

THE GRAND COMMANDERY OF KNIGHTS TEMPLAR OF NORTH CAROLINA

State News for DECEMBER, 2021



Grand Commander



Ludwik J. Wodka

(919) 349-3745

ludwikwodka@yahoo.com

Greetings, Sir Knights!

I hope this message finds you well.

In spite of the challenges we have faced over the course of this long year, we can be grateful to have witnessed a number of historic milestones as well. We have accomplished a great deal and have much to be proud of. Several

Commanderies that had been dormant for many years have sprung back to life. We even had the joy of chartering a new Commandery as well. Later this year, we will also celebrate the bicentennial of North Carolina's first Templar charter. Thank you for allowing me to serve and to be part of these events.

We cannot be too often reminded that the Christmas season is to celebrate the birth of the Lord Jesus Christ, the Prince of Peace, and Great Captain of our Salvation. It was in the most humble circumstances, in a manger in ancient Israel, that the King of Kings was born. An angel of God appeared before the shepherds in the field near Bethlehem on that fateful day to announce, "Fear not: for behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people. For unto you is born this in the city of David a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord." (Luke 2:10-11). Through this holiday season, reflect upon the beauty of His message and the light He has brought into this world.

To you and your loved ones, I wish you a Merry Christmas and a happy and healthy New Year.

Fraternally,

Ludwik J. Wodka
Grand Commander



A CHRISTMAS MESSAGE FROM THE GRAND PRELATE

"But when the fulness of the time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law, To redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons. And because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father. Wherefore thou art no more a servant, but a son; and if a son, then an heir of God through Christ."

(Galatians 4:4-7 KJV)

While Paul's letters do not relate any narrative traditions about Jesus' birth, he does speak profoundly about the meaning of the incarnation.

Galatians 4 reflects on God's sending of his Son in the context of a larger theological argument about what it means to be children of God and co-heirs with Christ.

While heirs are still minors, they are "no better than slaves," for they and the property they will inherit remain under the control of guardians and trustees "until the date set by the father" (4:1-2). "So with us," Paul continues, "while we were minors, we were enslaved to the elemental spirits of the world" (4:3).

"But when the fullness of time had come" (4:4) — at the end of one age and the beginning of another, at the time God deemed just right — "God sent his Son, born of a woman, born under the law, in order to redeem those who were under the law, so that we might receive adoption as children" (4:4-5).

God's sending of his Son ends the reign of the law and inaugurates a new age. The Son is "born of a woman," fully human, and "born under the law." The latter phrase might be seen to emphasize Jesus' Jewish lineage, but in context it seems rather to identify him with all of humanity. Paul suggests that all that are born under the law in one form or another

— whether the Law of Moses or the law of the “elemental spirits.” Jesus is born under the law in order to redeem us who are under the law, “so that we might receive adoption as children.”

Under Roman law, adopted children had the same legal status and inheritance rights as biological children. It is significant that Paul does not identify Jews with biological children and Gentiles with adopted children. Rather, he suggests that we are all adopted children. None of us have any prior claim on the father. Our adoption as God’s children is pure gift. Jesus alone is Son of God from birth, but he deigns to share his kinship and inheritance with us.

Paul continues: “And because you are children (*huiioi* = sons), God sent has sent the Spirit of his Son (*huios*) into our hearts, crying ‘Abba! Father!’” The Spirit links us with God’s Son as fellow children of God, and enables us to call upon God with the same intimate language Jesus used (Mark 14:36).

Our adoption as God’s children means that there is absolutely no reason to return to a life of slavery. In Christ we are children of God and full heirs with him to all that God has promised.

A preacher might help hearers envision the difference it makes in daily life to know that we are children of God purely by God’s grace and not by our adherence to the law, whatever form that law may take. For instance, the post-Christmas letdown that may set in with all its attendant guilt—about the Christmas cards that didn’t get sent, the hoped-for family harmony that didn’t quite happen, the over-eating now apparent on the bathroom scale. One way of dealing with that guilt is by making “new year’s resolutions” about how we will change, how we will make a fresh start with the turning of the calendar. And we know how well that usually turns out.

