



# LIVING STONES PILGRIMAGE

TO PALESTINE AND  
ISRAEL

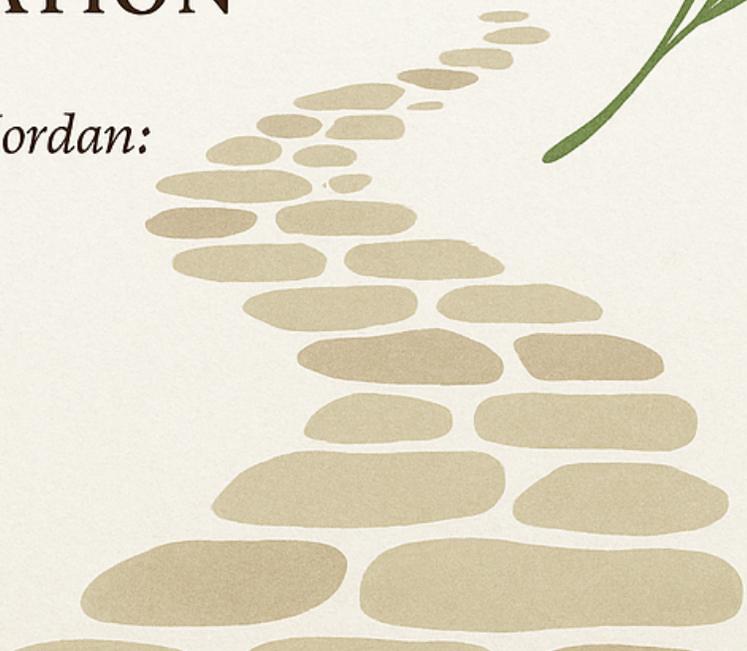
APRIL 12–23 OR 25, 2026\*



INFORMATION  
PACKET &  
APPLICATION



*\*Optional extension to Jordan:  
Petra & the Dead Sea*



# Living Stones Pilgrimage

**April 12-25, 2026 - Optional Jordan Add-On: \$3,100 (or \$2,600 with a \$500 Early Bird Discount if deposit paid by Dec 15 2025)**

**April 12-23, 2026: \$2,600 (or \$2,100 with a \$500 Early Bird Discount if deposit paid by Dec 15 2025)**

[The following are not included in the Pilgrimage fee: Flights, visas, passport fees, travel insurance, excess baggage, and items of a personal nature. Fee does not include airport transfers other than when with the group.]

**West Bank Tour Guide** - Usama Nicola

**Israel Tour Guide** - Archbishop Emeritus Elias Chacour

**Pilgrims U.S. Coordinators** - Rev. Gail Doering and Esrea Cherin, Executive Director

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## Pilgrimage Overview

A unique tour of witness and pilgrimage in the service of peace in the region a third of humanity call “The Holy Land”

This tour may very well be a once in a lifetime opportunity - Archbishop Emeritus Elias Chacour (also known as Abuna Chacour) will accompany the group to the Holy Sites in the Galilee and to his village of B’iram. This is an unprecedented chance to hear directly from 3-time Noble Prize Nominee, and author of the acclaimed, *Blood Brothers*, about the significance of these sites and their unique meaning from the perspective of a Palestinian Christian whose ancestors trace to the time of Jesus.

Father Chacour says, *“We invite visitors to see the ruins of holy sites but also engage with the “living stones”, the people that live and make homes there.”*

With this as inspiration, since 1995 Pilgrims of Ibillin has taken nearly 400 individuals on pilgrimages to Israel and Palestine. Led by Pilgrims staff, board members, and local partners in the West Bank and the Galilee, we visit Christians, Muslims, and Jews who are working creatively to plant and nourish the seeds of a “Just Peace”. Our tours include visits to important holy sites and explore social, cultural, historical, and



theological perspectives that help us make sense of current realities that fill headlines and news reports particularly in the past two years.

We consider our trips an escape to the traditional Holy Land trips and present alternative viewpoints that you might not be exposed to otherwise, from those working for peace and justice. The trip will encourage deep thinking, open minds, curiosity, and sensitivity to people living in this region.

During the tour we will visit many holy sites with the accompaniment of a beloved Biblical scholar, Fr. Chacour. And, in the West Bank guide will introduce us to a wide range of Christians, Jews, and Muslims working tirelessly for a just peace for all.

**If you are curious, enjoy learning about culture, history, religion, politics, human and environmental rights, and want to meet and engage with the people who live where you travel - this trip is for you!**

Overnight accommodations are clean, comfortable, and modest, nearby areas we can explore and meet locals and also keep the costs within reach.

