

WOODLANDS COMMUNITY PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH



COLUMBARIUM PURCHASING PACKET

The Woodlands Community Presbyterian Church Columbarium

Introduction

A church columbarium is a thoughtfully designed memorial that serves as a respectful final resting place for cremated remains and now replaces the old cemetery in the churchyard. The columbarium is a structure of niches or compartments of uniform size arranged in rows and columns. Each niche can hold two urns; each urn holds the cremains (or ashes) of a single person. The niche faceplate is inscribed with the names(s) and life dates of those inurned in the niche.

The Columbarium of The Woodlands Community Presbyterian Church stands in our Prayer Garden, surrounded by our church campus, signifying that “in life and death we belong to God.” Bill Merriman, our architect, envisions WCPC’s Columbarium completing and enhancing our Prayer Garden, which is already a place of prayer, meditation, solace, and comfort.

The walkway to the large cross at the back wall of the Prayer Garden is a cross in itself. The two Columbarium units, 50 niches in each, will stand at each end of the walkway crosspiece. Only two benches will be relocated (which are currently standing where the units will be). The lovely Prayer Garden stays as is, still dense with healthy, native plants and trees, birds and bees, butterflies and a fishpond.

Columbarium niches hold two urns (the cremains of two persons) and are \$2,500 per niche.

How to Purchase a Niche

IN PERSON

Visit WCPC to obtain a Columbarium Packet

Read pages in Packet

Locate Application in back pocket of Packet

Complete the Application

Insert Application and full payment in envelope and choose an option below

ONLINE

Visit www.wcpc-tx.org

Read pages in Online Packet

Download the Purchasing Packet

Complete the Application

Insert Application and full payment in envelope and choose an option below

Bring completed Application and full payment (\$2500/niche)
to WCPC Office
during weekday morning hours
and leave in Columbarium slot in workroom

