

UU Catskills Memorial Garden Policies

(as adopted by the UU Catskills Board of Trustees 4/09; rev. 2/11, rev. 6/19)

What is UU Catskill's Memorial Garden?

- The Memorial Garden is a place of dignity, meditation and remembrance, for use by the UU Catskill's Members and Friends, and their families, regardless of their faith, for the caring disposition of the cremated remains of loved ones.
- The formal portion of the Memorial Garden is a circle of seating stones. Inspired by Old World stone circles as well as Native American council rings, it embraces the idea of our connection to history, to Earth itself, to the world around us, and to each other.
- The less formal portion of the Memorial Garden is a memorial footpath that includes sections of boardwalk. The footpath winds from the stone circle through the woods and around the pond, returning through the wildflower field and yard to the Sanctuary.

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Conception and Design:

- Design and construction of the stone circle area and footpath are intentionally simple, requiring a minimum of maintenance, and employing natural and sustainable materials and methods to the extent possible.
- Aside from a common marker described below, there will be no memorials within the garden, nor monuments, plaques, signs stones, or other types of markers.
- The footpath will be kept to generally accepted standards of trail construction and maintenance, as outlined for example in the Appalachian Mountain Club's "Complete Guide to Trail Building and Maintenance," and NY-NJ Trail Conference's "Trail Maintenance Manual." Footpath improvements will adhere to accessibility guidelines

Use and Management:

- All arrangements are to be made through the Minister in collaboration with the Memorial Garden Committee.
- Present and former Members and Friends of the UU Catskills and their families may use the garden for the ashes of loved ones.
- The interment site will be prepared by an appointee of the Minister and/or Memorial Garden committee.
- Burial of cremated remains (refined ashes) will be placed directly into the soil without enclosure or in biodegradable containers, along the perimeter of the stone circle. Interment spaces will be about one-and-one half ft. square. Alternately, ashes may be scattered or interred along the footpath. No urns or durable boxes may be used in either case. Remains are not recoverable.
- Ashes of pets may be scattered in the woods along the memorial footpath.
- Flowers: No artificial flowers.
- No commemorative plants, bushes, trees or artifacts may be added to the stone circle area.

- Plantings may be made on other parts of the UU Catskill's property, in conjunction with the Buildings and grounds Committee, but these will not be maintained by the Memorial Garden Committee. Plantings in the woods along the memorial footpath should be native species intended to restore and sustain the forest community, and should be selected in consultation with the Memorial Garden and Buildings and Grounds Committees. Plantings of ornamental species are more appropriate to other parts of UU Catskill's gardens and grounds.

Records and Marking:

- Locations of interments will be permanently recorded in a detailed grid map of the garden kept in the Minister's office.
- A common marker will reside in a suitable location near the garden. The marker will contain nameplates inscribed with name, year dates of birth and death of each person whose ashes are among those in the Memorial Garden.
- The common marker may include the names and dates of those families and individuals preferring to be interred off of UU Catskill's grounds who want to be acknowledged as part of the UU Catskills community.
- Spouses or partners wishing to have interment spaces and/or nameplates next to each other may do this only by pre-purchase.

The Book of Remembrance:

- The Book of Remembrance is available so that family and friends might add a few words of remembrance--(even) a photo or some small (flat) personal item if the family so wishes. One or two pages is suggested.
- The Minister will introduce the Book of Remembrance as part of the initial interview with the family or survivors. A member of the Memorial Garden committee will be available to assist the family with completing the entry in the Book.
- The Book of Remembrance will be available in the sanctuary at the memorial services and also at special services during the year such as the Day of the Dead, Memorial Day, and Yom Kippur at the discretion of the Minister. At other times it will be kept in the Minister's office in a location known to the Memorial Garden Committee.

Fees and Funding:

- A dedicated Memorial Garden Fund will be created specifically to manage the long-term resources of the Memorial Garden.
- The fees for memorialization will be determined by the Memorial Garden Committee and approved by the Board of Trustees. These fees will include the actual costs of the interment of ashes, the purchase, inscription and placement of a common marker and nameplate(s), and maintenance. Convenient prepayment of fees can be arranged with the Memorial Garden Committee.
- Any and all fees may be adjusted at the discretion of the Minister in collaboration with the Memorial Garden Committee.
- The current fees are: \$500 per person; \$25 for pets.

- Donations to the UU Catskills, earmarked for the Memorial Garden Fund, to support the construction and upkeep of the Memorial Garden and footpath, are welcome.

Memorial Garden Committee

- The Memorial Garden is under the supervision and management of the Memorial Garden Committee in collaboration with the Minister. The Committee shall consist of at least three members appointed by the Board for staggered three-year terms, without term limits. Broader participation from the UU Catskills community is welcome.
- The Memorial Garden Committee is responsible for periodically reviewing and revising fees, and shall propose any updates to these policies and procedures, subject to Board acceptance.
- The committee shall report to the Board of Trustees on a regular basis.