

GRACE LUTHERAN CHURCH COLUMBARIUM FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

What is a Columbarium?

A Columbarium is a group of small compartments or “niches” designed to hold the cremated remains of loved ones who have died. It can be a place of remembrance, contemplation, meditation and prayer. The Grace Columbarium is a wall structure containing 72 niches and also contains a memorial band of granite than can be engraved to memorialize loved ones who are interred elsewhere. There is space for additional columbaria for future growth.

Why a Columbarium at Grace Lutheran Church?

Families may be comforted by having a memorial to their deceased loved one within the church grounds. It affirms our faith that those who die, remain not only with God, but with all those who have gone before us in the faith and also with the living. It is a visible sign that the church cares for its members from birth and baptism through death and eternal life. It also offers a practical and comfortable way to make advance plans, relieving the surviving family of difficult decisions.

How will the Columbarium be financed?

Funding for the Columbarium is provided through the subscription of niches, donor contributions and memorial gifts. The Columbarium will be self-supporting, including maintenance and perpetual care.

What does a niche cost and what is included?

The cost of a niche, which will hold two urns, is \$3,000. This includes the approximately 8”x 8” niche, one or two urns (depending on the number of persons interred in the niche), opening and closing of the niche, engraving the name and life dates of the person or persons interred on the face plate of the niche, and choice of niche location.

What are the advantages of choosing the Columbarium as opposed to a cemetery?

This is a personal choice. Many people choose to be interred in a Columbarium at their church because of a strong desire to be laid to rest on the ground of a church that they loved and served. They are often attracted by its religious focus and the nearness to the church. The proximity makes it convenient for visits by loved one and for periods of meditation and reflection. In addition, the Columbarium subscription fee is usually significantly less than the cost of interment in a cemetery

How are niches assigned?

You may choose an available niche at the time of subscription.

How do I Subscribe for a niche?

A Columbarium information packet is available at the church office. Complete an application for “Certificate of Right of Interment” and submit it to the church office with your check for \$3000. After purchase you will receive the “Certificate of Right of Interment” which should be placed with your will or other end-of -life documents.

Are there any financing options?

Payments for the niches and memorials should be paid in full at the time of purchase. If this is not possible, please schedule a meeting with a Columbarium Committee member for possible alternatives.

What is an urn?

Urns are the receptacles into which ashes are placed. The urns are then placed in the niche. The urns that are provided with the subscription of a niche are made of sheet bronze with a satin finish. They are sized so that two urns will fit in the niche enclosure.

May I use my own urn?

No, the reason for the decision to include the urns in the subscription price was to assure that two urns could be accommodated by a single niche. The urns supplied have been sized specifically for the Columbarium niche.

May other items be interred or placed with the cremains?

No. No valuables, trinkets or medals of any kind shall be placed in the niche. The niche may be used only for the interment of ashes in an urn. Cremains cannot be mixed. Only the cremains of the individuals listed on the "Right of Interment" may be placed in an urn.

May I place decorations?

Only fresh flowers may be placed next to a niche at the time of interment. Flowers must be removed immediately after the Interment Service. Nothing of either permanent or temporary nature may be affixed to the Columbarium wall surfaces.

How do I purchase an inscription on the Memorial Band?

The Columbarium contains a memorial band of granite than can be engraved to memorialize loved ones who are interred elsewhere. Complete the form "Request for Memorial Band Engraving" and submit to the Church office with your payment of \$500 for each individual to be memorialized.