

Calvary Lutheran Church Memorial Garden Usage Policy

Purpose

Cremation is an increasingly popular memorialization option. In fact, the National Funeral Directors Association projects the rate of cremation to increase from 50.2% of memorialization now, to 55.8% in 2020 and 70.6% in 2030.

Cremation typically costs less and is more environmentally friendly than a standard burial. A memorial garden or scattering garden is a beautifully decorated area with the express purpose of having ashes scattered upon it, providing a natural, eternal fertilizer for the flowers and plants, and serving as a cemetery of sorts for those who wish to be cremated but for whom loved ones still want a tranquil and solemn setting to visit.

The purpose of the Calvary Lutheran Church Memorial Garden is to provide this type of setting as well as a spiritually appropriate location on the church property for the interment of cremated human ashes. The Garden is available to members of Calvary their relatives and community members. For the purposes of this document, interment is defined as either the burial or placement of a certified biodegradable container wholly under the surface of the soil or ash poured from a container and scattered upon the soil to become part of the living garden.

Administration

The administrative authority governing all matters relating to the Memorial Garden is vested with the Pastor(s) and Church Council. The Memorial Garden committee is comprised of a chairperson and at least 4 other members. It is charged with maintaining the appearance of the garden through regular maintenance. The committee maintains standards for the types of plants within the garden and reviews all special requests for additional plantings. The Memorial Garden committee chairperson reports to church council through the property committee chair person. In the case of a desire for the remains to be buried in a biodegradable container, the committee will coordinate the hole preparation prior to the interment.

The church administrator coordinates all incoming requests for interment with the appropriate people to ensure an efficient and professional response to the needs of the grieving families. Appropriate Usage Policies and Applications are distributed, collected and recorded by the administrator. If services of a Calvary Pastor are desired, the administrator shall coordinate a date and time for the interment and provide the pastor with contact information.

Eligibility for Interment

The use of the Memorial Garden for internment of ashes is available to active or former members of the congregation, members of their families as well as members of the community at large.

Policy and Procedure

Those wishing to use the Memorial Garden must complete an application form indicating a knowledge and acceptance of the policies governing the Garden. Applications are to be submitted to the Church Administrator who will coordinate with the Calvary pastor and make the appropriate arrangements for the date and time of the interment. If another minister is desired, the family is responsible for coordinating a date and time with the Church Administrator. Upon acceptance of the application and receiving the designated fee, the church will issue a copy of the application together with a receipt. The Church Administrator will also order the monument stone name plate as documented on the application.

A fee of \$400 will apply to all applications for interment. Included in this fee is the cost of the stone monument name plate, administrative costs, and defrayal of the cost to maintain the garden as a respectful final resting place for loved ones.

Each applicant using the Memorial Garden agrees and understands that ashes will be interred by burying them directly into the soil or scattering the ashes within the garden in the presence of a minister of their choosing.

Only human remains in the form of cremated ashes are approved for burial in this Garden. When ashes are to be buried, only containers that are certified biodegradable by the statement of a licensed funeral director or a licensed cremation agency shall be accepted for interment.

The church will maintain accurate records of the memorial garden showing all uses. The names of all persons whose ashes are interred in the garden will be entered into the permanent register maintained by Calvary Lutheran Church.

In addition, the name (limit of 30 characters/spaces), birth and death dates of the individual to be interred will be recorded on a plaque permanently attached to a monument in the Memorial Garden. The engraving upon each name plate shall be of uniform size and style determined by the Memorial Garden Committee. The inscription will be provided to the church via the application form, clearly printed in ink and signed by the person entitled to do so. Arrangements for the engraving, in accordance with the information so furnished, will be made by the Church Administrator. The cost of the plaque and engraving will be included in the designated fee.

No interment of ashes or memorial service shall be conducted, nor shall any flowers, plants or other decorations be placed in or about the memorial garden without the prior approval of the Memorial Garden Committee. No permanent decorations shall be placed in the Memorial Garden. This policy may be amended by consent of the Church Council.

This policy has been approved by Church Council on 13 January 2020.