



# **DIFFERENT PERSPECTIVES OF LABOUR FROM TWO CEMETERIES IN HELSINKI PARISH UNION**

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Tämän opinnäytetyön tarkoitus valaista lukijalle millaista on työskennellä hautausmaalla. Työkauden alussa tein Helsingin seurakunnan kahden eri hautausmaan työntekijöille kyselyn, johon vastasivat sekä molemmat esihenkilöt, että työntekijät. Omat kokemukseni vastaavat heidän näkemyksiään.

Kyselyssä kysyttiin aiemmista ja nykyisistä työkokemuksista hautausmaalla, kentällä vietetystä ajasta, työhön käytetyistä työvälineistä, hoitohautojen kukkien muutoksista, ilmastonmuutoksen vaikutuksesta hautausmaatyöskentelyyn ja viestintätavoista. Yksityisyyden suojan vuoksi henkilöiden ja alueiden nimet ovat anonymisoitu, mutta työnimikkeet on säilytetty.

Vastaukset sisältävät ajatuksia eri työalueiden tieto- ja koulutusvaatimuksista, erilaisista työtavoista työntekijöiden välillä, vuosien saatossa ilmenneistä muutoksista työtavoissa sekä työergonomiassa, siitä, miten niitä on ylläpidetty ja mitä mahdollisia muutoksia niihin voisi odottaa tulevaisuudessa. Kaiken kaikkiaan tätä opinnäytetyötä voi kutsua pienimuotoiseksi tutkimukseksi kaikille niille, jotka ovat kiinnostuneet hautausmaalla työskentelemisestä.

Avainsanat Hautausmaa, toiminta, näkökulmat, hautausmaiden henkilökunnat, työntekijät  
Sivut 40 sivua ja liitteitä 3 sivua

This thesis is meant to give an enlightening perspective for the reader of what it takes to work in a cemetery. The questionnaire was distributed in the beginning of the working season to employees in two separate cemeteries belonging to Helsinki parish union. Both supervisors and employees at these cemeteries have given their valued input and communicated their own experiences while working for the parish. Their information and experiences are compiled with my own.

The questionnaire asks of previous work experiences in the cemetery, current experiences, time spent in their field, what tools are needed for their jobs, changing of flowers for contract graves, climate change and its effects on working life, and communication methods. For confidentiality, names and municipality have been omitted. Working titles remain and are used to label the interviewed.

There are insights to different areas of expertise, education that is required, differentiating working methods between employees, the evolution of labour and working ergonomics over the years and thoughts on how to potentially improve on some methods for the future. The outcome of this research is this miniature collective for anyone interested in cemetery labour.

Keywords Cemetery, working, perspectives, cemetery employees, workforce

Pages 40 pages and appendices 3 pages

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Appendix 2 Interview questions for both supervisors and employees (FI)

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## 1 Introduction

To the average visitor, the cemetery is a quiet place to reflect on their loved ones in peace and to take in the scenery and silence. Families and friends often leave mementos to express appreciation, while others prefer to observe the nature of the grounds and read headstones as a pass time.

To the employees, there are several benefits to working in the graveyards. It is an excellent place to observe nature while working. The employees are almost always outside in the fresh air. They can see the results of their work nearly immediately, and the work can multitask as both employment and a way to get into good physical shape.

The surroundings are usually relaxing and there is plenty of wildlife to observe. I have worked at a handful of cemeteries in southern Finland over the past decade. They all have different but similar ways of operating and methods of working practices can vary wildly depending on who has given the advising. There are many employees working at Helsinki parish union and at the two cemeteries that were chosen for this report.

This report gives the reader information on working experiences, insight into what tools are used daily, what the working environments are like, what employees have noticed about the weather changes during the seasons, how the flowers used have changed over the years, changing working methods and how communication works within and between groups. This should give the reader a good sense of operations in a parish organized cemetery. The information has been translated into English and compiled together.

The best approach to gaining insight into what the employees do and how they work in the cemetery was to interview them. I have had the privilege of working alongside with several employees in various groups during both my previous apprenticeships and at work. Due to varying working methods, working environments and varying levels of communication, it is beneficial to compile how the different groups manage these things and compare the work that they do around the cemeteries. The questionnaire was handed directly to only chosen employees based upon the criteria previously mentioned and were given the option to answer or not answer within the working season. To keep anonymity, the subjects are referenced from their working title and a letter.

There are 4 separate working groups in the cemeteries that responded to my questions. The groups include the general grounds maintenance group, regional grounds maintenance group, church cemetery and churchyard maintenance group. The interviewed groups consists of the group's

supervisors, manager, longest working seasonal employee, and their most recent seasonal employee. Due to long travel distances, busy seasons, and corona regulations still in effect, it was decided that an online questionnaire was the best way to conduct the interviews.

In this written work, the interviewed will be referenced as their job title at the time of the interview followed by a letter. This is to preserve their anonymity. Respective titles and their groups include:

Regional grounds maintenance: Regional grounds maintenance manager "A", Regional grounds maintenance supervisor "A", Regional grounds maintenance seasonal employee "A", Regional grounds maintenance seasonal employee "B", Regional grounds maintenance seasonal employee "C".

General grounds maintenance: General grounds maintenance supervisor and General grounds maintenance seasonal employee.

Church and churchyard maintenance: Sexton/Warden "A" of church and churchyard, Sexton/Warden "B" of church and churchyard, Seasonal employee of church and churchyard "A", Seasonal employee of church and churchyard "B".

## **2 Background of Cemeteries Belonging to Helsinki Parish Union**

The sizes of cemeteries belonging to Helsinki parish union vary widely. The smallest cemetery is Kulosaari cemetery, also known as Leposaari cemetery, located on Iso-Pässi Island and covers approximately two hectares of land. They are no longer accepting interments due to the small size of the cemetery. (Wikipedia, 2022).

Honkanummi cemetery, located in Vantaa, is the largest cemetery in Finland, covering approximately 76 hectares of land (Helsingin seurakuntayhtymä, n.d.- a). Malmi's cemetery is the second largest cemetery in Finland but is the largest cemetery of actively used land mass. It covers an area of 65 hectares of land with 56 hectares being actively used as of the year 2019. (Helsingin seurakuntayhtymä, 2019. - b)

Östersundom cathedral and graveyard is located in Sipoo. It is the oldest cathedral in Helsinki's parish, having been built in the 1600s. The church was destroyed by occupants in the 18th century and the current church was re-built in 1753. It has undergone several repairs and maintains most of its original constructs. The cemetery covers approximately seven hectares of land, and currently has 900 active burial plots. (Österundomin hautausmaa , n.d.)

Hietaniemi cemetery is the home and final resting place for many soldiers, writers, actors, and presidents of Finland throughout Finland's history. (Hietaniemen hautausmaan historia ja alueet, 2022). The cemetery covers approximately 28 hectares of land. (Avoimet puutarhat, n.d.)

Maunula urn grove is a different type of cemetery in that only urns and ashes can be inurned. It covers approximately 8 hectares of land and is Finland's largest and only cemetery dedicated to urns specifically. (Vihreät sylvit, N.d.)

## 2.1 Islamic Quarters

The Islamic quarters is a regional area located in Honkanummi cemetery. Honkanummi has two different groups taking care of this area. The General grounds maintenance group takes care of the machinery, grave digging, and grass sowing aspects. The Regional maintenance group takes care of the graves' flower beds and waters the grass.

In the Islamic religion quarters, all of the headstones, burial markers and burial placements are facing approximately 22 degrees south. The Islamic religion dictates that the deceased should be buried as soon as possible following death. The deceased are placed inside their caskets on their right sides so that their head is facing west, but their face is facing towards the south. (Sexton/Warden "A" of Helsinki Parish Union, 2023).

Due to the burial hurriedness, at least one grave should be ready and open at all times. The general maintenance group, or the grave digging group will dig more graves when one becomes occupied to ensure that an open grave is always available. These graves are covered with grave covers for safety of others and to keep the inside dry from the elements. The graves here are dug with less depth when compared to the usual practice, but still deep enough that animals can not disturb the deceased. (General grounds maintenance manager, 2018). Before the winter season, more than one grave spot may be opened. Digging graves in the wintertime can be challenging. The grave spots can have a power blanket placed on top in the winter for thawing. There have also been compromises made with families that the bodies may need to remain in the freezers until the grave spot is ready or the ground thaws naturally. In the wintertime, more than one grave spot in other parts of the cemetery can be opened using the same method. This method also applies to urn burials. (Sexton/Warden "A" of Helsinki Parish Union, 2023)

It is forbidden to walk or sit on these graves in particular. Taking care of the summer flowers can be challenging. Employees in the area are advised to stand off to the side of the grave, not touching the



grave marker or headstone and lean over the flower beds to tend to the areas. (Regional grounds maintenance supervisor "B", 2022)

## **2.2 Cremation and Deceased Population**

Appendix 3 provides a table created by the Finnish funeral service association Ry and is referred to in the following text.

It has been catalogued and reported that there has been an increase of cremations for the deceased in Finland. There was an increase of 4,374 cremations from 2021-2022. As of the year 2022, just over 60% of Finland's deceased population has opted for cremation. There was a 12,5% increase in cremations from the year 2021 – 2022. (The Finnish Funeral Service Association Ry, 2022)

In the year 2021, Hietaniemi cremated 2 886 bodies. In 2022, that number increased by 63. Combining Malmi and Honkanummi crematoriums, the two had an increase of 617 cremations from the years 2021 – 2022. However, this number of cremations in these crematoriums does not reflect the number of interments in the church's cemetery. This is partly due to ash scattering practices. Ashes may be scattered or buried elsewhere in the country, not just in the cemetery. Some of Finland's cemeteries and church cemeteries, such as the Parish union of Espoo, allow the urns to be interred at sea.

## **2.3 Effects of Climate Change for the Working Environment**

Nearly all groups interviewed reported of the summers being noticeably hotter and drier. It has been observed that the droughts have caused growing issues with the general foliage of the cemetery. (Regional grounds maintenance supervisor "A", 2022) These drier summers put a strain on the suggested water requirements that the Carbon Neutral Church proposed. The grounds are still irrigated at night, but still require more watering in the daytime as well.

