

2022 Application for Community Garden Plot

First Presbyterian Church of South St. Paul

In 2013, First Presbyterian Church transformed unused land into an organic garden. Twenty plots are rented to members and neighbors. Master Gardeners use a section to run seed trials for the University of Minnesota and grow veggies for the food shelf. Volunteers also grow veggies for the food shelf. Last summer, volunteers and Master Gardeners and volunteers donated 8856 pounds of organic veggies to the food shelf. Gardeners are responsible for all aspects of maintaining and operating the garden. The success of the garden relies on gardeners donating time and complying with the rules. *Read the FAQ and 2022 Garden Rules carefully before signing application and waiver.*

Name(s) _____

Address/City/Zip _____

Home Phone: _____ Cell Phone: _____ email: _____

I) Plot size: circle one 10'X15' = \$35 10'X20' = \$45

Renters are allowed one plot initially and more if available. A \$20 damage deposit (in addition to the plot rental fee) is required. The deposit will be refunded when you notify us that you do not want to continue to rent a plot and your plot clean-up is completed. If you rented a plot last year and paid the deposit, your deposit will be carried over to this year so you will not need to pay the deposit again. Financial assistance (partial or full) is available. Contact Julie at 651-459-5607 for info.

II) Please circle one: No experience A little experience Somewhat Skilled Very Skilled

III) What types of flowers/vegetables/fruits/plants do you plan to grow? _____

IV) Each gardener is expected to complete service as a part of their membership in the garden. This includes all work day and tasks. Gardeners are also expected to weed the path around their plot(s) and a section of the fence line. **We will discuss further at the kick-off meeting.**

The tasks needed thorough out the season: **site maintenance, rodent trapping, pollinator and herb gardens, weeding fence line and around your plot and helping with fall clean-up.**

I have read the Community Garden Rules. I hereby agree, for me and all those who help me in my plot, to pay the appropriate fee and abide by the 2021 Garden Rules of the FPC-SSP Community Garden. In signing this, I am stating that I am prepared to meet the physical demands of gardening, perform the required maintenance and meet the responsibilities outlined in the Rules. I understand that failure to do so may result in loss of my deposit and gardening privileges.

Applicant's Signature: _____ SignatureDate: _____

Returning Gardener Applications Due: Sunday, Feb. 28th. Application and fee due to FPC-SSP to reserve plot.

FPC-SSP Member Applications Due: Sunday, Feb. 28th. Application and fee due to FPC-SSP to reserve plot.

New Gardeners: Remaining plots will be assigned to new gardeners starting with those on waiting list.

Kick-off ZOOM Meeting: Sunday April 24th @1PM (Plan to spend up to 1 1/2 hours)

Last day to cancel application and receive refund of rental fee and deposit: April 25th.

Fall Work Day: To be announced.

Deadline for plot cleanup: October 15th.

Community Garden Waiver and Release must be signed. See next page.

Community Garden Waiver and Release for Participants

READ CAREFULLY BEFORE SIGNING. Participation in the Garden shall be at each participant's own risk. Any and all claims for injury or damages shall be waived as a condition to participation. To the greatest extent allowed by law, even if a waiver is not signed, participation shall be considered to be an agreement to assume all risk and to hold First Presbyterian Church of South St. Paul completely harmless therefrom. No security is provided at the Community Garden or on church property.

Parents shall be responsible for watching their children at all times.

I, the undersigned, agree to release, hold harmless, indemnify, and defend the First Presbyterian Church of South St. Paul and its officers, agents, employees, and volunteers from and against all damages, claims, demands, suits, and/or actions resulting from my occupancy and/or use of the Community Garden property; such damages may include, but are not limited to, damage to or loss of property or physical injury or death to myself or to any person. I assume all risks and hazards for myself, my guests, and for any minor children in my custody incidental to the conduct of this activity including but not limited to the risk of physical injury attendant therewith. I understand there is no insurance coverage provided for this activity and further understand the acquisition of insurance is my personal responsibility.

I agree to act in a safe, prudent and responsible manner at all times while using the Community Garden and I agree to be respectful of other users and their property.

I have read and understand the application and accept these rules, terms, and conditions stated above for the participation in the Community Garden at FPC-SSP. I understand that this agreement may change as necessary to meet garden rules. The Steering Committee will contact me if a change to these Rules must be made in the middle of the season.

Signed: _____ Date _____

Approved: _____ Date: _____

Please return the application form, the waiver and release form and a check for the rental fee plus the \$20 deposit made out to First Presbyterian Church. Mail or deliver to: First Presbyterian Church of South St. Paul, 535 20th Ave. No, So. St. Paul, MN 55075. **Application must include payment. Plots will not be reserved without a completed form and payment.**

Received by: _____ Date _____

1. \$_____ plot fee
2. \$20 deposit (if applicable)
3. Signed Application Form
4. Signed Waiver and Release Form

2022 Garden Rules

These rules are similar to those in effect in successful community gardens around the country. They are based upon cooperation, organic gardening practices, teamwork and respect for fellow gardeners. Although the garden is a project of the church's Social Justice Committee, running the garden is the responsibility of the gardeners. The Steering Committee will handle day-to-day operation, work with the Church and gardeners to define responsibilities and develop rules.

