



Hippos Excavation 2012

1. The Hippos Excavations

Hippos lies atop a spectacular steep-sided mountain on the east shore of the Sea of Galilee. Founded in the 3rd century B.C. as a Syrian outpost, it became one of the cities of the Decapolis, a loosely knit group of culturally Greek cities located just east of ancient Israel. Although it came under Jewish control for two brief periods in the first century B.C. (notably under the reign of Herod the Great), its history was dominated by Greek and Roman influences.

During the fourth century A.D., Hippos began to be “Christianized.” Within a century, it was an important centre of Byzantine Christianity. During this time it boasted at least six churches; one was an impressive cathedral and another seems to have been part of a monastery. The city reached its high-point, both as a classically planned city and as a Christian centre, late in the sixth century A.D. Following the Arab conquest of the mid-seventh century, Hippos began a period of gradual decline that ended with its complete destruction in a catastrophic earthquake in January of 749 A.D. The city then lay in ruins until excavations began in the year 2000.

These excavations have revealed a great deal of the city’s ancient splendour and the vibrancy of its inhabitants’ life. Concordia Lutheran Seminary is excited to continue collaborating on this project with Concordia University in St. Paul, Minnesota. There, Dr. Mark Schuler directs the Northeast Insula Project (NIP), which is the official designation for the part of the city in which we are working.

To supplement the brief information provided here, prospective participants should consult Concordia University’s website dedicated to the North-East Church project: <http://hippos.archaeology.csp.edu/>. Please note, however, that Canadians are encouraged to register and participate in the project through Concordia Lutheran Seminary, as outlined below.

2. Tentative dates

Thurs 28 June 2012	leave Edmonton (or other point of departure)
Fri 29 June	arrive Tel Aviv, drive to Kibbutz Ein Gev
Sat 30 June	tour: Hippos site, Sea of Galilee sites
Sun 1 July – Thurs 5 July	first week of excavation on the North-East Church
Fri 6 July – Sat 7 July	touring, incl. Jerusalem & Bethlehem (likely overnight stay)
Sun 8 July – Thurs 12 July	second week of excavation on the North-East Church
Fri 13 July – Sat 14 July	optional touring (sites, details, cost TBA) (<i>cost not included in package</i>)
Sun 15 July	possible further touring <i>OR</i> : leave Kibbutz Ein Gev, fly home

3. Description of the trip

Participants will fly as a group from Toronto to Tel Aviv, then travel by bus to Kibbutz Ein Gev on the east shore of the Sea of Galilee. There, we will join the larger excavation team. Our colleagues on the Northeast Insula Project are led by Dr. Mark Schuler (Concordia University, St. Paul, Minnesota). Those working elsewhere in the city of Hippos work under the leadership of Drs. Arthur Segal and Michael Eisenberg (Zinman Institute of Archaeology, University of Haifa).

Team members stay in small apartments or guest houses (3-4 persons per apartment or sleeping room). Linens for the bed, and one towel, are provided. Each housing unit has an air conditioner, a refrigerator and a hot pot. Limited closet/storage space is available in each apartment.

Participants must provide their own clothing, personal-care items, and excavation kit. Information on these will be given to those who register (or see http://hippos.archaeology.csp.edu/?page_id=168).

Before starting work, the team will spend a day (Sat. 30 June) touring the Hippos site and travelling around the Sea of Galilee, touring sites of historical and archaeological significance related to Jesus' ministry and early Christianity. Between the first and second weeks of work, more touring will include a trip to Jerusalem, where we will visit sites in the Old City, on the Mount of Olives, and in nearby Bethlehem.

Following the second week of excavations, our Canadian group will have an opportunity to spend several further days touring. Details will be arranged in Israel. The cost depends on the plans made, but may be around \$100 per person. *This cost is not included in the package price, but will be payable in cash (shekels).*

To economize on ground-travel costs within Israel, the seminary-sponsored team plans to return to Canada as a group. However, those who want to stay for a further 1 or 2 weeks on the excavation (under the auspices of Concordia University-St. Paul), or for further touring (on their own), may certainly do so. The price of return airfare is included in the package price.

4. Goals of the trip

The archaeological program of the seminary, in partnership with Concordia University-St. Paul, introduces participants to the science of archaeology in the Middle East through hands-on experience with the techniques of the discipline. (Translation: It's going to be *dirty* but *fun*!)

Broadly speaking, this includes experience in the excavation, recovery, documentation, and preservation of material remains, and—as opportunity presents—acquaintance with the use of material remains in the interpretation of Biblical and early Christian writings. (Translation: We'll get a better feel for how archaeology helps us understand the Bible and early Christian history.)

