

Ashlar Lodge No. 98 Free and Accepted Masons

St. Augustine, FL

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



August, 2023



STATED COMMUNICATIONS

Masonic Temple

4 Martin Luther King Blvd.

St. Augustine, FL

1ST & 3RD Thursdays

Meal – 6:30 p.m.

Stated Communication — 7:30 p.m.

DEGREE WORK AND PRACTICE

2nd & 4th Thursdays

CHARITY OF THE MONTH

St. Johns Housing Partnership

FROM THE EAST

Hi Brothers,

We will be Raising one of our Brothers to Master Mason toward the end of August or mid-

September. In addition, we have some new men ready to start their journey into Freemasonry, and we will have an EA degree in the October/November timeframe. If you are interested in participating in either of these degrees, please let me know.

We are always looking for new or returning instructors and lectur-

ers. We have some brothers who are happy to help you learn the work and get you well positioned to take on these rewarding roles.

Brother Terrell and I continue traveling around the district with some of our brothers. Feel free to connect with us and join us as we spread brotherly love and affection wherever we go.

I am still on the lookout for older brothers or widows who need some help around the house. I will also be working on getting a teambuilding day together for us as brothers with Habitat for Humanity as the weather cools off. I hope you will join us!

I hope you are having a safe and fun summer!

I look forward to seeing you soon!

Take care,
Tom

August 2023

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
		1	2 RAIN-BOW 7 PM	3 STATED COMM 6:30 PM	4	5
6	7 OES	8 SHRINE CLUB 7:00 pm	9 District Instruction Middleburg No. 107 6:30 pm	10 Lodge Instruction TBD	11 FSD&B Tour 9:00 am	12
13	14	15	16 RAIN-BOW 7 pm	17 STAT-ED COMM 6:30 PM	18	19 Eastern Star Rob Morris Picnic 10 am
20	21 OES	22 YORK RITE CHAPTER/ COUNCIL 6:30 PM	23 Dist. Assn. Palatka No. 34 6:30 pm	24 Lodge Instruction TBD	25 Fried Chicken Shrine Club	26 Open Books Pine-land No. 86 9—noon
27	28	29 YORK RITE COM-MANDERY 6:30 PM	30	31	28	

FROM THE WEST

As this time of year approaches and the halfway mark is behind us, it makes me think of this time of year, summer, vacations, time with family and friends. One question I ask myself often, is not only how to start something, but also, how to finish strong. Do I deserve a break, or rather should I be working harder to achieve my purpose or destination. The same can be applied to our Masonic walks, as we've been traveling much already, visiting other lodges and brothers, while making new acquaintances in brothers we've met. Not only the brothers themselves, but some of their own family members. What a beautiful idea behind masonry, that many of us have joined not being as young as we once were, but this opportunity allows us a new journey that will broaden our horizons as well as our minds and hearts. Not only a new journey, but something our family can be involved in as well. Sometimes in life, our light, be it a glow of a candle or high wattage lightbulb, can still provide some light in someone else's dark time. I'd like to encourage our brothers new and not, to always walk along the edge of light, while casting our own, so that dark times and shadows cannot exist amongst us. I would like to thank all of our committee members, charity and scholarship committee's members have been very generous in donating their time and efforts into the final destination for the year. We have our sights set on this being yet again another wonderful, and productive year for Ashlar Lodge No. 98. Gentleman, as always, let your light shine.

Our Brothers have are invited to tour the Florida School for the Deaf and the Blind on Friday, August 11, 2023 at 9:00 a.m. Please contact our Senior Warden, Bro. Terrell Jones if you plan to attend.
SW Terrell W Jones SR

September 2023

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
					1	2
3	4 OES	5	6 RAIN-BOW 7:00 PM	7 STAT-ED COMM 6:30 PM	8	9
10	11	12 Shrine Club 7:00 pm	13 District Instruction Cabul 116	14	15	16 MM DEGREE 8:30 am
17	18 OES	19 York Rite Chapter/Council 6:30 pm	20 RAINBOW 7:00 PM OPEN BOOKS PINELAND NO. 89 6-9	21 STAT-ED COMM 6:30 PM	22	23
24	25	26 YORK RITE COM-MANDERY 6:30 PM	27 Dist. Assn. Lake No. 72 6:30 pm	28 Lodge Instruc-tion TBD	29 Fried Chicken, Shrine Club	30

From the South
G.T. Maultsby — J.W.

