



The Ashlar



February 2018

Kempsville Lodge No. 196, A.F.&A.M.
www.kempsvillelodge.org

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Why Ritual?

Masonry has broadly been defined as a system of morality, veiled in allegory. Although this might be all-encompassing of what our Craft is concerned with, it does not explain how the Craft goes about implementing it. To implement a system of any kind, let alone a system of philosophic truths, or rather, apparent truths, requires more than a lecture at the end of a degree conferral. A system implies the use of motions, which work toward a common goal. In this way, Ritual is the necessary and working parts of the system that we know as speculative Masonry.

Our Working Lectures demonstrate this point to near perfection. Contained within the Working Lectures are the “nuts and bolts” of each progressive Degree. As this is memorized the individual Brother begins to act, however subtly, in unison with the Brethren. Automatically, we understand the importance of So Mote It Be. Instinctively, the moral applications of the Working Tools become ingrained in our daily lives. Without thinking, our Obligations shape our worldview, and thus, our actions to our fellow man, but especially with a Brother Mason.

Could any of this seemingly effortless congruity among otherwise separate and individual men be possible, were it not for the letter for letter Ritual that eventually, as we mature Masonically, comes to direct our thoughts, actions, and lives? The quick answer is NO. Without Ritual, Freemasonry is nothing more than a well-meaning set of laws and regulations, it is a membership of like-minded men. Were it not for Ritual, we might well be the equals, fraternally speaking, with any number of other good-natured organizations.

Without Ritual, the very foundations of Freemasonry, such as our first entrance into the Lodge, our Sacred Obligation, the Rite of Destitution, and even our Working Tools would be nothing more than simple suggestion. Yet, with Ritual, all these spring into constant and perpetual existence.

Factually and literally speaking, our Ritual, which has its roots in literature dating back some 766 years, to the Statutes of Bologna in the year 1248; and then onward through history through the hundreds of improvements and revisions that have led to any one of the several adopted ceremonies of today, would be, most likely, a nonexistent force today.

Certainly, the Speculative Lodge that we know and cherish today, would not carry the inner workings and hierarchy that is indicative of our Operative ancestors were it not for the Ritual. The learning experience of Operative Masons acts as the bridge which connects the ancient world to our modern one.

The fact of the matter is that this system of morality, veiled in Allegory, is only useful when it is repeated, time after time, with little or no change. Thus, the same figurative language that we hear today seeks to teach a lesson; the same lesson that was taught hundreds of years ago. Indeed, the lessons that are taught by Masonry are timeless. Therefore, is it any accident or coincidence that the delivery method of those truths has changed either?

Ritual, by its very nature, is as rock solid and unbending as the virtuous lessons that it helps to engrave upon our collective Masonic heart. If there were no Ritual; there could simply be no Craft. Ritual is what created the transition from the Trade Guilds into our Gentle Craft of Speculative Masonry. In turn, it is what began the traditions of the modern day, and thus planted the seed that would grow to search for Masonic Light. Ritual, in short, is the lifeblood, heart, and soul of the Free-Masonic Institution, and lays the ground works for all building and Masonic growth that may follow.

From The East



Brethren, as you recall, my theme for this year is; The Three R's of Masonry; Ritual, Retention, and Relief. Over the next three months the frontpage article of the Ashlar will showcase them individually in an attempt take a deeper dive into their purpose and meaning as well as the intention of your officers to bring focus and action to each. This month covers Ritual. As you read in the cover story, Ritual is what sets Masonry apart from other organizations and without Ritual there is no Craft. I hope you enjoyed reading it.

I previously stated that excellence in ritual and beauty in ceremony will be our distinction in 2018. I want to make sure that we take the right steps to make this statement come true. We owe that to each other, more importantly we owe it to the candidate. I am happy to report that we are well under way! Our new Lodge School format kicked off on January 15th and looks to be a success. Right Worshipful Tom McGowan is whipping us into shape! Additionally, Right Worshipful Steve Ridgeway was our guest speaker at the January Stated Communication and spoke eloquently on Ritual. If you missed his talk you missed a good one. He covered every aspect of what it is that we are determined to do this year in Kempsville Lodge. Thank you, Right Worshipful Steve, for energizing and encouraging us to strive for Ritual excellence.

