum. This communal farm provides dormitory space and regular meals in the cafeteria. There will be opportunities for interaction with Israelis who have immigrated from all over the world. Ten years ago a first-century fishing boat was discovered on its shores. It is now housed in their museum, which also serves as laboratory for our project.

Bethlehem: The Evangelical Lutheran Christmas Church Guest House located in the heart of this West Bank city. Since 1990 we have worked closely with Rev. Dr. Mitri Raheb, author of I Am a Palestinian Christian (Fortress Press). This immersion experience offers traditional Palestinian meals and opportunities for involvement in congregational life.

Amman, Jordan: Three star hotels.

Jerusalem Activities
We will walk every inch of the old city, climbing the Mount of Olives, following the Via Dolorosa, walking on top of old city walls, wading through Hezekiah’s tunnel, exploring Kidron Valley tombs, and visiting all the important historic sites: Wailing Wall, Dome of the Rock, Church of the Holy Sepulcher. We will also visit West Jerusalem and the Holocaust Museum. There will be plenty of time for shopping in the crowded bazaars.

Galilee Weekend Activities
- Sites from Jesus’ daily ministry including Capernaum and the Mount of Beatitudes
- Golan visit to rabbinic Qatzrin and hike to Gamla
- Mediterranean Coast trip to Caesarea
- Evening outings to modern Tiberias
- Celebration of Shabbat with festive Friday evening meal and relaxing time of coffee and discussion

Bethlehem Activities
- Church of the Nativity, Shepherds Fields, Herodium
- Bethlehem University, Lutheran elementary school, hospitals and social institutions
- Farm work with Palestinian workers
- Informal discussions and social gatherings
- Trip to Dead Sea, Qumran, and climb of Masada

Health:
- You should be in good physical condition (walk five miles a day in Waverly to get in shape)
- No additional shots are required, but tetanus should be current
- You must have health insurance
- You must inform leaders of any health concerns

Academic Credit:
- LS 307 -- Life & Culture of the Middle East
  .5 credit in Winter Term
- LS 308 -- Life & Culture of the Middle East
  .5 credit in May Term = worldview
- ID 308 -- Archaeology & the Bible
  1.0 credit in May Term (RE 101 & LS 307 prerequisite)

Costs:
- $2,950 will include airfare, ground travel, housing, three meals per day, dig fees, entry fees, tips (Students on Board at Wartburg will receive rebate for May Term meals).
- $100 - 500 for personal expenses including passport, film, souvenirs, postcards, snacks.
- Tuition -- as usual to Wartburg

Financial Aid:
See Financial Aid Office for loan information

Deadlines:
- March 2005 -- Register for Courses
- Dec. 1, 2006-- $200 nonrefundable downpayment-- billed by controllers office
- Feb. 1, 2006 --Balance due we cannot guarantee refunds after this date. However, we will pass on refunds we receive for flights etc.

The Middle East
May Term
2006
During May Term, 2006, we will offer our ninth Middle East Trip including travel to historic sites, experiencing local culture, participation in actual archaeological excavation, and studying the relationships of all these activities to the Bible. Since 1988, 300 Wartburg students have shared this experience. How about you?

Itinerary: April 25 to May 23, 2006
- Week 1 – Amman, Jordan – visit historic Petra and Jerash.
- Jerusalem -- visiting historic sites in a city holy to three religions: Islam, Christianity, and Judaism.
- Weeks 2-3 -- Galilee -- excavating the ancient city of Bethsaida while also experiencing modern Israeli culture at Kibbutz Ginnosar on the Sea of Galilee.
- Week 4 -- Bethlehem -- experiencing Palestinian life and interacting with Christians in this West Bank town.

Professor: Dr. C. Bouzard
The Story of Bethsaida

In reading the Gospels one frequently comes across the town Bethsaida. Its name literally means “house of the fisherman” and it is the home of three fishermen disciples: Peter, Andrew, and Philip (Jn 1). Jesus visited Bethsaida often and performed many miracles here (Mt 11) including healing a blind man (Mk 8) and feeding multitude (Lk 9).

