

# **Bethlehem Cemetery Association Rules and Regulations**

**Bethlehem Cemetery**  
2801 Jackson Avenue, Ann Arbor, MI 48103  
[www.bethlehemcemetery.net](http://www.bethlehemcemetery.net)

**Cemetery Records Office at  
Bethlehem United Church of Christ**  
423 South Fourth Avenue, Ann Arbor, MI 48104  
734-665-6149  
[www.bethlehem-ucc.org](http://www.bethlehem-ucc.org)

***Please note: All holders of interment, burial, and columbarium rights in Bethlehem Cemetery (hereafter called owners) are responsible to read these rules and regulations in their entirety. Owners will be required to correct any noncompliance.***

For the common, mutual protection of owners in the Bethlehem Cemetery, the following Rules and Regulations have been adopted by the Board of the Bethlehem Cemetery Association. All owners are subject to these Rules and Regulations and to future rules, regulations, amendments, and alterations adopted by the Board of the Bethlehem Cemetery Association. These Rules and Regulations are referenced in the “Certificate for Interment” which owners receive.

## **SECTION I: General Rules**

1. Bethlehem United Church of Christ is a religious corporation organized and existing under the laws of the state of Michigan. It owns and operates Bethlehem Cemetery in accordance with the cemetery laws of the state of Michigan. It reserves the right to refuse admission to the Cemetery and to refuse the use of any Cemetery facilities to those persons who do not comply with the reasonable

- policies of the Cemetery as they are adopted and amended by the Board.
2. All fees and charges for services at the Cemetery are payable at time of interment.
  3. Cemetery visitors are to walk on established roads and walks and not across burial sites unless it is necessary to get to a burial place. Visitors are not to drive across burial sites.
  4. Waste receptacles are located throughout the Cemetery. Trash is not to be left anywhere else in the Cemetery.
  5. Boxes, borders of any materials, metal designs, chairs, benches, urns, or similar articles are not to be placed on burial sites. The Board has the right to remove these items at the owner's expense.
  6. Appropriate conduct is to be used in the Cemetery. Those visiting the Cemetery are to refrain from conduct that is disrespectful of a sacred place.
  7. Firearms are prohibited in the Cemetery except as they are used by a military escort accompanying a veteran's service.
  8. Members of the Cemetery Board oversee compliance with these rules and regulations, maintain order, and protect and promote the best interests of the Cemetery.
  9. Special cases may arise when the enforcement of a rule or regulation will cause unnecessary hardship. In that particular case, the Board may choose to suspend or modify a rule or regulation for that case only. Such suspension or modification does not affect the general application of the established rules and regulations.
  10. The Church and the Board assume no liability for injuries to person or property that occur at the Cemetery regardless of cause.
  11. When the Board amends or repeals existing rules and regulations or adopts additional ones, these

changes will be made in printed copies and posted outside the stone building on the Cemetery property.

## **SECTION II: Lots and Lot Purchases**

1. Persons desiring to obtain interment, burial, or columbarium rights shall call or visit the Church Office or the Cemetery to arrange for aid in making a selection. Payment is to be made at the Church Office, and a Certificate of Interment will be issued detailing the plot(s), lot(s), or columbarium space(s) purchased. A sale of more than ten plots must have Board approval. Records of lots, plots, and columbarium spaces sold and available for sale are on file in the Church Office.
2. Plots, lots, memorial garden or columbarium spaces may *not* be purchased on a time payment basis.
3. No license, or right of interment is granted to owners on roads, drives, alleys, or walks within the Cemetery.
4. The Board will take reasonable precautions to protect the grave markers of the owners within the Cemetery from loss or damage. The Cemetery disclaims all responsibility for loss or damage beyond reasonable control: i.e. vandals, severe storms, unavoidable accidents.
5. Owners of burial rights are to notify the Church Office of any change of address or phone number. Call at 734-665-6149.
6. The Certificate of Interment and these Rules and Regulations and any changes made to them constitute the sole agreement between the Board and the owner.
7. Grave sites are to be fully paid for and Certificates of Interment issued before foundations are poured.

8. In the older sections of the Cemetery on multi-plot lots with a family monument, head/foot stones added later must match the family monument or be flush markers.
9. **Bethlehem Cemetery has a strict No Buy-Back policy on graves.**

### **SECTION III: Interments**

1. The Cemetery is open for interments from 8:30-3:30 pm Monday-Saturday. There is an additional charge for Saturday interments. There are no interments on Sundays, New Year's Day, Memorial Day, July 4th, Labor Day, Thanksgiving, or Christmas.
2. All services of interment are under the supervision of the contractor in charge (per direction of the Cemetery Board).
3. Once a casket containing a body is within the confines of the Cemetery, no one is permitted to open the casket or touch the body without an order from a court of competent jurisdiction.
4. All orders for interments in burial plots or columbarium spaces are to be signed by the owner(s) or the owner's(s') legal representative.
5. Interment of two bodies in one plot or space is allowed in these circumstances: a parent and infant child; two infants buried in one casket; the cremated remains of one person and the interred body of another person; the cremated remains of two persons in either plot or single columbarium unit with two niches.
6. When an interment is to occur in a plot or space, the location of such interment is to be designated by the owner(s) or the owner's(s') legal representative.
7. The Board and its authorized, licensed agents are the only ones permitted to open occupied graves under any of the following circumstances:

- (a) a disinterment is directed by an order from a court of competent jurisdiction and the Board has received a certified copy of that order; (b) the Washtenaw County Medical Examiner requires the disinterment to hold an inquest and has filed with the Board a court authorization to release the body to a lawful agent; (c) other occasions arise that are permitted, directed, and authorized by law.
8. All interments by burial are to be made in outside containers made of stone, metal, or reinforced concrete, as required by law. These containers are to meet specifications established by the Board. Such containers may be procured from any source meeting the established specifications.
  9. Interment charges are paid to Bethlehem Cemetery directly or through a funeral home handling the service.
  10. The Board requires at least thirty-six hours' notice prior to an interment and at least one week's notice prior to a disinterment or removal.
  11. Interments, disinterments, and removals are to be made at the time, in the manner, and by the charges set by the Board.
  12. All interments, disinterments, and removals are subject to these Rules and Regulations and to the orders and laws of properly constituted public authorities and courts.
  13. The Board is not responsible for any mistakes in orders resulting from telephone or electronic messages or from the lack of precise or proper instructions regarding the plot, space, or location within them to be used.
  14. The Board is not liable for obtaining the interment permit, for the identity of the person to be interred, or for the authority of the person arranging the interment.

15. The scattering of ashes in the Cemetery is *prohibited*.
16. Cremains to be placed in the Memorial Garden shall be buried by an authorized agent of the Board. The ashes will be buried using no container.

#### **SECTION IV: Plants and Shrubs**

1. The Board plants and maintains, to the extent practical, trees and shrubs which preserve and maintain landscape features at the Cemetery. Owners must have Board approval before planting any trees or shrubs.
2. The Board removes natural and artificial plants, shrubs and floral designs of any kind when they are unsightly, damaged, deteriorated, dangerous, or diseased.
3. The Board is not liable for the loss or breakage of floral pieces and their containers.
4. The Board is not responsible for frozen plants or shrubs or for those damaged by the elements, vandals, or other causes beyond its control.
5. The Board has the right to prevent the removal of any trees or shrubs without its consent.
6. No natural or artificial flowers, plants, shrubbery, decorations, flags, or objects of any kind are to be left at or attached to columbarium units.
7. No artificial flowers, wind chimes, bird feeders/house, flags or decorations/objects of any kind are to be hung from the branches of cemetery trees.
8. Dates for spring and fall removal of arrangements and decorations are posted in the Cemetery or can be received from the Church Office.
9. No lights of any kind are to be installed at grave sites. Candles may be used.

## SECTION V: Monuments

1. All monuments (headstone, footstones, etc.) are to be made of granite, marble, or bronze. Special materials (such as large stones) require Board approval.
2. The maximum length of a single gravestone is 36 inches. The maximum length of larger stones for multiple plots is  $\frac{3}{4}$  of the width of the plots. The maximum height of a gravestone is 78 inches above the ground surface including the foundation. Permission for a taller gravestone must be approved by the Board.
3. All monuments are to have concrete foundations adequate for monument size.
4. All bases of monuments must have rough-cut sides and be of 6" stock.
5. Slants (singles, doubles, etc.) are required to have a base under them.
6. Bevel markers are to be of 6" stock except for infant markers in Babyland areas. Example: single bevel=20" x 2" x 6" stock
7. Grass markers sold of 4" stock are to be set flush to the ground. The foundation order must state "Grass Marker."
8. Graves with an existing family headstone can only have upright footstones that match the family stones already on the lot, such as in the older sections of the Cemetery.
9. Foundations are subject to inspection before placement of the monument. The cost of inspection is the owner's responsibility.
10. Foundations may not be laid in the winter months. Yearly dates for foundation installation will be determined by the Board and posted in the Cemetery.

11. The Bethlehem Cemetery sexton is the only person authorized to pour foundations. Call him at 734-274-7422 for information
12. There is only one upright stone allowed per grave; an additional flush marker may be added.
13. Plot owners bear responsibility for the procurement, installation, and repair of headstones/monuments under Bethlehem Cemetery guidelines.
14. Bethlehem Cemetery will not be responsible for receiving, installing, or repairing headstones/monuments not ordered from an approved contractor. The Cemetery has a list of contractors who sell, deliver, and repair headstones/monuments. Call the Cemetery Sexton at 734-274-7422 for that information.

## **SECTION VI: Availability of Copies of Rules and Regulations**

Copies of current Rules and Regulations of the Bethlehem Cemetery are available in the Church Office at 423 South Fourth Avenue. An owner receives a copy along with the Certificate of Interment. There is also a copy displayed by the stone building in the Cemetery. These Rules and Regulations are subject to change without notice.