



2027 Israel Pilgrimage with First Presbyterian Church Led by Rev. Darin Travis and Dr. Jim Parker January 12-21, 2027, \$4795 from BTR

Day 1, Tuesday, January 12: depart BTR (other airports may be available) in main cabin seating. Anyone wishing to fly another airline or schedule or wishing to upgrade seats, can purchase personal tickets and deduct \$1598 from final payment.

Day 2, Wednesday, January 13: arrival in Tel Aviv and to a deluxe hotel near the Mediterranean seashore in Tel Aviv. Time for an orientation meeting and Bible study after dinner. Full breakfast and dinner buffets included each day at all hotels.

Day 3, Thursday, January 14: head up the Mediterranean seacoast to **Caesarea Maritime**, artificial harbor and city built by Herod the Great. A restored Roman theater, where proof of the historical existence of Pontius Pilate was found, is a highlight, along with a Crusader fortress and an aqueduct built by Herod the Great. Continue to **Mt Carmel** and the Carmelite monastery *Muhraka* for a breath-taking view of the Jezreel valley from the spot where Elijah challenged prophets of Baal. Explore **Megiddo**, the always strategic city in biblical history and biblical Armageddon (Rev. 16:16). Megiddo is the setting of a highly recommended historical novel, James Michener's *The Source*. Drive through the Galilean hills to Nazareth, stopping at the precipice over-looking **Nazareth**, Jesus' boyhood home, at the spot where his neighbors assembled to hurl Him to His death for the "blasphemy" of claiming to be Messiah. Check in for three nights at a lovely hotel situated right on the **Sea of Galilee**.

Day 4, Friday, January 15: be blessed sailing the **Sea of Galilee** in an enlarged version of the boats used by Jesus and His fishermen disciples--see an actual boat from the time of Jesus as marine archaeologists raised

it from the lake. Re-experience the words of Jesus in the Sermon on the Mount at the **Mt of Beatitudes Chapel** overlooking the Sea of Galilee.

In **Capernaum** where Jesus based His 18-month Galilean ministry, stand within the foundations of the synagogue where He preached and healed and see the house of Peter's family where He stayed.

Tabgha's ancient mosaic remembers the Miracle of Loaves and Fishes and Jesus giving Peter the special commission to "feed my sheep."

At **Caesarea Philippi**, center of Roman might and pagan worship in Jesus' time, explore the ruins of Herod Agrippa's palace. In this setting, Jesus challenged His disciples then and now, "Who do men--and who do you--say that I am?" Caesarea Philippi is also where the headwaters of the **Jordan River** meet at the foot of **Mt Hermon**. Time permitting, continue to the northernmost city of biblical Israel, **Dan**, and see the actual excavated gates that Abraham entered as he first journeyed through the Promised Land. Explore the Dan Nature Reserve on an easy hike, including rushing rivers, massive trees."

Day 5, Saturday, January 16: walk the restored streets of **Bet Shean**, where the bodies of King Saul and his sons were hung by the Philistines. A Decapolis city in Jesus' day, Bet Shean was both destroyed and preserved by an earthquake--and archaeologists have now done a fantastic restoration. Marvel at a 1500-year-old synagogue in the ancient city of **Sepphoris**, which some believe carpenter Joseph and his apprentice son helped construct. Dip a hand in the water of **Ein Harod**, the spring where the Lord had Gideon winnow his soldiers in unique fashion. Time permitting, visit the excavated **Bet Alpha** sixth-century synagogue.

Day 6, Sunday, January 17: head south along the Jordan Valley, stopping first at the banks of **Bethabara**, thought by many to be where Jesus was immersed by John the Baptist. Crossing the lunar landscape of the Judean wilderness, come to **Qumran** on the shores of the Dead Sea, where the Dead Sea Scrolls were discovered. Ascend by cable car to Masada, overlooking the Dead Sea, built by Herod the Great as both a winter palace and fortress, where zealous Jews resisted Rome after the 70 AD destruction of the Temple. View the date palm oasis of **En Gedi**.

Then it's "Up to Jerusalem," singing a Song of Ascent like Psalm 122: "I rejoiced with those who said to me, 'Let us go to the house of the Lord'" to Jerusalem, the Holy City. Our deluxe hotel for the rest of the tour is within walking distance of the Jaffa Gate into the Old City, the Ben Yehuda pedestrian shopping mall, and the colorful outdoor Mahane Yehuda market.

Day 7, Monday, January 18: starting from the summit of the **Mt of Olives**, walk down the Palm Sunday path where Jesus rode the donkey and heard the hosannas from the crowds. Stop at **Dominus Flevit** where "Jesus wept" and view the Eastern or Golden Gate through which Messiah rode. At the bottom of the hill, in the **Garden of Gethsemane**, surrounded by olive trees still growing from roots dating to Jesus' time.

Orient yourself to Jerusalem in Jesus' time by studying the incredibly-detailed large-scale out-door model of The Holy City at the **Israel Museum**, where you will also view actual scrolls and artifacts discovered in the Dead Sea caves of Qumran.

Travel through Shepherds' Fields to **Bethlehem** and the oldest-continually serving church in the world, 4th century Church of the Nativity where a silver star marks the traditional spot of Jesus' birth.

Day 8, Tuesday, January 19: pray at the **Kotel** or Western (Wailing) Wall, leaving scrolls of your prayers in the giant stones remaining from the Temple, from where Jewish tradition says prayers go most-directly to

heaven. Actually go *under* the Temple area exploring the famous **Rabbi's Tunnel**. Up on **Temple Mount**, Muslim mosques squat where Solomon and Herod built the First and Second Temples . . . but cannot prevent Christians standing at the Pinnacle of the Temple where Jesus was victorious over Satan's tempting.

Pray for loved ones back home at the healing **Pools of Bethesda**, then marvel at the acoustics as you sing in the **Church of St. Anne**. Worship where the **Upper Room** is commemorated. Stand on the pavement where Jesus was tormented by the soldiers in the **Judgment Hall of Pilate**. Walk the narrow streets of the Old City, still very much as when Jesus carried His cross to Calvary on the Via Dolorosa. See remains of the original 4th century **Church of the Holy Sepulcher** in the **Russian Orthodox Church**, adjoining the current structure guarding traditional sites of Calvary and Empty Tomb. See the actual steps up which Jesus was dragged from the Garden of Gethsemane to his imprisonment in the **House of Caiaphas**, high priest, where Peter denied His Lord thrice..

Time during the day for lunch on your own in **The Jewish Quarter** with shopping in the Old City bazaar and the restored shopping street called **The Cardo** or "The Heart" of Roman Jerusalem.

Day 9, Wednesday, January 20: **Yad Vashem**, the Holocaust Museum remembers the Jews who died, those who lived, and the Righteous Gentiles who gave of themselves to save life in the time of Nazi horror. Drive to the **Valley of Elah** to pick up five smooth stones as did shepherd boy David preparing for Goliath. Visit biblical **Tel Hadid**, being excavated by a team directed by Dr Jim Parker of New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary. Service of Holy Communion at **The Garden Tomb** overlooking a hillside nature has carved into what many see as a skull, Golgotha, and setting of an empty tomb from which the stone has been rolled away.

Farewell dinner, last hotel night, then morning flight home, arriving in the USA with memories and blessings of the Holy Land on **Day 10, Thursday, January 21**.

To enroll send \$500 deposit per person (check to First Presbyterian Church with "Israel 2027" in the memo line).

**Israel Jan 2027 Trip
Attn. Darin Travis
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Deposits are fully refundable till October 1, 2026.