

ST. FRANCIS MEMORIAL GARDEN
AND
OUTDOOR CHAPEL



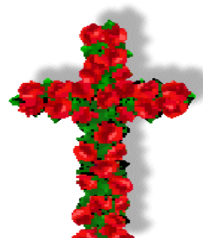


ST FRANCIS MEMORIAL GARDEN

The Episcopal Church, in acknowledging the Communion of Saints, counts both the living and the dead among its members. The people of the Church of the Epiphany rejoice that the St. Francis Memorial Garden and Outdoor Chapel provide a valuable ministry by connecting us to those we love but see no longer.

The St. Francis Memorial Garden was established by the Vestry of the Church of the Epiphany in the mid-1980s. Several guiding principles were set forth at the Garden's inception:

- The Garden will be maintained in keeping with its natural setting.
- All members of the parish and their immediate families are entitled to be buried in the Garden
- The ministry of the Garden is grounded in the sure and certain hope of the Resurrection to eternal life while acknowledging the reality and the legitimacy of human grief.



The Memorial Garden Committee maintains the Garden and oversees its care. It is chaired by a member of the congregation selected by the Senior Warden. Other committee members are drawn from parish members who have expressed an interest. Committee decisions are documented and presented to the Vestry for approval. Questions about the Garden and suggestions to enhance its ministry may be directed to the Memorial Garden Committee.

The following guidelines govern the use of the St. Francis Memorial Garden to help assure the sanctity of the Garden and fidelity to the original intentions of its foundation. The guidelines are as follows:

- Members desiring to have their own ashes or those of a family member buried in the Memorial Garden should contact the Rector.
- Members may reserve sites near a previously interred, immediate family member.
- Members may, in those instances where ashes of loved ones have been kept over time, request burial of the ashes in the Memorial Garden. Such requests must be approved by the Rector.
- Selection and preparation of sites for burial of ashes are facilitated by the Memorial Garden Committee.
- No burial fee is charged, but a donation of \$500 helps offset the costs of a bronze name plate and numbered metal spike for each burial as well as expenses associated with the Garden's upkeep.
- As required by the Henrico County Code, Section 24-13, ashes in memorial gardens must be buried in biodegradable containers.
- Each burial site will be marked by a numbered metal spike corresponding to the number on the deceased's bronze name plate affixed on the monument stones located on the southeastern side of the Garden. The stake will be placed directly over the ashes so that the location will be preserved and respected in perpetuity.

- Donation of items such as benches or birdbaths, etc., must be approved by the Memorial Garden Committee to ensure safety and appropriate construction, size, style, and design. It is recommended that donors provide funding for the Committee to purchase and place such items.
- During their time of mourning, some families choose to place items on the burial site, including cut flowers, figurines, coins, stones, etc. While such items are an understandable part of the mourning process, please remember that the *only* permissible permanent marker at each burial site is the numbered metal spike. All other items will be removed after a reasonable interval, not to exceed 30 days.

OUTDOOR CHAPEL

The Whitlock Memorial Outdoor Chapel, in memory of Carl Whitlock, was added in 1999 when a stone altar was erected on the northwestern side of the Garden. The Chapel is typically used when celebrating St Francis Day and the Blessing of the Pets. It may also be used for services on All Saints Day and other occasions during the year. It can be used for private services to observe the birthdate, anniversary, or death of a person buried in the Garden. Permission and planning for such services may be made by contacting the Rector of the Church of the Epiphany.

The St. Francis Memorial Garden and Outdoor Chapel provide a place for the burial of ashes of parishioners, past, present, and future. The churchyard has been the place for Christian burials through centuries of Church history. Today, however, many burial grounds are distant from the churches where the faithful worship. The St. Francis Memorial Garden was established to allow the parish to return to the ancient custom of burying the dead on hallowed ground where generations of families may continue to gather and worship.