

## Exploring the Reformation in Northern Europe

Presbyterians in the United States trace their theological roots and heritage to immigrants from Europe – particularly from Switzerland, Scotland, Ireland, and England. Travel to places of great historical and religious significance is a powerful way for modern Presbyterians to gain a better understanding of the unique values of their faith, and to learn about the historical context of visionary men and women who reformed the Church. Travel to places of great Presbyterian heritage inspires participants to become more active in advancing the mission of the Presbyterian Church and to share that heritage with future generations.

### Program Objectives

#### Get to know the early Presbyterians

Walk along the very streets and into the homes, shops, and churches where Calvin, Knox, and others made history, forging new religious and political institutions. Hear stories about their struggles and successes as they began to imagine different ways of living out the Gospel in the modern world.

#### Deepen knowledge of Reformation history

Traveling throughout Northern Europe to places like Switzerland, Scotland, and England makes Reformation history come to life. Pilgrims can better piece together the people, places and events of the Reformation. They return home with a more complex sense of the context of stories they hear in liturgy and in sermons.

#### Nurture faith formation and community bonds

As participants walk in the footsteps of visionary men and women of the Reformation, 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

**Switzerland** Calvin, Knox, Zwingli, and others transformed cities such as Geneva and Zurich into models of Christian discipleship and civic responsibility. The Swiss continue to live these values. Travel here provides opportunities for exploring both 16<sup>th</sup> century sites and city centers as well as early Christian sites (particularly in Geneva). Visits to nearby areas such as Strasbourg, Lyon, Avignon, or to places such as Lausanne, Sion, and the French-Swiss Alps are possible. Combine historical visits with hiking in the summer and skiing in the winter.

**Scotland** Scotland is a land of breathtaking natural beauty and evocative historical castles, abbeys, and villages that allow pilgrims to get a feel for the deep spirituality of the people and the evolution of that spirituality. Visit the Isle of Iona and explore Celtic Christian heritage brought to Scotland by St. Columba, the Border Region of Scotland where you will find a number of religious sites, as well as places associated with the Scottish reformation in St. Andrews, Perth, Edinburgh, Stirling, and Glasgow.

**England** Visit sites associated with John Knox's ministry. Knox held pastorates in Berwick-Upon-Tweed and Newcastle-Upon-Tyne. These offer opportunities to explore the heritage of Lindisfarne, where St. Aidan and St. Cuthbert has established early communities. Further afield include a unique museum "Bede's World," the Abbey of Whitby, and the great Cathedral of Durham near Hadrian's Wall.

**France & Holland** Trace the history of Reformation communities in France (the Huguenots) and Holland. See how the vision and values of Reformers took on different cultural patterns in these parts of Europe.

**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.**