1. **Emails:** Communicating about is essential. We are volunteers and have limited time. We have chosen to use emails. If you do not check your emails, please don't rent a plot.
2. **Agreement and fee.**
 - A completed and signed Application and Waiver/Release (including payment) is required. By signing and returning the forms, you agree to these rules. A onetime \$20 damage deposit (in addition to the plot rental fee) is required.
 - The deposit will be refunded when you notify us that you do not want to continue to rent a plot and your plot clean-up is completed.
 - If you rented a plot last year, your deposit will be carried over to this year so you will not need to pay the deposit again.
3. **Attending the Zoom Spring Kick-off Meeting is required. (Sunday, April 18th, 1:00PM.)**
4. **Adhere to organic growing practices.**
 - This is an organic garden. Gardeners will keep insects, pests and diseases under control using only certified organic pesticides and fertilizers.
 - A list of approved products and methods will be provided. If unsure about a product, contact the Steering Committee. Use of unapproved materials is grounds for immediate forfeiture of plot, without refund.
5. **Service commitment.**
 - Gardeners are expected to perform service to the garden. There will be tasks and opportunities posted.
 - Gardeners are also required to weed the path around their plot(s) and a section(s) along the fence.
 - Gardeners are expected to attend the Fall Clean-up Day.
 - Failure to fulfill this service commitment will result in being placed on the bottom of the wait list for the following year.
6. **Respect other gardeners and the neighbors.**
 - Act in a manner considerate of the rights, needs, and safety of other gardeners and the community at large and with courtesy toward others.
 - No smoking, alcoholic beverages, profane language or loud music.
 - Use community equipment and tools responsibly and treat with care. Return to the shed promptly and store them neatly and securely for safety and convenience. PLEASE CLEAN TOOLS AFTER EACH USE.
 - Do not enter others' plots except with permission or on garden business.
 - Pets are not allowed in the garden (except service dogs).
 - Children are very welcome in the garden but must be supervised by an adult.
7. **Actively garden and maintain your plot.**
 - Harvest produce in a timely manner.
 - Maintain path around your plot. Paths must be kept free of rocks, weeds, and other obstacles, including encroaching or overhanging plants (i.e. vines). The Steering Committee reserves the right to remove materials obstructing any public path at any time. Carpeting, roofing materials, and other inorganic materials are prohibited. Landscaping fabric is allowed if tidy. Wood chips in plots are not allowed.
 - All non-diseased compostable plants must be taken to the compost bins or taken home (not put in trash cans).

- To prevent contamination of the compost bins, *all diseased tomato plants and leaves* must be taken home.
- Keep garden pests (weeds, insects and diseases) under control. Weeds are considered out of control if they are greater than 6 inches in height, are flowering or are going to seed.
- Plants must not shade other renters' plots. If a gardener complains of excessive shading by anything on your plot, you must come to an agreement or remove it.
- No bushes, shrubs, raspberries, or trees may be planted in any plot.
- Any plot with numerous weeds, weeds going to seed, unharvested or rotting produce or any plot which is not half planted by June 15th will be presumed abandoned and is subject to forfeiture without refund.

8. Minimize water use.

- Overwatering and unattended, running hoses are not allowed. Water hoses must not cross others' plots.
- Sprinklers and drip irrigation are not allowed in rental plots.
- To minimize water use, mulching your plot is highly encouraged. (Do not use wood chips inside your plot. Consider straw, leaves, cocoa hulls and compost which break down in a year. Landscape fabric is allowed.)

9. Respect church property.

- Never dump debris or garden materials anywhere else on church property. Please use the compost bins and take trash home. During COVID, there is no trash pickup so do not put anything in the trash cans.
- Do not use motorized vehicles in the garden
- Driving on the grass is not allowed without prior permission from the Steering Committee even if you have a handicapped permit.

10. Transferability.

- You may not transfer or sublet your plot without approval of the Steering Committee.
- The Committee may, at its discretion, approve a one-year leave of absence upon formal written request.

11. Donate food to the food shelf.

- One of the goals of the church is to grow food for the food shelf. Although not a requirement, it is hoped that gardeners will donate their excess produce to the food shelf.

12. Communication of absence.

- We do not want food to go to waste. If you are on vacation or ill and unable to tend to your plot, you must arrange for someone to care of your plot in your absence. (Consider forming a gardening partnership with another gardener.) If you or your helper cannot harvest the produce, please let the steering committee know so we can pick and take it to the food shelf.

13. Consequence of Rule Violation. If a gardener violates these agreed-upon rules, the Steering Committee will address the violation. The penalty may be forfeiture of the plot with no refund of fee or deposit.

