

Has the Lost Church of the Council of Nicaea Finally Been Found?

Archaeologists in Turkey may have uncovered the church where Christian leaders gathered 1,700 years ago for the First Council of Nicaea, one of the defining moments in church history.

An international team excavating in ancient Nicaea, modern-day İznik, discovered evidence of a smaller church beneath the Church of the Holy Fathers near Lake İznik, according to Fox News.

Excavation director Mustafa Şahin identified the earlier structure as the Church of St. Neophytos, which was destroyed by an earthquake in A.D. 368. The Church of the Holy Fathers was later constructed over the site around A.D. 380.

Researchers discovered floor paving from an earlier structure continuing beneath the later church's eastern wall.



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"This first phase may correspond to the small church recounted in the written sources [about the Council of Nicaea]," Şahin told Fox News Digital.

The discovery is significant because the First Council of Nicaea met in A.D. 325. Bishops from across the Roman Empire gathered to confront the teachings of Arius, who argued that Jesus Christ was a created being rather than co-eternal with God the Father.

The council rejected that teaching and affirmed Christ's full

divinity, declaring Him “begotten, not made” in what became the Nicene Creed.

Historical evidence also strengthens the archaeological case. Eusebius of Caesarea, who attended the council, described the gathering as taking place inside a small church.

“The church was so small that one wonders how so many bishops fit inside,” Şahin said. “This itself was a great miracle of God.”

Şahin now believes the evidence confirms the later Church of the Holy Fathers was intentionally constructed over the location where the historic council met.

“We are very pleased because our hypothesis has been confirmed,” he said.

James Lasher, a seasoned writer and editor at Charisma Media, combines faith and storytelling with a journalism background from Otterbein University and ministry experience in Guatemala and at the LA Dream Center. A Marine Corps and Air Force veteran, he is the author of *The Revelation of Jesus: A Common Man's Commentary* and a contributor to Charisma magazine. For interviews and media inquiries, please contact media@.