

# Ashlar Lodge No. 98 Free and Accepted Masons

St. Augustine, FL

Chartered January 18, A.D. 1888, A.L. 5888

904-826-4086



September, 2019



## STATED COMMUNICATIONS

Masonic Temple

4 Martin Luther King Blvd.

St. Augustine, FL

1<sup>ST</sup> & 3<sup>RD</sup> Thursdays

Meal – 6:30 p.m.

Stated Communication — 7:30 p.m.

## DEGREE WORK AND PRACTICE

2<sup>nd</sup> & 4<sup>th</sup> Thursdays

## CHARITY OF THE QUARTER

Rodehaver's Boys Ranch

### Ritual

The study of ritual as a discrete cultural and human phenomenon is relatively new, emerging only in the late 1970s and early 1980s. It draws from earlier and current research in the fields of anthropology, sociology, history, ethology, and religion. Ritual is one of the basic elements that make us human. It is evolutionary in nature and is a fundamental feature of all human and animal behavior. It is something we cannot do without and it is impossible to avoid. It is biological and psychological as well as spiritual. It requires time, effort, skill, dedication, study, practice, energy, repetition, and, yes, even money. We may not consider ourselves ritual creatures, but our society is permeated with weddings, funerals, parades, graduations, inaugurations, and a wide variety of rites of passage, all of which are ritualistic in nature. When we explore the nature of ritual, we explore also its place, power, and its potential for transformation in self and society.

Ritual is founded on beliefs that are secure against the intrusion of other social constructs. At the same time, ritual has an integral role in the production of those beliefs. Ritual is about belonging and includes attraction, identification, and group cohesion. While all

group membership arises from a combination of choice, chance, and opportunity, once a member, the very nature of human social interdependence results in a potent, secure belonging often established through ritual. Belonging to a group is regularly accompanied by transitions. In Freemasonry these transitions are demonstrated through the various Degrees of the Blue Lodge as well as through initiation or reception into various appendant bodies. As one moves forward or transitions, relationships change; old ones are relaxed and new ones formed. Paramount to this experience in the Craft is *communitas*—the developing of a cohort that bonds Brothers. Ritual is fundamental to this process.

Ritual is found in all cultures and is as innate a part of modern industrialized society as it is of tribal society. The term “ritual” is no longer a lightning-rod for suspicion and is now understood and studied as a significant social phenomenon. Early studies of ritual often deemed it only as conformity to community and thus ignored the strong contributions ritual makes in modern society. Its study was often considered unnecessary because those who engaged in it were deemed lacking in academic credentials and the studies devoid of “hard” research. Ritual was too often considered an art worthy only of observation, not a human experience requiring research and analysis. “The arts can look after themselves; they are use to neglect and obfuscation” was the generally held opinion. In the film version of Evelyn Waugh’s *Brideshead Revisited*, these words are put into the mouth of Charles Ryder when asked by Markaster about art: “What do you want to be an artist for? I mean, what's the point of it? Why don't you just buy a bloody camera and take a bloody photograph and stop giving yourself airs? That's what I want to know.” Ryder responds by saying “Because, a camera is a mechanical device which records a moment in time, but not what that moment means or the emotions that it evokes. Whereas, a painting, however imperfect it may be, is an expression of feeling. An expression of love. Not just a copy of something.” This is ritual as well, it

## September 2019

| Sun | Mon    | Tue                                  | Wed  | Thu                             | Fri                                 | Sat |
|-----|--------|--------------------------------------|--|---------------------------------|-------------------------------------|-----|
| 1   | 2 OES  | 3                                    | 4 RAIN-BOW<br>7 PM                             | 5 STATED COMMUNICATION          | 6                                   | 7   |
| 8   | 9      | 10 Shrine Club 7:00 pm               | 11 DIST. INSTRUCTION MEL-ROSE 89               | 12                              | 13                                  | 14  |
| 15  | 16 OES | 17 York Rite Chapter/Council 6:30 pm | 18 RAIN-BOW 7 PM OPEN BOOKS PINELAND           | 19 STATED COMMUNICATION 6:30 PM | 20                                  | 21  |
| 22  | 23     | 24 York Rite Commandery 6:30 pm      | 25 District Association Hastings 183 6:30 p-m. | 26 Lodge Instruction 6:30 pm    | 27 Fried Chicken Shrine Club 5-7 pm | 28  |
| 28  | 30     |                                      |  |                                 |                                     |     |

it is not a copy; it is an expression of an emotion and, though often imperfect, is, as Waugh notes, a manifestation of feeling and brotherly love.

