

1. What is a columbarium?

A columbarium is a place where people's cremated remains are kept. The purpose of our columbarium is to maintain a member's or member family's remains in a perpetual and religious setting.

2. Why do we need one?

The church has always been involved at the time of death – providing emotional support, serving meals, conducting funeral or memorial services, and providing a place to put the body. Some churches have a cemetery on the property. Messiah Lutheran Church provides a columbarium for people who prefer cremation.

3. How much does each individual niche cost?

The cost of a niche (which accommodates the cremains of one person) is currently \$200. A family set of two adjoining niches is \$400. Once purchased, the cost is nonrefundable and the niche is not transferable.

4. What is included in the purchase of a niche?

The non tax-deductible fee assures you a niche, which measures 6 inches deep, 7 ½ inches high, and 9 ¾ inches wide. A suitably sized urn for the cremains can be purchased from most mortuaries. The name, birth and death dates are etched on a brass plate soon after interment. The purchaser does not “own” the space; the property is owned and perpetually maintained by the congregation.

5. Is cremation acceptable for Christians?

No major Christian denomination is opposed to cremation. It is one way to deal with the body of someone who has died. We believe that individuals are able to make their own choices. Cremation in no way affects our understanding of the resurrection of the body since St. Paul reminds us that what is raised is an appropriate body which need not look like the physical shell which is left behind at death. The percentage of people who currently choose cremation varies from single digits in parts of the southeast to over 60% in parts of the west and northeast.

6. What if I change my mind or the church needs to repair or relocate the columbarium.

Once you purchase a niche(s) you shall not receive a refund nor can a niche be transferred to another person. If notified or determined that a purchased niche(s) will not be needed, the specified niche(s) will be returned to the list of niches available for purchase by others. Every effort will be made to notify family of any modification or relocation of the current columbarium.

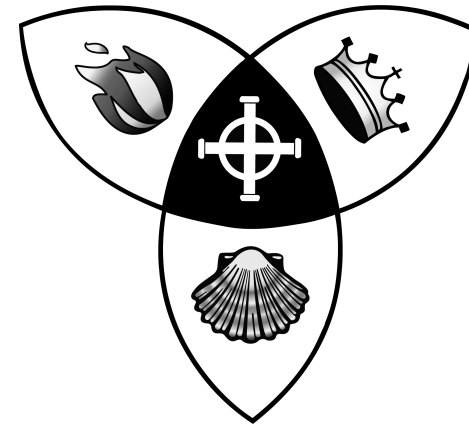
7. What if other questions come up, things that I haven't thought of yet?

Call the Church Office for copies of the complete Columbarium Policy and the Columbarium Subscription Agreement. These documents are also available online at www.mlutheran.org/Columbarium

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