We will stay at a hotel near Manger Square in Bethlehem and in Ibillin at the Mar Elias Educational Institution (MEEI) guest house. When in Jordan we will stay at a hotel in Wadi Musa (Petra) and the Dead Sea Marriott Resort.

Itinerary: April 12 - 23 or 25, 2026 (optional Jordan add-on)

Be aware that conditions on the ground may dictate changes

Please Note: For those adding Jordan you will fly into Tel Aviv and return from Amman airports.

### **Day 1 — Sunday, April 12, 2026 — Fly to Tel Aviv**

### **Day 2 — Monday, April 13 — Travel to Ibillin**

- Check into the Mar Elias (MEEI) Guesthouse
- Dinner with Archbishop Emeritus Elias Chacour

### **Day 3 — Tuesday, April 14 — Galilee**



- Breakfast at Guesthouse
- With Archbishop Emeritus Elias Chacour: Tour his ancestral destroyed village of Bi'ram
- Sea of Galilee
- Sites important in Jesus' ministry including Migdal - Primacy of Peter, Capernum, Mount of Beatitudes
- Dinner and overnight at MEEI Guesthouse

### **Day 4 — Wednesday, April 15 — Nazareth**

- Breakfast at Guesthouse
- With Archbishop Emeritus Elias Chacour: Sepphoris Archeologic Park or Sisters of Mercy Monastery/ruins
- Basilica of the Annunciation
- St. Joseph's Church
- Mary International Center and Lunch
- Walk through Nazareth souk
- Dinner and overnight at MEEI Guesthouse



## Day 5 — Thursday, April 16 — Ibillin



- Breakfast at Guesthouse
- Tour Mar Elias Educational Institutions
- Meet with High School Principal Elias AG, Faculty, and students
- Tour Old I'billin and meet with Assad Daoud - Antiquities Expert
- Visit to Stunning Garden in Old I'billin
- Depart to Bethlehem
- Check in Hotel

## Day 6 - Friday, April 17 — Bethlehem

- Breakfast at Hotel
- Visit Dheheisha Refugee Camp
- Church of Nativity
- Separation Wall
- Wi'am Palestinian Conflict Transformation Center for orientation and BBQ
- Debrief at Hotel

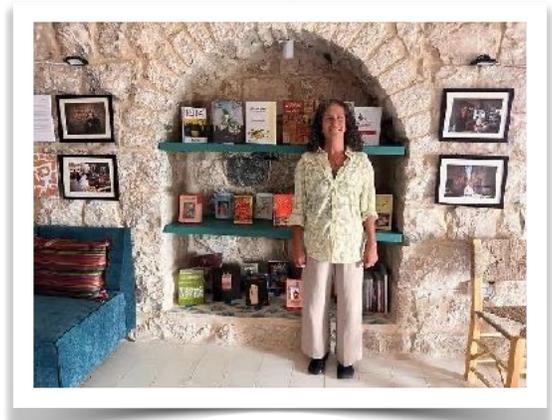


## Day 7 — Saturday, April 18 — Bethlehem

- Breakfast at Hotel
- Tour Aida Refugee Camp
- Al-Rowad Center
- Hope School
- Tent of Nations
- Dinner and Debrief at Hotel

## Day 8 — Sunday, April 19 — Ramallah

- Breakfast at Hotel
- Worship at Evangelical Lutheran Church of Hope
- Visit Sam Bahour
- Arafat Museum
- Seraj Library and Cultural Center
- Defense for Children
- Dinner at the Hotel and Debrief



## Day 9 — Monday, April 20 — Jericho

- Breakfast at Hotel
- Khan al-Ahmar Bedouin Community
- Lunch in Jericho - Mt of Temptation
- Hisham's Palace
- St George Monastery
- Dinner at the Hotel and Debrief



## Day 10— Tuesday, April 21 — Hebron



- Breakfast at Hotel
- Morning visit to Wadi Foquin
- Travel to Hebron to visit Abraham Mosque/Tomb of the Patriarchs
- Walk through Souq (market), Shouhada St.
- Meet with Community Peacemaker Team and lunch
- Visit Kaffiyeh factory and glass/ceramics factory
- Dinner at the Hotel and Debrief

