

# THE FORUM

## Home

Jacque Bethel is a perfect fit for board. **Page 4**



Community of Christ  
Historic Sites Foundation



*Preserving & Sharing  
Church Heritage*

### To Make a Donation

Preserving and sharing church heritage and telling the sacred story is both a privilege and a responsibility.

To give to the Community of Christ Historic Sites Foundation, call (217) 453-2246.

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*The Holy Land Tour provided life-changing stops and experiences.*

## HOLY LAND

By Greg Clark

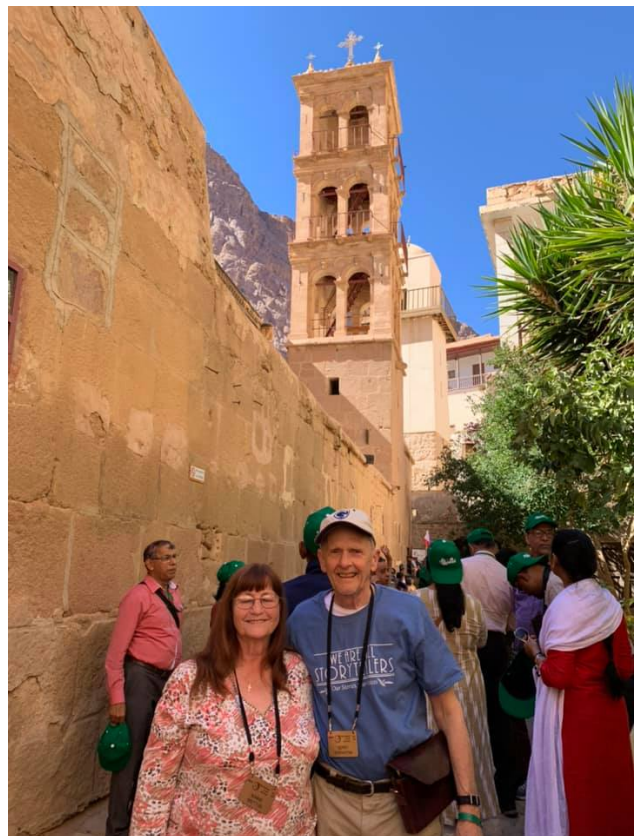
For one person, it happened in Bethlehem's Church of the Nativity while singing "Silent Night."

For another it was while riding high atop a camel near the Mount of Olives.

For yet another, it came while floating in a boat in the fresh water of the Sea of Galilee.

Others experienced it while climbing a pyramid in Egypt, exploring the ruins of the Masada fortress, visiting the site of the Sermon on the

*See Holy Land on page 11*



# *A Story to Tell: Women in Community of Christ History*

HISTORIC SITES BUS TOUR  
OCTOBER 5-15, 2020

Join us on an 11-day tour as we explore the stories behind the remarkable women throughout Community of Christ history. Experience the past through the eyes of the women who once lived in Kirtland, Nauvoo, Plano, and Lamoni. Learn about their timeless contributions to our faith community and see how their discipleship left a mark on future generations, including your own.

**Seating is limited.  
Reserve your seat today!**



# Tour Highlights

## CHURCH HISTORY SITES AND STORIES

Visit Emma Smith's birthplace in Harmony, Pennsylvania, and hear about how her childhood experiences impacted the type of leader she was to become in the early church.

See the historic landscapes and sites in Palmyra, New York, and learn about the first female members of the church. Gain a greater understanding of their role in preparing the first missionaries and helping to establish the church.

Experience Kirtland, Nauvoo, and Plano through the eyes of the women who lived in these historic communities. Learn about their sacrifice for the greater community good.

Visit Liberty Hall and hear the stories behind the women who lived in historic Lamoni.

## WOMEN'S HISTORY IN THE UNITED STATES

Celebrate the 100th anniversary of women's right to vote by visiting several significant places on the road to equality for all women. Sites include:

- Women's Rights National Historic Park
- Susan B. Anthony home
- Harriet Tubman home

Explore the lives of female religious leaders such as Ellen G. White as you tour the historic Seventh Day Adventist Village. Learn about Ann Lee's unique leadership style while exploring Hancock Shaker Village.

