

# NORTH CAROLINA THE MASON

Official Publication of The Grand Lodge of Ancient, Free and Accepted Masons of North Carolina

Volume 145 Number 4

Oxford, North Carolina

July/August 2020

## STAND

### North Carolina Freemasonry Grand Lodges share historic moment at the Capitol

By Beth Grace  
Mason Editor

“Behold how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity.”

Under a canopy of mature oaks on the east side of the Capitol in downtown Raleigh, some 200 North Carolina Freemasons gathered on June 13, 2020, to make history – and a stirring, public statement of brotherly love.

That Saturday dawned a bit cooler than normal, with a slight breeze. Perfect weather for an historic gathering of brethren, white and Black, all clad in dark suits, white gloves and protective masks, to talk about fellowship, fairness, race and brotherhood.

Only once before had these men met and made history in this place. On Nov. 21, 2008, they signed a “Compact of Mutual Recognition.” Both Grand Lodges on that day agreed to end generations of separation, recognizing each other and opening lodge meetings to each other. They remain the only two



The state's two Grand Masters, Daniel L. Thompson and Shaun Bradshaw, in a display of the unity found in Freemasonry.

Grand Lodges in the South to sign such a compact.

Just like back then, not every brother was in favor of this gathering. Some feared it would appear that Masons were stepping into politics; others worried that any media coverage would misrepresent reality; some still object to the idea of mutual recognition.

And, just like back then, all hoped

the day would play out peacefully, even as merchants just down

the street from the Capitol were still cleaning up glass and scrubbing graffiti left behind from several nights of violent protest downtown. The protests in Raleigh and around the nation followed the death of George Floyd in Minnesota and

the resurgence of the Black Lives Matter movement.

But the gathering went off without a hitch. Even passersby who knew nothing about the event – a couple thought it might be a protest rally but were educated by brothers standing near the back – paused to listen to each Grand Master speak from the heart about the power of living according to Masonic

teachings inside and outside of the lodge, and why it matters to the rest of

the world.

“We are here today, not because we all agree on the solutions to the injustices and divisions in our country, but because we understand the meaning, the hope, of brotherly love,” said Most Worshipful Shaun

Bradshaw, Grand Master of the Grand Lodge of North Carolina, A.F. & A.M.

“This tenet pushes us to see beyond those divisions, and as such, helps bring us together despite — and sometimes, because of — our differences. It unites us. ... By coming together this afternoon we hope to show the citizens of our communities, our state, and our country, that it is better to be united against hate, intolerance, injustice, and violence. That our fraternity is stronger when we work together, that society is better when we work together, that we should build and unite, not destroy and divide. To embody the ideals of Brotherly Love so that our conversations and debates start from a place of respect and tolerance rather than fear and hatred.



**SPEECHES** Read what the two Grand Masters had to say  
**UNITY** Joint statement issued by the Grand Lodges

# STAND

## Comments of A.F. & A.M GM Shaun Bradshaw

Most Worshipful Brother DT explained a little bit about why we are here today, and he and I addressed our thoughts on the important work Freemasonry does to foster peace, understanding, and goodwill for all humanity in our Joint Statement released earlier this week.

One of the earliest lessons we are taught as Freemasons is that we should abide by three Principle Tenets: Brotherly Love, Relief, and Truth. Today, I want to address Brotherly Love.

Our ritual explains to us that, “By the exercise of brotherly love we are taught to regard the whole human species – the high and low, the rich and poor, as one family; who, as created by one Almighty parent, and inhabitants of the same planet, are to aid, support, and protect each other. **On this principle Masonry unites men of every country, sect, and opinion,** and conciliates true friendship among those who otherwise might have remained at a perpetual distance.”

You’ll notice that no exceptions are mentioned. We don’t say brotherly love is reserved for those that look like us, talk like us, think like us, or act like us. No. Our ritual is clear. As we say in our Closing Charge, every human being has a claim on our kind offices.

This is what our ritual says, but the reality is not always as beautiful as the words.

As brethren in our respective Grand Lodges, our history is shared. You see, St. John’s Lodge No. 213 and Royal White Hart Lodge No. 403, (2 of the lodges which formed our Grand Lodge) and African Lodge No. 459, the lodge from which PHA grand lodges were formed, were each chartered by the Grand Lodge of England. However, despite our shared origins, our shared rituals, and the admonition that our fraternity should “unite men of every country, sect, and opinion,” cultural and racial divisions pervaded and our two Grand Lodges were not as close as we are today. It wasn’t until the mid-90s when the light of Brotherly Love finally began to dawn and the long process of recognizing our commonalities more than our differences commenced.

This process came to fruition on November 21, 2008, in the Capitol building just behind us, when the Compact of Mutual Recognition was finally signed — when we lived up to our ideals and finally recognized one another as brethren.. I was here that day. Masons are fond of their lapel pins, and I happen to be wearing the one I received at that historic event. And I’m so proud to be back here, at the Capitol, for this historic occasion - to share a few thoughts on the important example Freemasonry can and should set for the rest of the world in these trying times.

Few, if any of my brethren, come into this



fraternity demonstrating true brotherly love as described in our ritual. Sometimes we aren’t even consciously aware of it. We all have some implicit biases we operate with. It’s part of our human experience. Let me illustrate this with a brief story of my own implicit bias.

In 1989, my freshman year of college, I took Sociology 101. I thoroughly enjoyed the class and felt that I really got a lot out of it. At the time, I believed I wasn’t racist in the least. I had “Black friends” – still do – and tried my best to keep an open mind about people I met regardless of their color, creed, country of origin, political or personal persuasion.

But then reality slapped me in the face. You see, part of my final exam for that class included a Bloom County Comic, with the question of how it demonstrated the idea of institutional racism. For those of you not familiar with this comic strip, one of the main characters is a talking penguin and another is young Black child. In this particular strip, the young Black child was coloring a picture of himself and asked for the “flesh colored crayon”. When the penguin handed the child a crayon labelled “flesh,” the next panel simply showed them both looking at each other confused and sort of shrugging.

Here’s the thing. I didn’t get it. I did not recog-

nize “the joke.” The child asked for a flesh colored crayon, and the penguin handed him one. What was the joke? Where was the institutional racism? I skipped the question and moved on to the next one. Finally, as time on the exam was coming to an end, I returned to the question. And perhaps the pressure of time running out got to me and it finally clicked. I’m white. The flesh colored crayon was closer to the color of my skin than the Black child’s. I felt horrible that I didn’t see it immediately. The “joke” was clear to me then, and the revelation of my own implicit bias has stuck with me to this day.

Now let me bring that back to Freemasonry.

There is a certain part in one of our degrees when we are told we will have a dark and difficult path to travel. And we are later challenged by three obstacles. Some Masons interpret these obstacles as Political Ambition, Religious Fanaticism, and the Ignorance of the Mob. Others see them as Pride, Fear, and Anger. But the key is to understand that the obstacles you are overcoming are NOT those presented by the outside world, rather they are the obstacles of your own making – your own ambition, your own pride, your own fanaticism, fear, ignorance, and anger. As Freemasons, we strive to overcome those obstacles within ourselves, and by doing so we become transformed men. Or at least that’s the hope.