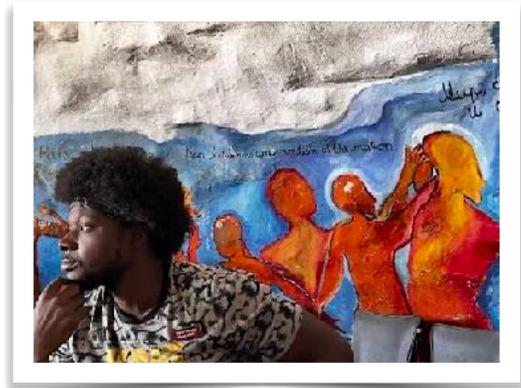
**Day 11 — Wednesday, April 22 — Jerusalem**

- Breakfast at Hotel
- Al Aqsa Mosque Compound and Solomon's Stables
- Western Wall
- Church of Holy Sepulcher
- Mt of Olives - Garden of Gethsemane
- Meet with ICAHD / Silwan
- Dinner at Hotel and Debrief



**Day 12 — Thursday, April 23 — Tel Aviv - Departure**

- Breakfast at Hotel
- Closing Ceremony
- Travel to Ben Gurion Airport for those departing (flights depart 3pm or later)



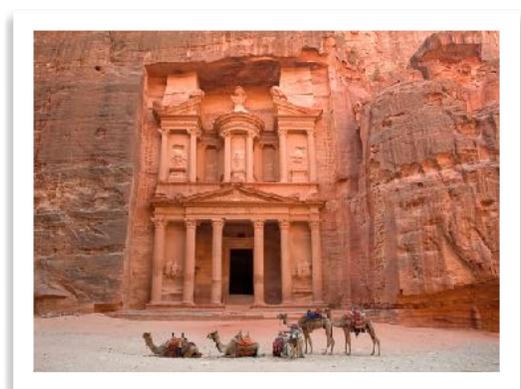
**Optional Add-on - Two Days in Jordan**

**Day 12 — Thursday, April 23 — Petra**

- Travel to Jordan for Night in Wadi Musa (Petra)
- Check in and Dinner at Guesthouse

**Day 13 — April 24 — Petra**

- Spend day exploring Petra
- Baptismal Site on Jordan River
- Dead Sea Marriott Resort for overnight



**Day 14 — April 25 — Departure**

- To Amman Airport to fly to the US

## Tour Coordinators

**Reverend Gail Doering**, on the Board of Pilgrims of Ibillin 2021-2025, Gail is a member of the Presbyterian clergy. In addition to half a dozen visits to the Holy Land, she spent a 3 month sabbatical in Israel, studying the theology of hope and how it is maintained in the face of conflict, oppression, and occupation.



**Essrea Cherin**, Executive Director of Pilgrims of Ibillin and the co-founder of the Boulder-Nablus Sister City Project. She is a conflict resolution and restorative processes professional and has worked in the Middle East for over 20 years beginning with Abraham's Path - establishing a hiking trail to retrace Abraham's footsteps.



Both have led groups to the region multiple times.

**Usama Nicola**, our West Bank Tour guide, is the Citizens Diplomacy Project coordinator along with Zoughbi Al Zoughbi at Wi'am in Bethlehem (The Palestinian Conflict Transformation Center). Since its inception, Wi'am has offered alternative tourist programs with opportunities for individuals and groups to visit Holy Places (Holy Stones), visit the people living there (Living Stones), and introduces the socio-economic and political conditions (Rolling Stones).



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## Detailed Information

### Cost of the Pilgrimage

#### **With Petra and Dead Sea Optional Add-On (April 12 - 25, 2026) -**

**\$3,100 (or Early Bird rate by December 15, 2025: \$2,600) double occupancy** with \$500 single room additional supplement. Price includes 7 nights in Bethlehem hotel, 3 nights in the Mar Elias Guest House in Ibillin, Israel, 1 night at Petra Guest House, and 1 night at the Dead Sea Marriott Resort.

**Without Petra and Dead Sea (April 12 - 23, 2026) - \$2,600 (or Early Bird rate by December 15, 2025: \$2,100) double occupancy** with \$400 single room additional supplement. Price includes 7 nights in Bethlehem hotel, 3 nights in the Mar Elias Guest House in Ibillin, Israel, and a transfer to the Tel Aviv airport.

Prices also includes meals, tips, entry fees, and honorariums for speakers.

Prices do not include airfare and travel insurance which is required. See more on this below.

