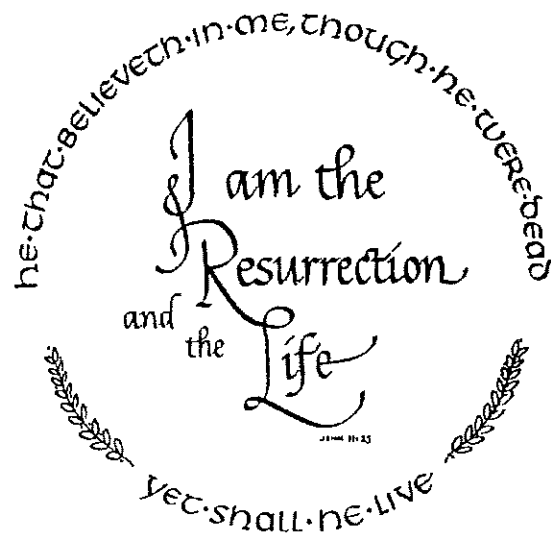


*The Columbarium
Memorial Wall*

*Ascension Lutheran Church
Shelby, North Carolina*



Preface

In 1999 the church council commissioned a committee to study the possible construction of a columbarium on the church grounds. After intensive study and consultation with knowledgeable individuals, other churches, and local architect, Roger Holland, a design was approved by the congregation on June 22, 2003. On November 20, 2005, at the annual congregational meeting, the congregation voted to build a columbarium with a memorial wall at Ascension Lutheran Church.

Our church building is the center of our worship life through Baptism, Holy Eucharist, confirmation, and marriage. Death and burial of the dead are also integral parts of our parish life. To incorporate the columbarium into the church's life accents our ministry from birth and baptism to death and eternal life. This ministry perpetuates our care to and remembrance of those who labored for Christ's kingdom in our midst. It is a ministry which provides for the spiritual, emotional, and financial concerns of those who face the issues of life and death. The life of our church focuses upon a love for people taught to us by our Lord Jesus Christ. The columbarium is a significant addition to the total ministry of our beloved church. It serves as an extension of Ascension Lutheran Church and provides a quiet corner for prayer, meditation, and thanksgiving. The columbarium is a meaningful area for remembrance as well as the joyous celebration of God's promise of new life.

The policies and regulations contained in this document are meant as a guide for church members and their families. It is impossible to answer every possible question about inurnment in the columbarium. Therefore, the columbarium committee under the leadership of the church council and pastor will have the responsibility for making ongoing decisions regarding the use of the facilities.

Welcome

The columbarium committee along with the church council and the pastor invite you to celebrate the gift of life through God's love. We welcome you into a community with all of the saints as we lift our voices in praise of the God who is quick to comfort, strong to save, full of mercy, and abounding in steadfast love.

Our columbarium provides for our blessed dead an eternal resting place within the shadow of the church. It creates a consoling link between life and death. The presence of the columbarium reminds us of the heritage of the saints who through their faith and love have passed the Gospel of Life on to the present congregation. This will be a hallowed spot, made sacred by the memory of those who have loved this church, who have departed from our midst, and now abide with Christ our Lord. Located on our premises, the columbarium is a constant reminder that in Christ not even death can separate us from one another.

Our hope is to provide a place where all people have the opportunity to celebrate their lives through the sacraments and the seasons of our church – a place to gather, to remember, and to lift up God's love that has proved itself victorious. As we grow forward together, let us strive to live our faith journey through the words of the Apostle's Creed:

I believe in the Holy Spirit,
the holy catholic church,
the communion of saints,
the forgiveness of sins,
the resurrection of the body,
and the life everlasting. Amen.

- 1.6 The term "reservation fee" shall be the cost for the use of a niche for inurnment.
- 1.7 The term "niche" shall mean one designated space in the columbarium. Each niche may hold two urns.
- 1.8 The term "urn" shall mean the container for cremated remains of humans.
- 1.9 The term "cremains" shall mean the cremated remains of humans.
- 1.10 The term "memorial wall" shall mean that area within the columbarium site that is dedicated to the memory of Ascension members whose remains are buried or scattered elsewhere.
- 1.11 The term "ossuary stand" shall mean a box that holds an urn of cremated human remains during funeral liturgies. An ossuary honors the cremated human remains as the earthly vessel that was once the temple of the Holy Spirit. As the funeral pall does for coffins, the ossuary asserts the equality of all believers in the sight of the Gospel.