I challenge my brethren to think about your own obstacles, your own assumptions, your own implicit biases. To contemplate our rituals and symbols in a way that allows you to confront who you truly are – to travel down that dark and difficult path, to bury yourselves in the rubbish of your own temples, so that one day, the angels of your better selves can come help raise you to a new understanding of who you are. Not perfect, but a little smoother, a little more level, a little more upright. And the hope is, just like my revelation during that Sociology exam, we will each come away transformed in a way that allows us to appreciate the bonds of our humanity with one another, more than the petty divisions too many in society concentrate on instead.

While the transformation improves us as men, it also improves us as citizens. It gives us the courage and capability to be open to others who aren’t exactly like us, who don’t always agree with us. We rely on the stronger tie, the fraternal bond that unites us, to acknowledge that there are differences between us, and yet to see beyond the color of a man’s skin, the dogma of his religious belief, the opinions and persuasions he holds – to see another spirit, another man, like us, attempting to improve himself by the virtues of

# STAND

## Comments of Prince Hall GM Daniel Thompson

Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity....

Since time immemorial, the fraternity of Free and Accepted Masons has espoused the principle tenets of brotherly love, relief and truth. We view the human family as one, there are no big I's and little U's. We understand we have an obligation to be like the Good Samaritan and come to the aid of those in need. We realize that the truth shall forever reign.

As we witness civil disturbance in our state and country and as millions of people exercise their right to march, protest and stand up against discrimination, injustice and racism, we the members of the North Carolina Grand Lodge of Ancient Free and Accepted Masons and the Most Worshipful Prince Hall Grand Lodge of Free and Accepted Masons of North Carolina stand together united.

Our leadership and membership are committed to the equality of all men and denounces all illegal and negative activities that fail to allow the realization that we are in fact created equal and that we are endowed by our creator with certain unalienable rights which include life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness.

We stand for justice. We stand for peace. We stand for understanding. We stand here as Masons, we stand here as Men, we stand here with the support of our sisters and fellow citizens. Together, WE STAND!!!

*I need you, you need me  
We're all a part of God's body  
Stand with me, agree with me  
We're all a part of God's body  
You are important to me  
I need you to survive*

I shall attempt to articulate, educate and stimulate the hearts, minds and souls standing here together in unity in the face and threat of COVID-19. Despite underlying health concerns, we gather here, united, to say WE ALL HAVE VALUE!

I was asked yesterday, why are you going to Raleigh? Well, I'm here because leaders lead and to show what right looks like. Who better to show what right looks like than the Freemasons, but not only the Freemasons, but the Freemasons of North Carolina?

Look at the statement our standing together makes. Freemasonry parallels the history of the United States. Freemasonry parallels the history of prejudice and racism. Eleven years ago, the Freemasons of North Carolina took the steps required to recognize each other as brothers and men; fulfilling the true principles of the fraternity. We are the only AF&AM and PHA



jurisdictional Grand Lodges in the South to share mutual recognition!

Today, as some in our state and country deny, ignore and turn a blind eye to the truth about prejudice and racism, it is the Freemasons of North Carolina, again, showing the world what right looks like. We stand together showing that it is the man's heart, not his color that counts.

It was William Cowper who reminded us:

*Fleecy locks and black complexion  
Cannot forfeit nature's claim;  
Skins may differ, but affection  
Dwells in white and black the same.*

We are like the keys on a musical keyboard, it takes the black keys and the white keys to make beautiful music; one can not do it by itself.

The Pandemic of Injustice isn't new. The pandemic of racism isn't new. The pandemic of poverty isn't new. The pandemic of racial profiling isn't new. 54 years ago, Huey Newton and Bobby Seale's 7th point of their 10-point plan was, **WE WANT AN IMMEDIATE END TO POLICE BRUTALITY AND MURDER OF BLACK PEOPLE, OTHER PEOPLE OF COLOR, ALL OPPRESSED PEOPLE INSIDE THE UNITED STATES.**

52 years ago, in his last sermon, Remaining Awake Through a Great Revolution, on March

31, 1968, Dr. King spoke of poverty and racism. Four days later, he was assassinated. It was June 5, 1968, that Robert Kennedy in his last speech spoke on the subjects of poverty and racism; ten minutes later he was assassinated. 52 years later, we are still dealing with these two issues.

Change is possible. But the change starts with the 'man in the mirror.' Change starts when we are honest with ourselves. Change starts in our hearts. Change starts when we don't do like Dives. In the parable of Dives and Lazarus, we see where Dives walked past Lazarus every day to the point Lazarus became invisible to him.

We can't be like Dives, or we might find ourselves like the rich man Dives, looking at heaven.

We cannot and will not change, heal or resolve these pandemics by burning down buildings, looting businesses or attacking each other physically. Each of those actions produce microwave satisfaction with negative results.

We must use the tools provided, use the rules and systems established. We must understand the rules of the game and the games that people play. Anyone can say I'm not A, B, C or D but if the actions don't match the words, the words are hollow. Actions speak louder than words!

I submit to you; change can come without resorting to physical attacks. We can effect change through economic impacts. The loss of profits leads to dialogue.

Boycotts lead to conversations. We can effect change via the ballot box. We must exercise our right and vote. We must ensure every eligible voter is registered and exercises his/her right. We have no grounds to complain if we don't vote.

As I conclude my remarks, I'm reminded of the words of Tracy Mayfield.

### *It's In The Valleys I Grow*

*Sometimes life seems hard to bear, Full of sorrow,  
trouble, and woe, It's then I have to remember,  
That it's in the valleys I grow  
If I always stayed on the mountain top, And never  
experienced pain,  
I would never appreciate God's love, And would be  
living in vain*

*I have so much to learn, And my growth is very slow,  
Sometimes I need the mountain tops, But it's in the  
valleys I grow*

*I do not always understand, Why things happen as  
they do, But I am very sure of one thing, My Lord  
will see me through*

Today is phase one, stand. Now it's time to go to phase two, the Valley. We have to go to the valley. We have to go to the valley and educate. We have to go to the valley and register. We have to go to the valley and assist.

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(USPS 598-260) is published bimonthly by The Grand Lodge of AF & AM of North Carolina, 2921 Glenwood Avenue, Raleigh, NC 27608.

Third class postage paid at Oxford, NC 27565.

POSTMASTER: Send address changes to *The North Carolina Mason*, School Of Graphic Arts, Masonic Home for Children, Oxford, NC 27565.

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Each North Carolina Mason is a subscriber to *The North Carolina Mason*. If you know a member who is not receiving the paper, please send us his full name, his complete address, and the name and number of his lodge. Masonic widows receive *The Mason* free upon request. Subscriptions are available to others at a rate of five dollars per year. Subscription inquiries and address changes only should be sent to: The School of Graphic Arts, Masonic Home for Children, 600 College Street, Oxford, North Carolina 27565.

