

# Tennessee Knight Templar News

SIR KNIGHT RONALD J. COATES, RIGHT EMINENT GRAND COMMANDER  
GRAND COMMANDERY KNIGHTS TEMPLAR OF TENNESSEE

April A.D. 2025 / A.O. 907

Edited by: Jesse J. Harper, KCT



Order of Malta conferral during the Middle Tennessee York Rite Association Festival on March 8, 2025.

The degree cast included several current and past Grand York Rite officers and committee members. Among other officers, the attendees included three Past Grand Masters, two of which have served as Right Eminent Grand Commander.

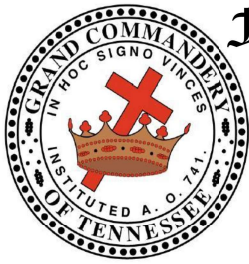
Pictured: John Palmer, Past Grand Master; Dickie Johnson, Past Grand Commander/Past Grand Master; Robert Waldron, Past Grand Commander/Past Grand Master

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If you are aware of any members who are not currently receiving this monthly newsletter, then please have them send an email to Steve Guendert with their name, email address, and Commandery number: [sguendert@iee.org](mailto:sguendert@iee.org)

Only about half of our membership is receiving this newsletter on a monthly basis. Assist us in getting this newsletter distributed to every Sir Knight on our rolls.



# From the Right Eminent Grand Commander

RONALD JASPER COATES

RIGHT EMINENT GRAND COMMANDER

Grand Commandery Knights Templar of Tennessee



## General Order #1

March 28, 2025

Centerville, TN

*To the Officers and Knights of the Grand Commandery, Knights Templar of Tennessee, and to the Officers and Knights of the Constituent Commanderies thereof, wheresoever dispersed:*

### General Order #1

I would like to take this opportunity to thank the Sir Knights for the confidence and trust you have placed in me by electing me as the Right Eminent Grand Commander of the Grand Commandery of Tennessee. I humbly accept this responsibility and will not take it lightly. My goal and vision are to strive to promote Templary in a very positive way. This can be accomplished by working together with all of the bodies of the York Rite of Freemasonry.

We are all Master Masons first, and then we receive the Chapter and Council degrees before we proceed to receiving the Order of Templary. We are all volunteers of this work, and by helping each other in the other bodies, we will help our Commanderies grow and prosper.

I want to thank each of the elected and appointed officers, and I appreciate their willingness to serve this Grand Commandery. We will be working closely together to promote the programs and charities of the Grand Commandery.

I encourage each of our Commanderies to support the Knights Templar Eye Foundation and the Holy Land Pilgrimage. These charities are our main way to let the public know that we are a charitable organization. What greater way is there to show that we are Christians than by supporting ministers to the Holy Land? To walk where our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ walked and preached the gospel to all.

I encourage all of the Commandery Officers and Sir Knights to attend their Regional Battalion Meetings planned for this year. This is a new program to learn more about how our Commanderies can work together to help each of us promote Templary in a positive manner and become more involved with our communities, hopefully making our Commanderies grow and prosper.

The annual Commandery Inspections this year will consist of conferring the Order of the Temple on an active candidate. Each of your Grand Commandery officers looks forward to visiting with each of you at your inspection. If at any time you need assistance from me or any of the Grand Officers, please feel free to contact us and let us know.

By working together, Templar Masonry will flourish and grow in Tennessee.

Respectfully in your service,

Ronald J. Coates

Right Eminent Grand Commander

Grand Commander Knights Templar of Tennessee



## **General Order #2**

March 28, 2025

Centerville, TN

*To the Officers and Knights of the Grand Commandery, Knights Templar of Tennessee, and to the Officers and Knights of the Constituent Commanderies thereof, wheresoever dispersed:*

It is my request that every Sir Knight in Tennessee assemble to commemorate the rising of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ, from the dead.

John 3:16

For God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.

1 Thess. 4:16

For the Lord himself will descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trumpet of God. And the dead in Christ will rise first.

Join me in this Easter season by celebrating his resurrection.

This General Order must be read at your next stated conclave and made part of the minutes and reported on your Monthly Activity Report.

Ronald J. Coates

Right Eminent Grand Commander

Grand Commandery Knights Templar of Tennessee

## Grand Commander Biography

Ronald Jasper Coates was born August 16, 1961 in Centerville, Tennessee, the son of A. J. and Willie B. Russell Coates. He was educated in the public school system of Hickman County, graduating from Hickman County High School in 1979. Leadership Hickman graduate of 2005-2006. Certified Public Administrator; 2006 County Officials Certificate Training Program of the University of Tennessee. 2017 Graduate of the UT Institute for Public Service; Local Government Leadership Program.

