

Liturgy We Live *by Dr. Gil Haas*

The difference between a cemetery and a graveyard can be explained by their historical development. After about the 7th century AD, burials were only allowed on land near a church which was called the “churchyard”. That part of the churchyard reserved for burials was called the “graveyard”. As the population of Europe grew, the capacity of graveyards rapidly became insufficient, and by the 18th century burial plots independent of graveyards appeared and were called cemeteries. Although all graveyards could be considered a type of cemetery, not all cemeteries should be considered a graveyard since many are not associated with a church. The phrase “graveyard shift” arose as a sailing term, because sailors experienced the eerie silence and increased number of disasters that occurred during these odd hours. A new style of burial plot called memorial parks was introduced about 75 years ago. Memorial parks are typically gardens where flat bronze memorials (instead of tombstones) are placed level with the ground to blend with the expansive lawns containing a variety of trees, flower beds and gardens, as well as fountains, sculpture, and memorial architecture. On the other hand, a traditional cemetery has upright monuments usually made of stone.

If you have a liturgical question or an inquiry about anything that transpires during or around our worship service, please forward the question you would like researched to: gghaas@aol.com, or drop the question in the offering basin. Please note whether we can credit you as the source of the question.