Don’t go back to that life of slavery, Paul tells us. The fullness of time has come! God sent his Son to redeem us from under the law, so that we might receive adoption as God’s children. God’s gift to us will not be revoked, regardless of how well we live up to our own expectations or the expectations of others. We do have a fresh start — not by our own will power, but by the gracious initiative of God in sending his Son, claiming us as God’s children, and sending the Spirit into our hearts. This is pure gift;

we cannot earn or deserve it. We can only give thanks and share this gift with others.

Merry Christmas, Sir Knights!

Alex. H. Ellis
Grand Prelate

Templar Funeral Service for PGC Don Wooster

Fayetteville – A formal Knights Templar Funeral Service was held at the Fayetteville Masonic center, led by Commander Ken Wical and the officers and members of Palestine #20. Sir Knight Herb Lynch and PGC James Steele delivered eulogies.



Grand York Rite Charity Raffle



The Grand York Rite of North Carolina is sponsoring a raffle for the benefit of the 3 principal charities: the [Royal Arch Research Assistance](#), the [Cryptic Masons Medical Research Foundation](#), and the [Knights Templar Eye Foundation](#). The raffle is for a well-fed and pastured hog, which the winner is free have custom-processed courtesy of the Key Packing Company of Robbins, NC for about 250 pounds of meat.

Tickets are \$20 each and can be purchased from any Grand Line Officer. The winner will be drawn at the annual York Rite Conclave in March 2022.

Celebrating 200 Years of Knights Templar in North Carolina

The Grand Commandery of North Carolina is celebrating its 200th anniversary, in conjunction with Plantagenet Commandery #1 in Wilmington and Palestine Commandery #20 in Fayetteville. The

celebration will be held at the Wilmington Scottish Rite at 1415 South 17th St, Wilmington on Saturday, December 18, starting at 5:00 PM. Sir Knights attending are requested to wear Commandery Uniforms without belt and sword, or a dark suit, and business casual for ladies in attendance. Please RSVP to Tom Jones at tbjones9350@gmail.com by December 5.

Nazareth 41 Constituted, Officers Installed

Southern Pines – On November 10, North Carolina's newest Commandery was consecrated as Nazareth Commander no. 41 in Southern Pines, NC, the first new commandery chartered in North Carolina in 53 years. The official charter ceremony was conducted by Right Eminent Grand Commander Ludwik Wodka. Witnessing and participating were several members of the Grand Line, several past Grand Commanders, and the newly appointed Mid-Atlantic Departmental Commander, James Steele.



Pictured: REGC Wodka consecrates Nazareth 41 and installs S/K Trent Carter as its first Eminent Commander, with the senior Grand Commandery officers and PGC Mike Daniels, who was instrumental in its formation.

The idea was first proposed in February of 2020, and in April, 11 Knights began meeting at the Southern Pines Masonic Lodge 484, forming the core of what would eventually grow to over 30 Sir Knights.



Pictured: Seated are the Grand Commander, Ludwik Wodka, Commander Trent Carter, and Department Commander James Steele, with Grand Officers, Officers of Nazareth 41, and attending Sir Knights standing.

Receiving the Commandery's new charter from the Grand Commander was Sir Knight Trent Carter, who was appointed and installed as Nazareth 41's first Eminent Commander. Carter, a retired Army colonel, said, "the future for Nazareth Commandery 41 looks great and promising. With the help and support of all knights, this commandery will be an inspiration and leader in North Carolina and quite possibly the country. Special thanks should be given to those who made it all possible beginning with Mike Daniels, Ludwik Wodka, Stancil Wilson, Anthony Myers, Dilles Walker, and the outstanding members of Nazareth Commandery 41."

Knights Templar Christmas Observances

As of our publication date, several commanderies have reported their plans for Christmas Observances for their local bodies. Many of these are open to the public and include inspiring speakers, beautiful musical performances, awards presentations, and the traditional toasts. Below is a list of those Commanderies who have responded with their programs:

December 1: Nazareth #41, [Southern Pines Masonic Lodge](#), 7:00 PM, open to the public.