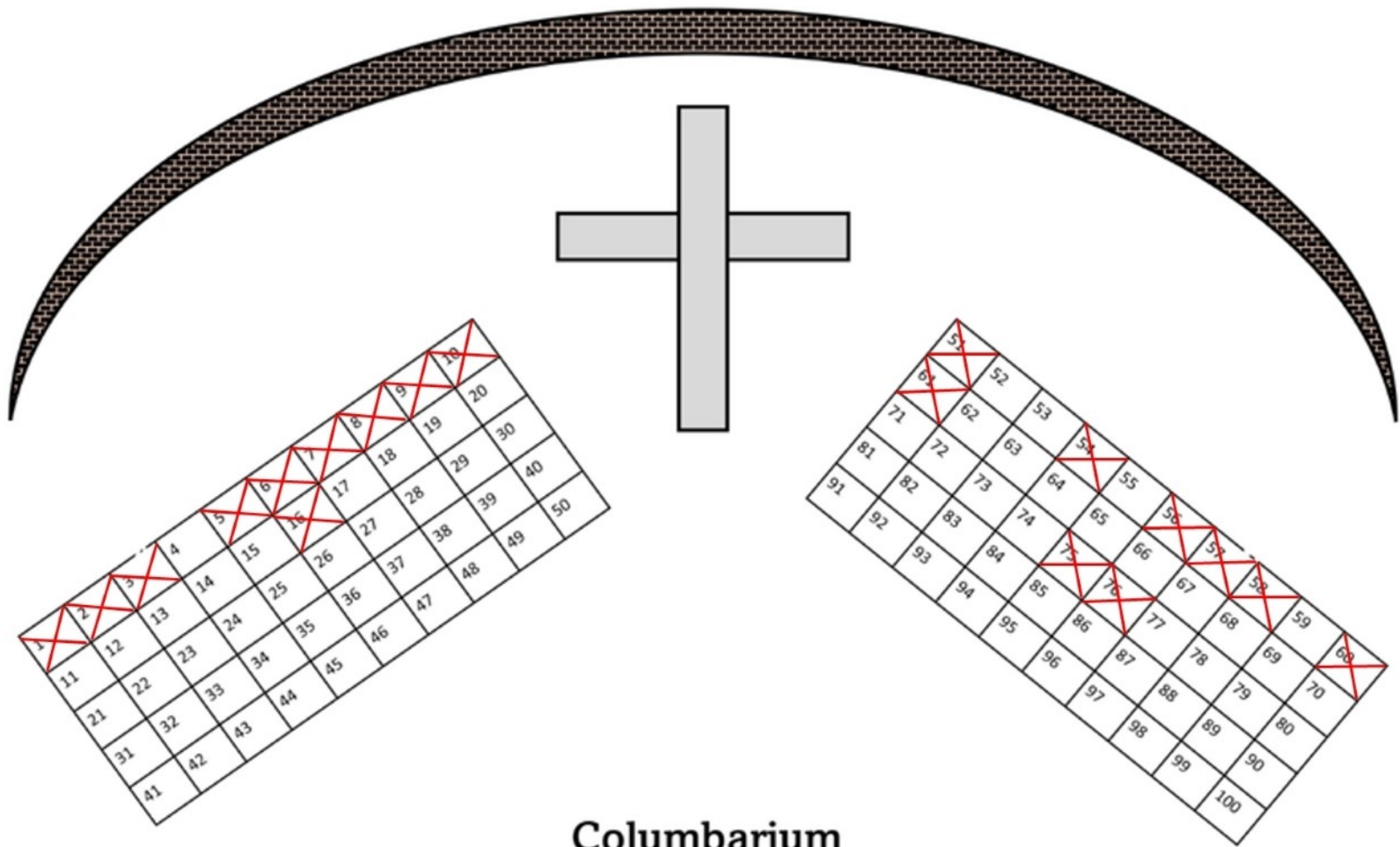
OR

Mail completed Application and full payment to
WCPC Office
4881 W Panther Creek Dr
The Woodlands, TX 77381

OR

Bring completed Application to
WCPC Office
during weekday morning hours
and electronically send full payment
to WCPC however you prefer.

Woodlands Community Presbyterian Church
4881 W Panther Creek Dr
The Woodlands, TX 77381
Office: 281-363-2040



Columbarium
Niche Numbering Chart
 The Woodlands Community Presbyterian Church

Policies and Procedures pertaining to the Columbarium of The Woodlands Community Presbyterian Church

1. Introduction

A columbarium is a place for the respectful placement (inurnment) of cremated remains (cremains) of a deceased person. The Columbarium of The Woodlands Community Presbyterian Church (WCPC), located in the Prayer Garden of WCPC, is for the use of our members, clergy, and families. The Columbarium provides a final resting place on WCPC's property in surroundings specially designed for prayer, meditation, and remembering, much like cemeteries in the past located on church property. The Columbarium's seamless access to the Sanctuary and the Baptismal Font recalls our journey through the cycle of life and death in which nothing separates us from the love of God. With its multiple niches, the Columbarium is also a visible reminder of the Christian cloud of witnesses that has gone before us and surrounds us now. We hope the beauty, serenity and solace of the area, encompassed in WCPC's campus and our faith community, brings comfort to those who grieve.

2. The Columbarium

2.1 Description

WCPC's Columbarium is made up of a grouping of separate spaces (niches). Each niche can contain up to two urns/containers with the cremains of one person in each urn/container. The granite faceplate on the front of each niche is engraved with the name(s), birth dates(s) and death date(s) of the deceased.

2.2 Eligibility for Inurnment

Inurnment in WCPC's Columbarium is open to any current or former members of WCPC and their immediate family, any current ministers or former ministers of WCPC and their immediate family, and others as approved by the Session (the governing body of WCPC) upon recommendation of the Columbarium Committee. "Immediate family" includes parents, spouse, children (whether natural, adopted, foster, or step) and grandchildren.

2.3 Purchase of Niche (Right of Inurnment)

A niche contains a maximum of the cremains of two persons. The cost of a niche, \$2500, includes its faceplate.

The purchase of a "Right of Inurnment," which is the right to place cremains in a niche, shall include the cost of one niche and faceplate, but does not include the cost

of cremation, transportation of cremains, or other off-premises services (i.e. the cost of urn/container and inscribing of faceplate).