The change in the weather has seemingly killed some long-standing trees, mosses and sometimes making is difficult to keep contracted flower beds alive. All employees take extra time to water their quarters, as everything needs to be irrigated, not just the flower beds. The water bill is expensive due to all the irrigation for these large areas. (Regional grounds maintenance supervisor "A", 2022) For some new trees being planted, irrigation bags are placed around them to keep a somewhat steady supply of water during extremely hot days. However, they are not aesthetically pleasing.

(Sexton/Warden "B" of church and churchyard 2021). A viable option to an irrigational dilemma for some of these plants, which would remain hidden, would be to implement subsurface drip irrigation methods. The systems would be kept out of sight, retain water longer due to laying under the surface and stay free of debris due to the pipe cap. (Seasonal employee of church and churchyard "B," 2021).

Due to plant scorching and having excessive evaporation, things often need to be replaced more frequently. More perennials and annuals that are heat and drought resistant are researched and purchased more so than before. The annual flowers that may have worked for some quarters before are often no longer considered suitable due to the changing environments. The weather is not always to blame for the changing environments. Sometimes it is due from a felled tree that may have given a lot of shade to the area; Or a new species of perennial shrubbery has replaced older shrubbery to give the quarter a fresher and more modern appearance. Some shrubbery may die when a new grave is dug, and a large root system is struck. (Seasonal employee of church and churchyard "B", 2022).

The employees are advised to plan their work ahead of time and keep track of the hottest and driest parts of their designated quarters. It is advised to first start working in the morning where the sun will later hit the hottest in the day, so the employee is not there at that time. This is not always an option for some employees, but for some employees it is an option. (Seasonal employee of church and churchyard "B", 2022). Heat breaks have increased during the summertime and are mandated. Employees are advised to carry and apply sunscreen throughout the day, wear caps that provide enough shade and keep water on their person. These current advisements have increased over the years as safety precautions for the employee and employer. (Regional grounds maintenance supervisor "A", 2022).

## **2.4 Flowers**

The selection of plant species for the cemetery available today is larger than it was 30 years ago. More easy-care and disease-resistant species are preferred for grave usage. New species of summer flowers are tried in small quantities at a time. Probably, because some established ornamental plants are marked as harmful alien species or generally harmful and/or difficult to manage compared to new species. (Regional grounds maintenance manager "A", 2022). The new flower species to be tested are put in smaller quarters or a test section of a quarter. The test areas are to test how the flowers react to the environment of the area, possible diseases or bugs that may have been missed in the greenhouse inspections or what they may be weak to in general in the cemetery. The test areas are usually in less windy or open areas to further prevent the wind from carrying mould spores or anything else that could destroy other plants. (Seasonal employee of church and churchyard "B", 2022). New flowers are also chosen by their resistance to shades, sun,

drought resistance and other important factors. Flower colours are typically chosen based upon what is currently popular or a customer favourite. (Sexton/Warden "B" of church and churchyard 2021). Impatiens of varying species are ordered more often than other species currently as they are sun loving and drought resistant. Some species grow larger petals, and the leaves are dark green. Families and visitors seem to prefer those than smaller flowers. (Sexton/Warden "B" of church and churchyard 2021).

Dahlias have fallen out of favour as they are not resistant to certain aphids or powdery mildew blooms. It was reported by the regional supervisors, sexton "B" and some older seasonal employees that the summer of 2018 was the last year Dahlia flowers were bought in large quantities for grave flowers. Most of the quarters that had dahlias had to be completely replaced the same summer with other species of flowers as the dahlias were infected with Black Bean aphids (*Aphis fabae*). Other dahlias were found to have root mould or powdery mildew blooms.

Families and visitors are allowed to plant their own flowers on a loved one's grave if there is a space for it, some urn groves and headstones have no room for planting but there are outdoor vases that visitors can pick up and use for their bouquets if they need them. The water from the wells usually goes into them but on occasion a visitor will use bottled water from home if they are unsure if our water is turned on for the season. Other visitors will sometimes leave their flowers in their containers that they were bought in, such as for easter flowers or fall heathers. The ground is sometimes frozen, and not everyone brings their own trowel or can find an employee to ask to borrow equipment. The containers are usually left to be cleaned up by an employee at a later date. (Sexton/Warden "B" of church and churchyard 2021).

Some families opt to purchase perennial flowers. Perennials are favoured by families and friends that live far away from the cemeteries, such as in different cities or countries or if they have difficulty with mobility. (Sexton/Warden "B" of church and churchyard 2021). These plants are typically easy to care for, for both the visitors and for employees. Two common examples of currently used perennial include a dwarfed species of *Filipendula* or varying species of *Hosta*. These perennials stay at the grave for approximately five years and are dug up and replaced with a smaller *Filipendula*. This is due to the plants root system growing too large to fit into the appointed growing area while also keeping space for other flowers to be placed or planted by the family or friends visiting. (Regional grounds maintenance supervisor "A") The plants are tended to regularly, and leaves and stems are removed where needed and as needed.

### **3 Differing Working Environments**

The following is based on my own personal knowledge and observations of working and serving apprenticeships for the Helsinki parish.

The work is physically taxing and demanding for all employees. The employees see all elements of the seasons and do their work mostly independently unless a bigger project is to be completed. The working environments can vary but are usually similar. Some areas in the cemetery only have one maintenance group to take care of it while other areas see several groups for maintenance. Some quarters can be severely dry or wet, full weather or nearly fully sheltered by the trees. In the past decade, as temperatures rise in the summer season, employees are usually allowed heat exhaustion breaks and shade breaks.

A few select groups in the cemetery travel all around the cemetery. Some grave quarters can be small and be deemed out of service for new contracts. Whilst other quarters are large and contain many new residents and get a lot of traffic from visitors, employees, or sightseers. The areas in the cemeteries that are deemed as memorials are usually small, have a designated area or two for families to put memorial candles or flowers or other miscellaneous items. Maintenance usually continues into the fall for some maintenance groups while other groups work throughout the winter for snow services. Before going into the employee's perspectives, knowledge and working methods, their working environments will be briefly delineated and explained.

#### **3.1 Regional Grounds Maintenance Working Environment**

The following section is based on previous knowledge and observations from prior working and apprenticeships for the Helsinki parish.

The regional ground maintenance work is generally made up of seasonal employees. The seasonal employees are given their own quarters to take care of for the summer and fall seasons. They can range from 1 – 2 medium - large quarters per person or in some cases 3 small quarters.

Some seasonal employees will rotate these quarters between each other or ask each other for assistance if the work becomes too much.

Quarters with a lot of trees and foliage usually require more than one employee at some point to get the work done. These can be challenging in other ways as well. Where there a lot of trees and other shrubs, it can be either be too shady, too many pinecones and needles covering the grass or water

will be taken from the flower beds quickly during watering. The potential shade and water hogging can prevent grass from growing properly, if at all and can stunt the growth of the summer flower beds for the graves. Flower beds have been known to rot out on occasion due to too much shade while others in full sun, will burn. All this can happen in the same quarter.

In quarters that have shorter species of trees and shrubs, the sun can pose a challenge. The grass burns much faster and easier. There are automated irrigation systems used in the quarters in the night-time, but the grass needs to be watered later on in the day as well.

There have been new quarters, and the number of urn burials has increased in number, surpassing coffin burials. Urn groves had to be made to accommodate these recent changes in how people handle burials. The most recent new quarters include a forest cemetery for urns, 3 Muslim religion quarters and an unmarked cemetery for the people of Helsinki and Vantaa. A new area for the people of Vantaa was put into use the fall of 2022, when the older area was deemed full.

## **3.2 Regional Grounds Maintenance Responsibilities and Working Methods**

The responsibilities and working methods of the regional groups is similar to other groups. The only noticeable difference is that the employees mostly stay in their own designated area instead of traveling round the cemetery like the general care group or the sextons. Although their responsibilities are on a more localized scale, there is always much to be done.

Regional employees are responsible for the entirety of their own areas throughout the spring, summer, and fall. The time may differ depending on hiring times, however. The caretaker's tasks usually include taking care of their region's graves, foliage, paths, wells, outdoor furniture, methods of irrigation, tools, and customer services. If the main caretaker is absent or not hired yet, the supervisor or another caretaker will take care of the area.

### **3.2.1 Supervisor**

The supervisors of separate groups attend nearly weekly meetings with each other inside their association. Seasonal work plans, budget, concerns, employee safety, wishes for their area and employees, what tools they would like, or need are discussed. (Regional grounds maintenance supervisor "A", 2022)

In the spring, they interview and recruit approximately 14 – 16 employees for the incoming season. During the job orientation, the employees are familiarized with the tasks on their starting day and are shown where tools are kept, lockers, and other places. The process can take from 4-6 hours. The familiarization will continue throughout the summer depending on what work needs to be done and if the employee has done that work before. Safety measures are given verbally and sometimes printed and added to the garage and storage rooms. The employees are familiarized with machines and how to use them safely and ergonomically. Schedules, pay roll, authority figures and other important matters are also discussed and given to employees in a compact starting pamphlet upon starting their employment. (Regional grounds maintenance supervisor "A", 2022)

The supervisors create task lists for the day and week for themselves and for the employees based on what needs to be completed, what should be completed, smaller tasks, weather, and employee availability. They also handle employees' payroll information, absent days, and manage vacation days. (Regional grounds maintenance supervisor "B", 2022)

Helping their employees cut hedges, mowing lawns, basic landscaping, snow work, quarter cleaning and other work will be completed when needed. Sometimes this group will go to the chapels to complete janitorial work. The janitorial work includes vacuuming the church and/or staff buildings, cleaning the floors, sanitising all touchable areas including door frames, cleaning bathrooms and other maintenance that needs to be done. The supervisor usually joins the other employees when their other necessary work has been completed, such as paperwork, meetings, and customer care. They also join their employees more often at the beginning of the work season when flowers are planted and the days where new employees come in and at the end of the work season, when everything is being dug out.

