

FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF SOUTH SAINT PAUL MEMORIAL GARDEN POLICY

PREFACE

Since ancient times, Christians have buried their families in the Churchyard, symbolizing the continuum of faith from birth to death, baptism to burial. In this tradition, the Memorial Garden of First Presbyterian Church of South Saint Paul is a sacred area, integral to the whole of the Church, for the purpose of remembering our members and friends and their families. The engraved plaques on the Memorial Wall and the flowers and foliage that grow in the garden are by design the enduring memorials to the deceased. They are testimony to our grief and also to our joyful memories and serve in place of the traditional plants, cut flowers, and artifacts at the grave site. The use of the garden for quiet meditation or for gatherings and celebrations is encouraged. While providing a quiet sanctuary for all who wish to visit, the garden is also an area for celebrating the joys of life and our relationships to God and to one another. The garden is one of honor and memorium, promise and testimony for those who walk and meet there.

ELEMENTS OF THE MEMORIAL GARDEN

- An underground crypt for the commingling of human cremains
- An area for the individual burial of human cremains
- The continued tradition of small brass plates on the inside hall wall depicting the name and dates of birth and death of the individual interred
- An outside wall dedicated to engraved plates depicting the name, birth date and death date of the individual interred or commemorated
- An area for a small memorial and/or committal service and for meditation
- An endowment fund established to provide for maintenance of the garden and necessary improvements to the area

GUIDELINES FOR COMMITTAL OF CREMAINS

Committal of cremains to the Memorial Garden, and/or nameplates on the Memorial Wall, is limited to members of First Presbyterian Church of South Saint Paul and their immediate families (defined as spouses, parents, and children). Both are also available to special friends of the church (such as persons for whom First Presbyterian has been their primary church home) and to former clergy of the church and their immediate families. Other requests will be considered and honored at the discretion of the Session.

- A written permission form must have been signed by the decedent or by the next of kin to allow for the disposition of cremains.
- The actual disposition of the cremains can be part of the funeral or memorial service, or can be done privately at the request of the family.
- Cremains may be interred in the common vault or directly in the ground (without container).
- In winter it may be necessary to hold cremains either by the family or at the Church until the ground is thawed. Arrangements will be made with the Pastor.

FEES AND NAMEPLATES

A fee is charged for two mandatory engraved nameplates – one inside the church and another on the outside Memorial Wall. Only one name may be engraved on each plaque. There is no additional fee for the opening and closing of the crypt or the committal of cremains to the ground. There are no retroactive charges for cremains committed to the vault prior to September 30, 2000. Spouses of

persons interred in the vault before September 30, 2000 may choose to be interred under the old policy, i.e., no outside nameplate and no charge except for engraving the inside plate.

Memorial nameplates on the outside wall are available for those who are interred elsewhere but are to be remembered at First Presbyterian. The cost for this commemoration is the same as for those interred in the garden.

Nameplates on the inside hallway of the church are placed in chronological order of death. Names on the outside Memorial Wall are in random order allowing those of family members to be placed in close proximity. No other markers are allowed.

Fee (effective March 1, 2009) Members of FPC-SSP \$385 Non-members \$785

If the price to the Church of the outside plaques increases, the fee will be raised accordingly.

PREPAYMENT

Any qualifying person wishing to pre-pay the interment fee may do so. A certificate will be issued documenting pre-payment. Pre-payment of this fee is not tax deductible. Upon written request, and at the discretion of the Memorial Garden Committee, the pre-paid fee, without interest, may be refunded. Due to changes in maintenance fees and/or the need for future enhancements, increases in the cost of interment may occur from time-to-time. These additional costs will not be retroactive to those who have pre-paid.

GUIDELINES

Fresh cut flowers may be placed in the Garden at the time of the interment service and may remain in place for three days. No cut flowers, plants, artificial materials or ornaments may be placed in the Garden at any other time. Arranged fresh flowers may be placed on the credenza in the church hallway; faded flowers will be removed by the custodian. At the discretion of the Memorial Garden Committee, a wreath made entirely of natural materials and paid for by garden funds will be placed near the Memorial Wall during the Christmas season. All plantings in the garden area are determined solely by the Memorial Garden Committee.

CONTRIBUTIONS

Contributions toward continued enhancements or maintenance of the garden are gratefully accepted. Such contributions are tax deductible.

MANAGEMENT OF THE GARDEN

Management of the Garden is entrusted to the Memorial Garden Committee which is a sub-committee of the Session Property Committee. The Committee will consist of one Session member of the Property Committee and a minimum of three interested volunteers who will serve at the discretion of the Session.

The Church secretary will perform the clerical duties of the Committee. All records will be kept on the computer and in a fireproof file in the Church office. The Clerk of Session will also keep records of all who are interred or memorialized in the Garden.