



Albania and Kosovo Vision Trip

May 16-22, 2010

Registration Deadline: March 7

Cost: \$1,590 + airfare

Days 1&2 **Departure/Arrival**

Depart United States and arrive in Kosovo (we lose one day due to travel). We will settle into our hotel in Gjakova and enjoy dinner together at a local restaurant.

Day 3 **Gjokova, Kosovo**

Bethany's ministry in Kosovo focuses on families and children whose lives were torn apart by the Civil War in Serbia/Kosovo. We will observe a program that ministers to people who live on the fringes of the local dump from which many are forced to sustain themselves. We will leave that evening for Tirana, Albania.

Day 4 **Group Homes/Counseling Center**

Visit the Group Homes which care for 40-50 children ages infant through 5 years old. This complex was built by Bethany in 1993-1994 as a replacement for government-run orphanages that were in disrepair beyond belief (no heat, broken windows, little food, constant sickness). The cost of construction was funded by contributions from Bethany U.S. donors. Bethany is working with the Albanian Government and International partners to develop and grow a foster care program through which children throughout Albania will be placed in loving foster families. Our dream is to eliminate the need for orphanages.

We will visit a Bethany counseling center in the local maternity hospital. When we began our ministry in Albania (1992), the number of abortions exceeded live births. Doctors supplement their moderate state-funded salaries by performing abortions often with old, unsterile equipment which frequently resulted in illness or in some cases death of the mother. Doctors resisted Bethany's pro-life counseling because of the income generated through abortions. Praise God that today Bethany is welcomed by the local doctors. Before having an abortion women are now required, by law, to receive counseling from a counselor.

We will also visit Bethany's community outreach family service center. All community based medical, social, and psychological services provided by Bethany are headquartered in this center.

Day 5 **Bajram Curri**

We will visit the Bajram Curri school program and community. Bethany provides guidance to Albanian minority children, helping them ease into an educational system that in the past harshly rejected them.

We will visit Bethany's Shepherding Home Program. Bethany Shepherding homes are private, Albanian families into which pregnant women receive temporary care. This program serves women who either are at risk of being trafficked, or who have been trafficked, and provides them immediate short-term shelter while we assist in planning for a more stable situation for them and their children.

Day 6 **Sightseeing**

We will visit Skenderbeg's Castle in Kruje. Skenderbeg is an Albanian warrior hero who saved the country from the invading Turks in the 15th century. Skenderbeg built a series of castles from the north to the south of Albania. As Turks were invading, smoke signals from the castles warned of impending invasion and/or progress being made in repelling the invaders. Kruje is a mountainside village about an hour north of the capital city of Tirane, where Skenderbeg's castles remains today. We also will visit a museum in the castle and have lunch there. Some souvenir shopping is also available in the village of Kruje.

We will then visit the Albanian sea port/resort city of Durres. A highlight of the afternoon will be the colosseum. Very few are aware that Durres was a thriving sea port during the time of Jesus' ministry on earth. The gospels make mention of Paul's visit to Ileria (modern day Albania). The colosseum was the site of speeches, plays, and sporting battles.

Day 7 **Departure and return home**