



# MISSOURI YORK RITE BEACON

*Happy  
Thanksgiving*





Grand York Rite of the State of Missouri

Missouri York Rite Beacon is the official publication of the Grand York Rite of the State of Missouri.

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**Submissions:** All submissions of photographs should include a 40 to 50 word article telling who, what, when, where and why. Pictures should be high resolution jpg (s) from a camera (at least 300 dpi). Phone pictures should be set to high resolution.

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<https://moyorkrite.org/missouri-york-rite-beacon-news-submission-form/>



*M.:E.: O.: Kevin M. Ritter  
Grand High Priest  
of the Grand Chapter of Royal Arch  
Masons of the State of Missouri*



Greetings, Companions!

Another month has come and gone! I hope October held more treats than tricks for you, and that you are now entering that period of contemplation and thankfulness, as we get closer to the Thanksgiving holiday.

This is one of my favorite times of the year, not only for the beautiful colors on the trees, the cooler temperatures, and the delicious food that comes with the season, but also the opportunity to spend some time in quiet contemplation for the many blessings I have received in my life and during the past year. I'm thankful for the many veterans who have given freely - of their time, their talents, and sometimes their lives – for the many blessings my family and I enjoy. I am thankful for my family, without whose love and support I would not be the person I am today. I am thankful for my job and the opportunity to continue working with university students. And I am thankful for this Grand Chapter, for all of my Companions, and the opportunity to serve you all this year as Grand High Priest.

I hope that you will each take the opportunity, between delicious plates of home-cooked meals, to think on all that you have to be thankful for. I wish each of you a Happy Thanksgiving and look forward to seeing you in your Chapters in the coming weeks and months.

As always, Companions, BE EXCELLENT TO EACH OTHER!

Fraternally,

Kevin Ritter  
Grand High Priest





*M.I.C. Dennis W. Houck*  
*Grand Master of the Grand Council of*  
*Cryptic Masons of the State of Missouri*



Greetings Companions,

I want to begin this month's newsletter by expressing my gratitude to all of the veterans who have served our great nation. Our First President was also the First Commanding General and an excellent and dedicated Freemason. He founded this country on the same values Freemasonry still holds today. Thank You and God Bless you all.

My travels this month, have kept me busy and satisfied. It was a joy to visit the Excelsior Chapter DeMolay in Jackson, Missouri. It is impressive to see what these young men can do. Their ritual work is excellent. These are future Masons in the making. It is our responsibility to move them on to our blue lodges and then to the York Rite.

Our school of instruction was excellent. V.I.C. Stuart Inglish provided an outstanding school of instruction on the opening and closing of a Council of Select Masters. He also gave instructions on the Royal Master's Degree. We had two Companions earn their proficiency cards. V.I.C. Chris Wehrenberg earned his proficiency cards on the Historical Lecture and the Apron Lecture. V.I.C. Homer Markhart earned his proficiency card in the opening and closing of a Council of Select Masters.

This past weekend, I found myself in Independence, Missouri. Their York Rite Festival was outstanding. They knighted thirteen new Knight Templars. The work they did and the timeline they kept made this a very smooth festival. Since October, Missouri has created thirty York Rite Masons. They progressed from Mark Master to the Order of the Temple. I want to thank everyone for their hard work.

Let us take a minute to reflect on this past year. Let us consider all the things we can be thankful for. For me, it would be the blessings God has given me. My wife for supporting me through this year, and for the Grand Council line. We are so alike and so different. All the various attitudes and ideas we have make this a great organization. Happy Thanksgiving!!!

John 14 VS 6

Fraternally

M.I.C. Dennis W. Houck

Grand Master of the Grand Council of Cryptic Masons of the State of Missouri





# *A note from the Desk of the Editor....*

Greetings Everyone,

Well, it looks like everyone survived the ghost, goblins, and ghouls. That now brings us into the month of November, and we are ready to celebrate two wonderful holidays. That of Veterans Day and Thanksgiving!!!

We respect and wish to thank all our Veterans who gave up so much to serve and protect our great nation. Many were separated from their families for months and years. They were dropped into the most God awful places that this world has to offer. All in order to keep our lives free and safe. Thank you all who served our armed forces. You honor us all as to your devotion to your country and its people. Thank you.

Next is Thanksgiving. Thanksgiving isn't just a day, it is a practice of gratitude. In a world that often emphasizes what we lack rather than what we have, Thanksgiving encourages us to count our blessings. It reminds us to appreciate what we have, such as food, shelter, and companionship, which is often taken for granted. So, this would be a good time to thank God for allowing us all that we have and have been given.

In this issue of the Beacon, we recognize Veterans Day with an article on Masonic Presidents who served our country in our military. For Thanksgiving, we have included an article on Masonic prayers. This so we may share our thanks to

God Almighty. Then we have a new section. One to introduce you to some Masonic authors. Look closely, they might be the Brother on your right who you did not even know had written a book or several books to be exact. Then we have our Royal Arch Education, and a nice article from the Retention Corner.

Companions and Sir Knights, this is your Beacon Magazine. We want to share your events and photos with your fellow York Rite members throughout the state. However, we cannot do this without your help. Please notify the Beacon staff, [through its link on our website](#), to share. Your next idea might transform our Fraternity!!!

Well everyone, I guess that is all I have to offer this month. God Bless our Veterans, God Bless America, and God Bless you all. Have a Happy Thanksgiving. May you all enjoy your time with your families, friends, and Brethren. And we will be seeing you all on down that dusty trail.

Peace,  
The  
Editor



**MWB Emmett J. Bryson Grand Master &  
MEC Kevin M. Ritter Grand High Priest  
invite you to experience the first two Degrees of the Royal Arch!**





## THE GRAND YORK RITE OF MISSOURI 7-DAY CRUISE TO ALASKA

**CRUISING FOR RARA, CMMRF, AND KTEF**  
ON THE NORWEGIAN CRUISE LINER "BLISS"

**SEATTLE TO: SITKA, JUNEAU, EDICOTT ARM DAWES GLACIER,  
ICY STRAIT POINT, KETCHIKAN, VICTORIA BC, SEATTLE**

**JULY 24 TO JULY 31, 2027**

Cabin Type	Cabin/Balcony sq. ft	Sleeps	Price 1st-2nd	Price 3rd-4th
Haven Penthouse	430-433 / 84-87	2	\$6,419.00 p/p*	
Club Balcony (ma)	249-361 / 41-101	4	\$2,710.78 p/p	\$887.39 p/p*
Balcony(ba)	214-367 / 38-108	3	\$2,498.07 p/p	\$887.39 p/p*
Inside (ia)	135-362	2	\$1,612.05 p/p	

Single balcony and single studio cabins are available These cabins do sell out, call for pricing. \*Price may increase. These specials are available if booked now: "More free at sea" FREE beverage package has A \$210.00 p/p gratuity charge, free 3 specialty dinning package for Balcony & above has a \$60.00 p/p gratuity additional charge.

The Airfares from Springfield, St. Louis, & Kansas City is \$823.50 pay for one, second goes free. Transfers from airport to ship, ship to airport \$69.00 round trip.

Your deposit for your cabin is only \$250. Certificates are available, (pay \$150 and get \$300 off the cruise). Veteran's discounts are available. Final payment doe by March 26, 2027.

Balances can be paid in 2, 3, 4, or 5 equal interest free payments.

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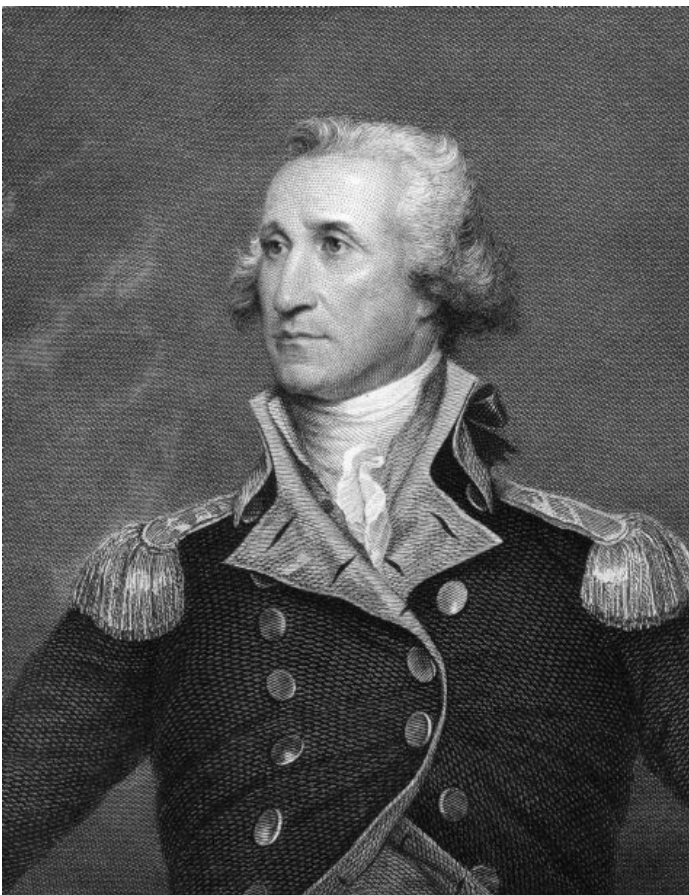
Phone: (864) 833-1013





November has numerous holidays and celebrations. However, Veterans Day comes up to the top of the list. Veterans Day began as Armistice Day. It was created by President Woodrow Wilson in 1919 to commemorate the end of World War I. In 1938, November 11th became the legal holiday dedicated to World War I veterans. After World War II and the Korean War, veteran service organizations pushed for a more inclusive holiday, leading Congress to change Armistice Day to Veterans Day in 1954, honoring all American veterans for their service to the citizens of the United States.

In this article, we will examine the Masonic Presidents who have honorably served our military and citizens. I did not include President Lyndon Johnson even though he served in our military and was initiated as an entered apprentice in 1937. He obviously did not take our fraternity seriously as he never tried to receive the rest of our degree during the following 36 years of his life.



George Washington's military career spanned

four decades and two major conflicts: the French and Indian War and the American Revolutionary War. Washington began as a major in the Virginia militia, rising to commander. Washington then led the Continental Army to victory in the American Revolution, serving our military for our independence.

Washington was initiated into Freemasonry in 1752, advancing through the three degrees to become a Master Mason by August 1753. He remained an active and prominent Freemason throughout his life, eventually serving as the first Master of Alexandria Lodge Number 22 and officiating the laying of the cornerstone for the U.S. Capitol in 1793. Washington's Masonic career was a notable part of his private and public life, with our fraternity playing a major role in his social advancement and national service.