Important 2022 Dates:

February 27	Application deadline for returning gardeners and FPCSSP members.
Feb 28	Remaining plots will be available to people on waiting list and then to new applicants.
April 24	Garden Kickoff Meeting on Zoom - 1 p.m.
April 25	Last day to cancel application and receive full refund. After this date, only deposit is returned.
October	Fall Cleanup tentatively scheduled.
October 15	Deadline for cleaning up plots

Steering Committee used to meet on the first Sundays at 11:30 in the church. Due to COVID, we meet on Zoom. If you would like to join, please let Kathy, Jan or Julie know so we can include you.

2022 Community Garden FAQ

What is this community garden all about?

Recognizing our responsibility as Christians to restore creation, members of First Presbyterian Church turned a piece of weedy, unused land behind the church into an organic community garden. The primary goal is to give people a place to grow fresh, nutritious food for their families and the food shelf. Master Gardeners of Dakota County teach classes and demonstrate organic gardening methods in their Seed Trial Garden within the community garden. Volunteers use additional plots to grow veggies for the food shelf at Neighbors, Inc. in So. St. Paul. The veggies from these plots and the Master Gardeners are either donated directly to the food shelf or are sold to church members at the Sunday morning Farmer's Market. Since 2013, we have donated 8856 pounds of organic vegetables and \$5921 cash from the Farmer's Market to Neighbors food shelf.

We welcome people of all cultures, with little or lots of gardening experience. Each household rents a garden plot and contributes volunteer hours to help maintain the garden. Gardeners will run the garden: collect fees, maintain paths, hold meetings, serve on the Steering Committee, etc.

How big are the plots and what is the rental fee?

10'X15' are \$35 and 10'X20' are \$45. You may rent one plot. If excess plots remain, they will be available to gardeners who want a second plot. A \$20 deposit is required and will be refunded when a gardener decides not to continue renting and plot clean-up is completed.

How will plots be assigned? Plots will be assigned first to returning gardeners, next to church members, then to community residents. Assignments in each group will be on a first-come, first-assigned basis. Sign-up deadlines are: February 21st for returning gardeners and FPC-SSP members who want to join the garden.

Are the gardens organic? Gardeners must agree to use only organic gardening methods. Commercial chemical products, including herbicides, insecticides and fungicides, are not allowed in this garden for 2 reasons. First, they are poisonous and pose a threat to animals, plants and insects beyond the target pest. Second, insecticides and herbicides may drift to neighboring garden plots. Therefore, only products which are certified as organic can be used. A list of acceptable organic products will be available.

What about people who have never gardened before? One of the greatest benefits of community gardening is learning from other gardeners. Master Gardeners will teach free classes and demonstrate organic gardening methods in their Seed Trial Garden. There will be other experienced gardeners who will be glad to share their knowledge and skills with gardening novices.

How much time does gardening take? Gardening is fun, but it's also hard work. You have to weed, harvest, and maintain your plot. If you are going to be out of town for an extended period, you'll have to arrange for someone to tend your plot. Gardening also demands more time at different points in the season than others. If you don't think you can tend to your plot twice a week, consider sharing with someone else.

What are the gardener's responsibilities? ~Be a good neighbor by following the rules and maintaining your plot. ~Help with maintenance of the garden. ~ Enjoy the garden and the community of gardeners!

What about deer and rabbits? The 8' fence and the gate are meant to keep out deer and rabbits. Unfortunately, the mice have no trouble getting through the fence.

Is water available? There are 4 water spigots and hoses. In order to minimize water use and keep rental fees low, gardeners are asked to use water wisely and to mulch plants and paths.

When can I start gardening? That will be determined by weather.

What about theft? Many community gardens experience at least a little theft or vandalism. We hope that our locked gate and 8' fence will prevent problems. So far, we have had no problems.

Are the gardens tilled? Tilling will be available for those gardeners who want it. Timing will depend upon weather and soil moisture level.

Is there a restroom? When the church is open, the restroom is available. When the church isn't open, it is not.

Are pets allowed? No, gardeners are not allowed to bring pets into the garden except for service animals.

Who can attend the Master Gardeners' gardening classes? The classes are free and open to anyone. If you are interested in attending, watch the calendar of the church website: www.fpcssp.org We will also notify you by e-mail.

Important 2021 Dates:

February 27	Application deadline for returning gardeners and FPCSSP members.
March 1	Remaining plots will be available to people on waiting list and then to new applicants.
April 24	Garden Kickoff Meeting on Zoom - 1 p.m.
April 25	Last day to cancel application and receive full refund. After this date, only deposit is returned.
October	Fall Clean-up date will be announced later
October 15	Deadline for cleaning up plots

Steering Committee used to meet on the first Sundays at 11:30 in the church. Due to COVID, we meet on Zoom. If you would like to join, please let Kathy, Jan or Julie know so we can include you.