

SOUTH MECKLENBURG PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

COLUMBARIUM RULES AND REGULATIONS

1. MANAGEMENT OF THE COLUMBARIUM

South Mecklenburg Presbyterian Church owns, manages and administers the Columbarium; determines the standards for eligibility; maintains the necessary structure; and keeps records in accordance with North Carolina requirements. The Columbarium Committee under the direction of the Session is charged with the oversight, approval and management of the Columbarium on behalf of the Church. The Church reserves the right to amend or change the Columbarium Rules and Regulations as the Church deems appropriate.

2. INURNMENT

A. Subject to Laws

In addition to the Rules and Regulations, all inurnments, disinurnments, and removals shall comply with all federal, state, and local laws to the extent they are applicable to the Church. Nothing herein shall be construed as a waiver of any exemption of the Church as pursuant to the laws, rules, and regulations.

B. Eligibility

Inurnment in the Columbarium will be available to present and former members or ministers of the Church and their relations including spouse, parents, children and grandchildren (biological, adopted, fostered or step of the above stated persons). Nonmembers of the Church may also apply to purchase a niche with the approval of the Session.

C. Fees

The one-time fee of \$3,500 includes the use of a selected niche for a single urn. The one-time fee of \$3,800 includes the use of a selected niche for two urns. Both options include the cost of the urn(s) and inscription(s). The fee supports the ongoing care and maintenance of the Columbarium, which is owned and operated by the Church. These costs are subject to change over time. The fee does not include the cost of cremation or funeral service.

D. Property Rights and Rights to Use Niche

A Certificate Holder who has paid the fee shall be entitled to name one or two persons whose ashes are to be inurned in that niche, provided that person or persons qualify as eligible. The Holder acquires no property rights in the Columbarium and its niches and agrees that said items and areas are at all times under the sole ownership and control of the Church.

A person may purchase a niche as a donation to the Church. Once the niche is donated, it is at the discretion of the Session as to who receives the donated niche.

E. Application for Inurnment

To reserve the right to use a niche, a person must submit the completed Application and payment to the Church for review. Provided the Application complies with the Church's Rules and Regulations and the requested niche is available, the Church will sign and provide the Certificate of Right of Inurnment to the Holder.

F. Designating the Person to be Inurned

Each Holder will designate at the time of application the name(s) of the person(s) to be inurned.

G. Selecting a Niche

The Church will maintain a map of niches that are available. Each submitted Application must request their preferred niche. Applications for niches will be reviewed in the order they are received by the Church. Niche location will be recorded on the Holder's Right of Inurnment Certificate and on the Church's internal record.

H. Niche Size Limitations

The sizes of the niches are 8" x 8" x 12" and allow the cremated remains of up to two persons to be inurned in each niche. Urns will be provided by the Church. No other urns will be allowed.

I. Committal Service/Inurnment

The pastoral staff of the Church will be responsible for coordinating the leadership for all services of committal.

J. Ashes and Urns

Only cremated human remains may be inurned in niches. Ashes shall be placed in the urn in a niche. No valuables or personal items other than the urn may be placed in the niche. The urn will be marked with permanent identification prior to Inurnment. Identification is to be provided by the family, Crematorium, Mortuary or Funeral Home. All urns will be permanently sealed at time of Inurnment. Urns may not be removed from their assigned niche once they are inurned unless cremated remains are being relocated.

3. INSCRIPTIONS

An Inscription Order Form will be provided to be completed by the person(s) with rights to use a niche. The inscribing of each niche front shall be of uniform size and style as the Church has selected. The inscription shall consist only of the person's name, date of birth, and date of death. The Church will arrange for the inscriptions.

4. FLOWERS, ORNAMENTS, DECORATIONS

Flowers may be left at designated spots near the Columbarium for up to three days following inurnment. Otherwise, no flowers decorations, signs, flags, or personal objects will be allowed within or on the columbarium. Such items will be removed and disposed of by the Church without notice or liability to the owner of the item or any niche holder.

5. CERTIFICATE HOLDER'S MAILING ADDRESS

It is the responsibility of the Holder to notify the Church office of any change in their mailing address. Notice sent to a Holder at the last address on file in the Church office shall be considered sufficient and proper legal notification for all purposes.