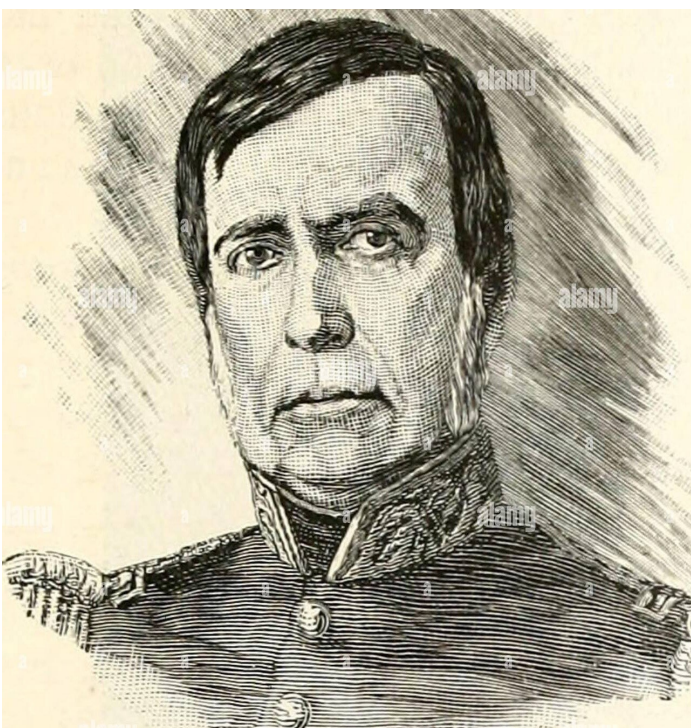


James Monroe served in the Continental Army



during the American Revolutionary War, enlisting in 1775. He was commissioned as a lieutenant, fought in key battles like the Battle of Trenton where he was severely wounded, and rose to the rank of captain. He also served as an aide-de-camp to Lord Stirling and was present at Valley Forge and the Battle of Monmouth. After the war, he continued to serve in the Virginia Militia with the rank of colonel.

Monroe began his Masonic career in 1775 as a 17-year-old student at William and Mary College, initiated into Williamsburg Lodge Number 6, and continued his membership until the 1780s, joining Fredericksburg Lodge Number 4 later on. His Masonic journey reflects a commitment to public service and national unity, ideals also embraced by other influential leaders of the era.



James K. Polk had a limited, non-combat military career, serving as a captain in the Tennessee militia in the 1820s. However, his legacy is tied to his role as Commander-in-Chief during the Mexican American War, in which he aggressively directed military strategy to achieve his expansionist goals.

James K. Polk was an active Freemason throughout his career, serving as a lodge officer and participating in Masonic ceremonies during his presidency. He was initiated into the fraternity in 1820, long before he became the 11th President of the United States.

James Buchanan's military career consisted of service in the Pennsylvania militia during the War of 1812, where he participated in the defense of

Baltimore. He joined a cavalry unit to help defend the city against British advances and was honorably discharged after the war.



James Buchanan joined Lancaster Lodge Number 43, in Pennsylvania in 1816, and served as its Worshipful Master in 1825. He later became Deputy Grand Master of the Grand Lodge of Pennsylvania. Buchanan remained an active Freemason, finding camaraderie and purpose in its principles of brotherhood and service, and his lodge supported him during threats after his presidency.



Andrew Johnson's military career was primarily



primarily as a political appointee rather than a career soldier. He was named military governor of Tennessee by President Abraham Lincoln during the Civil War, serving from 1862 to 1865.

Andrew Johnson was initiated into Freemasonry in 1851 at Greeneville Lodge No. 119 in Tennessee and became a Knight Templar in 1859. He achieved his Royal Arch degree and was a Scottish Rite Mason, famously becoming the first U.S. President to receive the Scottish Rite degrees while in office, which occurred in the White House in 1867. Johnson remained a proud Freemason throughout his life.



James A. Garfield served as a high-ranking officer in the Union Army during the Civil War, rising from lieutenant colonel to major general and leading his troops in notable battles such as Middle Creek and Shiloh. After distinguishing himself as a soldier and serving as chief of staff to Major General William S. Rosecrans, Garfield resigned from the military to take his seat in the U.S. House of Representatives in 1863, a position from which he was later elected president.

James A. Garfield began his Masonic journey on November 19, 1861, in Columbus, Ohio, becoming a Master Mason in 1864. He was an active member in several lodges, including becoming a charter member of Pentalpha Lodge Number 23, in Washington, D.C. Garfield also advanced in appendant bodies like the York Rite (Knights Templar) and the Scottish Rite. His Masonic affiliations continued through his presidency, with his Knights Templar commandery serving as his honor guard during his inauguration.

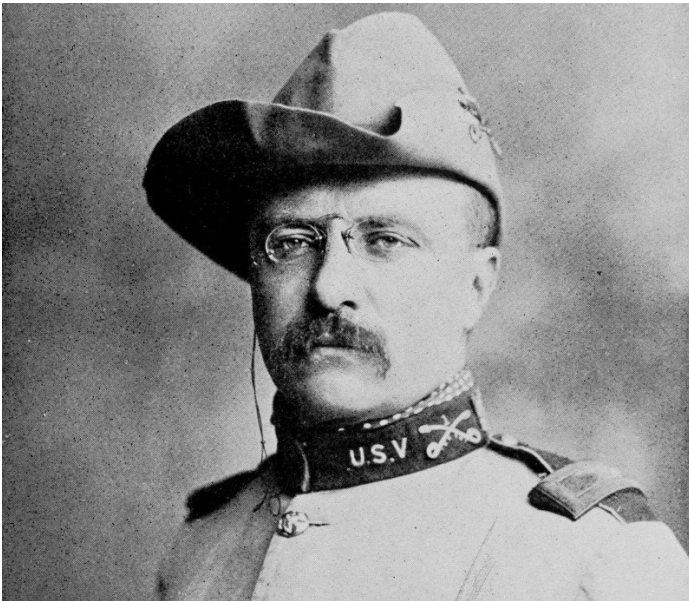
William McKinley served as a citizen soldier in the Civil War, enlisting as a private and rising to the rank of brevet major by the end of the war, serving

under future President Rutherford B. Hayes. He displayed bravery at battles like Antietam and was noted for his service in bringing rations under fire and his actions at the Battle of Cedar Creek. After the war, he also led the nation in the Spanish-American War as president, though this was a political, not a military command, following failed negotiations for Cuban independence.



William McKinley's Masonic career began in 1865 when he was inspired to join Freemasonry after witnessing the fraternal bond between Union and Confederate soldiers during the Civil War, joining Hiram Lodge Number 21, in Winchester, Virginia. He continued his active participation by affiliating with Canton Lodge Number 60, and becoming a charter member of Eagle Lodge Number 431 (later renamed William McKinley Lodge) in Canton, Ohio. He also advanced through the Capitular degrees and became a Knight Templar, remaining a devoted member of the craft until his death.





Theodore Roosevelt's military career is defined by his celebrated command of the "Rough Riders" during the Spanish-American War, an experience that catapulted him to national fame. Though it was his only combat service, his enthusiasm for military preparedness and the "strenuous life" influenced his policies as president.

Theodore Roosevelt joined Freemasonry in 1901, initiating as an Entered Apprentice in Matinecock Lodge in New York and quickly advancing to Master Mason later that year, shortly before becoming President of the United States. During his presidency and afterward, he remained an active Freemason, visiting lodges globally, participating in cornerstone ceremonies, and embodying Masonic virtues of integrity and public service in his progressive policies.



Harry S. Truman served in the U.S. Army during World War I, rising to the rank of captain and commanding Battery D of the 129th Field Artillery in France. After an initial period in the National

Guard, he was commissioned as a first lieutenant when his unit was federalized for World War I. As captain, Truman's leadership qualities were recognized, and he led his men through heavy combat in the Meuse-Argonne Offensive, famously ensuring his unit emerged from the war without losing any soldiers. His transformative military experience, particularly his combat leadership, provided him with a foundation for his later political career.

Harry Truman had an extensive Masonic career, becoming a Master Mason in 1909, serving as Grand Master of Missouri from 1940 to 1941, and ultimately receiving the 33rd-degree Sovereign Grand Inspector General designation in the Scottish Rite in 1945. He was deeply dedicated to the Craft, organizing lodges, completing degrees in the Scottish and York Rites, and receiving the Gourgass Medal, the highest honor of the Northern Masonic Jurisdiction.



Gerald Ford served in the U.S. Navy Reserve during World War II, joining in 1942 and serving on active duty until 1946, reaching the rank of Lieutenant Commander. He served aboard the light aircraft carrier USS Monterey (CVL-26), participating in major South Pacific operations. After the war, he remained in the Naval Reserve until 1963 and received an honorable discharge from active duty.

Gerald Ford had an extensive Masonic career, joining in 1949 and advancing to the 33rd degree of the Scottish Rite by 1962, becoming an Honorary Member of the Supreme Council. He was a devoted Mason, a member of Malta Lodge Number 465, in Grand Rapids, Michigan, and Columbia Lodge Number 3, in Washington, D.C. Ford's lifelong commitment to Masonic principles influenced his presidency, reflecting his belief in honesty, healing, and civic duty.



# Picture This.....

## Region 5 Royal Arch Degree Day

On Saturday, November 1st, Region 5, Royal Arch Masons of the State of Missouri, celebrated its 2nd Annual Royal Arch Degree Day. Through the course of the day, we exalted nine new Companions by conferring the Past Master, Most Excellent Master, and Royal Arch Degrees. This was the culmination of a year of conducting six Red Jacket Blizzes accompanied by Mark Master Degrees. Our newest Companions are: Michael Patrick Ahearn, Jason Robert Baron, Thomas Bradford, Thomas William Conlon, Benjamin Lee Gokenback, Michael David Leonard, Phillip McDaniel, Matthew Alan Pappert, and Nicholas John Prater. Congratulations to our new Companions!





Springfield Chapter #15, & Zabud Council #25, had the honor and privilege of presenting Companion Jackson Bodine with his 50 year pin & certificate from the Grand Chapter & Grand Council of Illinois. An enjoyable evening & fellowship! Following images:



MEC Kevin M. Ritter, Grand High Priest of the Grand Chapter of Royal Arch Masons of the State of Missouri presided over and presented Companion Jackson Bodine with his 50 year pin and certificate on behalf of the Grand Chapter of Illinois



Companion Jackson Bodine at the altar during the 50 year presentation.



