

Thessaloniki, Greece



VISIT ANCIENT RUINS...CHANGE LIVES FOREVER!!!

A new place, a new opportunity, a new calling...

You may be asking yourself “Why Greece and why now?” But until you have spent time here fighting for it, you may never fully understand the answer. In the past few years it seems that Greece has been setting off a “ping” on the spiritual radar. In a country that proudly boasts 98% christian orthodox, never before have so many been lost and hurting. In the mix of the young adults’ uncertainty of their future, the economic downfall of the government, and the nation’s quest for a better life, we have been given a chance. A chance to share the hope, peace, and

life we as Christians have all been given. However, we can’t do it alone. We need your help! Short term teams have proved to be the catalyst in our ministry here. From the excitement and energy you will bring, the new friends you will make, and the testimonies you will share, what you can do here is vital to the Kingdom’s operation. This brochure is meant to be a guide to what a team will experience while here in Thessaloniki. We ask that you take some time to look at it and prayerfully consider joining us here in Greece. Together we can change Greek lives forever!



Aristotle University

Aristotle University is home to over 85,000 students from all over Greece and Europe. We believe that from this campus we have the potential to reach a nation and continent!

iHeart



The view from the cup

To many, iHeart is nothing more than a place to hang out, relax, and enjoy a cup of joe. But to others, its something much more. It's our desire for this cafe to be used of the Lord. We want people to feel His peace as they walk through the doors. So every Sunday before opening, we gather inside to pray over the building and those who may enter inside.

How a Cafe Can Change a City

iHeart began as an idea over four years ago, when Tony Sebastian and his family felt the Lord calling them to move to Thessaloniki, Greece. Tony felt direction to make a difference in Thessaloniki through the modern-day marketplace: the café. In general, people converse over coffee – especially the Greek people.

Why not use coffee as a vehicle for furthering the gospel? The café operates as a center point of influence in the city through working for social justice with awareness and events, through having a more wholesome

environment with an artistic expression, and through building relationships with people from other cultures. What started as a concept soon became reality when iHeart opened its doors to university students in the spring of 2011. Located just across the street from Aristotle University, which has about 85,000 students, iHeart is a gathering place for the community and an opportunity to share your life of faith in a natural way. Come join us in Greece and see how simple conversation can be used to spread the light of Christ abroad!



Tony & Jamie Sebastian
Cafe Owners

Community Outreach: Going Beyond the Church Walls

We are privileged to partner with the A21 campaign (www.a21campaign.org) here in Greece. A21 is a non-profit organization that fights human trafficking through the awareness of prevention, legal prosecution, and aftercare for victims. On the 21st of every month, the iHeart café hosts an A21 awareness event night. Also, when short term teams are here, we give them the opportunity to help spread awareness on the streets of Thessaloniki. Greeks are constantly getting flyers handed to them. We like to take advantage of that, but with a twist. Victims of human trafficking often have no voice in society, so we will join them in silence by taping our mouths. This is sure to be a memory you will never forget.

Roma people (often referred to as gypsies) live all over Europe, and have become outcasts in European society. Greece is no exception. The Roma children spend their days in the streets

selling tissues or playing music for money, and sometimes begging alone or with a parent. As a team member you will go where few Greeks would go – to their home, which is a camp outside the city. Living in desperate conditions, these children are rarely treated with kindness. We bring God's love and a lot of fun to them by simply spending time with these kids on a regular basis.

Building relationships is our way of spreading the gospel, because faith comes up regularly in casual conversation. You may be surprised at the difference you can make in someone's life in the short amount of time you are here. Talking about God can happen over a cup of coffee or a game of basketball in Thessaloniki. We rely on our short term teams to help spark conversations around the city. Whether it's in iHeart, on the campus, or in the store, we have a place in Thessaloniki for you!



IMMERSION



Be part of something bigger than yourself.

When Zoe church launched in 2012 we had an overwhelming feeling that God was “throwing the kitchen sink” at Thessaloniki. We are part of a church planting team that is from 3 continents and multiple languages. This is a Greek church, but there is a lot of outside influence from Hillsong London and their entire network.

The leaders of the church are Chris and Nick Caine the founders of A21. The Sebastian family is part of the core plant team, and the iheart team is a major reason for the growth of the church using relationship through the cafe, outreach in the city, and short term workers from abroad.

The church in the first three months became one of the strongest

evangelical churches in the city, and broke all odds by seeing new lives come into the Kingdom of God.

If the excitement for planting a church and seeing new lives come into a saving relationship with Christ is not enough, than there will be opportunities to run into some amazing Christian workers around the globe.

In Fall of 2012 we were blessed to have Beth Moore, Kari Jobe, and Lisa Bevere invest into Zoe church. During a dynamic woman's conference we saw a student receive Christ. The next week she was serving in a Convoy of Hope outreach. Great people are drawn to the hard places. Are you?

