

# Ashlar Lodge No. 98 Free and Accepted Masons

St. Augustine, FL

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

904-826-4086



May, 2022



## 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 MONTH

Big Brothers & Big Sisters

## From the East

### Concerning the Ballot:

When in time of war, a company of soldiers go into camp for the night. The men can sleep with a sense of security only because along the frontiers of the camp, certain of their comrades are on sentry duty. The sentinel challenges all who approach; he permits none to pass or re-pass save such as are duly qualified.

The Ballot Box is Freemasonry's sentinel. It stands guard at the portals of the Craft to keep off all who are not qualified to enter. There is peace and harmony inside those portals only so long as it remains faithful to its sentinel

duties. Freemasonry does not solicit members. Petitioners must come of their own choice and free will. Of all those who thus come, only such as have certain necessary qualifications, are eligible for membership.

The first use of the Ballot is to decide whether in fact and truth a given petitioner possesses those qualifications.

### Some key points:

- A. The ballot gives decisive and practical expression of qualification.
- Or, it answers the question, Does the petitioner have the necessary qualifications for membership?
- B. A blackball is not a disgrace nor is it a judgement of a man's character or his personality, it is simply a mechanical means of determining if he is fitted to Masonry.
- C. It is Un-Masonic to cast a blackball against a petitioner out of spite or private prejudice.
- D. The ballot must be secret.
- E. Every member present should vote.
- F. The ballot is INVIOABLE. There is no appeal from its verdict.
- G. The ballot is independent. Once a voting member has exercised his duty in his best judgement, **he is not answerable to any man for his actions.**

W. Jim

# May 2022

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
1	2 OES	3	4 RAINBOW 7:00 PM	5 STAT- ED COMM 6:30 PM	5	7
8	9	10 Shrine Club 7:00 pm	11 District Instruction Bunnell No. 200 6:30 pm	12 EA Degree 6:30 pm	13	14
15	16 OES	17	18 RAIN- BOW 7:00 PM / Open Books Pine- land No. 86	19 STATED COMM 6:30 PM	20	21 Masonic Service for W. Pierucci 11:00 am
22	23	24 York Rite Chap- ter/Council 6:30 pm	25 Dist. Assn. Melrose No. 89 6:30 pm	26 MM Degree 1st half Practice 6:00 pm	27 Fried Chicken, Shrine Club	28
29 Grand Lodge	30 Grand Lodge	31 York Rite Command- ery 6:30 pm Grand Lodge				

## FROM THE WEST

Hello my Brothers,

I will be joining Ashlar Lodge's other elected officers and going to the Grand Lodge of Florida's Annual Communication this year over Memorial Day weekend. It will be my first time attending. If any of you have tips, tricks or suggestions on how to get the most out of the event, please let me know.

Our Lodge is continuing to grow. We have another Entered Apprentice degree coming up on Thursday, May 12<sup>th</sup> at 7:30pm (dinner at 6:30pm). Please come out and support these candidates as they become Brothers and start their journey into Freemasonry.

I would like to again suggest that the Brothers who sign petitions for new candidates be there for them. Please attend Lodge during the different degrees, and act as their mentor as they progress. I know they will appreciate your support and guidance.

Fraternally,  
Brother Tom Torretta

# June 2022

Sun                  Mon                  Tue                  Wed                  Thu                  Fri                  Sat

			1 RAIN- BOW 7 pm	2 STATED COMM 6:30 PM	3	4
5	6 OES	7	8	9 MM DE- GREE 2ND HALF PRACTICE 6:00 PM	10	11
12	13	14 SHRINE CLUB 7:00 pm	15 RAIN- BOW 7 pm	16 Sojourn to Pine- land No. 86 6:30 pm	17	18
19	20 OES	21 YORK RITE CHAP- TER/ COUNCIL 6:30 PM	22 District Assn. Ashlar No. 98 6:30 pm	23 PM Night MM Degree 6:00 pm	24 Fried Chicken Shrine Club	25
26	27	28 YORK RITE COMMAND- ERY 6:30 pm	29	30 Lodge Instruc- tion TBA	29	30

## FROM THE SOUTH

My Brothers:

Your Building Committee is continuing to make progress in the various renovations needed at our Lodge. A gas, on-demand water heater will be in place very soon as will a new gas range in our kitchen. Other renovations upcoming are the egress/fire escape and a new, updated heating/AC system. We will keep you informed as we progress.

Fraternally,  
Bro. Terrell Jones  
Junior Warden

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### FRATERNAL NOTICE

In accordance with Worshipful David Pierucci's final wishes, we will hold a brief Masonic service in the Lodge room on Saturday, May 21, 2022. The service will begin at 11:00 AM, after which we will adjourn to the dining hall for a meal and fellowship, also at his request.

This will be a Masons only event. EA's and FC's are encouraged to attend. Masonic funeral attire, white aprons and white gloves are appropriate. Please come and be with us to honor our departed Brother.

