

Joining the Garden Tomb Community

This document seeks to give you a flavour of what it is like to live in Jerusalem and be a part of the Community at the Garden Tomb. It is meant to be a practical guide, answering some of the questions you may have, but it is also meant to encourage you to prayerfully consider whether this is what the Lord wants you to do over the next few years. We are looking for people who want to commit themselves to the Garden Tomb ministry for 2-3 months over a number of years, regularly giving up their time to come to Jerusalem, and also representing and promoting the work of the Garden Tomb back in their home churches.

The Garden Tomb is a place of worship and witness. Your first visit will give you time to discern whether you are being called to become a member of the Garden Tomb Community and to participate in the activities; including welcoming and guiding visitors around the Garden, and being involved in intercessory prayer, which is a high priority.

There are a few things for you to prayerfully consider before you apply to join our team:

- 1 This is no holiday; days can be very long!
- 2 It is mainly outside work and for part of the year it's often over 90°F (33°C), and can be **very cold** and wet in the winter/springtime!
- 3 You would need to be prepared to do any job asked, including cleaning, sweeping paths etc.
- 4 Couples applying. Both are expected to be trained as a 'Guide' (see website)
- 5 You could well be under the authority of someone younger than you, less experienced in ministry, and less mature spiritually. But they are still in charge!

1. Accommodation

- a) We have several one- and two-bedroom self-catering apartments situated within the Garden. Couples are allocated their own apartment, but single people can expect to share apartments, though you will have your own bedroom.
- b) You would be responsible for keeping your apartment clean. You would be expected to leave the apartment **very clean** when you leave, in preparation for the next person/couple. Cleaning materials are provided on your arrival, but you would need to replace these as you use them.

2. Church

There are a variety of congregations in Jerusalem, which mainly meet on Sundays. Details would be provided on your arrival.

3. Clothing

- a) The dress code is 'smart casual' when the Garden is open. We provide polo shirts, and Garden Tomb fleece jackets for the cooler periods; shorts and certain jeans, jogging pants are not suitable for wearing in the Garden.
- b) **Women should dress modestly, so no low necklines on tops or dresses, no short skirts, no shorts, no sleeveless tops.** Smart trousers/smart jeans or long skirts are fine.
- c) **Everyone needs to bring full wet gear, so waterproofs, fleeces etc. during the wet season, which can be from October to April.** Comfortable walking shoes for the uneven paths in the Garden, and in the city are advisable.

4. First Time Serving in the Garden

- a) We ask new people to come to the Garden Tomb for the first time at their own expense, and to be part of the Garden Tomb Community for 4-6 weeks. This is not a holiday, as there is a lot of information to take in. At the end of this time, there is an opportunity to discuss the possibility of becoming a Community Member in the Garden in the future.
- b) English is the Garden's first language, and guiding is almost invariably in English; sometimes with simultaneous translation to another language. **A high standard of spoken English is essential.** We are always in need of guides who can guide in more than one language, particularly Spanish, Portuguese, Indonesian, and Mandarin.

5. Garden Politics

- a) The Garden exists to clearly present the biblical truths of Jesus' death, burial and resurrection. We do not debate other issues such as the place of modern Israel in God's plan, or the precise chronology of the last days.
- b) You would be required to be publicly neutral on all these and other issues – that is not to say they are less important but debating them with a ½ million visitors annually distracts us all from why the Garden Tomb exists, and can easily be misinterpreted and cause problems for the Garden long after people have returned home.

6. Health

You would need to be in very good health for every trip and cleared by your doctor to come. You will be asked to complete a medical questionnaire. **Serious or long-term conditions must be declared.**

7. Insurance

You would need to be completely covered for both travel and health care, ensuring the policy covered pre-existing conditions. **A copy of the insurance certificate covering dates of travel must be provided via email before arrival in the Garden.**

8. Pre-Reading

- a) You would need to know the four Gospel accounts of Jesus' final incarnate days very well, probably with key passages committed to memory. It's good to have knowledge of some Old Testament and other New Testament passages that refer to Jesus' death, burial and resurrection.
- b) There are some reading assignments, and it is critical that **everyone** completes these assignments ahead of their arrival at the Garden. Everyone is sent a document outlining the team goals and guidelines for Guiding in the Garden. One of the reading assignments is *"The Weekend That Changed the World"* by Peter Walker. This is our main reference book regarding the historical and archaeological content of the Garden Tomb. All Garden Tomb guides are required to read this book. It can be purchased from Amazon, either in a paperback or digital version.

9. Security and Safety

Israel is an intrinsically lively place - politically, culturally, and spiritually. It is generally a safe place to live.

10. Activity

You would be on a short-term ministry experience (not a holiday!), from your sending church to the Garden, and you would be expected to perform intense activity and to contribute fully to the ministry of the Garden Tomb. It would be good to involve your home church in what you would be doing at the Garden Tomb.

Activity hours:

- Cleaning benches, taking the rubbish out etc. at 6.15am.
- You would be expected to join in a devotional time of worship, Bible readings and prayer at 7.30am each morning in the staff room or in the Garden, except on your day off.
- The Garden is open from 8am to 6pm. However, during busier times, the Garden is open from 8am to 8pm. Shifts are allocated each week.

11. Time off

Sundays the Garden is closed for the day. Everyone is allocated one other day off each week. Saturdays are our busiest day, so team members can rarely have a Saturday off.

12. Shopping

All necessary provisions can be bought in the local shops.

13. Laundry

We have community washing machines, airing racks and a drying machine (to be used only in wet weather!).

14. Travel locally

It is possible to walk to most places, but Arab buses from near the Garden take you easily and cheaply to the Arab areas, such as Bethlehem and the Mount of Olives. Israeli buses and the Light Railway, situated close to the Garden, travel across Jerusalem.

The Central Bus Station offers buses across Israel.

15. Travel from Ben Gurion Airport to the Garden

- a) On a first visit to the Garden Tomb, you would usually be met at the airport or asked to get a taxi.
- b) On future visits, you would be asked to take the train from the airport to the Central Bus Station in Jerusalem, and from there the light railway to Damascus Gate or taxi. (This is the fastest way to get to Jerusalem)
- c) Alternatively, it is possible to travel to and from the airport by a sherut, a type of minibus, which costs about \$16 per person, or 70 shekels.

I hope this information helps as you prayerfully consider joining our international Community; together we share the Gospel to all whom God sends. Do go to our website for more details and videos of the Garden Tomb Ministry. However, if there is any further information you need, please do not hesitate to contact us.

Every blessing



Simon Holland
Director