

**MONTE SANO UNITED METHODIST CHURCH
HUNTSVILLE, ALABAMA**

COLUMBARIUM AND MEMORIAL GARDEN POLICY

The Columbarium and Memorial Garden policy has been established to assure that the procedures for inurnment and memorializing are carried out in an orderly and consistent manner and to describe and explain the services provided by the Monte Sano United Methodist Church (MSUMC) in connection with these activities.

MANAGEMENT: The Trustees Committee of the Church shall supervise the construction, management and maintenance of the Columbarium and Memorial Garden. The Trustees Committee will have the authority to amend, change or modify these operating policies, including the Fee Schedule, which shall govern all activities and services relating to the Columbarium and Memorial Garden subject to the approval of the MSUMC Administrative Council.

DESCRIPTION: The initial Columbarium shall consist of forty (40) niches and forty (40) memorial plaques. The niches, including identification (facing) plaques, will be uniform in size and appearance and used for the inurnment of the ashes (hereafter, “cremains”) of up to two cremated human beings. Each niche will have a specific identification indicating location. The memorial plaques will be incorporated into the Columbarium structure on the back or sides of the structure not to interfere with the niche facing plaques. The memorial plaques will be uniform in size and appearance and have a specific identification indicating location. Each niche or plaque shall be engraved with the name(s) and dates of birth and death of the deceased and an optional third line subject to approval of the Trustees Committee and subject to limitations of the engraver. The style, size and proportion of all engraving will be determined by the Trustees Committee to insure a uniform appearance. The niches and memorial plaques may be purchased upon payment of designated fees and execution of required documents.

ELIGIBILITY:

1. The inurnment of cremains in the Columbarium or scattering of cremains in the Memorial Garden shall be restricted to:
 - a. Individuals who are members of the Church at the time of purchase
 - b. Immediate family members of church members (spouses, partners, children, step-children, grandparents, grandchildren) regardless of religious affiliation
 - c. Prior members of the Church or their immediate family members as defined above
 - d. Former ministers of the Church or their immediate family members as defined above
 - e. Residents of the Monte Sano community
 - f. Other persons, upon written request, approved by the Trustees Committee
2. The memorial plaques shall be restricted to the same individuals mentioned above. A maximum of two individuals may be listed on each memorial plaque.

3. Anyone whose cremains are inurned in a niche is not eligible to be memorialized with a memorial plaque.
4. A niche may only be purchased and used for human cremains. A memorial plaque may only recognize a deceased human(s).
5. Scattering of cremains is allowed only in the Memorial Garden and may be only human cremains.

ISSUANCE OF CERTIFICATE AND ASSIGNMENT OF NICHE OR PLAQUE:

If the Application is approved (the “Approved Applicant”) by the Trustees Committee, the Committee shall cause a Certificate of Inurnment Rights or a Certificate of Memorial Plaque Rights only after full payment of all appropriate fees. The Certificate will be issued to the Approved Applicant and the Approved Applicant shall be deemed the holder (the “Holder”) of the Certificate and the assigned niche or memorial plaque based on availability at that time. No more Inurnment Rights or Memorial Plaque Rights will be sold to the Approved Applicant than those necessary to inurn the cremains or memorialize all currently eligible persons at time of application submittal. Verification of eligible persons shall be at the discretion of the Trustees Committee.

Niche and memorial plaque locations will be assigned on a first come, first served basis. The purchaser may select any available niche or plaque location at the time of purchase. Once assigned, the location will not be changed so long as the Certificate of Inurnment Rights or Certificate of Memorial Plaque Rights is in effect.

The purchase of a niche is purchase of the use of the interior space of a niche in perpetuity and no interest in real property is conveyed by such purchase. The purchase involves no ownership in the Columbarium and Memorial Garden and its property. The legal title to all niches shall at all times remain with the Monte Sano United Methodist Church (MSUMC).

A schedule of current required fees is attached as Exhibit A to this policy. The fees may change in the future as recommended by the Trustees Committee and upon approval of the Administrative Council. Scattering of cremains without the purchase of a memorial plaque is discouraged but shall be allowed with the approval of the Trustees Committee.

