

Initial Thoughts for Developing a Travel Program with the ELCA Wittenberg Center

Introduction

Thank you for your interest in the Wittenberg Center! We are looking forward to working with you to create a unique program resource, tailored to the spiritual needs and interests of your group. We will:

- work with you to craft an itinerary that meets your needs and includes some Center programming,
 1. provide sample itineraries
 2. provide speaker's list from the Wittenberg Center
 3. customize the itinerary –add educational and spiritual elements as desired
 4. develop a program that works!
 - connect you with a tour operator with whom we often work, who will be able to price the program, and add the "touristic" aspects such as hotels, transportation and meals.
- Notes on these aspects:

1. Our tour operators can work with groups as small as 15 or as large as 44 (capacity of one bus). Occasionally, a group runs with two busses, up to a total of up to 88
2. The standard hotels that our tour operators use are excellent European 3- or 4- star hotels
3. Our tour operators generally incorporate two meals per day into the program - breakfast plus either lunch or dinner.
4. A free place(s) can be incorporated into the pricing for the trip. Our tour operator will work with a group leader on pricing and free places.
5. Our tour operators generally do not make arrangements for air fares.
6. The program will be sold to you as an entire package including all accommodations, selected meals, all programming, tours and entrance fees, tips, etc.

We will use your programming preferences to develop suitable program components for your groups, and relay your other wishes to the professional tour operator with whom we work:

Nuts and Bolts

- 1.) You will need to decide on your desired program dates.
- 2.) Into and out of which city (cities) would you like to fly. Berlin is about an hour and a half driving time from Wittenberg. Some programs begin and end in Berlin. Some programs begin in Berlin and end in Frankfurt or Munich.
- 3.) We will need your group's contact person(s) (leader, registrar if known): address, phone, email, fax.
- 4.) Will you wish to build in complementary spaces— for example, for the pastor or group leader? How many?
- 5.) Typically the ELCA Wittenberg Center assists the tour operator in developing a brochure or flier for the program. We list all scheduled programs on our web site. It is possible to add a link to a program listing on our web site that would allow other interested persons to be in touch with a program's contact person to register for the program – would your group be open to receiving “outside” registrations?
- 6.) Are there any special emphases or unique aspects that you would like to include in the program: (emphasis on women, music, youth, cross-cultural experience, spirituality, Bonhoeffer, etc.). Are there any cities or places you want to make sure are included in your program?

Your Group

- 1.) Target group size (Group rates are generally available beginning at 15 persons and generally the larger the group, the better the rates. One full bus is 44 persons):
- 2.) Target audience (Are class credits or CEU units needed?):
- 3.) Do you plan to invite international guests? (i.e. from your companion synod):
- 4.) Does the program, or do any of its participants, have special needs?

Programming Preferences

- 1.) What is your general preferred pattern of presentations and worship (i.e. time of day, how often?)
- 2.) Will you want to include a group worship experience? We have been able to hold worship services (with Holy Communion) in the Castle and City Churches in Wittenberg as well as other cities. Group members have participated as lectors, Communion Assistants, preachers and presiders at Holy Communion. We work with group leaders to design the worship service and make arrangements for appropriate participation of group members.
- 2.) Do you wish us to provide you with worship resources? We have resources that connect with many of the places included in our programs that can be used to lead devotions and worship.
- 3.) Educational resources Are there any educational sources, speakers that you would like to include in your program? The Center has developed a speakers list and an extensive collection of pamphlets and brochures with information about people, places, events and historical movements. We can make suggestions for various speakers that will complement your program. We provide participants with a folder containing information relevant to the places included in your program.

Preferences: Lodging, Transportation, Scheduling *(many of these concerns will be addressed by your tour operator in coordination with our Center as we work through itinerary details)*

- 1.) What is your preferred mode of transportation: coach bus (recommended), train, driving yourselves?
- 2.) How many meals should be built into the program?
- 3.) How much free time do you wish to provide, and how often?
- 4.) Would you like to be “on the go,” as much as possible, staying just one night in each city, or would you prefer to have fewer “home bases,” staying in a city more than one night and making day trips?