Pictured left to right: VEC Greg Walker, Grand Principal Sojourner; Companion Jackson Bodine; MEC Kevin Ritter, Grand High Priest; REC Jim McManigle, Grand King



VIC Gerald Hill, RDGM, presented Comp. Jackson Bodine with his 50 year certificate on behalf of the Grand Council of Illinois. Left to right: MIC Ed Choate, Past IGM of the Grand Council of Cryptic Masons of the State of Illinois; Comp. Jackson Bodine; VIC Gerald Hill, RDGM; MIC Bob Detherow, Past Illustrious Grand Master of the Grand Council of Cryptic Masons of the State of Missouri. MIC Choate shared an interesting story as he had a direct connection with Companion Bodine. When MIC Choate was elected Grand Master of the Grand Council, the elected Grand Treasurer that year was Companion Bodine's father-in-law!!!







**Capitular Education 2025-2026**  
**Greg Walker, Chairman**  
**Committee:**  
**REC Donald MacCormick, VEC Lloyd Lyon, VEC Nick Young,**  
**VEC Doug Rose, VEC James Bell**

Companions all,

Hello Frost!!! The leaves are turning, albeit the colors are not very grand due to the dry season we had at the end of summer, but still it is a change. I hope you enjoy many nights around the firepit with friends and family.

This month we move on to the Past Master degree. It is fitting, it seems, that we cover this degree in a month where we are seeing so much change around us. The “passing” of one Master to another is something to be celebrated as an annual occurrence of auspicious solemnity. Enjoy!

**Grand Chapter Capitular Education Series - November 2025**  
**(Virtual) Past Master Degree**

The (Virtual) Past Master degree is one of the shortest degrees in the overall time it takes to confer the degree. But that shouldn't mean that it is brushed over or rushed through haphazardly. The “lecture” given to the candidate, as he is provided with the implements and regalia of a Master of a Lodge, is one of the most powerful statements in our Craft. In it, the candidate is directed on how to govern a Lodge under his care.

I have often wondered why this degree is no longer given as a chair degree to all newly elected and installed Masters of symbolic Lodges. It would be fitting given the situation. And it would be relevant to the task in which they are about to undertake.

The ceremony of installation for the Grand Lodge of Missouri allows room for impromptu additions to installing the officers. I can see where some of the points made in the Past Master degree could be inserted into that ceremony, without giving away the entire degree.

Something to consider...

In this reading, you have been given the entire Chapter along with:

- Multiple Choice Test
- Open-ended question:
  - ◊ What do you think about the (virtual) Past Master Degree?
  - ◊ Should there be a degree which gives away the Secrets of the Chair to a person who hasn't served as Worshipful Master?
  - ◊ Should we have the Degree at all - couldn't the United States simply follow other countries and allow anyone who is a Master Mason to become a Royal Arch Mason without going through the Past Master degree? (meaning, only confer three degrees rather than four)

\*\*\*\*\*

**Our education series will follow this schedule:**

**November 2025:** Past Master Degree, with quiz and open ended question

**December 2025:** Most Excellent Master Degree

**January 2026:** Most Excellent Master Degree, completion including quiz and open-ended question

**February 2026:** Royal Arch Degree

**March 2026:** Royal Arch Degree, continues

**April 2026:** Royal Arch Degree, continues

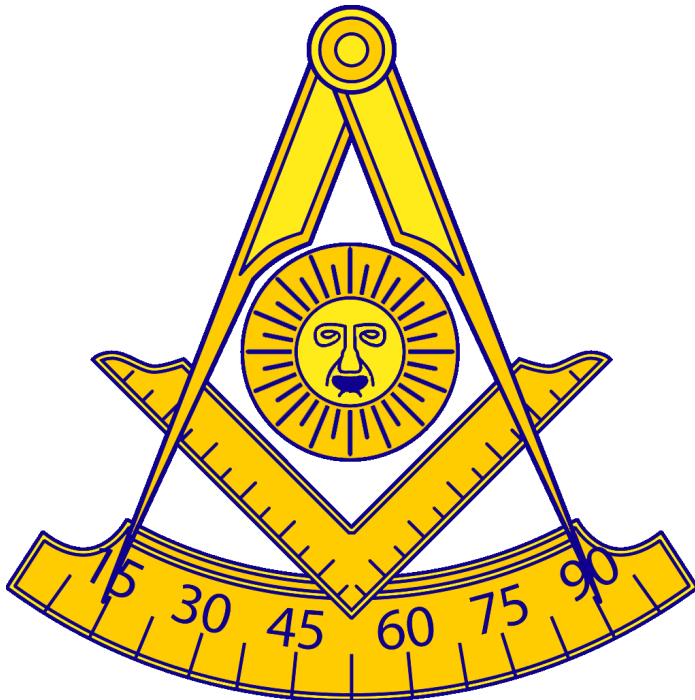
**May 2026:** Royal Arch Degree, completion including quiz and open-ended question

**June 2026:** Wrap up of education for the year and a short expose on a passage of scripture from the Royal Arch Degree ritual from the role of Jeshua, the High Priest.

This schedule may not fit all Chapters perfectly, but it is suggested that your members come prepared with a copy of The Beacon in hand, print or digital, to your meetings so that they may take part in the group readings and discussion that follows.



# Capitular Development Course



## Virtual Past Master Degree

### Background of the Past Master Degree

The origins of the Past Master Degree are lost in history, and it is probably as old as the Entered Apprentice and Fellowcraft Degrees. From what can be gleaned, from the earliest times, when a Master was installed in the Chair to preside over a Lodge, there was a short ceremony, usually performed only in the presence of other Past Master, in which he possibly took a further Obligation, and was entrusted with a grip and word known only to Past Masters. It is generally believed that this ceremony might have its roots in Operative Lodges, where it would be expected that, given the close attachment to the Church, there would be some kind of ceremony and blessing when a Brother was elected to preside over his Lodge.

In Scotland, indeed, the Installed Master's Degree was not even introduced until 1870 by the Earl of Rosslyn, from the English Ritual. In a declaration of 1846, it was categorically stated that 'The Grand Lodge further considers every Master Mason qualified to be elected to and fill the chair as R.W. Masons without receiving any additional

secrets whatever.'



*The Earl of Rosslyn*


This sort of Ritual was known by a number of different names, including the Secrets of the Chair, Paster Master, Passed Master, and Installed Master. The term 'Past Master' is further confused by the fact that a Master-elect could be said to be receiving the Paster Master degree, when the term Past Master strictly applies to a Master who has served his Lodge for the specified period, and has now vacated the East.

We have learned that the earliest form of the Royal Arch Degree was open only to Past Masters, and it quickly became evident that, given the small number of Past Masters, this important system of teaching Masonic secrets was in imminent danger of becoming extinct. It was among the Antients firstly, that a Degree which conferred the Secrets of the Chair upon worthy and well qualified Master

THE  
CONSTITUTIONS  
OF THE  
FREE-MASONS.  
CONTAINING THE  
*History, Charges, Regulation, &c.*  
of that most Ancient and Right  
Worshipful **FRATERNITY.**

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For the Use of the LODGES.



L O N D O N

Printed by WILLIAM STURGES, in New Street, at the Globe,  
and by W. MASON at the Crown and Anchor, in St. Dunstons  
Church, in the Strand.

In the Year of Maturity ————— 57d 6  
1785

In the United States, it is believed that the first known mention is the working of the Excellent Degree in St. Andrew's Royal Arch Lodge in 1769, Boston Massachusetts. When St. Andrew's and King Cyrus Chapters met in 1795 to standardize their Chapter Degrees, the records of St. Andrew's Chapter reported the working of the Past Master and Most Excellent Master Degrees in place of their Excellent and Super Excellent Degrees. Many scholars are certain this simply reflects a name change, and that this indicates the Excellent Degree practiced by them was in fact a Past Master Degree.

Nature, and the inventive Mason, abhors a

A black and white cartoon illustration depicting a chaotic scene. In the center, three men in top hats and suits are carrying a fourth man on a stretcher. The man on the stretcher is wearing a suit and a hat, and his arms are outstretched. To the left, a man in a top hat and suit is walking away, carrying a large suitcase. To the right, a man in a top hat and suit is being pulled back by another man. In the background, a man in a top hat and suit is standing, holding a cane. A sign on the ground reads "PROHIBITION".

That the Degree had become ‘offensive’ was reflected by Edmund Ronayne, writing in his 1879 expose of Freemasonry: “Notwithstanding this recommendation, the subordinate Chapter throughout the country continued to indulge in almost unlimited buffoonery in conferring this degree...I received this degree of Past Master twice, first in the Chapter on which occasion all kinds of stupid horse-play were indulged in at my expense...”

The current ritual reflects this minimalism, and the Degree is comparatively short, certainly in comparison with the now elaborate ritual conducted by a Board of Past Masters in the English Emulation Ritual. While some States no longer confer any kind of Past Master Degree, New York still holds a Board of Installed Masters in a side room prior to installing the Master-elect of a Symbolic Lodge, at which he



takes his Obligation and is entrusted with the Grip and Word of a Past Master.

Unusually, the Past Master Degree performed by Ancient Chapter No. 1 in New York may still contain some of the elements referred to by Mackey, since the Ritual includes a short scene which most certainly places the Candidate seated in the Oriental Chair in an embarrassing situation. Of course, what may have been considered ribald at the time is now seen as a quaint preservation of historical ritual!

In 1942, an additional part to the Degree, called The Allegory, composed by E.:. Howard, L. M. Jones, Past High Priest of Unity Chapter No. 16 located in Dayton, Ohio, was approved for optional adoption in the Virtual Past Master degree by General Grand Chapter; and it is the Appendix to this Course.

### **Differences between an Actual and Virtual Past Master**

Given that a Past Master Degree is practiced within a Chapter, however similar it may be in form to that practiced within the Blue Lodge system, in 1853, it was categorically declared to be unconnected with the latter Degree, as it was necessary to distinguish between the two forms of the Past Master Degree practiced in Capitular and Symbolic Masonry.

Some research has suggested that there may at one time have been differences in the secrets conferred, either a slight variation in grip or password, to ensure that nobody receiving the Past Master Degree as a prelude to receiving the Royal Arch degree could gain entrance to a Lodge of Past Masters about to confer their version upon a Master-elect. In the United States, at least, this possible difference, if it ever existed, has disappeared over time, and there is now no substantial difference between the two Rituals, other than the fact that, in the Blue Lodge setting, obedience to the Grand Lodge, its Constitutions, Laws and Edicts is sworn; and the ancient penalties are omitted. Also, only the grip and word are given. In Blue Lodge, the Charge, and the presentations of gavel, Constitutions, Charter and gavel are done in presence of the whole Lodge at the Installation Ceremony (and sometimes non-Masonic visitors if an open Installation is conducted).