Brethren, the rest is up to you. If you have a desire to be involved in Ritual now is your chance. Come to Monday night school. We start at 6:30 with targeted training. It is a new approach aimed to break down the parts into bite-sized pieces. You will not be put on the spot and can learn at your own pace. We have several instructors lined up to cover the various parts and I believe you will enjoy this approach. If performing Ritual is not for you, please remember that it is vitally important to fill the sidelines. This support means so much to the brethren performing degree work as well as the candidates.

Please remember that this is your Lodge. It's not just the officers and a few regulars who run the show. It takes everyone to make our Lodge a success and I encourage each one of you to get involved in some manner. Make your interests known, we will be more than happy to plug you in. Remember, you get out of it what you put into it.

Brother Chris Anders, Worshipful Master

From The West



Over the past few weeks I have found myself doing more reading than I typically do. I suspect the short days and winter chill have kept me inside more often than not. One topic I have found especially interesting is the articles, stories and books about Masonry and more specifically the misinformation among those still in the dark. Even authors claiming to be former Freemasons somehow present an inaccurate view of our fraternity.

Although this misinformation is usually harmless it did give rise to the Anti-Masonry party during the 1826 presidential election season. The misinformation was so rampant that Freemasonry was seen as the biggest threat to our young democracy and had to be removed from any political involvement.

Even before the founding of the United States, the Catholic Church forbid parishioners from participating in Masonry. The secrecy and mystery surrounding the Craft contradicted the direction of the church and had to be shunned.

What can we do to guard against these types of negative reactions and other negative press? I believe our first obligation is to educate ourselves on the fraternity. The Lodge and the Grand Lodge offer several resources to help with this. The Lodge Education Officer can direct a brother to some of the resources in the lodge and to the Grand Lodge website for others. Our second obligation is to share information with those uninitiated or direct them to someone more knowledgeable on Freemasonry while protecting the secrets of our craft. Lastly we have an obligation to point out flaws among our brothers and "in the most friendly manner" offer a correction.

The health of our fraternity and the way the public views it is incumbent on all of us. We should do our best to ensure that we project a positive image and relay correct and accurate information or direct the inquisitor to a more informed brother.

Brother Roger Taylor, Senior Warden

From The South



Brethren, we are off to a great start with our ritual work this year with the raising of two new Master Masons and two new Entered Apprentices in January. Although it had been almost two months since we last did degree work, our Kempsville team rose to the challenge and put on some outstanding presentations for our candidates.

For speculative Masons, the ritual is truly our Craft. We carefully shape it and work it so that we can provide an impressive and meaningful experience for our candidates. I have had no greater satisfaction as a Mason then when a candidate has come up to me following a degree and expressed to me how impressed they were and how much it meant to them. I would encourage all Brothers to participate whenever they can, either on the sidelines or as part of the ritual team.

Brother Dave Trzeciakiewicz, Junior Warden

Masonic Birthdays for February

Alex Harvey Adkins '76	Robert Hunter Johns '05
David H. Armstrong, Jr. '77	Kenneth W. Lancaster '05
Scott Edward Bateman '99	Marvin Boyd Lancaster '05
Raymond G. Clyburn, Jr. '17	Brian Donnan Littlehale '10
Dennis Leonard Eaton '11	David Joseph Meers '10
Charles Frank Edwards '70	John Mark Nuzum '02
Edward Joseph Foley '93	Galen Keith Rogers '99
Lewis Jackson Forrest '85	Joseph Max Snook '65
Glenn D. Fraser II '80	William Charles Vahle '13
Glenn Lincoln Gilman '78	Arthur F. Wadford, Jr. '08
William Franklin Grice '70	

The Brethren shown above have a total of 500 years in Masonry!

Masonic Lexicon

Hecatomb: In ancient Greece, a hecatomb was a sacrifice to the gods of 100 cattle (hekaton = one hundred, bous = bull). In practice, as few as 12 could make up a hecatomb. Hecatombs were offered to Greek gods Hera, Athena, and Apollo, during special religious ceremonies. At the end of the Olympic Games, a hecatomb was also offered to Zeus at Olympia. The meat would be roasted and a feast held. (Source: Wikipedia)

Trestleboard

January 30 Entered Apprentice Degree, 7 PM
February 3 Grand Master's Official Visit
Khedive Shrine Center, 6 PM
February 6 Entered Apprentice Degree, 7 PM
February 13 Stated Communication
District Deputy Grand Master's
Official Visit
Dinner 6 PM, Lodge 7 PM
February 19 District Blood Drive
at Lynnhaven Lodge No. 220, 2-7 PM
February 23 Division Leadership Conference
at Granby Street Temple, 6-8:30 PM
February 24 Monthly Breakfast, 8-10 AM
March 13 Stated Communication
Dinner 6 PM, Lodge 7 PM

For the latest, up-to-date schedule, check our web site at www.kempsvillelodge.org.

