

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

REGARDING THE COLUMBARIUM IN THE MEMORIAL GARDEN OF ST. MARK'S EPISCOPAL CHURCH IN DURANGO, COLORADO

- 1) **What is a columbarium?** "Columbarium" is a term derived from the Latin word *columba*, or dove, a symbol of God's spirit and peace. It is an in-ground location of Plots (at St. Mark's), or an above-ground structure (not at St. Mark's), often a vault or wall, with Niches. These Plots or Niches are designed to contain ashes of the deceased (cremains).
- 2) **Why should I choose the St. Mark's Columbarium for myself or my family?** Historically, Christians have laid the dead to rest in churchyards where they can be remembered and their remains safeguarded. In keeping with this tradition, to honor the memory of the deceased, and to provide a tranquil, familiar final resting place for parishioners and their loved ones, a Columbarium has been established in St. Mark's Memorial Garden.
- 3) **Who is eligible to buy a plot?** Parishioners, past rectors or former regular attendees and contributors of record to St. Mark's, along with their families, may purchase a plot.
- 4) **How much does a Columbarium Plot cost?**
 - At the time of initial application, a fee set by the Vestry is paid and the specific Plot is selected. At that time the Plot is considered reserved. As of 2015, this fee is \$500.
 - At the time of the initial interment, a fee set by the Vestry is due to cover the cost of the concrete under-slab, granite tile, bronze plaque and labor associated with the interment. As of 2015, this fee is \$250.
 - As up to two persons can be interred in the same Plot, at the second opening of the Plot, an additional fee is due to cover the expenses associated with that interment, including the addition of a second bronze plaque. As of 2015, this fee is \$250.
 - The Vestry of St. Mark's may modify pricing from time to time as necessary.
- 5) **Is some portion of the subscription cost of a Plot tax deductible?**

St. Mark's offers no tax advice and recommends that you consult with your tax advisor on this point.
- 6) **What is the advantage of purchasing a Plot reservation in advance?** Purchasing a Plot, also referred to as Right of Interment, in advance assures you of its availability in the future. A specific Plot will be selected and reserved at the time of purchase. By purchasing a Plot in advance, you will have a greater opportunity to select the Plot location of your choice.
- 7) **What if I buy a Plot, and eventually decide to make arrangements for burial or interment someplace else? May I get a refund, or transfer or sell my Plot reservation to someone else?** No. If you determine that you don't need the Plot after you've purchased it, there is no refund and the Plot is non-transferable and non-salable. It returns to St. Mark's.

- 8) There are a limited number of Plots. How will St. Mark's accommodate future generations who wish to be interred here?** St. Mark's has room to significantly expand the Columbarium capacity within the Memorial Garden.
- 9) Will mourners have access to the Columbarium outside of regular church hours, as on weekends or evenings?** Yes, within limits established by the Vestry.
- 10) Will mourners be allowed to leave flowers or other forms of memorial in of the Columbarium?** Yes. Temporary flower arrangements and small flags are allowed in moderation. In addition, family and friends who wish to honor their loved one with flowers are encouraged to contact the St. Mark's office to sponsor floral arrangements that are placed at the altar in the church. Permanent memorials or plantings may be considered at alternate locations, but these must be approved by the Vestry and Columbarium Committee.
- 11) Could the cremains or partial cremains of more than two people be placed in a single Plot if that were the family's wish?** No, the Plots and plaques are designed to hold and identify the cremains of only one or two people.
- 12) Is St. Mark's pledging to tend the Columbarium in perpetuity?** No, because the continued existence of the church cannot be guaranteed. However, as long as St. Mark's exists, it will use its best efforts to protect the Columbarium, the ashes interred and the memorial markers from damage or destruction.
- 13) What happens if St. Mark's no longer exists at the current location?** In the event that St. Mark's no longer exists at the current location due to relocation, closure or other circumstances, the contents of each plot in the Columbarium will be relocated either by a family member, by St. Mark's, or by the Diocese of Colorado.
- 14) How will the Columbarium be administered?** The Columbarium will be administered by the Columbarium Committee and Vestry of St. Mark's.