

# Heritage Trip to Egypt

## with Hands Along the Nile Development Services (HANDS)



Are you an Egyptian-American young adult between the ages of 18 and 26 who is interested in deepening your connection to the Protestant community in Egypt? If so, consider joining our first annual service-learning trip to Egypt this summer!

Come explore the work that the Church is doing in communities throughout Egypt. You'll meet with church leaders, volunteer at several projects, stay in a church-run guest house, and travel with a group of like-minded young adults.

This trip is organized by Hands Along the Nile Development Services (HANDS), which, for over 35 years, has been supporting the work of Protestant churches in Egypt, especially providing life-giving opportunities to households in economically vulnerable communities. Come learn how you can be a blessing to the people of Egypt!

Here's the plan.

### May 24–June 1, 2024 Schedule

A few flight suggestions:

- EgyptAir from NYC: leaves Thursday, May 23 at noon; arrives Friday at 5:40 am
- EgyptAir from IAD: leaves Thursday, May 23 at noon; arrives Friday at 5:30 am

**Friday, May 24:** You'll arrive in Cairo, probably early in the morning if you're on one of the EgyptAir flights mentioned above.

Our tour company will pick you up (individually or in groups, depending on where you're coming from) from the airport and bring you to the guest house to get settled.

After breakfast and some time to settle in, we'll have a welcome event with the **President of the Protestant Churches of Egypt**. This will be at the office of the **Coptic Evangelical Organization for Social Services (CEOSS)**, HANDS' largest partner organization. You'll meet with their leadership, enjoy lunch with their staff, and learn about their work, which impacts over four million Egyptians in villages and urban areas every year.

We'll spend the evening in the **Khan el Khalili bazaar**, where you can bargain with local vendors, enjoy a hot drink and henna painting at Feshawi's coffee shop, trek down the street to see the Tentmakers'

Hands Along the Nile Development Services, Inc.

[www.handsalongthenile.org](http://www.handsalongthenile.org)

# Heritage Trip to Egypt

## with Hands Along the Nile Development Services (HANDS)



Bazaar, and more. We'll have dinner at Naguib Mahfouz Café before heading back to the guest house.

**Sat., May 25:** After breakfast at the guest house, we'll visit another of HANDS' partner organizations, **Think and Do**, to hear about their vocational training programs and microloans and how they meet both the spiritual and economic needs of Egyptians from economically-challenged communities.

After lunch, we'll enjoy a felucca ride with young adults from **Heliopolis Evangelical Church** and then attend church with them that evening.

**Sun., May 26:** Now we're off to the Mediterranean Sea! After breakfast at the guest house, we will head to Alexandria for two days. We'll be volunteering at **Beit el Salam**, a retreat center for the Protestant community on the shore of the Mediterranean. Get ready to help with cleaning, serving food, and doing light maintenance work. We'll be spending the night at Beit el Salam, meeting their guests who are there for retreats, and soaking up some sun in our free time!

**Mon., May 27:** It's Memorial Day in the US, but in Egypt, it's another day of volunteering and having fun at Beit el Salam!

**Tues., May 28:** Back to Cairo! After breakfast, we'll head back to the (even bigger) city. After getting settled in the guest house again, we will head out to visit a community and meet the **beneficiaries of microloans** administered by CEOSS. You'll get to hear how amounts as small as \$250 or \$500 can change a person's life, enabling them to support themselves and their families—and often creating jobs for others in their communities. These loans are given to people regardless of religious affiliation. It's a beautiful way for the Church to serve the whole country.

In the evening, we will enjoy a **felukka sailboat ride on the Nile** and have dinner at Abu el Sid in Zamalek, where there are some fun shopping opportunities.

**Wed., May 29:** After breakfast at the guest house, we will be visiting one of the most economically challenged groups in Egypt: the **garbage collector**

# Heritage Trip to Egypt

## with Hands Along the Nile Development Services (HANDS)



**(zeballeen) community.** While these hardworking families recycle up to 80% of the trash they collect from their door-to-door garbage pickups, they live in poverty. Many children quit school at a young age to work in the families' trash collecting and recycling businesses. Without an education, they end up continuing the cycle of poverty for yet another generation.

