

December 2023

WLN20 Trestle Board



From the East

Mauro Lara - Worshipful Master

Hello Brethren, Family, and Friends.

CONGRATULATIONS

First, I want to express my sincerest congratulations to Worshipful Master-Elect **Matt Mason**, Brother Senior Warden-Elect **Joe Wallach**, and Brother Junior Warden-Elect **Bill Workman**. They are the three Pillar Officers elected by the Lodge at our November Stated Meeting. Additionally, Brother Secretary Worshipful **Francisco Marques (PM)** and Brother Treasurer Worshipful **Eric Hixson (PM)** were also elected to continue in their current offices. Lastly, we have a slate of Brethren appointed to fill the various Officer chairs for the Masonic year of 2024. The full list of Appointed Officers is detailed in Worshipful Master-Elect **Matt Mason's** article. Please join me in congratulating them, wishing them well during the Masonic year 2024, and supporting them during their term.

ACTIVITIES AND EVENTS

We are now at the end of the 2023 term. I also want to thank the Brethren for supporting the events, activities, ceremonies, Degrees, etc. during the year. It was a most eventful year, and I don't know about your thoughts, but it seems like we just recently entered this term. Throughout all, our line of Officers was most engaged and busy. To name the several items, we started with an all-hands Officer's meeting to work out the details for the year and plan the calendar. Then we held the **Annual Roll-Call Dinner**. This was followed by the first Ladies' Luncheon. Then came the First-Degree ceremony when we initiated and welcomed Brothers **Ivan Flowers** and **Anthony Ibarra**.

The next month, Brother **Moises Gonzalez** was passed to the Fellow Craft Degree. That was followed by another First-Degree welcoming Brother **Kelvin Kimball**. We also had our first Masonic Education Night. Then we had back-to-back activities starting with our **Table Lodge** which was followed by the “**Forget Me Not**” **Lecture**.

Our next event was the **Reception for the Grand Standard Bearer**, Worshipful **Joseph Dongo (PM)**. This turned out to be quite an event as we hosted a number of the Grand Lodge Officers, including Grand Master Randy Brill and many others who came to honor Worshipful Dongo. A couple of weeks later we hosted the second Ladies Luncheon. By the way, both **Ladies Luncheons** were of the Wine Tasting variety and the honor we pay our ladies supporting our Lodge was very well received.

Then came our **Annual Family BBQ Picnic** this was followed by a day of charitable activities at the **River City Food Bank** where we were joined by family members who helped serve 457 families that day. Way to Go, Brethren!!

Brother **Moises Gonzalez** was then Raised to the Sublime Degree of Master Mason. This was a special occasion because we also celebrated **Past Masters Night**. Of note is that all the parts in the Degree Ceremony were delivered by Past Masters, making it a most special evening for our newly Raised Brother and ourselves.

In the latter part of the year, the **174th Annual Communication** was held at Grand Lodge, the election of our 2024 officers took place at our November Stated Meeting and now we look forward to Installation on the 17th of next month.

I'm sure I missed mentioning some activities, but this gives us a good feel.

Oh, and I didn't mention that in between all those activities, our Officers were involved in Executive Committee meetings, Stated Meetings, practices for Degrees and other ceremonies, and Officers School of Instruction. As I mentioned, our Officers were quite busy in 2023 and we were joined on many occasions by the Brethren and families. Wow, I'm running out of breath just listing all of this.



FOUR ITEMS

I want to take this opportunity to close my article with four items. The last of which is a Masonic Connection to the season of the year.

Before that, I want to mention the first of the three. We had an amazing line of Officers this year. Key activities were taken on by Pillar Officers and Deacons and were carried out in a magnificent way. This commitment and execution are bar none. Thank you, Brethren. Many of the Officers from this year will continue as Officers in various capacities. Which brings me to the second item. The future of our Lodge is very bright. As I look at the line of Officers and the Brethren joining the Fraternity, it is not difficult for me not to see how well-positioned our Lodge is and how brilliant the outlook of our future leaders is. Well done and thank you for your dedication, commitment, and ongoing support.

