

Poolsville Memorial United Methodist Church Memorial Garden and Columbarium

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

1) What is a columbarium?

A columbarium is a permanent resting place for ashes after someone is cremated. It consists of a series of stacked enclosures. Each little space is called a "niche" and each one is large enough to hold the ashes (known as "cremains") of one or 2 people, each in a separate provided container (urn).

2) Why do we have one at Memorial UMC?

A columbarium at Memorial honors the heritage of our members who, through their faith and love, have passed the gospel of life to the present congregation. Burial on church grounds is a tradition as old as the church itself and completes the cycle of our church life: birth/ baptism, worship, Holy Communion, marriage and finally, death/eternal life. It provides a sacred place for those who wish to have their cremains rest at the church home that they loved and served.

3) Is cremation less expensive than a traditional burial?

Yes. In fact, today over 38% of Maryland residents who die are cremated instead of traditionally buried. Estimated figures indicate a savings of almost \$22,000 for cremation/inurnment for two people compared to traditional burial.

4) Where is Memorial's Columbarium located?

The Columbarium is in the church's Memorial Garden, between the Sanctuary and Fellowship Hall.

5) My loved ones are already buried in a cemetery. Is there a way I can still memorialize them in the Memorial Garden?

Yes. Bronze memorial plaques flank the columbarium and individual scrolls are available to purchase. Applications are available from the Church Office and at pmumc.org. Return completed applications and payment to the Church office.

6) Will the niches be weather-proof and tamper-resistant?

The manufacturer provides a patented niche design, purportedly the best niche available within the industry. This niche exceeds industry standards in strength, durability, security and element resistance.

7) Who may be inurned in Memorial's Columbarium?

Only human remains of any past or present baptized, professing or constituent member of PMUMC or anyone in the immediate family of such past or present member shall be eligible for inurnment, as well as any past or present clergy and his or her immediate family. A formal request to the Columbarium Committee must be made if there is a desire to purchase a niche to be used by someone other than the member's immediate family.

8) When may I visit the Memorial Garden to pay my respects?

Loved ones may visit the columbarium after inurnment just as they would a grave at a cemetery. Access to the Garden shall be available only during daylight hours.

9) What will I be purchasing?

The columbarium is owned by the church. Those who wish to have their cremains inurned in this columbarium will purchase a "Right of Inurnment." PMUMC is not a public cemetery and is not licensed as such, but will maintain responsibility for perpetual care and maintenance of the columbarium and the surrounding garden area. See the complete **Policies and Regulations**, available from the Church Office and at pmumc.org.

10) How do I purchase a "Right of Inurnment"?

Applications are available from the Church Office and at pmumc.org. Return completed applications and payment to the Church office. Applicant shall submit the most recent version of all forms.

11) What is the cost?

The cost for a "Right of Inurnment" is detailed on the Application. At time of death and prior to inurnment, an additional cost (subject to change) will be incurred for each person. This includes the urn, the engraved faceplate and the opening and closing of the niche at inurnment. See pmumc.org for details.

12) How does niche assignment work?

Niches are assigned on a first come, first served basis. Applicants may request a specific niche based on availability at the time their completed application and full payment is received. Your family name can be placed on the faceplate prior to inurnment (see pmumc.org/columbarium for the "Pre-Inurnment Inscription Order form").

13) How are cremains inurned into the columbarium?

Each niche in the columbarium accommodates two urns. Only the urn as available from the Church may be placed in the Columbarium. Each urn containing ashes is placed into a niche and then secured by the faceplate. The faceplate displays the name of the deceased and dates of birth and death, similar to a headstone.

14) How do I arrange an inurnment for my loved one?

All inurnments will be under the supervision of the current Pastor of PMUMC and the Columbarium Committee. The Pastor will have complete authority for all religious services of committal. Sufficient and proper notices of intended inurnments shall be given to the Pastor through the Church office, and only such religious services as the Pastor may conduct, or give permission for, may be performed.

15) How can I support the Memorial Garden Project if I do not wish to be laid to rest there?

You are welcome to make a financial contribution (designated to the Memorial Garden Project) at any time. Contributions may be placed in the offering plate or mailed to the Church. It is a wonderful way to honor the memory of church or family members that have passed or to acknowledge someone special.