Opinions expressed are not necessarily those of *The North Carolina Mason*, the Grand Lodge, or Board of Publication.

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THE MISSION OF FREEMASONRY IN NORTH CAROLINA IS TO RAISE THE MORAL, SOCIAL, INTELLECTUAL, AND SPIRITUAL CONSCIENCE OF SOCIETY BY TEACHING THE ANCIENT AND ENDURING PHILOSOPHICAL TENETS OF BROTHERLY LOVE, RELIEF, AND TRUTH, WHICH ARE EXPRESSED OUTWARDLY THROUGH SERVICE TO GOD, FAMILY, COUNTRY, AND SELF UNDER THE PATERNITY OF GOD WITHIN THE BROTHERHOOD OF MAN.

## FROM THE EDITOR'S DESK

# Patience may be a virtue, but one that I am lacking

I want my life back. I want your life back. I mean it. You can't see me right now, but I'm actually stomping my foot as I write that.

I want us all to go back to the day before we first heard the word "coronavirus." I want to have no idea what I look like – or anybody looks like – in a mask. I would make a trade with the devil to win a couple of hours in a crowded restaurant, or at a concert, or to settle happily in the sunbeam that hits my favorite pew right about the time the preacher starts his homily every Sunday. I'd love to attend a full-on board meeting at the Grand Lodge. Really. I'm not kidding.

If wishes were horses, my dad would say, beggars would ride.

No matter how you look at it, since March, we have all been on a long strange ride. A scary one, at times. We've been isolated. We've been quarantined. Some have lost jobs. Some have lost hope. Some have lost family and friends they love. We're all fighting an enemy we can't even see. And the fight just goes on and on and on. And on.

Which is why when I hear good news these days, I perk right up. And there is good news in the story of North Carolina Freemasonry.

First and maybe most importantly, brotherly love stands strong even in the face of a worldwide pandemic. We're hearing reports of brothers checking in with brethren who haven't visited lodge in years, and with widows who miss the men their husbands loved so dearly. Some lodges are still out there raising funds for our charities. Some are taking time to help health workers on the front lines, sending food, and bringing them homemade masks and hand sanitizer.

Education is exploding. We have a story in this issue looking at how brothers are Zooming their way to a higher level of Masonic knowledge. You can't scroll through Facebook these days without a healthy choice of learning experiences popping out at you.

Work is under way at the Grand Lodge to determine just how Annual Communication will go this year, while our Grand Lodge staff and countless fans among the brethren statewide take a moment to honor Cornelia Doherty, who has retired after almost 40 years. Read all about that in this issue.

Our charities are investing time and money to keep their respective residents safe and secure, to make sure they have food, shelter, and that they don't lack for fun. Props to those who run our homes – this has not been an easy time for them.

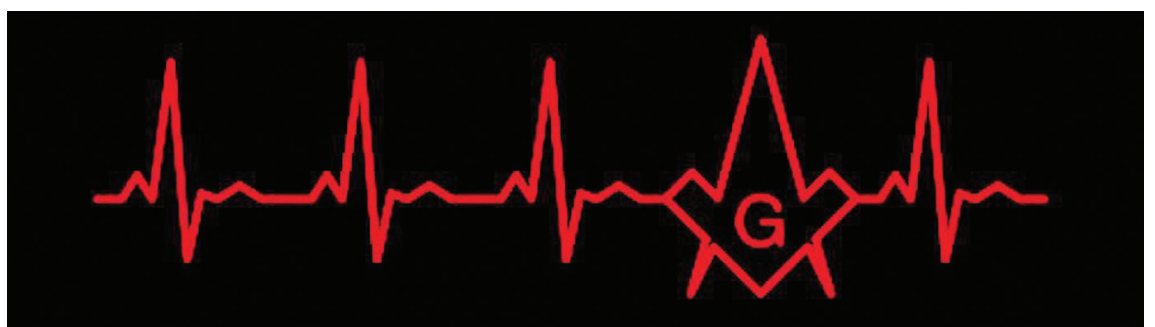
And even in the middle of this strangest of times, with the racial turmoil and protests nationwide, there came a moment of hope and peace on a warm, breezy June morning when some 200 Masons – more than half from the Prince Hall Grand Lodge – gathered at the North Carolina Capitol with friends and sisters of the Eastern Star to rally in favor of peaceful protest and respect for all people of all colors.

Our cover this issue focuses on that morning, and on the words two Grand Masters spoke in hopes of sharing their stories, their brotherly love and their desire for peace. Their words and their friendship were an inspiration to anyone with a heart and mind inclined to listen.

So on we go, friends ... They say patience is a virtue. If I ever get any patience, I'll let you know if that's true!



By Beth Grace  
Editor



## FROM THE GRAND MASTER



# What mask do you wear?

By P. Shaun Bradshaw  
Grand Master

I'm going to say something that I believe most of my brethren will agree with, but which still seems too controversial to openly admit in our Fraternity.

Freemasonry IS NOT for everyone.

The Master Mason's charge is clear on this fact when we tell the newly raised brother, "If in your circle of acquaintance, you find a person desirous of being initiated into Masonry, be particularly careful NOT to recommend him unless you are convinced he will conform to our rules."

Now, let me be clear, I'm not suggesting our fraternity is elitist or only "certain people" are worthy of the honor of joining our craft. Rather, I call your attention to the Entered Apprentice catechism, which gives us an excellent definition of who is worthy of membership when we ask, "Where were you first prepared?" The answer, of course is, "In my heart." But one natural question that arises is, "Prepared for what?"

I believe that a man who wishes to join our fraternity must recognize in himself, in his heart, a need to improve who he is as a man – to recognize a need for the transformative experience, which our rituals are designed to foster. As Brother Tony Hornsby said in his book *The Rough and Rugged Road*, "Initiation ... is designed to give us certain experiences that allow us to discover new things about ourselves."

Now, there is an important corollary to this idea – in order for a man to recognize his need to change, his willingness to be transformed by our rituals, he must be able to honestly answer another important question from our rituals: "Who comes here?"

At first glance it seems like a simple enough question, but have you ever considered why our ritual places so much emphasis on it? Throughout our degrees we ask the candidate this same question no less than 12 times. It seems to me, anything in our ritual that is repeated that often must be significant; perhaps even one of the most essential lessons our ritual attempts to impart to us.

Let's consider for a moment how we respond to this question. Just like in the ritual, most of us would answer by giving our name and then,

depending on the situation, we might describe what we do (or did) for a living and what we do for fun or what our hobbies are. Sometimes we might talk about ourselves in the context of our family by mentioning our marital status and how many children and/or grandchildren we have. And occasionally we may talk about our political or religious beliefs as key ways of defining who we are.

