



Memorial Garden

Congregational Church on Mercer Island • United Church of Christ

THE MINISTRY OF THE MEMORIAL GARDEN

From the earliest history of the Old Testament the people of Israel, and later the Christian church, have marked the graves of their loved ones and spiritual ancestors. This memorial was done not only to hold on to and honor the memories of the deceased, but also to serve as a landmark for those who followed them in faith.

It has been the tradition of Protestant churches from the earliest times to bury their dead on the church grounds, thus creating a foundation of those who preceded us. This serves to remind us that we are also building the spiritual foundation for those who will come after us.

A columbarium is a wall composed of niches designed to hold urns containing cremated remains. The word columbarium is derived from the Latin word *columba* (dove), the symbol of God's Spirit and the Christian symbol of peace. The CCMI Memorial Garden is a place of quiet and beauty containing the columbarium wall, a place for meditation and contemplation.

The purpose of the Memorial Garden:

- To provide a theological experience that challenges and develops our thinking about life and death, hope and resurrection
- To remember and honor subscribers and to celebrate life events
- To create a visual/tangible expression of church history
- To provide a final resting place within the context of our faith

In order to remember our loved ones, CCMI dedicated its Memorial Garden in 2007.

ABOUT THE MEMORIAL GARDEN

The Memorial Garden is a self-supporting entity located on the grounds of the Congregational Church on Mercer Island (CCMI), administered by the **Memorial Garden Committee**. Purchase of a naming on the cenotaph wall or interment in the columbarium does not constitute a sale of real property. A Member's rights to a naming or interment may not be assigned, transferred or inherited without the written consent of the Memorial Garden Committee. Members' rights shall not be subject to claims of creditors. Reservations are automatically forfeited if not claimed within two years of the Member's date of death, unless the Memorial Garden Committee grants a written extension.

At the time of purchase, the Member designates whose name will be engraved on the cenotaph wall or whose remains will be interred in the niche in the columbarium. The purchasing Member may designate himself or herself, or any other person who qualifies as a Member. The purchasing Member may change the designation by delivering a signed, written notice to the Memorial Garden Committee, in a form acceptable to the Committee. After the purchasing Member's death, the right to designate use of an un-engraved stone plate or unoccupied niche may be exercised by any person designated by the Member in his or her Will, or, if the Will is silent, by the personal representative of the Member's estate. In all cases, only persons who qualify as a Member may be designated.

Human cremains (ashes or cremated remains) in urns only are interred in a columbarium niche. Neither CCMI nor its pastoral staff is responsible for identifying the remains enclosed in an urn. No object separate from the urns and their contents may be placed within a niche. Inscriptions must be in a standardized format that includes only name, date of birth and date of death. No other inscriptions are permitted. Names will be first, middle (or maiden), last and suffix such as II or Jr. (An initial for the first or middle name is acceptable.) There can be no honorific titles such as Dr., Colonel, USN, Retired, etc. The date will be written Month-dd-yyyy, for example, Mar. 29, 1929.

After a right to a naming or interment has been purchased, but before engraving of the name or interment of any ashes, a Member may relinquish his or her rights back to CCMI. At its sole option, the Memorial Garden Committee may return a portion of the Member's original purchase price. No portion of the purchase price will be returned unless and until the Committee has resold the naming or interment right. Under no circumstances will the Memorial Garden Committee return more than the lesser of the proceeds from the resale or the original purchase price, less administrative fees. Removal of an urn for interment elsewhere may be permitted, at the option of the Memorial Garden Committee, upon submission to the Committee of a signed, written request. Written request may be made by the person given such a right under the deceased Member's Will or, if the Will is silent, by the personal representative of the Member's estate. No refund will be made, except as otherwise determined by the Committee in its sole discretion.

The Memorial Garden Committee is responsible for the maintenance of the Garden and has the discretion to either contract maintenance service or accomplish it voluntarily. Access to the Garden is available at any time. CCMI reserves the right, in its sole and complete discretion to expand or otherwise reconfigure the Garden. CCMI will endeavor to protect the Garden, but it assumes no responsibility other than to afford the Garden the same protection it provides for its other property. The right of naming on the cenotaph wall or interment in the columbarium shall cease if the present church property is demolished. In the event of such termination, CCMI shall relocate or make other arrangements or provisions for all cremated remains, which are not removed by people legally entitled to do so.