## GLORIOUS FALL FOLIAGE AND MORE!

Experience breathtaking autumn views, delicious foods, and delightful fellowship as you make your way across eight states. Reunite with old friends and enjoy new friendships on this "reunion on the road" bus tour.

## TOUR DETAILS AND PRICING

\$1,750 per person, double-occupancy  
\$2,350 per person, single occupancy

Tour price includes luxury bus transportation (from Independence, MO), all overnight lodging, tour and admission fees, and most meals.

**For more information about this exciting educational travel opportunity, go to:**  
[www.HistoricSitesFoundation.org](http://www.HistoricSitesFoundation.org)



# Bethel feeling right at home with foundation

By Greg Clark

Perhaps no person has more right to a spot with the Community of Christ Historic Sites Foundation than Jacquie Bethel.

After all, she's the only board member who as a child once called one of those sites "home."

Now 65, Jacquie lives in Huntington Beach, California, but spends time uplifting all the properties supported by the foundation. They include the Joseph Smith Historic Site in Nauvoo, Illinois; the Kirtland Temple in Ohio; Heritage Plaza in Independence, Missouri; and the Plano Stone Church in Illinois.

And, of course, there's Liberty Hall, Joseph Smith III's former home in Lamoni, Iowa. It was there that Jacquie, as a 13-year-old, spent a year finding treasures in the attic, running from spiders, and appreciating links to the past.

Her family had just moved to Lamoni, where her dad had accepted a job in education and coaching. Because of a housing shortage, they ended up in the home of the former church president.

"When I first started school in Lamoni...I didn't have many friends," Jacquie said. "It was a tight-knit community. But in the attic there were a lot of tidbits of history. And I found these diaries, from two daughters. They kind of helped me get through the year. I also was interested in their clothes and hats."

She remembers two early impressions of the home.

"The house was magnificent. It was so unique and had so much history. But at that time we liked horror movies, and I could conjure up so many scary thoughts. There was a cemetery on one side and an old house in the back. It was a wonderful place for a child with an incredible imagination."

But a few things weren't so wonderful. "Spiders and crawling critters were everywhere!" Also, there was no air conditioning for summer heat, and the winter was cold.

Little did she know that one day she'd serve on a board charged with preserving and sharing the church heritage of such places. That came about because a close friendship with Karen Graham Wade, then the board president.

"Jacquie and I met approximately 16 years ago after she took early retirement and moved to California due to her husband, Paul's, job," Karen said. "We connected almost immediately. Jacquie and Paul, both of whom have very deep roots in the church, have always valued our heritage. When our mission center started co-sponsoring Storyteller events with the foundation, they became some of our staunchest supporters.

"One day, I just came out and asked her if she would



*Jacquie Bethel and Peter Smith confer during a meeting.*

consider serving on the Historic Sites Foundation Board of Directors. ...It was hardly any time before she got back to me and said that she felt this possibility was an answer to her prayers, because she was looking for a new avenue in which to serve. And this seemed to be a perfect fit."

Jacquie, a retired area sales manager for an international manufacturing company for construction products, thought her background would help. "In sales you learn about how to communicate with people, solve problems, and how to encourage people. At the historic sites we're encouraging people to donate or be part of something that intrinsically is Community of Christ. It's about selling, being honest with where you're at, and maintaining the sites."

The importance of those tasks goes beyond childhood memories.

"I want my grandchildren to be able to experience that same awe and wonder when they see the places we have been. I want to share the past with them so that they may have a better understanding of my faith, my parents' faith, and their great-great-grandparents' faith communities."

Barbara Walden, executive director of the foundation, called Jacquie "a real treasure to the foundation and broader church history community." Walden praised her "leadership skills, attention to detail, genuine enthusiasm for church history and passion for preserving the historic sites. I especially appreciate her interest in the women's experience throughout Community of Christ history. That interest will be extremely helpful as we host the 2020 bus tour."

Jacquie already has experience with foundation-sponsored tours. She and Paul went on the "Zion Past and Present" tour in 2018. One of the stops: Liberty Hall.

She saw lots of changes. "It's definitely been reconfigured to the original small rooms...It's the original design."

And there was one more important improvement:

"I didn't see any spiders."

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Some give to honor and preserve church heritage.