To purchase a niche (Right of Inurnment), an eligible person must:

- 1) obtain a Columbarium Packet from WCPC's office or online at <https://www.wcpc-tx.org/columbarium/>,
- 2) read through the Packet
- 3) complete the Application form and submit it during weekday morning hours to WCPC's office with the niche's full purchase price (\$2500/niche).

Upon receipt of the application and full payment, the Columbarium intake-person assigns the purchaser a niche from the three choices he has indicated on the Application. A Certificate of Right of Inurnment is then issued to the purchaser indicating the selected niche.

2.4 Costs at Time of Death

All arrangements and preparations prior to inurnment in the Columbarium must be provided for and performed by a funeral home or crematory selected by the family. Neither WCPC, the Columbarium Committee, the ministers nor any other representative of WCPC shall handle or hold any cremains except in an appropriate urn/container and then only insofar as pertaining to the actual inurnment in the Columbarium.

The family or estate of the deceased pays for the urn/container and the engraving of the faceplate inscription at the time of death of the loved one.

The urn/container for the cremains must meet certain specifications in order to fit within the niche (which measures 8"x 8"x15.5"). However, the opening of a niche measures only 6"x7.625," due to hardware that connects to the faceplate. The cremains of the deceased must be in an urn/container that **fits inside the niche opening** and the name of the deceased must be clearly and permanently labeled on the urn/container before the Service of Inurnment. The labeled urn/container shall be suitable for removal and transportation in the event such removal and transportation becomes advisable or necessary.

2.5 Inscriptions of Faceplates

The engraving of the information on all niches' faceplates will be uniform. The inscription on a faceplate shall consist of the name of the deceased, birth date, and death date. Nicknames, titles, degrees, and other such designations are determined by how many spaces for lettering are available. Arrangements for the engraving are made by WCPC through the Columbarium manufacturer. No other inscription, adornment, decoration, modification, or other matter may be affixed to the niche faceplate.

Every reasonable effort will be made to have the engraving of the faceplate completed prior to the inurnment but that may not be possible in every case. In this

event, the niche will be covered with a blank plate and the installation of the engraved plate will be done at a later time.

2.6 Service of Inurnment

Any cremated remains must be inurned in the Columbarium niche with a committal service. Only an ordained minister of WCPC or an ordained minister approved by one of WCPC's ministers, shall be authorized to conduct a service of committal.

The approved minister has total responsibility, working with the family, for a religious service honoring the deceased.

Only human cremains, which are human ashes including the residue of any foreign material that was cremated with the human remains, may be inurned in the Columbarium.

Scattering of cremains on WCPC property is not allowed.

Flower arrangements or plants may be brought to the Columbarium for the Service of Inurnment, but must be removed by the family at the end of the Service. Displays of respect in memory of the deceased may be provided at a memorial service in the sanctuary and/or a floral arrangement for a Sunday worship service.

2.7 Flowers, Decorations, and Memorabilia at Columbarium

A niche may contain ONLY one or two urns/containers: no wreaths, ornaments, candles, toys, signs, decorations, or memorabilia. To preserve the environment of the Prayer Garden, no flowers, plants, balloons, candles, or memorabilia may be left at the Columbarium and will be removed and disposed of without notice to the Owner or liability to the remover.

2.8 Prayer Garden and Columbarium Care

WCPC will maintain the Prayer Garden and Columbarium in a tasteful, clean, and dignified state befitting the purpose of the Prayer Garden and does not expect or require the owner of a Right of Inurnment or his or her heirs, beneficiaries, or legal representative to contribute to the care and maintenance.

In the event the Columbarium requires repairs or other construction, the owner of a Right of Inurnment, or his or her heirs, beneficiaries, or legal representatives agree that the Committee may permit the temporary removal of the urns/containers for the duration of those repairs or construction.

2.9 Transfer of Right of Inurnment

A Right of Inurnment is not transferable or re-assignable without proof of eligibility of the proposed new owner, a completed application, and the written consent of the Columbarium Committee of WCPC. The owner has an obligation to keep WCPC informed concerning his or her current address and related information.