While each of these describe some aspect of who we are, I suspect we each present ourselves in a somewhat different way when we are acting in those different roles. In other words, how we present ourselves and how others perceive us frequently changes based on the context of the situation. One way to consider each of these roles is to think of them as different masks we wear. When we are at work, we have on our employer or employee mask. When we are at home, we have on our husband or father mask.

When we are on social media, we have on our "life is great" mask ... well, some of us do.

I'm reminded of a family vacation we took about nine years ago. We were in the Outer Banks and I had an important business call to make while we were driving to the lighthouse for a tour. As I drove along, with Sharon sitting beside me and the kids in the back seat, patiently waiting for Daddy's phone call to end, I went about my work conversation as I normally would. At the conclusion of the call, both my children commented on my "work voice" and how much more "serious" I was when I was on my call. That wasn't a mask they were accustomed to seeing from me and was an enlightening moment for me at the time.

Now I want you to consider a different situation you might find yourself in. What, if any, mask do you wear when you are sitting quietly thinking about your life, your plans, your hopes, your dreams, your deepest desires? What mask are you wearing when you read through the OSW or Bahnsen manual to learn or practice a part of the work? What mask are you wearing as you read through this article?

## Who? Comes? Here?

I would submit that the thoughts and feel-

ings that stream through your mind during these moments aren't a mask at all. They are a part of your true self. And the reason our ritual asks this question so often is to teach us that we must recognize and reconcile our true self with the masks we regularly wear, because too often we don't distinguish between them and we risk losing who we truly are.


By the way, I don't mean to imply that all masks – including masks folks are wearing into many stores and restaurants these days – are a bad thing. Society, in general, sets expectations of how we should act at different times and so we comply with those societal norms, but it's vitally important that we understand for ourselves when we are wearing the mask versus when we are being our authentic, true selves.

Another idea presented in *The Rough and Rugged Road* is that the more we as Freemasons come to understand the esoteric nature of the symbols, the more we are led to contemplate our thoughts, words, and actions. Thus, by understanding our true nature – that the divine ray of Deity lives within each of us – we find it easier to

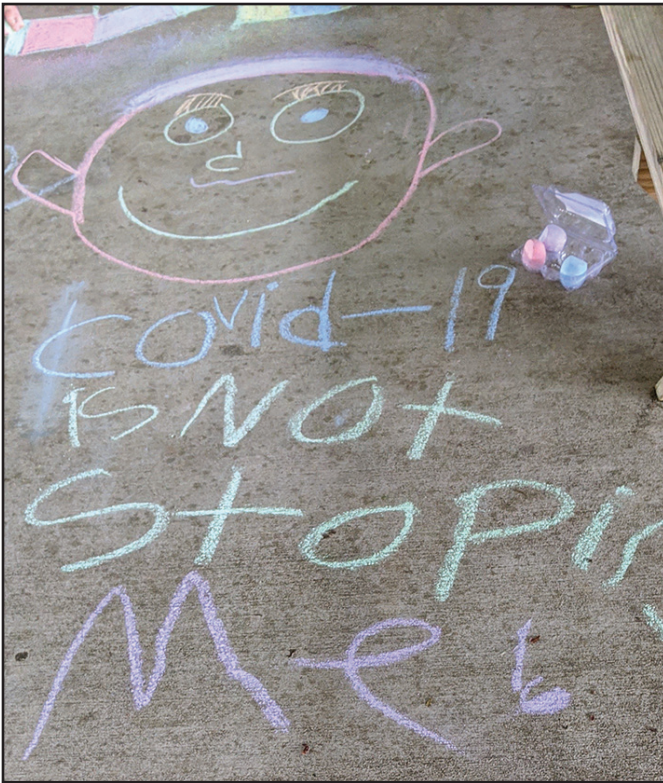
navigate the world around us and ultimately to act through will rather than react through our base material nature.

Taking this thought back to the beginning of the article – before we even ask a man where he was first prepared, we must know, to some degree, what's in his heart. We need to understand if he has the desire to learn who he truly is, to answer the simple, yet complex question of who comes here. To confront both his biases and his disinterestedness. To work to transform himself and understand when he's wearing a mask.

Finally brethren, I encourage you to share your story and tell me what you have learned about your true self since you joined our fraternity. If you would like to contact me about your story please don't hesitate to do so. I thoroughly enjoy hearing from each of you. Just email me at [sbradshaw@glnc.us](mailto:sbradshaw@glnc.us), or if you prefer, send a letter to me at the Grand Lodge. They'll get it to me.

Brethren, keep the light and tell your story! 

## OUR MASONIC CHARITIES AT WORK



COVID-19 cannot stop the good work of our charities! Our home managers have been busy keeping residents busy and happy, offering drive-by family visits at WhiteStone, outdoor coloring sessions for the little ones at MHCO and countless other events that keep everyone close — at a safe distance.

# NC Masons keeping children, seniors safe

By Beth Grace  
Mason Editor

We are blessed.

From our senior home in Greensboro to our children's home in Oxford, the sentiment is the same: "We are blessed."

Administrators, board leadership and staff of both homes have been on the job in person and in spirit 24-7 since the coronavirus prompted isolation orders and rigorous health and safety measures back in March.

The work has been hard and the hours long.

Some decisions have been heart-breakers: The annual Masonic Home for Children Homecoming in October has been canceled for the year.

And the residents themselves have pitched in to help make these months of isolation, and quarantine that have turned us all into home-bodies a little easier and less socially distant.

At WhiteStone, our Masonic and Eastern Star home, staff has worked long hours to find ways to keep residents interested, entertained and

involved.

Isolation is hard on everyone in normal times, says Administrator Mark Lewis. So it has been a priority to help residents find reasons to smile. Outdoor concerts, impromptu parades (complete with a wandering T-Rex) and special visit stations have been set up to help residents stay in touch — from a safe distance — with their families.

A parade in June had residents perched on chairs outside while their families drove through one by one, cars all decked out in posters, flags, flowers and photos of their much loved residents.

Residents and staff have formed a council that discusses how things are going and works to help keep things running smoothly.

With the easing of some state restrictions has come the return of some favorite services, Lewis said.

"Our salon services have reopened, following all state and local requirements," he said with a smile. "This has generated a lot of excitement."

With eased rules, residents are

allowed to travel off-campus, but Lewis says all efforts are aimed at keeping residents on site, to ensure that the protocols keeping WhiteStone free of COVID-19 stay strong.

Some 85 miles to the northeast, similar efforts are keeping the kids at MHCO happy and busy — and the kids are paying it forward.

The new pool is open and operating under strict health guidelines. Same goes for the gym, playgrounds, and bike rides.

The children are part of the effort, says Tina Gilreath, MHCO donor relations coordinator.

They have signed on to become pen pals with WhiteStone residents — including one resident of WhiteStone who grew up at what was then called Oxford Orphanage.

"We really appreciate WhiteStone reaching out to suggest this wonderful connection between our residents," she said.

"It does everyone a lot of good."

School plans are being finalized, now that Gov. Roy Cooper has announced the plan for the return to

school in August. In the meantime, Summer Enrichment — a program designed to keep elementary school kids learning during the break — was happening under the Picnic Shelter and in the gym in bad weather.