Brother Coates has been employed with the Hickman County Highway Department as a Road Grader Operator and Foreman since June 4, 1979 and was elected Road Superintendent of Hickman County on August 5, 2010. He served as Secretary of the Tennessee Counties Highway Officials Association in 2013 and served as President in 2016–2017. He served as a County Commissioner of the Hickman County Legislative Body from 1986-1990. He is a member of the Centerville Church of Christ.



Brother Coates was raised a Master Mason on May 24, 1984 in Centerville Lodge No. 618; served as Worshipful Master in 1988 and as Secretary from 2005-2010. He was elected Secretary for 2013 and is presently serving as Secretary. In the Grand Lodge, he served as Grand Steward in 1996. District Chairman from 1989-2000 and is presently serving as Grand Representative of the Grand Lodge of Virginia. Brother Coates was elected Most Worshipful Grand Master of the Grand Lodge of Free and Accepted Masons of Tennessee on March 27, 2003.

Companion Coates was exalted in Dickson Chapter No. 123 on February 21, 1987, served as High Priest in 1991 & 2017 and received the Order of High Priesthood on March 25, 1991. He is presently serving as Grand Representative of the Grand Chapter of British Columbia and the Yukon. He served on the Advancement of Royal Arch Masonry Committee. Companion Coates was elected Most Excellent Grand High Priest of the Grand Chapter of Royal Arch Masons of Tennessee on March 20, 2017. Companion Coates was invested with the degree of Grand High Priest of the Past Grand High Priest of Tennessee Association on June 9, 2017. He was awarded the Grand Chapter Ritual Jewel in 2019.

Companion Coates was greeted in Dickson Council No. 107 on February 24, 1987, served as Illustrious Master in 1991 and received the Order of the Silver Trowel on March 25, 1991. In the Grand Council, he served as Grand Marshal in 1992. He was awarded the Cryptic Mason of the Year Medal from the General Grand Council in 1992. In 1999 and 2000, he served as Grand Instructor. He also served on the Ritual Committee. He is presently serving as Grand Representative of the Grand Council of Ontario. He was awarded the Grand Council Ritual Jewel in 2021. He is a plural member of Nashville Council #1.

Sir Knight Coates was knighted in Clarksville Commandery No. 8 on March 21, 1987, becoming a charter member of Dickson Commandery No. 41 in 1991, served as Commander in 1993, served as Recorder from 1994-2007 and served as Commander and Prelate in 2019. He received the Knight Crusader of the Cross on April 23, 1993. In the Grand Commandery, he served as Grand Standard Bearer in 1993, served as a District Instructor from 1994-2000 and served as Grand Prelate in 2014. He is presently serving as Grand Representative of the Grand Commandery of Vermont. He is presently serving on the Knights Templar Education Committee of the Grand Commandery. He is a holder of the Grand Encampment Membership Jewel Award and Grand Master's Club of the Knight's Templar Eye Foundation. He is a plural member of Nashville Commandery #1. He is a member of Chattanooga Asylum #2 Order of Knight Commanders. He was elected Right Eminent Grand Commander of the Grand Commandery of Knights Templar of Tennessee on March 25, 2025.



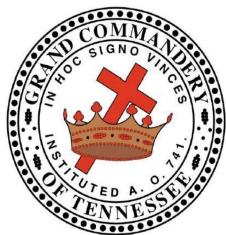
Brother Coates received the Scottish Rite Degrees in Trinity Consistory; Valley of Nashville in April 1985. He is a Life Member in the Valley of Memphis. On October 29, 2005 was invested with the rank and decoration of Knight Commander of the Court of Honour and on December 12, 2009 was coroneted a 33rd Degree Inspector General Honorary. He served as Venerable Master in the Valley of Memphis Lodge of Perfection in 2012-2013. He is a member of the Tri-County Scottish Rite Club.

Brother Coates was made a noble of Al Menah Shrine Temple on December 13, 1985; served as Hickman County Shrine Ambassador from 1987-1997. Member of Al Menah Shrine Past Masters Club, Cumberland Clan No. 151 Shrine Hillbillies; served as Raban of the Clan of Outhouse #1 and presently serves on the Al Menah Shrine Membership Committee.

