



MEMORIAL GARDEN

First Congregational Church, UCC

431 South Third St.

Elkhart, IN 46516

The Memorial Garden First Congregational Church

The First Congregational Church has established a Memorial Garden with a columbarium in the church courtyard, which is a memorial to all deceased church members. The columbarium, made possible through a private gift, will provide a place of interment for ashes of deceased loved ones

The Memorial Garden design reflects the traditional centuries old country churchyard cemetery. The courtyard location provides a quiet private place for meditation and prayer. Flowers and plantings (which will be maintained at all times) lend beauty to the comforting, peaceful atmosphere.

The columbarium niches have been arranged horizontally in two groups of 21 double-spaces in each group installed at a level of eight inches above the paved area. Each niche has a bronze plate for inscription at time of interment of name and year of birth and death.

Bronze plaques, mounted on the walls of the courtyard, name and memorialize all deceased members since 1960. The Memorial Garden Portfolio Holder will annually update the list.

At the time of a death, the family of the deceased will contact the minister and the funeral director immediately. Funeral arrangements, including type of burial, are a matter of personal choice, and the minister and funeral director should be advised if cremation is desired. If cremation is the planned disposition, the funeral director will place the ashes in a sealed container and deliver them to the church or wherever the family designates. Interment in the memorial niches can be done before or after the memorial service.

GENERAL INFORMATION AND POLICIES

General Information

1. Memorial Garden, a part of the First Congregational Church, UCC, was established in 1981 following a vote of the congregation. It operates under the direction of the Church Council and the ministers. They in turn have delegated certain of their powers to the Memorial Garden Portfolio Group. This group is authorized to provide a set of rules and policies for the operation of the Garden, and be responsible therefore, subject to the approval of the Church Council.

2. The original committee consisted of five members appointed by the Church Council for a term of three years or until completion of the Memorial Garden. To maintain continuity, their term continues until they request a replacement, which will be appointed by the Church Council. All action of the portfolio group shall be by a simple majority, with a 2/3 membership providing a quorum. If the portfolio group should fail to reach agreement on a particular item, it shall be submitted to the Church Council for its decision.

3. All funds shall be placed by the group in a special account administered by the portfolio group and shall be restricted to expenditures on the Memorial Garden and its general area. All such funds shall be used for upkeep, expansion and general maintenance of the Garden area. No funds shall be transferred from the special fund to other Church funds without the approval of the Church Council.

4. The Memorial Garden shall consist of niches for interment of cremated remains of eligible persons as the committee shall determine. Each niche shall carry an individual plate uniform in size and lettering, bearing only the year of birth and death and the name of the person whose cremated ashes are interred therein; provided, however, other designations may be used as titles, rank or occupation with the committee's approval.

5. Purchase of niches in the Memorial Garden entitles the purchaser to the interment rights only and does not convey title to ownership of the physical space.

6. Memorial plaques have also been made available for memorializing all deceased church members in recent years and in the future. These are mounted on the Memorial Garden walls in spaces provided by the portfolio group.

7. Decorative ornaments will not be permitted in the Memorial Garden area. Flowers may be placed on the granite table with the approval of the Memorial Garden Portfolio Group or the minister.

The pastor or Memorial Garden Portfolio Group reserves the right to remove such and dispose of without notice or liability to the owner.

Policies

1. Eligibility and Cost

Niches in the Memorial Garden are available to church members and relatives. "Friends of the Church" may be qualified by consent of the portfolio group and Church Council. Single or multiple niches may be reserved for present or future use by making application on the form provided by the Portfolio Group. The Portfolio Group must approve all applications. Niches must be paid in full before interment. Full cost, including plaque and engraving, is \$1,100 for a double unit or \$600 for a single unit. This price may be changed by the Church Council on recommendation of the Portfolio Group, but will not apply retroactively.

2. Inscription and Interments

A. The owner of the niche or designated successor, using the inscription order form provided by the Portfolio Group, should specify the inscription on the plaque. Arrangements for engraving in accordance with the name and dates so furnished will be made by the Portfolio Group. The Church Council and the Portfolio Group shall be responsible only for such errors in the inscription as might be made by the engraver in deviation from the data as filled in on the signed inscription order form.

B. All interments must be arranged with the pastors of the Church in cooperation with the funeral director.

C. Location of niche or niches will be approved in writing at the time of purchase. Cremated remains and the niche plaque may be removed from its original niche in the Memorial Garden, when there has been an exchange or purchase made for that purpose.

D. The Church and the Portfolio Group shall not be held responsible for any order given by telephone, or for any mistake occurring from the want of proper and precise instructions as to either the inscription upon or the location of a niche where interment is desired. The Church and the Portfolio Group shall not be liable for any interment permit nor for the identity of the person whose cremated remains are sought to be interred. Any permits for interment required by local or state laws must be secured and furnished by the niche users, their family, or the funeral director employed by them.

E. Not more than one cremated remains shall be interred in one niche.

F. Interments in the niches may be made only in the permanent containers or urns provided by the committee and permanently installed in the Memorial Garden area. All niche-front openings are to be covered with the uniform bronze niche plaques and the inscription thereon must be in the uniform size and style of letters and in conformity of text, as provided elsewhere herein.

3. Transfers or Assignments

No transfer or assignment of interment rights in any niche shall be valid without the consent in writing of the Portfolio Group and the surrender of any existing certificate of interment rights to such niche.

4. Amendments.

The Portfolio Group may at any time adopt new rules and policies or amend, alter or repeal any rule or policy or article, section, paragraph or sentence in these rules and policies, provided, however, that any such change, addition or repeal shall not become effective until ratified by the Church Council.

5. Right to move Memorial Garden

The Church reserves the right to move the Memorial Garden to another location of church property, should the church find it necessary to do so.

6. Applications

Applications for purchase of interment right to niches in the Memorial Garden and inscription order forms are available from the Church office.

It is not the intention or desire of the Memorial Garden Portfolio Group and the Church Council to create the impression that this church is attempting to compete with cemeteries or to promote cremation over other alternatives of burial. This facility is for the convenience of those First Congregational Church families who desire to use it and will find it meaningful. Admission to nonmembers will be determined on an individual basis by the Memorial Garden Portfolio Group.

If you are interested in further information, please contact the Administrative Assistant at the church office 574-295-8306 or office@firstucclkhart.org.



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