ASHLAR

14TH DISTRICT

✦

January 2026



Thanks for another fantastic year!

As 2025 draws to a close, we are grateful to you, the members of the 14th Masonic District, for giving us another year full of laughter, memories, and fellowship.

We've installed new officers. We've held fundraisers. We've broken bread together. We've shared our joys and sorrows. We've shaken *so many* hands. And we've brought new light in masonry to men all across central Ohio.

With the year coming to a close, it's a great time for reflection. We've asked every lodge in the district to select a member to give his thoughts on what it means to be a good Mason. In this issue, you'll find thoughts from our first two lodges.

We hope that these articles encourage you to think about what being a good mason means to you, personally. And if the feeling moves you, we would be more than happy to share your thoughts here in our pages.

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LABORING FAITHFULLY IN THE DETAILS

RWB Chris Greise

We have come to that time of year when pre-inspections begin to move into full swing. While we all understand that these pre-inspections are a necessary part of the annual process of running a lodge, they can certainly feel like a chore at times. I remember, years ago when I was Master, being overwhelmed—in the best possible way—by the efficiency of our lodge secretary and treasurer. Walking away from that first pre-inspection with the District Deputy's approval felt almost unbelievable.

Maintaining the paperwork of a lodge isn't always one of the most enjoyable aspects of Masonry, but it is absolutely critical to a lodge's success. Much of the work itself isn't overly complicated; however, it does require consistency and attention. When things are allowed to fall behind, even unintentionally, the impact can be significant. As life happens—as it inevitably does—we quickly realize how important it is to have capable backup secretaries and treasurers ready to step in when needed.

So why is the pre-inspection process so important? First and foremost, it ensures that a lodge is operating in accordance with code. This includes verifying the number of times each degree is conferred, the timely filing of the annual report, completion of the IRS Form 990 to maintain tax-exempt status, proper remittance of dues, and the eligibility of the elected Master, among other requirements. In most cases, lodges are handling these responsibilities correctly and properly recording them in the minutes. Challenges often arise, however, when newer Masons are placed into leadership roles without having had sufficient time to fully understand all that is required.



LABORING FAITHFULLY IN THE DETAILS, cont'd

RWB Chris Greise

Another critical component of the pre-inspection process is the review of lodge finances, which should already be examined by the lodge's audit committee. We must be good stewards of our lodge's financial resources so they remain viable for generations to come. While we trust our Brothers, we are all human, and difficult times can test even the best intentions. Ensuring that expenditures align with lodge records and that bank statements match the books helps confirm that everything is properly accounted for and that no unauthorized transactions have occurred.

To avoid issues throughout this process, it is vital that Past Masters and experienced members remain involved and actively mentor our newer leaders. Participation in district trainings for lodge officers is equally important, as these opportunities help ensure that all necessary tasks are being performed correctly and confidently. And above all, never be afraid to ask questions.

Brothers, not every aspect of Masonry is fun or exciting, but every part of it has purpose. These responsibilities allow us to put our working tools to use while laboring alongside our fellow Brothers and officers. They also provide us with opportunities to step outside our comfort zones, grow in service, and strengthen our lodges for the future.



A GOOD MASON: NINE LESSONS FROM A PRACTICAL-PHILOSOPHICAL VIEW

WB Rich Frederick | Arts & Sciences #792

Freemasonry is often described as a philosophical system, but its philosophy is not abstract speculation. It is a philosophy meant to be lived. A good Freemason is not defined by what he contemplates alone, but by how those contemplations govern his conduct. At Arts & Sciences lodge we are taught to practice what we call “Applied Masonry”. The Craft offers symbols and teachings, yet their value lies in their application to ordinary life, whether at home, at work, or in those quiet moments when no audience is present.

1. The Habit of Self-Examination

A good Freemason practices regular and honest self-review. After all, we are all rough ashlars. He asks not only “What did I do?” but “Why did I do it?” This discipline prevents complacency and guards against self-deception. He understands that improvement begins with awareness and that the work of refining character is never complete. Self-examination is not an exercise in guilt, but in clarity.

2. Moral Consistency in Daily Life

Philosophy becomes virtue only when it governs behavior. A good Freemason strives for consistency between his values and his actions. He does not reserve upright conduct for lodge meetings or ceremonial occasions; he carries it into business dealings, family relationships, and civic life. His ethics are not situational but principled, shaped by restraint, fairness, and responsibility.

3. Respectful Engagement with Others

Freemasonry places men of differing views into deliberate proximity. A good Freemason learns the practical art of disagreement without division. He listens before responding, speaks without malice, and recognizes that harmony is preserved not by silence, but by mutual respect. He values the dignity of others, even when he does not share their opinions.



