

Anglican and Eastern Churches Association

AECA Pilgrimage 2025: 1700th Anniversary of the Council of Nicaea
Monday 28 April – Wednesday 7 May, 2025

Ancient Cities and Landscapes of the Ecumenical Councils at
Constantinople, Chalcedon, Nicaea and Ephesus,

with visits to

Assos, Pergamum, Izmir (Smyrna), Urla and Çesme

The Pilgrimage will be led by

His Eminence Archbishop Nikitas Loulias
Archdiocese of Thyateira and Great Britain

and

The Rt Revd, the Lord Chartres
Assistant Bishop in The Diocese of Europe



organized by

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During this ten-day pilgrimage in Turkey, we explore the sites of the great Councils of the Church, staying in the cities in which they took place and visiting the locations where the Creeds were composed. Following two full days in Istanbul, where we visit wonderful historical churches and other sites on both sides of the Bosphorus, we travel to beautiful Iznik (Nicaea) where we shall celebrate the momentous 1700th anniversary of the Nicene Creed. We continue our journey southwards along

the Aegean coast, visiting breathtaking historical sites, which continue to resonate in the Christian imagination. Picturesque coastal towns such as Ayvalik and Urla were Christian majority towns until the 1920s. In Izmir (Smyrna) we shall visit Orthodox and Anglican churches which thrive in the present day, and at Ephesus we shall join the Orthodox and Roman Catholic communities in worship, with their Archbishops at the site of the tomb of St John the Evangelist in the remains of St John's Basilica. Late April/early May is a wonderful time to travel in Istanbul and the Aegean region. The weather is mild, and wildflowers cover the hillsides and ancient sites that we shall visit. The AECA invites you to journey together as we celebrate the faith we share.



Hagia Sophia, Istanbul

Tour Itinerary:

Apr 28 Mon Arrive Istanbul

Your tour guide will meet you after the baggage claim with an "AECA - TUTKU" sign. Meet and transfer to Moevenpick Golden Horn hotel near Phanar/Balat. Dinner and overnight. (B,D)

Apr 29 Tue Istanbul

During our first two days we will visit the **Greek Orthodox Patriarchate** in the district of Fener, at its ancient location beside the Golden Horn. We have a tour of **St George's Cathedral** (the patriarchal church) during which we will see the relics of St Gregory Nazianzen (who presided over 1st council of Constantinople. We hope to have an audience with **His All Holiness Patriarch Bartholemew**, the Ecumenical Patriarch. We visit the remarkable **Bulgarian Orthodox Church** at Balat, which is constructed entirely of iron, and the **Chora Church** (now mosque), with its spectacular Byzantine mosaics and frescoes. It was in the monastery here (close the city walls) that the Last Emperor resided during the seige prior to the fall of Constantinople in 1453. Visits also include **Zeyrek Mosque** - (Pantocrator Monastery) - burial place of Emperors, and the **Byzantine Palace Mosaic Museum** which will help to give us the context for the 5th and 6th Ecumenical Councils. Final visit to the Iconoclastic period **Church of Hagia Irene**. Dinner and overnight at the hotel. (B,D)



Lefke Gate, Iznik

Apr 30 Wed Istanbul

Morning ferry across the **Bosphorus** to **Kadıköy** (Chalcedon). Short walk to Greek Orthodox **Church of Ayia Efimia**- Mühürdar Street. The church (1694) is on the site of the 2nd Council of Chalcedon 451. The relics of St Efimia (which we hope to see) played a role in the council of Chalcedon. Short walk to **SurpTakavor Armenian Church** (1720), then visit **Holy Trinity Greek Orthodox Cathedral**. Lunch in Kadikoy. Return by ferry to visit **Hagia Sophia** - close to location of 2nd council Constantinople (5 May 553) in the great hall which was then attached to Hagia Sophia. Visit **Church of St Sergius and Bacchus** (Kucuk Ayasofya Mosque), which was constructed in 536. Free time/ till evening meal. Dinner at local restaurant in Sultanahmet. (B,D)

May 1 Thu Istanbul - Iznik (Nicaea)

Drive to or via Yalova ferry to **Nicaea**. We see the remains of the palace by Lake Nicaea - location of Constantine's Palace where the Council of Nicaea took place. Walking tour includes ancient walls and gates and the remains of **Dormition Church**. Visit **Ayasofya** mosque (former church), location of the 2nd Ecumenical Council of Nicaea- the council that marked the end of Iconoclasm. Dinner and overnight Iznik. (B,D)

May 2 Fri Iznik - Assos - Ayvalik

We drive from Iznik to the spectacular ancient city of **Assos** with views over the north Aegean. After lunch we continue southwards to the beautiful coastal town of **Ayvalik**, just across from the nearby Greek island of Lesbos. Dinner and overnight at Ayvalik. (B,D)

