

St. John's Evangelical Reformation Tour

May 17-28, 2024

You are invited to join Reverend John Richter, Senior Pastor of St. John's Evangelical Protestant Church, Cullman, AL on a 12-day tour of Germany. As part of the church's 150th anniversary celebration, we'll have a special visit to Frankweiler, Cullman's sister city. We'll be going from Berlin down to Munich with many stops along the way to see and experience the sites of Martin Luther as well as many quintessential historical German sites.

Born and raised in Cullman, Reverend John is a lifelong member of St. John's. He has been on staff since 2003 and was formally called as Senior Pastor in 2014. John also serves on the Board of Directors for the Evangelical Association of Reformed and Congregational Christian Churches and is an adjunct professor of religion at Wallace State Community College. He is married to Tiffany, and they have two children, Vella and John Isaac.

Highlights:

- Enjoy the highlights of Berlin on a panoramic tour
- Attend a service at St. Mary's Church where Luther preached in Wittenberg
- Visit Luther's home in Wittenberg where he lived with his family
- Tour Eisleben, where Luther was born and also where he died
- Stroll through Erfurt and visit the Augustinian Monastery
- Enjoy free time to explore Erfurt at leisure
- Explore Wartburg Castle where Luther translated the New Testament
- Sail one of the prettiest sections of the Rhine River, past many castles
- Celebrate with a meal and wine-tasting at a family-owned winery
- Connect with residents of Frankweiler, Cullman's twin city
- Step back in time in medieval Rothenberg-ob-der-Tauber
- Climb up to Neuschwanstein Castle for amazing Bavarian views
- Marvel at the splendor of Linderhof Castle
- Experience Munich with a guided tour, then leisure time
- Conclude this fun tour with a Farewell Dinner in Ettal

Tour Map

The overnights are indicated on the map, showing how many nights you will be at each location.



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Tour Itinerary

IF = In-flight meals, **B** = Breakfast, **L** = Lunch, **D** = Dinner

Day 1: Friday, May 17, 2024: Overnight flights
Our journey begins as we board our international flight to Berlin, Germany. Pre-tour nights are available in Berlin if you'd like to rest after the journey. **(IF)**

Day 2: Saturday, May 18, 2024: Berlin, Wittenberg



Upon our morning arrival in Berlin, we meet our tour leader and coach driver and pick-up early arrivals. We begin with a panoramic tour of the city with photo stops. We'll see the famous Brandenburg Gate, the Kaiser Wilhelm Memorial Church, the Cathedral, the Reichstag building and the lively boulevards. This city has undergone momentous changes since reunification. We will stop to visit the Checkpoint Charlie Museum then continue on to Wittenberg, where we'll dine in our hotel. (**B/D)**

Day 3: Sunday, May 19, 2024: Wittenberg



This morning is at leisure to attend a church service (in German) or explore the town. In the afternoon we will tour Lutherstadt Wittenberg, where Martin Luther nailed his famous 95 Theses to the door of Castle Church (Schlosskirche) in 1517. Although the original doors were destroyed in the Seven Years War, we can see Luther's texts cast in bronze on the new doors. We will visit St. Mary's Church where Luther regularly preached and visit the Old Latin School next door. Luther's former home, the Lutherhalle, is now a Reformation Museum and we will see where he lived with his family, as well as some of Luther's very own personal library, rare manuscripts, and early Bibles. The rest of the day will be free to explore independently. **(B)**

Day 4: Monday, May 20, 2024: Eisleben, Erfurt



This morning we will visit Eisleben, one of Luther's favorite towns. This is where he was born and also where he died, so it is sometimes referred to as his Bethlehem and Jerusalem. We will visit both of these homes with our guide, as well as St. Anne's, an old miner's church famous for the Biblical Scenes hewn in stone. We will also visit St. Peter and St. Paul Church where Luther was baptized. We will then continue to Erfurt and dine together. We will stay in the monastery in Erfurt (subject to availability) and soak up the atmosphere of this historic city. **(B/D)**