They will go to each quarter to make sure the flowers and other foliage are growing as they should or if something needs to be replanted, replaced or if there is any disease or pests spreading. They are responsible for their own regions. (Regional grounds maintenance supervisor "A", 2022)

In the fall, the supervisor is responsible for choosing the flowers for the next year for each quarter that they take care of. Some supervisors will often ask employees what flowers they would like to see in the quarters next year. The employees asked, usually have a background in gardening or have been working in the cemetery for a longer amount of time. The supervisor must calculate how many flowers will need to be ordered for the next year. This number is generated based upon the grave contracts, how many flowers had to be replaced during the current season and also order extra just in case anything goes wrong. (Regional grounds maintenance supervisor "A", 2022)

The supervisor will also go to each quarter to check the graves and their headstones and the general condition of the plotted area. They will check if the contract is still valid, write down if the headstone is not found, and check if the stone is safe to be near. If the headstone is deemed unsafe, it will be marked on the list and have tape wrapped around it clearly stating that it is unsafe. The grave owner will then be contacted regarding the matter. If these headstones and graves have flowers for the seasonal workers to take care of, they will no longer be touched until the stone has been deemed safe. When there are burials for coffins or urns reserved for their quarters, they will make sure that the areas are dug out and ready before the burial happens. If there is a flower bed where there is supposed to be a burial, the flowers will be moved into a plastic container and moved off to the side. They will either be replanted by the quarter's caretaker or another group after the area has been filled with sand and soil. (Regional grounds maintenance supervisor "A", 2022).

The tools that are used throughout the employment period include the computer, computer programs such as excel, word, teams etc. Gardening tools and machines such as lawnmowers, string trimmer, leaf blower, motorized edger, weed burner, hedge trimmers, electric car, clearing saw, all small tools, e.g., pruning shears, rakes. It was mentioned that the regional gardeners would like to have access to some of the bigger machines such as the tractor, so the cultivator could be used for aeration of the paths, haul larger loads of dirt or gravel and for other purposes. This could ease the workload of other groups. (Regional grounds maintenance supervisor "A", 2022)

The supervisors communicate with other regional supervisors and supervisors of other groups. Information flows in joint meetings, face-to-face, calling, e-mail, Teams, phone applications such as WhatsApp, and on the info tv. In the crematory and chapel, the deceased's names are no longer kept in notebooks but are catalogued into the computer using a register. This result is partly due to a breach of personal information in the year 2022 at Honkanummi Cemetery. According to Ilta-Sanomat, personal information of the deceased was found inside of trash cans and could be easily viewed. (Ilta Sanomat, 2022)

They get the funeral list for the week on Monday or Tuesday at the latest. The list gives the area the burial will take place and if it is an urn or a coffin burial. They will usually remind employees to check the list and then again remind employees the day of the burials. Employees in the surrounding areas will be reminded to leave their quarters 10 – 15 minutes before the party comes to the area. (Regional grounds maintenance supervisor "A", 2022). If the employees have not moved in time, the church bells are the very last indication to leave the premises. It has been observed that a regional employee could set a vibrating or exceptionally low volume alarm for themselves set to 15 minutes before the event. This often assists in having time to clean the surroundings, hide themselves and their tools. (Regional grounds maintenance supervisor "A", 2022)

With technology increasing over the years, work has become more IT oriented in some ways. Meetings are communicated more using the computer and phones are used often. The number of employees being recruited has decreased over the years, whilst the labour has increased. Customers are more demanding than before. (Regional grounds maintenance supervisor "B", 2022)

There were originally 3 greenhouses, and the flowers were grown by the cemetery. Now only one greenhouse is in use and the flowers are delivered by an external party. More service buildings have been built and the service office has been expanded. (Regional ground maintenance supervisor, 2018). Work is more versatile than before, and they are constantly learning new things and going through classes for new methods or machines. Funeral practices, office work, customer service and the working culture are constantly evolving.

The supervisors and managers interviewed all have at least, a gardening degree or horticultural based degree. Many supervisors started out as seasonal workers and then naturally transitioned to supervisor and others either applied for the position or were asked. Some supervisors were previously employed in different groups, such as the case for the Park Maintenance group's supervisor. They all stated enjoying their jobs because they can see the effect that their job has, such as helping employees, customers, cleaning the quarters and taking care of the foliage. Another observed commonality between them is the enjoyment of being outdoors.

### **3.2.2 Seasonal Employees**

In the spring, employees are responsible for spring cleaning. This includes clearing away old funerary candles, wreaths, Heather, and conifer branches left on the graves, and discarding any broken items such as rusted through lanterns or broken glass containers.

The contracted graves are often required to have new flower beds dug in the spring. This includes either removing half or all the soil from the current bed and adding new and adding measured slow-release fertilizer and mixing it together. Rarely but sometimes, the flower beds must be moved completely or altered in some way. This can range from simply changing the shape of the edges of the bed, to completely removing everything, filling in the old bed and making a brand new one.

Such as the case for many flowering beds in Honkanummi cemetery; flower beds on graves were once completely circular and approximately 50 cm away from the headstone and plinth and right in the middle of the grave. At some point in the mid 2010's, the managers decided that this was not the best place for the flower beds. Their placement and shape was deemed more difficult to maintain for the caretakers, so, they were altered.



Employees were tasked to move the beds closer to the headstones or plaques. The new beds also needed more of an elongated half-moon shape. The flowers in the bed would be planted approximately 15 cm – 20 cm from the plinth. (Regional grounds maintenance supervisor “B”, 2022) The distance of the flower bed to the plinth and headstone is important. If it is too close to the plinth, the watering from the season can have a negative effect on the gravel and sand that keeps the plinth and headstone level and sturdy. This does not necessarily apply to plaques. Plaques and epitaphs are usually set onto the grass or very surface of the plot without anchors.

In the late spring/early summer, the flowers for these graves are planted and taken care of by the employee designated for the quarter. This care includes watering, adding fertilizer as needed, adding soil as needed, pruning, dead heading the flowers up to two times a week, clearing away debris from the flower beds and mixing the top layer of the flower bed to prevent algae and moulds from forming and inviting pests. If mass amounts of pests such as aphids or slugs are found, the supervisor is to be notified. Sometimes deer or jack rabbits can be a pest and eat all the flowers off of the flower bed, in this case, a different species of flower may be planted in its place if no other options are available.

The flowers will be watered either by hose or by watering can 2 – 3 times a week depending on the weather. If the weather is constant rain, such as the case closer to fall, watering will be less. The beds must be checked regardless however to make sure the water is permeating the topsoil layer. A simple scratching with a finger is enough. If the beds are dry, then they should be watered by hand. This happens often with flower beds close to large trees, shrubs, or very sandy soil areas.

In the fall, towards when the end of the growing season nears, the watering will slowly cease. The flowers will be taken out of the flower beds in the beginning to mid-October. The beds will be cleaned, and soils will be changed completely or more will be added. A fall mix of slow-release fertilizer will be added to add nutrients to the soil during for the next growing season.

More work often includes raking the quarter free of debris such as leaves, pine needles and cones, cut grass debris after mowing; raking the paths in and around the quarters, straightening path edges using edging tools, and weeding the paths if the paths are sand or gravel. The tools may vary due to level of experience and age. For example, a youth under the age of sixteen may not use a motorized edging tool without a guardian’s written consent. An employee of age is usually unadvised to use a motorized edging tool if they have no prior experience. In these cases, the employees will be familiarized with manual tools instead or an employee, such as the supervisor, will do the mechanical edging in the quarter for them.

If the headstones or grave markers have debris on them after using the string trimmer, the caretaker must clean them. This is done with a scullery brush or broom to scrap off the debris and then

watered with a watering can or a hose. The grave markers need to be cleaned within the day so any potential visitor for the grave does not need to clean it themselves or get upset that the gravestone is dirty. The outer shrubs and bushes will be trimmed by the caretaker as needed. Depending on the variety this sometimes only happens every couple of years. As is the opposite case with other areas, that may need to be trimmed or pruned yearly.

The wells also need to be cleaned as needed using pine soap and a bristle brush. The pine soap helps slow the formation of algae which could harm the plants that are being watered with the well water. If there are any floating debris, they will be cleaned out as needed. If the well is located near a tree that releases a lot of needles or leaves, this could be a daily task. Often in the spring baby birds or squirrels need to be cleaned out of the wells if they've drowned or fallen in and cannot get out on their own.

Often during the working season, an employee may find remains of bones, either animal or human. This may be alarming for an employee or visitors. This happens the most during soil changes and path digging/laying. When these bones are found, the supervisor is notified. The employee may move the remains using gloved hands and a trowel. If the employee is uncomfortable with moving the bones, the supervisor will take care of it. Usually, the remain is re-buried deep into the ground. If the bone was accidentally dug up with the new soil, it will be buried much further away. If the remain was found inside the mulch pile, The mulch will be inspected closer for more potential remains. In older cemeteries, such as the church yard cemetery located in Sipoo, whole ribs may be found near or just next to the church. This situation is usually due to an animal taking parts from under the church and leaving the remains on top of the grass.

Remains are almost always discovered during the excavation process of plots that already have an occupant or had at one time. The remains are simply put back where they were found. It is important to not get excited if a remain is found. Acting in a calm manner is advised. (Sexton/Warden "A" of church and churchyard, 2021)

Seasonal employees' tools change often with the season but are numerous. The push lawnmower, riding lawnmower, string trimmer, leaf blower, shovel, spade, hand rake, leaf rake, edging tools, loop hoe, double blade weeder, pruning shears, secateurs, wheelbarrow, watering can, watering hose, pine soap, bristle brush. (Regional maintenance seasonal worker "C", 2022)

Regional gardeners usually communicate with their own group and supervisor. The supervisor communicates what should be done in the mornings at the beginning of work and may add announcements before or after break time. If a supervisor or manager is out of the office such as on leave, another regions authority may stay in their place. Employees will then answer to them for that time.

Other than the flower beds changing, there have been other changes over the years. Safety equipment and their practices has gained a higher importance. Employees and their authorities must be vigilant in these practices. This includes suitable clothing for the work and weather, plex visors, screen visors, sound cancelling ear guards, helmets, gloves, and safety boots. Workload has also increased for the employees due to expansion of the active working areas and warmer weather.

The seasonal employees all have their own reasons for joining their current line of employment. Some seasonal employees have degrees or previous work in gardening, but it is not necessarily required for the job although it helps. Other employees heard of the work through friends, relatives or through employment services. Many teachers have decided to do this job as a summer job as the timeline is suitable for them in between the school years. Such as the case with the supervisors, being outdoors, fresh air and getting exercise is noticeably important for all employees. The quiet of the cemetery and work independence is also a noted importance to them.