May 3 Sat Ayvalik - Bergama (Pergamum) - Izmir

During our morning stroll through the picturesque narrow streets of Ayvalik we visit **Agios Georgios** (Cinarli Camii) and the recently restored **Taxiarchis Church**. Drive to **Pergamum**, one of the Seven Churches of Revelation with its matchless acropolis and precipitous theatre. We also see the **Red Basilica** and the **Asklepion** (classical period healing centre). Stay in Izmir. (B,D)



Pergamum



Orthodox, Roman Catholic and Anglican celebration at St John's Basilica, Ephesus

May 4 Sun Izmir (Smyrna)

10am Service at **St John's Anglican Church**. Travel to **Ephesus** and visit the ancient site including the fourth century **Basilica of St Mary** (where the Council of Ephesus (432 AD) is remembered). Attend the Orthodox/Roman Catholic/Anglican Feast of St John celebration at the **Basilica of St John**, Ephesus. Orthodox Vespers, will be followed by a Roman Catholic Mass over the site of the tomb of St John. Return to Izmir for overnight. (B,D)

May 5 Mon Izmir

We have a relaxing day in **Izmir** including a visit to city's colourful grand bazaar and visits to historic synagogues, and the **Panagia Greek Orthodox Church**. Lunch in the bazaar area. Afternoon activities may include a stroll on the seafront, a visit to the Smyrna Agora, the new national museum in the district of Alsancak, or the historic elevator. Evening prayer at **St Mary Magdalene's Church** in the district of Bornova, and *al fresco* supper in one of the great Levantine gardens (B,D)

May 6 Tu Urla - Klazomenai - Erythrai - Çeşme - Izmir

We drive to the ancient city of **Klazomenai**, where the visit includes the Olive Oil Factory Museum. We continue to the historic town of **Urla** where we enjoy a stroll in the historic centre of the town, which like Ayvalik was a predominantly Christian/Orthodox town up to the 1920s. We continue our drive to **Çeşme**. *En route* we visit the secluded ancient city of **Erythrai** with spectacular views towards the nearby Greek island of Chios. We visit the ruins of the **Byzantine church of Mother of God**. At the attractive seaside city of Çeşme we visit **Ayios Haralambos Church**, a beautifully restored 19th-century Greek Orthodox church now used as a civic venue. Dinner and overnight in Izmir. (B,D)

May 7 Wed Drive to Izmir International Airport for UK flight/onward destinations



Anglican Church of St Mary Magdalene, Izmir

LAND RATES

GBP 1,350 Per Person in Double Room
GBP 420 Single Room Supplement

INCLUDING

- 3 Nights at Moevenpick Golden Horn Hotel in Istanbul or similar
- 1 Night at Limnades Hotel in Iznik or similar
- 1 Night at Halic Hotel in Ayvalik or similar
- 4 Nights at Kordon Cankaya Hotel in Izmir or similar
- Daily breakfast at the hotels
- 10 Dinners
- Entrance fees to all sightseeing
- Licensed English Speaking tour guide
- Tutku gifts (map, t-shirt, luggage tag)
- Tips to hotel staff
- Service charges and local taxes

EXCLUDING

- Lunches and drinks
- Tips to tour guide and driver
- All kinds of insurance and personal expenses

PAYMENT PROCEDURE

- **DEPOSIT: 100 GBP on or before December 1, 2024**
- **FULL BALANCE PAYMENT: on or before March 3, 2025**

REGISTRATION

you can fill in the secure form at TUTKU website



OPTION 1

REGISTER NOW

<https://tutku.travel/tour/2504BUXTON>

OPTION 2



1. Open the Camera app on your device.
2. Move the QR code into the frame.

FURTHER INFORMATION

- If there is anything you would like to ask us, please contact **Fr Ben Drury**, AECA Pilgrimage Secretary:

Email: frbenjamindrury@gmail.com

WhatsApp: 00447719202333 **Mobile:** 00306973670585

- The Pilgrimage will also be accompanied by **Fr James Buxton** (Anglican Chaplain in Izmir).

Recommended flights: (please book your own flights)

Date	Flights	Depart-Arrive Airports	Depart/Arrive
28APR	British Airways BA 676	London(LHR)-Istanbul(IST)	10:40/16:40
07MAY	Turkish Airlines TK2319	Izmir(ADB)-Istanbul(IST)	12:00/13:30
07MAY	Turkish Airlines TK1971	Istanbul(IST)-London(LHR)	14:55/16:50

- TUTKU will arrange the arrival and departure airport transfers based on the above flights.
- Those who make other flight arrangements arriving/departing at different times, need to arrange their own airport transfers. They can take a taxi or, TUTKU can arrange private transfers upon request at extra cost.
- If you are arriving/departing at the same time you can join the group transfers.



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