PEACE SEEKERS

A Sermon Guide for Pastors

Praying for the Peace of Jerusalem and Our Communities



HILC
Hispanic Israel Leadership Coalition

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NATIONAL HISPANIC CHRISTIAN LEADERSHIP CONFERENCE

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Key Texts

Psalm 122:6; Jeremiah 29:7; Matthew 5:9; Romans 12:18

SERMON TITLE OPTIONS

- Peace Seekers
- Blessed Are the Peacemakers
- Praying for Peace in a Divided World
- The Church That Carries Peace

MAIN IDEA

God calls His people to be active agents of peace—praying for Jerusalem, pursuing peace in their communities, and living as peacemakers in a divided world.

PASTORAL NOTE

Pastoral Note

This guide is designed to help pastors preach with biblical clarity and pastoral compassion. Where appropriate, pastors are encouraged to include a brief personal or local story that helps the congregation see Jewish people not only as part of biblical history or current events, but as neighbors, families, students, colleagues, and friends.

If possible, pastors should draw from a real experience, such as a visit to Jerusalem, a relationship with a Jewish neighbor or rabbi, a conversation with a Jewish friend or colleague, or a local example shared with permission.

INTRODUCTION (PREACHER SETUP)

We are living in a time where division is loud, tension is rising, and people are quick to take sides—but slow to seek peace.

Everywhere you look, there’s conflict.

Everywhere you listen, there’s outrage.

But the Church was never called to mirror the chaos.

We were called to carry something different.

Not fear.

Not hatred.

Not confusion.

We were called to carry peace.

Not a weak peace.

Not a silent peace.

But a peace rooted in truth, grounded in righteousness, and empowered by God.

Story Note for Pastors:

This is a good place to briefly introduce the human side of the message. Pastors may want to mention that Jewish people are not only people we read about in Scripture, but neighbors today. They are families gathering for Shabbat, students walking across campus, people entering synagogues for worship, and communities that may be carrying real concern in this moment.

POINT 1: PRAY FOR THE PEACE OF JERUSALEM

> **Psalm 122:6 NKJV**
>
> “Pray for the peace of Jerusalem: ‘May they prosper who love you.’”

Teaching Emphasis:

- This is a direct biblical instruction, not a suggestion.
- Jerusalem is central to God’s covenant and redemptive plan.
- Praying for Jerusalem aligns us with God’s purposes.

> **Preaching Line:**
>
> We don’t pray based on headlines—we pray based on Scripture.

Story Note for Pastors:

If you have visited Jerusalem or Israel, this is a strong place to briefly draw from your own experience. Share what made Jerusalem personal to you. This could include walking the streets of Jerusalem, praying near the Western Wall, standing on the Mount of Olives, visiting places connected to Scripture, sharing a meal with people who live there, or seeing families, children, markets, schools, synagogues, and churches.

The goal is to help the church understand that when we pray for the peace of Jerusalem, we are not praying for an abstract religious symbol. We are praying for a real city filled with real people.

If you have not visited Jerusalem, you can still make the connection clear. For many Christians, Jerusalem is connected to prophecy, worship, and Scripture. For Jewish families, it is also connected to parents, grandparents, children, holidays, history, memory, and home.

Application:

- Lead your church in consistent prayer for Jerusalem.
- Teach the biblical importance of Israel in God’s plan.
- Encourage intentional, ongoing intercession.

POINT 2: SEEK THE PEACE OF YOUR CITY

> **Jeremiah 29:7 NKJV**
>
> “And seek the peace of the city where I have caused you to be carried away captive… for in its peace you will have peace.”

Teaching Emphasis:

- God told His people to pursue peace even in difficult environments.
- We are not called to withdraw—we are called to engage.
- The peace of our communities is connected to our obedience.

> **Preaching Line:**
>
> You don’t wait for your city to get better—you step in and bring what Heaven carries.

Story Note for Pastors:

This is a good place to connect the message to your local community. Pastors may want to mention a local Jewish neighbor, rabbi, synagogue, community center, student, colleague, or family, especially if there is a real relationship or story that can be shared respectfully.

The goal is not to speak for the Jewish community, but to help the church ask a better question: Who are the Jewish people in our community, and how can we be better neighbors?

Application:

- Pray for local leaders and communities.
- Encourage believers to be present and engaged in their neighborhoods.
- Model what it means to bring peace into real situations.

POINT 3: BE PEACEMAKERS, NOT JUST PEACEKEEPERS

> **Matthew 5:9 NKJV**
>
> “Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called sons of God.”

Teaching Emphasis:

- Peacekeepers maintain; peacemakers transform.
- Peacemaking requires courage, not passivity.
- It means standing for truth while extending dignity.

> **Preaching Line:**
>
> Peacemaking is not avoiding conflict—it’s bringing God into the middle of it.

Story Note for Pastors:

This is the strongest place to include a brief example of how antisemitism affects an ordinary Jewish person.

Best option: use a real local or personal story with permission.

Possible general illustration if no local story is available:

Consider a Jewish student who used to wear a Star of David necklace openly, but now quietly tucks it under a shirt because conversations around them have become hostile. That student is not a statistic or a political argument. That student is someone’s child, someone’s friend, and someone made in the image of God.

Application:

- Call believers to reject hatred and division.
- Address real issues with biblical clarity and compassion.
- Challenge the church to reflect Christ in how they speak and respond.

POINT 4: TAKE RESPONSIBILITY FOR PEACE

> **Romans 12:18 NKJV**
>
> “If it is possible, as much as depends on you, live peaceably with all men.”

Teaching Emphasis:

- We are responsible for our response, not everyone else’s.
- Peace begins with personal obedience.
- The Church sets the tone in culture.

> **Preaching Line:**
>
> You may not control what others do—but you are accountable for how you respond.

Application:

- Encourage self-examination in attitudes and speech.
- Teach believers to lead with grace and truth.
- Call for maturity in how Christians engage a divided world.

STORIES TO SHARE

Pastors are encouraged to include one brief personal story or local example in the sermon.

The story should help the congregation see Jewish people as ordinary neighbors, families, students, worshipers, and community members.

Recommended story sources:

- A personal experience from visiting Jerusalem or Israel.
- A conversation with a Jewish neighbor, rabbi, colleague, or community leader.
- A story from a Jewish family, student, or friend shared with permission.
- A local example involving a synagogue, school, campus, workplace, or community concern.

Story guidelines:

- Keep it brief.
- Keep it human.
- Avoid exaggeration.
- Avoid partisan language.
- Use real stories with permission whenever possible.
- If using a general illustration, introduce it as an example, not as a verified personal account.

REFLECTION QUESTIONS

- Who are the Jewish people in our community?
- Have I ever asked a Jewish neighbor, colleague, or community leader how they are doing?
- Have I repeated something about Jewish people or Israel without understanding it?
- Do my words bring peace, or do they add to fear?
- How can I pray for Jerusalem while also loving the Jewish people near me?

CLOSING CHALLENGE

This is not just about what we believe.

This is about how we live.

Will we add to the noise?

Or will we carry the presence of God into it?

Will we reflect division?

Or will we reveal Christ?

ALTAR / RESPONSE MOMENT (OPTIONAL)

- Lead in prayer for the peace of Jerusalem.
- Pray for your city and local community.
- Invite people to commit to being peacemakers in their homes, workplaces, and relationships.

FINAL DECLARATION (READ TOGETHER)

We will pray for the peace of Jerusalem.

We will pursue the peace of our communities.

We will walk in the peace of Christ.

We will not be silent.

We will not be divided.

We will be peacemakers.

In Jesus’ name, Amen.