

The Ecumenical Theological Research Fraternity in Israel invites you to
a lecture in the 2022-23 series,

Bethsaida – In Search of the City of the Apostles

Professor Dr. Steven Notley

**Center for the Study of Ancient Judaism and Christian Origins
Nyack College, New York USA**

Zoom Webinar 08 February, 20:00 Israel Time
(13:00 EST; 19:00 European Time)

Bethsaida, the lost home of the first Apostles Peter, Andrew and Philip might have finally been found in el-Araj at the northern shores of the Kinnereth. Having excavated the site since 2016 Prof. Steven Notley, Nyack College New York, and Prof. Mordechai Aviam, Kinnereth College in Israel, jointly suggest that this site presents evidence for Herod Philip's urbanization of the New Testament fishing village and transformation into the Jewish city Julias.

In el Araj the two archaeologists discovered, amongst other details, the Byzantine period basilica called the "Church of the Apostles," which they assume had been built over the Apostles Peter's and Andrew's home. Furthermore, in summer 2022 they uncovered a large Greek inscription. The writing references a donor, "Constantine, the servant of Christ," and continues with a petition for intercession by St. Peter, "chief and commander of the heavenly apostles." Byzantine Christian tradition routinely identified Peter's home in Bethsaida, and not in Capernaum.

Professor Steven Notley is Distinguished Professor of New Testament and Christian Origins on the New York City campus of Nyack College and chair of the college's Biblical and Theological Studies Department. He received his Ph.D. from the Hebrew University and lived for 16 years in Jerusalem, during which time he was the founding chair of the New Testament Studies program at Jerusalem University College. He is the author of many books and articles. See his most recent article, "Byzantine Bethsaida and the House of St. Peter," *Novum Testamentum* 64 (2022), 532-551. Since his Jerusalem time he has remained a close friend to many Jewish and Christian scholars in Israel. The Fraternity is grateful for Steven's presentation which will encourage new readings about the first Apostles.