Another difference is in the name. While the ceremony within a Lodge created a Past Master (sometimes referred to as an Actual Past Master), the ceremony within Capitular Masonry creates a Virtual Past Master. This is to indicate that he has not been elected by a Lodge to serve over them, nor has he

been required to meet the other prerequisites such as having served as a Warden. Because of this he cannot serve as a Master in a Blue Lodge, nor expect to receive any of the rights and privileges associated with that honor. These include conferring the Entered Apprentice, Fellowcraft or Master Mason Degrees, being invited to a seat in the East, or being received in a Blue Lodge as a Past Master. Similarly, many of the duties of a Past Master Recited in the chapter are not in fact relevant to a Virtual Past Master (such as presiding at dedications, consecrations, the laying of cornerstone, and presiding at funeral services).

### **Variations Can Lead to Embarrassing Situation!**



Unfortunately, the variations in requirements to receive-and to observe- the Royal arch Degree can lead to embarrassment when visiting other countries. For example, while any American Master Mason can, by virtue of receiving the Virtual Past Master Degree, receive the Royal Arch Degree, and thereby rise through the offices to become High Priest of his Chapter, in England and Ireland, while any Master Masons may become a Royal Arch Mason, only those who have sat as Master of a Lodge may be elected to the three principle positions of the Council – Scribe, King or High Priest. An English Mason would find it most confusing that an American Mason could be a Past High Priest yet not Past Master of a Lodge. Another source of much confusion is that, in the Dogmatic Ritual (practiced in England and her Commonwealth, including

Canada), the Grand Council are called the Three Principal Officers – and the most senior one is ‘Z’, or Zerubbabel the King. ‘J’ or Jeshua the High Priest is the second in line. And the sign given on entering retiring is uniquely given with the left, and not the right hand in the English Royal Arch!



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This can lead to problems when an English Royal Arch Mason wishes to visit an American Chapter. In theory, there are a few areas of concern. Firstly, if he is not a Past Master, he will not have received the Past Master Degree – and indeed in most jurisdictions receiving the Past Master Degree in a Blue Lodge is for some reason not considered a substitute for receiving the ‘expedient’ version in the Capitular Degrees! Secondly, since it is an entirely separate Body, he may not be a Mark Master Mason. Finally, since the Most Excellent Master degree forms part of what we call the Cryptic Council, he probably won’t have received that either.

A key issue is the fact that only Past Masters can invoke the Great and Sacred Name under a Living Arch and over a Triangle. In English Chapter, the three Principal Officers raise the Arch, give the

words and lower the Arch while the rest of the Companions watch. An English Royal arch Mason is therefore not equipped to participate in our Openings and Closings.

The situation is similarly confusing for the English visiting a Scottish Chapter. Not only are the Mark and Excellent Mast Degrees prerequisites, the English Royal Arch Mason will not be permitted into the Chapter until he was ‘taken the Veils’, since the Ceremony of the Veils only exists in the ‘time immemorial’ ritual confined to a few Lodges in Bristol, and the Dogmatic Ritual practiced elsewhere does not use veils. On the other hand, the fact that the Scottish Constitution does not require one to be a Past Master in order to receive – or confer – the Royal Arch Degree, has also led to some difficult situations in the past, since this creates a situation in which a high priest who has neither sat as Master of a Lodge nor received the Virtual Past Master Degree can confer the Royal arch degree, whose validity would be questioned both under the English and general Grand Chapter Constitutions!

There are just a few examples of the many differences which can lead to embarrassment, or possibly worse, a violation of our own Obligations if we allow those who have not yet taken certain Obligations to see the working and receive the signs and words. In all cases it is best to contact the Grand Secretary’s Office to double check the situation regarding a visitor, if any notice of an impending visit has been given. In the New York Jurisdiction, a recent change was made to the constitution to ensure the Mark, Past Master, Most Excellent Master and Royal Arch Degrees are given in that order: yes, it was discovered that a Chapter had conferred the Degrees in a random order!

The General Grand Chapter has a provision in its Constitution that if a person presents himself from another jurisdiction as a Royal Arch Mason, he may receive the preceding three Degrees in order to heal him and allow him to attend a meeting of Chapter without charge or capitation fee. However, this is impractical in most instances, since the visitor probably would not be around for the length of time required to put on the Mark, Past Master and Most Excellent Master Degrees.

When investigating a prospective visitor to a Chapter, if they hail from a jurisdiction other than one under the auspices of General Grand Chapter, you now understand that there are a number of precautions which must be taken, all the while ensuring that you in no manner offend the prospective visitor. If, for example, the visitor is a Principle or Past Principle, he may be invited to



attend the conferral of the Royal Arch Degree. It is up to the High Priest whether a visitor who is not a Past Master should be allowed to attend a Royal Arch Degree, and in any event, he may only observe, and not participate in the ceremony. Nobody outside the jurisdiction of the General Grand Chapter should attend the Opening and Closing of a Royal Arch Lodge, since they will not be in possession of the intervening signs and due guards of the 4th to 7th Degrees.

If a person has moved to the United States and intends to affiliate with a Chapter, it is best if they simply go through the Degrees here, so that they might be best prepared to both learn all the Signs and Due Guards, and so that the Certificate they receive will allow them free entry into any Chapter under the purview of the General Grand Chapter.

### **Lessons of the Past Master Degree**

The Address to the Candidate expressly states that: "The Past Master's Degree, unlike all the other Degrees in Freemasonry, sheds no light upon itself." It later states: "Our candidates are made to pass the Chair simply as a preparation and qualification towards being invested with the solemn instructions of the Royal Arch."

However, it would not be strictly accurate to say that undergoing a ceremony which, symbolically at least, prepares you to preside over a Lodge is without teaching. Whether or not the Candidate actually has to go through the work of planning and running an efficient Lodge, the very act of taking an Obligation, and focusing on the accoutrements with which he is furnished provide a number of points for meditation.

Indeed, it is to be hoped that there is something to be learned in this Degree. The Address tells us that "it was doubtful to many if it (the Past Master Degree) could legally be abolished, and, the law still requires that the August degree of Royal Arch shall be restricted Part Masters." However, this statement is not strictly true, since a number of jurisdictions have removed the Degree yet their members are still recognized by jurisdictions which have not. It would also seem tragic if what was considered a meaningless ceremony was blindly followed from century to century which had no discernible use at all, simply because of blind tradition.

One author has described the lesson inculcated in this Degree as "responsible leadership." It teaches that moderation, decorum and justice are essential for the fair exercise of Masonic leadership, and since the Capitular Degrees are intended to make the Brothers ever more tied to the beloved Craft and

teaches them to lead their younger and less enlightened Brethren through leadership, example and education, this Degree would seem to be a moment of stillness for the Candidate to reflect upon those important attributes.



The emblem of the square is worn about the neck, rather than being presented to him as a Working Tool or indicated upon the Holy Bible. It is to remind the Master forcibly that it is upon himself he must take up the work and assume it himself in order to lead by example.

The threefold cord is likewise a reminder that, while the follower offers of himself, he must offer twice as much to help the newly-made Masons to achieve his goals. In some interpretations, it manifests a lesson indicated earlier – the Capitular Degrees emphasize a transition from the physical basis of the Symbolic Degrees to a Spiritual nature. Thus the Master offers an addition, spiritual level to the grip to raise the Candidate up to a higher plane.

In particular, it reminds us that we are bound by three kinds of law: the Law of Self, the Law of Man, and the Law of God.

The Law of Self is that circumscribing of passions we learned in the First Degree, the need to control ourselves in order to make us fit citizens of society and a help to our fellow man.

The Law of Man is represented by the presentation of the Constitutions and Bylaws, which teach us that, as members of society, we should both abide by and as Master enforce those rules which mankind has commonly agreed to follow.

Finally, by pointing once more to the Volume of the Sacred Law and invited to study and follow its precepts, we are reminded that the most sublime Law is God's, and if all our actions are calculated to do His will, we will never falter.



Figure 47 - The Past Master

## **VPM Quiz #2**

1. Where did the Past Master Degree originate?
  - a. With the Moderns.
  - b. With the Antients.
  - c. With the Irish.
  - d. We don't really know.
2. What was believed to be the original purpose of the Past Master Degree?
  - a. A means to obtain the Royal Arch Degree.
  - b. A way of honoring and distinguishing a Master of a Lodge.
  - c. A ritual descended from the Knights Templar in Scotland.
  - d. A ritual recognizing the service of a retiring Stonemason.
3. Who were the Giblim?
  - a. Overseers.
  - b. Stonesquares.
  - c. Woodcarvers.
  - d. Metalworkers.
4. The Degree of Past Master has been...
  - a. A ceremony to install the Master-elect of a Lodge.
  - b. A ceremony to permit a Master Mason to receive the Royal Arch Degree.
  - c. A Ceremony designed to haze and embarrass a fellow Mason.
  - d. All of the above.

5 The first working of the Past Master degree was...

- a. At St. Andrew's Royal Arch Lodge in Boston.
- b. At Kilwinning Lodge in Scotland.
- c. At a Bolton Lodge in England.
- d. Unknown

6 What three laws have some researchers suggested the Degree promotes?

- a. Self, Man, and God.
- b. Lodge, Chapter, and God.
- c. Earthly, Spiritual, and Heavenly.
- d. Torah, New Testament and Korn.

7. Who is covered in a Past Master's Lodge?

- a. The Right Worshipful Master
- b. Everyone Present.
- c. The Candidate.
- d. The Right Worshipful Master or the Candidate.

8 Which jurisdictions listed below currently require a Candidate for the Royal Arch to have received the Virtual Past Master Degree?

- a. England
- b. Ireland
- c. United States.
- d. All the above.