Catholicism and Masonry

There is nothing in any of the Masonic doctrines, rules or regulations, or the laws of our Grand Lodge which would prevent a Catholic from becoming a Mason because of his church membership. If such were the case, Freemasonry could make no claim to universality, nor could it state that it did not espouse any theological doctrine or dogma if it made any distinction between men because of their religious beliefs.

However, the relationship between Freemasonry and the Roman Catholic Church is greatly misunderstood by many Masons as well as most of the general public. This misunderstanding has led to many false conclusions and created barriers where none exist, so far as Freemasonry is concerned. It is a historical fact that a number of Catholic Popes have regarded Masonry with disfavor and caused Papal Bulls to be issued which condemned Freemasonry and prohibited membership in it to all Catholics.

However, many prominent Catholics have been Masons in spite of these edicts. Masonry generally has given no official recognition to these many evidences of papal disfavor. It has chosen to follow its own admonition of “silence and circumspection” over the nearly two-and-a-quarter centuries since Pope Clement XII issued the first of these edicts in 1738. GL-217 p5, 2.10

THE SECOND GREAT AWAKENING AND ANTI-MASONRY

“The Great Awakenings” refer to any of four phases in U.S. history during which there were marked periods of predominantly Protestant revivals which focused on a renewed interest in religion in general as well as a new sense of evangelical activities coupled with an emphasis on individual guilt and a new standard for public morality. The First Great Awakening began in the mid-1730s and lasted until early 1743. There had been smaller revivals in prior years, most notably that led by Solomon Stoddard, Jonathan Edward’s grandfather, but it was in the person of George Whitefield when he came to the Georgia in 1738 that the first ‘Great Awakening’ came to what would become the United States.

‘The Second Awakening’ began around 1790 and reached its peak in the early 1850s. This awakening was enthusiastic, captivating, emotional, super-natural, and powerful. This movement rejected the philosophies of both the Enlightenment and Rationalism as found in the Age of Reason. This second awakening began in the Kentucky hills, spread to Tennessee and Ohio, and then throughout the frontier and south. Circuit riders or itinerant preachers were common sights and they did much not only to establish lines of communication across the frontier, but also to create new believers and convert old ones as they spread the message of this revival movement.

By the early nineteenth century, the movement had reached the “burned-over” district of New York carried there by Charles Finney, who also coined the phrase “burned-over district.” According to Finney, the area composing the western counties of New York bounded on the south by Pennsylvania and on the west and north by Lake Erie and the Finger Lakes, had been so heavily evangelized in previous generations that there was no “fuel” or unconverted population left to “burn over” or convert. Close to the center of the “burned over” district was Genesee County and its county seat, Batavia, at one time the home of William Morgan, brick mason and the central figure in the so-called “Morgan Affair” of 1826.

This awakening or revival movement involved Baptist, Methodist, Presbyterian, and other groups including Mormons and Shakers. It further divided itself into subgroups which included Adventism (Second Advent of Jesus), the Holiness movement which emphasized Wesleyan teaching, and other assemblies identified as congregational primitives. The movement was distinctly postmillennial and its theology predicted the imminent return of Christ in the year 1844. This prediction proved false, however, resulting in the “Great Disappointment,” but not the total demise of the movement. The more fervent members simply blamed the “error” on a misreading of *The Bible* and the concept of postmillennialism became focused on a “long period” rather than a set date or span of time.

This Second Awakening witnessed spiraling increases in church membership with the Baptists and Methodists becoming the dominant denominations in the United States, and new groups being founded to include Churches of Christ, Disciples of Christ, Seventh-Day Adventists, and, several racially segregated churches populated by slaves, newly freed slaves, and other people of color. The movement also witnessed a new religiosity among women and gave women leadership roles in the faith community as well as in the task of instructing children in religion and morals. Formal missionary societies, many dominated by women, emerged.

Politically, the movement continued into the 1860s and laid the foundation for the abolition of slavery, temperance, women’s rights, and other societal issues. It also contributed directly to the establishment of the Anti-Masonic Party, the first official third party in U.S. political life. This party was, however, essentially a short-lived, one-issue entity and will be discussed later.

The Second Great Awakening appears to have segued into the Third in the early 1850s with the formation of the Y.M.C.A. and, after 1858, under the leadership of Dwight L. Moody, carried out its work among the armies on both sides during the Civil War. This Awakening also saw the formation of The Freedman’s Society and The Christian and Sanitary Commission.

The Fourth Great Awakening came more than one hundred years later beginning in the late 1960s and continuing, to some extent, into the present day. This movement saw sharp drops in membership in mainline churches while the more conservative churches grew dramatically. This Fourth Awakening also includes a renewal of conservative political involvement, internal theological battles, and the development of community and mega churches as well as televangelism.

