

Cemetery Rules and Regulations (Revised 9-2008)

Purpose Statement:

One of the most costly church expenses is cemetery/lawn care (currently +/- \$14,000.00). This cost is borne by the offerings of current church goers and thus takes away income that would be available for other missions of Mt Mitchell United Methodist Church. This means that there are significant numbers of our church givers that are maintaining the grass in the cemetery who do not have or ever will have a grave site at Mt Mitchell United Methodist Church.

Likewise, there are a significant number of non-members or non-attending members who own lots but give nothing to their upkeep. To equalize this unfair condition, we are requesting some relief with a \$100 yearly maintenance support fee. This amounts to less than \$2.00 per week to keep your grave site maintained. Your support will be treated as an offering to the church and is tax deductible.

General Regulations:

The following rules and regulations governing the cemetery of Mt Mitchell United Methodist Church supersede all previous motions, amendments, rules and regulations.

1. A Member of the church shall be appointed or elected by the Administrative Council as a representative of the church to sell cemetery lots or spaces to members of the above mentioned church and to keep records of such transactions as well as the locations of purchased spaces or lots. **Every sale must be accompanied by a copy of these rules and the representative should emphasize [Rule #11](#) verbally.**

2. The Lay Leadership Committee will appoint a Cemetery Committee consisting of no less than three (3) persons plus the cemetery representative for a total of four (4) persons. Each person on said committee will serve a period of three (3) years along with the representative.

3. Three (3) copies of burial locations shall be kept at all times. One (1) shall be kept by the church member (representative) elected by the Administrative Council to sell cemetery spaces or lots, one (1) shall be kept in the lock box by the Trustees Chairperson, and one (1) shall be kept by the Cemetery Committee Chairperson. **These rules and regulations are to be reviewed annually.**

4. Said representative or two (2) Cemetery Committee members must be consulted before a grave is opened. All financial obligations must be met before permission is given to open a grave.

5. Said representative is not responsible for digging or supervising the digging of the grave.

6. No grave shall be less than five (5) feet deep unless authorized by the representative. Any person using heavy equipment and damaging grounds shall be liable for such damage. Any cost associated with failure to meet county and state codes will be the responsibility of the Lessee.

7. The representative or two (2) Cemetery Committee members must be consulted before a monument is erected on any grave. Failure to do so will make person(s) liable for any cost associated with damage to adjoining graves or misplacement of markers.

a. Funeral name markers that are installed at the grave when the grave site is used will be removed by the family or Cemetery Committee when the monument is installed. If removed by the Cemetery Committee, the marker will be saved for the family.

b. Headstones and grave markers are the responsibility of those leasing the cemetery lot. Expenses incurred from damages remain their responsibility. Repairs must be made under the supervision of the cemetery superintendent.

8. A footing of six (6) inches in all directions is required at the base of the monument to come flush with the ground. All foot stones are to be flush with the ground.

9. No curbing is allowed.

10. The present purchase price of one (1) lot (2 grave spaces) is \$50.00. This includes excess dirt removal. The price of the grave lots will be established annually. Rules and regulations will also be reviewed annually.

a. Burial spaces or lots may be purchased by Mt Mitchell United Methodist Church members only. Non-members may not purchase a space or lot at any price.

b. If a church member who has purchased a cemetery lot dies and is survived by a non-church member or a Non-Supporting member spouse, the spouse may use the extra space for their site if the yearly maintenance fee is paid.

c. When the grave opening charge is paid, the maintenance fee is set to zero and begins accumulating at the start of the next year.

11. Any grave space previously purchased and not used by a member or non-member, may not be transferred to any other person through a will, gift, bequeath or other means. These space lots shall revert to the church, and purchase price or credit will be refunded to the estate at their request. Every effort will be made by the Cemetery Committee to have these unused sites returned to the church on a voluntary basis, then followed by a mandatory repossession for resale by the church.

12. Any current/former pastor and/or spouse will be given free grave sites at time of death, **if space is available**.

13. Any United Methodist minister who was a member of Mt Mitchell United Methodist Church at the time of entering the ministry and who remains in the United Methodist ministry until death or retirement, will be given free burial space for him/herself, spouse and dependent children (18 years and under), **if space is available**.

14. Any church member who dies and does **NOT** have a grave space may have one (1) space at the member price purchased by his/her family. If his/her spouse or children under 18 are non-members, their grave will be at the non-member price.

a. If the above church member has not supported Mt Mitchell United Methodist Church in the last 10 years, his/her relatives will be required to pay the non-member price of \$750 per grave site.

Rules for Non-Members & Non-Supporting Members

1. Persons who no longer attend services at Mt Mitchell United Methodist Church or have moved their membership, will have to select one of the following options:

Non-Members

- a. Sell lots back to the church at the purchase price or,
- b. Pay difference between original price and current non-member price of \$750.00 per grave or \$1,500.00 per grave lot. \$100 per grave (\$200.00 per lot) will go to the Cemetery Endowment Fund for perpetual care.

Non-Supporting Members

- a. Sell lots back to the church at the purchase price or,
- b. Pay a yearly maintenance support fee of \$100.00.
- c. Unless paid, the \$100.00 yearly maintenance fee will accumulate to a maximum value of \$500.00 (5 years). If not paid, this amount will have to be reimbursed when requesting the grave to be opened. Upon exceeding that amount your spaces will be forfeited and listed for resale by the church.

2. The Cemetery Committee will contact non-members holding grave spaces or lots and they will have ninety (90) days to select from the above options.

Authorization

These rules will apply to all persons and in extenuating cases a final decision will be made by use of the [Exception Policy](#).

These amended rules and regulations were approved on _____ and will be in effect immediately and remain so until Mt Mitchell United Methodist Church Administrative Council changes or amends them. These and all other amended rules and regulations will be sent to church members, non-active church members, and non-church members who own cemetery spaces or lots.