THE MEMORIAL GARDEN AGREEMENT

TERMS AND CONDITIONS

The purpose of the Memorial Garden is to remember and honor past subscribers and to witness to the hope of resurrection in Jesus Christ. The Memorial Garden is a self-supporting entity located on the grounds of the Congregational Church on Mercer Island (CCMI).

Who is eligible to be remembered and honored in the Memorial Garden?

- Persons who are current or past members of CCMI, their spouses, children, siblings and parents
- Persons who are current or past pastors of CCMI, their spouses, children, siblings and parents
- Persons with strong ties to CCMI, as determined by the Memorial Garden Committee

How is a subscriber remembered and honored in the Memorial Garden?

There are 60 niches in the Memorial Garden. Two options are available for subscribers:

1. **Naming on Cenotaph Pillar.** A cenotaph is a pillar engraved with names. Purchase of a line on the cenotaph pillar entitles the subscriber to have his or her name engraved on the cenotaph pillar. This option does not include inurnment of the subscriber's ashes.
2. **Inurnment in Memorial Garden.** A Memorial Garden is a structure with niches, or compartments, for urns or containers with ashes of the deceased. Purchase of a niche in the Memorial Garden entitles the subscriber to inurnment in a sealed urn or container with the subscriber's ashes in the niche, with the subscriber's name, birth date and death date engraved on the stone face plate of the niche. Human cremains (ashes or cremated remains) in urns only, are inurned in a Memorial Garden niche. Each niche may hold one or two urns which need not be placed in the niche at the same time. Purchase of a "two-person niche" allows for two urns and two names; purchase of a "single-person niche" allows for one urn and one name. Neither CCMI nor its pastoral staff is responsible for identifying the remains enclosed in an urn.

What types of inscriptions are allowed?

Inscriptions must be in a standardized format that includes only name, date of birth and date of death. No other inscriptions are permitted. Names will be first, middle (or maiden), last and suffix, such as II or Jr. (An initial for the first or middle name is acceptable.) **There can be no titles such as Dr., Lt. Commander, USN, Retired.** The date will be written numerically, such as 03-29-1929 for March 29, 1929.

Can a subscriber designate the location of their name on the cenotaph pillar or niche in the columbarium?

Subscribers may choose the location of their niche and corresponding face plate or cenotaph pillar based on availability. Location choices are subject to final approval by the Memorial Garden Committee.

How does a subscriber designate who will be named on the cenotaph wall or inurned in the Memorial Garden?

At the time of purchase, the subscriber designates whose name will be engraved on the cenotaph pillar or whose remains will be inurned in the niche in the Memorial Garden. The purchasing subscriber may designate himself or herself, or any other person who qualifies as a subscriber. The purchasing subscriber may change the designation by delivering a signed written notice to the Memorial Garden Committee, in a form acceptable to the Committee. After the purchasing subscriber's death, the right to designate use of an un-engraved face plate or unoccupied niche may be exercised by any person designated by the subscriber in his or her Will, or, if the Will is silent, by the personal representative of the subscriber's estate. In all cases, only persons who qualify as a subscriber may be designated.

How do subscribers reserve a line on the cenotaph wall or inurnment in the Memorial Garden?

Delivering the completed Reservation Form to the Memorial Garden Committee and paying the purchase price constitutes a reservation. A reservation is not complete until the Memorial Garden Committee has received the completed Form and full purchase price.

Reservations are automatically forfeited if not claimed within two years of the subscriber's date of death, unless the Memorial Garden Committee grants a written extension.

Reservations may be made by a subscriber, the personal representative of a deceased subscriber's estate or the legal guardian or attorney-in-fact of an incapacitated subscriber.

What happens if the subscriber no longer wishes to be remembered or honored in the Memorial Garden?