## **Grand Council Officers**

Y L N M M I J K D Z R S B Y P S S N Q H  
 R P A W A I F A C E S R E T L A W Z E I  
 E E G G P C V O K U R R O P A R K E R L  
 K X R K R I C C E N O S P M O H T I S L  
 A T O I S E U O V S G H V I T N N B G O  
 R L M W J S B F R O T F R Y E G O N B P  
 A X H A T L U N H M F E B D L C R Y F P  
 C A Y N S F T E E U I U B I N R E N L M  
 D J U O H I Z Q R R E C S X L A Y Q F C  
 Z H R W U B E D U R H H K F F D E K K Z  
 B T U Q L T O T V E N E S L E E M N Z Q  
 Z E T E A O R A Q Y S K W P D P R Z Y E  
 N A H O W A P D O A S E P C N N N S U D  
 Z M H B H C M Q X A T D N G K G Y A Z Q  
 C C C K X Y M G M S G N Q B N T Y G I M  
 Q Q R T J J H P J E S S E N E I K R Z Q  
 Z A D G E Q L S Q Y B N N C M R R E Q N  
 M F B S Y E I V Q T I X B J U N R O D U  
 E O Z S Y V E K G R X I D N P K V Y G C  
 C W J E O B P X C M M S T O R Y Y Q S O

Caraker  
Ergas  
Houck  
Jessen  
Meyer  
Ruth  
Walters

Choate  
Foeste  
Huntsucker  
Lyon  
Morgan  
Sample  
Wehrenberg

Davis  
Goring  
Inglish  
MacCormick  
Parker  
Story  
Woodruff

Elsen  
Hill  
Iwanow  
Markhart  
Quesenberry  
Thompson

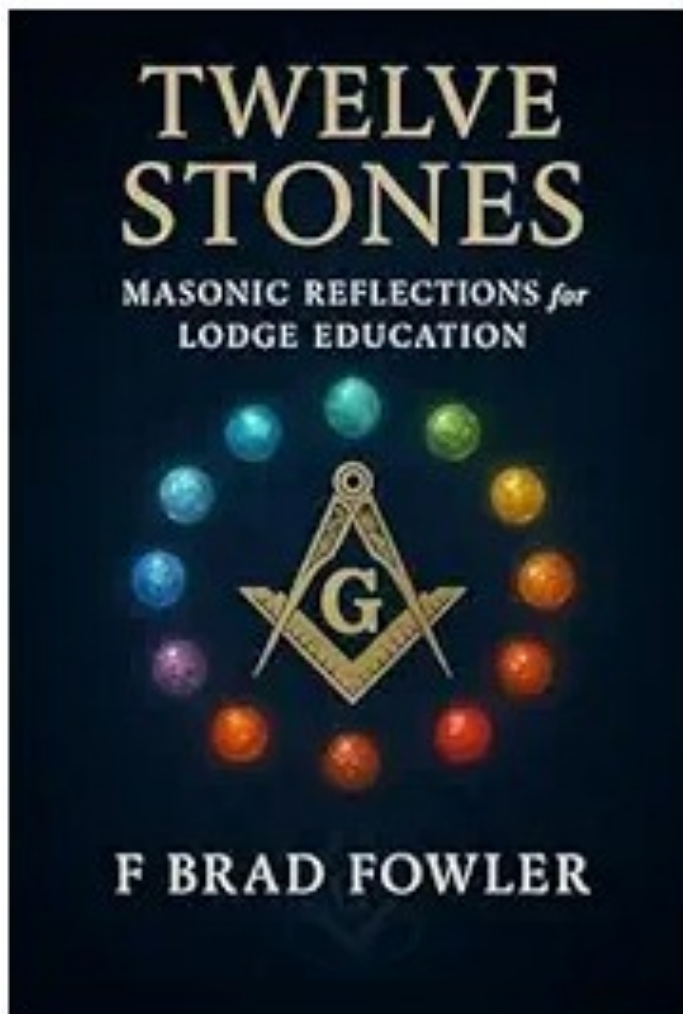




**HAPPY VETERAN'S DAY  
FROM THE GRAND YORK RITE  
OF THE STATE OF MISSOURI**







Freemasonry, at its core, is a journey of lifelong learning and personal transformation. While its rituals and symbols often speak in profound allegory, the true light of the Craft is found in reflection and understanding, both individually and within the brotherhood.

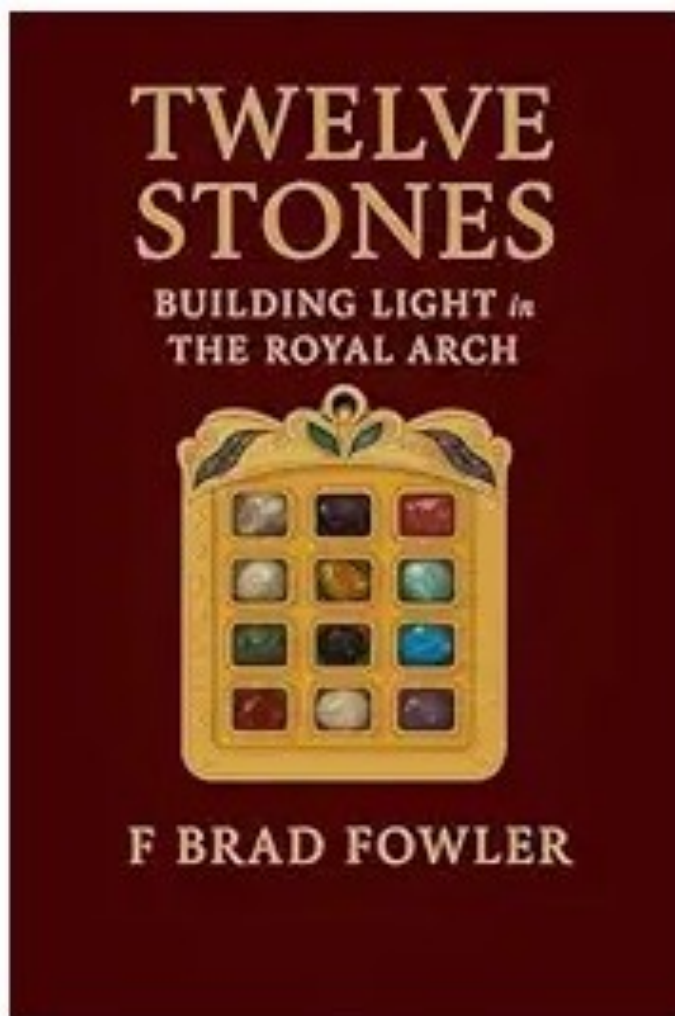
Twelve Stone: Masonic Reflections for Lodge Education is designed to serve as a companion on that journey. Comprising twelve concise educational talks, each chapter explores one of the fundamental symbols, principles, or lessons that shape a Mason's path. Like the twelve stones upon the High Priest's breastplate, each distinct yet essential, these reflections provide building blocks for knowledge, virtue, and growth.

Whether you are a new initiate seeking foundational insight or a seasoned Mason deepening

your appreciation for the Craft, these talks are intended to inspire conversation, meditation, and practical application. Presented in clear language with historical references and thoughtful interpretation, this collection aims to enrich Lodge meetings, spark personal study, and strengthen the bonds between brethren.

Every Mason is both a stone in the great spiritual temple and a builder of his own character. By engaging with these reflections, you accept the noble challenge to labor diligently, transforming the rough into the smooth, the unknown into the understood, and the individual into the brother.

May these twelve stones guide you toward further light and lasting wisdom.



Twelve Stones: Building Light in the Royal



Arch by F. Brad Fowler is a practical and inspiring guide for Royal Arch Masons seeking a deeper understanding of the symbols, lessons, and spiritual insights of Capitular Masonry.

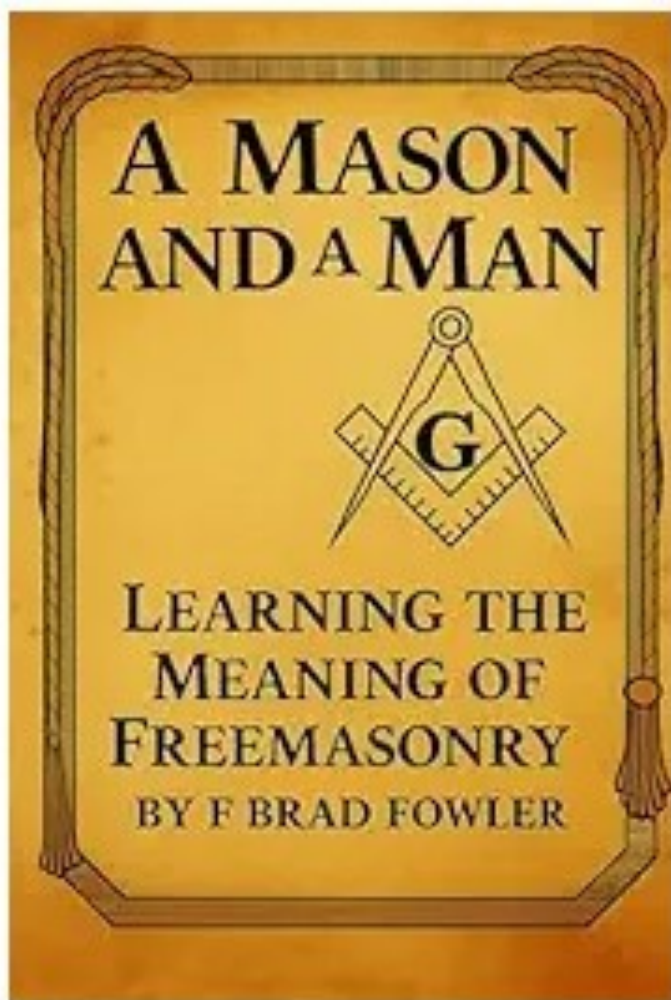
Written by a Past High Priest and experienced Masonic educator, this book offers twelve concise educational talks, each designed to be shared in Chapter meetings, study groups, or personal reflection. Drawing from biblical texts, Masonic tradition, and universal moral principles, I explore the Keystone, the Triple Tau, the Veils, the Past Master's Degree, and more, showing how these timeless symbols provide wisdom for both Masonic growth and everyday life.