If no use is made of a niche within 75 years of the date of purchase and neither the owner of the Right of Inurnment nor any designated person who is listed in the Right can be located by the Church, the reservation fee will be forfeited and the niche will be made available to other applicants.

2.10 Transfer of Cremains to WCPC Columbarium

Cremains from a previous death of an eligible person may be transferred from another location to the WCPC Columbarium upon application for and purchase of a Right of Inurnment. All arrangements, including any legal issues, must be performed or resolved by the applicant. WCPC will not be liable for or responsible for any issues other than providing the niche according to the Right of Inurnment's application and payment.

2.11 Not Responsible for Remains or for Identity of Remains

Neither WCPC, the Columbarium Committee, the clergy of WCPC nor any other representative of WCPC shall handle or hold any cremated remains except in an appropriate urn/container at the time of inurnment, or be responsible for any permit required for inurnment, or be responsible for the identity of the person whose remains are to be inurned, or for any other irregularity or improper care with respect to such remains.

2.12 Removal of Remains

Cremated remains are the property of the family or the estate of the deceased. Removal of cremains is prohibited without compliance with applicable law and only with written consent of the Columbarium Committee of WCPC. If cremated remains from one or both persons listed on the Right of Inurnment have been inurned in their niche and the survivors wish to remove all of the cremated remains, and this wish is granted, upon removal all rights to the niche will revert back to WCPC, with no compensation due to the owner's estate.

2.13 Security

WCPC has taken steps through the design and construction of the Prayer Garden and the Columbarium to provide a reasonable level of security, balanced by the need for visits by loved ones and availability of the property for visitors, prayers, and services. Although the Prayer Garden has never experienced any vandalism, by purchasing a niche, the owner of the Right of Inurnment and his or her heirs, beneficiaries, and legal representatives assume the risk of loss, destruction, vandalism, and desecration of cremains.

By purchasing a niche, the owner of the Right of Inurnment and his or her heirs, beneficiaries, and legal representatives further release WCPC and its employees and the Columbarium Committee from all claims, liabilities, and cases of action relating to or pertaining to the application, inurnment, and the past, present and future operation of WCPC Prayer Garden and Columbarium, including all negligence, loss,

destruction, vandalism, and desecration of cremains, save and except for acts of gross negligence or intentional wrongdoing by WCPC or its employees or the Columbarium Committee; and in no event shall they corporately or individually be liable for any damages to the purchaser or his/her relatives or heirs beyond the purchase price of the Right of Inurnment.

2.14 Termination of the Columbarium

The Right of Inurnment shall continue so long as the property at 4881 W. Panther Creek Drive, The Woodlands, TX, 77381, is owned by WCPC or one of its legal successors. If the property is sold and a replacement Columbarium will not be furnished at a new church premises or other site, the Right of Inurnment will cease. In that event, WCPC or its Columbarium Committee will notify the owner or his/ her heirs, beneficiaries, or legal representatives at the address contained in the Columbarium files that WCPC is ceasing to exist and that the cremains must be removed from the niche. If arrangements for the removal of the cremains are not made within a reasonable period or if a proper representative cannot be contacted within a reasonable time, WCPC retains the right, and the owner and his/her heirs and legal representative consent to WCPC's right, to take possession of the title to the cremains and relocate the cremains in a fitting service as it deems proper. No refund of any amount for purchase of inurnment rights shall be made in the instance of termination of the Columbarium.

Date approved by WCPC Session: August, 2022

Frequently Asked Questions:

1. Why is the structure called a “columbarium”?

“Columbarium” is derived from the Latin word “columbary,” which meant “a dwelling place for doves” or “pigeon holes.” When Christians relegated to Rome’s catacombs began using cliff-side niches to seal away ashes of the faithful who died, “columbarium” took on its present meaning: sacred compartments for storage of cremated remains.

2. Why select a church columbarium and not a mausoleum at a cemetery?

In a return to church tradition, the Columbarium provides members of the Church and their families the opportunity for their final resting place to be in the shadow of the Church which has been central to their lives. Our outdoor Columbarium is located in our Prayer Garden, a place of beauty and dignity where friends and family can visit and meditate at any time.