Specifically, the 2012 team will focus on excavating two areas within the Northeast Insula. One is “the House of Tyche,” a luxurious mansion immediately adjoining—and connected to—the North-East Church. The other is “Building Beta” on the west side of the Via Sacra that leads to the church.

These field experiences will be supplemented with touring, occasional evening lectures by archaeologists and visiting scholars, and recommended reading (including pre-trip reading), in order to provide a reasonably comprehensive introduction to the land and its material remains.

5. Eligibility

a) Students at Concordia Lutheran Seminary

All CLS students are invited to take part in the excavation, which—along with reading and writing assignments—comprises E-573 (Field Archaeology). Those who register for this program are eligible to receive financial aid. However, the dig is a rigorous activity requiring robust health. Students should consider their physical stamina when deciding whether to join the team.

b) Adult volunteers

The archaeological project of Concordia University-St. Paul, in which our seminary participates, relies heavily on adult volunteers (age 18 and over, as of 1 July 2012). Although the physical demands of archaeological work are significant, work will be tailored where possible to individual ability and interest. Most adults work alongside college and/or seminary students; as

opportunity allows, some may engage in slower and more delicate work. Parents are welcome to bring children aged 14 or older (as of 1 July 2012).

c) Passport requirements

Each participant must hold a valid passport with at least six months' validity beyond the expected date of departure from Israel. In other words, your passport must expire on or after 15 January 2013. *Earlier expiration dates will not be accepted.*

6. Registration process

Registration is a two-part process.

a) Please complete both a registration form (below) and the "Understandings and Waiver Form" (UWF) that is required of all participants by Concordia University-St. Paul. Send both forms, along with the registration fee of \$250.00, to the Concordia Lutheran Seminary Hippos Excavation Co-ordinator, Dr. Stephen Chambers, to be received no later than 15 March 2012. Cheques should be payable to "Concordia Lutheran Seminary."

b) After registration, Concordia Lutheran Seminary will book the air tickets for all registrants and finalize all costs (which are estimated below). Participants will be notified of the final amount payable. This amount is due in full no later than 1 May 2012.

7. A typical day (Sunday through Thursday)

4:20 am	wake up
4:45 am	leave for site
5:00 – 8:00 am	excavation / preservation
8:00 – 8:30 am	breakfast
8:30 – noon	excavation / preservation
noon – 1:15 pm	return to <i>kibbutz</i> and clean up
1:15 – 2:00 pm	lunch
2:00 – 4:30 pm	free time
4:30 – 6:15 pm	pottery cleaning
6:30 – 7:15 pm	supper
7:30 – 8:30 pm	worship / lecture / team meeting (Sunday, Monday, Tuesday)
8:30 pm	devotions (Saturday to Wednesday)
9:00 pm	lights out (highly recommended!)

8. Estimated fees per person

a) *Important notes regarding fees:*

- *The estimates below are calculated on the basis of \$1.00 USD = \$1.05 CAD. However, these costs will change, depending on airfare fluctuations as well as the exchange-rates between four currencies: US dollar, Canadian dollar, Euro, and shekel.*
- *Each participant's actual fees for "local costs" (see section "b" below) will be calculated on the basis of the exchange rates in effect when Concordia Lutheran Seminary issues his or her invoice (likely in mid-March).*
- *The "sample airfare" listed (section "c" below) is based on the route Edmonton-Toronto-Tel Aviv, as of mid-January 2012. Departure from cities other than Edmonton is possible, but the price from other cities will differ from the sample fare shown.*
- *Each participant's actual fees for "airfare" (see section "c" below) will be calculated on the basis of the round-trip fares that are available from his or her chosen city of departure on the day when Concordia Lutheran Seminary books his or her flight.*

- *Because of the need for all participants to be on the same airplane from Toronto to Tel Aviv, it is necessary for Concordia Lutheran Seminary to book all participants' flights.*
- *Participants' invoices will be prepared as soon as possible after 15 March 2012 (the registration deadline). Payment is due in full by 1 May 2012.*
- *In addition to the fees listed below (local costs + airfare), each participant is responsible for the cost of several meals—for example, while in transit and while touring—plus any desired cancellation insurance (or other travel insurance), and all personal expenses. The final two days' touring (13-14 July) are optional, and at extra cost (payable in cash).*

b) *Local costs*

<i>Item</i>	<i>Cost</i>	<i>Approx. cost in CAD*</i>
Registration fee (non-refundable)	\$250 CAD	\$250 CAD
Room and board at Kibbutz Ein Gev (2 weeks)	\$1,450 USD	\$1,522 CAD
Transportation fee (ground transport within Israel)	ca. \$120 USD	\$126 CAD
Jerusalem trip (transportation, accommodation, half-board)	ca. \$265 USD	\$278 CAD
<i>Total, this category:</i>		\$2,176 CAD

*Canadian-dollar equivalents in this chart are provided for illustration purposes only.

c) *Sample airfare*

Edmonton – Tel Aviv, return, via Toronto (as of mid-January 2012) **\$2,338 CAD**

d) *Estimated fees (local costs + airfare)*

\$4,514 CAD

9. Security

Since the fall of 2000, tensions and violence have been high in Israel and the Occupied Territories. In 2006, the second Lebanon War brought *katyusha* rocket fire to areas near the excavation (as close as 10 km). As a result, students were evacuated and sent home. Nevertheless, the site of the Hippos Excavations is removed from population centers and has not experienced any direct conflict. It is within the internationally recognized 1948 borders of Israel. It is one of the safer places in Israel primarily due to its remoteness.