### **3.3 Church and Churchyard Maintenance Working Environment**

The churchyard is relatively similar to the regional care environment, as it is both regional and general. The church usually has a soldier's monument nearby which must be taken care of. There are some graves surrounding the church that are important to the church and its history and are grandfathered into being cared for. The graves in the churchyard, soldier's monument and any surrounding flower beds need to be taken care of and kept pristine. Inside of the church must be taken care of as well. Usually, one or two employees are tasked with cleaning the church after funerals, wakes, christenings, weddings, etc. The employees that take care of these events are usually the sextons, but a trained seasonal supervisor may also do this work. (Sexton/Warden "B" of church and churchyard 2021)

Because the churches are relatively old, care must be taken to ensure that nothing breaks, has broken and stays in good shape for years to come. Cleaning can sometimes be time consuming. The proper cleaning products should be used to avoid accidental paint stripping, bleaching or the floors do not get scratched from pebbles due to foot traffic. Alter and funerary candles should be blown out when the last person of the group from events leaves to prevent fires. LED candles are used on the walls while actual candles are set in the candelabras. The candles are scented with allspice and other earthy spices to cover any unpleasant smells. The original bells for these churches are no longer used but, there are a series of sound systems to replace the old bells. The electronic bells are sounded by the church caretaker, parish, or anyone in charge of the church for that day. The sounds range from celebration to mourning and are loud enough to be heard throughout the municipal and land nearby.

There are memorial areas inside of the churchyard where families can leave candles for remembrance, gardens to sit near and admire and the hero's monument and memorial nearby.

### **3.4 Church and Churchyard Maintenance Responsibilities and Working Methods**

When events take place in the church, gardeners or other maintenance workers are to be out of sight. Gardeners may work in a completely different area where they will not be seen or heard but all machines must also be hidden and completely shut down. This is important for all events, especially funerals and wakes. Sounds travel from the cemetery and gardens to the church very easily.

When the funeral/mourning party moves onto the cemetery grounds, the workers cannot work anywhere nearby and must stay nearly unseen. If the funeral party is coming towards the final resting place for the deceased, the workers nearby should have left the nearby areas at least 10 minutes in advance and taken a side route as not to accidentally run into the party or any attendees. Any tools in the area must be moved out of sight and taken with the workers. Large machines will be moved as far away as possible, usually behind trees, and shut down so no noise will bother the party. (Sexton/Warden "B" of church and churchyard 2021)

#### **3.4.1 Supervisor**

As the representative/head gardener for the church and church's cemetery, Sexton/Warden "B" is in responsible for everything involving the church, church events, the church cemetery, burials, and other miscellaneous things. They are also in charge of adding these events in the digital calendar for the other churches and cemeteries to view. They are obliged to answer the work phone at all times during the working hours for customers and other matters. (Sexton/Warden "B" of church and churchyard 2021)

Often, Sexton/Warden "B" is also the head gardener for the church grounds. This incorporates the decision making for the church's groundwork. Flowers for the season will be decided for the church's gardens and burial plots. They are responsible for ordering tools for the season, fertilizers, managing grave contracts, orchestrating where employees will take care of grounds and what needs particular attention. Hiring seasonal employees for the working season and hiring their substitute begins before the spring season. (Sexton/Warden "B" of church and churchyard 2021)

Sexton/Warden "B" often needs to use digital mapping for older parts of the cemetery where stones or graves may have been previously located or difficult to find. This is mainly due to a visitor looking for a loved one or relative. Maps are updated both digitally and in written form when new information needs to be added. This includes if new graves have been discovered where there was nothing marked on previous maps or if new working areas are created. (Sexton/Warden "B" of church and churchyard 2021)

When families choose a burial area, the sexton or his substitute will measure where urns and coffin/casket graves should be placed. If the family of the deceased has no prior grave plots or grandfathered plots, new grave plots are presented to families. The families are given various options in the newer parts of the cemeteries of where their loved ones can be placed. Usually this is a simple task. Some families would like their loved one to be interred in the older parts of the cemetery however, the older cemetery belonging to the church is quite full. Rarely are new graves made unless they are to be buried in a family plot or the plot has empty niches to be filled. The Sexton or their substitute performs the ushering for funerals and funeral cortege escorting. (Sexton/Warden "B" of church and churchyard 2021)

Digging the urn niches, groves and columbarium's is mainly done by Sexton/Warden "B" or their substitute. However, there are times when another group must come in and dig the larger graves. This is usually done when a new casket grave needs to be dug or there are time constraints. The other group has a larger backhoe and sometimes has more manpower to complete the work. (Sexton/Warden "B" of church and churchyard 2021)The inurnment of ashes, entombment and interment is usually done by the sexton or their stand in. In urn groves, or lawn crypts, the columbarium is covered with wooden slats before an inurnment. When an urn is placed inside, it is covered in sand and tampered gently. Depending on if the urn is inside a lawn crypt or an alter grave, the sand will either be covered by turf, stone slate or pulverized rock. (Sexton/Warden "B" of church and churchyard 2021)

They are in charge of checking headstone safety, and the upkeep of grandfathered graves surrounding the church. The grandfathered graves will be taken care of by the church if there are no living relatives to be contacted. If there are living relatives or next of kin available, then they will be contacted on the condition of the grave site and/or headstone. This also includes grave restoration. The older graves take longer to be restored, as all the rock sand and base material will need replacing, the headstone will need to be cleaned and a new flower bed should be made if there is space for that.

Similar to the regional maintenance group, they are in charge of seasonal work around the cemetery, inventory of tools, gardening tool maintenance, garden planning, machine maintenance,

quick machine repairs, quick church repairs, trash emptying, parking lot cleaning, snow related work in the winter, bench staining and tree felling/planting. Following the procured budget for the working year is incredibly important as it is usually smaller. Tools, machinery, and employees need to be thought through carefully.

They oversee interviewing potential employees. The employees hired are a smaller group, ranging from 2 to 4. When the new employees begin their term of employment, the work familiarization is also given. Like other supervisors, this includes machine operating, work safety techniques, general church and cemetery rules and guidelines, history of the church itself, and other work-related matters. Payroll, absent days, and other employee related matters are handled.

The tools used by the supervisor of this group is expanded due to the dual nature of their work. An Avant tractor, van, push lawnmower, riding lawnmower, leaf blower, loop hoe, chainsaw, power blanket, hand saw, wheelbarrow, leaf-barrow, catafalque, bier, mort safe, grave cover, tamper, tamping bar, lute rake, edger, computer, phone, laminator, calendar, dress suit or dress for funeral services and other office related tools. The use of battery-powered machines has increased. Big trees have had to be cut down and new ones planted to try to create more shade; the dryness has increased substantially, and the automated watering system does not work very well. New quarters have been built and put into use. The amount of work has increased. (Sexton/Warden "B" of church and churchyard 2021)

This group communicates with other churches and those church cemetery working groups. Communication is done mostly for union meetings or if supplies such as tools, mulch, soil, or seasonal flowers are needed. The telephone, WhatsApp, email, and the Microsoft "Teams" application is most often used. Social media is also used to update the public on church events. For communication amongst the Sexton, their substitute and seasonal employees, the telephone, WhatsApp, and face-to-face communication are the primary communication methods. (Sexton/Warden "B" of church and churchyard 2021)

Sexton/Warden "B" originally started out as a seasonal employee and eventually worked as a substitute for their supervisor. When the previous supervisor had to go on leave, Sexton "B" took over the position. They have a degree in gardening and had previously worked in a nursery. According to Sexton "B", the job is nice as there is visible change in the surroundings, especially with the changing of the seasons. The outdoor work, fresh air and independence is satisfying and relaxing. (Sexton/Warden "B" of church and churchyard 2021)

### 3.4.2 Seasonal Employees

Seasonal employee of church and churchyard “A “, did everything the supervisors usually does when they are away, such as general cemetery care, janitorial duties, replacement of supervisor. Other seasonal employees, such as “B”, were in charge of taking care of contracted flower beds for graves, lawn mowing, shrub and tree pruning, dead heading, turning soil, changing flower beds, planting flowers and other general cemetery care.

Both employees cleaned the church and the office building. Like the regional groups, they are to be out of sight during events. This is usually the best time to clean the work sheds or the office building and its perimeter. If there has been heavy rain, the paths in the cemetery will have to be releveled as there will be large trenches in them from the water. The water wells are cleaned as needed using pine soap to prevent algae from forming. The water that goes into these wells is slightly brackish water, so algae tends to bloom at a different rate from the summer heat.

The employees change the soils for all the contracted graves and hero’s monument. The flowers are planted at the same time as the other cemetery in the same parish union. The hero’s monument has new flowers in spring, Independence Day, summer, and fall. The monument has its own raised garden bed that has more shady plants. The monument should be swept clean and washed of debris. The hero’s headstones are to be kept clean. They are bevelled headstones and gather all forms of debris easily, especially during lawn maintenance days. All debris from general lawn maintenance is cleared away and they are often washed and scrubbed using a bristle brush. The hero’s monument and its flower bed are very close to the church, so both areas need to be kept in perfect condition constantly as it is the first thing people see when entering the churchyard and cemetery.

Many of the burial plots are cradle graves with sand, gravel or stone filling the inner cradle. The cradle sides need to be kept in mind while walking and working on or near them. Workers have injured their feet, legs and ankles when not paying attention, especially if the stones become slippery. (Seasonal employee “A” of church and churchyard, 2021). The filling sand and gravel needs to be tended to via weeding and sometimes replacing the filling. If the filling is highly uneven, it will be raked to a constant level. The bottom of these cradles should not be visible through the sand or gravel. If it becomes visible and the filling of the cradle has been previously added by the church, more is added. If the gravel or sand is a special type, the owner of the plot will be contacted for further instruction. Alter grave cradle cleanings usually take place at the same time the flower beds are being tended to. However, the same task may be performed throughout the week while doing other tasks if a rogue weed has been spotted. (Seasonal employee of church and churchyard

“B “, 2021). At times, the lining of the cradle needs to be replaced, such as if disintegrating or in general poor condition. The supervisor usually takes care of this task but on occasion, a trained employee may perform the task. (Seasonal employee of church and churchyard “A “, 2021).

The church is carefully cleaned by this group. Cleaning is performed weekly and also depending on events that are planned. It is cleaned both before and after events such as weddings, funerals, wakes, concerts, prayer groups, christenings, and other events. The cleaning includes the sanitization of all surfaces that can and could be touched. Due to the age of the church, it is necessary to clean cautiously around doors and walls. If anything is found broken on or in the church, it is reported to Sexton/Warden “B” or their substitute. (Seasonal employee of church and churchyard “B “, 2021).