Anyone may purchase a niche or a memorial plaque as long as the eligibility rules mentioned previously are met. However, priority will be given to Church members should the need arise.

Purchase of a single inurnment or plaque may be upgraded to a double inurnment or plaque by making out a second application and paying the difference between the applicable single and double price.

INURNMENT:

1. **URNS:** Each niche shall accommodate up to two urns. Each urn shall be used for the cremains of one individual. The urn to hold the cremains of each person to be inurned in the Columbarium is included as part of the niche reservation and shall be provided by MSUMC.

2. **OTHER ITEMS:** Flags, decorations or other memorabilia will be permitted inside the niche at no charge as long as they are placed inside at the time of inurnment of the deceased.
3. **FACING STONE:** Engraving of niche facing stones will be of a predetermined uniform size and appearance as determined by the Trustees Committee. MSUMC will provide for such engraving as a part of the purchase of a niche or plaque. Each facing stone will be inscribed only with the name(s) and dates of birth and death of the deceased. An optional third line may also be added with an appropriate remembrance of the deceased person(s) subject to approval of the Trustees Committee and limitations of the engraver. No other inscriptions will be permitted.

MEMORIAL SERVICES: A private service for the inurnment or scattering of cremains may be conducted by a minister of the Monte Sano United Methodist Church in consultation with the family of the deceased. It will be the responsibility of the family of the deceased to determine what, if any, service will be done and who may conduct the service. It is not required that the minister of Monte Sano United Methodist Church or any other ordained minister conduct the inurnment ceremony. However, any service shall be coordinated with and approved by the MSUMC Trustees Committee and Senior Pastor.

ADDRESSES: It shall be the responsibility of the purchaser to keep MSUMC advised at all times of the current mailing addresses of himself or herself, the person for whom the niche or plaque is purchased, and the next of kin of the designee. The purchaser will normally be the individual MSUMC would contact for any reason.

ACCOUNTING: MSUMC will receive all payments and disburse all expenditures in a separate account to be known as The Columbarium Fund (hereafter, the "Fund") apart from, and separate from, the General Operating Fund. Appropriate annual audits and reviews will be performed in accordance with MSUMC's regular accounting procedures. The records shall also include all accounting for both construction and perpetual care. The balance required to be maintained in the Fund for perpetual care shall be determined by the Trustees Committee. Fund balances exceeding this amount may be transferred to the MSUMC General Operating Fund as the MSUMC Administrative Council deems fit.

RECORDS: MSUMC Bookkeeper/Secretary shall be the custodian of all books and records of the Columbarium and Memorial Garden. Such records shall include, but shall not be limited to:

1. For Columbarium niches:
 - a. Application for Purchase, including proof of payment
 - b. Copy of the Certificate of Inurnment Rights
 - c. Any other pertinent information
2. For memorial plaques memorializing individuals scattered in the garden:
 - a. Application for Purchase, including proof of payment
3. For memorial plaques memorializing individuals not involving cremains scattering in the garden:
 - a. Application for Purchase, including proof of payment
4. A diagram of all purchased and available niche and plaque locations
5. A listing of all inurnments and scatterings

6. Accounting records of all Columbarium-related income; expenses, including construction and maintenance expenses; Fund balance and any other required or appropriate accounting information

RIGHT TO REMOVE CREMAINS: A niche may be opened and the contents removed only for good cause as determined by the Trustees Committee. No fee will be charged for opening the niche. MSUMC will allow movement of the cremains to another location upon receiving legal authority from a designated heir of the deceased. Removal of cremains terminates the right to further or future use, and the niche rights will revert to MSUMC. Any expenses, including relocation, will be borne by those requesting such action. Also, MSUMC retains the right, in its discretion, to remove cremains and memorial plaques and to relocate all or any part of the Columbarium (including niches and plaques) as it may deem necessary or advisable. If it is necessary to relocate an existing niche for any reason, MSUMC will provide another niche for the cremains and will endeavor to advise the next of kin of the new location and the reason for the transfer. All openings and removals shall be fully documented with MSUMC being released from any and all responsibility.