SECTION 2. USE OF THE COLUMBARIUM

- 2.1 **COLUMBARIUM:** The columbarium shall consist of niches, uniform in size, for the inurnment of the ashes of cremated humans. The church will provide for the niche covers and their engraving. Each niche shall have a granite plate of uniform size, which shall be engraved with the names of the deceased and the year of birth and the year of death. No other inscription(s) will be permitted. Each niche is limited to the cremains of two persons.

2.2 ELIGIBILITY: The columbarium is restricted to the inurnment of members of Ascension Lutheran Church, Shelby, North Carolina.

Guidelines for a niche in the columbarium are as follows:

1. members of the congregation and their spouses
2. children, step-children, or adopted children of members
3. parents, step-parents, or grandparents of members
4. siblings of members
5. current or former ministers of the church, their spouses and children

The members of the committee, the church council, and the pastor reserve the right to make exceptions to these restrictions.

The memorial wall shall be used for members of the congregation whose remains have been placed elsewhere. The names of previous members who died while they were members of the congregation shall be included on the memorial wall. Names included on the memorial wall will be taken from the church records. The names of the deceased will be placed on the memorial wall in the order in which they entered the church triumphant.

Guidelines for a plaque on the memorial wall are as follows:

1. Infants and children will be a part of the memorial wall if one of their parents is a member of Ascension at the time of their death, baptized or not baptized to be included. (name of child required)
2. Members who died elsewhere and their funerals held elsewhere shall be included.

3. Persons who were baptized members of Ascension and have not joined other congregations but are still seen or see themselves as part of the Ascension faith community will be included.
4. Unknown dates to be left blank. If/when dates are found, they will be added to plaque.
5. Updates to be done yearly (before All Saints' Sunday).

2.3 COLUMBARIUM AGREEMENT: The signed and witnessed columbarium agreement shall be evidence of the purchaser's intent to the use of a niche in the columbarium for inurnment. The application and full payment (\$2,000) will constitute a contract of ownership of the right to use the specified space. A certificate will be issued for the privilege of permanent placement of cremains in the said space. Legal title to all niches shall remain with the church. The church shall at all times have full rights of management and control with respect to all matters relating to the columbarium.

2.4 TRANSFERS AND REFUNDS: A purchaser may transfer the rights evidenced by the columbarium agreement to members of his or her immediate family. In the event of any unauthorized transfer, the rights evidenced by the columbarium agreement shall become null and void and the niche shall revert to the church – the columbarium account. If a purchaser decides he or she no longer wants to be interned in the columbarium and that he or she wants to terminate the columbarium agreement, the funds paid for a niche will be transferred to the columbarium account. The purchaser shall receive a fifty percent (50%) refund of the total amount of money they have paid for a niche.

- 3.2 ACCESS: The columbarium is located on the north side of our sanctuary which provides a natural extension of our worship service and everyday life of our church family. Committal or memorial services are under the direction of the pastor. A committal service must accompany the placement of cremains within a niche. The opening of any niche is prohibited by anyone other than those authorized by the columbarium committee.
- 3.3 LIABILITY: No liability of any kind or character whatsoever is assumed by Ascension Lutheran Church, congregation council, or the columbarium committee for any loss or damage to the cremains of any person inurned in the columbarium or damage to the containers. In addition, no liability of any kind whatsoever, is assumed by the church or council for any matter or things relating to the columbarium, its use or subsequent maintenance.
- 3.4 COLUMBARIUM FUND: The congregation council shall maintain a separate interest-bearing account specifically for the care, maintenance, and construction of units/niches. All sums paid for the use of the columbarium and all donations toward the care and maintenance of the columbarium shall be deposited into this account to be withdrawn as needed to fulfill these purposes and for the perpetual care of the columbarium. Distribution and utilization of the fund are at the discretion of the congregation council.
- 3.5 ADDRESSES: It shall be the responsibility of the purchaser(s) at all times to keep Ascension Lutheran Church advised of the current mailing address of themselves, the persons for whom the niche is reserved, and of their next of kin or designee's address. This selected person will then be the individual the church would contact for any reason.