Ritual appears to be external and group oriented, yet individual philosophy and identity contribute greatly to its understanding and impact. This leads to the study of ritual in both *epistemological* and *metaphysical* terms. Epistemology refers to our knowledge of ritual methods and includes a determination of the performance as ritual as opposed to simple repetitive behavior as well as a determination of where the ritual begins and ends. A metaphysical analysis of ritual focuses on and answers questions such as “what makes a performance a ritual?” and “what parts make it a proper ritual?” While the metaphysical study of ritual presents problems for many scholars based upon an assumption that all ritual study is descriptive rather than scientific or, even, theological, when ritual is classified as an individual activity resulting in change, its study is greatly facilitated.

Ritual is truly transformative resulting in change, both to the individual and, over time, to the ritual. It is a mirror of society and a model for transition. As Catherine Bell notes in *Ritual: Perspectives and Dimensions*, there were significant changes made in Christian ritual from the time of the early church (second to fourth century) through and beyond the Reformation which resulted in “a constant diet of dramatic upheavals and gradual modifications.” And these changes in Christian ritual are ongoing as witnessed in developments in the modern mega church and non-denominationalism. Freemasonry has been no different. The ceremonies engaged in by our ancient brothers during the operative centuries (eleventh through the sixteenth) were most likely simple imitations into a craft during which the apprentice pledged allegiance to the guild, to the church, and to the government. After which he was rewarded with “words” and “signs” that would enable him to engage in his trade wherever he might travel.

# October 2019

Sun                  Mon                  Tue                  Wed                  Thu                  Fri                  Sat

|    |               |  |   |   |  |  |
|----|---------------|--|---|---|--|--|
|    |               | 1  | <b>2 RAIN-BOW<br/>7:00 PM</b>                                       | <b>3 STATED<br/>COMM.<br/>6:30 PM</b>       | 4  | 5  |
| 6  | <b>7 OES</b>  | <b>8 SHRINE<br/>CLUB<br/>7 PM</b>                        | <b>9 DIST. IN-<br/>STRUCTIO<br/>N ASHLAR<br/>NO. 98 6:30<br/>PM</b> | 10  | 11   | 12   |
| 13 | 14            | <b>15 York Rite<br/>Chapter/<br/>Council<br/>6:30 pm</b> | <b>16 RAIN-<br/>BOW<br/>7:00 PM</b>                                 | <b>17 STATED<br/>COMM.<br/>6:30 PM</b>      | 18   | <b>19 OPEN<br/>BOOKS<br/>PINELAND<br/>9-NOON</b> |
| 20 | <b>21 OES</b> | <b>22 York Rite<br/>Commandery<br/>6:30 pm</b>           | <b>23 District<br/>Association<br/>Bunnell 200<br/>6:30 p-m.</b>    | 24  | <b>25 Fried<br/>Chicken<br/>Shrine Club<br/>5-7 pm</b> | 26   |
| 27 | 28            | 29   | 30  | <b>31 Lodge<br/>Instruction<br/>6:30 pm</b> |  |  |

As Freemasonry transformed from an operative guild based on the knowledge of the skilled workman to a speculative society seeking knowledge about the higher activities of man, the ritual of initiation and, later, advancement, transformed to meet the new nature of the Craft. Elias Ashmole wrote in his diary on 16 October 1646: "4:30 p.m., I was made a Free-Mason at Warrington in Lancashire with Col. Henry Mainwaring of Karincham in Cheshire." He then lists the names of those in attendance but he gives no details about the actual ceremony. Typical to Freemasonry and to Masonic minutes, little information is available about these early rituals. Some inferences may be made, however, from the records that do survive.