Whether you are a newly exalted Companion or a seasoned officer, Twelve Stones will serve as both a resource and a source of inspiration. Its lessons are ideal for:

Chapter presentations (10–15 minutes each)

- Trestleboards and newsletters
- Personal Masonic study and reflection
- Officer leadership development

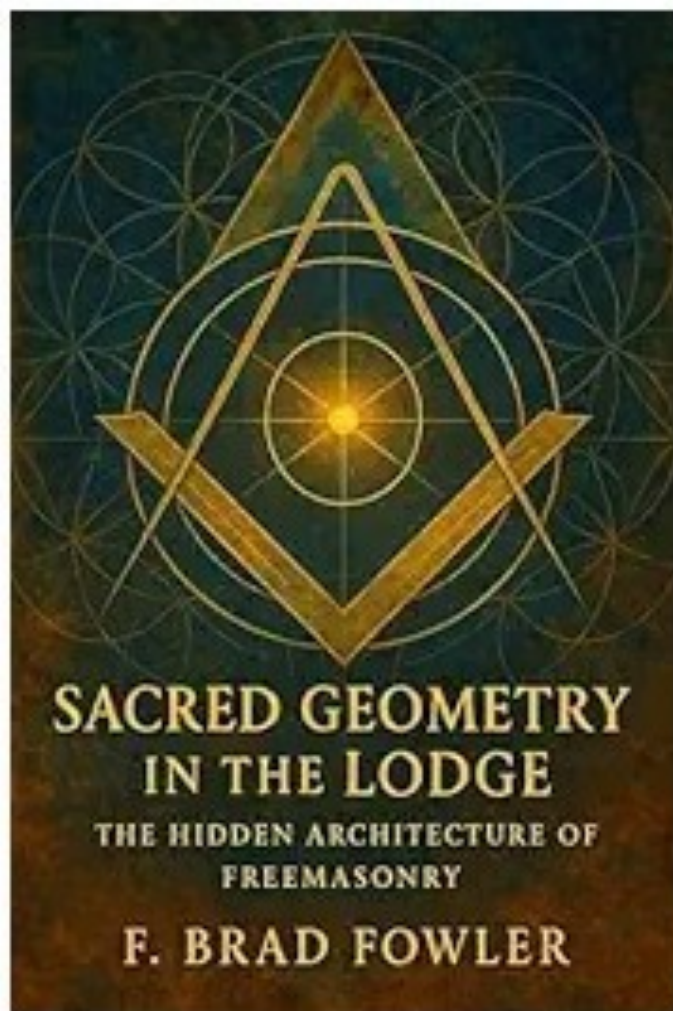
More than a book of ritual commentary, this volume is a journey of Light, reminding every Royal Arch Mason that the true Temple is built within.



*A Mason and a Man: Learning the Meaning of Freemasonry* by F. Brad Fowler is a thoughtful exploration of the deeper meaning of Masonic life, inspired by the timeless poem “A Mason and a Man.”

More than rituals, regalia, or symbols, true Masonry is lived in the heart and reflected in a man's daily conduct. This book guides the reader through the values, lessons, and enduring truths of Freemasonry, truths that encourage men to live with integrity, compassion, and a steadfast commitment to brotherhood.

Drawing from personal insight and Masonic tradition, Fowler reminds us that the true measure of a Mason lies not in outward signs, but in the way he treats his fellow man. This work is both inspirational and instructional, offering Masons and seekers alike a roadmap to living out the principles of the Craft in everyday life.

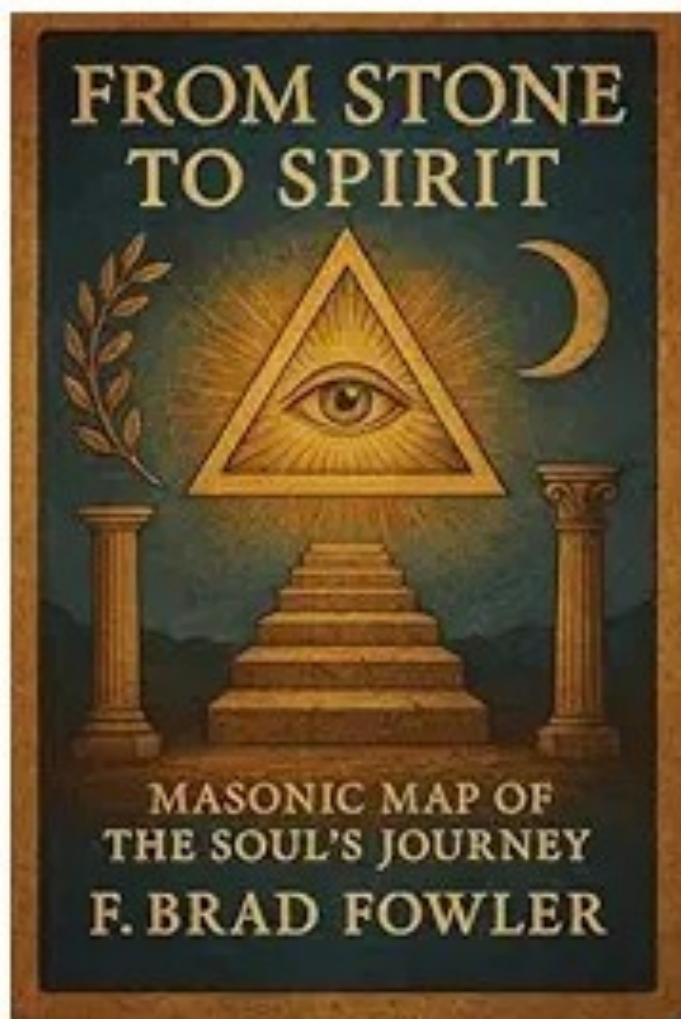


Discover the timeless harmony between number, proportion, and the human spirit in *Sacred Geometry in the Lodge: The Hidden Architecture of Freemasonry*. Drawing on biblical texts, historical traditions, and the working tools of the Craft, this

book unveils how geometry has always been more than measurement; it is the very language of the Divine.

From the point within a circle to the pillars of Solomon's Temple, from the winding staircase to the Gothic cathedral, each chapter traces how sacred geometry shaped both stone and soul. Accompanied by detailed artwork plates, readers will see how the Lodge reflects the cosmos and how every Mason participates in building the eternal Temple within.

Whether you are a Master Mason seeking further light, a student of symbolism, or simply curious about the mysteries of proportion and design, this book provides an inspiring journey into the patterns that unite heaven and earth.



A Masonic Map of the Soul's Journey invites readers on a profound exploration of the Masonic degrees as more than ritual; they are a spiritual roadmap of the human condition.

Drawing from symbolism, history, and timeless archetypes, this book shows how each stage of initiation reflects the soul's own passage: from awakening as an Apprentice, to the trials of the

Craft, to the higher light of the Royal Arch, Cryptic, and Chivalric Orders. With clarity and depth, it unveils the deeper meaning of obligation, transformation, death, and rebirth, and the search for the Lost Word.

Whether you are a Freemason seeking greater insight into your journey or a spiritual seeker intrigued by the universal wisdom hidden within the Craft, this book offers a guide to living the lessons of the degrees in daily life.

Through its pages, you will discover:

- How the degrees mirror the stages of the soul's growth.
- Why ritual is not just a ceremony, but an inner transformation.
- The hidden treasure of the Royal Arch, the silence of the Cryptic Rite, and the knightly virtues of the Chivalric Orders.
- How geometry, symbolism, and sacred drama reveal the path to Light.

#### About the Author:

F Brad Fowler is a Missouri Freemason with a distinguished record of service spanning Lodge, York Rite, and numerous appendant bodies. He is a Past Master of Ivanhoe Lodge #446 and Christian Lodge #392. Brad served as a District Deputy Grand Lecturer for the Grand Lodge of Missouri.

His commitment to the York Rite is equally notable. Brad is a Past High Priest of Kansas City Chapter #28, and he has served as a DDGHP. His leadership in Cryptic Masonry includes tenure as Past Illustrious Master of Kansas City Council #45, Past Assistant Grand Sentinel, and a Regional Grand Illustrious Master.

In the Commandery, Brad distinguished himself as Past Eminent Commander of Kansas City Commandery #10 and as a Regional Grand Commander.

Brad's Masonic journey extends through many esteemed appendant bodies, reflecting his broad experience and dedication. He is a member of:

- Harry S Truman York Rite Sovereign College
- Charlemagne Council of Knight Masons
- Kilwinning Council of Allied Masonic Degree
- Mary Conclave of the Red Cross of Constantine
- Guthrie Valley Scottish Rite
- Royal Order of Scotland
- Missouri Priory Knight of York Cross of Honor

Brad Fowler embodies the principles of Brotherly Love, Relief, and Truth, dedicating his life to the service, education, and betterment of the Craft. His books can be found on Amazon.com or <https://www.bradfowler.org/>





# Thanksgiving Day Blessings

Thanksgiving is a time of Thanks. It is kind of easy to figure out when you look at it's name. What do you have that you are thankful for? For me, it is quite easy. I am thankful for my relationship with God, my wonderful wife, my kids, my father, my extended family, and all of you that are sharing your lives with me. My family and I am so blessed!!!

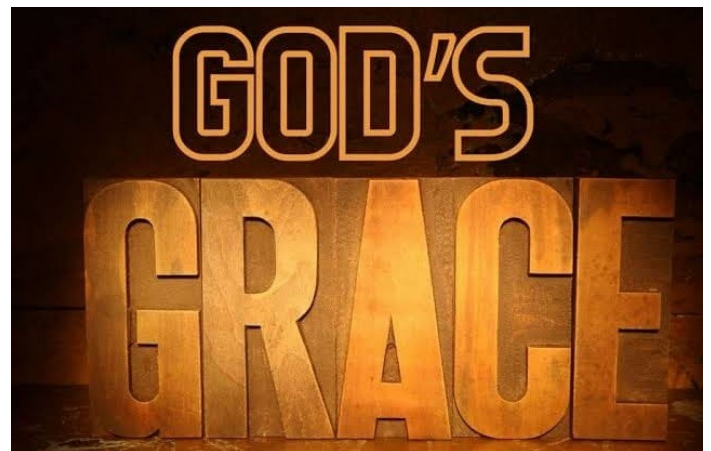
So, when I sat down to try and figure out what to write for you all in reference to this most wonderful of holidays, I asked what should I share? And then it came to me, a grouping of prayers. Something that you might share with God and all others. So, without further a due, here we go!



- As we gather round the social board for the last meeting of this season, let us give thanks for the food, drink and Good Companionship we have enjoyed. May the blessing of heaven rest upon us and all regular masons. May brotherly love prevail, and every moral and social virtue cement us. So mote it be.
- Brethren, as we are gathered tonight, united by the principles of Brotherly Love, Relief and Truth, let us give thanks to the Great Architect Of The Universe for the food, drink and Good Companionship that we are about to enjoy.
- Creator and provider of all things, we thank You for this occasion and ask for your blessing upon

this food that has been prepared for us. We thank You also for the fellowship with our Brothers. Enrich us in our time around this table, that through our conversations and sharing we may become more committed to understanding and supporting one another in words and actions which are consistent with Your laws and the principals of our Craft. Amen.

- For food to eat and those who prepare it, For health to enjoy it and friends to share it, May the Great Architect of the Universe be blessed and praised.
- From the sin of gluttony, and the pain of indigestion, may the Great Architect of the Universe protect us.
- God help us all to pass this way, with love fraternal on this day, and remind us too of those in need, while we sit and drink and feed.
- Great Architect be praised, My belly's been raised, An inch above the table And I'll be damned, If I'm not crammed, As full as I am able.



- Great Artificer of the Universe, Who has provided us with refreshment from Thy bounty, bless, we beseech Thee, with Thy gracious favor, our continued humble efforts to Thy service.
- Great Artificer of the Universe, Who providest refreshment for those who work, bless, we beseech Thee, this Thy bounty with Thy gracious favor that, this meal ended, we may return to our labors and consecrate our humble efforts to Thy service.

