

Mount Zion United Methodist Church

Cemetery Policy

The purpose of having and maintaining the Mount Zion United Methodist Church Cemetery is to provide a resting place for the remains of members of the church as they await the day of the resurrection. Because it is not possible for us to know how long we will await that day, the following regulations are adopted for the sake of good order and to allow the caretakers of the cemetery to maintain the cemetery in manner befitting its holy purpose.

“Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life.” Romans 6:4-6

GUIDELINES FOR WHO IS ELIGIBLE TO BE INTERRED IN THE CEMETERY OF MOUNT ZION UNITED METHODIST CHURCH:

1. All active members of Mount Zion United Methodist Church, their spouses and minor children (under 18) are eligible for burial plots at no cost.

An active member is defined as someone who, at the time of death, meets at least two of the following conditions:

- a. Are listed on Mount Zion’s roll as a professing or baptized member
 - b. Attended Mount Zion at least twice in the last year, unless hindered for medical reasons
 - c. Made regular financial contributions to Mount Zion (at least once in the past year)
2. Non-active members with some connection to the church are eligible for the use of a plot at the time of death for a donation to the Cemetery Maintenance Fund unless the plot was assigned prior to implementation of this policy.

A non-active member is defined as someone who, at the time of death:

- a. Is listed on the Mount Zion roll as a baptized or professing member
- b. Seldom or never attends Mount Zion (less than once a year)
- c. Does not make regular financial contributions to Mount Zion (not in the last year)

BURIAL PLOT GUIDELINES

1. Active church members may express a preference for specific burial plots. However, the following conditions apply:
 - a. All gravesites remain the property of Mount Zion United Methodist Church in accordance with applicable provisions of *The Book of Discipline of The United Methodist Church*. No one has the right to sell, transfer or otherwise assign a plot to someone else.

- b. Members are not reserving a plot, but expressing a preference. Every effort will be made to comply with the preference request.
 - c. Should the family become inactive, their plot preferences may be reassigned.
 - d. When a member moves their membership by letter (or otherwise contacts the church) any plot reserved will revert back to the church.
3. Although the church will make every effort to allow family members to be interred together, for space management reasons, non-active members and non-resident members may not express a preference for specific burial plots. The only exception to this rule is for spouses of people interred in the cemetery.
4. Provisions for cremains shall be :
 - a. Interment: Plots for the interment of cremains shall be available under the same guidelines as other burial plots.
 - b. Scattering ashes on church property is at the discretion of the Cemetery Team in conjunction with the wishes of the family.
 - c. Two or more cremains may be buried in the same plot.
5. Any pastors who request a plot while officially serving on Mount Zion's staff will be accommodated.

OTHER GUIDELINES FOR CEMETERY USE:

1. Mount Zion United Methodist Church shall have in place a Cemetery Committee to oversee this policy and to provide routine care and maintenance to the cemetery. Monetary donations to defray the cost of this care are appreciated and encouraged. Grave plots will be no more than 5'x10' including coping (stone walls).
2. The church is not responsible for repair or maintenance of markers
3. Family members are encouraged to remove dead/faded flowers, stands, pots, etc from graves. Care should be taken to ensure that flowers and other objects do not prevent groundskeepers from having access to graves. The Cemetery Team is empowered to remove unsightly/dead flowers as deemed necessary.
4. Fences, trees, or barriers of any type of construction may not be erected in the cemetery.
5. Grave markers must be installed within two (2) years of burial.
6. Grave markers are prohibited from having personalization unbecoming a Christian cemetery. The Cemetery Team reserves the right to determine suitability and remove inappropriate items at the expense of the owner.
7. We do not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, or disability.
8. Flowers should be removed seven (7) days after the funeral service unless specifically authorized by the Cemetery Team.
9. Vaults are required and no two grave vaults may occupy one plot (no over/under burials)
10. Christian traditions are to be observed. It is expected that all funeral rites, memorial services, remembrance rites, etc. will be conducted with dignity and reverence and not be in conflict with Christian traditions.

11. The Cemetery Team shall have oversight of the church cemetery and shall keep an accurate plot map indicating current burial sites and church members' preference for burial sites.
12. There are above ground plots available on the back row of the cemetery.

REQUESTING A BURIAL PLOT:

When requesting a burial plot, contact a member of the Cemetery Team in order to obtain a map of available plots and request a specific location. Assignment of the plot will be noted by the Cemetery Team and kept on file in the Church office as well as with the team.

DONATIONS:

A separate ministry fund has been established to ensure the perpetual care and maintain the historic integrity of the cemetery at Mount Zion United Methodist Church. The maintenance of a cemetery should be proper, honorable, and sacred. This fund is used to maintain the grounds in keeping with expectations of a sacred plot of land, to purchase equipment as needed, and to ensure that an accurate map of plots is on file. Donations are to be made to Mount Zion United Methodist Church and earmarked for Cemetery Fund.