Prior to about 1725, no reference can be found to three separate degrees in Freemasonry. The terms most commonly used were "Making a Brother" or "Making a Free Mason." All candidates were simply "entered." A man asked a Masonic friend to be allowed to join the lodge. His qualifications were openly debated in the Lodge at some length with his proposer serving as his advocate and the Brothers present as the examiners. The candidate was not present which required that the proposer be very familiar with the candidate, his record, his family, his history, and the benefits associated with admitting him into the Lodge. His name was then put to a secret vote with a single dissent sufficient for rejection. If he was approved, he was sent a written summons informing him to appear with his proposer at a specified place on a given date. There was no waiting for investigation. It was assumed that if a Brother of a Lodge recommended a man, he knew the candidate very well and personally,.

**LODGE OFFICERS 2019**

**Worshipful Master**

**Matthew Sweeney** 904-806-0571

Senior Warden

**Kenneth Schaffner** 386-864-9162

Junior Warden

**James Carrick** 904-501-4348

Secretary

**David Pierucci** 904-460-9477

Treasurer

**Oscar Patterson III** 904-955-9175

Chaplain

**William Roberts** 904-825-1594

**OTHER 11th MASONIC DISTRICT LODGES**

**Palatka No. 34**

Palatka—2nd & 4th Mondays

**Lake No. 72**

Crescent City—1st & 3rd Mondays

**Pineland No. 86**

Peniel—1st & 3rd Thursdays

**Melrose No 89**

Keystone Heights—2nd & 4th Tuesdays

**Middleburg No. 107**

Middleburg—1st & 3rd Tuesdays

**Cabul No. 116**

Green Cove Springs—2nd & 4th Thursdays

**Hastings No. 183**

Hastings—2nd & 4th Tuesdays

**Bunnell No. 200**

Bunnell—1st and 3rd Tuesdays

**FRATERNAL NOTICES AND DATES**

O.E.S. Chapter #12.....1st & 3rd Mondays

Rainbow Assembly #42.....1st & 3rd Wednesdays

York Rite Bodies.....3rd & 4th Tuesdays

**Ritual Architecture**

*That is how architecture is to be known. As the material theatre of human activity, its truth is in its use. Spiro Kostof*

Man appears to be innately ritualistic. Just about everything we do can be viewed as ritual in some form even how we undress. Clark Gable describes to Claudette Colbert in "It Happened One Night" the ritual a man goes through when performing that mundane task. "Quite a study in psychology. No two men do it alike. You know, I once knew a man who kept his hat on until he was completely undressed. . . I have a method all my own. If you notice, the coat came first, then the tie, then the shirt. Now, uh, according to Hoyle, after that, the, uh, pants should be next. There's where I'm different... I go for the shoes next. First the right, then the left. After that it's, uh, every man for himself." Ritual extends far beyond how we behave to how we live, politic, engage in war, and how we construct edifices, cities, and states.

The cave art of Europe and Asia was long considered to be the earliest form of ritual architecture dating from between 25,000 and 30,000 B.C.E. The oldest megalithic architecture is Gobekli Tepe in southern Turkey which was built about eleven thousand years ago (9,000 B.C.E.). Its pillars are nested in concentric circles which appear to form enclosures. Gobekli Tepe was not a burial site nor was it a city. It was, reports Klaus Schmidt, a lead investigator at the site, "first a temple. . . [and] a religious sanctuary." Gobekli Tepe, like the more familiar Stonehenge, incorporates standing stones in concentric circle oriented to a specific location on the horizon. But neither Gobekli Tepe nor Stonehenge is the oldest human-constructed potentially ritual site. That honor now belongs to mysterious Paleolithic circles in Bruniquel Cave located in the southwestern part of France.

The circles at Bruniquel are constructed predominately from stalagmites crafted into large circles measuring nearly twenty-two feet in diameter. These circles, located some 1,000 feet inside the cave, have been dated to about 177,000 years ago using advanced radioactive techniques. The structures display what researchers (archeologists, anthropologists, and paleontologists) agree is evidence of human planning and activity and, based upon the date, are considered evidence of deliberate construction by Neanderthals, cousins of modern humans. These circles are, potentially, the oldest ritual structures still in existence.

