

Explore the Life of Early Christians

Academic and pastoral leaders from a variety of faith traditions – Roman Catholic, Anglican, Protestant, Evangelical and Reformed - find that group travel to Early Christian sites inspires participants to further their study of the Bible and Church history, nurtures ongoing faith formation, and builds community amongst those who travel together – invigorating participation in local congregations, schools institutes and other organizations.

Program Objectives

Unearth the life and times of Early Christians

Step into another world, through historic streets and past temples, courthouses, shops, baths and apartments. With local experts, recreate the daily life of ordinary citizens and glimpse the experience of the earliest Christians. Modern travelers have access to vast archeological parks that enable one to easily imagine the context of early Christianity.

Deepen knowledge of Biblical History

Travel to places referenced in the scriptures. Biblical history comes to life, providing a vivid and tangible reference point for making sense of the life and ministry of visionary men and women of faith. People begin to see the chronology of events more clearly and better understand the geographical, urban and political context of Biblical stories.

Nurture faith formation and community bonds

As participants walk in the footsteps of visionary men and women and recount the stories of the Bible, their own faith deepens, matures and strengthens. They return home with a newfound eagerness to learn more and preserve this heritage for future generations. In lands where the beliefs and practices of many different peoples and traditions are lived daily, participants will have opportunities to reflect on questions of justice and peace as they ponder historical and contemporary conflict as well as examples of cooperation and dialogue.

The way we travel the world is always changing but the reasons remain constant– to become citizens of the world, *leading and inspiring respectful and compassionate ways of life*. People who travel the globe begin a lifelong journey of worldly citizenship to gain valuable insight about themselves and the world around them through the discovery and exploration of cultures outside their own.

Program Destinations

The Holy Land Many people refer to the Holy Land as the 5th Gospel – a land that brings the scriptures to life. Much of the landscape is as it was during the time of Jesus, making it easy to visualize and imagine the context within which he forged a new vision of religious life. Visit cities that were central to his life and ministry – such as Nazareth, Bethlehem, Capernaum, and Jerusalem – as well as other sites that allow participants to better appreciate the Roman and Jewish world of the 1st century.

Italy Rome was a major center of early Christian life. Some of the best preserved sites – the burial grounds of the catacombs, sites where early Christians worshipped, some of the earliest Christian art, and an unbroken record of the development of Christian architecture – are accessible in this city of unprecedented world heritage. Combine Rome with visits to Malta, Sicily, and Naples, following in the footsteps of Paul and learning about the culture of the Roman Empire during his ministry.

Turkey and Greece Some of the most vibrant sites of early Christianity are in western Turkey and Greece. This region was a rich cosmopolitan area where Greek and Roman cities flourished as urban centers of trade, learning, and culture. Paul's missionary journeys cover a vast territory of the Mediterranean region. Explore the heritage of Paul through visits to sites such as Colossae, Pergamon, Sardis, and the great urban centers of Ephesus, Corinth, and Athens.

Other venues – Illume coordinates travel to other venues where early Christian communities emerged in the context of ancient civilizations – including Ireland, the UK, Spain, and France.

Illume works with group leaders to create customized and unique programs with activities, visits and resources that support your vision and objectives. Call us to begin planning a program tailored to your constituency.