

Rules and Regulations Governing Burials in the Churchyard

St. George's Episcopal Church

Valley Lee, MD 20692

Revised November 2, 2015
Passed by the Vestry on April 13, 2016
Effective Date July 15, 2016

INTRODUCTION

Just as Baptism is the first act of the Church for each of us as an individual, Christian Burial is the final act for the Christian on this earth. Each pre-supposes the other, and both are part of the total ministry of the Body of Christ.

It is the purpose of these policies to maintain this cemetery as a part of the total ministry of the Church. Our primary aim is to provide for the burial of those who have been a part of the life and work of the St. George's Parish. While we realize that no set of policies can take full account of the details of every possible situation for use of the cemetery, our aim led to the rules and regulations which follow.

Note: The term "site" used below indicates the space normally reserved for one grave interment, while the term "lot" indicates the space for one or more colocated sites.

I. PERMISSION AND FEES ASSOCIATED WITH USE OF THE GRAVEYARD

A. Burial in the Church Cemetery is available to the following:

1. Persons who have heretofore, under the rules then in force, requested and were approved for use of grave sites. The initial step in acquiring grave sites is to submit a Request Form, attached to these Rules and Regulations as Attachment A which must be reviewed/approved by the Rector, Building & Grounds Vestry Member, and the Cemetery Representative (aka, the Cemetery Committee).
2. Members of the Congregation in good standing, that is persons who attend St. George's Episcopal Church services with reasonable regularity and whose contributions to the support of the Church are a matter of record (entitled to member rates).
3. Any other persons that submit the appropriate request and whom the Cemetery Committee approves for procurement of said lots.

B. Fees for the use of sites:

1. Rates for members in good standing - \$600 per grave site. Corner markers are required for each lot to mark the outer boundaries. Four cornerstones are required for each lot, which can consist of one or more grave sites. Cost for the cornerstones is \$35 each or \$140 for the four corners. Installation of the cornerstones will be completed by the Cemetery Committee at no cost. Cost for Niches in the Columbarium will be \$900 for members or \$1500 for a double niche. Cost for lettering of the cover plate will be the responsibility of the requestor and must be arranged by them. The Committee will complete the sale and will provide the blank plate for the needed lettering requirement only.

2. Non members who have been approved for grave sites will be at a cost of \$1,200 per grave site with the requirements for four cornerstones per lot, \$140 total and will be installed at no cost to the lot owner. Cost for Collumbarium niches for non members will be \$1,500 per niche, \$2,500 per double niche. The requirement for lettering of the niche cover plate will be the responsibility of the requestor.
3. Special circumstances for grave site use can be requested directly to the Cemetery Committee and only considered under unusual or compelling circumstances.
4. Payment for use of sites/lots shall normally be made with the Cemetery Committee at the time the request is approved, but arrangements can be made for deferred payments. A deed will be issued for each site/lot but only after full payment is received. The deed will be signed by the Rector, the Sr. Warden, the Buildings and Grounds Vestryperson, and the Cemetery Representative. Gravesite location and related information will be entered in this attached registry. A sample deed form is included as Attachment B.
5. Transfer or resale of graveyard sites is expressly forbidden without the approval of the Cemetery Committee.
6. The Cemetery Committee, with Vestry Approval, is empowered to limit the number of sites or lots that can be sold to an individual or family. The number of remaining lots is limited and the goal is to have sites available for the foreseeable future of the congregation. Sites will be approved for non members on a case by case basis.

II. THE CEMETERY COMMITTEE AND ITS' DUTIES

A. *The Cemetery Committee shall consist of three members:* the Rector, the Vestry Buildings & Grounds representative, and the Cemetery Representative, who may or may not be a member of the vestry, as appointed. At present, the representative and the Buildings & Grounds Vestryman are volunteer positions.