**LODGE OFFICERS 2022**

**Worshipful Master**  
**James Carrick**            **904-501-4348**  
Senior Warden  
    Thomas Torretta        602-881-3206  
Junior Warden  
    Terrell Jones            904-669-5249  
Secretary Pro Tempore  
    Troy Usina                904-451-5283  
Treasurer  
    Oscar Patterson III    904-955-9175  
Senior Deacon  
    George Maulsby        703-956-0228  
Junior Deacon  
    Mark Williams         904-669-9694  
Chaplain  
    Robert Harry, Jr.      904-806-1255

**FRATERNAL NOTICES AND DATES**

O.E.S. Chapter #12.....1st & 3rd  
Mondays  
Rainbow Assembly #42.....1st & 3rd  
Wednesdays  
York Rite Bodies.....3rd & 4th  
Tuesdays

**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

### *Masonic Ritual*

Masonic ritual has evolved significantly since the first references to it are found in the seventeenth century. No longer are Brothers simply *made Masons* in a single ceremony. To find the origin of current practices, we must look at the legends as well as the history of the craft as recounted in the various *Old Charges* and at how the *Word* was transmitted. The earliest rituals suggest that a catechism was an integral part of initiation as was the imparting of *words* and *signs* accompanied by a demonstration of proficiency in both. In addition, some form of Craft history was recounted to the initiate, similar to the lectures given in modern degree work. All of this ceremonial activity was utilized to form a link with the operative past or *time immemorial* as well as between the Brothers.

Virtually all evidence currently existing relating to Masonic ritual and its inherent secrets is of Scottish origin which focused on the passing of *The Word* or tenets from generation to generation. This was done mouth-to-ear using a memorized catechism similar to religious instruction. Included in the ritual were set prayers for before, convening, and dismissing a Lodge similar to those found in the *Book of Common Prayer*. Evident as well in the evolution of the Grand Lodge system is the introduction of trigradual Freemasonry.

Early Freemasonry utilized a single ceremony to *make* a Mason which included parts of the current Entered Apprentice and Fellow Craft Degrees (see Chapter I). There is some evidence to suggest that as early 1696 in Scotland there were two ceremonies—one for Entered Apprentices and the other for Fellow Crafts/Master Masons, and that each propounded its own secrets. It further appears that at some point after 1726 in England, the three-degree system evolved, but the reasons behind this modification are unknown with the evidence supporting the contention that the evolution of the three-degree system in both English and Irish Lodges after 1730 may have originated about 40 years earlier as an attempt to expand Masonic education through more elevated moral and ritual instruction. This much is for sure, the work of *speculative* Masonic Lodges was significantly different from that of their operative ancestors and their manner of adoption or acceptance had become much more formal.

The study of ritual has emerged over the past twenty years as a sound field for philosophical, academic, and theological discourse. Ritual is a living thing and is neither a “cookie cutter” exercise nor a set of timeless practices fit only for curious observation and imitation in the modern world. Ritual is a complex system of cultural constructions, traditions, self-expressions, theology transmitted esoterically, and symbolism. It is capable of transmitting through words and actions which include a variety of role models, the rich density of human life.

“The meaning of ritual is deep indeed” wrote Xunzi in the third century B.C.E. It is a great and lofty enterprise and those who try to enter “with the violent and arrogant ways of those who despise common customs and consider themselves to be above other men will meet his downfall there.”

This text endeavors to briefly address the depth of the ritualistic experience through an historical and psychological analysis of ritual dynamics—what ritual means to man as well as what man means to ritual. The expression of thought through the duality of action and words is addressed, as well as is the psychological impact of ritual and the physiological implications of its practice. Ritual is human behavior at its most perfect. It is spiritual, rational, and cultural.

Ritual is not the direct result of any one human action or train of thought. And as noted in Chapter IV, the question of which came first, ritual or community, is yet to be answered. Ritual is much talked about yet little understood, possibly because the modern world tends to downplay the possibility that humans are effected by what they see and hear.

Ritual teaches us about reality but we will not come to a full understanding of it if we disparage what others do and view their actions from a pseudo-position of intellectual and cultural superiority. Ritual is, writes Catherine Bell, is an interaction of body and mind which “by virtue of movement and stillness, sound and silence” enables humans to experience and interpret events. It establishes levels of professionalism as it generates and transmits traditions.

Yet ritual is something that can be taught. Rituals are repetitive and rhythmic which contribute to their ready retention and transmission. They come in all sizes and link humans in a multitude of ways. Ritual is expressed in architecture as well as performance. It is not empty or hollow, but when properly performed in an appropriate environment directly effects the human psyche in ways no other event can achieve.

Ritual is at the core of Freemasonry and is that thing which sets us apart from so many social and fraternal organizations. It is the key to our “secrets” and the manner through which we transmit our “beautiful system of morality.” It is something to be treasured, maintained, taught, evaluated, and, above, reinforced through proper performance, decorum, and setting.