

Bluestem

ADDRESS AND DIRECTIONS

Bluestem is located at 1900 Hurdle Mills Road in Cedar Grove. The address is fully recognizable by Google and Apple maps. A flag, gate and sign are visible from Hurdle Mills Road. Please call Heidi or Jeff at (919) 621-4661 if you are lost.

WHAT TO EXPECT (*and how to dress*) FOR A GREEN BURIAL AT BLUESTEM

Bluestem staff and volunteers are ready to support you with the natural burial service of your choice. We are fully committed to Bluestem's mission offering green burial in a natural setting that embraces simplicity, individuality, and sustainability.

Bluestem is a natural area. Please dress for the weather, with comfortable clothing and in sensible shoes. Once the date is selected, Bluestem staff conduct the burial in rain or shine. The wind is unpredictable, and the sun is very warm in the grasslands. Umbrellas have been helpful. We have a few on site.

When you arrive at Bluestem, our volunteers will direct you from the front gate, either to the gravesite or to a gathering space. A map of Bluestem will be provided.

Please note that Bluestem does not have bathroom facilities; only 2 porta-potties. One at the front of the property, the other in the interior.

The grass pathways at Bluestem reflect recent weather: generally dry in the summer and they can be muddy in the winter. Many have a slight slope to them. Some woodland trails are still under construction. Depending on the family's chosen gravesite, expect the area around it to be all natural. Please let us know if anyone has accessibility needs.

The sanctuaries at Bluestem are plain and simple. Staff will have set up benches for the family and guests. Bluestem can accommodate approximately 30 people on benches. Other guests may be asked to stand. Bringing your own camp chair is always welcome.

Gravesites are open and undecorated. Depending on the season, Bluestem provides wildflowers, grasses and/or cedar branches and other natural materials for laying in the grave. We follow the family's lead.

The service is led by the family or by a leader of their choosing. Bluestem staff and volunteers are present for support. We are happy to welcome people with a few words about Bluestem if the family wishes, but otherwise the service is entirely of your own making.

Bluestem ash burials require an amendment process. Speak with staff ahead of time to determine if your preference is to include the amending of the ashes as part of your ritual, or if you wish for staff to take care of this prior to the service.

Family will gather graveside and place the casket, shroud or ashes in the grave. If family prefers not to be involved, Bluestem staff and volunteers can manage this process.

After the casket, shroud or ashes are in the grave, family and friends are invited to lay natural materials on top of the vessel/remains. Services may then include songs, readings and/or prayers.

Once the family is ready, they are invited to place a handful or shovelful of earth back into the grave and finalize the closing of the grave. Family and friends can close the grave entirely on their own or Bluestem staff and volunteers can close the grave.

Once the grave is filled, we will shape a mound and cover it with pine straw. A family member or friend is invited to place the grave marker in the middle of the mound. This will then be recorded by GPS.

Gravestones must be acquired from Bluestem staff (samples are located beside the cabin steps). Engraving of the stone with the loved one's name and dates occurs offsite and is the responsibility of the family. When the engraving is done, family returns to Bluestem to place the stone on the grave.

Please speak with staff about remembering loved ones at Bluestem. Natural materials only are allowed inside and on graves at Bluestem. No framing of graves is permitted. If stones, or logs, or other natural materials are assembled on gravesites, they will be removed.

Only plantings supplied by staff and that support Bluestem's ecological diversity are permitted on the gravesite or on the property.

Thank you for respecting the conservation practices in this natural area.