**St. George’s Episcopal Church
Columbarium Committee
By-Laws**

The Rector, Wardens, and Vestry and at their regular meeting for the month of September, 2021 held on the 19th day of said month, hereby adopt the following By-Laws which shall govern the operation of the Columbarium Committee herein established.

**Article 1
Names and Members**

The committee shall be named the “Columbarium Committee” (hereinafter referred to as the Committee) and it shall consist of two (2) persons who are members of St. George’s Episcopal Church in Savannah, Georgia.

The first two (2) members of the Committee shall be appointed by the Vestry. One member shall be elected for a two (2) year term and one for a three (3) year term. Thereafter, upon expiration of terms, members shall be elected for three (3) year terms.

Each year, the Vestry will select a representative from the Vestry to serve on the Committee for a one (1) year term.

The Rector shall be a member of the Committee and shall have voice in deliberations of the Committee and can cast a tie-breaking vote, if needed.

From their number, they shall elect a Chairman and a Secretary/Treasurer. This election will be held each year at the first meeting of the Committee. Thereafter, meetings of the Committee shall be held at their convenience, as the business of the Committee warrants.

Should a vacancy occur, it shall be filled by election by the Vestry to fill the unexpired term.

**Article 2
Duties**

The Committee shall make all decisions concerning the sale of use of plots, ordering equipment, marketing, and distribution of funds. Any decisions that cannot be made by the agreement of the Committee will be submitted to the Vestry for resolution.

Prior to the December meeting of the Vestry, the Committee shall meet, approve a financial report to be made to the Vestry by the Secretary/Treasurer. This report shall be made to the Vestry at its regular meeting in December each year.

The Committee shall receive a report from the Secretary/Treasurer at each of its meetings concerning the financial status of its funds.

The Committee shall receive funds for the purchase of the use of plots and shall expend such funds as are necessary to ensure that there are sufficient empty burial plots available to accommodate all of those purchased for use by individuals.

It is the responsibility of the Committee to monitor sales of plots and notify the Vestry once purchases of plots exceeds 75% of the inventory of plots. At that time, the Committee and Vestry will pursue plans for expansion either with additional in-ground plots, or with the construction of above-ground structures with niches to store ashes.

**Article 3
Authority**

The decisions of the Columbarium Committee shall be final and shall not be reviewable by the Vestry.

The Vestry shall set the price to be paid for the use of each plot and may change that price by majority vote of the Vestry.

The Vestry will review these By-Laws annually, or as needed, and present proposed changes to the congregation at the Annual Parish Meeting. If necessary, a special-call meeting as defined by the Diocesan Constitution of Cannons may be held to present proposed amendments to these By-Laws.

**Article 4
Purchase of Use of Plot**

The Columbarium Committee shall cause the appropriate contracts and other documents to be prepared and signed and copies provided for each purchase of the use of a plot. Each plot shall require separate contracts and other documents to be prepared and signed.

The cost of a plot will have two components: a portion that is to cover the actual cost of the marker and associated installation services, and a portion that will be considered a donation to be used for maintenance and future expansion of the Columbarium.

Upon the receipt of funds for the purchase of the use of a plot, the Committee shall insure that said plot is physically present in the Columbarium area.

Sale of the use of a plot shall be limited to interment of members of St. George’s Episcopal Church in Savannah, Georgia, and their families. Sale of the use of a plot for internment of a person not described above shall be authorized by the Committee.

**Article 5
Location**

The outside Altar, located at north side of the church building, is designated as the location of the Columbarium. The current layout and design of the Columbarium accommodates in-ground burials of ashes. Future plans may include above-ground structures with niches for ashes as needed.

The Committee shall present any proposed landscaping and / or expansion plans to the Vestry for approval.

**Article 6
Installment Payments**

The payment for the use of each plot shall be made in full, prior to its use. Payment by installment may be made by approval of the Committee.

If the Purchaser of a plot dies before full purchase price is paid, the Committee shall require full payment before the Certificate of Use document is executed. If the plot is no longer wanted by the heirs of the Purchaser, the portion of payment that has been received that was designated for purchase of the marker will be reimbursed to the estate of the Purchaser. The portion of the payment that has been received that represents the donation to the church will not be reimbursed.

If after paying the full purchase price, a person who has use of the plot dies or otherwise does not use the plot, the Committee shall return to said person or their Estate the full amount of the monies paid which represents that part of the purchase price which is the cost of purchasing the plot. The Committee shall retain for its use that part of the purchase price which represents the donation to the Church.

**Article 7
Documentation**

A file shall be kept on each plot which shall include a copy of the executed Certificate of Use document and the Disclosure Statement, a copy of any receipt for purchase, and the name, address, and the next of kin of the person purchasing the use of the plot and any other documents that the Committee shall designate.

**Article 8
ACCOUNTING**

The Committee Secretary/Treasurer shall work closely with the Parish Treasurer, Assistant Treasurer and Accountant to track funds for the Columbarium. Columbarium funds will be tracked in restrictive funds and will follow Fund Cost Accounting principles. Separate funds will be maintained to track the monies received for the purchase of the plot to include marker and installation services, and monies received as donation to the church for maintenance and future expansion of the Columbarium.

The Committee Secretary/Treasurer will coordinate with the Parish Treasurer or Assistant Treasurer to request disbursement from these funds to pay for the installation of markers or any other expenses that occur as a result of the operation of this burial service. The Committee Secretary/Treasurer will also request disbursement for reimbursement of any payment necessary if the person purchasing the use of the plot decides to be buried elsewhere.