# Thanks be to God for His Indescribable Gift!

2 Corinthians 9:15

- Let us give thanks for the food and drink we laid before us and for the Good Companionship we enjoy each month, but most of all we ask that the Great Architect continue to help us to practice outside the Lodge those virtues we have been taught in it.
- Lord God, Great Architect of the Universe, who has so inspired the ancient members of our Craft that in the bond of brotherhood they met each others needs and first of all men came together in the hidden mysteries handed down to us, give us, we beseech Thee, grateful hearts, that in joyful service we may bring relief to the unfortunate, and in perfect loyalty both preserve our trust and leave behind us an increased inheritance.
- Lord, we bless Thy Holy Name and thank Thee for all Thy Gifts, especially the Gift of Friendship.
- Lord, we here all are fit and able, To enjoy this festive table, But ever mindful we shall be, Of those that need our charity.
- Lord, we thank You for the social board that we have enjoyed. Renewing old acquaintances, making new friends. But we ask You to be also with those brethren who could not be with us and all those who ate alone.
- Mason one, and Masons all, Masons here from wall to wall, Masons thick, and Masons fast, All thanking God for a great repast.
- May our grateful thanks ascend, To Him from whom all blessings flow. May we always have a square meal, Within the length of our cable-tow.
- May the blessing of Heaven rest upon us, and all regular Masons! May Brotherly love prevails,

And every moral and social virtue cement us.

- May the Great Architect Of The Universe Bless that which his bounty has prepared for us and may he give us grateful hearts and help us to supply the wants and needs of our fellow creatures.
- May the Great Architect of the Universe bless that bounty which He has provided for us and make us mindful of the needs of others.
- May the Great Architect of the Universe bless that which His bounty has provided.
- May the Great Architect of the Universe give us grateful hearts and supply the needs of others.
- We are speaking to you now, O Lord, At the end of this festive board. With humble thanks for such a spread, and now before we go home to bed, Let us with all reverence say, Thank you God for a magnificent day.
- We thank Thee, Great Architect above, for good food and brotherly love. Relief for all in need we pray, Thy Truth, our Aid from day to day.
- We thank Thee, Father, for the happy fellowship of our Fraternity, and for all Thy bounties spread before us. Grant that through these blessings we may be strengthened and refreshed for Thy service.

Happy Thanksgiving everyone and may you all enjoy a day full of love, laughter, and delicious food. May it be filled with joy and many blessings. We wish you all to have a bountiful Thanksgiving with plenty of reasons to be grateful.





## Are you a Royal Arch Mason?

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May this day be a BEAUTIFUL  
reminders of the WONDERFUL  
things in LIFE.

HAPPY  
Thanksgiving



ORDER OF THE EASTERN STAR

# *Retention Corner*

*By: VIC Gerald Hill*

What Does your Council retention program look like? Do you have a retention committee like your Grand Body?

The Illustrious Master of your Council has the power to appoint special committees during their term of office. However, you may not need these special committees. As we spoken before, each Council has that individual dynamic that works for some but not others. In having a plan for retention, you should at a minimum outlook on On-boarding, Communication, Recognition, Awards, and Snail Mail (OCRASM).

A good first impression is always important and lasting. So, it is important to provide the best ritual that we can do. It should be our goal to make sure that the candidates receive the best degrees possible. Additionally, the Top Liner signer and/or knowledgeable Brother should be present to help direct the candidate's experience in a way to make sure that they understand what they have just experienced. When those degree have been completed, we should have the necessary paraphernalia available that they may have the opportunity to purchase the necessary supplies that they need. This is the reason behind having packets, coins, jewels and other items available at the completion of their degrees. We should provide a strong initial Masonic education as well. When we have what they need, they will feel important to our Fraternity.

A communication plan is also needed. It is a top priority. When necessary, it should include feedback of the kindest nature. This year your Grand Committee on Retention, which includes your RDGMs, have been testing your Councils health and returning reports. This is to assist your organization in the areas in which you might need to improve. We have taken every avenue to present that information in a kindest and gentlest of manners. I have always said that "Feedback is a Gift" and it should be taken as such. Instinctively we fight negative feedback, our first goal may be to debate and argue that information. However, engaging in objective self-reflection often helps us and our organization to improve and grow. Take this health report with a positive mindset as the committee decides its value and shares it with each Council. Our intention is to

help you improve and strive successfully forward. We are currently reviewing how this information will be used.

Let's look at your communications to the members. We have members without email or social media. Sometimes someone can only be reached by phone or snail mail. Determine your members preferences and implement it into you regular operations. You can set up a text list, email chain, and a telephone roster. I do not check emails very often, so texting me will get you a faster response. You may have a member in an assisted living facility or home bound. Please call them. A phone call can change a day of misery to that of joy and help pass the gift of Freemasonry forward. I know of a blue lodge and a lady's organization that does just that. What a great way for older members to keep up to date with events. By working in this manner, members you may have never met may become fun and active people who may help benefit your Council, and as an additional benefit, suspensions may go way down. Take advantage of our retirees. They may have the freedoms to assist in this communication process.

Are you represented on social media? I have always run a public page for announcements and events and provide a private group for member posts. Who are your active social media people? Look at the nature of the chosen members posts and provide instruction as to not cast any aspersions on this venerable institution. In other words, choose your representative wisely. These social platforms provide tips and tricks to assist members. Once your page is up, tell your story often, show pictures, and get your members to share their posts so that others may see.

In the days of my military service the standard was that you were recognized only when you messed up. The other stuff was considered doing your job. Today, we call much of that "toxic leadership". Barking orders and dressing someone down can result in the worst results to our Fraternity. Even if you still believe in that stuff, it should stay in the military, not in the lodge rooms. We are in a VOLUNTEER organization. There are a lot of them out there, and we are all competing for the same people. We must recognize our members. Encourage



them to not only do more but shows that you appreciate them. Many of them will attend where they are appreciated the most and exclude those places where they are not respected.

Awards are a wonderful way to recognize our members for their hard work. As their leader, it is your responsibility to get your members and Councils their awards. If your Council has received an award, your members will proudly share their successes with others. Those awards should be worn by those individuals and when seen we should comment and congratulate the receiver of their great success. Please communicate our awards programs and promote competition to strive to be better. Don't keep our awards a secret.

Many organizations have Birthday and get-well cards in their inventory. It is a nice touch when you mail them out to your members. This personal touch is always appreciated by the receiver and can repay the Council tenfold. Your Grand Office does this for its Grand Officers, Secretaries, and their spouses. As one who has received one of those cards I can tell you that it is refreshing, it shows me how much they care about me, and because of that I find that I work harder towards our common goal.

A couple of years ago, one of the Worshipful Masters in my district sent me an invitation to their lodge's Past Masters Night. Because of that I made

an extra effort to show up. It is now my privilege to assist such a solid Freemason to soon get his Chapter proficiency card on opening and closing. Once again this personal aspect of communication has its dividends.

With the Holiday Season upon us I am going to resume Retention Corner in January, likely in a slightly new direction. For now, I want to wish all of you an enjoyable Veteran's Day, Happy Thanksgiving, Merry Christmas, and a Happy New Year! God Bless.





## **Royal Arch Research Assistance (RARA) – FAQs**

**Q:** What exactly does RARA fund?

**A:** RARA funds scientific research on Central Auditory Processing Disorder (CAPD) through grants to early career researchers at universities and medical centers. We don't fund treatment centers or hospitals directly, but rather the scientists discovering new treatments and diagnostic methods.

**Q:** How is RARA different from other hearing related charities?

**A:** Most hearing charities focus on deafness or hearing loss. RARA specifically targets CAPD, where hearing is normal but the brain can't process sound correctly. It's a unique focus area with limited funding sources.

**Q:** Who reviews research grant applications?

**A:** RARA partners with the Hearing Health Foundation, which uses a rigorous peer review process with medical experts. Only the most promising research receives funding.

**Q:** How much does RARA give in grants each year?

**A:** RARA awards approximately \$500,000 annually in research grants, typically funding 10-12 researchers per year at \$40,000-\$50,000 per grant.

**Q:** What is the leverage ratio?

**A:** RARA grants serve as "seed funding" that helps researchers qualify for much larger federal grants. On average, every \$1 RARA donates results in \$27 of total research funding. This multiplier effect maximizes our impact.

**Q:** Has RARA research led to actual treatments?

**A:** Yes. RARA funded research has contributed to:

- ⇒ New diagnostic protocols now used in clinics nationwide
- ⇒ Non-surgical treatment options for children with CAPD
- ⇒ Better understanding of CAPD's relationship to autism
- ⇒ Reduced need for invasive procedures

**Q:** How long has RARA been around?

**A:** RARA was established in 1974 at the General Grand Chapter Triennial meeting. Over 50 years of supporting research that changes lives.

**Q:** Is my donation tax-deductible?

**A:** Yes. RARA is a 501(c)(3) charitable organization. EIN: 23-7410576. You'll receive a tax receipt for your donation.

**Q:** Can I designate my donation in memory of someone?

**A:** Absolutely. Memorial and honor gifts are welcome. We'll send acknowledgment to the family and recognize the memorial in our records.

**Q:** Does RARA help adults or just children?

**A:** While CAPD often presents in childhood, research helps all ages. Many veterans with traumatic brain injury experience CAPD like symptoms. RARA research benefits everyone affected.

**Q:** What percentage of donations goes to research?

**A:** RARA operates with minimal overhead through volunteer leadership and General Grand Chapter support. Approximately 92% of donations go directly to research funding.

**Q:** Can non-Masons donate to RARA?

**A:** Yes. While RARA is sponsored by Royal Arch Masons, donations from anyone are welcome and appreciated.

**Q:** How can I learn more about current research?

**A:** Visit [www.givetorara.org](http://www.givetorara.org) or [www.hearinghealthfoundation.org/rara](http://www.hearinghealthfoundation.org/rara) to see current grant recipients and research summaries.

**Q:** What happens if I sign up for monthly giving and need to stop?

**A:** You can cancel anytime with a simple phone call or email. No questions asked, no hassles. We understand circumstances change.

**Q:** How does Missouri's fundraising compare to other states?

**A:** Missouri has tremendous potential. Some states raise \$50,000+ annually. With 30+ chapters and thousands of members, Missouri can become a top contributor to RARA research.





Philanthropy of Grand Council of Cryptic Masons of the State of Missouri, and the General Grand Council of Cryptic Masons, International.