### Payment

**Deposit of \$500, payable to Pilgrims of Ibillin**, is due immediately to secure participation; space is limited. Payment with credit card at this link or payment with check can be sent to tour coordinator Essrea Cherin at 4500 19th Street, #435, Boulder, CO 80304. Pay deposit no later than December 15, 2025 to receive an **Early Bird discount of \$500 off**. After December 15 the cost increases to \$3,100 with Jordan and \$2,600 without the Jordan add-on.

Final payment is due no later than Friday, March 13, 2026.



## Not included

Flights, visas, passport fees, travel insurance, excess baggage, and items of a personal nature. Fee does not include airport transfers other than when with the group. If unable to travel with the group, there's an additional fee of \$150 for airport transport.

**Space is limited** and to guarantee your spot in the group, register soon with **\$500 deposit**. Final payment is due by March 13, 2025.

To offer this group cost, we request deposit and final payment by check. If paying with credit card ([at this webpage](#)), please add a 2.6% surcharge (you'll see this option on the payment form). After March 13 a \$300 late fee will be applied.

## Flight Reservations

**Arrange for a refundable flight** through our Travel Agent Christina Boyer at All Aboard Travel at [christina@allaboardtravelhillsdale.com](mailto:christina@allaboardtravelhillsdale.com) or **(517) 437-4844** for individual airline reservations from your home airport to Amman and return.

Or, alternatively, if making your own plans please **arrive at Tel Aviv airport on April 13 before 5 pm local time and plan your return flight after 12pm on April 23 or after noon on April 25** (depending on whether you take the extra two days in Jordan or decide to depart early). Leaving later will require potential additional hotel and transportation expense and we can help arrange that for you.

Christina is familiar with our tour and the need for these specific times.

## Comprehensive Travel Insurance

Insurance covering baggage, health, and trip cancellation is highly recommended and is available through All Aboard Travel or if you arrange your own flight we also suggest World Nomads [www.worldnomads.com](http://www.worldnomads.com).

A flight with refundable airfare is very strongly advised as is travel insurance given the uncertainties that come along with travel to this particular region.



## Passports and Visas

U.S. citizens need a passport valid at least six months after their date of return to the US. Passport applications are available at <http://www.travel.state.gov/>.

**Israel Visa:** The Israel Population and Immigration Authority (PIBA) has launched an electronic travel authorization (ETA) program that began on June 1, 2024. The new system, known as **ETA-IL**, requires tourists and business travelers from visa-exempt countries (such as the United States) to submit a travel authorization form **online prior to travel**.

Upon arrival at the Ben Gurion (Tel Aviv) Airport, you will receive a visa (typically 3 months) on a slip of paper — **DO NOT LOSE** this paper (I generally paper clip it to my passport) you will need it to exit the country.

**Jordan Visa:** if you intend to stay on for Petra and the Dead Sea - your visa to enter Jordan will be taken care of as part of the Pilgrimage fee.

**Provide a photocopy of your passport to the tour coordinator before the trip begins.** We will be watching Israel's travel requirements closely and will relay information as needed.

## Refund Policy

If cancellation is received in writing before February 28, 2026, a \$200 fee applies plus unrecoverable deposits or land service payments. After February 28, a \$500 cancellation fee will be deducted from your refund, due to the special contracts for tour features, commitments to other tour members, and the services rendered on behalf of all tour members.

If circumstances in-country require that we cancel or postpone the trip, your deposit and payments will be refunded in full, or applied to the next trip - according to your preference.



## Responsibility

Neither Pilgrims of Ibillin nor its employees or agents, nor any other person, party, or entity associated with it shall be liable for any injuries, damages, accidents, expenses, delays, schedule or itinerary changes, damage to person or property, or any other loss or inconvenience arising out of or in connection with any transportation, meals, accommodation, tours, or other services that relate to the travel program or are referred to herein, or that occur during free time the members may have on the tour.

Pilgrims of Ibillin reserves the right, at its sole discretion, to make changes in the itinerary whenever changes are warranted or deemed appropriate and withdraw participation of any tour member whose conduct is incompatible with the group.

In the ever changing world situation, Pilgrims of Ibillin recommends personal monitoring of news about Israel/Palestine. For the latest country information and travel warning from the US Dept. of State, visit: [http:// www.travel.state.gov/travel](http://www.travel.state.gov/travel).

**This pilgrimage is demanding. It includes long walks over often uneven ground and cobblestone, climbing long and steep staircases, and long days. Be sure you are fit and able. Please do not hesitate to e-mail or call if you have questions.**

By signing my registration application (page 18), I affirm that I have been advised and am aware of the U.S. State Department Travel Warning to Israel and the West Bank.