6. CARE OF THE COLUMBARIUM

The Church will provide reasonable ongoing care for the Columbarium. However, neither the Church nor any persons acting on the Church's behalf will be liable for any loss or damage to the Columbarium.

7. SURRENDER, REMOVAL, TRANSFER AND ABANDONMENT OF CREMATED REMAINS AND NICHES

A. Surrender of Certificates

The Holder may elect to surrender the Certificate if no cremated remains have ever been inurned in the assigned niche. In this case, the Holder must contact the Church to terminate the right of inurnment. The Holder of the Right of Inurnment cannot sell the right to a third party. If such termination is approved by the Session, upon written request, the funds paid for the niche shall be refunded to the Holder less an administrative fee.

B. Removal of Cremated Remains by Holder

Cremated remains are the property of the family or estate of the deceased. If the cremated remains for one or both persons listed on the Certificate have been inurned in their assigned niche and the survivors wish to remove all the cremated remains, rights to the assigned niches will revert to the Church with no compensation due to the Holder or Holder's estate. The action to remove cremated remains shall be communicated to the Columbarium Committee by the Holder by submitting a Termination of Right of Inurnment form.

C. Transfer or Re-Assignments

A Holder may make written application to the Columbarium Committee to transfer or assign the Holder's rights under a Certificate of Inurnment Rights to an eligible transferee. The application shall state the grounds for eligibility of the proposed transferee as defined by these Rules and Regulations. The Church shall approve the request provided it finds the proposed transferee eligible. Upon approval, the Holder or Holder's authorized representative shall surrender the Certificate of

Inurnment Rights. The Columbarium Committee shall then issue a new Certificate of Inurnment Rights to the approved transferee. The new transferee shall be bound by these same Rules and Regulations.

D. Abandonment

If after 20 years from the date of the Inurnment Certificate, no cremated remains have been inurned in an assigned niche specified on a Certificate, and the Holder of the Certificate cannot be located after good faith efforts are made by the Columbarium Committee to locate the Holder, the Right of Inurnment and the Certificate shall be deemed null and void and the assigned niche will revert back to the Church with no compensation due to Holder or Holder's estate. The Columbarium Committee will be free to reassign the abandoned niche. Also, a niche shall be deemed abandoned if, 12 months after the death of the person reserving the niche (or the last death if two persons have jointly reserved), no cremains have been interred therein and intention for use has not been expressed to the Church. Abandoned niches revert to the Church and may be resold.

8. MOVEMENT AND TERMINATION OF THE COLUMBARIUM

A. Movement of the Columbarium

In the event the Church is moved to another location or should it be necessary to move the Columbarium to another location on the Church property, it shall be the responsibility of the Church to provide facilities for the re-depositing of the cremated remains committed to its care. The Church shall exercise reasonable efforts to locate and notify surviving heirs as to the new location.

B. Termination of the Columbarium

Inurnment Certificates and Rights of Inurnment will continue as long as the present Columbarium stands and is owned by the Church. In the rare possibility the present Columbarium is to be sold or demolished, a replacement Columbarium will not be furnished. Certificates will be cancelled, and Rights of Inurnment will cease. In that event, the Church will attempt to notify each niche Holder or estate that the Certificate will be cancelled and will attempt to notify a family member of each person inurned in the Columbarium that the person's cremated remains must be removed from the niche. If the Church is not able to establish contact using Church records, or if the cremated remains are not removed within a reasonable period of time, the Church may relocate the cremated remains as it deems proper. No compensation will be due to the Holder or person's estate or family.

9. GLOSSARY

- **Columbarium** – A structure containing niches for urn storage.
- **Cremated Remains** – The ashes of a cremated human body.
- **Certificate of Right of Inurnment** – A signed document granting the right to place cremated remains within the reserved niche in the columbarium.
- **Inurnment** – The placement of the urn into the assigned niche with the columbarium.
- **Niche** – A place for the storage of an urn containing cremated remains.
- **Niche Front** – A uniform front plate attached to the outside of the niche upon which the inscription is engraved.
- **Church** – This refers to South Mecklenburg Presbyterian Church.
- **Session** – This refers to the Session at South Mecklenburg Presbyterian Church.

Approved 12/3/23

