

The Westwood Lutheran Church Columbarium

Westwood Lutheran Church has established a columbarium to provide a permanent place on the church premises for the inurnment of the cremated remains of Westwood members and their families.

There are many who are not familiar with Columbaria. This brochure addresses frequently asked questions.

What Is a Columbarium?

A columbarium is a liturgically proper and aesthetically pleasing group of niches that contain the cremated remains of the deceased.

A church columbarium provides a safe, theologically correct, and ecologically sound way to honor the dead. It also provides a private, quiet, comfortable place for family and friends to come and pray and remember those who have passed on to eternal life.

Who is Eligible to Be Inurned in Westwood's Columbarium?

Westwood members and their families. Former members and friends of the congregation would also qualify. The Westwood pastoral staff is authorized to decide on other eligibility issues.

What Is the Cost of Each Niche?

The cost (which is subject to change) of each niche, which may hold either one or two urns, is \$2,500. This cost includes the brass urn(s) and brass identification plate(s) to be fastened to the granite stone front of the niche. Cremation expenses are not included in this niche price.

Is Any Part of the Purchase Tax Deductible?

Based on an analysis of IRS revenue rulings, we have concluded that \$500 of the \$2,500 purchase price is a tax-deductible contribution to Westwood.

May a Columbarium Niche Be Purchased in Installments?

To make the purchase more affordable, a columbarium niche may be purchased on an installment basis, with an initial payment of at least \$1,500, with the balance to be paid in two installments of \$500 within the two-year period following the initial payment. See Columbarium Governing Policies.

Are Columbarium Niches Still Available for Purchase?

Yes. The initial construction phases included 115 niches, and the expansion in 2023 provided an additional 88 niches ensuring adequate space for many years to come.

How is an Inurnment Conducted?

No remains may be inurned in the Westwood Columbarium without a committal service conducted according to the Lutheran Order of Service. This will usually take place immediately following the memorial service but may be scheduled later if desired.

How Is the Columbarium Administered?

The Westwood Lutheran Church Council approved the plan for the Columbarium and established a ministry team to administer it. This *Columbarium Ministry Team, along with its pastoral staff liaison, reports directly to the Church Council on a regular basis.

How Can I Get More Information?

Additional information may be obtained by writing or calling:

Westwood Lutheran Church
9001 Cedar Lake Road
St. Louis Park, MN 55426
tel. 952-545-5623

<https://www.westwood.church/funerals>

*The Columbarium Ministry Team members are John Stark (Chair), Dwight Peterson, and Keith Bergquist.

LOCATION

The Westwood Columbarium is located on the Church premises in the small chapel between the sanctuary and the commons. The chapel provides a private, quiet place to pray, meditate, and remember. It is open whenever the church is open to the public. Families may plan for a special time by contacting the church office.

Cremation and the Church

Throughout the ages, Christians have stated their belief in the life to come with the words from the Apostles' Creed: "I believe . . . in the resurrection of the body and the life everlasting." But Christians have always been quick to point out that this resurrection hope does not depend on the preservation of one's mortal remains. The power of the resurrection applies every bit as much to those who have died from explosions or accidents, or whose bodies cannot be recovered, as it does to those whose bodies are buried in a cemetery. Cremation, therefore, is entirely consistent with a Christian understanding of the resurrection.

Westwood Lutheran Church

Columbarium



WESTWOOD
LUTHERAN CHURCH

9001 Cedar Lake Road
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*"I am the Resurrection
and the Life"*