3. Is cremation biblically sound?

Cremation is widely recognized as a theologically valid process for the deceased and is a hastening of the natural process that occurs following death. The ancient practice has particular relevance for today because burials in churchyards are less of an option. Cremation makes it possible to continue the tradition of a place for God’s children to “dwell in the house of the Lord forever.” (Psalms 23:6)

- The Cremation of King Saul: 1 Samuel 31:12
- Return to dust of the earth: Genesis 3:19
- Destruction of the earthly body: 2 Corinthians 5:1

4. What are the benefits of one’s cremains (ashes) being inurned in a columbarium?

Making inurnment arrangements (buying a niche in a columbarium) eliminates the pressures of choosing a cemetery plot, casket, vault and monument. A Memorial Service can be held at the church instead of a funeral home and the Service is only linked to inurnment in a niche, not burial in the ground.

5. Which is least expensive: cremains inurned in a columbarium or a body buried in a cemetery?

The combined cost of cremation and a columbarium niche are usually less than one-fourth the cost of a casket, vault, burial site and marker.

6. May I honor a family member who has been buried in a cemetery by purchasing a niche?

A niche and its engraved faceplate may be used as a memory marker when your loved one is buried at another location. A plaque on the west Prayer Garden wall would also serve the same purpose. Ask about wall plaques in the WCPC office.

7. What if I have already made other burial arrangements?

Should you prefer inurnment in our Columbarium, contact the facility with which you previously made arrangements to learn how those arrangements can be terminated. Some refund may be due on services paid for, but in most cases you will need to sell burial plots or mausoleum slots through a broker or the newspaper.

8. What provision exists for a person who is eligible to buy a niche but is unable to afford one?

Any minister of WCPC has the authority to *discreetly* excuse any part of or all the payment for a niche for a person eligible to buy a niche. In these cases, the person in need selects the desired niche from any of the remaining unsold niches.

9. What if I am considering leaving my body to a Whole Body Donation program?

Search online for Whole Body Donation programs and learn how each will cooperate with your family to allow your cremains to be inurned in WCPC's Columbarium.

10. If I am a designated organ donor, will this delay cremation after my death?

No. Organs for transplant must be harvested very shortly after death. Therefore, there is no appreciable delay in the availability of the body for cremation.

11. Must I go through a funeral home to have my body cremated?

Use the "Options for Cremation Services" list in this packet to find funeral homes and direct cremation options. Contact these places, ask your specific questions and make your cremation plans.

12. What is a good book about making preparations for the end of life?

[You Only Die Once: Preparing for the End of Life with Grace and Gusto](#) by Margie Jenkins

13. If I am planning NOT to buy a niche in WCPC's Columbarium, may I donate to the project?

Yes. Contact Milton Thigpen in the WCPC Office during weekday morning hours and determine how best to donate.

Options for Cremation Services

Calvary Hill Funeral Home & Cemetery

21723 Aldine Westfield Rd.

Humble, TX 77338

(281) 443-3340

Forest Park The Woodlands Funeral Home & Cemetery

18000 Interstate 45 S

The Woodlands , TX 77384

(936) 321-5115

Cashner Funeral Home

801 Teas Rd.

Conroe, TX 77303

(936) 756-2126

Klein Funeral Home & Memorial

16131 Champion Forest Dr.

Spring, TX 77379

(281) 320-2674

Chapel of the Pines

800 Wilcrest Dr. Ste 102

Houston, TX 77042

(281) 328-1000

Klein Memorial Park

1400 West Main Street

Tomball, TX 77375

(281) 351-7233

Cypress Creek Funeral Home

2000 Cypress Landing Dr.

Houston, TX 77090

(281) 895-8811

McNutt Funeral Home

1703 Porter Rd.

Conroe, TX 77301

(936) 756-2724

Direct Cremation

4400 Town Plaza Dr.

Houston, TX 77045

(888) 211-5956

Neptune Society

2910 W Loop S Ste 102

Houston, TX 77027

(713) 766-6104

Eickenhorst Funeral Services

1712 N Frazier St. Ste #115

Conroe, TX 77301

(936) 788-1145