



Westminster

Presbyterian Church

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RULES & REGULATIONS

Westminster Presbyterian Church's Ossuarium

August 2020

1. MANAGEMENT OF OSSUARIUM

The Church owns, manages and administers the Ossuarium; determines the standards for eligibility; maintains the necessary structure; and keeps records in accordance with Pennsylvania requirements. The Memorial Garden Committee is charged with the oversight, approval and management of the Ossuarium on behalf of the Church. The Church reserves the right to amend or change the Ossuarium Rules and Regulations as the Church deems appropriate.

2. INURNMENT

A. Subject to Laws

In addition to the Rules and Regulations, all inurnments, dis-inurnments, and removals shall comply with all federal, state, and local laws to the extent they are applicable to the Church. Nothing herein shall be construed as a waiver of any exemption of the Church as pursuant to the laws, rules, and regulations.

B. Eligibility

Inurnment in the Ossuarium will be available to: Members of the church; Spouses and children of members; and ordained ministers who have served as pastors of the church. Requests for the inurnment of non-eligible persons may be honored in the event such persons are recommended to and approved by the Memorial Garden Committee.

C. Fees

Fees for the right of inurnment shall be stated in the Fee Schedule, which will be reviewed and approved by the Memorial Garden Committee annually. The fee shall be required upfront when a niche is purchased or space reserved in the ossuary vault. The fee supports the ongoing care and maintenance of the Ossuarium, which is owned and operated by the Church. The fee does not include the cost of cremation or funeral service, the urn or the inscription.

D. Property Rights and Rights to Use Niche

A Certificate Holder who has paid the fee shall be entitled to name one or two persons whose ashes are to be inurned in that niche, provided that person or persons qualify as eligible. The Holder acquires no property rights in the Ossuary and its niches and agrees that said items and areas are at all times under the sole ownership and control of the Church.

E. Application for Inurnment

To reserve the rights to use a niche or the ossuary vault, a person must submit the completed Application and payment to the Church for review. Provided the application complies with the Church's policies and the requested niche is available, the Church will sign and provide the Certificate of Right of Inurnment to the Holder.

F. Designating the Person to be Inurned

Each Holder will designate at the time of application the name(s) of the person(s) to be inurned.

G. Selecting a Niche

The Church will maintain a map of niches that are available. Each submitted application must request their preferred niche. Applications for niches will be reviewed in the order they are received by the Church. Niche location will be recorded on the Holder's Right of Inurnment Certificate and on the Church's internal record.

H. Niche Size Limitations

The size of the niches allows the cremated remains of up to two persons to be inurned in each niche. There are 8 niches per row that would require the use of 2 standard 7"x 5 1/2"x 5 1/2" sheet bronze urns. These are purchased through the Church. The remainder of the niches (16 per row) would be able to accommodate both the sheet bronze urns and the 2 larger vase-style urns, the size of which cannot exceed 10" high and 6" wide. In the event the Holder's urn does not fit the niche, the Holder will be responsible for obtaining smaller urn(s) and the proper transfer of ashes to the replaced urn(s).

I. Committal Service/Inurnment

Only a Pastor of the Church or a minister invited by a Pastor of the Church may officiate at a committal service at the Ossuary.

J. Ashes and Urns

Only cremated human remains may be inurned in niches. Ashes shall be placed in the urn in a niche. No valuables or personal items other than the urn may be placed in the niche. The urn must be sealed, be in good taste and is subject to approval by the Church. The urn must be marked with permanent identification prior to Inurnment. Identification is to be provided by the family, Crematorium, Mortuary or Funeral Home. At the family's discretion, a decorative unsealed urn may be used for a memorial service and the ashes then transferred to a standard urn for Inurnment. Any transfer is the responsibility of the family. All urns will be permanently sealed at time of Inurnment. Urns may not be removed from their assigned niche once they are inurned unless cremated remains are being relocated.

K. Ossuary Vault

Only cremated human remains may be deposited. Ashes must be placed in a satin urn, which can be purchased through the Church.