Groups are small to provide social distancing.

The plan for this year's Homecoming was complete and ready to go, said MHCO Administrator Kevin Otis. But the case rates in the state made it impossible to go forward.

"We just couldn't take that chance," Otis said. "But you can bet we'll be ready for next year — mark your calendar for Oct. 8 through 10!"

In the meantime, the work of our charities will go on.

"We continue to focus on the positives and opportunities this situation has provided. Staff and residents are serious about doing their part to help keep all safe," he said.

"The campus is active with laughter and play." ♡

# Watch what can happen when you order one of these

Tick tock ...

Whether you're a "watch guy" like our Grand Master or not, the limited-edition Masonic watch he has designed with a High Point watchmaker to help raise funds for our charities will catch your eye.

There is still time to order your own hand-assembled watch, which features the square and compasses on the front face, and the words "Grand Lodge of North Carolina AF & AM" above the 6 o'clock mark.

Net proceeds from the sale of each watch, priced at \$350, go to the North Carolina Masonic Foundation in support of the Masonic Home for Children and WhiteStone: A Masonic and Eastern Star community.

The watch is NC-made and has a Miyota 8215 automatic movement, sapphire crystal, and all stainless steel construction. The case back has the 2020 Grand Master's pin design etched into it.

Production was limited to only 100 watches and each watch will have its number shown on the case back.

Here's where to order: <https://my-site-106242-103188.square.site/>



## Brethren, co-workers will miss working with Cornelia

There may not be a lodge officer in North Carolina who has not found himself on the phone with Cornelia Doherty at some point or another. And when he did, he found a friend and a colleague who would move mountains to help.

Cornelia retired from the Grand Lodge staff in July, where she has worked for almost 40 years. There's very little Cornelia doesn't know about the administrative workings of Freemasonry in the Tar Heel state.

The Rocky Mount native was hired in 1981 by then-Grand Secretary Pete Dudley.

She never really had a formal title, but Grand Secretary Walt Clapp calls her the ultimate administrative

assistant.

Her early role was to handle reports and events from lodges and record them by hand on 3x5 index cards – in duplicate. As time went on, she became indispensable. She took on handling petitions and applications, out-of-state correspondence and the lion's share of details for Annual Communication. Hotels, rooms, reservations, food service – you name it, she handled the arrangements.

She's a whiz at numbers, so her institutional knowledge of lodge numbers was forever in play. She also got to know staff in Grand Lodges all over the country, which opened lines of communication and knowledge from other jurisdictions, said Jonathan

Underwood, assistant to the Grand Secretary.

Her personality made her a favorite among callers. She loved to talk with brothers about their families, their pets and especially loved stories about their grandchildren.

Clapp says he will miss his friend.

"You work together for so long, you know everything there is to know. Even when you have spats at work, you end up friends," he said. "It will be hard to fill her shoes as far as work, but the friendship goes on."

Any brethren interested in sending a card or best wishes, can write to Cornelia in care of the Grand Lodge, 2921 Glenwood Ave., Raleigh NC, 27608.

## NCMF Lodge letter program heading to a lodge near YOU

As the old saying goes, the best laid plans of mice and men soon go awry. The plans we all had for 2020 have gone by the wayside as we fight the coronavirus, while huddling in isolation and waiting for an "all clear" signal.

As hard as this year has been on everyone, it has been arguably harder on our charities, which have made heroic efforts to protect our children in Oxford and our senior brothers and sisters in Greensboro.

Both organizations have had to restructure how they do business, how they serve their residents, how they fight an invisible enemy and how they maintain some semblance of a budget. Meanwhile, fundraisers our lodges traditionally hold on their behalf all year have been cancelled; many not to be rescheduled.

So, in consultation with lodge Masters and others, NCMF in August will bring back a tradition designed to help lodges that opt in get the word out about giving in hard times.

For each lodge that accepts, NCMF offers to produce, print and mail a letter signed by the Master to brothers of that lodge asking them to consider a gift to our charities to help make up for the loss of fundraisers.

It's a turnkey program that takes but a minute to accept. We'll be emailing details to each District Deputy Grand Master, who will contact masters of lodges in their district. We do the rest – and our charities benefit!

## STAND, from page 1

“That is the promise of Freemasonry, the magic of it. The example it can be, and the example it is.”

MW Daniel L. Thompson, Grand Master of Prince Hall Grand Lodge, F. & A.M., brought the message home.

“Look at the statement our standing together makes. Freemasonry parallels the history of the United States. Freemasonry parallels the history of prejudice and racism. Eleven years ago, the Freemasons of North Carolina took the steps required to recognize each other as brothers and men; fulfilling the true principles of the fraternity.

“Today, as some in our state and country deny, ignore and turn a blind eye to the truth about prejudice and racism, it is the Freemasons of North Carolina, again, showing

the world what right looks like. We stand together showing that it is the man's heart, not his color that counts.”

He urged the brethren to listen with an open heart to his message of change – and act on it.

“Change is possible. But the change starts with the ‘man in the mirror,’” he said.

“We stand for justice. We stand for peace. We stand for understanding. We stand here as Masons, we stand here as Men, we stand here with the support of our sisters and fellow citizens. Together, WE STAND!!!”

Music and prayers opened the gathering. Near the speaker's area, Eastern Star sisters of the PHA, gowned in white, joined their brothers to hear a written greeting

from Gov. Roy Cooper.

“Since its inception, your organization has a proud history of promoting friendship and brotherly love in communities across North Carolina. Because of this, many lives have been affected in a positive manner,” Cooper wrote.

“You have reached out to the needy and the helpless and have given them encouragement, a sense of pride and, most of all, hope.

“I am grateful for your continuing efforts to bring unity, peace and understanding to all of our communities.”

Since the Gathering, GMs Bradshaw and Thompson have met to talk about next steps.

Neither brother wants to lose the momentum gained in June.

COVID phases permitting, both lodges will work together to host a

legislative reception in September for brethren in the NC Legislature and those who work in that area.

And since the annual Masons Can drive at Annual Communication likely will not be doable, Thompson will ask his brethren to host drop-off sites around the state for all Masons to visit and leave cans of food for the needy.

GMs Bradshaw and Thompson will visit those sites during the collection to say thanks in person.

A third joint event is tentatively planned, most likely to happen in 2021.

Both Grand Lodges will work together to host joint blood drives at various locations around North Carolina. Details to come. ✦

## BRADSHAW, from page 2

Temperance, Fortitude, Prudence and Justice.

Let me speak for a moment about that last one – Justice. Our ritual tells us that Justice is “the very cement and support of civil society.” As I contemplated on that particular phrase, I thought what it would mean if there were no Justice? If Justice is necessary, if it is the “cement” that supports civil society, what does it mean if, or when, Justice is not dispensed equally?