THE CHURCH



Zoe church
launched in
Sept 2012



BIG EVENT OPPORTUNITIES



Construction

The iheart cafe, Zoe church and other ventures are always in need of work. A team can fund a work day and be a huge blessing to extending our influence.



Are you interested in raising some extra funds?

A typical team budget can't cover a large event outreach while the team is one the ground. During the trip there are opportunities to do plenty of ministry, but if you are able to raise some extra funds the sky is the limit.

In 2012 Convoy of Hope came to the city and through that outreach we had 15 visitors in church the following week. We also had the chance to distribute over 300 Bibles that one day in a large day event.

We gave out 300 Bibles at Convoy of Hope

Convoy also invested in a large University event which has launched an English proficiency ministry out of the cafe. These types of events are highly effective, but our budget can't handle these types of large events.

If your team would want to raise extra team funds your group could be part of the next large praise report.

HERE ARE SOME IDEAS	FEEDING EVENT	UNIVERSITY	A21	HOMELESS
These are a few ideas to let you know the impact some extra funds can have here in the city. The amounts are a approximate coverage of the people able to be touched.	medium For \$5,000 we can do a major feeding event that will touch 1,000 people.	small For \$3,000 we can handout a gift bag connecting with 1,000 students.	small For \$1,000 we can pass out materials to 10,000 people in the city.	small For \$1,000 we can reach homeless people with food, cloths, ect.

FAQ'S

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Where is Thessaloniki located?

Thessaloniki is the second largest city in Greece and is considered to be the “cultural capital” of the country. The city lies in the northeast of the country along the Aegean Sea.



Who is who?

Tony and Jamie Sebastian, along with their three children, are the primary hosts in Thessaloniki. They are fully appointed missionaries with the Assemblies of God and have been on the field for over three years. They both hold degrees from Central Bible College in Springfield, Missouri. Prior to serving in Greece, they served as youth pastors in Pennsylvania. Alongside the Sebastians are a team of MAs from Louisiana and Texas who help out with campus ministry, teams, iHeart, and other daily functions.

What is the cost of a visit?

An average price is \$75-85 per person per day plus airfare. While PPD (price per day) is only the average, the price rarely goes more than \$10 either way of that. We also require a deposit of \$50 two months in advance of the trip. This deposit allows us to book the hostel rooms and to print materials you will need.

What is included in this price?

We operate our teams in an all inclusive setting. We feel you shouldn't have to worry about chipping in for dinner, paying for the hotel, or topping off the tank. Meals, travel, rooms, and team phones are all accounted for in our daily charge. You will also receive a t-shirt, photo book, and small souvenir from us! Any additional personal shopping and an optional night at a local Ravitadiko are not included in this price.

Is there a team size limit?

No, there is no limit on team size. We can accommodate from 2 to 20+.

When is the best time to come?

Typically the months between March and June and then September through early December are our most successful times. We have found out that Greeks are pretty serious about their vacation time and exam periods. As such, the late summer and January-February are times you will find that there is little to no availability at all with the Greeks.

FAQ'S

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What should I bring?

Beyond packing enough clothes and toiletries to last you your trip, there are a few things you won't want to forget. We also, from time to time, will ask teams to bring a few "groceries" for us. We have learned there are some things from the U.S. we just can't live without. Here is a link to a typical short term packing list: <https://docs.google.com/document/d/1LMMG09-Xoy3pCtuBpbPxbKIKGPhj6QfW62g0pANNAr4/edit>

What not to bring?

We politely ask you to leave your "I support America" shirts at home. Greece is in the middle of an ever-changing political climate and we want to be mindful of that. We also request that you refrain from using words such as missions, missionary, and evangelism, as they would cause more harm than good.

Is there an age limit?

While we have no official age limit on groups, its important that they relate to today's young adults. A majority of what we do is based on the college campus here in Thessaloniki, and its crucial that we fit in to that scene. Thus, most

team members are at or around college age. However, this is not a criteria of members. If you do have a team of "more mature" individuals who are interested in coming, we are adaptable and can accommodated for such.

What will you be doing?

Honestly, by the end of your stay you'll be asking yourself what you haven't done. We feel that it's important to give teams a healthy mix of what we do here in Thessaloniki. We have our hand in everything from spreading awareness about sex trafficking, university ministry, Roma (gypsy) camp outreach, cafe fellowship, and building relationships with the national church. You will be able to experience some of all of this during your stay as well as a biblical tour of Philippi. If one thing is for certain, you won't be able to leave here saying you missed out.

Where will you stay?

We will make arrangements for you at a local hostel. Located about a minute away from iHeart cafe and less than five minutes from the university, you couldn't be in a better place. For pictures and further information, here is a link to their website: <http://www.rentrooms-thessaloniki.com/>

Do they accept American money?

