

Bethlehem United Methodist Church

Cemetery Guidelines



**1324 Gholson Road
Clarksville, Tennessee 37043**

(Approved February 10, 2013)

Bethlehem United Methodist Church Cemetery Policies and Guidelines

All cemetery property is considered sacred ground devoted to the burial of our loved ones. A respectful atmosphere must be maintained at all times and all visitors are requested to assist us in maintaining the beauty and tranquility of this place.

The following guidelines govern the use and maintenance of the Bethlehem United Methodist Church Cemetery and may be altered, amended, or updated and all rates stated are subject to change at any time by the Trustees of Bethlehem United Methodist Church. The church will take appropriate measures to notify those affected of any changes in policies. However, it is the responsibility of all holders of interment rights in the cemetery to stay in touch with the church so they can be appropriately informed.

GUIDELINES

1. Permission to acquire a right of interment must be granted by the Board of Trustees of Bethlehem United Methodist Church. *The Trustees reserve the right to determine if a member is or is not in good standing. The Trustees will then make recommendation to the Administrative Board as to allow the purchase of a plot for the right of interment.
2. Members in good standing* of Bethlehem United Methodist Church will be given a burial plot—one gravesite—as right of interment for an initial Maintenance Fee of \$100 per gravesite (\$200 for a family plot consisting of 2 gravesites.) (This does not include the cost to dig and prepare the grave or any funeral expenses.) Current members in good standing who would like to reserve a burial plot(s) at no cost have until May 1, 2013 to do so. Persons who have no family ties with members in good standing* cannot reserve a plot. (Family ties are understood as being husband, wife, or children.)
3. Non-members who have family ties to a member in good standing as described above and any former Pastor and their wife may reserve a right of interment for a fee of \$1500.00. Payment must be paid in full before a plot is considered reserved. No interment; no installation of a vault, monument, or memorial and no work of any kind shall be permitted with respect to any lot or grave unless the lot has been fully paid for. (This does not include the cost to dig and prepare the grave or any funeral expenses.)
4. All Persons who have acquired or reserved a right of interment will be issued a *Certificate of Right of Sepulcher* as proof of said plot for the right of interment. Your information will be recorded in the church's records and cemetery database for future references.
5. An issued *Certificate of Right of Sepulcher* may be rescinded by the holder and one half of the fee (\$750) will be returned by the church. Former Pastors and their wives will receive a full refund.
6. Members in good standing* who join another church forfeit any claims on any burial plot in the cemetery and must return their *Certificate of Right of Sepulcher*. Board of Trustees reserve the right to waive this policy for military, company transfers, etc.
7. Persons requiring dependent care or children under 18 years of age may be given a right of interment if one or both parents are members in good standing*.
8. No plot for right of interment may be transferred to another person. Only one interment per gravesite is permitted.
9. All monies received from the fee stated in Item 2 & 3 for plots and cemetery upkeep shall go directly into the church's cemetery fund and used exclusively for cemetery maintenance.
10. Cremations: Bethlehem United Methodist Church does not permit the "scattering the ashes". A single burial plot may be reserved/or a member in good standing may be given a plot for the purpose of the burial of cremated ashes or urns. Five (5) inurnments are permitted on a single gravesite, provided there are no other vault burials in the grave. Two (2) inurnments are permitted over another burial plot.
11. All graves must be fitted with a grave-liner or vault. All interments and inurnments are subject to all requirements as outlined in state and local laws.

