

Honoring Masons

Suggestions: Ask a Master, Past Master, a Master Mason, or Associate Bethel Guardian to narrate. Soft march music is played as daughters form Square and Compass Formation (see Figure A). Lights are semi-dimmed and narrator reads as daughters march in. This ceremony may be used on a Masonic Night as a ceremony after the regular meeting.

The history of Masonry dates back to the time before the Christian era. In the middle of the seventeenth century, a group of skilled architects banded themselves together for the protection of their craft and prosperity of their skills. They were the first "Master Masons", creators of the magnificent edifices for the Medieval Period of cathedral building in Europe. They worked under their own government, traveling from place to place as work required.

Some years later, in 1702, a London England lodge decided to open the doors of Masonry to men unskilled in architecture. As the demand for operative skill decreased, the lofty moral principles, noble ideals and manly virtues of those who were already members attracted to this society of men of prominence in church and state, whose higher character and fine attainments had made them distinguished. This is the origin of Freemasonry as we know it today.

Persecuted by church and state because of its successful effort to promote free thinking and lofty ideals, its history pages are smeared with the blood of the martyrs who gave their lives that this order survive. Its history also has gilded pages covered with the records of deeds well done, of bonded men set free, and of mercy and good-will to all mankind.

A writer of authority on the subject of Masonry tells us that the great secret of this Order is that it makes men aware of the divinity within them. A Mason's whole life takes its beauty and meaning from this divine spark and inspires him to follow and obey it. This same writer says; "A man is a Mason when he can look out over the rivers, the hills, and the far horizon with a profound sense of his own littleness in the vast scheme of things, and yet have faith, hope, and courage which is the root of every virtue."

This quotation from "The Veil of Isis", by Winwood Reade, is a revelation of the high ideals of this great Masonic Order that we revere and honor. (Full lights)

"The doctrines of Masonry are the most beautiful that is possible to imagine. They breathe the simplicity of the earliest ages, animated by the love of a martyred God. That word which Puritans translated CHARITY, but which is really LOVE, is the keystone which supports the entire edifice of the mystic science. LOVE ONE ANOTHER. TEACH ONE ANOTHER, HELP ONE ANOTHER. This is all

our doctrine, all our science, all our law. We have no narrow-minded prejudices; we do not debar from our society this sect or that sect; it is sufficient for us that man worships GOD no matter under what name or in what manner. It is impossible to be a good Mason without being a good man."

Here we have formed the SQUARE & COMPASS, symbolic emblems of this exalted Order, to which the youth assembled this evening owe their heritage. We exalt it, honor it. We are proud of its victories over bitter persecution, we are grateful for its triumph over the snares of time.

A solo may be sung: "How Firm a Foundation"

Soft march music for Daughters to retire.

See Appendix - FIGURE A