Some give because of spiritual experiences while visiting one of the sites.

Some give to provide opportunities for young people to learn and deepen their appreciation for church history.

Some give in honor or memory of loved ones, past and present.

No matter your reason for giving, we deeply appreciate your support. You can mail donations to P.O. Box 338, Nauvoo, IL 62354. You also can donate your gifts online at [www.HistoricSitesFoundation.org](http://www.HistoricSitesFoundation.org).

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*The immensity of the pyramids inspired great awe and wonder among many visitors.*

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Besides visiting famous antiquity sites, guests experienced biblical waterways (top) and sampled local culture.

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# Carsons find formula for generosity

## Roth IRA helps fund yearly gift

By Greg Clark

James and Ann Carson blended practicality with passion and found a generous way to bless the Community of Christ Historic Sites Foundation.

The Carsons, longtime church members from Weeping Water, Nebraska, committed to the formula while at a reunion at the Guthrie Grove Retreat Center in Iowa.

It started with a Roth IRA, which has a required minimum distribution every year.

“For six years, we’ve taken the minimum distribution out and split it with the local church and World Church, half and half,” said James, an elder.

The thing is, he said, the Roth IRA didn’t fall in value. “I have received enough increase in interest that the equity I have on the account is still there.”

That’s a sweet situation. James said his distribution increased every year, so last spring he made a decision, which he announced in Guthrie Grove.

“I said that we’re going to add a portion of that account for church history. I’ll split it between the local church, World Church, and the Historic Sites Foundation. It’s a wonderful way to support (all three).

“I really think the minimum distribution—taking that fund and sharing it—is the way to go.”

Others quickly noticed the Carsons’ commitment. “They participate in our bus tours and have creatively thought out how they may help support the Historic Sites Foundation,” said Board President Sally Roth. “Outstanding!”

Executive Director Barbara Walden added: “Jim gave an impromptu testimony about how he would be giving out



of his Roth IRA.” She called it a “unique form of donating” that might be attractive to potential donors.

Because of a passion for church and history, Ann said the decision was easy.

“It’s important to keep the sites going for future generations.... I hope we can continue to get enough support that we can hang onto these historic places.”

They’ve taken their interest in history on the road, so to speak, by participating in two bus tours sponsored by the foundation. Each left a lasting impact.

James especially enjoyed the Sacred Grove in New York, where Joseph Smith Jr. had a vision. “We got to see and feel that. We also got to see some of the other congregations in the area that were

at that time important to the church history.

“The association with the church members during the tour was excellent, and Barb’s comments about the coming events and background added a lot to the enjoyment of the tour.”

He explained why church history is beneficial. “I think it’s important to know where we come from and where we’re headed. It’s an important part of our church. To see, know, and experience the history of the church helps us to understand where we’re at in the world.”

Both Carsons mentioned another site: “I really think the Kirtland Temple was the highlight,” Ann said. “I enjoyed it all. I think the church does a really good job planning these things.”

# Holy Land

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Mount, stopping at the Garden of Gethsemane, praying at the Western Wall, walking along the Via Dolorosa, or any number of other events.

Each of the 51 people who went on the Holy Land tour sponsored in October by the Community of Christ Historic Sites Foundation experienced at least one—if not many—life-changing events.

Besides returning with incredible memories, they brought back a deeper understanding of our church's role and history through missionaries who served in the land where Jesus walked.

The tour was the foundation's first in the Holy Land. It was done in three parts. The first included a visit to the Treasury at Petra, made famous in scenes from the movie; "Indiana Jones and the Last Crusade."

## **Karen Graham Wade**

The former foundation president obviously was fascinated with the many sites. But to her, perhaps more intriguing were the people.

"Although there were many touching moments for me during the tour, such as when I placed a prayer for peace in the Western Wall in old Jerusalem, perhaps the most meaningful was the opportunity some of us had to meet with a Christian Palestinian family living in the occupied West Bank. Their daily trials, courage, and commitment to their faith humbled me to the core."

That gave the visitors a greater appreciation of a different culture.

"The trip provided me an opportunity to expand my understanding of, and respect for, a region and people so different from what we know and take for granted in the Western world," she said. "The trip merely strengthened my understanding of and appreciation for the many faith traditions that both worship and revere our Creator, who is known by many names."

