

Garden Tomb Newsletter: February 2017

January and February: cold, wet and busy!

We have had very good weather (for locals!) over the last 2 weeks, with lots of rain and a little snow. The cistern in the garden should be well on the way to reaching its 1,000,000 litre capacity.



The garden is looking fresh and green, with the first signs of spring breaking through. The almond trees are beginning to blossom alongside the roses, which somehow have remained in full flower throughout the winter.



The trend that started at the end of last year has continued into 2017, and visitor numbers have increased significantly compared with 12 months ago. The number of groups from China continues to increase, along with visitors from Indonesia, South America and the USA. In January we had a group of 500 from Brazil, and in February 380 people visited the garden with Governor Mike Huckabee. In March, 1000 Indonesians are booked to come in one day, and there are many more large groups expected through the remainder of winter and into spring.

Volunteer team: on-site at the moment we have **Joan Liu** (Taiwan), **Juergen and Dawn Kleinloh** (Germany), **Ron and Cindy Youde** (USA), **Stan and Molly Doland** (USA), **Dwain and Cindy Camp** (USA), **Colin and Jane Peattie** (South Africa), and **David and Lily Chia** (Singapore/Australia). They will be joined soon by **John and Ann Hooper** (UK), **Inkeri Tahvanainen** (Finland), **Maureen Hodges** (UK), and **Bertil and Gun Vik** (Sweden). It is wonderful to see the way that God joins this amazing international team together in serving the risen Christ, alongside the local staff.



A big 'Thank You' to **Peter and Malcolm** from Frinton on Sea (UK) who joined us for 10 days in February, serving the ministry of the Garden Tomb by giving their time and skills in fitting a new kitchen in the Mews apartment - last January they fitted the kitchen in the Haven!

Prayer Pointers:

- We are about to embark on an upgrade to the Garden Tomb shop, and are excited at the prospect of improving a facility which is integral to the ministry of the garden. Preparation work will start in March, and the main work will be done this summer. We will be working hard to ensure we continue to offer our visitors a good selection of goods to buy, and will be opening a temporary shop in one of the meeting areas whilst the shop renovation is under way. Please pray for everyone involved in the planning and execution of this important project.
- Please continue to join us in praying that our relationship with the Muslim Waqf will be amicable whilst monitoring of the boundary wall continues. To date the wall remains stable, and for this we give thanks.
- Pray for our local staff, and the ever-changing volunteer team. We have about 20 new volunteers scheduled to join the team during the course of the year, and we continue to seek and pray for more people with the languages we need in order to best serve our visitors. In particular we continue to look for people able to speak Mandarin, Indonesian, Spanish and Portuguese; in addition to English.

And finally: could I ask you to consider joining with us in praying for the ministry of the Garden Tomb. One of the ways you can do this is by going to the Garden Tomb website (www.gardentomb.com) and clicking on the **PRAYER** icon, which you will see on the right hand side of the web page, near the top of the page. Click this button and you will go to the **Prayer Page** where you can find more information about how to join our **24/7 Prayer Network**. You can sign up by following the instructions one step at a time. This should be straight forward, but please email me at stephen@gardentomb.com if you encounter any problems registering. Once registered, you will be able to choose one or more 15 minute prayer slots a week. Every week you will then receive an email reminder of your prayer slot, along with an update on prayer needs and praise points.

1 Timothy 2:1-4 *"First of all, then, I urge that supplications, prayers, intercessions, and thanksgivings be made for all people... This is good, and it is pleasing in the sight of God our Saviour who desires all people to be saved and to come to a knowledge of the truth".*

Join us in praying that the lives of many thousands of people will be transformed this year as they visit the Garden Tomb and hear the Good News of Jesus the Messiah.

Blessings from Jerusalem!
Stephen and Sue Bridge

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