

First Methodist Church Washington PRAYER GARDEN

The **Prayer Garden** is provided as a place for worship, as an invitation to prayer – a quiet place for personal and group meditation. It is not a recreational/play area. It is to be considered and used as a sacred part of the church – *an outside sanctuary*.

As such, it may be used for weddings, provided the pastor approves and the church's official wedding guidelines and policies are followed.

While the **Prayer Garden** is not to be considered a cemetery in the traditional sense, it may, however, be used for the interment of the cremains of members of First Methodist Church Washington, provided the following rules are observed:

1. It is recommended that the cremains be poured into the ground.
2. No permanent vessels containing the cremains may be buried in the **Prayer Garden**. All containers must be quickly biodegradable.
3. No burial markers are to be placed anywhere in the **Prayer Garden**.
4. No memorial flowers, wreathes, or potted plants may be left in the **Prayer Garden**.
5. Names and dates of the deceased only may be inscribed/engraved on the Memorial plaque on the wall of the Cowell Chapel. The names and dates may be no larger than one-inch in height. The expense of the engraving will be borne by the family.
6. The Church will be responsible for providing and maintaining the Memorial plaque.
7. The Senior Pastor may authorize cremains interment of the non-member spouse and/or children in cases where the deceased member is interned.

Those who use the **Prayer Garden** as a site for cremains interment may make a contribution to "*The Prayer Garden Endowment Fund*."

Trustees have the principal responsibility for the **Prayer Garden**. When appropriate and volunteers are forthcoming, the care, plantings and wellbeing of the **Prayer Garden** is to be done by a *Prayer Garden Committee*. Trustees shall contract for professional Landscape Company to do the actual work in maintaining the garden and infrastructure. Before major physical changes are made in the **Prayer Garden**, the *Prayer Garden Committee* will seek the Trustees cooperation. An informal record (grid map) to show the physical location of interned cremains will be maintained in the Trustee church office files.