But there is hope! One of HANDS' partners, the **Association for the Protection of the Environment (APE)**, offers educational programs for kids and women, healthcare for the community, and vocational training for women, where they can learn quilting, weaving, sewing, and other crafts—all using recycled materials!

We'll get a guided tour of all their work, spend time playing with the kids, and have the chance to purchase some handicrafts for those who are interested.

Note: Although this project isn't technically run by a Church organization, it is a partner project of HANDS—and, if you are so moved, you can host a sale of handicrafts in your community to support the project.

After our day of volunteering and exploring the project, we'll stop by the **Cave Church** on the way out of the community to see an incredible faith community that worships in a cave carved into Mukattam mountain.

In the evening, we plan to have dinner at Minglings in Heliopolis.

**Thurs., May 30:** Since you're Egyptian-American, you have probably visited Ilahramaat before, but what is a trip to Egypt without a day at the 4,500 year-old **Giza Pyramids**? We'll have an Egyptologist with us to provide some context as we also visit the **Sphinx**, carved from a single stone, representing a creature with a Pharaoh's head and a lion's body. We should even have time for a short **camel ride** in the desert around the pyramids.

We'll have lunch at Khufu (the restaurant, not the pyramid!)

Afterwards, we'll head to the newly opened Grand Egyptian Museum for a guided tour.

# Heritage Trip to Egypt

## with Hands Along the Nile Development Services (HANDS)



**Friday, May 31:** One last day of fun before you leave Omm Iddunya! Today we'll check out one of the **Museum of Civilizations**, where the mummies of our ancient kings and queens now rest. After a short visit to **Coptic Cairo**, we'll visit the **Citadel**, including Mohamed Ali's mosque.

Over dinner at **Al Azhar Park**, we'll spend some time debriefing and reflecting on our experience. Then it's back to the guest house to pack for our early morning (or late night flights) home.

**Sat., June 1:** Our travel company will take those of you who are leaving this morning to your flights. For those who wish to stay on longer to visit your family in Egypt, ahlan w sahan!

Flight suggestions on EgyptAir:

- To JFK: leaves at 4:10 am on Sunday morning
- To IAD: leaves at 12:20 am on Saturday, Tuesday, and Thursday mornings

Note: Please plan to be a bit flexible. There is a possibility that some elements of the itinerary might be changed or the timing shuffled due to circumstances beyond our control.

### Pricing

This once-in-a-lifetime service-learning opportunity costs only \$2,250 per person for a single room or \$2,100 per person for a shared room. (Note that there are limited numbers of both types of rooms, so please register early!)

This price includes:

- six nights at the Synod of the Nile Guest House in Azbakeya, above Azbakeya Evangelical Church
- two nights at Beit el Salam in Agamy
- three meals per day
- an English-speaking guide for our scheduled tours on the last two days
- accompaniment by both a trip leader, chosen by HANDS to represent the Christian community in Egypt, and a tour leader from the company, who will help with logistical issues
- entrance fees to sites on itinerary

Hands Along the Nile Development Services, Inc.

[www.handsalongthenile.org](http://www.handsalongthenile.org)

# Heritage Trip to Egypt

## with Hands Along the Nile Development Services (HANDS)



- van transport within Egypt

This price excludes:

- international airfare (to/from the US)
- personal expenses (laundry, phone calls, etc.)
- visa fee and personal travel insurance
- tips
- optional excursions

**Bonus! \$500 of your payment is a tax-deductible donation to support HANDS' work in underserved communities in Egypt!**

### Next steps

To join this insiders' look at the Christian community in Egypt, please fill out [this application form here](#).

Once you find out that you have been accepted, the payment schedule is:

- \$500 down-payment due April 30, 2024
- remainder of payment due May 17, 2024

**Please do not purchase your airline tickets until we confirm your acceptance and that the trip is full.**

Payments can be made [online here](#). (Please note that if we don't have enough people to fill the trip, we will be happy to refund your deposit.)

We hope you'll start your summer out with this amazing opportunity, crafted especially for Egyptian-American young adults like yourself to explore the work of the Church in Egypt and how you might stay engaged with it after returning to the US.