

CHURCH OF THE NATIVITY'S MEMORIAL GARDEN POLICY

July 2013

PURPOSE

The Church of the Nativity Memorial Garden is set aside on the parish site as a resting place for parishioners and their family members. This space is considered permanent. It is the intent of the parish that the garden may be used as a place of meditation and rest for its visitors, but may also be utilized for special religious gatherings at the discretion of the rector.

OVERSIGHT

Oversight and management of the Memorial Garden and policies regarding it will be a responsibility of the Rector and Vestry of the Church of the Nativity.

The Vestry may appoint a Memorial Garden Committee to assist the Clergy in the administration of the Memorial Garden. The Committee should have members with ties to the Pastoral Care Ministry Team, the Building and Grounds Ministry Team, and someone with personal ties to the garden itself. The Committee may provide recommendations to the Clergy and Vestry regarding any matter relative to the Memorial Garden.

Annually (at a minimum) the Committee shall establish and publish the pricing for all services relevant to the operation of the Memorial Garden. The Committee shall submit to the Vestry a suggested annual operating budget for the Memorial Garden.

All policies, records, and other official business of the Memorial Garden, including a Memorial Garden Registry and Agreement Form, will be completed and maintained by the parish office.

ELIGIBILITY

All members of the Church of the Nativity, their parents, spouses and children, are eligible for interment. Others with valid ties to the Church of the Nativity will be considered at the discretion of the rector.

Those families wishing to use the Memorial Garden must sign a written Registry and Agreement Form indicating a knowledge and acceptance of the rules, regulations, and fees for Memorial Garden.

INTERMENT

Arrangements for the funeral service and interment will be made with the Clergy. Cremation arrangements must be handled by a funeral home.

At each interment, the Rector, or a priest of the Episcopal Church authorized by the Rector, shall officiate and provide an appropriate committal. Normally the service will be held in the church followed by a procession to the Memorial Garden for the committal and interment of the ashes.

Ashes must be in a bio-degradable container, or interred with no container, or scattered. No cemetery is created. Ashes buried in the Memorial Garden may not be removed.

The location of the interment will be approved by the rector. Advance reservation of an interment spot in the Memorial Garden may be made in accordance with the terms of the Registry and Agreement Form. A suitable temporary marker shall be placed in the Memorial

Garden to define the reserved interment space. The location of all interment sites are to be marked.

MARKERS

Nativity requires that memorial markers be kept as simple and uniform as possible. Therefore, memorial markers must be ordered through Nativity's office. The family of the deceased is responsible for the cost of the marker. Markers should be natural stone no taller than 6 inches above the ground, diameter not to exceed 26 inches, in keeping with the simplicity of the Memorial Garden. Inscriptions may be inscribed on the stone or on a plaque set into the stone.

If the Memorial Garden Committee or Building and Grounds Ministry Team decide that a marker has been irreparably damaged, or is no longer suitable for the Memorial Garden and must be removed, 90 days' notice shall be provided to the deceased's next of kin to allow for a new marker to be put in place. The church will be responsible for ordering and paying for the replacement stone.

No boxes, shells, toys, glassware, receptacles, or similar items will be permitted to be placed on any interment space or elsewhere within the Memorial Garden, and if so placed, the Committee may remove any such items.

Nativity is not responsible for the loss or damage to any personal property, including artifacts, markers, personal effects, etc. placed on or near interment spaces or elsewhere in the Memorial Garden.

A common plaque, located on the church property, is available to list the names and dates of birth and death of persons whose ashes are buried in the Memorial Garden. The design, wording, size and location of the plaque must be approved by the Memorial Garden Committee.

COSTS

There is no required fee for interment in the Memorial Garden. The costs of the site marker, the inscription on the Memorial Plaque, the fee for an advance site reservation in the Memorial Garden, and all honorariums, as detailed in the Registry and Agreement Form, shall be paid by the family representative of the deceased. Upon recommendation by the Clergy, and at its discretion, the Vestry may waive any and all fees.

Memorial gifts toward landscaping and maintenance of the area may be made at any time and will go into the general operating fund of the church.

MAINTENANCE

Landscaping and basic upkeep of the Memorial Garden is an ongoing responsibility of the Building and Grounds Ministry Team. Foliage on the grounds has been chosen for beauty in accordance with a natural setting and design of the garden. Low maintenance is a primary consideration. Requests for plantings must be approved by the committee and vestry. Memorial gifts to help defray these costs can be made at any time to Church of the Nativity.

FLOWERS

All flowers, when wilted, are to be removed along with their containers. All floral decorations shall be subject to the Memorial Garden written policies. The Memorial Garden

Committee or Building and Grounds Ministry Team may remove all floral design, flowers, weeds, shrubs, or plants of any kind from the Memorial Garden as soon as they become unsightly or diseased, or if they do not conform to the Memorial Garden's written policies. No invasive species may be planted.

RESTRICTIONS

Interment or scattering of ashes in the Memorial Garden shall not take place without a properly executed Registry and Agreement Form signed by the legal custodian having full legal authority to authorize disposition of the deceased's cremated remains.

No applicant or other person may acquire any right to the physical location or appearance of the Memorial Garden. Only the Church of the Nativity shall have any property rights to the Memorial Garden.

There shall be no interments outside the boundary of the Memorial Garden. The church reserves the right to require reasonable notice prior to any interment, and further requires that a designated representative of the church is present when cremated remains are placed.

In the event the Church moves to a new location, only the markers for individual interments will be moved to the new location. A notice of the new location will be sent to those listed as the next of kin.