



“PLANTING INFO ...”

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The Creation of a Meditation Garden

This newsletter is dedicated to the creation of one meditation garden from its beginning concepts to its dedication and beyond. It is the history of one church’s garden and how it became a reality. It began with the dream of a church member and his endowment to the church. The ladies of the church were entrusted with making his dream come true.

What is a meditation garden? There are many definitions and most are correct. It is a place to provide retreat, an escape from the daily stresses of life. All elements should be soothing and peaceful. Natural elements will magnify the experience of calm, relaxation and peace.

What are the basics to consider? Funding is first but, of course, not for this garden. The next step is selection of site. The site should be cool, dry, calm and quiet. In the case of this particular garden, the site had already been selected. Other thoughts to be included are size, sound (need for buffers?), terrain and views.



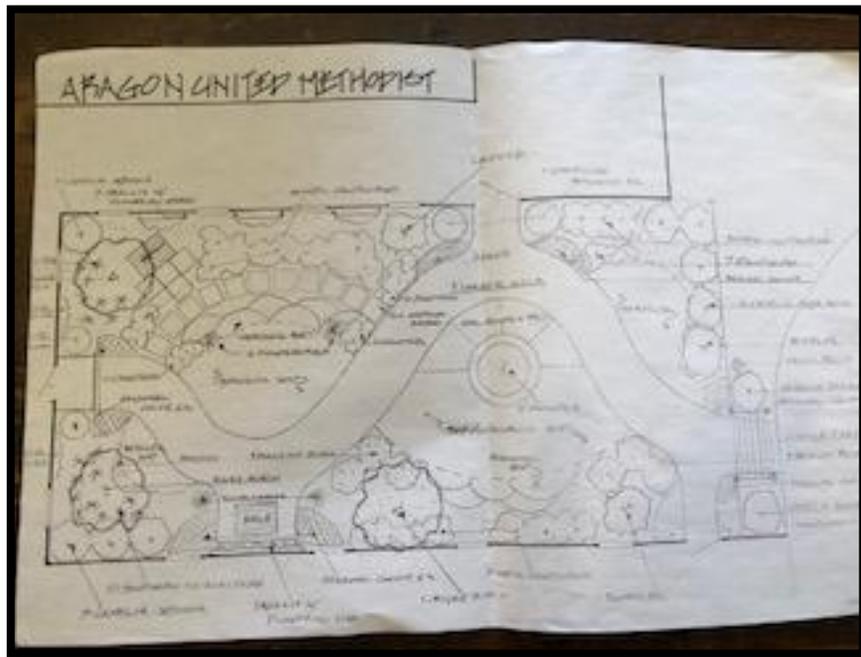
New Dawn Rose was selected as an element in this garden due to its prolific blooms and excellent climbing trait.

And now how the Aragon United Methodist Church Meditation Garden came to be:

When the ladies of the church received this great responsibility, the first step was setting up a committee. It was understood that a large endowment had been given to them but was also known that there would be more expenses in the future – upkeep being a major one. Fundraisers were begun. The church sold bricks which were to be in honor or memory of someone and would be placed in the garden walkway. There would be many dinners, bake sales and rummage sales. There was an opportunity for church members to make donations with their name being placed in an honor book.

Upon investigating the site (*surrounded on three sides by the sanctuary, fellowship hall and Sunday School rooms*), it was determined that there would be a drainage problem. The church took on this problem without involving the endowment. When this was completed, it went back to the ladies to complete.

Next step – a plan! The ladies were asked to submit their ideas. After several weeks of going over these plans, it was decided that outside help was needed. A friend who was a non-practicing landscape architect donated his time and talents.



Above is his plan which was used with only a few modifications

With a working plan in hand, it was time to find the best skilled workers possible: Irrigation system and lighting would need to be installed, sidewalks (*a curving walkway to simulate water*) and landing areas at doorways. Besides the entrance, there were two other existing doorways. Though not in the original plans, a third doorway was created as an entrance to a Sunday School room which would become a library. A member generously offered a blank check to open a window into a doorway for this entrance!

Before Photos



Other Features

With fund raising continuing and church members wanting to contribute to the garden in honor or memory of their family members, more features were added to the garden. An arbor and entrance gate were installed which would eventually have a pair of New Dawn roses planted to cover it.



**This beautiful arbor was the gift of a family in memory of loved ones.
A wrought iron fence was a gift of the same family.**

With the arbor and fence in place, more features were added: a pair of iron benches, trellises and a water fountain – all given in honor or memory of someone.

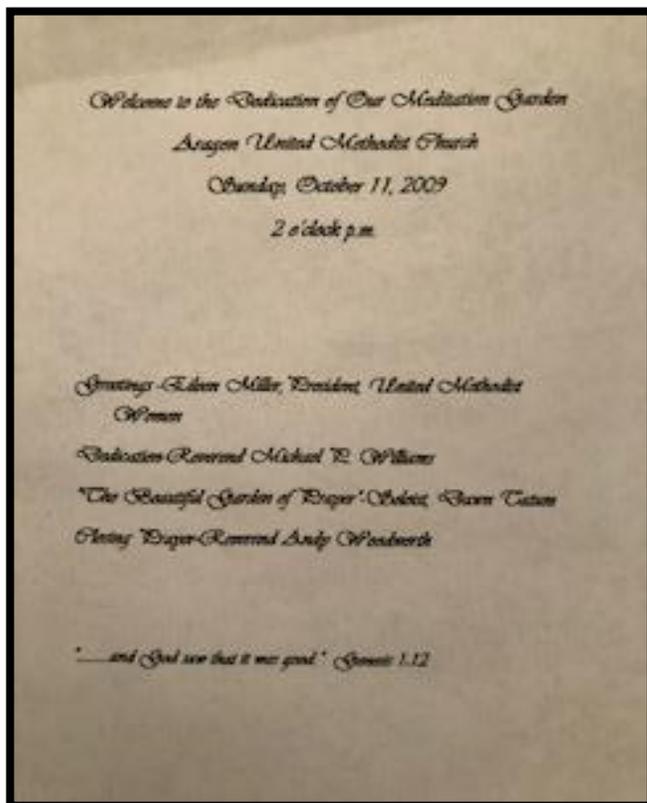
And Finally the Natural Elements Were Added

Working from the original plan with only a few changes, the very best landscaper in the area was sought. The group worked with him to add a few of their favorite plants to the garden. Following are a few of them: zoysia sod, crape myrtles, a Japanese maple, camellias (both sasanqua and japonica), anise espalier, Indian hawthorn, buddleia, fountain grass, perennial and annual beds, ferns and other plants would be added. The arbors were planted with clematis which had been saved from a church member's yard. In time, other plants would be added.

Dedication

On Homecoming Sunday, October 11, 2009, the garden was dedicated with a brief service.

The women of the church continue to care for the garden.



Garden Photos



More Garden Photos