At the heart of the Second Great Awakening was a shift from a Calvinists-dominated doctrine to a more American Christianity. This awakening was one of practical Arminianism which emphasized the ability of humans to repent and stop sinning. Conversion was a major component of this awakening, with revivals, tent meetings, and similar communal gatherings such as week-long camps often held at specific sites and involving mass baptism. Action became important with “holy dancing,” “speaking in tongues,” and mass sing-alongs common experiences. This awakening was more demonstrative than previous religious events. Above all, the movement “preached” that Christians in America (and others) were slumbering or passive thus leading to secularism and a loss of religious initiative. The Awakening was meant to revitalize through reconversion, rebaptism, and redemption.

At the heart of the political aspect of the Second Awakening was the Anti-Masonic Party founded in northwest New York not that far from the Genesee County noted above. The party was concentrated in small towns and rural areas. It was staunchly opposed to Jacksonian Democracy and to Andrew Jackson, a Mason, in particular. The party’s members were democrats (with a lower case “d”) who saw themselves as frontiersmen. It is most interesting that they found their champion in, of all politicians, John Quincy Adams, son of the second president of the United States, John Adams.

John Adams and Alexander Hamilton had been the strongest voices in support of the British constitutional monarchy system referring to it as “the finest government in the history of the world.” Adams the elder and Hamilton, joined by John Dickinson and Robert Morris, wanted to emulate the British model with the upper house—the senate—being parallel to the House of Lords in that membership would be restricted to those owning significant property and who demonstrated the sound management thereof as “proof of their wisdom and education.” These four advocated for two elected branches: one composed of the elite and **“one honest”** elected one composed of common men, or so contended Thomas Jefferson, Adam’s vice president and political opponent. Adams, for example, preferred titles derived from British Crown tradition, such as “His Majesty the President” or “His High Mightiness, the President of the United States and Protector of Their Liberties,” but he was popularly referred to as “His

Rotundity.”

John Quincy Adams or Adams the younger was the Anti-Masonic Party’s candidate for Governor of Massachusetts in 1836. He had served as President of the United States from 1825-1829 after defeating Andrew Jackson in the Electoral College in the 1824 election. He lost to Jackson in the 1828 election. Adams was a National Republican and had as his allies many members of the old Federalists party. He was staunchly anti-Jackson and anti-Jacksonian. The Anti-Masonic Party, using Adams the younger’s prestige value as a former president, focused first on a single issue—opposing Freemasonry—but later expanded its platform, effectively dropping anti-Masonry and addressing social unrest, weakening family ties, and abolition. It pioneered both the nominating convention and the creation of party platforms. For Freemasons, though, the damage was done and the Fraternity suffered a significant setback in stature, membership, and influence as well as public opinion.

Anti-Masonry, as both a political and philosophical movement, is thought to have arisen out of wide-spread social insecurity capitalized upon by the evangelists of the Second Great Awakening who preached individualism. Masons were perceived as being a self-selected elite who possessed “secrets” not available to the common man which enabled them to wield undue influence and power, especially politically. They were also perceived as functioning as a group or organization lacking in individual initiative or action. What is interesting is that the anti-Masonry movement espoused transparency and democracy, yet their leaders were anti-Jacksonian in political sentiment and were not always forthcoming in their thoughts, words, or deeds. Masons were perceived and spoken against by this party as a radical group, intent on national, if not world, domination.

Two major figures of U.S. politics, both radical Republicans, “learned their trade” with the Anti-Masonic Party: Thaddeus Stevens, a major figure in the Republican Party in the 1860s (see also Lydia Hamilton Smith, his “domestic partner”) and Thurlow Weed, a New York publisher and political operative who, as editor of the Rochester Telegraph, had been directly involved in the Morgan Affair and even accused of some complicity in how it was reported.

Anti-Masonry did impact directly on the National Masonic Conventions of 1842 and 1843, and William Seward, Abraham Lincoln’s Secretary of State, who was elected to the New York State Senate in 1830 on the Anti-Masonic Party ticket, was accused, during the 1860 campaign for the Republican nomination, of having been responsible for the solicitation of signed statements from individuals alleged to have been conspirators in the Morgan Affair.

The Anti-Masonic Party was a failure as a political entity electing no Presidents or U.S. Senators though twenty-six members of Congress, mainly from Pennsylvania and New York, were elected under its banner. At the state level, its highest elected officials were William A. Palmer, governor of Vermont elected in 183, and Silas H. Jennison elected Lieutenant governor of the same state in 1835. In some cases, coalitions of Anti-Masons and Democrats worked together and such a coalition elected the Speaker of the Rhode Island House of Representatives in 1831.

