

First Presbyterian Church of Lansing

Memorial Garden Policies and Procedures

February 18, 2009

Purpose

The Memorial Garden of First Presbyterian Church of Lansing is a hallowed place for the interment of ashes of our faithful departed, sacred to the memory of those persons. Ashes are scattered or placed directly into the soil without a container so that they become part of the living garden. The Garden is also used as a special gathering place for ceremonies, education, fellowship and meditation. Visitors to the Garden should observe those purposes in thought and prayer.

There is great emotional, spiritual and psychological value in the time-tested traditions surrounding the way we bury our dead. Cremation can be used as an alternative to cemetery burial while maintaining the traditional funeral home visitation and funeral/memorial service. The Memorial Garden increases our choices by providing burial space on our church grounds.

Arrangements

Arrangements for interment can be made through the First Presbyterian Church office or pastor. A church representative will contact the family to arrange the necessary paperwork. Placement may be pre-planned and pre-paid at any time during a person's life.

Eligibility for Placement

Eligible persons are:

First Presbyterian Church members and former members, their spouses, children, parents, stepchildren and stepparents;

Ordained ministers who have served First Presbyterian Church of Lansing (or have had a direct relationship with First Presbyterian Church), their spouses, children, parents, stepchildren and stepparents;

"Friends" of First Presbyterian Church, upon application and approval of the Session.

Only human cremains may be interred.

Placement of Creains

Placing cremains in a special area of the Memorial Garden is a continuation of church tradition by providing a place of interment. It is also a demonstration of a person's great love of the church and wanting to be always in this home by choosing to have his or her cremains part of the grounds.

Cremains will be placed directly into the ground, either in a small hole or by scattering in the designated area. No container will be used. The cremains will give nourishment to the soil and vitality to the plants growing there.

Cremains will be interred in the Garden in a service overseen by a pastor of First Presbyterian Church. A member of the family should be present.

Ashes are not recoverable or preserved intact. No one may acquire any right to the physical location or appearance of the Garden. It is understood that the Memorial Garden may have a variety of uses as noted above.

Markers

A memorial plaque is located on the exterior wall of the church building at the interment site. After placement of the ashes, an engraved nameplate will be added to the plaque. The nameplate will include the person's name, birth year and death year. A permanent record listing the names of the persons whose ashes are buried in the Garden is maintained in a Memorial Garden Memory Book. Suitable memorials, including flowers for the chancel, gifts to First Presbyterian Church, as well as gifts for the care of the Garden are welcome and may be arranged through the church office.

Fees

The fees for placement shall be reviewed periodically by the Session. Once payment is made, there is no obligation for further payment. Fees will be invested for perpetual maintenance of the Garden.

The fee covers:

1. Placement of ashes
2. Nameplate on plaque
3. Recording in Memory Book
4. Maintenance and perpetual care of the Garden

(Fees do not cover the usual costs or honoraria of the funeral/memorial service.)

Perpetual care may include:

1. Routine maintenance
2. Enhancing landscaping and plantings of the Garden area
3. Inscription and installment of nameplates on the plaque
4. Insurance as may be required
5. Future additions, modifications, or repairs to the Garden
6. Other matters as determined by the Memorial Garden Committee and/or Session

The current fees for placement are included in Appendix 1. All financial considerations must be completed prior to placement of the ashes.

If an individual or family member has prepaid and decides in the future not to use the Garden, a request for a refund must be submitted to the Session with reason stated. The payment may be refunded minus an administrative fee as determined by the Session.

Contributions

Monetary donations for the development and perpetuation of the Garden are always welcome and may be made at any time. Designations for specific gifts – plantings, benches, or other hardscape items – will be reviewed by the Memorial Garden Committee and recommendations forwarded to the Session. All contributions will be reserved solely for the construction and permanent maintenance of the Memorial Garden area.

Oversight

The oversight of the Memorial Garden shall be the responsibility of the First Presbyterian Church of Lansing Session.

Policies

These policies have been adopted by the Session of First Presbyterian Church of Lansing and can be changed only by that body. Any matters not covered by these policies shall be decided by the Session.

Appendices

1. Placement fees
2. Site map
3. Forms
 - A. Certificate of Acceptance for Placement of Cremains
 - B. Preplanned Request
 - C. "Paver" Order Form
 - D. Memorial Garden Memory Book Personal Information