



Grand Commander



Scottie W. Cox

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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. Submissions may be altered to fit.
- ✘ Please send emails with subject line “**KT State News**” to the editor.

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Grand Commander's Message

Greetings Sir Knights,

Merry Christmas! December has arrived and with it our plans to gather with family and friends to celebrate the birth of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. Please take time out of your busy month to thank our Supreme Architect for sending us his only Son, our Savior, and continue to pray for all our Christian brothers and sisters who need His healing as they continue struggle this Holiday Season.

While the world sends a blaring message that Christmas is all about gifts, parties, family reunions and over-the-top experiences and the days leading to Christmas time is filled with wonderful smells, sights, and sounds we sometimes miss the wonder of the season.

The Christmas season is special for Christians all around the world. We focus on the miraculous circumstances of Jesus' birth. We know that in the true meaning of the season we can be distracted by selfishness, and disappointment which can interfere with our ability to experience the wonder of Christmas. And we hear sermons preached how our Jesus left heaven to come to earth and give hope to the entire world!

One of my former Pastors always started his sermon with “Grace to you, and peace from God our Father and from the Lord Jesus Christ.” It is a greeting used by the apostle Paul in his epistles which conveys the hope that God's grace and peace will be with the reader. The Prophet Isaiah prays in Chapter 42:

“May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace as you trust in him...”

The birth of Jesus is a reminder of the hope we have in God, and that hope is attainable. There is no greater hope than the everlasting hope found in our Lord Jesus Christ and the sufficiency of His Word.

The angel proclaimed the birth of Jesus to

the shepherds, saying, *“Fear not: for, behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people”* (Luke 2:10). Does fear cause us to miss the Wonder of Christmas? This Christmas do we need encouragement to step out in faith? Fear can prevent us from stepping into the plans God has for us.

Although we think of the Christmas story as being filled with great joy because of Jesus' birth, we must remember that key figures in this story had to bravely respond with obedience (hope) although they had every reason to be afraid.

So, we hear in the Bible many times “Fear Not”. But we do fear. We know that in the true meaning of the season we can be distracted by selfishness, and disappointment which can interfere with our ability to experience the wonder of Christmas. Again, as the Prophet prays, and my prayer for you, during the Christmas Season, *“May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace as you trust in him...”*

Merry Christmas!

Fraternally yours,

Scottie W. Cox

Grand Commander

Grand Commandery Schedule for the Christmas Observance at MHCO & District 1 Meeting

Salisbury – Please join REGC Scottie Cox and several other Grand Commandery officers for the Christmas Observance at the Masonic Home for Children in Oxford on Sunday December 15, starting at 6:00pm in the York Rite Chapel. The Sir Knights will march in and then hold an abbreviated Observance followed by a Candlelight Service from Pastor Becky, the new Pastor of MHCO. After the service, all attendees will enjoy desserts at the Administrator's home. If you are planning to attend and want to march in with

the Sir Knights, please wear your Class A uniform with Chapeau and NO sword. The Grand Officers will be in Greenville, NC, on December 16, for the District 1 meeting, which will also be the Christmas Observance for Bethlehem #29. The meeting will begin at 7:30pm with refreshments afterwards. Please join us if you can.

Grand Prelate's Christmas Address

Salisbury – Grace and peace to all of you in the name of our Lord, Jesus Christ. As we approach this Christmas season, with all of its festivities, I want to encourage us all to take a moment to consider this time, the time before Christmas, and how we can learn from this Advent season. Advent, usually the four weeks before Christmas, is a season where we prepare for the great joy of the celebration of the birth of our Savior, the Messiah. This parallels with the expectation of the Messiah that the Jewish people before Christ felt, waiting for the prophesies of Isaiah to be fulfilled, when he said that:

“Therefore the Lord himself shall give you a sign; Behold, a virgin will conceive, and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel” (Isaiah 7:14) and, “For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given, and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace. Of the increase of his government there shall be no end, upon the throne of David, and upon his kingdom, to order it, and to establish it with judgment and with justice from henceforth even forever. The zeal of the Lord of Hosts will perform this.” (Isaiah 9:6-7)

As Christians, we are also waiting for the return of our Savior to establish that government, or to meet him in person in *“that house not made with hands, eternal, in the heavens.”* So, it is important, in this Advent season, to focus on how we are “waiting” for Christmas and, by extension, for our meeting with our Messiah.

There are many forms in which this “waiting” takes. Some children have Christmas calendars with boxes or markers (sometimes containing candy or treats) that they mark or open every day until December 25. Adults mark time at work or with their friends and family at gatherings to exchange little gifts or well wishes before Christmas arrives. Some believers follow the tradition of lighting candles weekly on the Advent Wreath, to remind them of the Christian virtues of hope, peace, love, and joy.

However, in all of the anticipation and expectation of these, we are (mostly) merely watching time pass, with an occasional festivity to mark the time. This type of “passive waiting” for our Savior to appear is all too common in this seas-

on, where we sit and wait, and maybe, unfortunately, fall asleep while we are supposed to be watching.

As Christian Knights, we should strive for better than this. I would encourage all of us to change our “passive waiting” for Christmas into a more “active waiting,” where we strive to emulate, at least a little, the Christian and knightly virtues that our Savior embodied in anticipation of his return. This could be in aiding the poor and destitute that do not think they have much to look forward to, in visiting people who do not have family to come see them, or just to be a compassionate friend to someone going through difficulties during this busy season. Those Christian virtues of hope, peace, love and joy often have a habit of multiplying and coming back to those that give it to others.

So, Sir Knights, in this Advent season, let us see if we can find some instances of “actively waiting” for Christmas as we get closer to December 25, and return the joy and peace that the Savior has given us. And, in the fullness of time, when we finally do get to meet our Redeemer, we can finally hear those fateful words: *“Well done, good and faithful servant. Enter thou into the joy of thy Lord.”*

Fraternally,

Matthew A. Peeler, Grand Prelate

Important Reminders:

December 4: Ivanhoe #8 Christmas Observance, starting at 7:30PM, at the [Greensboro Masonic Temple](#).

December 5: Goldsboro #26 Christmas Observance, starting at 7:00PM at [Wayne Lodge](#).

December 5: Durham #3 Christmas Observance, starting at 7:00PM at [University Lodge](#), Chapel Hill.

December 9: Mt. Lebanon #7 Christmas Observance, starting at 7:00PM at [Wilson Lodge](#).

December 11: Nazareth #41 Christmas Observance, starting at 6:00PM at the [Southern Pines Masonic Temple](#).

December 14: Raleigh #4 Christmas Observance, starting at 7:00PM at [JJ Crowder Lodge](#), Raleigh.

December 14: Palestine #20 Christmas Observance, starting at 7:00PM at the [Fayetteville Masonic Center](#).

December 15: St. Johns #10 Christmas Observance, starting at 7:30PM at the [York Rite Temple](#), New Bern.

December 16: Lenoir #33 / Wilkes #40 joint Christmas Observance, starting at 6:30PM at [Hibriten Lodge](#), N. Wilkesboro.

December 16: Bethlehem #29 Christmas Observance, starting at 7:30PM at [Greenville Lodge](#), Greenville.