Brother Coates was made a member of Tennessee Priory No. 15 Knights of the York Cross of Honour (KYCH) on March 28, 1994, Knights of the York Grand Cross of Honour (KYGCH) with one quadrant on March 25, 2003, with two quadrants on March 21, 2017. and three quadrants on March 25, 2025. He served as Eminent Prior of Tennessee Priory No. 15 Knights of the York Cross of Honour in 2009 and 2015. He is a member of Middle Tennessee York Rite College No. 143; served as Governor in 2001 and received the Order of the Purple Cross from the York Rite Sovereign College of North America on July 28, 2001 and designated an Associate Regent of the York Rite Sovereign College of North America. Middle Tennessee York Rite Association; served as President in 1995, awarded the York Rite Mason of the Year from the Middle Tennessee York Rite Association on October 22, 2004. Old Hickory Conclave Red Cross of Constantine; served as Sovereign in 2006 and served as President of the Tennessee Red Cross of Constantine Association in 2008. He served on the Credentials Committee of the United Grand Imperial Council of the Red Cross of Constantine for the year 2005-2006. On June 4, 2022, was appointed Intendant General of the Red Cross of Constantine for Tennessee. Tennessee Lodge of Research; served as Worshipful Master in 2001 and designated with rank and honor of Fellow.

Brother Coates is a member of the Royal Order of Scotland, Grand College of Rites of the USA, Pilgrim Preceptors Alfred the Great Conclave #25; served as Excellent Preceptor in 2024-2025, Tennessee Court #122 Masonic Order of Athelstan; inducted as Past Master on October 14th 2017 and inducted as Past Senior Grand Warden of the Provincial Grand Court of the USA on October 14, 2017, West Tennessee Forest #213 Tall Cedars of Lebanon, Holy Manger Tabernacle No. XLVIII Holy Royal Arch Knight Templar Priest; served as Very Eminent Preceptor in 2012 and was elevated to the rank of Knight Commander, Tennessee College Masonic Societas Rosicruciana in Civitatibus Foederatis; served as Celebrant in 2013, Cornelius Chapel #104 St. Thomas of Acon; served as Worthy Master in 2019 and presently serving as Provincial Assistant Grand Marshal for the Southeastern Province, Masonic Veteran's Association of Tennessee, Tralee Council No. 41 Knight Masons, Ezra Council No. 89 Knight Masons; served as Excellent Chief in 2009 and presently serving as Treasurer, Middle Tennessee Past Master's Association; served as President in 2003, West Tennessee Past Master's Association, Ray S. Garton Council #403 Allied Masonic Degrees; served as Sovereign Master in 2004 and created a Knight Commander of the Royal Order of the Red Branch of Eri, Allied Masonic Degrees Association of Tennessee; served as President in 2012, Edwin Hickman Chapter #550 National Sojourners; served as President in 2013, Defeated Creek Camp Heroes of 76; served as Commander in 2015 and Centerville Chapter No. 329 Order of the Eastern Star; served as Worthy Patron in 1993 and 1996.

Brother Coates was invested with the Honorary DeMolay Legion of Honor from The International Supreme Council of the Order of DeMolay on July 9, 2004. Honorary member of the High Twelve International. Member of the Masonic Order of the 4 Black Llamas. Holds honorary membership in several masonic lodges. He is also an Honorary Kentucky Colonel. Member of Sam Davis Lodge Knights of Pythias.



# 2025 Grand Commandery Officers



<b>Right Eminent Grand Commander</b>		
Ronald Jasper Coates (1/41)	RonaldCoates@hotmail.com	931-224-0537
<b>Very Eminent Deputy Grand Commander</b>		
Roy Tillman Sutton III (Tim) (19/25/33/37)	rtsutton3@gmail.com	423-384-5011
<b>Eminent Grand Generalissimo</b>		
Dr. Bobby Charles Blankenship, Jr. (13)	yrblex@gmail.com	731-571-1104
<b>Eminent Grand Captain General</b>		
Gerry Lucious Reed (7)	gerryreed57@gmail.com	615-489-3185
<b>Eminent Grand Treasurer</b>		
George Caleb Ladd (11)	george.caleb.ladd@gmail.com	931-682-2263
<b>Eminent Grand Recorder</b>		
Quentin Thomas Bolden (10)	gyrbtn@gmail.com	615-339-2176
<b>Eminent Grand Senior Warden</b>		
Jesse Jonathan Harper (45/43)	jesssharp@comcast.net	865-621-8686
<b>Eminent Grand Junior Warden</b>		
Nicholas Adam White (23)	nicho529@gmail.com	865-202-8217
<b>Eminent Grand Prelate</b>		
Dickie Wayland Johnson (1/7/10/40/41)	dickiewaylandjohnson@gmail.com	615-418-8057
<b>Eminent Grand Standard Bearer</b>		
William Victor Mullins (31)	chef.william.mullins@gmail.com	662-694-1340
<b>Eminent Grand Sword Bearer</b>		
David Len Harwell (19/25/37)	cowboydavidtx6471@gmail.com	423-914-2046
<b>Eminent Grand Warder</b>		
Norman Kenneth Eubank (Ken) (11)	normanksr@outlook.com	931-626-7504
<b>Eminent Grand Sentinel</b>		
Charles Ray Ragsdale (41)	crrpony@yahoo.com	931-628-1949
<b>Eminent Grand Inspector/Instructor</b>		
Ralph Burks Taylor (1/8/14/41)	burkstaylor@comcast.net	615-848-8264
<b>Aides de Camp</b>		
Ronald Lee McVey, Jr. (1/7)	rlmjrtx@gmail.com	214-918-8104
Brian Ronald Song (8)	brian.song13@gmail.com	931-241-0391
Jared David Karpel (41)	jkarpel66@gmail.com	931-306-9015



# Battalion Meetings

All Sir Knights are encouraged to attend, but especially Commanders, Generalissimos, Captain Generals, Recorders, Treasurers, Membership and Engagement Chairs.

