TO: UUSD Board of Trustees

FROM: UUSD Landscape and Property Management Committees

RE: Memorial plantings on UUSD property

DATE: September 28, 2022

**History**

* Recently, DE Stonewall PAC asked to donate a tree/shrub at UUSD in memory of David Dagenais.
* In the past, several UUSD members have asked to plant trees to honor members who have passed.
* These past groups were told trees could not be planted until UUSD developed guidelines for overall property usage.

**Issues**

* Landscape and Property Management do not want to be in a position of approving or rejecting these memorial planting requests without policy to support those decisions.
* Memorial bricks (existing and future ones) need to find a permanent home and logically would be relocated near memorial plantings.
* There is also interest in creating a meditation/memorial garden in the rear east corner of the property, behind the future wildflower pollinator meadow.
* Some UU congregations allow spreading/interment of cremains in their memorial gardens; how this is done varies from simply scattering ashes to burying ashes in delineated spots with markers to masonry structures with drawers and/or plaques.

**Request**

* The immediate need from the Board is to create basic guidelines for what can be planted as a memorial, including the following information:
  + Type of plant (i.e., shrubs, not trees) that can be planted, with Landscape Team stipulating only native plants, in keeping with UUSD’s landscaping philosophy
  + Size of plaque to be installed
  + Where items can be planted (Landscape Team could be given authority to determine location, based on knowledge of property, in collaboration with PMC)
* Long-term, an ad hoc group needs to assess the congregation’s interest in having a memorial garden with/without cremains and, if there is interest, explore the implications such a project presents, including drafting policies and procedures.

**Current Thinking**

* Two options have been suggested for permanent location of the memorial bricks:
  + Put bricks in the grassy area due west of the chalice.
  + Place 2-3 rows of the existing bricks around the stone border of the chalice sculpture, then lay the remainder in a meandering path from the sculpture toward the street;
* Memorial bushes could be added in the area between the chalice and the first tree on that side of the driveway, creating a general memorial area which would be attractive as people approach the building.
* In the future, if a memorial garden is created in the back east corner, other memorial shrubs/plants could be added there, as well as memorial bricks, when purchased.
* We are in touch with other UU congregations who have established memorial gardens to see what has worked for them.