

GILLIAM SPRINGS BAPTIST CHURCH CEMETERY POLICY

[Revised 2026]

ORGANIZATION

The Gilliam Springs Cemetery is owned by the congregation of Gilliam Springs Baptist Church, Arab, Alabama. The church has appointed a Board of Trustees to take all necessary measures for the protection, management, and proper functioning of all its properties. A Cemetery Ministry Team has been selected by the church and is charged with overseeing the operation and maintenance of the cemetery and administering its funds.

PURPOSE

Gilliam Springs Cemetery is maintained as a memorial area with perpetual care being provided for all plots as well as its grounds and structures. The setting is bordered by the Gilliam Springs church driveway. Availability of plots is presently open to all persons, not just those who are members of Gilliam Springs Church.

These policies have been prepared as a guide for the ministry team. They shall be used by the ministry team, members of Gilliam Springs Baptist Church, funeral directors, local churches, and especially for those who have plots or who may reserve plots in the future.

Its purpose is to outline the use of public donated funds in a wise and unassuming manner. Public trust is of the utmost importance to the ministry team. The policies and procedures contained herein are relevant to reserving plots, burials, disinterments, and care of the cemetery. These policies will be reviewed periodically by current members of the Cemetery Ministry Team and may be amended at that time.

PLOT RESERVATION

Further information regarding the reservation of plots may be secured by contacting a member of the Cemetery Ministry Team. The cemetery has both full-sized plots, as well as plots for cremated remains. Unless there is an overwhelming and compelling reason for not doing so, plots are reserved in an orderly sequence. The reservation of any burial plot does not constitute, suggest, or imply ownership of any plot. All plots remain the complete property of Gilliam Springs Baptist Church Cemetery. The Cemetery Ministry Team reserves the right to attempt to meet all parties' burial needs on a case-by-case basis recognizing that the good of the cemetery, in its entirety, is the foundation for the ministry team's decisions.

Gilliam Springs Baptist Church members must make an **initial reservation donation of \$100** to reserve each burial site plus an annual donation for maintenance/upkeep of the cemetery. **Non-members** must make an **initial reservation donation of \$300** to reserve each burial site plus an annual donation for the maintenance/upkeep of the cemetery. A limit of two gravesites per immediate family may be reserved on the new part of the cemetery except when approved by the cemetery ministry team.

FLOWERS AND DECORATIONS

Gilliam Springs Baptist Church may at any time alter any rules of the cemetery, as long as they are for the beautification of the cemetery. The church may request the ministry team to remove any existing borders, shrubs, trees, flowers, sand, gravel, or other material. No trees, shrubs, flowers, or any plants are to be planted. No grave borders of any kind are permitted around any graves. No grave top can be covered with any material other than grass.

All flowers shall be removed from the ground two weeks before Decoration Day, the first Sunday of May. All flowers on the ground except two pots shall be removed within three weeks after Decoration Day. Flowers on headstones may be left since they do not interfere with mowing. No headstones will be installed that exceed four feet in height. Flags, pennants, or banners are not allowed with the exception of the American Flag which should be displayed adjacent to the headstone. Metal stanchions, poles, or hooks are not allowed because of the potential damage they pose to mowing equipment or injury they may cause to persons visiting the cemetery.

FUNERAL ARRANGEMENTS

Permission to open graves and allow interments or disinterment must be granted by the Cemetery Ministry Team. The ministry team will provide the family and/or the funeral director with the name (or names) of recommended and approved (by the ministry team) equipment operators that are bonded and insured. This is to achieve satisfactory results for the family and the ministry team during opening or closing of a grave. All excess dirt will be transported to a designated fill location on the cemetery property.

USE OF THE CEMETERY

All policies described within are aimed at preserving a dignified atmosphere within the cemetery setting. The Cemetery Ministry team expressly disclaims liability for any property damage and for any injuries sustained by visitors to the cemetery. The plot holder, his/her friends and relatives are always welcome within the grounds. Normal visiting hours are dawn to dusk.

The ministry team reserves the right to control all motor vehicles within the cemetery and has the right to refuse admission of bicycles and motorcycles to the cemetery. Loitering, boisterous demonstrations, and assemblages which the ministry team deems improper are forbidden. Peddling, soliciting, posting of signs or notices, advertising,

picnicking, and discarding of rubbish within the cemetery are not permitted. Animals are not permitted in the cemetery. Any person responsible for causing damage to cemetery property or grave markers is liable and responsible for their repair.

LOSS OR DAMAGE

The Cemetery Ministry Team and Gilliam Springs Baptist Church disclaim all responsibility for loss or damage from causes beyond their reasonable control and especially by an act of God, floods, earthquakes, war, riots, thieves, vandals, unavoidable accidents, and the like. Should there be any such damage, The ministry team will notify those people affected who will be responsible for any repair.

PLOT HOLDER'S RIGHTS AND OBLIGATIONS

The ministry team reserves the right to specify all interment rights for each plot. No fencing, curbing, hedging, borders, or enclosures of any kind shall be allowed around a plot. The ministry team reserves the right, without prior notice, to remove the same if so erected, planted, or placed. The use of a plot is for the interment of the human remains of the plot holder or his relatives. In no case shall a plot holder have any right to transfer, exchange, or in any manner dispose of said plot or any part thereof, without written permission of the ministry team. The plot holder is expected and encouraged to make a yearly donation to the cemetery ministry team for maintenance and upkeep of the cemetery.

RIGHTS AND PRIVILEGES OF THE MINISTRY TEAM

The ministry team has the right to survey, enlarge, diminish, alter in shape and size, or change any and all parts of the cemetery. It shall be granted easements and rights of way through the cemetery for the purpose of installing, operating, or maintaining utilities or for any other cemetery purpose. No easement or right of interment is granted to any plot holder in any road, drive, or walk within the cemetery. Such road, drive, or walk is a means of access for all persons to the cemetery as long as the ministry team denotes such to that purpose.

The statement of any member of the ministry team shall not be binding except as such statements coincide with the right of interment and these policies.

In all matters not specifically covered by these policies, the ministry team reserves the right to act in a reasonable and conservative manner with all decisions said to be binding upon the plot holder and all parties concerned.

The ministry team reserves the right at any time to change, amend, alter, repeal, rescind, or add to these policies or any part thereof, or to adopt any new policy with respect to the cemetery, or anything pertaining thereto.

Should any memorial or item placed in the cemetery become unsightly or a safety hazard, the ministry team shall have the right to have it removed without notice. If such removal involves an expense, that expense shall be the responsibility of the plot holder.

The ministry team will make available to all plot holders new or revised rules and regulations of the cemetery each year during Decoration Day.

DISINTERMENT POLICY/PROCEDURES

The family requesting the disinterment must forward this request in writing to Gilliam Springs Cemetery Ministry Team. The letter must include the name, address, email address, phone number, and the name of a contact person at the funeral home who will handle the process. The cost of the disinterment including, but not limited to, gravedigger and funeral home will be completely borne by the family making the request. It should further be noted that the Cemetery Ministry Team takes no responsibility for any damage that might occur during the entire disinterment process.

The Cemetery Ministry Team will contact the funeral home to arrange for the disinterment. The ministry team will also contact its gravedigger who is familiar with the cemetery should it be necessary to travel over any portion of the cemetery containing other gravesites. This could require the placement of planks or boards over areas to be driven over in order to avoid damage to those sites.

It should be noted that the family is responsible for obtaining any and all permits for disinterment. The funeral home may be of some assistance in these matters.