A GOOD MASON: NINE LESSONS FROM A PRACTICAL-PHILOSOPHICAL VIEW, cont'd

WB Rich Frederick | Arts & Sciences #792

4. Charity as a Way of Being

Charity, philosophically understood, is an orientation of the self toward the needs of others. A good Freemason practices charity through patience, encouragement, discretion, and timely assistance. He understands that relief often takes the form of presence rather than provision, and that kindness, when consistently applied, shapes character as much as it helps those who receive it.

5. Responsibility to the Lodge and the Craft

This is an idea that, sadly, sometimes slips past some of our brethren. A good Freemason recognizes that the lodge is not an abstract institution, but a living body sustained by participation. He attends when he can, prepares for any roles he may be assigned, and supports the work even when recognition is absent. Philosophically, he understands that obligation freely assumed is a form of moral education—teaching discipline, humility, and fidelity.

6. Thoughtful Use of Symbol and Ritual

Masonic symbols are not puzzles to be solved once, but tools to be used repeatedly. A good Freemason reflects on them in practical terms: how balance governs his decisions, how boundaries preserve integrity, how structure enables freedom. He allows symbolism to inform conduct, not merely intellect, translating metaphor into measurable improvement.

7. Temperance and Emotional Governance

The practical philosopher governs himself before attempting to influence others. A good Freemason cultivates emotional discipline—moderation in speech, patience under frustration, and restraint in judgment. He understands that mastery of the self is the precondition for harmony in the lodge and credibility in the world.



A GOOD MASON: NINE LESSONS FROM A PRACTICAL-PHILOSOPHICAL VIEW, cont'd

WB Rich Frederick | Arts & Sciences #792

8. Brotherhood as Practice, Not Sentiment

Brotherhood is not defined by warmth alone, but by loyalty, accountability, and mutual concern. A good Freemason supports his Brothers through action: offering counsel, extending forgiveness, and correcting gently when necessary. He recognizes that true fraternity requires effort and that shared labor, more than shared opinion, binds men together.

9. Applied Philosophy and the Masonic Life

The good Freemason is not the man who speaks most eloquently about virtue, but the one whose life quietly reflects it. He understands that Freemasonry's philosophy is tested not in ideal circumstances, but in fatigue, disagreement, responsibility, and time.

By practicing these ideas, including the three tenets of our order, as well as the three principle rounds of the celestial ladder, he transforms symbolic teaching into lived wisdom. In doing so, he fulfills the deeper aim of the Craft: not merely to form thinkers, but to shape men whose character contributes to the harmony of the lodge and the well-being of the world beyond it.



A GOOD MASON: STRIVING TOWARD PERFECTION

WB Michael Emery| Blendon #339

When we think about what it means to be a good mason, it's easy to think of a man living the ideals of our fraternity in his daily life, embodying these principles without deviation or fault. We can quote dozens of lines of ritual regarding what we should do, how we should act, who we should be.

In my view, under this definition, not a single man alive is a good mason. I know to a certainty that I am not. I am intemperate. I am imprudent. I struggle with anger, with inadequacy, with despair. I find it difficult to reconcile my own thoughts on what constitutes justice with what I am taught by our degrees. I am a flawed man in a hard world, and I fail every single day to meet all the ideals of our fraternal philosophy.

I firmly believe that *this is the point*. Something I say often to my brothers is that the temple is unfinished for a reason. We are taught to view ourselves not as perfect ashlars, but as rough ones. Our lives are imperfect by nature and by immaculate design. To be a good mason is to strive toward perfection, not to achieve it. A craftsman is defined by his labor, and our labor is to continually work our stone, always reaching for a state we will never attain.

This is not to say that we are granted immunity for our sins, nor are we excused from living our ideals outside of the lodge. Far from it. To ignore the principles we are taught in their entirety is to reject our very foundations. Consider the lesson of the beehive, and the regard in which we should hold those who ignore its tenets.

To me, a good mason is a man at labor. He acknowledges his shortcomings. He accepts his faults. Most importantly, he works each day to improve on them. In this journey, the most important step is ever the next one.



LODGE MENTORSHIP
WB Jeffrey Hall, DEO

I greet you all with a sincere heart and a deep appreciation for the work you continue to do inside your lodges. As we answer our Grand Master's call to Commit to the Craft, I am reminded that Freemasonry is not sustained by buildings, titles, or rituals alone—it is sustained by men. Men who care. Men who teach. Men who lift one another up.

Today, I want to speak not as your District Education Officer, but as your brother, about something that is both powerful and humbling: the Master Craftsmen Program and the sacred responsibility of Masonic mentorship.