All money collected is used to research: Heart Disease, Diabetes, Blindness, Regenerative Medicine, Leg Circulation, Wound Healing, Arthritis, Stroke and more...

### **THE PROBLEM**

Arteriosclerosis is a disease affecting the blood vessels which carry blood from the heart to all parts of the body. It is commonly called “hardening of the arteries”, and is a process which results in the narrowing of these vessels. It is gradually progressive, and eventually interferes with the flow of blood. When an artery supplying the muscle of the heart is affected severely in this manner, it results in a heart attack. When a major artery supplying the brain is involved it results in a stroke; if the large artery of the leg is greatly narrowed by this process, gangrene occurs (the tissue dies) and the leg often has to be amputated, as the only method of satisfactory treatment.

### **THE WORK OF CRYPTIC MASONS**

Freemasonry seeks to improve the community by improving the individual. Therefore, Councils of Cryptic Masons are found working with Lodges, Chapters, and Commanders, giving more opportunities to improve one's skills in leadership, public speaking, interpersonal relationships, and administration. This empowers Masons to become better leaders in their career, church, and community. Councils also work with these and other Masonic groups in community service projects to demonstrate Masonic teachings as a way of life.

The General Grand Council established the Cryptic Masons Medical Research Foundation to give Cryptic Masons an opportunity to turn Masonic philosophy into a living practice. Issues like diabetes, stroke, poor circulation, heart failure, wound healing, and many other diseases share the

common denominator of blood vessels, so vascular research is a vital part of treating many different kinds of illnesses. Supporting the ICVBM's research has the potential to help millions of people.

### **THE INDIANA CENTER FOR VASCULAR BIOLOGY AND MEDICINE**

The Indian Center for Vascular Biology and Medicine is committed to researching the mechanisms of vascular wellness and disease, and to developing leading-edge medical therapies to improve the care of patients with vascular problems. The ICVBM includes more than 40 investigators from a range of basic and clinical disciplines, and approaches vascular research and development from a highly cross-disciplinary perspective. This faculty, as well as the staff and students, work together as a team to complete the primary mission of rapid development and clinical application of new interdisciplinary research in vascular biology. The ICVBM emphasizes reaching patients as quickly as possible so that they can benefit from ongoing developments of gene, molecular, cell- and device-based therapies.

Since 1986, CMMRF has been working with Indiana University & ICVBM. The foundation funds the research & since its inception has contributed more than \$4,500,000 to ICVBM.

All monies sent to the ICVBM is used to research:

- Heart Disease
- Diabetes
- Blindness
- Regenerative Medicine
- Leg Circulation
- Wound Healing
- Arthritis
- Stroke
- and more...

You can send your contributions to your local Recorder, or, contributions can be sent to the Grand Recorder, CMMRF, 107 S. Williams Street, Fayette, MO 65248-1047. Checks should be made out to the Grand Council of Cryptic Masons of Missouri, with CMMRF written on the memo line.



The mission of the Knights Templar Eye Foundation, Inc. is to provide assistance to those who face loss of sight due to the need for surgical treatment without regard to race, color, creed, age, sex, or national origin provided they are unable to pay or receive adequate assistance from current government agencies or similar sources and to provide funds for research in curing diseases of the eye. This includes the correction of strabismus (cross-eyes) in children up to the age of 16 years.

Funds for the operation of the Eye Foundation are obtained in part from an annual assessment of each Knight Templar, contributions made by Masons from throughout the Masonic Family, fund-raising activities, memorials, wills and bequests, and donations from endowment funds or similar sources. Special award programs for contributions include the Grand Master's Sword of Merit (\$25,000), Golden Chalice (\$10,000), Grand Master's Club (\$1,000), Grand Commander's Club (\$1,000 in \$100 annual installments), Patron Certificate (\$100), Associate Patron Certificate (\$50), and Life Sponsor (\$30). Those who are designated as a Life Sponsor or above are relieved from the annual assessment.

Since 1956, over \$98 million has been spent on approved cases, and applications have been received from 80,000 people. Research Grants totaling in excess of \$9.2 million have been awarded to researchers working in the fields of Pediatric Ophthalmology and Ophthalmic Genetics.

Application for assistance from the Foundation can be made through a Knight Templar who is a member of one of over 1,200 Constituent Commanderies of the Grand Encampment. Information is available from the Knights Templar Eye Foundation, Inc., 1000 East State Parkway, Suite I, Schaumburg, IL 60173, Phone (847) 490-3838; Fax (847) 490-3777. The Knights Templar Eye Foundation, Inc. is a co-sponsor of the Seniors Eye Care Program (formally known as the National Eye Care Project) with Eye Care America, a Public Service Foundation of the American Academy of Ophthalmology. The Seniors Eye Care Program helps those persons 65 years or over who do not have an Ophthalmologist. Anyone wishing to contact the Seniors Eye Care Program may do so by calling 1-800-222-EYES and telling them you were referred by a Knight Templar.

The Knight of Siloam special award program in Missouri was created by Sir Knights J. Edward Blinn, REPGC, and Danny L. Ferguson, REPGC, during the 93-94 Templar year as a means of recognizing those Missouri Sir Knights who make substantial contributions to the Knights Templar Eye Foundation, and to encourage others to do so. A special medal and patent is presented to those who donate \$500.00 or more to KTEF either in a lump sum or in installments. The jewel is designated as a meritorious service jewel and may be worn on the Knight.



The Knights Templar Educational Foundation, Division of the Grand Commandery of the State of Missouri, provides financial assistance in the way of low cost student loans to college juniors and seniors, as well as trade school students.



The Missouri Holy Land Pilgrimage Fund is used to pay the expenses of sending a Minister to the Holy Land under the provisions of the Grand Encampment. The Holy Land Pilgrimage Committee of the Grand Commandery can provide more information about qualifying Ministers.

The Missouri Holy Land Pilgrimage Endowment Fund is an endowment, the interest of which is used to generate income for the Holy Land Pilgrimage Fund (above). Commandery Recorders are to ask each Sir Knight on their annual dues statement to remit at least \$3.65 towards the Holy Land Endowment Fund, and Commanderies are encouraged to have fund raisers to generate money for this fund.





# York Rite Bulletin Board

## Interactive Maps for Local York Rite Bodies

Exciting news all!!! The Grand York Rite of Missouri has now added interactive maps for Chapters, Councils, and Commanderies to help you easily find a meeting location, and find directions to assist you in planning your travels. We hope they help

You can find those maps at the following webpages:

<https://moyorkrite.org/royal-arch-chapters-in-missouri/>

<https://moyorkrite.org/councils-in-missouri/>

<https://moyorkrite.org/commanderies-in-missouri/>

## Your Help is Needed!!!

Did you know that you can make changes to your own MMS Profile Page? You can!

Simply click this link: <https://www.masonic-web.com/mms/memberbio/default.aspx> and use your membership number which can be found on the side of any of your York Rite dues cards with your name and date of birth. You have only one Profile Page which links to each Chapter, Council, and/or Commandery where you have a membership.

The information on your Profile Page helps us stay in contact with each of you. Please carefully check the information on your Profile Page:

- Full name: First, Middle, and Last Name (No Abbreviations) with any prefix or suffix.
- Birth location: City and State.
- Current Address: Where mail comes.
- Phone Numbers: Home and/or Cell.
- Email Addresses: Home and/or Work.
- Spouse's name: First, Middle, and Last Names.
- Her Date of Birth: Month and Day (We like to send birthday cards!)
- Your children's Names: First and Last Names
- **Information about your job (Optional)**

Our office will not share this information with any person, business, or other institution. This is

YOUR Profile Page. Thank you for your time.

## Past Grand Officers

History is a wonderful thing. It reminds us of our great accomplishments and mistakes. Either way, we learn something from both. However, below are links to our Past Grand High Priest, Past Grand Masters, and Grand Commanders here in Missouri. Take a look, one of them might be a relative you did not know had been honored by these great positions.

Past Grand High Priests:

<https://moyorkrite.org/past-grand-high-priests/>

Past Grand Masters:

<https://moyorkrite.org/past-grand-masters/>

Past Grand Commanders:

<https://moyorkrite.org/past-grand-commanders/>

## Upcoming Events

**ROYAL ARCH CHAPTERS  
IN MISSOURI**

**COUNCILS IN MISSOURI**

**MISSOURI COMMANDERIES**



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## Grand Officers Coins for Sale

The Grand York Rite has numerous items for sale. One of which is the Grand Officers coins. For a small donation of \$20.00 you may obtain their coin or \$60.00 for all three coins through our Grand York Rite Offices (660) 248-5100.



2025-2026

**MEC Kevin M. Ritter, Grand High Priest Coin**



2025-2026

**MIC Dennis W. Houck Grand Master Coin**



2024-2025

**SK Ronald L. Skiles, Right Eminent Grand Commander Coin 2024-2025**

These coins are in limited production. So, hurry and purchase one now as they will soon be out of stock. All donations go to the Grand Officer's charity. Thank you for your consideration.



## Distinguished Chapter Award

Chapter Secretaries and current High Priests will soon be able to access the updated Distinguished Chapter Award Form, which will include the new addition of the Chapter Proficiency Ritual Card section.

Every proficiency card newly earned or renewed will earn **100 points for the Chapter**. These points are unlimited.

This is being added to highlight one of MEC Ritter's goals for the year - his own goal of earning his Part 1 Ritual Card.

The Chapter Proficiency Ritual card plan can be found on the [moyorkrite.org](http://moyorkrite.org) website.

Chapter Proficiency Certificate Plan:

<https://moyorkrite.org/DocsChapter/Chapter%20Proficiency%20Certificate%20Plan%202023.pdf>



### ILLINOIS MASONIC REGALIA

Website - [www.illinoismasonicregalia.com](http://www.illinoismasonicregalia.com), Etsy shop link on Website.  
Business Owner - John Grant 402-321-2317

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Collars  
Aprons  
Apron Briefcases



York Rite  
Collars  
Aprons  
Medals/Jewels



Most items can be customized. Aprons personalized under the flap or make your own design. Decals or metal name plates for your briefcases. Nametags of all shapes and designs. Please contact us with your orders or to set up at one of your events.





SAVE THE DATE

# 175th Anniversary of Springfield Chapter No.15

Royal Arch Masons of the State of Missouri

Please help us celebrate this milestone in  
conjunction with the 250<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the  
United States of America and the 100<sup>th</sup> Anniversary  
of Route 66 in Springfield, MO



**SATURDAY**

**MAY**

**16**

**10.00 AM**

1930 W Catalpa St  
Springfield, MO 65807  
The Acacia Room

RSVP to [springfielddyorkrite@gmail.com](mailto:springfielddyorkrite@gmail.com)