

BLACKSBURG PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH



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Blacksburg Presbyterian Church

Columbarium and Memorial Tablet

Guidelines and Regulations



PURPOSE

The Columbarium of Blacksburg Presbyterian Church provides a special place at the church for the interment of ashes of eligible deceased. The Columbarium also provides a Memorial Tablet for memorial plaques in memory of those interred elsewhere or whose ashes have been scattered in the Memorial Garden which surrounds the Columbarium. Note: Ashes may be scattered in the Memorial Garden, but any digging or burying is prohibited.

WHAT IS A COLUMBARIUM?

A columbarium is a structure provided for the placement of the ashes of the dead and can be either an interior or exterior structure. Ashes are placed in niches or compartments within the columbarium and are marked with a memorial plaque. Sometimes a church chooses to have a memorial garden in addition to or instead of a columbarium. Here ashes are either buried in urns (in marked places) or scattered in the garden (with a memorial plaque). Sometimes these projects include plaques to memorialize members of the family buried elsewhere. Examples of columbaria can be found nearby at such churches as St. Thomas Episcopal in Christiansburg and Second Presbyterian and St. John's Episcopal in Roanoke. All are places where the ashes of the departed may rest in peace and dignity within the shadow of the church.

IS CREMATION APPROPRIATE AND ALLOWABLE?

The concept of interment or burial in consecrated ground is both theologically and practically sound. If the church is the center of life—baptism, confirmation, marriage, and worship—then death and burial should be centered here as well. Planning a hallowed place of interment or inurnment within or adjacent to the church revives the ancient Christian tradition of having the mortal remains of members of the Christian community located as near as possible to the place of community worship. Cremation is also economical (far less expensive than burial) and an example of sensible land stewardship.

ELIGIBILITY

The Columbarium niches and Memorial Tablet shall be reserved for and used by the following: members or former members of Blacksburg Presbyterian Church and their spouses, children, stepchildren, parents, or stepparents; and present or former members of the professional staff of Blacksburg Presbyterian Church and their spouses, children, and stepchildren. Requests for exceptions to this policy will be referred by the Pastor to the Session which will have final authority concerning the requests.

USE OF NICHES

Each niche may be used to inter the ashes of one eligible person designated by the Subscriber.

RESERVATION OF NICHES

Niches shall be available upon submission of the application and payment of the fee in effect at the time of the reservation. Reservations cannot be transferred by the Subscriber to another party. In the event a Subscriber or his/her estate wishes to cancel a reservation before the niche is used, a written request must be submitted to the Session. If the Session agrees to the cancellation, the reservation fee shall be returned to the Subscriber or to his/her estate without interest.

APPLICATION PROCESS

Each Subscriber shall submit a written application for a niche on a form provided by Blacksburg Presbyterian Church and pay the applicable reservation fee of \$2,000.00 per niche. The application shall designate the name of the person whose ashes will be interred in the niche. If the application is accepted, the Subscriber will receive a certificate of reservation. The Subscriber shall retain the right, consistent with the applicable rules and regulations, to change the designation of the eligible person whose ashes shall be placed in the niche. The Subscriber shall also name on his/her application the person who, upon the Subscriber's death or incapacity, shall have the right and authority to change the designation.

Once a person's ashes have been interred, the remains may be removed with the approval of the Session based on a written request. However, even if the request is approved, no refund shall be made.

URNS OR CONTAINERS

All urns or containers of ashes must be of dimensions to fit within the available niches (cylindrical—6 1/2" X 9 1/2"). Urns are provided by the Blacksburg Presbyterian Church office.

PLAQUES AND INSCRIPTIONS

Each niche shall be marked with the provided bronze plaque. Inscriptions on the plaques shall be uniform in style, size and structure as specified by the Session. Inscriptions may include only the name of the decedent, the decedent's date of birth, and the decedent's date of death.

MEMORIAL TABLET AND PLAQUES

Memorial plaques in memory of those who are interred elsewhere or whose ashes have been placed in niches or spread in the Memorial Garden may be purchased for \$300 from the Blacksburg Presbyterian Church office for mounting on the Memorial Tablet in the Prayer Room. These plaques shall be provided by the Church as specified by the Session. Each plaque shall be inscribed with the name and dates of birth and death of the decedent, with one name included on each plaque.

rites and services

All rites and services relating to interment in the Columbarium shall be subject to the discretion of and conducted by the Pastors of Blacksburg Presbyterian Church or their designates.

Authority and Ownership

The use and care of the Columbarium are subject to the control of the Session of Blacksburg Presbyterian Church. All rules and regulations are established by the Session and may be amended by the Session. Columbarium niches are the property of Blacksburg Presbyterian Church. Issuance of a certificate and payment of the established fee entitles the Subscriber to the use of a niche in perpetuity but not the right of ownership. A Subscriber may reserve a particular niche when his/her application is accepted, and payment of the set subscription fee is made.

Responsibility

Blacksburg Presbyterian Church will strive to protect the urns, ashes and their receptacles both before and after they are interred in the Columbarium, but it assumes no liability in connection with the operation of the Columbarium.

Columbarium Removal

Blacksburg Presbyterian Church reserves the right to relocate part or all of the Columbarium, urns, and memorial plaques if it is ever deemed necessary by the Session.

Fees and Charges

The charge for reservation of a niche is currently \$2000.00. Urns are provided for each niche.

The cost of a memorial plaque for mounting on the Memorial Tablet is \$300.00.

These fees and charges shall be set by the Session and may be changed from time to time.

Columbarium Fund

The Session will authorize a separate account for all receipts and expenses related to the Columbarium.

Columbarium Committee

The Session shall name a Columbarium Committee to oversee and execute the policies of the Session. The Committee shall consist of at least four members. The Chair shall be a member of the Session.