No, you will need to exchange any cash into Euros. While the rate changes daily, a good base figure is around \$1.30 U.S. to 1.00 Euro. You can also use your card to pull money out of any ATM. Just make sure to call your bank first and let the know you are traveling.

FAQ'S

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Where will we land and depart from?

We fly in and out of Thessaloniki airport (code SKG). The airport is located right outside of Thessaloniki, which is only a bus ride away from the hotel and cafe. You also have the option of flying into Athens, Greece. Once you land there it is a 6 hour train ride into Thessaloniki, however the train ride is not accounted for in the daily price. While it is an option for you, we have found most do not enjoy a long train ride after flying overseas with their luggage in tow.

What about the language?

Chances are you do not speak modern Greek and that is okay. The majority of Greeks can at the very least understand a little English. While on campus meeting students or hanging out in the cafe, you can get by with English. Although when at the Roma camp and a few other times where conversation may be limited, we will have translators for you to use.

Is the water safe to drink?

Yes the tap water is perfectly safe to drink. While most of us use filtered pitchers for our

drinking water, there is nothing wrong with the faucet water.

Do I need any shots?

No, you do not need any shots for traveling to Greece. If you are coming on a construction trip, a tetanus shot is recommended, and of course always check the CDC website before international travel.

How is the weather?

Hot! This is the Mediterranean so be prepared. Depending on your time of travel, it can be anywhere from below freezing to well over 100°F. We strongly recommend checking the weather for “Salonica” before your trip, and don’t forget to pack your sunscreen!

Is there WiFi?

Have no worries here. Thessaloniki has you covered. Both the iHeart cafe and the hostel you will be staying in have WiFi, so you don’t have to miss a beat back home.

How will we get around?

Whether it’s by train, bus, car, walking, or on bike, we’ll get you where you are going. Please be prepared for any and all modes of transportation.

Will we need passports?

Yes, you will need a passport to enter into and exit Greece. Please make sure all team members have current passports with an ample amount of time left on them before departing.

A MOCK SCHEDULE OF YOUR TIME IN GREECE

Saturday

- Arrival to Thess
- Lunch at Mall
- Baggage drop off at hotel
- Team orientation
- Dinner & hang out

Sunday

- Breakfast
- Church setup
- Lunch
- Zoe church
- Dinner and free time

Monday

- Breakfast
- Team Meeting
- Campus orientatoin
- Campus day
- Lunch (on campus)
- Campus day (cont)
- Dinner and debrief

Tuesday

- Breakfast
- Team Meeting
- Roma Camp
- Lunch
- Hang outs
- Dinner and worship night



Check out our Promo Video on our [website](#)

Wednesday

- Breakfast
- Team Meeting
- Campus orientation
- Campus day
- Lunch (on campus)
- Campus day (cont.)
- BBQ with students

Thursday

- Breakfast
- Team meeting
- A21 awareness day
- Lunch
- Shopping
- Event at the Cafe

Friday

- Breakfast
- Depart to Philippi
- Tours
- Return to Thess.
- Dinner at Sebastian's

Saturday

- Breakfast
- Baggage Pick up
- Depart

THE SEBASTIAN FAMILY

Two cool parents and three pretty awesome kids.

The Sebastian family moved to Greece in the Fall of 2009. Teams come to help with the vast needs of the city of Thessaloniki. You will get the opportunity to walk along side of this family as they make a difference in the city of Thessaloniki.

Thessaloniki is a city of 1.5 million people. The need is everywhere.

Your support allows us to touch those who need help. This can happen though bringing hope and education to **gypsy refugees** who live in total poverty. Their main source of income is through begging or digging through trash containers. Their homes have no water or electricity, and sadly thousands of these Roma people live in desperate conditions within arms reach of the city.

You allow us to bring joy and trauma recovery to women who have been caught in the modern slavery of **human trafficking**. Thessaloniki is a primary destination city to bring woman from all over Eastern

Europe, former Soviet countries, and Africa. Once moved to our city known as “the parking lot” these women are often sent to other locations in the European Union.

You allow us to reach out to one of the largest University campuses in the country that has an enrollment of **81,500 students**. Most of these students have a bleak view of the future, and we connect with them to improve their English which will help them get a better job. As they connect with foreigners their worldview is enlarged and they open up to a broader way of thinking and believing.

Your dedication allows the iheart **coffee house** to be a place of acceptance and warmth for those who need a positive voice in their life. It is a place where a passion for God can be revived and a launching point to fund social causes in our community.

You also give us the opportunity to invest into the **small national church** movement across the



country. With a population that is almost 100% Orthodox, we find it important to encourage those who have similar core values. This band of churches might be few in number, but they are reaching out to a community of believers, strengthening and encouraging them for the future. We find it a privilege to assist them in any way possible.

We cannot be here without your generosity, and the need truly is everywhere.

If you would like to keep up with the Sebastian family take a few minutes to find out about them on the web:

www.becominggreek.com