

Frequently Asked Questions

About Wesley Park Columbarium and Memorial Garden

What is a columbarium?

The word columbarium comes from the Latin word "Columba," meaning dove. It has come to mean a structure with compartments, or niches, for holding urns. Wesley Park Columbarium has 24 niches, where urns containing cremated remains are inurned. The niches are sealed with engraved fronts showing the name and life dates of those inurned within.

How will the columbarium be financed?

Funding for the columbarium is provided through the sale of niches, donor contributions and memorial gifts. The construction of the columbarium will not begin until the funds for the construction are in hand. The columbarium will be self-supporting including maintenance and perpetual care made possible by tax-deductible donations included in the sale of niches.

What is a Memorial Garden?

The Memorial Garden is the area located between the Sanctuary and the Family Life Center.

What is a Tree of Life?

The Tree of Life is one opportunity to celebrate the life of someone by purchasing a leaf where their name will be engraved. The cost of each leaf is up to the person making the donation. The funds from the Tree of Life will be used for the Memorial Garden and Memorial Fund.

Who can be inurned in the columbarium?

Members or former members, pastors and staff of the Church, their current or prior spouses or partners, their children (natural or adopted) and step-

children, their parents, and ordained United Methodist Church pastors and their current or prior spouses or partners or others at the discretion of the Memorial Garden Committee or pastor may be inurned in the Memorial Garden.

How much does a niche cost and what is included in the price?

A niche costs \$1,200. The price includes the niche, an urn, engraving the face plate with the name and life dates of the person whose cremains are inurned, choice of niche location, inurnment by a Wesley Park United Methodist pastor, opening and closing of the inurnment space, record-keeping, and maintenance in perpetuity. It does not include the cost of cremation.

How much does it cost for ashes to be buried in the ground in the Memorial Garden?

For cremains to be placed directly in the ground, with no markings, the cost would be \$600. The price includes engraving the face plate with the name and life dates of the person whose cremains are inurned on the Tree of Life, inurnment by a Wesley Park United Methodist pastor, and record-keeping. It does not include the cost of cremation.

What is the cost of a Memorial Brick and what does this price include?

A memorial Brick costs a minimum of \$50. This includes the paver stone and engraving of the name of someone to be honored on the walkway in the Memorial Garden.

Are there any financing options?

No. Payments for the niches and plaques must be paid in full at the time of purchase.

Who maintains records and oversees the columbarium and memorial garden?

The Memorial Garden Committee maintains all files and records for the columbarium and memorial wall, including the identity and location of cremains inurned in or removed. The Committee, with funds in a perpetual care fund, maintains the columbarium and Tree of Life, including the

architecture and landscaping, and supervises all service providers, such as water irrigation system, snow removal, tree care, and gardening.

What is the size of the niche?

The front of the niche that holds the engraving is 8 inches by 8 inches. Each niche is about 7 ½ inches wide by 6 ¾ inches high by 11 ½ inches deep.

What is inscribed on the niche?

The person's or persons' full name(s) with month, date and years of birth and death. For an additional cost, military service emblems are available.

What is an urn?

Urns are the receptacles into which ashes are placed. The urns are then placed in the niche. The urns provided with the purchase of a niche are made of sheet bronze with a satin finish. Each urn is 5 ½ inches high, 5 ½ inches wide and 7 inches long.

May I use my own urn?

Wesley Park recommends using the sheet bronze urn included in the price of the niche. However, another urn that may have special meaning may be used if it fits within the niche, at the discretion of the church.

May other items be inurned with the cremains?

No. No valuables, trinkets or medals of any kind shall be placed in the urn or niche. The niche may be used only for the inurnment of ashes in an urn.

How many niches may I buy?

You may buy as many as needed. For example, families may opt to purchase a group of adjacent niches.

May I choose the location of the niche?

Yes. A map of the columbarium will be provided at the time of purchase and you may choose the location based on availability.

May I place decorations?

Only fresh flowers may be placed next to a niche at the time of inurnment and for up to three days thereafter. The church will remove those flowers after three days. You are welcome to place flowers at any time, but again, they will be removed after three days.

Will clergy perform a service at the time of inurnment?

Wesley Park will provide a brief religious service at the time of each inurnment. A member of the clergy shall conduct the service and be present at the inurnment.

When is the inurnment usually done?

Inurnments or other services will be made when reasonably feasible after the church has received adequate notice from you or your heirs or personal representative. Often, inurnment will take place immediately before or after a memorial service. In the event of inclement weather, inurnment may be delayed until practical. If so, the church may suggest an alternative time or day.

How will the church and funeral home interact?

At the time of death, the family, funeral home, and the church are in communication with each other. The church will make provision for delivery of the urn to the funeral home. The funeral home will arrange for cremation and deliver the ashes to the family or the church, as directed. If delivered to the church, they will be retained in a safe place until the time of inurnment.

Is the burying of cremains available?

Yes, upon approval of the pastor and Memorial Garden Board of Directors, cremains may be placed directly into the soil of the Memorial Garden. No markers are allowed to mark the place of the buried cremains.

May I inurn my pet?

No pet ashes are allowed.

May I have my niche inscribed before I die?

No.

What about cremains I already have?

You may have them inurned in the columbarium after completion of the Columbarium Agreement and arrangement of a memorial service. Contact your pastor to arrange for a service and to obtain the information to purchase a niche.

How are the rules set up?

The Memorial Garden Committee has adopted a set of policies and procedures. They are designed to protect the current interests of both you and the church, and to preserve the decorum and appearance of the columbarium over time. From time to time, the rules may be amended as the church or the board deems necessary.

How do I purchase a niche?

Submit a written application (Columbarium Agreement) and payment to the church. These are available in the church office.

Do I actually own the niche?

No, the columbarium agreement is only a license to use the niche. No real property right or interest is created.

May I change the list of people who may be inurned in my niche in the columbarium?

Yes, during your lifetime, you may change the list of designated persons by a written amendment to the columbarium agreement signed by the church representative and yourself.

What if I decide later not to use the niche?

If there has been no inurnment and you decide that the niche is no longer needed, the church may, at its discretion, repurchase the niche for \$350.

May I sell the niche to another person?

Yes, but only if you obtain prior permission. The sale, transfer or assignment of the niche without the prior written consent of the church representative is not allowed.

May I remove ashes from the columbarium for any reason?

Yes, in the event there has been an inurnment in a niche and the personal representative or immediate family of the person whose cremains have been inurned wish to permanently remove the cremains from the niche, they may do so. However, there will not be any reimbursement in this case.

What other costs are involved in being inurned at the Wesley Park United Methodist Church Columbarium?

The memorial service, honorarium for minister, musicians, etc. are separate and subject to the church's policies and fee schedules.

Does the price include cremation?

No, the price does not include cremation. Arrangements for cremation should be made directly with a funeral home or cremation society.

What if affordability is an issue?

Please speak with the pastor.

How does the price of a columbarium niche compare to being buried in a traditional cemetery?

Currently, columbarium niches are less than cemetery burials. More information on these details are available from a mortuary/funeral home.

Are there other advantages of inurnment at a columbarium?

Some may feel that a columbarium interment is more environmentally responsible than burial in a cemetery.