

**First Presbyterian Church of Palo Alto**  
MEMORIAL GARDEN POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

The Memorial Garden was created to provide a suitable site where cremated human remains could be interred. In addition, the Garden offers a place of remembrance for individuals whose remains are located elsewhere. Each person interred or remembered in the Memorial Garden shall be entitled to a plaque.

**Interment:** means the placing of cremated human remains in the earth or the scattering of human ashes.

**Eligibility for Interment:** The Memorial Garden has been provided as a place of interment for members, and their immediate family, former members, and regularly attending friends of the Church. The pastor can decide exceptions to this policy.

**Arrangements - Pre Need:** Members and friends of the Church who want their ashes to be interred in the Garden and/or have a plaque with their name placed on the garden wall may fill out a Pre-Need Application. People may make a donation at that time which will enable them to select a plaque location in advance. The Church will record the payment and wall location for future reference. The Church will reserve a plaque location adjacent to their deceased spouse for a surviving family member whether or not a Pre-Need Application or donation has been made.

**Post-Mortem:** On the death of a church member or friend, the survivor will contact the Pastor to make arrangements for interment and/or plaque placement. They will fill out the Request for Plaque Placement/Disposal of Ashes form and make a donation if none has already been received. The Church will order the plaques and make arrangements for plaque placement as specified in the Pre-Need Application if available, adjacent to a deceased spouse, or in the next available space if no prior arrangements have been made.

**Memorial Services:** A service may be arranged at a time and place agreeable to the family and the Church. The pastor may authorize other clergy to hold services.

**Memorials:** No memorials, other than the bronze name plaque, will be placed in the Memorial Garden. Other suitable memorials, including gifts to the Church or the Memorial Garden Fund, will be welcome and arranged through the Church office.

The Church reserves the right to remove and dispose of any decorations without notice and or liability.

**Donation:** There will be a donation of \$1,000 for each individual interred and/or remembered with a plaque. This donation covers the plaque costs, a biodegradable container for the ashes (if requested), the interment, and ongoing maintenance of the Memorial Garden. The donation should be made payable to the First Presbyterian Church of Palo Alto, clearly marked for "The Memorial Garden Fund" and indicating the name of the individual who is being remembered. The donation amount is subject to change at the discretion of the Session. The Pastor may reduce the fee at his/her discretion.

**Interment and Ash Scattering:** Interment will be in the area between the sanctuary wall and the walkway using a biodegradable bag provided by the Church. Ashes may be scattered in the area between the garden wall and the walkway. The Church will keep a record of the general area of scattering or interment. The Church will be responsible for the interment process. Families may be present upon request.

All state, county, and city rules and regulations regarding scattering and interment of ashes will be observed.

**Plaques:** A bronze plaque 6 1/2" by 4 1/2 "will be mounted on the bricks of the inner four-foot walls of the Memorial Garden after the interment or, when there is no interment in the garden, upon the request of the family. The plaque may contain the following: name, date of birth, and date of death. An inscription order form will be provided by the Church to be filled in and signed by the person entitled to do so. The Memorial Garden Committee will place the orders for plaques to ensure uniformity. The material, size, shape, and character of the plaque and lettering thereon shall be subject to the Church's control.

**Records:** The Church will maintain the following records:

- A chronological listing of all completed interments and memorials, including name, date, the general area of interment, plaque location, and donation amount.
- Individual Advanced Directives forms documenting name, if interment requested, reserved plaque location, and donation made.
- Map of Memorial Garden Wall plaques indicating placements utilized, reserved, or available.

## **ADDITIONAL TERMS**

**Responsibility for the Church:** The Memorial Garden, its use, and its maintenance are all under the control of The First Presbyterian Church of Palo Alto. Any claim for liability against any other individual member of the Church is hereby waived.

The maintenance of the Garden shall be under the care of the Session of the First Presbyterian Church of Palo Alto, working through the Facilities Committee as long as the Church remains at its present location. The Memorial Garden Fund shall be used to maintain the Garden, including cleaning, regular plant care, plant replacement, irrigation repair, and seasonal pruning as needed.

The Church shall use its best efforts to protect the Memorial Garden from defacement and damage and may carry such insurance as the Session deems necessary. However, the Church has no obligation or responsibility for any loss or damage caused by the elements, acts of God, common enemy, thieves, vandals, explosions, riots, or the order of any civil or military authority.

Any person known willfully to disturb any interred remains may be subject to prosecution under California's statutes.

In the event of relocation or termination of the First Presbyterian Church of Palo Alto, or destruction due to a major disaster, the Church will ensure a commemorative record of persons whose ashes have been interred in the Memorial Garden will be transferred to a suitable alternate location.

Neither the Church nor its officers shall be responsible for the identity of the person whose cremated remains are presented for interment.

The Church, represented by Session, may, and hereby expressly reserves the right to adopt new Memorial Garden Policies and Procedures or amend, alter or repeal any Policy or Procedure or portion thereof.

**Approved by Session April 21, 2021**