3. INSCRIPTIONS

An Inscription Order form will be provided to be completed by the person(s) with rights to use a niche. The inscribing of each niche front shall be of uniform size and style as the Church has selected. Names permitted can be first, middle, maiden name and surname, and include suffixes and military designations, as long as each line does not exceed 23 characters. The inscription shall consist of the person's name, abbreviated month, day and year of birth and abbreviated month, day and year of death. The Church will arrange for the inscriptions, which are not included in the Right of Inurnment fee. Embroidered inscriptions and emblems are available through Eickhof to be used for the satin urns in the ossuary vault.

4. FLOWERS, ORNAMENTS, DECORATIONS

No flowers, decorations, signs, flags, or personal objects will be allowed within or on the Ossuarium. Such items will be removed and disposed of by the Church without notice or liability to the owner of the item or any niche Holder. Flowers may be left at designated spots near the Ossuarium for up to 5 days following inurnment.

5. CERTIFICATE HOLDER'S MAILING ADDRESS

It is the responsibility of the Holder to notify the Church office of any change in their mailing address. Notice sent to a Holder at the last address on file in the Church office shall be considered sufficient and proper legal notification for all purposes.

6. CARE OF THE OSSUARIUM

The Church will provide reasonable ongoing care for the Ossuarium. However, neither the Church nor any persons acting on the Church's behalf will be liable for any loss or damage to the Ossuarium.

7. SURRENDER, REMOVAL, TRANSFER AND ABANDONMENT OF CREMATED REMAINS AND NICHEs

A. Surrender of Certificates

The Holder may elect to surrender the Certificate if no cremated remains have ever been inurned in the assigned niche. In this case, the Holder must contact the Church to terminate the right of inurnment. The Holder of the Right of Inurnment cannot sell the right to a third party.

B. Removal of Cremated Remains by Holder

Cremated remains are the property of the family or estate of the deceased. If the cremated remains for one or both persons listed on the Certificate have been inurned in their assigned niche and the survivors wish to remove all the cremated remains, rights to the assigned niches will revert to the Church with no compensation due to the Holder or Holder's estate. The action to remove cremated remains shall be communicated to the Memorial Garden Committee by the Holder by submitting a Termination of Right of Inurnment form.

C. Transfer or Re-Assignments

A Holder may make written application to the Memorial Garden Committee to transfer or assign the Holder's rights under a Certificate of Inurnment Rights to an eligible transferee. The application shall state the grounds for eligibility of the proposed transferee as defined by these Rules and Regulations. The Church shall approve the request provided it finds the proposed transferee eligible. Upon approval, the Holder or Holder's authorized representative shall surrender the Certificate of Inurnment Rights. The Memorial Garden Committee shall then issue a new Certificate of Inurnment Rights to the approved transferee. The new transferee shall be bound by these same Rules and Regulations.

D. Abandonment

If after 50 years from the date of the Inurnment Certificate, no cremated remains have been inurned in an assigned niche specified on a Certificate, and the Holder of the Certificate cannot be located after good faith efforts are made by the Memorial Garden Committee to locate the Holder, the Right of Inurnment and the Certificate shall be deemed null and void and the assigned niche will revert back to the Church with no compensation due to Holder or Holder's estate. The Memorial Garden Committee will be free to reassign the abandoned niche.

8. MOVEMENT AND TERMINATION OF THE OSSUARIUM

A. Movement of the Ossuarium

In the event the Church is moved to another location or should it be necessary to move the Ossuarium to another location on the Church property, it shall be the responsibility of the Church to provide facilities for the re-depositing of the cremated remains committed to its care. The Church shall exercise reasonable efforts to locate and notify surviving heirs as to the new location.

B. Termination of the Ossuarium

Inurnment Certificates and Rights of Inurnment will continue as long as the present Ossuarium stands and is owned by the Church. In the rare possibility the present Ossuarium is to be sold or demolished, a replacement Ossuarium will not be furnished. Certificates will be cancelled, and Rights of Inurnment will cease. In that event, the Church will attempt to notify each niche Holder or estate that the Certificate will be cancelled and will attempt to notify a family member of each person inurned in the Ossuarium that the person's cremated remains must be removed from the niche. If the Church is not able to establish contact using Church records, or if the cremated remains are not removed within a reasonable period of time, the Church may relocate the cremated remains as it deems proper. No compensation will be due to the Holder or person's estate or family.