THE QUIET STRENGTH OF MENTORSHIP

Mentorship in Freemasonry has never been about knowing more than another brother. It is about walking beside him. When a new brother knocks at the outer door and begins his journey, he is stepping into a world he does not yet fully understand.

The Master Craftsmen Program gives us the opportunity to guide him—gently, patiently, and with intention. This mentorship teaches him our traditions, our values, and our expectations, not through lectures alone, but through example. Through shared experience. Through trust. And in doing so, something remarkable happens...the mentor grows just as much as the mentee.

It's also important to remember that mentorship does not end once a brother becomes a Master Mason. The moment he is raised does not signal the end of guidance—it is only the beginning of a deeper, more meaningful bond. As a new Master Mason begins to understand the responsibilities, expectations, and opportunities before him, he still needs the steady hand of a mentor and the support of his lodge.



LODGE MENTORSHIP, cont'd
WB Jeffrey Hall, DEO

This ongoing relationship allows him to grow in confidence, grow in knowledge, and grow in his ability to serve. And just as iron sharpens iron, both brothers continue to strengthen one another as they walk this journey side by side.

WHY THIS MATTERS TO OUR LODGES

A lodge that mentors its new brothers is a lodge that thrives. Powerful lodges are not built by accident; they are built by men who choose to invest in one another. Humble lodges are not quiet by weakness; they are steady in purpose, grounded in brotherly love. The Master Craftsmen Program strengthens our lodges by:

- Helping new brothers find their footing and feel connected
- Encouraging learning, curiosity, and engagement
- Reinvigorating seasoned brothers who rediscover their passion for the Craft
- Creating unity between generations
- Building confidence in ritual, symbolism, and Masonic identity

A SHARED RESPONSIBILITY

Brothers, mentorship is not the responsibility of one officer or one committee. It is the responsibility of all of us. Every handshake, every word of encouragement, every moment spent explaining a symbol or a piece of ritual adds another brick to the foundation of our brother's Masonic journey.

ANSWERING THE GRAND MASTER'S CALL

Most Worshipful Brother Shawn Johnson has challenged us to Commit to the Craft. This is one of the most practical and meaningful ways we can answer that challenge. If your lodge needs help strengthening or starting the Master Craftsmen Program, We are here—fully committed, fully available, and ready to support you.

Your DDGMs and DEOs



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Grand Lodge of Free & Accepted Masons of Ohio

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President

WB Jay Miller 1st Vice President	**WB Kenneth Goble** 2nd Vice President
WB John Hicks Treasurer	**RWB Brian Bolyard** Secretary
WB Jeff Robeano Sergeant-At-Arms	**WB Jack G. Weber III** Chaplain

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RWB Adam Michael
WB Craig Shumaker
RWB Brian Bolyard
WB Jeffrey Hall
WB Adam Lappert

EDITOR

WB Michael Emery

DISTRICT ADVISOR

RWB Adam Michael

WANT TO BE FEATURED?

We'd love to hear your thoughts or help you advertise your event in the Ashlar. It just takes two easy steps:

1. Gather your information
   a. What's happening?
   b. Who is invited?
   c. Where is it?
   d. When is it?
   e. How much does it cost?
2. Send to ashlar@14thmasonicdistrict.org

Submissions must be sent before the 15th of the month before publication (i.e. January 15th for the February Ashlar).

UPCOMING EVENTS

JAN
7

FRANKLIN COUNTY MEMORIAL LODGE
Hiram Lodge
7:30 PM

JAN
10

SYSK SESSION 1
Avery Lodge
8 AM

JAN
28

BLUE JACKETS NIGHT
Nationwide Arena
7 PM

FEB
7

SYSK SESSION 2
Sunrise Lodge
8 AM

LODGE BREAKFASTS

GROVE CITY
1st Saturdays, 8-10A

GROVEPORT
3rd Saturdays, 7:30-10A

HIRAM
1st Saturdays, 8-10A
(Except July and August)