Important Building Information

New thermostats have been installed in the lodge room and dining hall. They are programmable and have been set to maintain the temperature at 62 degrees when in HEAT mode (Winter) and 80 degrees when in COOL mode (Summer). If you wish to adjust the temperature while you are in the building, please use the UP or DOWN buttons to do so. Please do not press the HOLD BUTTON. Use the SYSTEM button to toggle between HEAT and COOL but please do not select EM HEAT. We have gas heat and EM Heat is not available. Please do not change the FAN setting from AUTO to ON. We always want to be in AUTO mode. Most importantly, please do not change the programming. Doing so will cause disruption and the system will not function as required. Lastly, please set the temperature back to 62 degrees (HEAT mode) and 80 degrees (COOL mode) before you leave the building. Your cooperation is appreciated and will help our building heat and cool more efficiently and hopefully save a little on our utility bill. If you have any questions please see me or our building and grounds chairman, Right Worshipful Bill Knowles. Thank You!

Chris Anders, Worshipful Master.

The Finer Points

The preparation room is a sanctuary for the candidate and the officers preparing him. It is necessary that the door to it be closed-in and that its privacy is strictly preserved.

It is a breach of good manners for the candidate to be made the subject of unkind remarks. The officers preparing him must act with dignity and are not expected to discuss with him anything in the Degree he is being prepared for apart from what is in the Grand Lodge publication: "Questions and Answers for the Postulant."

It is appropriate to review any Degrees that he has already taken and coach him to respond to questions in the same form and tense that they are asked. For example; "Is it, etc.? Answer "It is."; "Do you, etc.? Answer "I do," Instead of "yes sir" and "no sir" which in Lodge sounds unsuitable.

Brother Mike Denning, Seacon Deacon

Masonic Blood Drive Information

Please come out and support the next blood drive at Lynnhaven Lodge No. 220 hosted by Princess Anne Lodge No. 25 on February 19th from 2-7 PM.

Brother Mike Blankenship, Blood Coordinator

To Our Masonic Widows

Happy Birthday to our special ladies in February:

Nancy Moffat	February 4 th
Lorraine Johns	February 5 th
Ann Akers	February 17 th

If any of our ladies are in need of assistance from the Lodge, please don't hesitate to contact Right Worshipful Bill Knowles or the Secretary.

Youth Report

On Sunday, December 17th, Bethel 42 had their Installation of Officers for the spring term.

Congratulations to the newly installed Honored Queen, Briana; Senior Princess, Keita; Junior Princess, Charlye and to all of the other officers who were elected or appointed to serve the Bethel for the next six months.

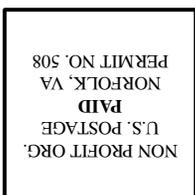
Both the DeMolay and Job's attended Kempsville Lodge's Installation of Officers and congratulated the New Worshipful Master Dad Chris Anders

The DeMolay will be holding their annual spaghetti dinner on March 10th from 3-7 PM we would like to invite everyone to come out and join us.

Brother Eddie Foley, Youth Advisor

Lodge Officers

Worshipful Master	Chris Anders	635-7617
Senior Warden	Roger Taylor	478-5498
Junior Warden	Dave Trzeciakiewicz	620-8311
Treasurer	Bill Nelligar	536-4100
Secretary	Bob Stanek	255-8336
Senior Deacon	Mike Denning	651-0712
Junior Deacon	John Settle, III	675-9695
Senior Steward	Todd Moissett	604-3085
Junior Steward	Doug Dunn	781-389-6557
Chaplain	Justin Gray	338-7218
Musician	R. Scott Foxwell	536-1659
Marshal	Scott Sherman	597-1150
Tiler	Dickie Cooper	971-7347
Instructor of Work	Tom McGowan	497-3881
Education Officer	William Rawson	724-4867
MAHOVA Ambassador	Ray Connard	630-5797
Blood Coordinator	Michael Blankenship	438-2862
Youth Advisor	Eddie Foley	581-8144



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