

Dear Worldwide Garden Fellowship

Praise God for His oversight of all the Easter events here. I hope that you have managed to view part or all of the service online at:

<http://www.cbn.com/cbnnews/insideisrael/2011/April/Easter-at-the-Garden-Tomb-in-Jerusalem/> I think that CBN has done a cracking job on the editing, against considerable spiritual attack, I might add – please encourage my very good ally, Chris Mitchell, at cbnnews@netvision.net.il if you enjoyed it; they film it free for us which is so great.

You will not within that service a request for prayer as we continue to engage with the Waqf about their wall; Victor and I have twice been in Court this month and we are making incremental progress. I am much encouraged by reading of Gideon's call in Judges 6.6-16 that God was behind him even when he saw no sign.

The new Reception Centre should open this coming week. It already looks great! And the new computer should go live in May – please pray as we resolve the final gremlins in the software, and for Sue as she uploads and creates bar codes for all her stock.

Local Staff:

Riki and Rami, our gardeners, are both and (separately) on holiday right now, as are Nellie and Peter Spaander. Staff are otherwise stable though some need more work than the Garden can offer them to pay their rent so do please pray that they can find additional work outside the Garden family. Pray too for Anne Berit and Dani as they wrestle with accommodation needs and a landlord moving them out in July. Hanna Spannder would appreciate prayers as she completes her university course.

Viktoria Gohr writes:

My name is Viktoria, and I have been working at the Garden Tomb for the past 8 months. Twenty years ago after the fall of the Soviet Union, my mother and my baby self had the option to leave the Ukraine in search of a better life in either Israel or Germany. Naturally my mother chose the more developed Western European country. During the following years therefore I grew up with a sense of German identity, just like any other citizen you would meet in the streets of our large city Hamburg. Migration background was nothing out of the ordinary at the bilingual gymnasium I attended. There I was taught that no place in the world was out of my reach and from a young age I developed a strong interest in other cultures and languages. When I became a believer at the age of eleven it was beyond my understanding why I could not go to Africa straight away and teach the poor children how to read and write. Finally when I reached 18 and graduated high school I was free to go abroad for one year before university. The options seemed vast, but out of seemingly nowhere arose an interest for the land of Israel and my yet unexplored Jewish identity.

Two years ago I had the privilege to attend a bible school in Jerusalem and to get involved in 24/7 worship and intercession at Succat Hallel, the local House of Prayer. Never had I felt so at home as in the land of Israel, finally I had found a place where I belonged. Miraculously the process of "making aliyah" (immigration) took only a short time so that now I hold both a German and an Israeli passport.

The past year I spent studying Hebrew and preparing to enter Hebrew University this year.

The community at the Garden has been very dear and enriching to me in this time, providing more than a work place, being closer to a family.

Volunteers on the move:

For May we will have:

Paul and Dawn DOBLE from Cornwall here for the second time

Martin and Sue HINES from Hampshire here for the first time as volunteers

Frank and Jenny SUDWORTH here for the umpteenth time

John and Ruth SUTCLIFFE from Bath also here for the first time.

I praise God for the sterling service of the Diks, Haywoods, Maureen Hodges, Meltons, Victor Jack and the Weglos over the very full Easter period.

Don and Glenda write of themselves:

We call British Columbia, Canada home. We have four grown children (three daughters and a son) and are awaiting their fourth grandchild (two boys and girl so far). Don retired from radio broadcasting after 35 years and now drives shuttle for a local car dealership while Glenda continues to work out of their home as a travel agent.

Don has served as board chairman of Emmanuel Baptist church for most of the last 25 years, and is active in leading Bible studies and welcoming new people in the church. Glenda has been a youth leader for many years and is involved in women's ministries and catering, inside and outside of the church.

We have been involved in numerous short term missions trips in the past, including several excursions to Mexico with their church youth group to build basketball courts, perform dramas, and run sport camps. More recently we spent two weeks in Ecuador running a vacation Bible school and ministering at a missionaries retreat. However, being able to come to Israel and serve as a guide and in the gift shop has been a real answer to prayer. Don has been able to use his broadcasting background and Glenda her retail experience to serve in this amazing atmosphere.