The tools are relatively the same as they are for the supervisor. A push lawnmower, riding lawnmower, Avant tractor, skid steer loader, string trimmer, leaf blower, shovel, spade, hand rake, leaf rake, edging tools, loop hoe, double blade weeder, lute rake, tamper, hand roller, pruning shears, secateurs, wheelbarrow, watering can, watering hose, pine soap, bristle brush.

The communication methods for the seasonal workers are reminiscent to that of their supervisors. The employees communicate with each other via telephone, WhatsApp, Telegram or face-to-face. Due to the small size of their working area, face-to-face is usually the quickest method. But if another employee cannot be found right away or a question needs to be answered quickly, a call on the telephone is useful. (Seasonal employee of church and churchyard “B “, 2021)

There are more urns now than before and a quarter dedicated to urn burials was created, but the change in the way people are buried has not drastically changed. The quarters are filling up at a fairly slow pace. The flower beds used to be watered Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays but during droughts and hot periods, the watering can be nearly daily. Due to the irrigation having low water pressure, there can only be one sprinkler on at a time, the rest of the trees, shrubs, hedges and 90% of the graves must be watered by can. On hot days, this can take the entire day. If the sexton has time to help, then it only takes the morning. However, when there are only one or two employees, it tends to take longer. (Seasonal employees of church and churchyard “A” & “B”). Extra care must be taken on Fridays before the weekend due to this irrigational issue. (Seasonal employee of church and churchyard “A “).

Perennial areas have increased, and efforts have been made to add new trees to replace those that have been felled or pruned. Summer flowers that are resistant to more heat and sun are more sought after than in previous years. The summers have been drier, people do not have the opportunity to come and water the flowers as much as they need. The summers have been very dry



and excessively hot. The group had to think about which plants would survive the heat and drought. In the summer, they were not left with much spare time for other work-related tasks other than filling the wells and watering the plants. Because it was so hot and dry, the grass burned very quickly and had become sparse, so less lawn mowing was required. (Seasonal employee of church and churchyard "A").

Both employees were originally quarter care takers, Employee "A" was the managers substitute and Employee "B" was a quarter caretaker. Both employees have degrees in gardening. The work was appealing due to the independence, exercise and that they could see a clear difference in how the graves looked after they were cared for. Maintaining the churchyard is important to both of them.

Both employees have degrees and backgrounds in gardening. Due to this, they are allowed to help plan and give input into the churchyards flower beds. They are allowed to communicate any ideas they may have on flower or plant species that are planned for the next growing season. Their supervisor often trusts these employees to make choices on their own when planning the flower beds or the flowerpots for around the church. (Sexton/Warden "B" of church and churchyard 2021)

### **3.5 Church and Churchyard Maintenance Working Environment**

The churchyard is relatively similar to the regional care environment, as it is both regional and general. The church usually has a soldier's monument nearby which must be taken care of. There are some graves surrounding the church that are important to the church and its history and are grandfathered into being cared for. The graves in the churchyard, soldier's monument and any surrounding flower beds need to be taken care of and kept pristine.

Inside of the church must be taken care of as well. Usually, one or two employees are tasked with cleaning the church after funerals, wakes, christenings, weddings, etc. The employees that take care of these events are usually the sextons, but a trained seasonal supervisor may also do this work. (Sexton/Warden "B" of church and churchyard 2021) Because the churches are relatively old, care must be taken to ensure that nothing breaks, has broken and stays in good shape for years to come. Cleaning can sometimes be time consuming. The proper cleaning products should be used to avoid accidental paint stripping, bleaching or the floors do not get scratched from possible gravel that has been brought inside due to foot traffic.

Alter and funerary candles are blown out when the last person of the group from events leaves to prevent fires. LED candles are used on the walls while actual candles are set in the candelabras. The candles are scented with allspice and other earthy spices to cover any unpleasant smells.

There are memorial areas where families can leave candles for remembrance, gardens to sit near and admire and the hero's monument and memorial nearby. The bells for the churches are no longer used but there are a series of sound systems to replace the old bells. The electronic bells are sounded by the church caretaker, parish, or anyone in charge of the church for that day. The sounds range from celebration to mourning and are loud enough to be heard throughout the municipal and land nearby.

### **3.6 Church and Churchyard Maintenance Responsibilities and Working Methods**

When events take place in the church, gardeners or other maintenance workers are to be out of sight. Gardeners may work in a completely different area where they will not be seen or heard but all machines must also be hidden and completely shut down. This is important for all events, especially funerals and wakes. Sounds travel from the cemetery and gardens to the church very easily.

When the funeral party moves onto the cemetery grounds, the workers cannot work anywhere nearby and must stay nearly unseen. If the funeral party is coming towards the final resting place for the deceased, the workers nearby should have left the nearby areas at least 10 minutes in advance and taken a side route as not to accidentally run into the party or any attendees. Any tools in the area must be moved out of sight and taken with the workers. Large machines will be moved as far away as possible, usually behind trees, and shut down so no noise will bother the party.

(Sexton/Warden "B" of church and churchyard 2021)

#### **3.6.1 Supervisor**

As the representative/head gardener for the church and church's cemetery, they are in charge of everything involving the church, its cemetery, burials, church events and other miscellaneous things. They need to answer the work phone at all times during the working hours for customers and other matters. Often, they are also the head gardener for the church grounds. This incorporates the decision making for the church's groundwork. Flowers for the season will be decided for the gardens and burial plots, ordering tools for the season, fertilizers, managing grave contracts, orchestrating where employees will take care of grounds and what needs particular attention.

They are also responsible for choosing who to employ for their working season, this includes the hiring of their stand-in. (Sexton/Warden "B" of church and churchyard 2021). Interviews for employees are conducted before the start of the season. Due to the small size of the cemetery and budget constraints, less employees are hired than in larger areas. The average group size for a

working size, including Sexton/Warden "B" totals to 4 employees. When the new employees begin their term of employment, work familiarization is dictated. Like other supervisors, this includes machine operating, work safety techniques, general church and cemetery rules and guidelines, history of the church itself, and other work-related matters. Payroll, absent days, and other employee related matters are handled. Keeping an inventory of tools, maintains both gardening tools and small machines, plans the church gardens, and completes small repair jobs in the church is required. The supervisor or their substitute also empties the rubbish containers, maintains the parking lot, and performs snow related work in the winter. (Sexton/Warden "B" of church and churchyard 2021).

The church is carefully cleaned by this group and often also by its seasonal employees. The church is cleaned after events such as weddings, funerals, wakes, concerts, prayer groups, christenings, and other events. If anything is found broken on or in the church, it is reported and later fixed. They are also in charge of organizing these events and putting them in the calendar for the other churches and cemeteries to view. Ushering for funerals and funeral cortege escorting is performed.

Sexton/Warden "B" and their substitute sometimes have to rely on digital maps of the church cemetery. The digital maps are usually employees when someone is looking for a grave that may no longer have a marker or if the grave is difficult to find. In the older parts of the cemetery, the grave markers engravings may be worn down, the rows are not all straight and some are uneven. These factors can affect how easy a grave can be found. (Sexton/Warden "B" of church and churchyard 2021). Maps are updated both digitally and in written form when new information needs to be added. This includes if new graves have been discovered where there was nothing marked on previous maps or if new working areas are created. They measure where urns and coffin/casket graves should be placed. Usually this is a simple task, as new burials are made, they are usually placed in the newer, unused parts of the cemetery. The old cemetery is quite full and not many new graves are made unless they are to be buried in a family plot or the plot has empty niches to be filled. New grave plots are presented to families and are given options in the newer parts of the cemeteries of where their loved ones can be placed.

Digging of the urn niches and columbarium's is done by this group but, sometimes another group must come in and dig the larger graves as the other group has a larger backhoe or more manpower. The interment of ashes, entombment and interment is usually done by the manager or their stand in. In urn groves, the columbarium is covered with wooden slats when they are still being filled. When urns are placed in a niche, it is covered in sand and tampered gently. The wooden slat is placed on the top afterward.

They are in charge of checking headstone safety, and the upkeep of grandfathered graves surrounding the church. The grandfathered graves will be taken care of by the church if there are no

living relatives to be contacted. If there are living relatives or next of kin available, then they will be contacted on the condition of the grave site and/or headstone. This also includes grave restoration. The older graves take longer to be restored, as all the rock sand and base material will need replacing, the headstone will need to be cleaned and a new flower bed should be made if there is space for that.

The tools used by the supervisor of this group is expanded due to the dual nature of their work. An Avant tractor, van, push lawnmower, riding lawnmower, leaf blower, loop hoe, chainsaw, power blanket, hand saw, wheelbarrow, leaf-barrow, catafalque, bier, mort safe, grave cover, tamper, tamping bar, lute rake, edger, computer, phone, laminator, calendar, dress suit or dress for funeral services and other office related tools.

The supervisor and their substitute communicate with the other churches nearby but usually communicate amongst themselves. To communicate with other churches or groups, such as for meetings, Teams is used, social media applications, phone applications such as WhatsApp, email, calling or face-to-face are used. (Sexton/Warden "B" of church and churchyard 2021)

It is noted that the use of battery-powered machines has increased. Older and large trees have had to be cut down for various reasons and new ones planted to try to create more shade. The dryness of the area has increased substantially, and the automated watering system does not work very well. Due to the churches old cemetery becoming full, new quarters have been built and put into use in recent years. Because of the drought, lack of some resources and droughts, the amount of work has increased. (Sexton/Warden "B" of church and churchyard 2021)

Sexton/Warden "B" originally started out as a seasonal worker and eventually worked as a stand in for the previous manager. When that manager had to go on leave, they took over the position. They have a degree in gardening and had previously worked in a nursery. The job is nice as there is visible change in the surroundings, especially with the changing of the seasons. The outdoor work, fresh air and independence is satisfying and relaxing. (Sexton/Warden "B" of church and churchyard 2021)

### **3.6.2 Seasonal Employees**

Seasonal employee of church and churchyard "A " has an employment duality. They are both a seasonal employee and also the supervisor's substitute. They perform the work that Sexton/Warden "B" usually does when they are away. This includes general cemetery care, janitorial duties, planning church events, sitting in meetings while also conducting outside labour.