Ivanhoe #8 [Greensboro Masonic Temple](#), 7:30 PM, Sir Knights only, due to local restrictions.

December 3: Durham #3, [University Lodge](#), Chapel Hill, 7:00 PM, open to the public.

December 6: Salisbury #13, [Salisbury Temple](#), 7:30 PM, open to the public.

December 11: Raleigh #4, [JJ Crowder Lodge](#), 5:00 PM, open to the public.

December 12: Cyrene #5, [Asheville Masonic Temple](#), 2:00 PM, open to the public with free parking in first 2 rows next to the building.

Piedmont #6, [Winston-Salem Masonic Center](#), 2:00 PM, open to the public.

Charlotte #2, [Charlotte York Rite Masonic Center](#), 2:00 PM, public invited for service awards, traditional toasts, honoring ladies, memorial service, and dinner (RSVP by Dec. 6 to ewhitener3@carolina.rr.com)

December 13: Oxford #39, [Oxford Masonic Lodge](#), 6:00 PM, open to the public.

December 18: Plantagenet #1, Palestine #20, [Wilmington Scottish Rite Temple](#), 5:00 PM, also celebration the Bicentennial of Templary in North Carolina, open to the public.

December 19: St. Johns #10, [New Bern Temple](#), TBD

December 20: Lenoir #33, Wilkes #40, [North Wilkesboro Masonic Lodge](#), 6:00 PM dinner service, open to the public.

Local News

Southern Pines – Nazareth Commandery No. 41 performed their first public action on November 6 as participants in the Southern Pines Veterans Parade. The audience was appreciative with their applause as the Sir Knights passed the reviewing stand, with Grand Commander Ludwik Wodka leading the way. This was the first time that the Masons and or Knights Templar participated in this annual event.

New Bern – Ten new Sir Knights were created on November 6, courtesy of St. Johns #10 in New Bern. Deputy Grand Commander Sparkie Travis was on hand to assist in the conferral of the orders and reports the new Sir Knights are ready and enthusiastic in helping their respective York Rite Bodies continue their good work in the coming years.

Charlotte – Charlotte Commandery #2 will be participating in Wreaths Across America on Saturday, December 18, starting at 12:00 PM. This is the fourth year that the Sir Knights have participated in the national event. This year they and their wives will be joined by members of the Rainbow Girls, DeMolay, Ladies of the Order of the Amaranth, members of the Order of the Eastern Star, and local Boy Scout troops.

Fayetteville – A special fundraising event was hosted by Palestine #20 at the Fayetteville Masonic Center on November 13, to replace the Center's HV-AC unit. Authors and forensic geologists Scott and Janet Wolter spoke on theories and archaeological evidence of Templars in America from about the

mid-12th Century. The acclaimed authors were also present for book signings and questions.



Pictured: Scott and Janet Wolter speak to attendees of their program at the Fayetteville Masonic Center on November 13, hosted by Palestine #20

That same day, Palestine Commandery # 20 also conferred the Commandery Orders on a class of six candidates. Of note, the Commandery was joined by Sir Knights from as far away as Virginia, West Virginia, and South Carolina who assisted in conferring the Orders.

Wilmington, NC – On November 13, Plantagenet #1 held an Oyster Roast to raise funds for the York Rite Charities. Over \$5,000 was raised in addition to the good food and fellowship enjoyed by all.



Pictured: Members of Plantagenet Commandery #1 preparing oysters for the roast.

Plantagenet Commandery also plans to participate in the Wilmington Holiday parade in downtown Wilmington along historic Front Street on December 12. The parade steps off at 5:55 PM and participating Sir Knights are requested to wear uniforms and swords.

We Need Your Help!

Please send event news from your local commanderies to us for inclusion in the State News! Submissions must be received by the 20th of the month for inclusion in the upcoming edition. Please send emails with subject line "KT State News" to the editor. Space is limited, and submissions may be altered to fit.

Editor: Larry Aydlett, KT
larry.aydlett@gmail.com