Day 5: Tuesday, May 21, 2024: Erfurt



Our local guide will take us on a tour including viewing St. Mary's Cathedral, the Church of St. Severus, and the famous Merchant's Bridge. We will end our tour at the Augustinian Monastery where Luther became a monk on July 17, 1505. We will be able to see his monastic quarters, including one cell furnished to look as it would have when he lived there. At the end of the tour, we will have a group worship service in the chapel. In the afternoon we will have optional trip to Buchenwald. (**B)**

Day 6: Wednesday, May 22, 2024: Eisenach, Heidelberg



This morning we will visit nearby Eisenach, for a tour of the Wartburg Castle, where Luther translated the New Testament into German. In 1521, while fleeing from the wrath of the Pope, Luther took refuge in the Wartburg Castle after a fake kidnapping staged by his friend and protector, Frederick the Wise. We will tour the Wartburg and see where Luther finished translating the New Testament into German in just eleven weeks. Luther spent time in the nearby town of Eisenach as a school boy and sang in the choir of St. George's Church, where the Bach family also worshiped. The afternoon will be free to explore the town or tour the Bach Museum and Luther House Museum before we drive down to Heidelberg for our group dinner. **(B/D)**

Day 7: Thursday, May 23, 2024: Rhine Cruise, Mainz, Worms, Heidelberg



What better way to start the day than with a Rhine cruise! We will board the boat and sail past magnificent castles and the famous Loreley rock to St. Goar. Every bend in the river will bring more stunning scenery, ships pass left & right, and numerous trains roar up and down the Rhine River valley. From there we will drive to Worms, where we will tour the Cathedral, followed by the site of Luther's Worms Debates (Diet of Worms), now a park, with a plaque commemorating Luther's brave stand for faith and truth in 1521. We will have a photo stop at the stunning Reformation Monument, followed by a visit to the Church of the Holy Trinity. Tonight's dinner will be in a family-owned winery and our meal will include tasting 4 local wines. We will return to Heidelberg for a second overnight. **(B/D)**

Day 8: Friday, May 24, 2024: Frankweiler, Heidelberg



As the church is celebrating our 150th anniversary, we will have a special day trip to Frankweiler today, which has been the sister city of Cullman, AL in 1987. We will have a guided tour including the birthplace of Colonel John Cullmann. We will have lunch today with local people and hear more about the town twinning project. We will return to Heidelberg in the afternoon to relax or visit Heidelberg Castle which boasts the world's largest wine barrel, fascinating history and a stunning view. **(B/L)**

Day 9: Saturday, May 25, 2024: Rothenburg-ob-der-Tauber

This morning we will drive to Rothenburg, the most picturesque and well-preserved of the towns along the famous "Romantic Road". It is one of Germany's very best walled medieval cities – most of the buildings were built by 1400. We will begin with a walk along the city wall. On our tour of St. Jacob's Church we will see the famous carved "Holy Blood Altar" by Tilman Riemenschneider. We will also have some time to shop at the famous Käthe Wohlfahrt store. We will dine in our hotel this evening. (**B/D)**



Day 10: Sunday, May 26, 2024: Romantic Road, Munich



We will travel south today using the fabled "Romantic Road," Germany's most famous and popular tourist route which runs through a rich and varied cultural landscape along the river Main and through the Franconian wine country to the Alps. In the afternoon we will have a walking tour of Munich, including the Cathedral, the Marienplatz, and the Old Town. This evening is at leisure to explore Munich.

Day 11: Monday, May 27, 2024: Bavarian Castles, Munich

Today is castle day! We will have a brief stop to see the Baroque paintings in the Wieskirche, then we will tour the magnificent Neuschwanstein Castle, the inspiration for the Disney Palace. Those would prefer can visit Hohenschwangau Palace which involves fewer stairs. In the afternoon we will visit Linderhof Palace and Gardens and we'll have dinner in the Ettal Monastery, which brews its own beer. We will return to Munich for our final overnight.



Day 12: Tuesday, May 28, 2024: Return

Our motor coach takes us to Munich airport for our return flight home.

Reformation Tours reserves the right to alter itineraries without notice should it become necessary. While on tour, if conditions necessitate changes, or if certain features are unavailable or limited, we reserve the right to vary or substitute alternatives. All prices are calculated at the exchange rate in effect at the time of this quotation. Should currency fluctuations necessitate an adjustment in the tour price, the adjusted price will be reflected in the final invoice.