
Burials

Information on the Service of the Burial of the Dead and Interment in the St Francis Memorial Garden at The Episcopal Church of the Good Shepherd



INTRODUCTION

The death of a member of the Church should be reported as soon as possible to, and arrangements for the funeral should be made in consultation with, the Rector of the congregation. Baptized Christians are properly buried from the church.

“The liturgy for the dead is an Easter liturgy. It finds all its meaning in the resurrection. Because Jesus was raised from the dead, we, too, shall be raised.

The liturgy, therefore, is characterized by joy, in the certainty that ‘neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers, nor height, nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord.’

This joy, however, does not make human grief unchristian. The very love we have for each other in Christ brings deep sorrow when we are parted by death. Jesus himself wept at the grave of his friend. So, while we rejoice that one we love has entered into the nearer presence of our Lord, we sorrow in sympathy with those who mourn.” BCP 507

INTERMENT IN THE ST FRANCIS MEMORIAL GARDEN

Introduction

In the early days of Christianity, it was traditional for the remains of Christians to be laid to rest in the church itself. As time went on and space in the church was filled, cemeteries were established on church property. These ancient customs lasted until modern times and are rooted in the belief that the people of God wished to bury their loved ones in close proximity to their place of worship. The Episcopal Church of the Good Shepherd is pleased to continue this sacred tradition with the St. Francis Memorial Garden, a resting place that has been used for nearly 50 years. Shaded by trees and landscaped with shrubbery, this special garden highlights two water features that help provide a peaceful and spiritually rich environment for loved ones.

Cremation

At death, we “lay aside the burden of the flesh” and enter into the nearer presence of the Lord. The material body that we leave behind must be disposed of. While some choose the traditional custom of burial in a coffin others choose cremation. Cremated remains must be treated in a dignified way, honoring the remains of the deceased person’s mortal body. The St. Francis Memorial Garden at The Episcopal Church of the Good Shepherd is available for those choosing cremation. With cremations, expenses are kept at a minimum. The ashes are placed directly into the garden for interment. No vessels rest in the garden itself. After the interment, a brass name plaque is affixed to the Memorial Garden fountain wall. No head stone marks the spot of burial. The living garden itself becomes the memorial to those we love.

St. Francis Memorial Garden

The St. Francis Memorial Garden is more than a resting place for loved ones. It is a place of meditation and remembrance, and a place to give thanks for lives that have been shared. It is frequented by brides and grooms on their wedding day, by church members and visitors on a regular

basis and by family members who simply wish to reflect in a peaceful surrounding. The garden is an integral part of the church grounds.

Eligibility

Members of The Episcopal Church of the Good Shepherd and their immediate family shall be considered eligible for burial in the St. Francis Memorial Garden. Immediate family members include: spouse, children, parents and siblings. Exceptions shall be made at the discretion of the Rector. The St. Francis Memorial Garden is not a public burial ground.

Fees

A fee of \$400 covers the cost of the interment, a plaque and a contribution to the garden's continuing maintenance budget. No eligible person shall be denied interment in the garden and accompanying plaque because of the inability to pay. The Rector approves all burials.

Memorial Gifts

The St. Francis Memorial Garden will be maintained by church volunteers in perpetuity. Memorial gifts are gratefully accepted. The Vestry is responsible for approving all expenses, upgrades and for overseeing maintenance. We invite all to visit this very unique area of the Church of the Good Shepherd campus.

GUIDELINES FOR INTERMENT IN THE MEMORIAL GARDEN

- All interments in the Memorial Garden are done in accordance with the policies of The Episcopal Church of the Good Shepherd and will be accompanied by the appropriate Committal Service from the Book of Common Prayer.
- Authorization forms permitting burial of cremains in the Memorial Garden may be obtained from the Church Office. This form may be filled out as advance planning for the disposition of cremains, or by the family of the deceased shortly after a death. A record of burial will be given to the next of kin, or the personal representative.
- All burials will be recorded in the Parish Register, and related information will be kept in the church office files.
- All burials become the property of The Episcopal Church of the Good Shepherd and cannot be removed. All cremated remains are placed directly into the ground; no urns or boxes are permitted. This allows for natural biodegradability, truly dust to dust. Location of ashes in the earth will be determined by clergy.
- No plaque may be placed on the memorial wall unless the ashes of the individual to be listed on the plaque are interred in the garden. An exception to this policy may only be made when a church member or member of their family dies and the body cannot be recovered.
- The Memorial Garden has been designed to incorporate native trees and shrubbery reflecting on the beauty of our surroundings as God has provided it. No plantings are permitted in the garden without the approval of the memorial Garden Committee. Markers, statuary, silk, plastic flowers, potted plants, and other objects are not permitted. Cut flowers may be left in disposable containers.