## **Peter Smith**

Smith, a board member who has helped lead several trips sponsored by



*The trip gave some guests an opportunity to extend warm greetings.*

the foundation, shared a similar appreciation for the Western Wall.

"Walking up to the wall, seeing people's prayers scribbled on scraps of paper and stuck into the creases between the bricks, seeing devoted believers praying and chanting with their hands on the wall—some in stillness and some rocking back and forth with passion—it all drew me into a deep sense of belonging to something so much larger than myself, something reaching back into the past and yet claiming me in that very moment. It was a very powerful experience that I will always remember.

Smith found the trip to be meaningful in many other ways, too.

"To be in the same places and walk the same roads as Jesus—this made the trip especially meaningful. It put so many scripture stories into perspective and will forever change my reading of the Gospel stories. However, the most meaningful aspect of this journey was having the opportunity to share the experience with my Historic Sites Foundation family. I wouldn't have chosen any other group of people to take this trip with.

"My faith has grown deeper because of this."

Smith said his faith isn't the only thing that changed on the trip.

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## Make a Donation, Aid Preservation

*Preserving and sharing church heritage and telling the sacred story of our journey is a privilege and a responsibility.*

*To help the Community of Christ Historic Sites Foundation fulfill that mission, call (217) 453-2246 to make a donation.*

*Another alternative is to send donations to P.O. Box 338, Nauvoo, IL 62354.*

*You also can donate at [www.HistoricSitesFoundation.org/donate](http://www.HistoricSitesFoundation.org/donate).*

## Volunteers Needed

*To volunteer at a historic site supported by the Community of Christ Historic Sites Foundation, call Lachlan Mackay at (217) 453-2246 or email him at [lmackay@CofChrist.org](mailto:lmackay@CofChrist.org).*

## Community of Christ Historic Sites Foundation

P.O. Box 338  
Nauvoo, IL 62354

## Holy Land

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"I have a greater admiration for those who came before me in our church, and their willingness to leave everything behind for the sake of the gospel and travel to completely unknown places to share the good news (through word and deed).

"I'm very much in awe of their dedication."

### Barbara Walden

For the foundation's executive director, the trip's most touching moment came in a mountaintop experience—literally.

"As a church-history lover, taking a moment for prayer on the Mount of Olives while looking out over Old Jerusalem was a powerful moment. Knowing the first church missionary in 1841—and the generations of missionaries to follow—stood on that mountain and prayed, connected the past and present for me in the most profound way. It was a moment I'll never forget.

"I greatly admired the strength and

perseverance of the early church members who lived in Palestine. The sacrifices they made and the faith they possessed is indescribable. It reminded me that our faith community is richly blessed with generations of pioneers whose lives are profound testimonies to us today."

She easily connected the events in the land from the time of Jesus to today's church.

"It was truly the trip of a lifetime to learn about the historic Jesus...all the while hearing the stories behind generations of church members who lived in the Holy Land. It...gave me a greater understanding and appreciation for the life and ministry of Jesus Christ. The tour strengthened my faith."

### Sally Roth

For the current foundation president, a moving moment came aboard the boat on the Sea of Galilee.

"Peter Smith led us in a devotion while we were out on the Sea of Galilee. It was of (the Apostle) Peter attempting to walk on the water. It was magic that we had this moment together."

She said the tour fleshed out the

stories she's read about.

"This really brought the scriptures into color. It's something when you look at a map, but it's something else when you look at the sites.

"Everyday people go, expecting to find the Spirit. People go there, crawling on their knees. At the Western Wall, you realize that for 2,000 years people have been taking their prayers, coming with expectations."

She experienced deep emotions throughout the trip. "We followed in the physical footsteps of Jesus as we sailed on the Sea of Galilee, walked the shores where his ministry flourished, walked the Via Dolorosa, prayed in the Garden of Gethsemane, walked where Jesus was raised in Nazareth, and was born in Bethlehem."

The tour also affected Sally's perception of Community of Christ today. "I am so full of joy at our Enduring Principles and Mission Initiatives—lights unto our path. Our church is more than a religion; it is a way to be an active part of Christ's ministry. Having been in the Middle East, I see the global importance of our journey with Jesus."