- 3.6 MEMORIALS/GIFTS: All gifts and memorials made to the columbarium will be listed in the *Announcer*. These gifts will also be recorded in a memorial book at the church.
- 3.7 COLUMBARIUM COMMITTEE : Management of the columbarium is entrusted by the congregation council to the columbarium committee and the pastor. A representative from the church council shall be appointed to serve as a member of the columbarium committee. The committee shall report regularly to the council and shall have the authority to establish reasonable procedures for the care and use of the columbarium and to collect and disburse funds. Therefore, duties of the committee shall include the selection of niches, maintenance of records of the ashes interred in each niche and such other activities as are necessary or appropriate to the successful operation of the columbarium.
- 3.8 RELOCATION: Ascension Lutheran Church reserves the right to enlarge, remodel, or alter the columbarium as it deems necessary or desirable. The columbarium and its niches, their use and maintenance, are at all times subject to the management of the congregation council. Should relocation be necessitated, the next of kin shall be notified by certified mail at the address of record before any action is made. This notification will occur at least 30 days prior to the activity taking place and will include a detailed explanation of the reasons requiring such a change. Should exhumation be necessary, it will be carried out according to all applicable laws and statutes, and with care and reverence. Reburial should occur expeditiously and respectfully. Should a family decide to relocate an individual's cremains from Ascension Lutheran Church, the family must adhere to any applicable laws and statutes, and must assume all costs.

APPLICATION FOR RESERVATION OF COLUMBARIUM NICHE

ASCENSION LUTHERAN CHURCH

SHELBY, NORTH CAROLINA

Date: _____

Applicant's Name: _____ Date of birth: _____

Address: _____

Phone: _____

Amount accompanying this application: \$ _____

The undersigned applicant acknowledges receipt of a copy of the policies and regulations for the operation and use of the columbarium established by the congregation of Ascension Lutheran Church, and agrees that acceptance of this application and issuance of a certificate reservation will be subject to those policies and regulations and any subsequent amendments thereto approved by the congregation council.

The applicant further agrees to promptly notify the church of any change in his or her address as shown above.

Signature of applicant: _____

Signature of spouse: _____

(For use of the Columbarium Committee)

Receipt of the above application and payment of \$ _____ is hereby acknowledged. Remaining balance is \$ _____.

COLUMBARIUM COMMITTEE

By: _____

Date: _____ Niche Number _____ in Section _____

Applicant's Name to be engraved on granite face of niche:

(please print)

Original to File: Copy to Applicant

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ASCENSION LUTHERAN CHURCH

SHELBY, NORTH CAROLINA

Date: _____

Applicant's
Name: _____ Date of birth: _____

Address: _____

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(For use of the Columbarium Committee)

COLUMBARIUM COMMITTEE

By: _____

Date: _____ Niche Number _____ in Section _____

Applicant's Name to be engraved on granite face of niche:

(please print)

Original to File: Copy to Applicant

**COLUMBARIUM CERTIFICATE OF PURCHASE OF EXCLUSIVE RIGHT OF
INURNMENT IN A NICHE OF THE COLUMBARIUM**

**ASCENSION LUTHERAN CHURCH
SHELBY, NORTH CAROLINA
EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH IN AMERICA**

THIS INDENTURE, made this the _____ day of _____, 20____, between the Evangelical Lutheran Church of the Ascension –E.L.C.A., 300 North Lafayette Street, Shelby, North Carolina, 28150 (hereafter referred to as “Ascension Lutheran Church”), and _____ (hereafter referred to as “ Purchaser (s)”’).

WITNESSETH:

Ascension Lutheran Church in consideration of the sum of \$ _____, receipt of which is hereby acknowledged, does hereby sell to Purchaser(s) the exclusive right of inurnment of the cremated remains of two (2) persons contained in a suitable urn(s), in niche number _____ in section _____ of the Columbarium of Ascension Lutheran Church.

The undersigned Purchaser(s) acknowledge(s) receipt of a copy of the policies and regulations established by the Congregation Council of Ascension Lutheran Church, and agree(s) to those policies and regulations and any subsequent amendments thereto. This certificate shall be the contract of ownership for the right to use the specified space. Any changes of address by the holder of this certificate shall be reported promptly to the office of Ascension Lutheran Church.

Purchaser(s)

Ascension Lutheran Church

Pastor

Chairperson Church Council

Dated: _____

Columbarium Committee Member