We are here today, not because we all agree on the solutions to the injustices and divisions in our country, but because we understand the meaning, the hope, of brotherly love. This tenet pushes us to see beyond those divisions, and as such, helps bring us together despite — and sometimes, because of — our differences. It unites us. It helps us see ourselves in our brethren and love them for who they are – men who are also traveling on that dark and difficult path, working to transform themselves into smoother, more level, and more upright members of society.

By coming together this afternoon we hope to show the citizens of our communities, our state, and our country, that it is better to be united against hate, intolerance, injustice, and violence. That our fraternity is stronger when we work together, that society is better when we work together, that we should build and unite, not destroy and divide. To embody the ideals of Brotherly Love so that our conversations and debates start from a place of respect and tolerance rather than fear and hatred.

That is the promise of Freemasonry, the magic of it. The example it can be, and the example it is. ✦



### Joint Statement of North Carolina's Grand Masters June 3, 2020

Since its founding, Freemasonry has fostered peace, understanding, and goodwill for all of humanity. Our ritual teaches us that every human being has a claim upon our kind offices. We are to **do good unto all**.

Today, our world is in turmoil and the people of North Carolina are in pain. Disease, division, fear, and racism invade our daily lives. Yet, where some seek to divide us with hate, intolerance, and violence, Freemasons of every color, belief, creed, and background labor to build bridges of love, compassion, and truth.

Be it known in solidarity and in one voice that we, the Grand Masters, Grand Officers, and Brethren of the Most Worshipful Prince Hall Grand Lodge of North Carolina and the Most Worshipful Grand Lodge of Ancient, Free and Accepted Masons of North Carolina together condemn intolerance, injustice, violence, and the ignorance that plagues the minds of those who would perpetrate horrendous acts of brutality and cruelty.

Together, we mourn the senseless loss of life, which has spurred the people—our brothers and sisters—to seek a voice.

Together we affirm the great principles of our Masonic fraternity—of Brotherly Love, Relief, and Truth. Brotherly Love teaches us “to regard the whole human species...as one family.” Relief affirms our commitment to assistance, encouragement and support. And, Truth reminds us that we are all the children of God and in search of His love and light—a knowledge that binds us together in immortality.

Yet, while Freemasonry is built upon these beautiful tenets, we acknowledge that the words and actions of our fraternity have not always lived up to those ideals, and for too long prejudice and racism hid the light of truth. Today, as we see our nation writhe we are reminded of our own struggle to forge a bond of friendship that broke the boundaries of race and prejudice. Now, a generation after that historic leap, when our Grand Lodges extended to each other the hand of brotherly love, we know we are ready to face the challenges ahead of us.

Together, we are a grand mosaic and beautiful to behold. We are united. We are stronger together. And, we will make this world a better place by denouncing injustice, caring for the afflicted, and comforting the orphan—for all people.

We are our Brother's Keeper!

P. Shaun Bradshaw  
Grand Master  
The Grand Lodge of A.F. & A.M.  
Raleigh, North Carolina

Daniel L. Thompson  
Grand Master  
MW Prince Hall Grand Lodge F. & A.M.  
Durham, North Carolina



## THOMPSON, from page 3

There are young men and women in the valley who need role models. There are elderly citizens in the valley who need assistance with healthcare and insurance. There are citizens in the valley who need assistance with educational and employment opportunities. There is work to be done in the valley.

Grand Master Bradshaw, thank you. My brothers of the North Carolina Grand Lodge of Ancient Free and Accepted Masons and the Most Worshipful Prince Hall Grand Lodge of Free and Accepted Masons of North Carolina, thank you. My sisters of the Order of the Eastern Star, thank you. Those who stopped by to witness this event, thank you.

I'm reminded of the words found in II Chronicles, 7th Chapter, 14th verse:

"If my people, which are called by my name, shall humble themselves, and pray, and seek my face, and turn from their wicked ways; then will I hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin, and will heal their land." ✦



# No steps back; we move forward together

Freemasonry shines in difficult times. In the midst of a pandemic, civil unrest, and economic crisis, our state's two Grand Masters—D.T. Thompson and Shaun Bradshaw—led our two Grand Lodges in a beautiful show of unity.

June 13, 2020, will forever remind me of how far our fraternity has come to fight ignorance and hate to enlighten the world of true brotherhood. It reminded me that the proudest moment of my career was being part of our recognition of Prince Hall in 2008.

Much has happened since that struggle began when our members looked past another man's color to see a Mason. So much of that struggle returned to my memory after George Floyd was murdered and the Black Lives Matter movement gained momentum. And, I have had to re-evaluate my understanding of who I am and who we are as an institution. I have struggled with the institutional and even blatant racism I've seen bubble up again from within our fraternity, especially on social media.

I needed someone to turn to; someone I could talk with about all this and what it means for our future.

So, I called my friend Marvin Chambers, Past Grand Master of the Prince Hall Grand Lodge of North Carolina and current Grand Secretary General of the Southern Jurisdiction of the Scottish Rite of Prince Hall Affiliates. Marvin and I have spent many days and nights talking about Freemasonry, race and recognition between our Grand Lodges.

We agreed that in difficult times, Freemasonry realizes its purpose. In difficult times, we sharpen our gaze on the tenets that define us. But just because we've made progress does not mean we should stop, and now is the time to move forward together

and take no steps back.

Grand Master Chambers is a retired mechanical engineer and lives in Asheville. He's as calm and thoughtful a soul as you'll find, and a dear friend and brother.

I asked Marvin what he thought about the social unrest we're experiencing. I asked about the Black Lives Matter movement and about the racism our nation is facing. I told him I was so sad and angry that some of our members have chosen to post racist comments and memes on social media and seemed to ignorantly embrace institutional racism.



By Walt Clapp  
Grand Secretary

Marvin chuckled and told me, "Just be cool, Clapp. You're not going

to change everyone. It takes time. You've got to live it to understand it, and most people don't understand it. I just want people to listen."

"Listen to what?" I asked.

Marvin's voice grew a little deeper. "Well, let me tell you one of my stories."