A significantly smaller and far more religiously-oriented Anti-Masonic Party was active from 1872 to 1888. It was led by Jonathan Blanchard, president of Wheaton College from 1860-1882. Blanchard was a staunch abolitionist and anti-Mason.

Freemasonry has been opposed by groups as diverse as the Catholic Church, the Eastern Orthodox Church, and many evangelical denominations in the U.S. It faces the same opposition today with added input

from web sites such as Ephesians 5:11 which espouses a strong anti-Masonic sentiment. In 2006, for example, Asbury Theological Seminar hosted a three-day conference which included papers addressing the “teachings of Freemasonry and a number of other false religions.” The title of the conference was “Ministry to Masons” and the outline given on the web site suggests that it was intended to give direction on how to remove men from Freemasonry. The web site Ephesians 5:11 has a similar focus..

Some anti-Masons, such as William J. Schnoebelen, who is often quoted by conspiracy theorists, view Freemasonry as an “organization whose rites can effortlessly slide into witchcraft and devil worship.” Anti-Masons and Anti-Masonry has not gone away. Declared official opposition to the Fraternity is found in many nations especially those with non-democratic forms of government and strong interweaving of religion and politics, but there is no single anti-Masonic movement. It has now become a realm inhabited by totalitarian governments, fundamental religious sects, conspiracy theorists, and popular media. In the U.S. it found expression in popular literature through notorious forgeries such as *The Protocols of the Elders of Zion* and the earlier writings of Leo Taxil and Abel Clarin de la Rive. And in popular electronic media the various “history” channels and “reality” television programs have given an open mike and camera to those who are hostile to the Fraternity for whatever the reason or those to see a “buck to be made” through espousing supposed links between Freemasonry and all of the world’s ills.

From the Masonic standpoint the response to all of this furor is simple. Stand above the fray. Let our lives be examples of what Freemasons teach, believe, and practice. Let our morality and ethical decision making set us above all others. Let our true deeds be our secrets. Let us make good men better. One cannot and should not argue with those who have already made up their minds, incorrect though their perceptions and conclusions may be. Consider these two examples as illustrations.

A family moves into a community, lives among the people in non-ostentatious surroundings, speaks the same language, wears the same clothes, treats all as equals, is charitable, seeks no glory or recognition, speaks well of all, and practices his faith quietly and personally. In time, the family is accepted and other members of the community took to them as examples of how to live and behave. They become community leaders and their example serves to inspire future generations.

A second family moves into the same community and immediately demands that all walk, talk, act, eat, and believe exactly as they do. They do not respect others nor treat them as equals. They walk with a superior attitude and require that all defer to them in every matter. They demand rather than earn respect, and are most vocal when they do not receive it, arguing constantly for their belief system and their way of acting. The community, from the beginning, views them with suspicion and, even, contempt. Over time what little influence they may have had wanes and they are soon remembered only in the most negative terms.

Only one of these meets the true description of a Freemason. The best way to address anti-Masonry in all forms; the best way to let the world know that we are true men and Freemasons is to be one.

The real Freemason is distinguished from the rest of Mankind by the uniform unrestrained rectitude of his conduct. Other men are honest in fear of punishment

which the law might inflict; they are religious in expectation of being rewarded, or in dread of the devil, in the next world. A Freemason would be just if there were no laws, human or divine except those written in his heart by the finger of his Creator. In every climate, under every system of religion, he is the same.

He kneels before the Universal Throne of God in gratitude for the blessings he has received and humble solicitation for his future protection. He venerates the good men of all religions. He disturbs not the religion of others. He restrains his passions, because they cannot be indulged without injuring his neighbor or himself. He gives no offense, because he does not choose to be offended. He contracts no debts which he is certain he cannot discharge, because he is honest upon principal. *The Farmer's Almanac*, 1823.

LODGE OFFICERS 2022

Worshipful Master

Thomas Torretta 602-881-3206

Senior Warden

Terrell Jones 904-669-5249

Junior Warden

George Maulsby 703-956-0228

Secretary

Troy Usina 904-451-5283

Treasurer

Oscar Patterson III 904-955-9175

Senior Deacon

Mark Williams 904-669-9694

Junior Deacon

Darrell Lindsey 904-814-7158

Chaplain

Robert Harry, Jr. 904-806-1255

Tyler

Russell Sellers 512-801-7831

FRATERNAL NOTICES AND DATES

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

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

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

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