While Capernaum was located on the west side of the lake within Galilee itself, Bethsaida lies five miles to the northeast just on the other side of the Jordan River as a major city of the Golan Region composed of a mixed population of Jews and Greeks (Jn 12).

Because the town lies on a small hill near a freshwater spring, it had been inhabited already in the bronze age. Our recent discoveries of a 3,000 year old temple, palace, and iron age city gate point to this site as the capital of Geshur. King David married Maacah, the daughter of the Geshurite king and their child was Absalom, who later rebelled against his father starting from Bethsaida.

The town was destroyed in the 8th century BC by the Assyrians and was later rebuilt about 400 BC. The Jewish Historian Josephus tells us that Philip then elevated the town to the status of a Greek Polis and renamed it Bethsaida-Julias in honor of the wife of Caesar Augustus. On the basis of coins discovered at Bethsaida, it is clear that this occurred shortly after her death in 29 AD—the very time that Jesus and his disciples were active here. Two large courtyard-style houses provide evidence of domestic life from this time period. A newly discovered Roman temple points to Roman Imperial Cult worship.

From the discovery of a cross etched on pottery, we are now relatively certain that an early Christian community was centered in Bethsaida. A major battle in the Jewish revolt against Rome took place outside Bethsaida in 67 AD. Josephus describes how the tide turned when his own horse stumbled in the marshy ground and the Galilean troops panicked to see him injured. Roman arrowheads are among the ruins. In 115 AD a major earthquake hit this entire area which twisted walls, collapsed buildings, destroyed homes, destroyed the harbor and brought major silting to change forever the Galilean coast line, the city was never rebuilt on this site.

The Bethsaida Excavations Project

Prior to 1967 the Golan Heights area was a military zone (the site itself still yields Syrian bunkers and other evidence of military occupation). Following the 1967 war, Israeli archaeologists surveyed the area and a Dominican Priest Bargil Pixner proposed opening excavations at Bethsaida (Biblical Archaeologist, Dec. 1985, 207-16). In 1987, Israeli Archaeologist Dr. Rami Arav obtained an excavation license from the Israeli Antiquities Authority.

The first season of excavation began in 1988 with a May Term group from Wartburg College breaking ground. In 1991 a consortium of schools was organized which annually offers a three-month season involving over 200 participants. Wartburg continues to provide the largest group. Today the consortium includes:

- Wartburg College
- University of Nebraska at Omaha
- Munich University
- Truman State University
- Rocky Mountain College
- Michigan State University
- Dana College
- Albertson College
- Doane College

In March, 1998, the site was opened up as an official tourist site for pilgrims and archaeological enthusiasts.

Daily Dig Schedule:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Activity</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>5:30 am</td>
<td>leave for dig site</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6:00</td>
<td>begin digging</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9:00</td>
<td>breakfast of bread, cheese, eggs, cucumbers, tomatoes, olives</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11:00</td>
<td>popsicle break</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12:30 pm</td>
<td>clean up site</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1:00</td>
<td>lunch at Kibbutz (meat meal)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1:30</td>
<td>swim in Sea of Galilee</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2:30</td>
<td>shower, laundry nap</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4:30</td>
<td>pottery analysis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7:00</td>
<td>dinner (milk meal)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8:00</td>
<td>lecture (history, literature, archaeology)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9:30</td>
<td>journal writing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10:30</td>
<td>sleep</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Finds—Made by Wartburg Students

- Roman cultic incense shovel (featured as “find of the year” in Biblical Archaeology Review)
- pottery with cross etching
- figurines of Zeus and Ashera
- Roman key
- Roman, Persian, Assyrian era spear heads
- numerous coins
- fishhooks, weights, and anchors
- stamped pottery handles
- toga pins
- walls of domestic and public buildings
- buckets and buckets of pottery shards
- The best-preserved Iron-age city gate.
- Iron-age altar

Publications:


Video Documentary: The Lost City of Bethsaida (The History Channel).

Video Documentary: The Jesus Files (CTVC-England).


Mitri Raheb, I am a Palestinian Christian (Fortress, 1994).

Washington Report on Middle East Affairs (8 times a year)