Lastly, item number three, our Past Masters. From the very start as Master-Elect last year, the support, encouragement, and mentoring by our Past Masters were provided to me in a very strong way. During the Masonic term, this did not diminish. This was culminated by **Past Masters Night** when we had 11, yes eleven, Past Masters at the ready for the

celebration and for the Third-Degree Ceremony. I want to thank all the Past Masters, including one or two who live out of state, who provided me with support, encouragement, and mentoring in a very strong way.

I am very happy to have served you all and to have represented you throughout the Masonic year. It was my honor and distinct pleasure.

And now to the fourth and final item as noted earlier.

As the Holiday and Christmas season is upon us, I thought I'd do a little research on what has become one of our holiday traditions and that is "A Christmas Carol." Is there a Masonic tie or influence with this much-loved novella? Let's take a look.



A CHIRSTMAS CAROL

"A Christmas Carol" by **Charles Dickens** is a timeless tale that transcends its initial publication in 1843, capturing the hearts of readers for generations. While the story is commonly known for its themes of redemption and generosity, there exists an intriguing connection between

the narrative and the Masonic principles prevalent during Dickens's era. Let's explore the Masonic influence in "A Christmas Carol" and how the author might have drawn inspiration from Masonic ideals to shape the characters and themes in the novella.

Background:

Freemasonry has played a significant role in shaping social and intellectual movements. Its influence extended to the 19th century, a period marked by rapid industrialization and social upheaval. Masonic lodges provided a space for individuals from diverse backgrounds to come together, emphasizing moral and ethical development, charity, and brotherhood.

Masonic Symbols in "A Christmas Carol":

One notable aspect linking the novella to Freemasonry is the presence of symbols. Freemasonry is known for its rich symbolism, and Dickens may have subtly incorporated Masonic symbols into his narrative. The use of symbols like chains, keys, and locks throughout "A Christmas Carol" could be interpreted as nods to Masonic imagery, representing the binding nature of one's actions and the potential for spiritual liberation.

Ebenezer Scrooge and Masonic Values:

Ebenezer Scrooge, the central character in the novella, undergoes a profound transformation from a miserly and selfish individual to a compassionate and benevolent one. This metamorphosis aligns with Masonic principles of moral and spiritual growth. Freemasonry emphasizes the importance of self-improvement and charity, values that are mirrored in Scrooge's journey toward redemption.

Scrooge's encounter with the three spirits can be likened to the Masonic concept of initiation, where individuals undergo symbolic experiences to achieve enlightenment. Each spirit serves as a guide, urging Scrooge to reflect on his past, present, and future, fostering a deep introspection akin to Masonic rituals.

The second degree, that of the Fellow Craft represents manhood; the middle period of our lives. Referred to as the ceremony of 'Passing', it teaches us to ponder on our path in life, in this case the passage from

youth (Initiation) to adulthood: from apprentice to journeyman. As Ebenezer Scrooge goes from the ghost of Christmas Past to the ghost of Christmas present, you can see the pondering that commences with him and starts on that journey of reflection on life.

From the Initiation of youth, then the Passing into adulthood, the Third Degree brings our attention to aging and our ultimate death.

“Memento Mori – remember we die. Not only does the Master Mason have to face this impending reality but he is offered the opportunity to be “Raised” or “reborn” to a state of maturity whereby he can utilize all the wisdom and education he has received on his journey through the Three Degrees.” The Square Magazine

Ebenezer ponders with the ghost of future on what may be in store for him. The Third degree is the importance of living life true to Masonic principles. This allows us to make peace with the Great Architect and enlightens the relationship to our mortality; for ultimately, how a man lives and dies is the most important message that Freemasonry offers.

Bob Cratchit and Masonic Brotherhood:

The character of Bob Cratchit, Scrooge's underpaid and overworked employee, embodies the Masonic spirit of brotherhood. Despite facing adversity, Cratchit maintains a positive attitude and a sense of camaraderie. His resilience and kindness exemplify the Masonic values of compassion and solidarity among brethren.

The Cratchit family's modest yet content lifestyle also echoes Masonic principles of humility and gratitude for life's blessings. Dickens, perhaps influenced by Masonic ideals, uses the Cratchit family to underscore the importance of compassion and community in the face of economic disparity.