12. All headstones must be approved by the Bethlehem board of Trustees before placing on grave site. The headstones will be placed at the head of the grave on a concrete base even with the ground extending four inches on all sides of the monument. All foot markers must be sunk to ground level in concrete as of January, 2013. Bethlehem policy recommends a headstone be placed at the grave site within 24 months after burial.
13. Containers of real or artificial flowers or other objects placed on a gravesite that have become weatherworn or unsightly must be removed and disposed of properly. Annually, the last Saturday of April, all of the previous mentioned will be removed. No item shall be thrown into the woods. When such arrangements or objects have not been removed the church will remove them after an appropriate period of time. Any plantings of bulbs, shrubs or trees must be approved by the Trustees and should not interfere with lawn mowing or maintenance of the grounds. No fence, railing or other enclosure of any kind shall be permitted to be erected on, about or around gravesite.
14. Bethlehem United Methodist Church reserves the right to level all graves after they settle and/or re-sod or re-seed the grass.
15. The Board of Trustees shall keep an up-to-date cemetery plat of all burial plots and a list of their assignments to be stored in the church office. A duplicate copy of said plat and list is to be placed in safe keeping with a member of the Board of Trustees.
16. Funeral directors shall contact both the Pastor of Bethlehem United Methodist Church and the Chairperson of its Board of Trustees prior to making funeral plans at the church and/or cemetery.
17. A copy of these rules shall be presented to all those who have a *Certificate of Right of Sepulcher* for a plot. Copies of these rules shall also be presented to local funeral homes in Clarksville, TN. BUMC Trustees will maintain a current distribution plan for all future revisions to this policy.
18. In case the need of a plot arises when there is not enough time for the administrative board to convene, the chairpersons of the Administrative Council and Board of Trustees along with the pastor will make a decision on the plot.

DEFINITIONS OF TERMS USED IN DOCUMENT:

Members in good standing are those individuals who are members of Bethlehem United Methodist Church (BUMC) according to the church's membership documents and who participate in church services and/or financial support within each three-month period.

The Maintenance Fee refers to the account set aside as "Cemetery Maintenance Fund" by BUMC to provide maintenance and upkeep of the cemetery property; including grass mowing, trash and weed control, tree and shrub trimming, memorial markers repairs if accidentally overturned. If a memorial marker becomes damaged and beyond repair, replacement will be the responsibility of the owner. This fee does not include the cost to dig and prepare the grave or any funeral expenses.

A Gravesite designates a single space for one burial or up to 5 inurnments.

Family Burial Plot designates two gravesites side by side to be used by husband and wife.

Certificate of Right of Sepulcher is the document giving proof of the right for burial in a gravesite in the cemetery of Bethlehem United Methodist Church.

CERTIFICATE OF RIGHT OF SEPULCHER

**Bethlehem United Methodist Church
P. O. Box 3155
Clarksville, Tennessee 37043**

**Located at 1324 Gholson Road
Telephone: 931-358-3826**

Cemetery Plot Number

Customer Name

Current Chairperson of Board of Trustees

Current Chairperson of Administrative Council

Current Pastor of Bethlehem United Methodist Church

Today's Date: _____

____ **CEMETERY FEE PAID** \$ _____

____ **NUMBER OF GRAVE PLOTS** \$ _____

**THE PURCHASER AGREES TO TERMS AND GUIDELINES STATED IN
BETHLEHEM UNITED METHODIST CHURCH'S CEMETERY POLICY.**

APPLICATION FOR OBTAINING A BURIAL PLOT IN THE CEMETERY AT BETHLEHEM UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

Please complete and return this form to

Bethlehem UMC
PO Box 3155
Clarksville, TN 37043.
Phone (931) 358-3826

You will be notified when your request is approved or disapproved.

Date _____

Name of Person Applying _____

Address: _____
Mailing Address City State Zip

Telephone: _____ / _____ / _____ / _____ / _____ / _____
(Home) (Cell) (Work) if applicable

Email Address: _____
If applicable

*I am a member in good standing of Bethlehem United Methodist Church. Yes No

I joined BUMC in _____
Year

I would like to obtain one (1) plot two (2) plots _____ plots

Are the plots for you and your spouse? Yes No

If "Yes" the name of your spouse

If "No" who will use your plot(s)?

If you purchase more than two (2) plots, are they for your children? Yes No

Designate the names of persons who will be buried in these plots and their relationship to you.

1. _____ Relationship _____

2. _____ Relationship _____

3. _____ Relationship _____

4. _____ Relationship _____

Signature of Applicant _____ Date _____