REYNOLDSBURG
Last Saturdays, 8-10A

WEST GATE
2nd Saturdays, 9A-12P



2026 Inspection Calendar

LODGE NAME	#	INSPECTION DATE	Degree	DDGM	DEO	DO	
Hiram	18	Tuesday, February 10, 2026	EA	KF	JH	KG	
Avery	493	Tuesday, February 17, 2026	EA	KF	MH	JM	
Linden	637	Thursday, February 19, 2026	MM	KF	JH	PM	
New England	4	Monday, February 23, 2026	MM	EL	MH	PM	
Neoacacia	595	Wednesday, February 25, 2026	EA	EL	MH	JR	
Magnolia	20	Saturday, February 28, 2026	MM	CG	MH	JW	**
Goodale	372	Saturday, February 28, 2026	FC	KF	BL	JW	**
Community	684	Monday, March 2, 2026	EA	CG	BL	JW	
Sunrise	783	Tuesday, March 3, 2026	MM	CG	BL	JR	
Canal Winchester	670	Wednesday, March 11, 2026	FC	CG	JH	KG	
Blendon	339	Monday, March 16, 2026	EA	CG	BL	JM	
Sparrow	400	Saturday, March 21, 2026	MM	CG	MH	JM	*
Westgate	623	Monday, March 23, 2026	EA	KF	JH	JW	
Triangle	748	Thursday, March 26, 2026	MM	EL	BL	PM	
York	563	Saturday, March 28, 2026	EA	EL	MH	JM	***
Capital City	656	Saturday, March 28, 2026	FC	KF	BL	KG	***
University	631	Saturday, March 28, 2026	MM	KF	BL	KG	***
Reynoldsburg	340	Tuesday, April 7, 2026	FC	EL	JH	JR	
Groveport-Lockbournce	801	Tuesday, April 14, 2026	FC	EL	JH	JR	
Arts & Sciences	792	Thursday, April 16, 2026	FC	EL	MH	PM	
Grove City	689	Monday, April 20, 2026	FC	CG	JH	PM	

All EA and FC Inspections begin at 7:00pm (dinner 6:15pm) (UNLESS NOTED BELOW)
All MM inspections begin at 5:30pm (dinner at 6:15), second section at 7pm
*Sparrow 400 - breakfast at 8:00 am, degree at 9:00 am
**Two Degrees - MM 900am-1145am, Lunch 1200pm-1245pm, FC 1245pm-230pm
***Three Degrees - FC 9am-1030am, EA 1100am-100pm, Lunch 100pm-145pm, MM 145pm-330pm

Franklin County Memorial Lodge: Wednesday January 7, 2026 7:30 pm - Hiram Lodge 18
District Quarterly Meeting: Thursday February 26, 2026. Location TBA
14th District Reception: Saturday March 14, 2026 - Bridgewater
District Awards meeting: Thursday May 28, 2026 - Location TBA

AROUND THE DISTRICT



LINDEN LODGE
INSTALLATION OF OFFICERS



NEW ENGLAND LODGE
INSTALLATION OF OFFICERS



REYNOLDSBURG LODGE
INSTALLATION OF OFFICERS

AROUND THE DISTRICT



NEOACACIA LODGE
BRO. JIM SHORE
60 YEAR PIN

NEOACACIA LODGE
INSTALLATION OF OFFICERS





WEST GATE LODGE
INSTALLATION OF OFFICERS


Ohio Lodge of Research
WINTER MEETING
Speakers:
Maxwell Miller
Composition of GM Portrait
Bill Carter
Smartphones in Freemasonry
THE OHIO LODGE OF RESEARCH
CHARTERED 1966
Dover Lodge No. 489
735 N. Wooster Ave
Dover, Ohio 44622
IN PERSON ONLY
Saturday, January 17, 2025
12:00 Roundtable discussion
12:45 Opening of OLR
1:00 Bro Maxwell Miller
2:00 Bro William Carter
Contact: Michael Miller • Call: (513) 435-3048
Email: master@ohiolodgeofresearch.com

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MAPLE SYRUP



Milligan's Maple Caramel Corn with Peanuts
Milligan's Maple syrup is cooked to a delicious caramel and tossed with fresh popcorn and Spanish peanuts. A delicious, sweet and savory treat. (Milligan's Maple syrup, popcorn, peanuts, butter, salt.)
4 oz | $6; or, 2 for $10



Milligan's Sweet & Savory Trail Mix
A sweet, savory, spicy, protein-packed, one-of-a-kind treat with an explosive blend of dried chile, garlic, soy and spices. (Milligan's Maple syrup, cashews, pepitas, peanuts, pecans, almonds, cranberries, raisins, butter and spicy seasoning.)
4 oz | $8



Milligan's Maple Nuts
Sweet and salty peanuts, cashews, pecans and hazelnuts glazed with 100% Milligan's Maple caramel and a touch of salt. (Milligan's Maple syrup, cashews, hazelnuts, peanuts, pecans, butter, salt.)
4 oz | $8
8 oz | $15



Milligan's Maple Puffs
Crunchy, buttery and sweet. Huskless, baked corn puffs tossed with 100% Milligan's Maple caramel. (Milligan's Maple syrup, corn puffs, butter, salt.)
4 oz | $8

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