This is his story:

*When I was Grand Master, probably about 2001 or 2002, I drove over to Canton to visit Gibsontown to see a friend and brother. Wells Funeral Home was the landmark I used to find my way. And, by the time I got near the funeral home it was getting dark. I don't know when, but at some intersection I turned right when I should have turned left. I didn't know where I was, but I was in a neighborhood where the streets seemed to wind around to the same starting place. I was lost. And, I eventually just turned around and headed back toward the intersection I had come from. You know, we all wind up in the wrong section of town sometimes.*

*As I got near the intersection three police cars turned their lights on and pulled up behind me and beside me. The officers swarmed my car. One in at my window, one in front of me, and one on my passenger side, all shining their lights in my car.*

*I thought to myself, "Oh, Lord, what have I done?" I took a deep breath, turned the overhead light on, rolled my window down, and put my hands on the steering wheel so the officer could see them—all things my Dad taught me to do when I encountered the police.*

*The officer pointed the light in my face and asked, "Where are you going?" I was nervous and said, "Well, I'm lost." The officer snickered and said, "I know you're lost. You're on the wrong side of town. Let me see your driver's license and registration."*

*"Yes, sir." I replied. I could tell he was irritated, so I nodded over to the glove compartment and said, "They're in my glove compartment and I'm going to reach over for them, would you please tell the other officer what I'm doing?" He looked over the top of the car and said, "He's going to reach in the glove box for his stuff." When I saw the other officer nod, I reached over slowly and pulled my registration out.*

*As he read them over, he shined the light in my face and asked what my business was and where I was going. My Dad told me never to be smart with a policeman, but it really was not his business. So, I told him, "That's really not any of your business. I just got lost."*

*The officer's tone changed again and he said, "You're a smart n\*\*\*\*r, ain't you?" I did not reply back this time. And, for the next 15 or 20 minutes he insulted me, and Black people. He told me the NAACP was evil. He told me we were worthless and a waste of time. He told me I was frightening the white people in the neighborhood and trying to cause problems.*

*He was trying to provoke me, but I just kept cool. I couldn't allow myself to react because I knew I'd never get home. It was all a play my Dad had warned me about so many times, and one I've talked to my children about. You have to be prepared for this day, or these days.*

*The officer asked me a laundry list of questions, none of which concerned driving. After an hour, he finally told me he could arrest me and lock me up for at least a night. I replied I hoped that wouldn't be necessary. He cursed*

*me and told me not to come around here again and handed my license back to me. I went on my way.*

*All I did was take a wrong turn.*

*See, I think when most people are pulled over, they think it's inconvenient, and you assume it's going to be A-OK. But if you're Black, it's not. And, it's not the first time it's happened to me. When I was younger, I was riding with my father in a brand new Pontiac back toward Asheville on a little two-lane road. Dad always told me to obey every traffic rule. And to never get too close to the yellow line, especially double yellow lines. Not just, "don't cross it. Don't get too close." Well, he did get too close, I guess, and a sheriff's deputy pulled us over. Dad talked to the officer and the officer told him, "You got too close to the line. You're gonna have to pay a fine. Follow me down this way."*

*We were terrified. We followed the deputy out into the woods, down a curvy road, then down a dirt road to a "justice of the peace's" house. We had no idea where we were. It was late, and the deputy led us up to the door and explained the situation. The JP just looked at us and said, "That'll be X amount of dollars." I don't remember the amount. But Dad just pulled it from his wallet and paid the man. Or, rather, the man extorted it from Dad. The JP and the deputy admonished us to obey the law and go home, and we left.*

*Times are strange, but not that strange to some of us. There's a lot of bad people in the world—a lot of ignorant people. And, things don't change overnight. But it is time for change, and there are a lot of good people who want to help. The only real way for that to happen is for us to work together to make change.*

*When I was in my teens, I went to work for a Mr. McChesney. He was white. I used to mow his grass and clean up his yard. Mrs. McChesney would make me lunch, and when I would come in they would sit at their table, and I would sit at a little table set up on the side of the room, or in the next room. We ate apart. We were separate. It was how things were.*

# Who comes here? In whose name?

By Donald Street

Hiram #40, Morning Star #85,  
Nine Sisters #773

In the last article we spoke of “three” as the perfect number and we continue this thought. After the three alarms we hear an ominous voice inquiring, “Who comes here?”

As we examine this query, it begs a broader question: Who does come here? What kind of man?

This can be interpreted in three ways. First is the physical man and the most obvious: size, weight, health, wholeness, etc. Masonry has always required whole persons, in theory, and not persons dependent on our charity.

Second is the psychological man. What kinds of psychic motivations have brought the person to our door? Is this someone seriously interested in improving himself and society or someone acting from idle curiosity? The idle curious persons are the most useless. (Idle curiosity is addressed in the 32° charge.)

Third is the spiritual man. How connected is our petitioner to the spiritual connection of “right living, spiritual aspirations and the tenants we practice?” Or, is our petitioner confusing Masonry as being possessed of deep and dark secrets with keys to world power and salvation?

I am intrigued with contemporary movie and television productions containing Masonic references that lead many to believe Freemasons are in control of the world and all mystical and spiritual knowledge. However, there is a belief that Freemasons as individuals are involved in many interesting organizations, but these organizations are not necessarily Masonic.

Thus, the confusion exists. Do we possess the gnostic key to salva-

tion? Do we have spiritual power to summon extra Earth forces to command physical events? Are we Hermetic Magicians?

The answer to these idle curious solicitants is a very disappointing NO.

After determining the nature and, hopefully, the substance of the individual making the alarm, he has to be vouched for as being accept-



able for admission as sponsored by someone worthy. Then the welcome words “let him enter...” At this point, as we all know, Divine Providence is addressed, but in which name and how known?

In Exodus 3:13-14 (KJV) the name of God is addressed. When directed to go to Egypt and treat with pharaoh, Moses inquired of God, “When I come unto the children of Israel, and shall say unto them, the God of your fathers hath sent me unto you; and they shall say to me, ‘What is his name?’ What shall I say unto them? And God said unto Moses, I AM THAT I AM: and he said, Thus shalt thou say unto the children of Israel, I AM hath sent me unto you.”

One realizes immediately that knowing the name of God is a powerful and sinister thing. The possession of the name of God diminishes the omnipotence of an all-powerful God. To address Divine Providence and avoid destruction, priests of the period found ways to address the power and majesty of God without diminishing any of God’s power.

In the ancient world, before the maturity of monotheism, gods were

many and local. The sky gods of the Greeks lived on Mount Olympus, the animistic gods of Africa lived on Mount Kirinyaga (Kenya), and Cybele’s Phrygian Cult of the Mother Goddess lived in the mountains of Anatolia.

These pantheons of gods were filled with divinities possessing anthropomorphic qualities, and, as such, being part human and part divine mixed and mingled with humans doing mischievous things to interfere with human affairs.

The methods of worship were attempts to placate the gods to behave and be less malevolent while interfering in human affairs.

The reference in the Cyrus Edict to the Jews found in Ezra 1:3 refers to the local jurisdiction of gods. In his declaration to free the Jews in Babylon and rebuild their Holy House in Jerusalem, Cyrus dictates that he shall “build the House of the Lord God of Israel, (He is the God), which is in Jerusalem.” In ancient times, divinities were limited with territorial dimensions.

The ancients, living in fear of wrathful gods and not wanting to offend any deity, developed methods to address the name of God. These names were divided into two classes, ineffable and effable. Ineffable, or too great or extreme to be expressed or described in words, were the descriptions used by the High Priests to define the Holy Presence by reciting a series of letters or using a formula of numbers.

In Jewish writings we find the High Priest is permitted only once in a year to utter the name of God and then under controlled conditions in the Holy of Holies. As this was a very dangerous activity, the temple attendants tied a rope around the foot or waist of the High Priest

in order to pull him out of Sanctum Sanctorum should he displease God and be struck dead. In such a dangerous scenario, how can Divine Providence be identified by name?

