

GUIDE FOR MEMBERS OF ALL SOULS NATURAL BURIAL
GROUND AND THEIR FAMILIES AND FRIENDS
NOVEMBER 2022

All Souls Natural Burial Ground (ASNBG) is registered as a non-profit organization in Greensboro, North Carolina and it is managed by a group of volunteers under the name All Souls Natural Burial Association.

The burial ground is located on the property of St Barnabas Episcopal Church, 1300 Jefferson Road, Greensboro, N.C. 27410

ASNBG is non-sectarian and includes members of all religious groups, ethnicities, nationalities, and gender identities.

What does All Souls Natural Burial Ground require for a natural burial?

In keeping with our respect for the environment and respect for the deceased, ASNBG prohibits the use of vaults of any kind. Bodies embalmed cannot be buried here.

Natural Burial

Natural burial offers the opportunity for people to return to what has been the traditional form of burial for most of human history, allowing the remains of the deceased to return to nature without a negative impact on the natural ecosystem.

Caskets and shrouds must be made of non-toxic, biodegradable materials such as natural wood, bamboo, wicker, reed, or cardboard for caskets. Linen, wool, and cotton for shrouds.

All Souls Natural Burial Ground provides the following services for our members:

- The right to be buried in a beautiful, wooded property surrounding St. Barnabas Episcopal Church, which is easily accessible for burial ceremonies and visitors.
- The opening and closing of a shallow grave which will be 3 to 4 feet deep. This facilitates decomposition of the remains and is deep enough to create a smell barrier for all animals.
- An opportunity for loved ones to help close the grave, if they so wish. This is a common practice in natural burials.
- A ground level head stone, made of stone native to the area to be engraved by the family.
- A list of approved native plants that may be planted on grave sites.
- Ongoing environmentally sustainable management of the grounds.

Honoring Tradition

A part of natural burials in many cultures includes home vigils with the deceased before burial. If you are interested in a home vigil for yourself or a loved one it is necessary to make plans in advance.

The Importance of Planning

When you begin to consider natural burial, many questions may arise about how to plan for your burial and how you want to be treated at the time of death. It is a good idea for all of us to make the time to think about and plan for how we want to be treated near the end of life and share our wishes with family and friends.

It is very helpful to your doctors, family, and friends to have talked with you to be clear about how you want to be treated if you are unable to make your wishes known. Also, take time to write an Advance Directive for North Carolina or the state in which you reside. An example of such a document is called Five Wishes, see: fivewishes.org for details. Five Wishes is an easy-to-use legal advance directive document written in everyday language. It helps all adults, regardless of age or health, to consider and document how they want to be cared for at the end of life. It is America's most popular living will with more than 35 million copies in circulation.

In North Carolina this document has to be signed by 2 witnesses and notarized by a notary. It is a great opportunity to start the conversation with family and friends about how you wish to be treated at the end of your life.

When and if you get diagnosed with a serious illness you can ask your doctor to develop a Medical Order for Scope of Treatment. A MOST form is a doctor's order that helps you keep control over medical care at the end of life. Like a Do Not Resuscitate (DNR) order, the form tells emergency medical personnel and other health care providers whether or not to administer cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR) in the event of a medical emergency. Do not resuscitate (DNR) order forms are created for patients that do not want to be saved in the event their heart or breathing stops. This is generally the case for individuals with late stages of cancer or other advanced medical issues.

Planning ahead will be a gift to those who need to make decisions on your behalf and help ensure your plans are carried out.

The Gifts of Home Vigils

This was practiced for many years before embalming and funeral homes started in the late 1800's and early 1900's. The women of the family took care of their loved ones, washing and dressing the body for visitation in the home. Contrary to some beliefs, dead bodies are not diseased and cannot harm the living. More and more, the practice of home care for the dying and after death care is coming back into families and community life. This also brings awareness to the alternatives to conventional funeral and burial care. Natural death care and natural burial are more affordable, environmentally responsible, and often more meaningful than conventional burials. The ritual of caring for your loved one can bring an unexpected joy and relief. It may offer a moment of love and warmth ... again.