B. *Duties of the Cemetery Committee:*

1. The Committee shall review all grave site Requests submitted to the Church Office and determine if the request meets normal cemetery guidelines. Where the decision is not clear, the request should be referred to one of the Wardens (Sr. or Jr.) with a recommendation from the Cemetery Committee as to course of action. Based on final decision, Approval or Disapproval of the Request will be completed. The requestor will be notified of the final action by the committee.
2. Cornerstones will be ordered by the Cemetery Representative for Approved Requests and will be installed once received. Gravesites were originally approximately four feet by nine feet to allow the wooden boxes of the time to be interred. Modern caskets required that grave sites be five (5) feet by ten (ten) feet per site.

3. The Committee Representative will log all lot sales and personnel information related to the sale and deed into the registry with the location of the lots. This information will be available in the Church Office to assist family members and others with a need to know on directions to locate the grave sites.
4. The income received from the sale and any special gifts shall be deposited with the Treasurer for inclusion in a fund which shall be used for the upkeep of the cemetery and associated grounds.
5. The Cemetery Representative will be available to meet with persons on an as available basis to indicate where grave sites are available and general rules for their use. They will also instruct requestors on the method to request grave sites.

III. GENERAL REGULATIONS FOR THE CEMETERY.

- A.** Only single depth casket burials are available because of the water table levels.
- B.** Up to four cremations can be interred in a single grave site
- C.** All Memorial Markers must be located at the head of the grave to assist with graveyard maintenance. Markers that are included at other than the head must be flush with the ground so that lawn maintenance equipment can go over them without damage to either the memorial or the lawn equipment. Flowers and small trees must also be located in line with the headstones to assist with lawn maintenance. Any request for trees that will grow above shrub height must be approved by the Cemetery Committee.
- D.** Cornerstones will be installed level with the ground for lawn maintenance
- E.** Artificial flowers are discouraged but can be used in the form of "toppers" located on the memorial or in line with the headstones. No unusual ornaments are allowed, plastic balloons, animals etc. All flowers/decorations must be removed during Lent, if they are not, the Committee will remove them and put them near the Lawn Maintenance Shed.
- F.** No unusually large monuments or markers or colors outside of the normal granite colors,(white, gray, brown, or black) are allowed. Markers should be in keeping with the general area they are to be installed in.
- G.** Any request for the opening or moving of an existing grave must be submitted to the Vestry and be in keeping with county or state regulations pertaining to those issues.

These Rules and Regulations Shall be in force once approved and replace previous versions.

Attachment B
Sample Blank Deed Form

SECTION: Cemetery Location _____

DEED NO: Letter and Number ie K-7 _____

VESTRY OF WILLIAM AND MARY PARISH TO

Mr. & Mrs. Member
Number and Street Address
City, State, Zip

THIS DEED, made the dd/mmm/yyyy between the Vestry of William and Mary Parish, in the County of St. Mary's, in the State of Maryland, of the one part, and Mr. & Mrs. Member, of the other witnesseth that the said William and Mary Parish have, for the consideration of TBD Hundred and no/100 dollars (\$TBD) paid to them by the said Mr. & Mrs. Member, the receipt of which is hereby acknowledged, bargained and sold, and do hereby bargain and sell onto the said Mr. & Mrs. Member heirs and assigns in fee simple, Lot(s) xx and yy (xx and yy), Row zz, Cemetery Section as listed in the Register of the Cemetery attached to St. George's Episcopal Church, in the said William and Mary Parish, containing nn (nn) grave sites, for the purpose of internment only, and subject to such rules and regulations as have been or may be made by said Vestry. And this deed is made upon condition that said Mr. & Mrs. Member or their heirs shall make no grant, alienation, or transfer of or in respect said lot(s) without being authorized to do so by said Vestry. In testimony of which this instrument is signed by the Rector, the Registrar, the Sr. Warden, and the Cemetery Representative, with the Parish Seal attached.

Rector _____

Sr. Warden _____

Registrar/Secretary _____

Cemetery Rep. _____