



Joint Journey to Jerusalem 22–31 May 2016 'Understanding Each Other'

Initiative by



JCMA
Jewish Christian Muslim
Association of Australia

Three Faith leaders will lead a group on a 'Joint Journey to Jerusalem' this year. The group will consist of twelve people, four from each of the three Abrahamic faiths, comprising Spiritual leaders and lay people, men and women.

The purpose of the trip is to visit each others' sacred places in Jerusalem, to study texts from our sacred writings, to discuss points of agreement and disagreement, and so sense the religious experience that is proper to our faiths. In short, the group will truly 'meet' in the City which is sacred to all three traditions.

The group will come together three times before the trip and also, following the trip, communicate the impact of their experiences with their respective religious communities and the broader community. In this imaginative way Jerusalem will show how it is indeed a 'City of Peace', as its name suggests.

The subsidized fee per participant will be \$2500.* This is significantly below cost due to generous donations and grants. Breakfasts will be provided by the hotel. Some group dinners and meals will be covered by the trip fee. Other dinners and all lunches will be participants' responsibility.

Those interested should provide a written response to the criteria listed below and send their application to the planning committee, care of Rev Ian Smith (ian.smith@vcc.org.au). The planning committee will select the other nine members of the Journey. The selection process will be according to the criteria below and remains confidential and final.

Applications should be received by Sunday 6th March, 2016. Successful applicants will be notified within two weeks after that date and others will be informed soon after.

Criteria for selection:

1. Before the journey

- A. Participants should reside in the Melbourne area.
- B. Participants should be committed to, and knowledgeable of their tradition
- C. Participants should be able and willing to actively participate in group discussion on major texts in their tradition.
- D. Participants should be willing to consider texts that have been the cause of misunderstanding.
- E. Participants should be willing to face the 'shadows' of their tradition and acknowledge the truth that is found in the other.
- F. Though not a requirement, preference will be given to those who have already engaged in interfaith relations.
- G. Participants need to commit to participate in the following preparation sessions in Melbourne in order to establish good relations with each other, to converse, to raise questions, to share expectations. (The sessions will be hosted by each of the three planning committee members.)
Three sessions will be held in March, April and early May.

- H. Participants will be asked to commit to the full period of the journey departing Melbourne on Sunday 22nd May returning Tuesday 31st May.
- I. Expectation is that participants will share in three presentations following the trip.
- J. Accepted applicants will be asked to pay \$2,500 by March 28th and provide up to date passports (valid with more than 6 months from dates of travel). The cost helps defray estimated costs of airfares, hotel accommodation, some entry fees and taxis etc.

2. During the journey

- A. **This is a spiritual journey. Participants agree not to discuss politics.**
- B. The Old City is very small (about 1 square kilometre), such that it is possible and in fact necessary to walk to most places. Participants should be able to walk easily.
- C. Participants will help facilitate prayer times for Muslims, Jews, and Christians as desired.
- D. Participants will participate in discussion of texts, both easy and difficult.
- E. Participants will take part (both leading and participating) in debriefing each day and briefing the next day.
- F. Participants will enter the sacred spaces of the other faiths. For example, to go onto the Haram el-Sharif/Temple Mount, to enter a mosque, to enter a synagogue, to go near the Western Wall, to enter churches and Church of the Holy Sepulchre.
- G. Other visits may include, among many other things:
 - i. Shabbat service and meal, Jewish Quarter, Yad Vashem (Holocaust Memorial/Museum), Sound and Light show at Citadel of David.
 - ii. Mt of Olives, the Garden of Gethsemane, the Via Dolorosa, the Cenacle, Bethlehem.
 - iii. Dome of the Rock, and the Haram El-Sharif, El Quds University, Muslim Quarter, visit to a Mosque, meeting with Muslim family.
 - iv. Meeting with various groups that promote reconciliation and interfaith relations.
 - v. Hospital and university visits.
- H. Participants accept to share accommodation (two persons of diverse faiths per hotel room).
- I. Participants accept to eat kosher food, and non-alcoholic beverages at group meals. (Though alcoholic beverages may be consumed elsewhere in the hotel, alcohol will not be consumed at our tables.)
- J. Participants will participate in a daily blog and reflection writing as well as the sharing of photographs on a Facebook page.

3. After the journey

- A. Participants will report in various ways to groups in Melbourne in the months following. Expectation is that people will participate in a minimum of three events.
- B. Participants will use the experience to further interfaith relations, undertaking to develop further outcomes as they arise from the Journey to Jerusalem.

* Additional costs may apply at time of travel



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Delegate Registration *(please complete all sections clearly in capital letters, use additional pages when necessary)*

Title: _____ First Name: _____ Surname: _____

Postal Address: _____

State: _____ Postcode: _____

Telephone: _____ Fax: _____ Mobile: _____

Email: _____

Religious Allegiance (Jewish, Christian, Muslim): _____

Denomination within that tradition, e.g. Conservative, Anglican, Sunni: _____

Previous interfaith experience: _____

Reasons why you wish to be a participant in this Journey: _____

Ways in which you may contribute to interfaith relations as a result of this experience: _____

Please return completed Registration Form to:

Rev Ian Smith at level 4, 306 Lt Collins Street Melbourne 3000 or ian.smith@vcc.org.au

For enquires and further information:

Contact **Rev Ian Smith** by email ian.smith@vcc.org.au or by mobile 0408 313 610 or **Ginette Everest** at JCMA on 03 9287 5590 executiveofficer@jcma.org.au

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