Other seasonal employees, such as seasonal employee “B”, were in charge of taking care of contracted flower beds for graves, lawn mowing, shrub and tree pruning, dead heading, turning soil, changing flower beds, planting flowers and other general cemetery care. They will also clean the church and the office building on occasion. Like the regional groups, they are to be out of sight during events. This is usually the best time to clean the work sheds or the office building and its perimeter. If there has been heavy rain, the paths in the cemetery will have to be leveled as there will be large trenches in them from the water. The water wells are cleaned as needed using pine soap to prevent algae from forming. The water that goes into these wells is slightly brackish water, so algae tends to bloom at a different rate from the summer heat.

The employees change the soils for all the contracted graves and hero’s monument. The flowers are planted at the same time as the other cemetery in the same parish union. The hero’s monument has new flowers in spring, Independence Day, summer, and fall. The monument has its own raised garden bed that has more shady plants. The monument should be swept clean and washed of debris. The hero’s headstones are to be kept clean. They are bevelled headstones and gather all forms of debris easily, especially during lawn maintenance days. All debris from general lawn maintenance is cleared away and they are often washed and scrubbed using a bristle brush. The hero’s monument and its flower bed are very close to the church, so both areas need to be kept in perfect condition constantly as it is the first thing people see when entering the churchyard and cemetery.

Many of the burial plots are alter graves with sand, gravel or stone filling the inner cradle. The cradle sides need to be kept in mind while walking and working on or near them. Workers have injured their feet, legs and ankles when not paying attention, especially if the stones become slippery. (Seasonal employee “A” of church and churchyard, 2021). The filling sand and gravel needs to be tended to via weeding and sometimes replacing the filling. If the filling is highly uneven, it will be raked to a constant level. The bottom of these cradles should not be visible through the sand or gravel. If it becomes visible and the filling of the cradle has been previously added by the church, more is added. If the gravel or sand is a special type, the owner of the plot will be contacted for further instruction. These cradle cleanings usually take place at the same time the flower beds are being tended to, but sometimes throughout the week while doing other tasks and a rogue weed has been spotted. (Seasonal employee of church and churchyard “B “, 2021). At times, the lining of the cradle needs to be replaced, such as if disintegrating or in general poor condition. The supervisor usually takes care of this task but on occasion, a trained employee may perform the task. (Seasonal employee of church and churchyard “A “, 2021).

The tools are relatively the same as they are for the supervisor. A push lawnmower, riding lawnmower, Avant tractor, skid steer loader, string trimmer, leaf blower, shovel, spade, hand rake, leaf rake, edging tools, loop hoe, double blade weeder, lute rake, tamper, hand roller, pruning shears, secateurs, wheelbarrow, watering can, watering hose, pine soap, bristle brush.

There are more urns now than before and a quarter dedicated to urn burials was created, but the change in the way people are buried has not drastically changed. The quarters are filling up at a fairly slow pace. The flower beds used to be watered Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays but currently the watering is almost daily. Due to the irrigation having low water pressure, there can only be one sprinkler on at a time, the rest of the trees, shrubs, hedges and 90% of the graves must be watered by can. On hot days, this can take the entire day. If the sexton has time to help, then it only takes the morning, but when there's only one or two employees, it always takes longer. (Seasonal employees of church and churchyard "A" & "B"). Extra care must be taken on Fridays before the weekend due to this irrigational issue. (Seasonal employee of church and churchyard "A").

Perennial areas have increased, and efforts have been made to add new trees to replace those that have been felled or pruned. Summer flowers that are resistant to more heat and sun are more sought after than in previous years. The summers have been drier, people do not have the opportunity to come and water the flowers as much as they need. The summers have been very dry and excessively hot. The group had to think about which plants would survive the heat and drought. In the summer, they had not had time to do anything other than fill the watering wells. Because it has been so hot and dry, the grass burns very quickly and has become sparse, so less lawn mowing is required. (Seasonal employee of church and churchyard "A").

Both employees were originally quarter care takers, Employee "A" was the managers substitute and Employee "B" was a quarter caretaker. Both employees have degrees in gardening. The work was appealing due to the independence, exercise and that they could see a clear difference in how the graves looked after they were cared for. Maintaining the churchyard is important to both of them. The employees communicate with each other via smartphone, WhatsApp, Telegram or face-to-face. Because the area is small, face-to-face is usually the quickest method. (Seasonal employee of church and churchyard "B", 2021)

Because they both have degrees and backgrounds in gardening, they are allowed to help plan and give input into the churchyards flower beds and communicate any ideas there may be on flower or plant species. (Sexton/Warden "B" of church and churchyard 2021)

### **3.7 General Grounds Maintenance Working Environment**

This group takes care of the landscaping in all of the cemetery. There are other groups that also move around the cemetery and take care of similar versions of landscaping such as the funerary group, the churchyard management, and the general maintenance groups. The pallet trucks are usually non-existent in the smaller cemeteries due to lack of workspace. In these smaller cemeteries, the tractors take the place of the pallet trucks.

They perform headstone levelling, road and path laying, grass sowing, grave filling, creating the blessing sand for funerals and other jobs that the cemetery needs to be taken care of.

Most materials, such as gravel, sand, mulch, soils, woodchips, and things are found on site in a secluded area towards either the side or the very back of the cemetery. The group gets the materials from here and it is also usually where their machines go during funerals or wakes to “hide”. This group sometimes digs graves, but they mostly dig the holes for urns. A separate group dedicated to grave digging usually digs the plots for caskets and large columbarium for urn groves. Like the other groups, they see all the elements. In rainy or drizzly weather, paths and roads are usually laid. The water helps compact the rock ash and gravel better and leaves cleaner lines. New soil can be laid for grave filling in similar weather but if it is incredibly wet, the soil will have to wait as the end result will be patchy and uneven. When raining, the soil, grass seeds and fertilizers need to stay dry. A cap, such as plywood can be laid on top of the soil in the carriage to keep it semi dry.

### **3.8 General Grounds Maintenance Working Methods and Responsibilities**

The general grounds maintenance crew is responsible for maintaining the all the quarters and other things in the cemetery. This includes removing headstones and plinths from graves that no longer have a contract. Filling the wholes from the absent plinth stones with soil and grass seeds. They fill and dig both coffin burials and urn niches/columbarium and re-level headstones and plinths. New paths and the renewal of paths in the quarters is often done by using rock ash. General landscaping is often done in the quarters. If there are holes, dips in the ground and general unevenness that effects the lawn mower, is troublesome to work with or may be a hazard to general traffic, they are fixed. (General grounds maintenance manager, 2022)

Sometimes entire quarters need to be re-landscaped, and the base and plinths of all the headstones needs to be raised. This group helps complete those tasks along with other groups to get the job done. If this group goes to the other nearby cemeteries, it is usually for landscaping maintenance. If there are many bevel headstones to be levelled, monument/obelisk headstone or other heavier work that cannot be completed by the other team.

They sometimes deliver mulch and soil to the regional areas or the churchyard for the seasonal gardeners if the supply has run out. In the winter, snow ploughing, plot thawing, and other snow related work is completed. (General grounds maintenance manager, 2022)

### 3.8.1 Supervisor

The supervisor's work can be varying. In May – October, they perform gardening work and landscaping around the cemetery. In November – April, they perform more janitorial work in the chapel as well as snow work. In the chapel, ushering during funerals is performed and they work as a funeral cortege escort. (General grounds maintenance manager, 2022)

Their work continues after burials of all sorts. Sometimes if there is exhumations for restoration of caskets or urn retrievals, they must dig up and refill the area. This is a rare occurrence, but when performed, it is often due to a much larger landscaping job being performed where many graves and urns will be misplaced and reburied in a nearby area. Before work can proceed, some permits need to be filled. As the Finnish law states:

“A buried body or ashes can be moved to another grave with the permission of the regional administration office for particularly pressing reasons. There are separate regulations regarding the health protection authority's permission to move a buried body”. (Hautaustoimilaki 457/2003 §24)

The grave digging continues all summer long. In the winter, niches and grave plots are thawed using power blankets and then they are dug out. The time it takes to thaw a grave depends on the size of the area, the amount of snow or frost on the ground, and the depth that needs to be dug. Other various snow related work is handled manually and by machine. (General grounds maintenance manager, 2022)

They handle the requests of other supervisors asking to have new rock ash added to paths in different quarters, along with their own work list of what other areas need attending to. They receive information from the database system, such as excel, that continuously has new information added from other groups. This includes grave monuments that need correcting, reclamations for graves and lawn, uneven grass areas and other information.

They are responsible for the interviewing process of their seasonal employees for the incoming working season. Old employees and new employees are both given instructions about the workplace and work familiarization is summarized. The familiarization and work introduction takes approximately 2 – 3 hours, with continued familiarization throughout the working season.



On the first day, information packets are given to each employee containing information about their work, workers' rights, payroll, vacation days and other important information. Work machines and tools are instructed upon as a case-by-case basis before commissioning. Asking questions about the work throughout the season or employment is encouraged.

The tools are mostly manual tools which includes shovels, snow shovel, spade, rake, leaf rake, tamper, tamping bar, lute rake, blunt tooth lute rake, hand roller, mattock, post-hole digger, edging tool, grave template, hammer drill, Wille-loader, John Deere tractor and trailer, mort safe, and grave cover. Grave burners have fallen out of favour and have been replaced by newer technology, such as the power blanket or "ground thawer". The heaviest labours have been taken over by machines, where before it required one's own strength and hands.

There is not very much face-to-face communication with this group and other groups. This is mainly due to their high rate of traveling in the surrounding area. They mostly communicate amongst themselves. Other information comes from the Info tv on breaks, the weekly work meeting with other supervisors and managers, Teams, e-mail, phones, face-to-face, WhatsApp and other available outlets. Sometimes they communicate with and help the companies that come into the quarters to fix headstones. Although uncommon with third party companies, this usually consists of helping to set a headstone or monument stone straight.