Man has apparently engaged in rituals for more than 170,000 years to form a bridge between the natural and the spiritual world. Yet we tend to perform these rituals in separate, dedicated spaces with Jonathan Z. Smith suggesting that action becomes ritual by virtue of its placement. Ritual is not ordinary and thus requires a “nonordinary” locale

At the center of the ritual space tends to be an altar. It symbolizes an integration between the self and the universe. It is the central point of focus for the event. It is usually elevated so that all can see it or, when used by the ritualist, the high point allows for an unobstructed view of the surroundings, the participants, and the spectators. It is the axis along which the guiding light of the Deity comes to man. An altar is a central pillar both for the participant and the viewer—an anchor. Altars originally may have represented the point at which something emerged from nothing symbolically or realistically. They may represent the navel of the earth; the place where water first sprang forth from barren ground; or where a tree sprout first appeared in rocky soil. It may even locate the site where God appeared to man or where an angel became visible.

In European cathedrals, the altar commonly represents the Tomb of Christ and is thus highly symbolic of the relationship between man and God. Altars are usually covered with a cloth and are the resting place for sacred texts and symbols. Altars are usually oriented east and west to represent, anciently, the four elements, and the first Tabernacle. This orientation anciently appears to be directly related to the fact that the sun rises in the east with some altars being oriented not only to the east but also to the rising sun on a specific day—the solstice. Some western churches are still oriented so that the sun on specified Sunday mornings will enter the main doors and stream down the aisle to illuminate the altar thus symbolizing the resurrection.

Ritual architecture reflects every aspect of human endeavor and social order. Such architecture abounds worldwide. There are caves in France and Indonesia; temples in Malta, Mycenae, and Minoan cities; standing stones in Germany and England; even more temples and tombs in Egypt; classical structures in Greece and Rome; and Romanesque, Norman, and Gothic cathedrals dot the European landscape. Many of these, like Stonehenge, were designed to plot and predict solar alignments. But that is the function of the structure, not its meaning. The calendar could easily have been done, and was done, on a much smaller scale. It could even be held in the hand as suggested by the Nebra sky disk. The phenomenal engineering feat and the intense, protracted labor involved at Stonehenge didn’t just create a “Neolithic computer,” they created a sacred center for community activities of initiation and renewal.

With the establishment of Christianity as the dominant religion in the Western world, basilica churches and then cathedrals became common throughout Europe. Western architecture was expressed in terms of the ritual itself: simple and solid. An unpretentious rectangular hall flanked by small appendages such as an apse, choir, or tower became common. The main hall was entered through small doors only—no grand entry as will be found later in Gothic cathedrals. In a few of these structures, low cross arms appeared near the altar which would evolve into the transept.

Daily liturgical ritual defined the architecture with the focus being on the Mass. In the monasteries, the walls, porticoes, and enclosed spaces provided for an environment in which services were continuous and even circumambulations were well defined and purposeful. The monastery and the church provided for quiet contemplation and gave all involved the opportunity to revere their surroundings as they contemplated their faith and their reason for being. Ritual architecture presented the participant a symbolic representation of God’s relationship to his creatures and established the power and transcendence of the Deity.

The Gothic style arose in France in the twelfth century and by its demise in the mid sixteenth century, had permeated Europe. Masonic guilds are most identified with this style which in itself demonstrates most clearly the religion of the Middle Ages. The great cathedrals of the age in France are located at St. Denis, Chartres, Bourges, and Notre Dame. In England they are located at Winchester, Salisbury, Lincoln, and Westminster. These magnificent structures demonstrated the richness of the design scheme and the liturgy housed there.