Summary:

The connection between "A Christmas Carol" and Freemasonry adds a layer of depth to the novella. Charles Dickens, a keen observer of his society, likely drew inspiration from the Masonic principles of brotherhood, charity, and moral development to craft a tale that resonates across time.

The incorporation of Masonic symbols and the alignment of characters with Masonic values contribute to the enduring appeal and universal relevance of "A Christmas Carol." Dickens, knowingly or unknowingly, utilized Masonic concepts to create a narrative that not only entertains but also imparts timeless moral lessons.

Whilst 'A Christmas Carol' is evidently not a Masonic story, it is, however, like Freemasonry, a story of morality, veiled in allegory and illustrated by symbols. If anything, Dickens' story is a powerful portrayal of the transforming effect of inner reflection and the application of that wisdom.

Now a smile or two:

Question: Who gets invited to the most holiday parties?

Answer: Christmas Carol.

And finally:

A copy of A Christmas Carol fell on my toe...

It hurts like the Dickens!



From the West

Matthew Mason - Senior Warden

What a month November was. Our Lodge really does shine in the light of Masonry and I am so proud to be part of it.

We started the month off with our Annual Elections of Officers. It was a night that brought together many of us in the same room and there were a good number of brothers on the sidelines. This was followed by a great Ladies' Night organized by Brother **Joseph Wallach**. Everyone I talked to had a great time and Brother Workman has plans for another stellar fun night in store for '24 – hey, that rhymes.

I must say, before going any further, that I am so humbled by your confidence in me to lead this Lodge next year. Our focus will be on building

both families in a Mason's life up — personal and Masonic, so please plan on attending events with your partner, spouse, or family.

Unless it specifically says “stag”, which will be only one or two times, all of our events are welcoming for our ladies and families. This is all because we cannot function as a man or as a lodge without our families support. (And EVERY Stated Meeting will have a bottle of wine waiting in the Club Room for the ladies to sip on during the business meetings so they can get to know each other.)

Speaking of support, our appointed Officers' line is simply stellar. I could not ask for a better team to work with. They are:

Senior Deacon – **Brandon Jenkins**
Junior Deacon – **Kevin Hall**
Chaplain – **Ramey Packer**
Marshal – **Christopher Hamilton**
Senior Steward – **Patrick Fischer**
Junior Steward – **Nicholas Johnston**
Tiler – **Martin Buff**
Organist – **James Dimmitt**

The 2024 theme will be revealed at the Annual Installation of Officers which is December 17 at 2:00 pm.

That is one week later than our normal installation date, which was done to accommodate Grand Master **Sean Metroka** to preside as the Installing Officer working with our own Past Masters **Joseph Dongo** and **Phil Hardiman**. A cocktail reception will follow in the Club Room.



From the South

Joseph Wallach - Junior Warden

Brethren,

As we coast into the last remnants of the year, December is a time to reflect on all that has been accomplished, what was done well, and what more can be done and better at the new year's dawn.

Of course, this month's holiday is the reason for the season — a day to celebrate the birth of the Savior on December 25th.

Preceding Christmas Day, on December 22nd, there is the winter solstice, the day with the least light and the most darkness. It is an important reminder that when you find yourself short of light and surrounded by darkness, luminous days will return with time, patience, and perseverance.

We have 18 birthdays this month. I look forward to seeing you at our Stated Meeting.



CALENDAR OF EVENTS

DECEMBER 2023

- 05 **Monthly Executive Committee Meeting** (Zoom) Tuesday 06:30 PM
- 07 **Fellowship Dinner** (Banquet Room) Thursday 06:00 PM
- 07 **Monthly Stated Meeting** (LR1) Thursday 07:30 PM
- 14 **Installation Practice** (LR1) Thursday 06:00 PM
- 17 **Annual Installation of Officers** (LR1) Sunday 02:00 PM
- 20 **OSI (Officers School of Instruction)** (LR3) Wednesday 07:00 PM
- 21 **DARK** Thursday
- 28 **DARK** Thursday

JANUARY 2024 HAPPY NEW YEAR!

