



ST. JOHN LUTHERAN CHURCH  LCMS

A Caring Community: Confessing Christ by Reaching Families

6135 Rings Rd. | Dublin OH 43016

Office 614.889.2284 | Preschool 614.889.5893

Sunday Worship 8:00a & 10:45a

Adam J. Steinbrenner, Pastor

Sunday School Hour 9:30a

adam.steinbrenner@stjohndublin.org

Bible Study for all ages 9:30a

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This narrative outlines the desire of St. John Lutheran Church to rezone our properties of 6001/6041 Rings Rd. into a memorial garden/cemetery preserve as a Planned Unit Development. We wish to expand our ministry by providing spiritual care for our congregants from the waters of baptism until they are ultimately laid to rest.

St. John has been on the Rings Rd. corner adjacent to the properties of 6001 and 6041 Rings Rd for the last 123 years. Our original church was located about a mile north on Avery Road (in 1855). The original church cemetery location, which has no area for expansion, is next to the roundabout on Avery Road. We have maintained, and will continue to maintain that property into the future. Many of our congregants have a rich, active, and full history with this church and especially the Dublin area. This is home for us now and when our time comes to depart from this life. Therefore, we want to be buried on our home property along with our church family and friends.

The parcels included in the proposed Planned Unit Development are designated as Rural Residential in Dublin's Future Land Use Plan. Surrounding these parcels are additional Rural Residential to the east, Parks and Open Space to the south, Civic/Public Assembly to the west, and Suburban/Low Density Residential to the north. This Planned Unit Development supports Dublin's future land-use goals by preserving the Rural Residential character along Rings Road through the retention of existing woodland, buildings, fence, and columns, while avoiding additional curb cuts. The only structure being added to the site is a proposed shelter that will serve as a gathering space for those attending funerals or visiting deceased loved ones within the memorial. Therefore, it is the contention of this narrative that the existing site will be largely remain the same as it is currently stands, the pastoral look maintained utilizing flush grave markers, native landscaping, screening and preserved on-site vegetation.

On a day on which a funeral is held, (the current average rate is ± 10 funerals a year), attendees may park within the main Church parking lot (± 104 existing spaces + 8 handicapped spaces), the western church lot (± 60 existing spaces) and / or the parking spaces within the preserve which would primarily be used for close family members and service vehicles (hearses). From there, attendees and visitors will walk to grave sites using the circulation network within the site. For those attending funerals or visiting grave sites, the Church will be accessible and available for restroom use, assuming the visitors are visiting during the church's hours of operation. The site's proximity to Avery Road and the location of its main parking lot along this major arterial—part of Dublin's multimodal thoroughfare plan—mean the nominal traffic- increase (as noted in the traffic study) can be easily accommodated by the existing road network.

As the primary memorial spaces reach capacity, likely decades in the future, the church will seek to expand its preserve to the southern 4 acres, using the same precedent of character it used to the north. It will have a self-contained path network, additional landscaping and screening, as well as additional memorials, scatter gardens, and / or columbariums. Until this expansion is needed, the southern 4 acres will be maintained as an open, park-like field.

We are committed to preserving and maintaining the natural and created beauty of the proposed memorial space. This commitment should give our neighbors peace of mind, with a known and stable environment with beautiful views from their property. We have the same interest as our neighbors in preserving this area and the beauty associated with these parcels of land. That stability will also protect the value of their homes. This proposed memorial project will align with Dublin's objectives for planning rural neighborhoods and parks.

INTENDED PROPERTIES DEVELOPMENT:

A. We intend to professionally develop and manage the front (north) portion of both parcels, which is approximately 6 acres, into a memorial preserve which provides a variety of hybrid burial options on this rural property. Our objective is to develop and preserve, as much as possible, the historic and open pastoral look and feel of this area while also providing various burial options as we continue our "cradle to grave" ministry. At the same time, placement of all burials will be dependent on floodways and flood plain.

B. This memorial space will not be developed in the traditional cemetery style (i.e., multiple lines of headstones) but instead will be planned & developed to blend with and enhance the existing environment, the natural land features and the local area. We will utilize a variety of burial options including (traditional, natural/green, various types of columbarium & cremation options and a scatter garden option) on site.

C. Several areas will have both large and small columbarium box options with native and seasonal landscaping. Also included, there will be hardscaping (paved sitting & benched areas) in garden spaces linked by pedestrian paths throughout the site.

D. All headstone markers will be "limited and similar" in size and shape and also limited to just 2 or 3 color options throughout the site. This will help to maintain a unified and balanced look throughout. Burial locations and options will be arranged to blend with existing landscape or have hardy/low maintenance native perennials and grasses planted nearby to soften and blend stones with existing landscape and hardscaping.

E. All open lawn areas are being planned to maintain an open pasture environment by allowing only flush (same color) lawn markers. This will benefit both us and our adjacent neighbors by preserving the current natural/rural look and feel of the area. This also helps to reduce maintenance & associated noise.

F. Plans are to have a small structure onsite linked to a memorial area providing space for family gatherings or occasional special events.

G. If any stone material is used on site or on structures, it would be similar to what is used in the surrounding neighborhoods and area. All of this would be aligned with Dublin's guidelines for **P**lanned **U**rban **D**evelopment.

H. There would be single-lane driving path through memorial garden and possibly across the properties to the existing church parking lot of 6135 Rings Rd.

I. The memorial preserve will be implemented in phases over time. The time deration for this site to be fully developed will be determined by market conditions and demand. However, the circulation infrastructure, such as roads and sidewalks, will be implemented in the first phase. The shelter structure will be a second phase as funding becomes available. The memorial plots/burials/scatter gardens etc. will be implemented upon demand and will be independently developed from the first two phases.

J The site plan is designed to maintain the existing residential character of Rings Road. The existing house will remain as a home for families associated with the church. The frontage of the vacant lot will remain undeveloped. This approach provides a buffer / boundary for the preserve while maintaining the existing character or Rings Road.

This endeavor is near and dear to our hearts. Therefore, in summary, we propose to rezone the aforementioned properties to a Planned Unit Development for use as a memorial garden/cemetery preserve.