We are privileged to be the first Canadians to serve in this capacity – the Garden Tomb allowed them to come to Jerusalem following 2 years of prayer and a door that continued to open wider day by day. We are thrilled to have had the opportunity over the past three months to serve as volunteers at the Garden Tomb. To be able to share our faith with people through guiding or through the gift shop, while working alongside so many other volunteers who have such a passion for what the Garden represents has been a real blessing from God. We hope to be able to return in the near future to this place that holds such special meaning for so many.

April Testimonies:

My wife and I spent Easter Morning with you at the 9.30am service. We drove down from Tiberias and were so blessed by the experience. Next year we will come for the Easter weekend services and already planning our diaries accordingly! Thank you for the blessing of your ministry in this very special place. Yours in Christ, Andrew and Niva D

Folks, The services today were such a blessing! I appreciate your ministry and hard work. Thank you and God bless! Joe C

I am grateful to have had the privilege of visiting the Garden Tomb. The peacefulness and beauty surrounding the rock that once held His body illuminate the magnificent reality that our risen Lord lives! From my recent visit to Israel the Garden Tomb of course captivated me. I do realize that it's just like a musical or play, and that the audience only sees the best part but isn't that the ultimate reward... to be able to deliver an unforgettable experience to hundreds of people thru all the behind the scenes hardwork. Mabel D

For many of us, The Garden Tomb was the most impressive site we visited. While there were a lot of people, it still was quiet and peaceful. I personally loved it! I'm still trying to put into words what our trip to Israel was like. I do know that The Garden Tomb was a very special place to me...whether or not Christ was buried there. I felt His presence there, and to me that's very special. Mike C

My wife, Joleen, and I were part of the Burke Community Church contingent that visited you last week. I just want to offer my thanks again for your special effort to spend time with us. Alan M

Thank you for guiding our group from Richmond, VA and other parts of the USA last week. Our ending of our pilgrimage at the Garden Tomb was the highlight of our trip. Craig S

I've often been asked since returning about the highlight of our two weeks in Israel. While I confess that it's hard to choose from so many amazing and spiritually fulfilling experiences, I consistently have pointed to the Garden Tomb as a rich time of reflection, prayer, and praise. I appreciate your great stewardship of this gift to all Christians.

To our wonderful friends at the Garden Tomb THANK YOU SO MUCH for making our stay in Jerusalem wonderful. Thank you for the love of God that radiates from you. Thank you for taking such great care of this garden. With love and thanks Brigham Young University students Winter 2011.

This month we can praise God:

- ü For an amazing Easter here – record numbers; you can watch (again) online. Dorm spoke so well at all the services; the worship was wonderful; the Garden team made it all happen seamlessly; God was glorified.

- ü For high numbers visiting day by day

- ü For a great team of Easter Volunteers who head home shortly (Diks, Haywoods, Maureen, Meltons, Victor, Weglos)

- ü That the new Visitor Centre is almost ready

ü Continuing showers of ‘latter rains’.

This month I ask you to pray that:

ü For the summer Volunteer team arriving now on (Dobles, Hines, Sudworths, Sutcliffes)

ü For strength and energy for the team as we transition from Easter to summer busy-ness

ü For our ongoing court case with the Waqf about the Wall – maybe moving from legal proceedings vs the Waqf towards vs the Municipality

ü So for wisdom for the trustees and me as we decide what is right for God’s Kingdom purposes

ü For the final furlongs of installing and launching the new computer here, especially for Sue in the Shop and Corrie’s finances

ü For Judy and Al Melton who each return home with leg injuries but have soldiered on here valiantly, and for Victor who recently fell on his hip but who customarily continues stoicly!

ü For Hanna Spaander as she completes her university course.

For The Lord to be Glorified

Richard Meryon