

## **Memorial Garden Committee Congregational Update - March 2010**

We formed as a Committee in May, 2008 to explore the creation of an outdoor sacred space in our oak “grove” for retreat, reflection, and remembering loved ones. We want its design and its features to soothe fears and pain, invite conversations, encourage diversion from the pulls of the day, and enable families to inter ashes of loved ones or designate some aspect of the area as a memorial. It would be accessible to all and appropriately secure.

One feature of the project is the provision of a “columbarium,” a structure or number of structures that contain niches for secured boxes of ashes. We seek a design approach that provides the desired number of current and future niches and also respects the desire for an aesthetic space overall. The proposal of a columbarium on the property has brought various reactions among members. We’ll provide opportunities to share our thoughts and feelings, and in time we’ll need to decide. We also desire a fountain. The third principal feature is a labyrinth -- likely its walkway pattern built into the surface. And, of course, a garden atmosphere: for meditation, rest, thought, and the restoration that comes from being in a sacred space.

Approaching 2 years later, our committee has:

- identified the required features of the space in a Request for Proposal
- projected the ability of the project to significantly finance itself via the purchase of niches and memorials
- selected and hired a landscape architect to provide initial concept sketches
- provided a mock-up of the sketch and held forums for members to consider
- selected and hired a soils engineer and a civil engineer
- directed the landscape architect to incorporate engineering reports
- selected a new architect who is ready to continue the project design work.

John Cahalan, of Los Gatos, is our choice. His sole proprietorship is in its 15<sup>th</sup> year, with projects primarily in the Bay Area. His firm provides professional services in landscape architectural design, site planning, master planning, construction documents, bidding and construction review, and on-site consultation. He offers 20 years of experience in landscape architecture, including 4 peninsula churches and 3 civic projects in the San Mateo area.

The committee proposes hiring John to formulate and complete the design work needed in order to present the congregation with the desired project. With the congregation’s approval, the plans would be further prepared for City of San Mateo review. The columbarium would require us to obtain a special use permit and we’d proceed with those conversations with our neighbors.

The sketch and its features are presented on the back-side of this page.

Here are the members of our committee:

Kay Harris	Jim Ingwersen	Jim Granucci	Jim Shaul
George Cintel	Bahram Mozayeny	John Fyfe (chair)	Kibbie Ruth
	Penny Nixon		

We welcome additional members if you want to help these plans materialize.

***Further opportunities to learn more: Sunday, March 14, after worship, we’ll have tours of the space & plans***

"Memorial Garden" to be located on the NW corner of the Church's property.

The northern border of the site is fixed by the existing sidewalk adjacent to Pilgrim Plaza; the western border by the existing municipal sidewalk, the southern border by the Sanctuary building of the Church. The eastern border is less fixed but envisioned currently to be at the corner of Steve's office.

The orientation of this page is north (Pilgrim Plaza) along the top of the page, south (chancel wall) along the bottom, west (San Mateo Drive) along the left edge, and east (CCSM parking lot) along the right edge.

A 6' to 8' high wall would enclose the west end of the garden site, in line with the western-most point of the chancel to the south. That 6'-to 8' high wall would run along the north edge (alongside Pilgrim Plaza property) to the eastern edge; at this point it would turn toward the church as a return, with two wide gates allowing a wide opening to the space from the parking lot, with a return to the "Steve office."

Features: columbarium area in the west portion of the space (in the grove); removal of the current half-wall and storage container; placement of a wall fountain in the north wall, and directly across from the double doors into the northwest end of the sanctuary; labyrinth in the eastern portion of the space (where sunlight and distance from the oaks will permit more greenery and vertical plantings).