There is more technology to learn than there was previously. An example being the website Hautahaku.fi, where one can look at where someone may be buried and view the graveyards quarter maps. The usage of computer work and other digital work has increased for both receiving and giving information. (General grounds maintenance manager, 2022)

There has been noticeable an increase of inurnments as opposed to interments over the years. An average sized grave plot can fit two caskets and from 12 – 18 urns on top of those. The caskets are buried much deeper than the urns. When there are many urns in a grave plot, sometimes a columbarium is built to put in the ground, but usually the urn placements are marked down on a map. It is sometimes advised to dig into the ground slowly and see if the spades blade taps anything, if there feels some sort of resistance, it is best to move the spade over a couple of centimetres. (General grounds maintenance manager, 2018)

The general grounds maintenance manager was a seasonal worker for a couple of summers before receiving permanent employment. They were told to apply for the opening of this job over two decades ago. The freedom to move around the cemetery as opposed to staying in one area is nice. Being able to see the effects of their work is rewarding. The physicality of their labour, fresh air and independence while also working in a team is ideal. (General grounds maintenance manager, 2022)

### 3.8.2 Seasonal Employees

The general grounds maintenance employee does everything the supervisor usually does when the supervisor is away. However, this does not include the interviewing process or snow work. Work usually starts in late April for them. As the machinist of the group, almost all of the large machines are operated by them, and forestry work is performed by them. (General grounds maintenance employee, 2022)

When the group is split in half, they are the stand-in manager for whoever their partner is while the manager takes care of the other group. They are given a copy of all the work lists and information needed for the day unless it is updated after they received the information. If something comes in last minute to be completed, a phone call is usually made to pass along the information. On Fridays, or the days before a long weekend, the machines are thoroughly cleaned inside and out and inspected for any issues. The machines are usually inspected at the end of each workday and their working hours and petrol usage are logged into notebooks. (General grounds maintenance employee, 2022).

Their tools are fairly similar to other groups. Shovels, snow shovel, spade, rake, leaf rake, tamper, tamping bar, lute rake, blunt tooth lute rake, rope, hand roller, mattock, post-hole digger, edging tool, grave template, hammer drill, Wille-loader, John Deere tractor and trailer, mort safe, grave cover, electric golf cart, bicycle, and anything else found in the tool storage shed.

Sometimes information is received straight from the head gardener, but usually through the supervisors. There is some information flow with other groups, such as where work needs to be completed or started. Communication happens through the phone, face-to-face and sometimes phone applications such as WhatsApp. (General grounds maintenance employee, 2022)

Even though their working environment has essentially stayed the same size, the workable area has increased. Clearing of smaller forest groves and building new quarters has increased their labour. Some smaller paths in quarters have been filled in with new grass in order to make the area more aesthetically pleasing but also to help workflow easier for everyone. There are more niches to dig for urn groves, and older quarters' grass needs to be relandscaped to either fill dips in the land or correct very dry/burned/damaged grass. (General grounds maintenance seasonal employee, 2022)

When this employee was younger, they had studied forest machinery in school so they could eventually become a forester. Their current line of work reminds them of that work, but also gives them options to use other machines and tools. Similarly, to other employees, physical labour and

versatility of the job is a key factor. There is joy in fulfilling the stand-in position for their supervisor when the supervisor is out of office. Usually, maintenance work is conducted during those time periods. (General grounds maintenance seasonal employee, 2022).

## **4 Helsinki Parish Union and Environmental Diplomacy**

The churches environmental diplomacy has been developed, tailored, and revised regularly since its creation in the year of 2001. The churches environmental diplomacy handbook was last revised and then published in the year of 2021. (Evangelical Lutheran Church of Finland, n.d.-a) The handbook is to be used as a tool in which to help church employees implement carbon neutral habits and practices. The goals are clearly presented and strategized, giving the reader a clear idea of what is to be done. The evangelical Lutheran church of Finland is relatively large, it consists of different parishes and congregations' unions. Due to this, they are independent in their decision making and are not required to join the diplomacy. However, the parishes are still invited to participate. (Evangelical Lutheran Church of Finland, n.d.-a)

The parish's environmental diplomacy also includes the environment management commitment, offer environmental diploma training, a group dedicated to working in and for the environment, monitoring of the environmental program, auditing, renewal, interim auditing, communications, finances and operations, environmental education, transportations, forests, parks, cemeteries, real estate and energy, food and kitchens, waste management and promotion of a circular economy. (Evangelical Lutheran Church of Finland, n.d.-b)

### **4.1 Carbon neutral church 2030**

In February of 2019, the evangelical church made the decision to join the efforts to become carbon neutral by the year 2030. The parish households need to be equal to their residing area carbon sinks. The church is to practice their reduction of greenhouse emissions from the parish buildings. The church encourages its members to approach operations with carbon neutrality in mind. (Evangelical Lutheran Church of Finland, n.d.-b)

Part of this plan of action is encouraging members of the church and its employees to live within moderation. To not make extra waste that cannot be reused, incinerated, or recycled. Finland's Lutheran church owns approximately 0,7% of Finland's forests but their carbon sinks have not yet been mapped. However, the churches own assessors have noted that most of their carbon

emissions come from heating their buildings and electricity consumption. (Evangelical Lutheran Church of Finland, n.d.-a)

Information on the churches carbon neutrality plan and steps they are taking to reach that goal, is readable on their webpages and shorter versions are available in Swedish and English.

Environmentally friendly church events are given in a year-round calendar format. The events range from bird watching, recycling events, recyclable Christmas gift ideas to more nationally known events such as green flag day and earth day. (Evangelical Lutheran Church of Finland, n.d.-c)

## 4.2 Cemeteries and Environmental Diplomacy

The church's diplomacy guides employees to care for park-like cemeteries in an environmentally friendly way. They are to be a restful and comforting environment for the relatives of the deceased and for any relatives that are to be interred in the same cemeteries in the future. When the cemeteries are maintained like a park, they are often part of their local green network and a carbon sink for the surrounding urban environments. The shrubs and trees often allow wildlife to thrive. (Evangelical Lutheran Church of Finland, n.d.-d)

Environmental aspects that are related to the care of the cemetery are recorded in the cemeteries management plan. The management plan includes the care of perennial and annual plants, cultural values, nature values, control of immigrated foliage species, control of hazardous chemicals, reduction of water consumption, environmentally friendly maintenance of the machinery, the environmental aspects of grave care, remembrance of the deceased, reuse of tombstones and the environmental training of cemetery staff members. (Evangelical Lutheran Church of Finland, n.d.-e)

There are specific areas where items may be recycled, such as metals (for lanterns, lids of burned candles, etc), biodegradable (for old flowers, grasses, and other biodegradable items), and mixed waste that will be later taken away and incinerated. The plastic containers that flowers are transported in at the beginning of the season are cleaned off and saved to be used later or recycled. (Regional grounds maintenance supervisor "B", 2022)

Weeds in the paths and in unwanted areas are taken care of mechanically or plucked by hand. Chemicals that are harmful to the environment are not introduced. (Evangelical Lutheran Church of Finland, n.d.-f) Pine soap is often used only to clean wells that have algae blooms in the summer. (Sexton/Warden "B" of church and churchyard 2021).

Annual and perennial plant species that do not spread into the surrounding environment easily are used. Some species of flowers that are planted in the summer on the graves, the seed pods must be

plucked before they burst open and cause problems for the area. On occasion, a relative, friend or visitor may plant a species that spreads in the area easily. When this happens and spreads into the lawns, usually the area is dug up, new soil is placed, and new grass is added. On occasion, a letter may be sent to the owner of the grave plot that the species of plant cannot be placed and has had to be taken out. This usually occurs for invasive species or shrubs/trees that will grow too large, and the roots may become harmful to the headstones and surrounding areas. (Sexton/Warden "B" of church and churchyard 2021).

As to the care of the deceased, the number of cremations and inurnment has grown in recent years in Finland, with more than 50% of the population opting for cremation after death. (Evangelical Lutheran Church of Finland, n.d.-g) Cremation is currently the more environmentally friendly option than traditional coffin burials as the indirect emissions that are related to burials are usually larger than the direct emissions caused by the burials. Some of Finland's crematoriums are equipped with flue gas filtering equipment and equipped with a heat recovery system. (Evangelical Lutheran Church of Finland, n.d.-g)

PVC, artificial upholstery and plastics in coffins and urns have been abandoned due to occupational safety reasons and environmental reasons. The church council has approved the recommendations for more ecological coffin and urn materials, the creation of memorial groves, borrowable urns for urn scattering and the metal recycling in the crematorium. (Evangelical Lutheran Church of Finland, n.d.-g) Prosthetic body parts that are made of metals are cleaned from the ovens and then recycled back to Holland where they will be given a new life in the future. If the deceased has a pacemaker, a doctor needs to remove it before cremation as it will explode inside of the oven and destroy the oven. (Sexton/Warden "A" of church and churchyard 2019).

Headstones are also an opportunity to reflect on the environment. They are usually Finnish sourced stone. They are the property of the grave owners as a remembrance tool but at the end of the grave management period, and if the owners have not renewed their contract, the grave and its stone are transferred to the parish after six months. (General grounds maintenance manager, 2019) The stones can be reused for many things. The identifying information can be removed so the stone may be reused as building material for memorial walls, material for art and stone education in schools/institutions, crushed into material for road and path work and may be handed over to museums as a culturally historical marker. (Evangelical Lutheran Church of Finland, n.d.-h)

The machines in the cemetery have also gone under the proverbial microscope. The exhaust emissions and noise level of the working machines have been tightened by legislation. Machines that are under more scrutiny are tractors, lawnmowers, clearing saws, chainsaws, and other working

machines. The machines are to use clean fuels and lubricants, often bio-based and no hydrocarbons. Machines can be equipped with catalytic converters and exhaust filters, replaced by mechanical, battery or electricity operated machines. The machines should not produce microplastics, feeding lines for string trimmers are biodegradable and machines should be EU approved. (Evangelical Lutheran Church of Finland, n.d.-i). Watering of foliage and lawn areas has been moved to a nighttime schedule rather than daytime. The automated system is rarely performed during the daytime in larger cemeteries. This is to conserve water usage during the day. The sun will not be present to evaporate the water as quickly. (Evangelical Lutheran Church of Finland, n.d.-j)

## 5 Conclusion

Four different groups were interviewed from two different graveyards and churchyards belonging to Helsinki parish union. Between all the employees interviewed, work is similar but also versatile. Supervisors have far more meetings but communicate well amongst each other and their employees while also helping their employees with other tasks when there is time. Seasonal employees tend to have a shorter contract than supervisors and managers.

The core work of each group is lawn and foliage maintenance, gentle landscaping, varying degrees of flower care, irrigation, customer care services and tool maintenance. The churchyard group performed similar to tasks compared to the general and regional grounds crew with some hybridization occurring due mostly to employee constraints.

Each group reported very similar motivations for their employment. Independence in work, being fresh air and being outdoors, physical activity and seeing the effects of their work were the commonalities for everyone interviewed. Mechanical and motorized tools were used by all employees in varying degrees, with large machines mainly reserved for the general grounds' maintenance group and the churchyard group.

