

Calvary Columbarium

Frequently Asked Questions

29 April 2021

Is the Columbarium open to everyone? YES.

Application

Do I have to fill out an application? Yes. Applications are available from the church office and on the Calvary website (www.clwc.org). We need this information to manage the Columbarium. We do not envision any circumstance where an application would be turned down.

Why do you need email addresses and phone numbers? If any questions come up, at the time of inurnment for example, we need as many ways as possible to contact those concerned. We do not expect questions to come up, but we must be prepared.

Will information be shared? No, not outside Calvary pastor(s), the Columbarium board and church staff as necessary to manage the Columbarium. For example, we will need to provide Eickhof with information for inscribing names and dates.

Should I send a check with my application? Yes, but only for the niche reservation fee, not for inscription and urns. Please make the check payable to Calvary Lutheran Church with Columbarium in the memo field.

Urns and inscription will be billed when purchased. A sheet with current pricing is available. The actual cost will be determined by Eickhof at the time of purchase.

Why is there a lower cost for the top and bottom 8" x 8" rows? In Eickhof's experience these rows often fill later as they are above and below eye level. They recommended a discount when we were planning the Columbarium and we concurred.

Can I pick the niche I want? Yes. The Columbarium Board maintains a map of the columbarium showing which niches have been reserved. After receiving the reservation fee, a copy of the map is sent showing which niches are available. Selections are offered/made in the order in which completed applications are received.

Urns

Are urns required? Yes. Niches are not sealed from moisture and windblown debris. Alternatives to urns, such as fabric containers, do not provide the necessary protection.

Are urns available? Yes, Calvary will have a suitable urn on hand when it is needed. You will be billed for the urn based on the Eickhof price at the time of purchase.

What do the urns look like? The urns supplied by Calvary (from Eickhof) are made of sheet bronze, as shown below. The urn comes with a plastic liner (bag) to contain the cremains inside the urn, a closure for the liner, and a lid. After the lid is locked in place, the urn cannot be reopened.



Can urns be purchased when the niche is reserved? Urns may be purchased when the niche is reserved (or any time thereafter) but Calvary will not store them. They will be billed at the time of purchase and delivered when the bill is paid. If shipping is required, the bill will include the cost of shipping.

Can urns be inscribed? The bronze urns supplied by Calvary are suitable for inscription. If inscription is desired, all responsibility is with the urn purchaser. Inscription should be oriented with the lines aligned horizontally with the 7" dimension. Calvary has not identified vendors for this service.

Can I use my own urn? Yes with some caveats. It must fit inside the niche and the urn must be weather resistant.

Why must the urn be weather resistant? The urn will be protected from direct elements, but the niches are not sealed from moisture and wind-blown debris, such as dust. Eickhof recommends the cremated remains be placed inside a plastic bag (like those included with the sheet bronze urns) and tied shut, then placed in the urn. A metal lined urn is not necessary.

Can I make my own urn out of wood? Yes. The wood must be treated/finished/sealed so it will withstand exterior environmental weathering. The size limits described below apply to all urns.

What are the size requirements? Size requirements are specified by the columbarium fabricator (Eickhof Columbaria, Inc) and are described in Attachment 2 to the Columbarium Bylaws,

An 8" x 8" niche will accommodate two urns whose outside dimensions are 5 ½" (tall) x 7" (wide) x 5 ½" (deep). Most, if not all, vase-shaped urns are not suitable. The opening height is less than 8" because of the hardware and shelves which may either hang down or rise.

A 12" x 12" niche will accommodate two urns whose outside dimensions are 9¾" (tall) x 10½" (wide) x 5 ½" (deep) or two vase-shaped urns with a maximum diameter of 6½" and a height of 10". The opening height is less than 12" because of the hardware and shelves which may either hang down or rise. (The vase-shaped urns may be slightly taller because they can be tilted when being placed, with the interior dimension slightly larger than the dimensions of the opening.) If there are any concerns, it is advisable to verify the exact size of the specific niche.

Who puts ashes in the urn? Typically, if you provide the urn to the cremation service or funeral home, they will put the ashes in the urn. If that is not possible, you or a designee can transfer the ashes to the urn.

What is required to get an urn into the niche? There is a special tool for opening the niche. Individuals will not be provided access to the niche without being accompanied by a trained Calvary representative.

Inscription

How will the niche front be inscribed? The granite face plate will be removed and replaced with a temporary granite faceplate when the front is sent for inscription. Inscription will be done by Eickhof and billed by Calvary based on Eickhof's inscription charges and the cost of shipping the niche front. The total cost (in 2021) should be less than \$250 to \$300 for a single name/dates. If both names and dates are done at the same time the cost per name/dates will be slightly less.

Why limit inscription to Eickhof? This will provide a uniform look to the Columbarium and is the usual practice at other Columbarium sites.

Why can't inscription be paid for when the niche is reserved? Since the cost of inscription and shipping will change over time, these costs will be billed at the time of inscription.

How long does inscription take? A typical maximum is around 12 business days. For an extra rush fee of \$75 (Jan 2020 pricing) and the additional costs of overnight shipping, Eickhof can have the finished inscription completed and returned to Calvary in four business days.

Other

Is it necessary to use a funeral home? No. There are many options for cremation and it can be prearranged. The Columbarium Bylaws require only that the cremains must be prepared for inurnment by an organization duly licensed and actively engaged in the practice of funeral service in Pennsylvania, or with an equivalent license in another jurisdiction.

Does a Columbarium niche make any sense if you already have a cemetery plot? Financially, yes, cremation and inurnment will be significantly cheaper than embalment and burial in casket and liner. However, this is a completely personal decision, and depends on all kinds of personal considerations, including what to do with an unused plot.