



Abundant Life  
COMMUNITY CHURCH



*Each day this week, I (Gabe) will share a brief devotional- walking through some of the events of Holy Week, the days leading up to and including Jesus' death & resurrection, using some pictures from my trip to Israel last month.*

## **He is Risen!**

A 'Silent Sabbath' finally gives way to glorious Easter Sunday, and we get to celebrate the empty tomb! I took the above picture at the Garden Tomb, just outside

---

the walls of Old City Jerusalem. As I mentioned on Friday, there is some debate over the precise location of Jesus' crucifixion and burial - it could be here, at the Garden Tomb, or it could be at the Church of the Holy Sepulchre (see below). Both locations fit all of the criteria lined up in the Gospels...and both tombs are empty!

Take a few minutes to [read John 20:1-10...](#) and feel free to keep on reading from there!!!

The tension we felt on Good Friday and the Silent Sabbath make the joy of Easter Sunday that much sweeter. Perhaps, as you read this passage, you shared in Mary Magdalene's confusion as she found the stone rolled away from the tomb, fearing in those moments that Jesus' humiliation had been made worse with his body being moved. Maybe you felt a twinge of Peter and John's anxiety as they raced to the tomb, upset that someone would mess with Jesus' body and unsure what they would find when they got there. And I hope you tasted the wave of exuberant joy that washed over the two disciples as the truth began to dawn on them - Jesus' body was not there, because he had risen from the grave! All of a sudden, their minds were flooded with all of the things Jesus had told them. It was as if their blinders had finally been removed, and they saw everything clearly. This was what Jesus had always intended!

We are so easily discouraged and overwhelmed. Life will take turns we don't expect, and we will receive answers we don't like. All of this can leave us feeling lost, hopeless, and weighed down by fear, doubt, and guilt. But the empty tomb shows us that there is hope, where we otherwise would have none! Our God, having poured out his love for us on the cross, has also shared his victory with us through the resurrection. No matter what we might be going through today, we can find hope in the promise of the empty tomb. We don't write the script, but we know the end of the story!

---

He is Risen... He is Risen, Indeed!

See you at church!



This is the other (and more likely) possible site of Jesus' empty tomb, taken inside the Church of the Holy Sepulchre. No matter the exact location, we know Jesus' body

would have been buried very close to the crucifixion site. Our tour guide discouraged us from waiting in the 3-hour line (!! ) that had formed to take a quick peek inside this tomb. Many people, from all over the world, travel to Jerusalem to see this very site and take in this opportunity to connect, on a physical and emotional level, with the greatest news the world has ever heard. Of course, as our guide assured us - even if we had waited in the long line to step inside this tomb, we wouldn't have found Jesus' body inside!



Looking at the crowd in this busy night market in Jerusalem, I can't help but think of the crowds of people who went about their normal lives on that first Easter Sunday, not pausing to consider the significance of what Jesus had just accomplished. My Thought: May we never forget, even for a moment, that the resurrection fundamentally changes the way we approach our lives.



A picture taken from inside the Garden Tomb. We didn't stand in the 3-hour line at the Church of the Holy Sepulchre to view the inside of that tomb, but the view would have been roughly the same as this one because... He is risen!