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## Before Travel

- Participants will have an opportunity to meet and engage with the tour coordinators and each other in a Zoom meeting to get to know each other, receive travel guidance, and to answer any questions you may have prior to departure.
- In addition we will send out a packing list and any travel instructions you may need.
- Travelers will be encouraged to prepare by reading Archbishop Elias Chacour's Blood Brothers (we will travel with the author throughout the Galilee). We will also provide a comprehensive list of resources you may wish to explore prior to departure.

## What to Expect During Trip

- We will have active and full days with some free-time built in. That will be the best opportunity for shopping if you wish to purchase treasures from Palestine.
- We will have debriefings at the culmination of each day whenever possible.

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## Comments from Previous Pilgrimage Participants

*“I highly recommend a Pilgrims of Ibillin tour! It gives a better understanding of a situation that is not well covered in our usual newsfeeds. For a better understanding of the individuals and communities involved and the “peacemaker” groups. This pilgrimage is a mix of seeing important historical and biblical places, and meeting people who live there today.”*

*“There is a universal need for American Christians to gain a broader perspective on Israel and Palestine, and a number of good and worthy agencies that can do so very well. Specifically, I appreciate Pilgrims of Ibillin’s connection to the Mar Elias Educational Institution and the unique and powerful witness of Elias Chacour. Pilgrims of Ibillin is to be commended as well for their excellent networking among other agents of peace and justice.”*

*“I was very impressed with the organization of the trip, as well as the flexibility needed when arrangements changed. I especially appreciated the personal caring and efforts of both US and Palestinian personnel.”*

## Questions?

Please do not hesitate to e-mail trip coordinators: Rev. Gail Doering - [reverendgdo@gmail.com](mailto:reverendgdo@gmail.com) or Essrea Cherin - [essrea@pilgrimsofibilin.org](mailto:essrea@pilgrimsofibilin.org) if you have questions.



## Reservation for Living Stones Pilgrimage to Palestine & Israel

[You may register online at this link](#) or complete the form below and return to pilgrimage coordinators:

Please select which option you are choosing:

April 12 - 23, 2026 - No Jordan Add-on

April 12 - 25, 2026 - With Jordan Add-on

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To be assured of your place on this tour, please print and complete this form, and mail along with your registration deposit of \$500 check to Pilgrims of Ibillin ([or credit card at this link](#) and if using a credit card please check the box to cover the transaction fees)

Mail to: **Essrea Cherin 4500 19th Street, #435, Boulder, CO 80304**

Registrations and complete fees are due no later than Friday, March 13, 2026

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### 1<sup>st</sup> Traveler

Name 1 (as it appears on passport) \_\_\_\_\_

Passport # \_\_\_\_\_

Expiration Date \_\_\_\_\_

Birth Date \_\_\_\_\_

Name as preferred for name tag \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Email \_\_\_\_\_



Travel History? Have you traveled to Israel and/or Palestine before? If yes, when?

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Why are you interested in this Pilgrimage?

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Do you have any medical considerations or allergies?

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**2<sup>nd</sup> Traveler**

Name 2 (as it appears on passport) \_\_\_\_\_

Passport # \_\_\_\_\_

Expiration Date \_\_\_\_\_

Birth Date \_\_\_\_\_

Name as preferred for name tag \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Email \_\_\_\_\_



Travel History? Have you traveled to Israel and/or Palestine before? If yes, when?

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Why are you interested in this Pilgrimage?

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Do you have any medical considerations or allergies?

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**\* If there are more than two travelers in your group please copy this page to continue adding as needed**

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## **All Travelers**

### **Passport copies**

Please enclose a clear photocopy or .jpg of the signature page of each traveler's passport

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City, State and Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Preferred home airport: \_\_\_\_\_



**Room Type**, select one:

Double— If you choose Double - please indicate if you have a preferred roommate: \_\_\_\_\_ (we do our best to honor your request although cannot guarantee)

Single (\$500 with Jordan or \$400 without Jordan, added for single supplement)

I have read the Considerations for this tour and agree to the terms listed therein. By signing, I affirm that I have been advised and am aware of the U.S. State Department Travel Warning to Israel and the West Bank.

**Print name, Signature, and Date**

Traveler # 1 \_\_\_\_\_

Traveler #2 \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

**Emergency Contact**

Please provide contact information for at least one emergency contact at home:

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

e-mail \_\_\_\_\_

*Thank you for completing this application!  
We are so excited for you to join this journey of a lifetime with us!*