After a right to a line or inurnment has been purchased, but before engraving of the name or inurnment of any ashes, a subscriber may relinquish his or her rights back to CCMI. At its sole option, the Memorial Garden Committee may return a portion of the subscriber's original purchase price. No portion of the purchase price will be returned unless and until the Committee has resold the line or inurnment right. Under no circumstances will the Memorial Garden Committee return more than the lesser of the proceeds from the resale or the original purchase price, less administrative fees.

Removal of an urn for inurnment elsewhere may be permitted, at the option of the Memorial Garden Committee, upon submission to the Committee of a signed written request. A written request may be made by the person given such a right under the deceased subscriber's Will or, if the Will is silent, by the personal representative of the subscriber's estate. No refund will be made, except as otherwise determined by the Committee at its sole discretion.

How is the Memorial Garden maintained and administered?

The Memorial Garden Committee administers the Memorial Garden and maintains records of reservations and inurnments. The Committee, consisting of a minimum of three members, is a subcommittee of the Trustee Committee, which reports to CCMI Council. The minister is an ex-officio member of the committee.

The Memorial Garden Committee, church and representatives of each shall have no liability to any subscriber or his/her estate arising out of or related to the operation, maintenance, damage or destruction of the Memorial Garden.

A permanent record book of all inurnments shall be maintained by the church and shall include the names of the deceased, the niche numbers and the dates of inurnment. The record book shall be available in the church office.

All ownership of real property within and around the Memorial Garden shall at all times remain with the church.

Any sculpture or other memorial must be approved by the Memorial Garden Committee. Scripture verses and plantings must also be approved by the Committee. Artificial flowers, flags, decorations or other memorabilia are not allowed in or around the Garden except at the time of a committal service and no more than seven days thereafter. Fresh flowers will be removed when they are faded.

The Memorial Garden does not provide for scattering of remains.

The Memorial Garden Committee is responsible for the maintenance of the Garden and has the discretion to either contract maintenance service or accomplish it voluntarily. Access to the Garden is available at any time. CCMI reserves the right, in its sole and complete discretion, to expand or otherwise reconfigure the Garden.

CCMI will endeavor to protect the Garden, but it assumes no responsibility other than to afford the Garden the same protection it provides for its other property.

What are the costs of a line on the cenotaph wall or inurnment in the Memorial Garden?*

Two-person niche in columbarium	\$3300
One-person niche in columbarium	\$1925
One name on wall of cenotaph	\$495
Two names on wall of cenotaph	\$715

The purchase price must be paid in full within six months of submission of the completed Reservation Form or before inurnment whichever comes first. Fees are not considered a tax-deductible contribution.

The price of a niche includes engraving of the face plate and, opening and closing of the niche. Prices do not include urns or cremation.

Purchase of a line on the cenotaph pillar or inurnment in the Memorial Garden does not constitute a sale of real property. A subscriber's rights to a line or inurnment may not be assigned, transferred or inherited without the written consent of the Memorial Garden Committee. Subscribers' rights shall not be subject to claims of creditors.

*Current prices as of Dec 2011 and subject to change as approved by the CCMI Memorial Garden Committee

What are the instructions for inurnment at time of death?

The attached documents, **The Memorial Garden Agreement - Terms and Conditions and Reservation Form**, pertaining thereto, should be kept in an accessible and safe place. Arrangements for inurnment will be under the direction of the CCMI pastoral staff.

At time of death

- Notify the CCMI church office (206-232-7800). The staff will assist you with the necessary arrangements if you desire. The church does not provide cremation services. Neither cost of cremation nor cost of urn is covered by any fees associated with use of columbarium.
- Inform the Funeral Director that a niche is reserved at the Congregational Church of Mercer Island and advise them the niche dimensions are 10½" wide × 10½" high × 9¾" deep and will hold one or two urn(s) of appropriate size.
- The ashes may be kept by the family or funeral director until taken to the Church at the time of the service or inurnment.
- If desired, a committal service may be arranged by a member of the Memorial Garden Committee.
- Please provide a short biography of the deceased to be kept by the church in a Memorial Book.