There are several ways to go about learning how to home care for your loved ones. Resources for education are:

- Abigail Textor-Dobbins
www.DeathDoulasofNC.com/Abigail 336 312 9182
- Deborah Parker
deborahparker57@gmail.com 336 327 2482.
- Sandra LaGrega
sandraclagrega@gmail.com 336 908 4664.
- “The Art of Natural Death Care” a film by Katelyn LaGrega
<https://www.katelynlagrega.com/documentary>

You can also find many educational videos on YouTube.

Remember, this is something you need to learn before it is needed.

What needs to be done between the time of death and burial?

Death Is Not an Emergency!!!!

When death occurs at home, most people believe they are obligated to immediately call 911, Hospice or a funeral home. This is an opportunity to stop and take a breath. Be with what has just happened. Spend a bit of quiet time with your loved one before the next step. If your loved one dies in the hospital, hospice care facility, or nursing home you have the right to ask for time with them. Usually they will give you a few hours, if possible, giving you time to gather family and friends to see them before the next step. This allows for the opportunity and time to start beneficial healing and help with closure and grieving.

If using a funeral home for transportation, ask them for a delayed pickup. In North Carolina it is legal to transport your loved one yourself if you are going to remain in the state. If not, you must acquire a transport certificate from the county health department.

If you wish you can have the funeral home take your loved one home, perhaps allow time for visitation, and then have them transport the loved one to the funeral home for care and refrigeration before burial. You also have the option to assist the funeral home in the care of getting your loved one ready for burial.

The time after death is the last time some people have to see their loved one and say goodbye - so be sure to ask for what you want and what you need and know that you can take your time.

All Souls Natural Burial Ground needs a 36 hour notice to prepare the burial site. Make sure you have ASNBG listed in your directives as well as in your pre-needs with the funeral home as the place the body will be interred after death.

When the time comes to arrange for a burial call Family Liaison Deborah Parker 336 327 2482 or Randall Keeney 336 809 0701.

We have found funeral homes to be very helpful in preparing the deceased for their natural burial. You may already have a preferred funeral home to use, if so use them. If not, these are some of the funeral home we have worked with. They all have been easy to work with. They can also supply cardboard, wicker, wooden, bamboo and willow caskets.

- Lowe Funeral Home
2205 S.Church St., Burlington, N.C.
336 228 8366
- Triad Cremation & Funeral Services
2110 Servomation Rd. Greensboro, N.C.
336 275 1005
- Forbis & Dick Funeral Services
118 N. Elm St. Greensboro, N. C.
336 275 8408
- Woodard Funeral Home
3200 N. O'henry Blvd. Greensboro, N.C.
336 621 3461
- Hanes Lineberry Funeral Home
515 N. Elm St. Greensboro, N.C.
336 272 5157

**Be sure someone is assigned the responsibility of calling
All Souls Natural Burial Ground.**

Other Burial Resources:

John Jull - wood casket maker
www.aldergrovewoodworks.com
919 748 7240

Pat Scheible - shroud maker
ptschbl@gmail.com
919 672 4700

Sarah Laswell - weaver of willow caskets
www.mossandthislefarm.com
678 994 2988

Deborah Parker “How to make a shroud out of biodegradable fabric you already have”. Such as blankets, sheets and bed spreads, etc. 336 327 2482

Recommended Books:

No Death, No Fear - Thich Nhat Hanh

The Five Invitations: Discovering What Death Can Teach Us About Living Fully - Frank Ostaseski

Our Last Best Act: Planning for the End of our Lives to Protect the People and Places We Love - Mallory McDuff

With the End in Mind: Dying, Death, and Wisdom in an Age of Denial – Kathryn Mannix

Smoke Gets in Your Eyes – Caitlin Doughty

From Here to Eternity – Caitlin Doughty