

St. John's Lutheran Church

Cemetery Policy

The following rules and regulations are hereby adopted by the Congregation Council:

A. Purchase of Lots:

1. Grave site sales are on a first-come basis and shall be made available to anyone that desires them whether or not they are members at St. John's. Sites can be verbally reserved for 30 days prior to payment. The reservation shall expire at the end of the 30-day period.
2. Persons or their agents wishing to purchase a grave site in the cemetery will be referred to the cemetery manager. The cemetery manager will have available plats showing location of sites, and such other information as may be required, and will render assistance to those desiring to make lot purchases. Upon having made a selection, the church office manager will issue a deed to the prospective purchaser.
3. Payment of the purchase price is due in full before a deed will be issued. Partial payments are not accepted.
4. The transfer of ownership or any interest in any grave site shall be reported to the church office, whereby a new deed will be issued.
5. Individual grave sites may not be subdivided.

B. Burials

1. The cemetery manager or designee shall be given at least 48-hours notice prior to any interment and to at least one week notice for any disinterment or removal.
2. No interment shall be permitted or memorial placed in or on any property unless the plot is fully paid for. A note or pledge shall not be considered as payment.
3. The interment of two bodies in one grave will not be allowed, except in the case of a parent and infant, twin children, two children buried at the same time, one casket and one cremation, or in special circumstances with the approval of the cemetery manager. Up to two cremains will be allowed on a single gravesite. Combined vault space shall not exceed seven feet six inches in multiple interments.
4. All interments shall be made in a permanent outer casket that shall not be constructed of wood.
5. All caskets/containers shall be placed below the surface of the ground and shall allow for a minimum of 18" of dirt and sod to be placed over the top of the vault. (Exposed top of a casket/container is prohibited.)
6. No burial will be permitted until a legal burial transit permit has been completed by the funeral director and presented to the cemetery manager.

7. The interment of bodies of persons who have died of contagious disease shall be in strict accordance with the rules of the State Board of Health.

C. Memorials and Markers

1. All burials must have a permanent marker installed within 6 months of interment.
2. Only bronze or granite memorials shall be permitted in the cemetery. All markers must be set level with the ground.
3. Two markers may be set on a single grave space if approved by the cemetery manager. One of these markers must be a flush or foot marker.
4. All monuments shall be set on a cement foundation that provides for a 5-inch border around the monumentation.
5. No person shall erect, construct, or install a candle or fuel/solar-powered device that is designed and intended to produce a memorial flame or light for a continuous and indefinite period.
6. All markers and memorials must be appropriate to Christian philosophy. Final approval is subject to cemetery management.

D. Trees, Shrubs, Flowers and Ornaments

1. Planting of trees, shrubs or inground flowers will not be permitted.
2. Fresh cut flowers may be placed anytime and will remain until, in the judgment of the cemetery manager, they become unsightly. Containers for fresh cut flowers shall be of a type that is level with the ground and can be disposed of when the flowers are removed.
3. Containers for all flowers must be plastic or ceramic.
4. Potted plants may be set in metal stands that are a minimum of 22" above the ground. Potted plants will be removed if they are not maintained and/or have become unsightly.
5. Artificial plants and flowers must be in a vase or pot and will be treated as a potted plant. They must be set in a metal stand that is a minimum of 22" above the ground.
6. All summer containers must be removed by October 1.
7. No ground level plants are permitted.
8. Wreaths may be placed on graves beginning November 15 and must be removed by April 1.
9. No hedges, fences, or enclosures of any kind will be permitted on or around grave sites. Any unapproved fixtures or decorations will be removed without notice.

E. Maintenance

1. Cemetery grounds will be mowed by St. John's staff or designee during the months of May through October on an as-needed basis.
2. Cemetery roads will not be plowed by the church in the winter months unless by special request. If a burial is required in the winter months, the estate of the deceased will be responsible for the cost of plowing.

3. Weed control and fertilizing will be done at the discretion of the Facility Manager.
4. Dogs must be kept in vehicle at all times.

F. Administration

1. St. John's Property Committee is responsible for the administration and operation of the cemetery.
2. The position of Cemetery Manager shall be selected by the Property Committee and the name submitted to the Church Council for approval. The term shall be for one year with unlimited terms.
3. A copy of deeds issued will be maintained in the Church office and be considered a permanent record along with death certificates, burial transit permits, etc.
4. A complete record of all lots, including sold and available for sale, will be maintained by the cemetery manager or designee. The record must include the name of owner(s), date of sale, and location by block and lot numbers.
5. Cemetery Perpetual Care:
 - A perpetual care account has been established to provide income for the care and maintenance of the cemetery. Initially, 100% of the proceeds from lot sales were allocated to the perpetual care account. Beginning in 2025, 15% of lot sales were retained by this account.
 - Income from the perpetual care fund is returned to the operating budget to partially offset the cost of operating the cemetery.
 - Based on operating costs in 1988, it shall be our policy to continue adding to the perpetual fund until such time as the fund reaches \$75,000 (1990 dollars) adjusted annually for inflation. The principal amount of the perpetual care fund shall not be spent.
6. Cemetery Capital Account:
 - The capital account was activated in 2025 and is funded by 85% of lot sales and 100% of all undesignated gifts to the cemetery. Funds will be spent on capital cemetery projects as determined by the Property Committee.
 - Interest earned from these funds will be applied to this account.
7. There shall be a letter agreement for any contractor or private party to provide grave openings/closings and any maintenance not provided by church staff. (snowplowing, mowing, tree trimming)
8. Cemetery policies, price of lots and other fees shall be reviewed annually by the Property Committee. Changes are to be submitted to the Church Council for approval and adopted by resolution.

9. All correspondence concerning cemetery matters should be addressed to:
St. John's Lutheran Church
Attention: Cemetery Manager
1804 Highland Avenue
Eau Claire, WI 54701