Security is a serious concern for Concordia University-St. Paul, and for Concordia Lutheran Seminary as an institutional partner in the university's program. After the 2006 evacuation, students, parents, and adult volunteers gave Concordia University high marks for its handling of the crisis. The university continues to upgrade its plans and procedures in order to keep students and volunteers safe.

The project director, Dr. Mark Schuler, registers the team with the US Embassy and is on their notification list for issues of security. News and security announcements are monitored regularly. Both Dr. Schuler and Dr. Chambers are available by cell phone to participants' family members 24 hours a day. Dr. Schuler reserves the right to make any changes to the program in order to assure the reasonable security of participants.

Any of the following circumstances will mandate evacuation of all students:

- Hostilities flare up with inaccurate rocket fire or shelling striking near the Sea of Galilee or in the southern Golan.
- Military forces of another nation enter northern Israel and begin to hold land.
- Weapons of mass destruction are employed or their use is a significant probability.
- Other unexpected circumstances deemed by the project director to mandate evacuation.

The form of the evacuation will be determined by circumstances on the ground. Public transit will not be used. Evacuation may be to another location in Israel, or out of Israel by air, or to a third country (Jordan) if safe exit by air from Israel is not possible. If safe travel within Israel is not possible, participants may be restricted to Kibbutz Ein Gev and/or its bomb shelters.

Those who consider participating in the Northeast Insula Project at Hippos should monitor closely the latest news. Participants should also become familiar with the travel advisories provided by Foreign Affairs Canada (http://www.voyage.gc.ca/countries_pays/report_rapport-eng.asp?id=135000) and by the United States State Department (http://travel.state.gov/travel/cis_pa_tw/tw/tw_1764.html).

10. Cancellation

a) Prior to departure for Israel

Participants must make their own decisions about cancellation prior to 28 June 2012. In previous years, the excavation has proceeded even at times of high tension. If you or your family become concerned because of events in the Middle East before you leave home, it is your decision whether or not to proceed. The following are the only circumstances that would cause cancellation of all activities prior to departure:

- Cancellation of the dig season by the Zinman Institute of Archaeology (University of Haifa)
- An order by the United States Embassy to evacuate all U.S. citizens
- The refusal of airlines to fly to Israel.

b) Program interruption and/or evacuation

Because instability in the Middle East can cause a crisis to flare up at any time, the project director at Concordia University-St. Paul (Dr. Mark Schuler) reserves the right to change, limit, or cancel programming at his sole discretion for security purposes, even if those changes cause financial loss or increased costs to participants. In the event of such interruption, participants will be responsible for their own additional costs for transportation, lodging, and meals. Fees for unused portions of the excavation fees are not refundable.

Application

Registration is a two-part process.

- a) Please complete both a registration form (below) and the “Understandings and Waiver Form” (UWF) that is required of all participants by Concordia University-St. Paul. Send both forms, along with the registration fee of \$250.00, to the Concordia Lutheran Seminary Hippos Excavation Co-ordinator, Dr. Stephen Chambers, to be received no later than 15 March 2012. Cheques should be payable to “Concordia Lutheran Seminary.”

- b) After registration, Concordia Lutheran Seminary will book the air tickets for all registrants and finalize all costs (which are estimated below). Participants will be notified of the final amount payable. This amount is due in full no later than 1 May 2012.

Full legal name: _____

Street address: _____

City: _____

Province: _____

Postal code: _____

Email address: _____

Phone number: _____

Date of birth: _____

Passport number: _____

Issuing authority (city): _____

Date of expiry: _____

Status (select one):

- I am a student at Concordia Lutheran Seminary
- I am an adult volunteer (18 years or more, as of 1 July 2012)
- I am a dependent of an adult volunteer (14 years or more, as of 1 July 2012)

Work preference (select one):

- I prefer to work on excavation tasks
- I prefer to work on lighter duties, as possible
- I will work wherever I am needed

List two emergency contacts:

Name: _____
Relationship: _____
Phone number: _____
Email: _____

Name: _____
Relationship: _____
Phone number: _____
Email: _____