

Completing Our Circle of Ministry

From the earliest Christian times, the Church has seen as its responsibility the lifelong care of its members. We, as Presbyterians, have long believed that no significant event in a person's life need occur without the help and support of the Church. In the Church we are baptized, educated, confirmed, and married. Consistent with that ministry, the Church also supports church families in the time of death.

In keeping with First Presbyterian's ministry of care to its members, the Columbarium and Memorial Garden offers an area designed to permanently accommodate the cremated remains of those members, ministers and families of members who wish to be interred on church grounds. In the Christian tradition, the Church has offered its grounds as a final resting place for keepers of its faith. The Columbarium and Memorial Garden of First Presbyterian Church not only continues this tradition, but also enriches our own ministry of care and support.

Financing

The Columbarium and Memorial Garden is a self-supporting addition to our ministry. No funds from the general operating budget will be used for the columbarium. Receipts from the sale of niches, as well as gifts, are used to defray construction and maintenance costs. Opportunities are available to memorialize certain portions of the columbarium garden with special plantings, benches, etc.

Definition and Design

A columbarium is a permanent structure in which niches are created to hold urns containing ashes of the deceased. The word *columbarium* actually derives from the Latin word for a dovecote, the dwelling place of Columba, the dove.

The Columbarium and Memorial Garden is located in the bell tower area. Phase 1 construction provides 30 niches, each of which will accommodate two urns. Niche covers made of granite and uniform in size are inscribed with the names, dates of birth, and dates of death. Our design also includes memorial walls for the purpose of memorializing members of our church family who are interred elsewhere. Phase 1 allows for 48 memorial wall engravings. There is adequate space for many years to come in the

area and additional niches will be added as needed. The surrounding area serves as a place for retreat and reflection in memory of deceased members of First Presbyterian. The reservation of the niche does not include the cost of engraving on the cover unless the niche was purchased prior to construction. Urns must be purchased through the church at a fee that will be subject to change to reflect changes in cost.

Administration

The Columbarium and Memorial Garden is administered by First Presbyterian Church. A Columbarium Committee, under the direction of the Session, administers the Columbarium and Memorial Garden policies. These policies have been developed to reflect First Presbyterian's commitment to establishing the Columbarium and Memorial Garden as a place of beauty and reverence as well as perpetual care. These policies, which address eligibility, guidelines for services, and other matters concerning use of the Columbarium, are available in the church office.

Reservation of Niches and Memorial Wall Engravings

We encourage members of First Presbyterian who choose to be inurned on the grounds to purchase niches in advance of need. We also accept enabling gifts to the Columbarium and Memorial Garden. Purchases of niches and memorial wall engravings may be made by contacting the church office. An operating manual which includes the policy and more specific information is available in the church office.

Cremation and the Presbyterian Church

The Presbyterian Church is fully supportive of cremation as an appropriate means of dealing with earthly remains. We believe that the body raised in the resurrection is a spiritual body; therefore the choice for burial or cremation appropriate for the Presbyterian faith. The practice of cremation is becoming more widespread in that is theologically and ecologically sound, as well as cost effective.



O Lord,
Support us all the day long,
Until the shadows lengthen
And the evening comes,
And the busy world is hushed,
And the fever of life is over
And our work is done.
Then, in thy mercy,
Grant us a safe lodging,
A holy rest, and peace
At the last,
Through Jesus Christ.

Anonymous

The Columbarium And Memorial Garden

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