Alternate ways to identify the deity were created. These terms are styled effable, or being able to be described in words. As in all things there must be a basis for justification of effable names.

In many versions, the commonly used justification is based on or around the Tower of Babel Confusion of the Tongues as referenced in Genesis 11:1-9. “And the whole Earth was of one language and one speech. ... Go to, let us go down, and there confound their language, that they may not understand one another’s speech. ... Therefore the name of the place is called Babel; because the Lord did there confound the language of all the earth: and from thence did the Lord scatter them abroad upon the face of the earth.”

This incident describes how the Confusion of the Tongues created 72 different effable names for God. The 72 languages are numbered according the grandchildren of Noah. Noah’s son Shem is allotted 27 names; Ham, 30; Japheth, 15.

Over time, the various explanations have increased the number of divine names to 100, 110 and other variations including the stylized life sign PHI (φ) represented on our present Most Worshipful Grand Master’s one-of-a-kind Masonic ring.

As we continue to internalize our system of veiled morality and view symbolic illustrations representative of our philosophy, we advance into the tiled recesses. “Let him enter and be received!” ✦

## CLAPP from page 9

*But, one day, I came in and just one table was set. It was set for three people. I looked up and Mr. McChesney said, “Sit here, Marvin.” I didn’t say anything, but just walked over to the table. I was*

*scared. I had never sat at their table with them.*

*Mr. McChesney smiled at me and said, “Marvin, things are changing. They’re not like they used to be. They are changing, and we have to*

*acknowledge that.”*

*And, he was so right.*

*I don’t expect everyone to understand my story, but I am thankful that so many are finally willing to acknowledge it. ✦*



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# Virtual Annual Communication may be in the cards; amendments listed

In the world we live in these days, nobody is really sure what will happen next week, much less next month. Which is why there are, at this writing, at least three plans of action to ensure this year's Annual Communication happens and that necessary work gets done.

With the coronavirus surging in late July and Gov. Roy Cooper extending Phase II into early August, the final word on how Annual Communication will be held will come to brothers via their District Deputy Grand Master,

email and Facebook.

If the virus suddenly disappears and all restrictions are dropped, the event would run as usual.

But it's probably a safe bet that things will not run as they usually do; in fact, most lodges already are seeking spaces in each district where brothers can meet to attend the meeting virtually. If restrictions on the number of people allowed to gather in one space continues, lodges may hear more about a plan to ask each lodge to designate one brother to attend, carrying proxies

from the other two brothers.

It may also be possible that not all of the code amendments will get a vote; organizers hope to carry out all business in one day – Friday, Sept. 25.

In any case, the plan calls for votes to be held on Grand Line officers and the new budget, no matter what. Grand Master Shaun Bradshaw has said he considers election of the next Grand Master and officers to be important to the continuity of Masonry going forward.



## Lodges honored with 2020 Lodge of Excellence Award

Twenty-six lodges have qualified as a 2020 Lion and Pillar Lodge of Excellence this year, including 17 that achieved Platinum status.

The program, which began three years ago and was designed to honor lodges that actively promoted the Masonic tenets of brotherly love, relief and truth. Requirements were announced, then updated with more virtual-based requirements, such as watching NCMF videos, checking out each charity's website, etc., in April when the coronavirus pandemic forced lodges to go dark for months.

Here are Lion and Pillar lodge honorees for 2020:

- Albemarle 703
- Ashlar 765
- Cleveland 202
- Granite 191
- Mingo 206
- Shallotte 727
- Statesville 27
- Stokes 32
- West Bend 434

### PLATINUM

- Bula 409
- Cannon Memorial 626
- Carthage 181
- Clemmons 755
- Hibriten 262
- William G. Hill 218
- Thomas M. Holt 492
- Kenly 257
- Kilwinning 64
- Lux Libertas 772
- Mount Holly 544
- Oxford 122
- Pilot 493
- Semper Fidelis 680
- Steele Creek 737
- Wilmington 319
- Zion 81



### AMENDMENT GROUP 1

Allows election of Finance Committee Chairman to occur prior to installation of Grand Lodge Officers.



### AMENDMENT GROUP 2

Requires lodges to fully insure their property per NC law.



### AMENDMENT GROUP 3

Allows members who reside outside the state to serve on Boards, Commissions, and Committees.



### AMENDMENT GROUP 4

Establishes additional qualifications for Grand Lodge Officers.



### AMENDMENT GROUP 5

Allows lodges to vote on petitions collectively.



### AMENDMENT GROUP 6

Increase the size of the Committee on Special Activities to five members.



### AMENDMENT GROUP 7

Allows a lodge, if it wanted to, to open and conduct business on First Degree.



### AMENDMENT GROUP 8

Resolves conflict in the Code concerning motions to close debate in a subordinate lodge.



### AMENDMENT GROUP 9

Requires consolidating lodges to transfer real property before consolidation is complete.



### AMENDMENT GROUP 10

Refines and restructures endowed memberships.



### AMENDMENT GROUP 11

Creates recognition "Chaplain of Distinction."

## CHAPLAIN'S CORNER

As Masons, I want to suggest that we are always different!

Different in the fact that we are all living lives that take us into different areas, different vocations, and different social circles. That is how we make a difference.

So often we desire to be comfortable, unchanging, and with no riff. I would like to suggest that it is the "being different" that makes us good Masons.

If we examine scripture, both Jewish and Christian, we see that those "selected" by the Almighty were once comfortable but when set to work, the discomfort set in, yet the work continued. The disciples, the Old Testament prophets, all were comfortable

people at one time, but when selected to go to work, it became a bit uncomfortable.

As Masons we are instructed to be "at work" all the time. Not just when we are comfortably sitting in a lodge room but when we are called on to help the widow, the distraught brother, the brother who may not see things exactly as we do, or the brother who doesn't even look like us.

When the world cries out for help, will our work continue?

PRAYER: Grand Architect, may we be changers in this world. Seeking to do right, seeking to reach out, and seeking to care for those around us. In all that we say, in all that we do. SMIB. AMEN.

By Rev. Mark M. Vickers  
Grand Chaplain

The heat is mounting, the humidity is on the rise, and I knew if I waited long enough, baseball is on the horizon!

So often, in times of crisis and uncertainty we look toward the familiar and the comfortable. Our lives have been turned upside down by COVID-19, social injustice, the delay of annual meetings and get togethers, lodge meetings have been on hold and we all suffer from what I call "brother loss" – that time we yearn for brotherly togetherness, conversation around the dining table, and the rich work of ritual. We are dealing with being different.



page 6

Our Masonic homes  
keeping residents safe



page 11

Lodges earn Lion  
and Pillar honors



page 11

Annual meeting  
may be virtual only  
this year

*On the cover*

Freemasons from across the  
state gathered on the lawn of the  
state Capitol in Raleigh for Stand.  
See Page 1

**The North Carolina Mason**  
The Grand Lodge of North Carolina, AF&AM  
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JULY/AUGUST 2020

