

Cremation and Christian Belief

“I am the resurrection and the life,” says the Lord. “Those who believe in me, even though they die, will live, and everyone who lives and believes in me will never die.” – John 11:25-26

Christians know God to be Lord of both life and death, and trust in Jesus Christ and the power of his resurrection. They commit their bodies to the earthly finality expressed in the words, “ashes to ashes and dust to dust,” doing so in sure and certain hope of God’s power to raise them to new and everlasting life. Consequently, cremation is not only an appropriate Christian means of caring for the body once one has died, it is also compatible with good and faithful stewardship.

The columbarium makes it possible for members of The Brick Church family to have their cremated remains placed with those of others who have worshipped and worked in this place. The Brick Church believes that it is serving an ever growing need for many who no longer have family in their places of origin, who would like their remains inurned in this city.

THE BRICK PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

Parish House: 62 East 92nd Street, New York, New York 10128
Telephone: 212-289-4400 Fax: 212-996-7078
www.brickchurch.org

The Brick Presbyterian Church in the City of New York



Columbarium Information

A Columbarium at The Brick Church

The Brick Presbyterian Church columbarium is where its members and their relatives may have their lives memorialized, and their cremated remains housed in a dedicated space adjacent to the Sanctuary – a resting place of memories and reflection.

What is a Columbarium?

A columbarium is an assembly of niches designed to house urns containing a deceased person's cremated remains. The word comes from the Latin word *columba*, meaning "dovecote" (dove house), which later came to mean a structure of brick niches housing cremated remains in the Roman Empire. The word also came to be used to describe places where Christians gathered for prayer, and lies behind our English word for chapel. For Christians, the imagery of the dove is a witness to the Holy Spirit, "the Lord and giver of life," who sustains us not only in this life but in life eternal, and who is the giver of comfort and peace.

The Ancient Tradition of Christian Burial within the Church

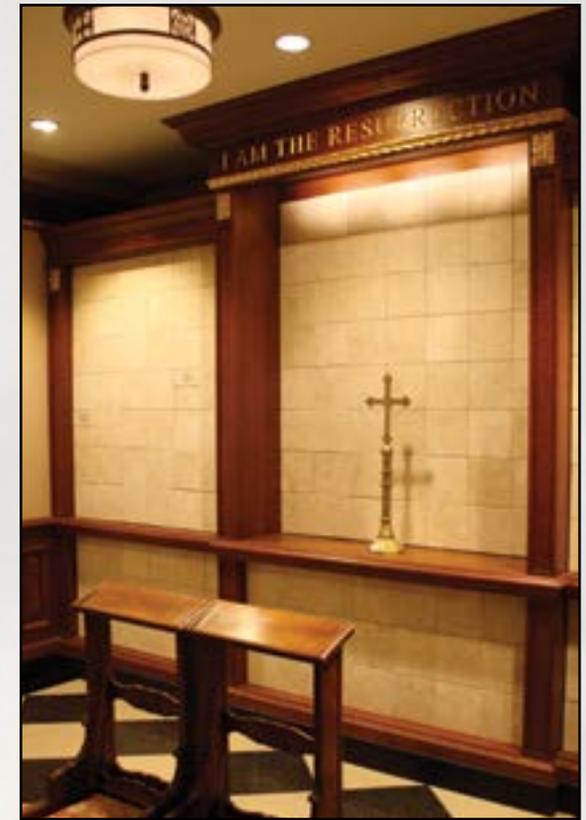
Burial within or near the worship space of the Christian community is a practice that reaches back to the days of the catacombs. By the fourth century, when Christians were first permitted to own public buildings, many churches were erected over the burial sites of apostles, saints and other martyred church leaders. Burial, or inhumation, had replaced the earlier practice of cremation during the second century. Consequently, when Christians died, they sought places within or nearby their place of worship where their bodies could be buried. Thus began the long Christian tradition of burial in crypts below church sanctuaries,

beneath floor stones in naves, chapels and crossings, and on adjoining ground in what would become church cemeteries. The value and limited availability of property in New York City has made burial difficult, if not impossible, causing people to search for burial sites in expensive commercial cemeteries situated in outlying or distant communities. During the last 50 years, with the continuing decrease in available church cemetery space and the escalating costs associated with burial in commercial cemeteries, many Christians have embraced the ancient practice of cremation, placing their loved one's remains in a church columbarium.

The Brick Church Columbarium

The columbarium contains 197 double niches (with spaces for two urns, one behind the other) that are faced with Crema Marfil Classico marble, where the name and years of birth and death of the deceased will be inscribed. A Book of Remembrance containing a laminated, one-page description of each deceased niche occupant – to the extent that the deceased or the deceased's family members wish the deceased to be so remembered – is in place with access for viewing provided to family members as appropriate.

The privilege of inurnment may be secured by a contribution to the columbarium fund. For a single niche, this contribution is \$3,000 (including urn) and for a double niche, the contribution is \$5,000 (including urns). An initial contribution of \$1,000 per urn space in a niche is required at the time the applicant files an application for the privilege to inurn. The applicant may make the contribution in full immediately or in installments of \$1,000 per urn space in a niche in the next calendar year and for every calendar year thereafter



until the full contribution has been made.

The right to a specific location cannot be finally secured, nor the niche used, until the contribution has been made in full. The separate fee for inscribing names and dates on the marble faceplate will be due following inurnment. Double niches may be used to inurn an immediate relative in the second urn space. Request for an application for inurnment should be directed to the church's business office. Provision has been made for discretionary niches that allow the church to provide space for deceased persons whose circumstances may not make possible the submission of a fee for a niche. Member and friends are encouraged to consider the funding of such niches, the fee for which will be attributed as a gift to the church.