



**Evangelical Lutheran Church in America**  
God's work. Our hands.



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## Planning a tour to the Holy Land

**Holy Land Trips Liaison, Julie Rossate** ([Julie.Rossate@elca.org](mailto:Julie.Rossate@elca.org)):

Julie works with groups who come to visit the Holy Land, mostly groups with a Lutheran connection. The Liaison is usually involved in suggesting local tour guides and tour companies and works specifically to help set up opportunities for visitors to connect with the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Jordan and the Holy Land (ELCJHL) ministries. The Liaison is not a tour guide, but is happy to try to answer questions and certainly to brainstorm activities and ways to connect with people here.

**Suggested Travel Companies:** [Group Travel](http://www.gtd.org/) (<http://www.gtd.org/>) and [Crossing Borders, Inc.](http://www.crossingborders.com/) (<http://www.crossingborders.com/>)

The Peace Not Walls staffers know that many commercial tour companies plan and lead effective group visits to the Holy Land. These listed above have been recommended by numerous ELCA trip leaders. Each also has a stated commitment to and demonstrated track record of providing exposure to a range of Palestinian and Israeli experiences and perspectives and to the region's Christian population and Lutheran ministries. They also agree to make responsible use of Palestinian tour providers while in the Holy Land. Please be assured the ELCA receives no financial compensation for recommending these companies.

**Whomever you choose, we encourage you to ask questions:**

- Interview several tour companies about how their services may support your proposed group program. Before doing so, have a clear idea of your goals and objectives for the experience.
- What is your leadership style and role?
- Who are the people who are likely to travel with you (ages, international travel experience, physical abilities, etc.)?
- What are the "must-do" parts of the experience?
- Are there specific sites, worship experiences, opportunities to dialogue with local folks, visits to mission projects, exposure to new viewpoints which are critical to the experience?

**Request a formal proposal from the one tour company** that you have selected. This is the first step in a building process that will continue throughout the planning and operating of your tour. Continue to ask questions throughout the trip planning process.

**Send a copy of your proposed itinerary** to the Holy Land Trips Liaison Julie Rossate at [Julie.Rossate@elca.org](mailto:Julie.Rossate@elca.org) and the Peace Not Walls staff at [peacenotwalls@elca.org](mailto:peacenotwalls@elca.org). The PNW team will be able to assist you with suggestions and local contacts.

***Code of Conduct for Tourism in the Holy Land:***

The Alternative Tourism Group provides suggestions for responsible tourism in the Holy Land. Check it out [here](http://www.atg.ps/pdf/code_of_conduct.pdf) ([http://www.atg.ps/pdf/code\\_of\\_conduct.pdf](http://www.atg.ps/pdf/code_of_conduct.pdf)).