The current change in climate is making an impact in how employees are working during the season. The employees need to plan their workload for the day based on the weather and events occurring in the graveyard but more so when the weather has become hotter in recent years. More time is dedicated to irrigating their areas more frequently, replacing any dead plants and taking more breaks in the day if the weather is exceedingly hot. Supervisors and seasonal employees that get to choose what flowers go in the cemetery need to plan more carefully than before due to the heat and the droughts. The flowers also need to be chosen for other tolerances and shade requirements. More drought and pest resistant flowers and shrubbery are currently favoured than before.

The churches interviewed have implemented recycling bins in specified areas where visitors and employees are encouraged to sort their waste. Employees are trained to work in an environmentally friendly manner and to keep their work environment clean of unnatural materials such as plastic. Employees are asked to keep a quiet and respectful distance from mourning parties and processions. The general culture of caring for flowers on memorials or graves is to act respectfully and keep flowers, vases, and reusable lanterns in the designated plot. However, some graves are more culturally sensitive. An employee is advised to respect the different culture while maintaining certain graves and areas. Some graves are peculiar where an employee may stand, squat, walk or work.

Cremation and inurnment is becoming more favourable over the years as opposed to traditional interments and burials. The number of cremations from the years 2021 – 2022 has risen by 12% in Finland. This could be due to a growing trend that cremation is more environmentally friendly, a personal preference or that it is more affordable than casket burials. More urns can fit inside an average sized grave plot and still have room for two caskets under them.

For myself, it was important to find out that all the groups are adapting to the current change in environment. How they work and handle their day has had to evolve due to the heat and how much of their workload has been adjusted to strictly irrigation or changing plants in their areas due to draught. It was also somewhat surprising that the number of cremations had risen so drastically in Finland in such a short amount of time.

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1. What is your working title at this cemetery?
2. How long have you been working at the cemetery?
3. Why did you choose this job/field?
4. What do you like best about your work?
  - a. If this is your first year, is the work what you thought it would be? Is it easier or harder?
  - b. If this is not your first year, how has the job changed for you? What have you learned during your years of work?
5. What do your job tasks include?
6. What tools do you use in your profession?
7. What do you like best about your work?
8. What changes would you hope to make or have made in the work done at the cemetery?
9. Do you collaborate with other groups? If you collaborate often with other groups, what groups do you work the closest with in the cemetery? How do you communicate between groups? How does the information flow from the leader/s to you? Would you change anything about the communication?
10. Is this your original starting position at the cemetery? If not, what other positions did you hold and how are they different?
  - If you've worked at this graveyard for several years, how has working at the cemetery changed over the years? (Technology, customers, customs, regulations/ rules regarding burials, regulations/rules for land building).
11. How has the cemetery physically changed in your time? (Has there been noticeable growth or no growth in the amount of estate lots/sections? Have current areas grown in size? Are there more urns than coffins? Have certain shady areas become sunny or vice versa, etc)
12. Have the plant species or trending plants being used changed over the years in the cemetery? Why do you think this is?
13. Is climate change affecting your field? If so, how? (Plant growth, economical questions, work methods, breaks during hot days etc.)
14. Have you given instruction/introduction or practical training to employees? If so, how many employees do you typically instruct/train per season and how long does the mentoring usually take? What does it include? How have you or could you improve it?

## **Appendix 2: Interview questions for both supervisors and employees (FI)**

1. Mikä on työnimikkeesi/roolisi tällä hautausmaalla?
2. Kuinka kauan olet työskennellyt hautausmaalla?
3. Miksi valitsit tämän työn/alan?
4. Mistä pidät työssäsi eniten?
  - a. Jos tämä on ensimmäinen vuotesi, onko työ sitä, mitä ajattelit sen olevan? Onko se helpompaa vai vaikeampaa?
  - b. Jos tämä ei ole ensimmäinen vuotesi, miten työsi on muuttunut? Mitä olet oppinut työvuosiesi aikana?
5. Mitä työtehtäviisi kuuluu?
6. Mitä välineitä käytät ammatissasi?
7. Mistä pidät työssäsi eniten?
8. Mitä muutoksia toivoisit tai olet tehnyt hautausmaalla työskentelemiseen?
9. Teetkö yhteistyötä muiden ryhmien kanssa? Jos teet usein yhteistyötä muiden ryhmien kanssa, minkä ryhmien kanssa työskentelet eniten hautausmaalla? Miten kommunikoitte ryhmien välillä? Miten tieto kulkee johtajalta/johtajilta sinulle? Muuttaisitko jotain kommunikaatiossa/viestinnässä?
10. Onko tämä alkuperäinen roolisi hautausmaalla? Jos ei, mitä muita tehtäviä sinulla on ollut ja miten ne eroavat toisistaan?
  - Jos olet ollut hautausmaalla töissä useamman vuoden, miten hautausmaalla työskentely on muuttunut vuosien varrella? (Tekniikka, asiakkaat, tavat, hautaamista koskevat määräykset/säännöt, maanrakennusmääräykset/säännöt).
11. Miten hautausmaa on fyysisesti muuttunut sinun aikanasi? (Oletko huomannut, että käytössä olevien alueiden/korttelien määrä on lisääntynyt? Vai ovatko ne pysyneet ennallaan? Onko käytössä olevien alueiden koot kasvaneet? Onko uurnia enemmän kuin arkkuja? Ovatko tietyt varjoiset alueet muuttuneet aurinkoisiksi tai päinvastoin? jne.)
12. Onko hautausmaalla käytetyt kasvilajit tai suositut kasvit muuttuneet vuosien varrella? Miksi luulet tämän olevan?
13. Vaikuttaako ilmastonmuutos työhösi? Jos kyllä, miten? (Kasvien kasvu, taloudelliset asiat, työtavat, helletauot jne.)
14. Oletko perehdyttänyt/kouluttanut työntekijöitä? Jos olet, kuinka monta työntekijää perehdytät/koulutat tavallisesti per kausi ja kuinka kauan mentorointi yleensä kestää? Mitä perehdytykseen/koulutukseen kuuluu? Miten olet tai haluaisit parantaa perehdytystä/koulutusta?

## Appendix 3

Table 1. (The Finnish Funeral Service Association Ry; 2022)

## STATISTICS OF CREMATORY OPERATIONS IN FINLAND

From the years 2012–2022

Crematorium Location	Retort	Number of cremations										
		2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
Espoo	2	1108	1179	167	509	1125	1175	1216	1 204	1 138	<b>1373</b>	<b>1 549</b>
Helsinki, Hietaniemi	2	1980	1148	2519	2728	2371	2488	2453	2 412	2 905	<b>2 886</b>	<b>2 949</b>
Helsinki, Malmi	2	1266		1421	1453			1593				
Helsinki, Honkanummi, Vantaa	2	2364		2688	2478			1971				
Helsinki:Malmi+Honkanummi	1+2	3630	4351	4109	3931	3855	3964	3958	4 143	4 432	<b>4 613</b>	<b>5 230</b>
Hyvinkää	1	865	1002	1057	1182	1187	1185	1287	1 315	1 436	<b>1 468</b>	<b>1 522</b>
Hämeenlinna	1	1102	1079	996	967	1116	1097	1390	1 418	1 538	<b>1 665</b>	<b>1 882</b>
Imatra	1	619	791	808	855	880	975	1000	1 027	1 154	<b>1 218</b>	<b>1 248</b>
Joensuu	1	401	390	485	508	573	574	605	678	801	<b>865</b>	<b>1 446</b>
Jyväskylä	2	979	1003	1155	1183	1294	1364	1626	1 651	1 840	<b>1 853</b>	<b>1 741</b>
Kajaani	1	181	218	231	310	232	309	313	448	577	<b>644</b>	<b>748</b>
Karjaa/Raasepori	1	870	845	919	827	991	857	1091	1 069	1 187	<b>1 245</b>	<b>1 446</b>
Kuopio	1	871	918	987	1047	1178	1231	1302	1 393	1 513	<b>1 599</b>	<b>1 844</b>
Kokkola	1			31.8.21 starting cremation in the new crematorium started							<b>141</b>	<b>438</b>
Kotka	1	1127	1071	1134	1224	1417	1003	1110	1 087	1 232	<b>1 186</b>	<b>1 383</b>
Lahti	1	1464	1473	1566	1608	1616	2071	2243	2 249	2 300	<b>2 704</b>	<b>3 174</b>
Oulu	1	879	1005	1098	1000	1204	1339	1501	1 436	1 593	<b>1 625</b>	<b>1 745</b>
Pori	2	1058	1063	1034	1006	1168	1014	1398	1 360	1 170	<b>1 255</b>	<b>1 637</b>
Rauma	1	389	451	501	510	538	715	603	699	1 001	<b>1 496</b>	<b>1 275</b>
Seinäjoki	1	516	570	579	378	683	772	814	902	1 060	<b>1 114</b>	<b>1 205</b>
Tampere, Vatiala	2	1779	2130	2407	2542	2655	2771	2331	2 562	2 792	<b>3 007</b>	<b>3 030</b>
Turku	2	2405	2520	2532	2591	2808	2812	2972	3 006	2 876	<b>2 187</b>	<b>3 025</b>
Vaasa	1	425	495	538	725	592	620	665	674	701	<b>717</b>	<b>718</b>
	<b>29</b>	<b>22648</b>	<b>24855</b>	<b>25828</b>	<b>25631</b>	<b>27483</b>	<b>28336</b>	<b>29366</b>	<b>30 733</b>	<b>33 246</b>	<b>34 861</b>	<b>39 235</b>
Total amount of deceased		<b>51465</b>	<b>51185</b>	<b>52186</b>	<b>52492</b>	<b>53923</b>	<b>53217</b>	<b>54295</b>	<b>53 559</b>	<b>54 943</b>	<b>57 343</b>	<b>62 886</b>
Cremation % of deceased		<b>44,01</b>	<b>48,56</b>	<b>47,56</b>	<b>48,83</b>	<b>50,97</b>	<b>53,25</b>	<b>54,09</b>	<b>57,18</b>	<b>60,5</b>	<b>60,8</b>	<b>62,39</b>

There were a total of 39,235 cremations in 2022, which was 4,374 more than in 2021.

According to Statistics Finland's preliminary information, there were 62,886 deaths in 2022 (final statistics in April 2023)

According to the Church Board's statistics, in 2022, 57,283 deceased people were buried in parishes