MAINTENANCE OF THE COLUMBARIUM AND MEMORIAL GARDEN: The Trustees Committee of MSUMC is responsible for the maintenance of the Columbarium and Memorial Garden. The Trustees Committee will ensure the space is maintained as a sacred space with appropriate markings to prevent casual traffic. Cremains may be scattered in the Memorial Garden only. MSUMC reserves the right to scatter the cremains of multiple people in the Memorial Garden. MSUMC reserves the right to disturb cremains in order to maintain the Memorial Garden. No mapping of cremains will be maintained by MSUMC. Markers or other adornment of individual cremains locations within the Memorial Garden is prohibited. The use of ornamentation on or in proximity to any niche or plaque is prohibited with the following exception: cut flowers or live plants may be placed at the base of the Columbarium for one week after inurnment, provided they are tastefully presented and properly cared for. Any other decorations will be removed by MSUMC. Individual plantings in the Memorial Garden are not permitted without prior written approval of MSUMC Trustees.

SURRENDER, REMOVAL, ABANDONMENT

1. *Surrender of Certificates.* The Holder may elect to surrender the Certificate if no cremains have ever been inurned in the assigned niche or a memorial plaque engraving requested. In this case, the Holder must complete a Termination of Right of Inurnment/Memorial Plaque form and deliver to the Chairperson of the Trustees Committee. The Trustees Committee will refund 75% of the original purchase price of the Certificate to the Holder within 30 days after receipt of the Termination form and other verification as may be required as determined by the Trustees Committee. The Holder of the Right of Inurnment or Right of Memorial Plaque cannot sell the right to a third party.
2. *Removal.* Cremains remain the property of the family or estate of the deceased. If cremains from one or both persons listed on the Certificate have been inurned in their assigned niche and the survivors wish to remove all the cremains, rights to the assigned niche will revert to the church with no compensation due to the Holder or Holder's estate. The action to remove cremains shall be communicated to the Trustees Committee by Holder submitting a Termination of the Right of Inurnment form.

3. *Abandonment.* If after 25 years from date of issue of the Certificate of Inurnment Rights or Certificate of Memorial Plaque Rights no cremains have been inurned in an assigned niche or memorial plaque engraving requested and the Holder of such certificate cannot be located after good faith efforts are made by the Committee to locate the Holder, the Right to Inurnment or Memorial Plaque and the Certificate evidencing same shall be deemed null and void and of no further force and effect and the assigned niche or memorial plaque shall revert to the Church. Good faith effort shall consist of one or more combinations of contact by phone call, email or U.S. mail.

TERMINATION OF THE COLUMBARIUM:

The Right of Inurnment will continue as long as the Columbarium stands and is owned by the Church. If the present edifice is to be sold or demolished, and a replacement Columbarium will not be furnished at the new site, the Certificate of Inurnment Rights will automatically terminate and be of no further force or effect. In such event, a Trustees Committee member will notify the next of kin that the cremains must be removed by a specified date. If the next of kin fails to remove the cremains by the specified date, or if the next of kin cannot be located due to the failure of the next of kin to notify the church of the current or forwarding address and/or phone number, then within a reasonable period of time thereafter, but not to exceed 60 days, the Trustees Committee shall have the right to relocate or scatter the cremains as it deems appropriate. No refund of any fees will be made as a result of such termination.

LIABILITY: Purchasers of Columbarium niches agree that the MSUMC, its members and staff will not be liable to any subscriber, heirs, successors or assigns for unauthorized removal of cremains or for damage to Columbarium niches and/or their contents caused by malicious mischief, vandalism, weather, war, civil disturbances or acts of God. The Columbarium structure shall be covered under the MSUMC insurance policy.

OTHER CIRCUMSTANCES: Circumstances and conditions not covered by these policies fall under the jurisdiction of the Monte Sano United Methodist Church Trustees Committee for determination and resolution.

Contact: Monte Sano United Methodist Church
601 Monte Sano Boulevard SE; Huntsville, Alabama 35801
Phone/Web: 256-533-6083/www.msumc.net

Exhibit A

Columbarium Niche and Memorial Plaque Fee Schedule					
Columbarium Niche	Member	Non-Member	Memorial Plaque	Member	Non-Member
Single	\$1750	\$2250	Single	\$400	\$500
Double	\$2000	\$2500	Double	\$525	\$625