

In the Footsteps of Saint Paul:
A Pilgrimage Through Asia Minor (Turkey)

Monday, April 28 – Saturday, May 10, 2008

Churches carved into the rock...ancient cities where the Gospel was first proclaimed...the birthplace of the Creeds of the Church...Roman and Byzantine ruins...sandy beaches...one of the friendliest and most interesting cultures in Asia...

All this and more can be found in modern-day Turkey, ancient Asia Minor. It was the site of much of Saint Paul's work of evangelism, the home of Early Church theologians, and is a tremendous place of pilgrimage for Christians today. If you have ever wondered about the ancient world, about the life and times of Saint Paul, or even about Christian theology, then this pilgrimage is for you! We will be following in the footsteps of the great Apostle, exploring the cities where he preached, taught and wrote, and visiting the land that in many ways gave rise to our modern church. We will visit, among other places, Ephesus, Colossae, Pergamum, Laodicea, Antioch of Psidia, ancient Troy, and, of course, Byzantium.

Please consider joining us for a pilgrimage in the footsteps of Saint Paul next spring. The trip will be led by the Rev. Sally French and the Rev. Joe Walker. Sally is a licensed Christian Pilgrimage leader, and has taken many groups to biblical destinations throughout the Middle East. We will be journeying across Turkey, from Cappadocia to Ephesus, the Mediterranean Coast, Gallipoli and Istanbul.

Itinerary:

Monday, April 28, 2008: Depart North America for Turkey.

Tuesday, April 29, 2008: Arrive Turkey. Air and bus transfers to Goreme, the main site in the region of Cappadocia.

Wednesday, April 30, 2008: We will begin our pilgrimage in Cappadocia, the heart of the early church, and a site of spectacular ruins and history. All-day visit to the open-air archaeological park to see the ancient churches carved into the rock, to examine the ancient fresco paintings, and to discuss and learn about the development of Christian theology, including the creeds of the Church.

Thursday, May 1, 2008: Our tour of the Cappadocia region continues with a visit to one of the underground cities of the region, a place of refuge for early Christians fleeing persecution. Then, we drive on to modern-day Konya, home of the ‘whirling dervishes’. We will visit their centre and the local museum.

Friday, May 2, 2008: Today, we make our way towards ancient ‘Antioch of Psidia’, where Saint Paul began to spread the Gospel to the wider world (Acts 13). From there, we continue on to the ancient spa town of Heliopolis, modern-day Pammukale. On the way, we will stop and visit ancient Colossae and Laodicea, famous from the Letter to the Colossians and the Book of Revelation.

Saturday, May 3, 2008: Our tour of some of the “seven churches” of the Book of Revelation (Rev 3) takes us to the ruins of Sardis, including some spectacular Roman buildings, a temple dedicated to Artemis, an ancient Synagogue and a Byzantine church. We will continue on towards the Mediterranean coast and spend the night in the modern-day resort town of Kusadasi, close to the ancient city of Ephesus.

Sunday, May 4, 2008: Visit Ephesus, one of the greatest ruins of the ancient Roman world, and a significant site for Saint Paul. In addition to an extensive tour of the ancient city, we will also be visiting the Basilica of Saint John and the ruins of the Temple of Artemis of the Ephesians, one of the 'seven wonders of the ancient world'.

Monday, May 5, 2008: From Ephesus, we will continue northward to Bergama, ancient Pergamum. There, we will see the Acropolis, the Askelepion (Temple of Healing), and other ancient temples.

Tuesday, May 6, 2008: From Bergama, we will continue on towards the Strait of the Dardanelles. Along the way, we will visit ancient Troy, and have an afternoon tour of Gallipoli. Overnight in the modern Turkish town of Cannakale, where you may enjoy Turkish baths and other aspects of modern Turkish life.

Wednesday, May 7, 2008: We will pass through the ancient Roman province of Thrace on our way to Istanbul, formerly known as Byzantium and Constantinople, and once the seat of the great eastern arm of the Roman Empire. We will enter the city along the Bosphorus, with a boat cruise past the city's many minarets.

Thursday, May 8, 2008: Tour Istanbul: Walking tour of the Blue Mosque, the Hippodrome, and Hagia Sophia, followed by an afternoon visit to the Chora Church. We will finish our day with some free time in the Istanbul Spice Market and Grand Bazaar, and a relaxing evening to enjoy the city.

Friday, May 9, 2008: Free day in Istanbul. Walk through the ancient streets, visit the Topkapi palace or other sites, shop and relax. In the evening, we will gather together for a final celebratory meal, a traditional Turkish feast.

Saturday, May 10, 2008: Departure. Travel from Istanbul's Ataturk International Airport to North America on our return home.

Accommodations and Meals:

Your pilgrimage fees include all accommodations and most meals. The accommodations will all be 4 or 5 star, depending on availability. All meals are included, except dinner on May 8 and lunch on May 9. This is to give you some flexibility with your free time, and to give you the option of getting to know Istanbul and to make your own decisions regarding what, where, and when you eat. On other days, we will be traveling together as a group during mealtimes. Most meals will be 'buffet-style', with plenty of choices and opportunities to test the local cuisine. We can accommodate almost all dietary restrictions, please let us know if you have any questions or concerns.

Registration, Fees, and other information:

The total cost for the pilgrimage is \$4750.00 Canadian. This includes all travel (flights, bus, boat, etc), accommodations, meals as described, all admissions and guiding costs. It does not include medical insurance, local tips, travel visas, and personal expenses. For more details, please see the Registration form.

We strive to provide you with both a first-class travel experience and a positive experience of Christian pilgrimage. Throughout our time together, there will be opportunities for worship, for prayer and reflection, and for spiritual direction. This is not a "package tour" – it is a spiritual journey with fellow Christians, following Saint Paul and those who went before us in the earliest days of the Church. We believe that seeing the lands of the bible is truly a life-changing experience and we are excited about the possibility of sharing them with you. Although your leaders are both Anglican clergy, we welcome people of all Christian backgrounds and we would be happy to answer any questions you might have. Please feel free to contact me either by email, sally_french@twcny.rr.com or by telephone (315-788-1408)

We wish you every blessing as you discern and prepare for pilgrimage, and we look forward to journeying with you in the footsteps of Saint Paul.