- 02 **Monthly Executive Committee Meeting** (Zoom) Tuesday 06:30 PM
- 04 **Monthly Stated Meeting Dinner** (Banquet Room) Thursday 06:00 PM
- 04 **Monthly Stated Meeting** (LR1) Thursday 07:30 PM
- 11 **DARK** Thursday
- 17 **OSI (Officers School of Instruction)** (LR3) Wednesday 07:00 PM
- 18 **DARK** Thursday
- 25 **GLO Reception Practice** (LR1) Thursday 06:00 PM
- 30 **Monthly Executive Committee Meeting** (Zoom) Tuesday 06:30 PM

Washington Lodge No. 20

Mission Statement

To practice and promote a way of life that binds like-minded men in a worldwide brotherhood that transcends all religious, ethnic, cultural, social and educational differences.

Through Masonic principles and tradition, and by the outward expression of these through its fellowship and compassion, **Washington Lodge No.20 Free & Accepted Masons** provides ways in which to serve God, family, country, neighbors, and self in an environment that contributes to the enrichment and betterment of its members, mankind, and its communities.

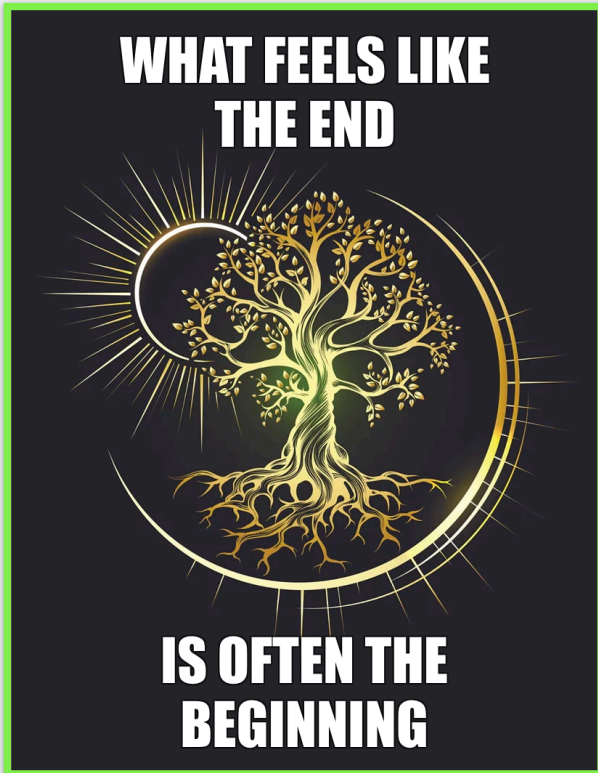
DECEMBER 2023

BIRTHDAYS

- 02 **Cyril Shah** (Master Mason)
- 03 **David Minke** (Master Mason)
- 04 **Joseph Barnes** (Master Mason)
- 10 **James Dimmitt** (Master Mason)
- 11 **Jason Sibbring** (Master Mason)
- 12 **Joseph Basham** (Master Mason)
- 12 **Edward Hardiman** (Master Mason)
- 13 **Gerald Van Wagner Jr.** (Master Mason)
- 17 **Morrison England Jr.** (Master Mason)
- 20 **Martin Buff (Master Mason) (Tiler)**
- 21 **Michael Allen** (Master Mason)
- 21 **Stanley Sanders** (Master Mason)
- 24 **Floyd Tritt** (Master Mason)
- 25 **Donte Cuellar** (Master Mason)
- 25 **Stephen Michalski** (Master Mason)
- 30 **Eddie Haskins** (Master Mason)

MASTER MASON ANNIVERSARIES

- 04 **Joseph Basham** (13 Years)
- 10 **James Keehner** (57 Years)
- 10 **Tim Tyler** (25 Years)
- 14 **Andrew Wilson** (23 Years)
- 15 **Clinton Abbott** (24 Years)
- 15 **Melvin Pinsler** (72 Years)
- 15 **Branden Polupan** (01 Year)
- 17 **Joseph Dongo (Past Master)** (25 Years)
- 19 **Francisco Marques (Past Master)** (27 Years)



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