KJ Cemetery Committee Memorandum

“After 120 Years”

Overview of KJ Cemetery Initiatives & Policies

Congregation Kehilath Jeshurun wishes to provide its members with as much support as possible during every stage of life. We recognize that end-of-life issues are some of the most difficult for families to manage, and KJ is prepared to extend every element of support to families at that time. Complementing the wonderful work of KJ’s Chevra Kadisha and KJ’s Sisterhood shiva activities, the KJ Cemetery Committee focuses on assisting families to plan for, and implement, burial planning for their loved ones. This memorandum is intended to provide information to our members; however, all are strongly advised to seek the assistance of the KJ rabbinical staff before determining any course of action.

Guiding Principles

It is the intent of the KJ community to assist its members to:

- Fulfill the mitzvah of Kavod HaMeit, honoring the dead
- Protect the interests of KJ members - past, present and future - who own plots at KJ-affiliated cemeteries, and
- Encourage proper performance by managers at KJ-affiliated cemeteries.

Current Status of the KJ Cemetery Program

- KJ does not technically own its own cemetery, but it has purchased burial plots for resale to its members in three cemeteries in the NY area. However, with some exceptions, only Beth-El has graves available for sale by KJ.
- Union Fields in Queens
- Old Mt. Carmel, also in Queens, and
- Beth-El in Paramus, NJ

- The three cemeteries all seem to be physically well-maintained, based on KJ on-site inspections, although graves without perpetual or annual care can be less well-maintained.
- KJ maintains a detailed set of records for all plots sold and unsold, owned and used at each of these 3 locations. For information about your family’s plots, please contact KJ Comptroller, Sy Yanofsky in the KJ Synagogue office at 212-774-5620 or SY@CKJ.org.

KJ will handle the sale of a plot in the KJ section of Beth El, while the cemetery is responsible for burial services and maintenance, and sets prices itself for these matters.

**Purchase of burial plots**

Pricing for burial plots vary, but below is a sample of pricing for the purchase of plots at Beth El.

- Single Grave - $2,000
- 2 Single Graves - $4,000
- 4 Grave Plot - $7,500
- 6 Grave Plot - $10,750
- 8 Grave Plot - $13,750
- 10 Grave Plot - $16,500
Annual and Perpetual Care

Cemetery fees for annual and perpetual care depend on the size of the plot and whether any shrubbery or plantings are present. The cost for the most basic of plots is shown below, although specific quotes will be provided by Beth El on request. The synagogue urges owners to arrange for perpetual care of their plots, so that they remain dignified final resting places.

Beth El Cemetery offers two options for care of graves. Perpetual Care, which is a one-time payment, and Annual Care which requires payment every year in order to maintain a grave or group of graves in a plot.

Perpetual Care pricing, as of March 2019, is shown below for graves that are grass covered, with no plantings. If there are plantings, pricing increases.

- Single grave: $7,200
- 4 grave plot: $10,500
- 5-8 grave plot: $19,000

Annual Care pricing, as of March 2019, is shown below for graves that are grass covered, with no plantings. If there are plantings, pricing increases. Annual pricing may change over time.

- Single grave: $325 for initial sod, plus $255 per year
- 4 grave plot: $420 for initial sod, plus $510 per year
- 5-8 grave plot: $460 for initial sod, plus $770 per year
Please note that the pricing above is subject to change; up-to-date information can be obtained from Beth El directly.

**KJ Cemetery Policies**

KJ’s cemetery policies reflect both halakha and local practice in the KJ community. In the event that you have any question about these policies, please seek advice from one of the rabbis at KJ.

1. Individuals buried in a KJ-affiliated cemetery must have been Jewish on the date of death.

2. Provisions for a proper Taharah should be made before burial.

3. Funeral arrangements should include the use of KJ-approved funeral homes.

4. Caskets used for burial in a KJ-affiliated cemetery should be made of wood.

5. Burial should take place as soon as practical after death.

6. Individuals buried in KJ-affiliated cemeteries should not be cremated, in order to maintain the sanctity of the body that housed the neshamah of the deceased.

7. The interment service for the deceased should be respectful of KJ traditions and halakha, and should include the covering of the casket with earth, to the greatest degree possible, by the mourners and their entourage, and be completed before the mourners leave the cemetery.

8. Monuments should be in keeping with KJ community practice, and in compliance with the cemetery’s own independent Rules and Regulations.

Honoring the dead is a very important Jewish principle and is an exceptional act of kindness, as it is one that can never be repaid. We hope that all will respect
our policies so that we can continue to provide an environment consistent with halakha and our community traditions.