As the Renaissance dawned in Europe and eventually reached England, changes in architectural style followed. The foundation of the new style was provided by Leon Battista Alberti. The new Europe was the domain of merchants, bankers, and skilled craftsmen. The reawakening generated a new definition of human life. Scholars and artisans began to look to the past in order to recover strength for the future. New life was breathed into the legacies of Rome and Greece. Antiquarian studies proved decisive and led to a movement away from Gothic design based on “arcane geometric formulae jealously guarded by the lodge” which lacked specific proportion and had no fixed ratios, and in which a simple drawing or sketch provided the outline and design details were decided and executed on site through individual endeavor, to the development of a unitary plan created by a single architect. By the 1450s books on architecture such as Alberti’s *Ten Books on Architecture* based on Vitruvius, were being published. Function again became a fundamental aspect of design. Buildings were created to demonstrate the structure of the natural world and nature was viewed as being synonymous with God.

In the guild lodges there was extreme unease. They were being replaced with “bookish” men who studied the past as well as mathematics, engineering, and natural philosophy. These new architects could not dress a stone nor turn a vault, but they were the precursors of a new age in which the craft guilds would have to reinvent themselves. Brick began to replace stone by the end of the period with Henry VIII’s great palace at Hampton Court, begun in 1515, being constructed from the cheaper, more available material. With this change in architecture came, as well, a change in ritual with the beginnings of the Reformation in Germany and in England, the creation of the first truly national church.

Masonic architecture follows the same symbolic, ritualistic pattern as that demonstrated in religious architecture. The Lodge is described as a square within a square—a parallelepipedon--extending from east to west and north to south. It is symbolic of the world and the nature of the Fraternity housed there indicating that both include all mankind. The Lodge is supported, metaphorically, by three great pillars which represent the principle tenets of wisdom, strength, and beauty. The Lodge is covered by the starry heavens reached by a great ladder which demonstrates faith, hope, and charity. It is furnished first with an altar which symbolically may be assumed to represent the center of wisdom as it serves to support the Volume of Sacred Law as well as the significant symbols of Freemasonry--the Square and Compasses. The altar sits upon a pavement emblematical of the ground floor of the Temple of Solomon, the erection of which is the great allegory of Freemasonry. The pavement teaches us of the nature of human life, good and evil intertwined, and above is the blazing star which not only illuminates the Law, but also represents the Divinity.

Lodges, like early cathedrals, tend to have minimal or no illumination coming from without, depending, instead, on internal sources for light. Traditionally, Lodges had three great lights situated at the stations of the Worshipful Master, Senior Warden, and Junior Warden. Lodges are further furnished with a Rough and a Perfect Ashlar symbolizing the movement from imperfection to perfection. Lodges are dedicated in modern Freemasonry to St. John the Baptist and St. John the Evangelist, and within the room there is usually a definite representation of those Saints and their symbolic meaning to the Craft. Finally, each new Brother is instructed that Lodges are most often constructed on the second floor for security and also, possibly, in imitation of the architect’s loft of the middle ages which was also traditionally on that floor. They are further told that each edifice is erected with the cornerstone placed in the northeast and so each Lodge is symbolically so erected. The Entered Apprentice is, therefore, placed there to represent a sound beginning.

It is most instructive to compare the ritual and architecture of Freemasonry with that of the ritual practices of both in the convent and in the monastery. The attire of both the novice and the candidate are symbolic of a new set of values and a metaphor of a new beginning. The ritual requires not only utilization of a clearly defined space, but also the physical control of the body demanded serves as a metaphor for that life that has been chosen. The candidate's movement in the degrees as is the novice's in the investiture includes circumambulation which represents a movement of one's own free will and accord in front of the company or congregation to symbolize the beginning of a journey. Both the novice and the candidate walk barefoot to the altar—sacred ground—though Freemasonry has somewhat modified this practice to meet the allusion to a pledge of sincerity and divesture as found in the Book of Ruth. Novices prostrate themselves before the altar while candidates kneel there. And, at the proper time, both are invested with the clothing and marks of their new station.

Sound Masonic education extends well beyond the memorization or the consideration of ritual as a relatively dry, arcane subject. It is our ritual, when properly performed and fully understood, that makes us part of an ancient tradition. These are the mysteries of our Craft. In the Medieval world, trade secrets usually associated with recognition and proficiency insured employment and, through the guild system, they indemnified the structure and thus the reputation of the craft. It is no different in the modern era; a thorough understanding of Freemasonic mysteries and ritual insures the continued existence and strength of our great Fraternity.