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Cedarville Basketball Team "Walked the Word" in Israel

CEDARVILLE, OHIO - Hiking over 80 miles in 12 days, Cedarville's men's basketball team completed an eye-opening mission trip this past summer in Israel. The trip was titled "Walk the Story," and was led by John Farwell of [Athletes in Action](#), an organization committed to helping athletes develop physically, mentally and spiritually.

The team worked through a lot of logistics to make this trip happen.

"It took quite a bit of working with Global Outreach as well as John Farwell at Walk the Story," said Pat Estep, head coach of the men's basketball team. "A lot of logistics for the travel and raising support."

During the team's trip, they visited and learned about biblical landmarks such as the Wilderness of Zin, the Dead Sea Scrolls, En Ghedi, Mt. Arbel, the Sea of Galilee and Jerusalem.

"I really wanted the Bible to come to life for our players," said Estep. "It's a bucket list trip for believers, but most aren't able to go until much later in life. I really was excited about the potential for our program to walk the story of the Bible and have it come to life in the lives of our players."

Estep and his players were also able to take the lessons learned from their trip and find ways to apply them to their everyday lives.

"We learned just how differently you read the Bible. In Israel, they call traveling there the fifth gospel. It is so true that once you have been, those stories become alive, not just stories," said Estep.

While many moments on the trip were impactful, Estep pointed out two in particular.

"Two moments that really stood out were watching our guys break off and pray by themselves in the Garden of Gethsemane," said Estep. "You could really see the impact of what happened there hitting home. The second was watching our players and staff interact with the family of our Muslim bus driver. They had us over for a traditional Palestinian dinner and our guys were great interacting with the kids."

God clearly worked in the lives of both the basketball players and the people that they were interacting with.

"The lessons were really impactful being in the locations where they happened," said Estep. "I was really proud of our guys for their attitude and how locked in they were throughout the trip despite how difficult the heat or the hikes were. I was proud to see them genuinely come to understand how the Bible impacts their life."

Cedarville opens its 2023-24 basketball season on Saturday, Oct. 28 at the University of Dayton in a matchup with the Flyers for the third time in five years. The Yellow Jackets will also play in the Small College Basketball Hall of Fame Classic in Lakeland, Florida November 4-5, and it will revive the Don Callan Classic November 17-18 with 2-22-23 G-MAC member Ashland University joining with Southwest Baptist University and Purdue Northwest in the Classic.

Located in southwest Ohio, Cedarville University is an accredited, Christ-centered, Baptist institution with an enrollment of 5,456 undergraduate, graduate, and dual-enrolled high school students in more than 175 areas of study. Founded in 1887, Cedarville is one of the largest private universities in Ohio, recognized nationally for its authentic Christian community, rigorous academic programs, high graduation and retention rates, accredited professional and health science offerings, and the #4 national ranking by the Wall Street Journal for student engagement. For more information about the University, visit cedarville.edu.

By Julia Swain

Photo Captions

1. Members of the Cedarville men's basketball team sit down for dinner with a local family. The team had the opportunity to visit many famous biblical landmarks during their trip.
2. Members of the Cedarville men's basketball team gather for a group picture. The team hiked 80 miles over the course of their 12-day trip.