

Lake Edge Lutheran Church Memorial Garden

Lake Edge Lutheran Church (LELC), located at 4032 Monona Drive, is located in the 15th ward in the city of Madison. The alderperson is Larry Palm and the church is part of the Lake Edge Neighborhood Association.

There are approximately 900 members comprised of traditional and non-traditional families as LELC is a reconciled church open & welcoming to all people. One of the ministries of the congregation is Peace & Justice with Care of the Earth a primary concern.

We are nearing completion on a building project that has emphasized building green. We are now ready to expand our ministry to outside our building and create a natural extension of our project to our backyard.

We wish to create a columbarium and memorial garden as a new ministry to our members. As cremation becomes a more desired option by people in the Midwest, choices have to be made regarding the place to keep the cremains. A logical option is to have a meaningful place near a church where family and friends can reflect and remember their loved one.

A committee of church members has prepared this plan, with the added expertise of member Brad Nygaard who is a professional architect. Brad has been assisted in the development of the plans by landscape architect Paul Skidmore of Barnes, Inc.

Our proposal consists of four areas:

1. A brick memorial pathway with engraved bricks
2. A rain garden
3. A patio for internment of ashes either under bricks or in a center garden area
4. A retaining wall with columbarium niches for internment of ashes

The memorial garden and columbarium located behind the church building will provide a quiet, landscaped space, separated from neighboring yards by a wooden fence and natural landscaping. Neighbors on the side and behind will be given more privacy and some lovely trees and plants for their view.

Using the backyard of the church for this project provides good ecological practices as well as a quiet, natural escape space within an urban environment. This area will be open to congregational members and their friends and family. We also welcome our neighbors to enjoy the space and learn about a rain garden.