Attendance of this meeting is to be included in Commandery Engagement.

Topics to be covered:

- Battalion and Committee Structure
- Passport Program
- Traveling Sword
- Uniform Guide
- Charities
- Observances
- Duties of Membership Chairman
- New Inspection Structure
- Commandery Leadership

May 3, 2025 –  
Upper East Battalion  
Meal at 12 PM EST at Kingsport Lodge No. 688

May 10, 2025 –  
Southeast Battalion  
Meal at 12 PM EST at Chattanooga Masonic Center.

May 17, 2025 –  
Cumberland Battalion  
Meal at 12 PM CST at Lebanon Lodge No. 98

May 24, 2025 –  
Southwest Battalion  
Meal at 12 PM CST at St. John's Lodge No 332

May 31, 2025 –  
East Central Battalion  
Meal at 12 PM EST at New Providence Lodge No. 125

June 7, 2025 –  
North Central Battalion  
Meal at 12 PM CST at Dickson Lodge No. 468

June 28, 2025 –  
South Central Battalion  
Meal at 9 AM CST at Mt. Moriarty Lodge No. 18

\*\*\* Schedule Subject to Change \*\*\*

# From the Eminent Grand Prelate

Sir Knight Dickie W. Johnson, PGC

## Prelates Devotion for April

### HE IS RISEN

*"In the end of the Sabbath, as it began to dawn toward the first day of the week, came Mary Magdalene and the other Mary to see the sepulchre. And, behold, there was a great earthquake, for the angel of the Lord descended from heaven and came and rolled back the stone from the door and sat upon it. His countenance was like lightning, and his raiment white as snow. And for fear of him, the keepers did shake and became as dead men. And the angel answered and said unto the women, Fear not ye: for I know that ye seek Jesus, which was crucified. He is not here, for he is risen, as he said. Come, see the place where the Lord lay." (Matthew 28: 1-6)*

When the women found the tomb empty, it was the greatest day in the history of the world. There have been other great days: the day we accepted Christ, the day of our marriage, the birth of our children, graduation, the day when wars ended, God's promise to Abraham for a son, the Hebrews escape from Egypt, the Ten Commandments, entry into the promised land, and the birth of Jesus. Regardless of these great days, the day Jesus rose from the grave is the greatest day of all!

On the greatest day in history, only the women went to check on the body of Jesus. They found the tomb empty. The disciples were missing. These were the twelve men that Jesus had chosen. They had spent almost every moment with Him for nearly three years, yet Judas had betrayed him, Peter had denied Him, and the others had fled in fear. Only John followed to the cross. Their dreams were crushed. The one they thought would change their world and their lives was dead. His lifeless body had been placed in a tomb. It must have looked like God had turned His back on it all. Even Jesus was heard saying, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?"

But God was still in control! He always has been, and He always will be! The women found the tomb empty. Humankind has often tried to build something to hold God, but the great temple in Jerusalem could not even hold Him. Churches cannot hold Him. Even the tomb could not hold Him! That tomb is still empty today!

The people of Israel had built a great temple as a dwelling place for God. When Jesus died on the cross, the great curtain that surrounded the Holy of Holies was torn apart. We no longer must go through temples to reach God. We can now go through Jesus Christ! He is the once and for all, the Great High Priest! Now we have victory in Jesus!

Jesus died on the cross for all people. He died for Pilate, Caiaphas the High Priest, and all the Jewish religious leaders. He died for you and for me! Salvation is now within reach of all people, and it comes by God's freely given grace. Remember, though, that salvation comes with a warning as well as a promise. The warning: The Scribes and Pharisees were the moral, religious, church-going people of Jesus' day, but they loved their lives too much to change. The promise: Guilty sinners, dishonest tax collectors, prostitutes, and other social outcasts all had their lives changed by believing in Jesus as Lord and Savior! They were willing to accept God's grace—grace that is greater than all our sin!

In His Service,

Dickie W. Johnson, PGC



## Upcoming Events

Monday, April 14<sup>th</sup>-  
Murfreesboro Commandery #10  
Order of the Temple  
Eat at 6 PM  
Conferral at 7 PM

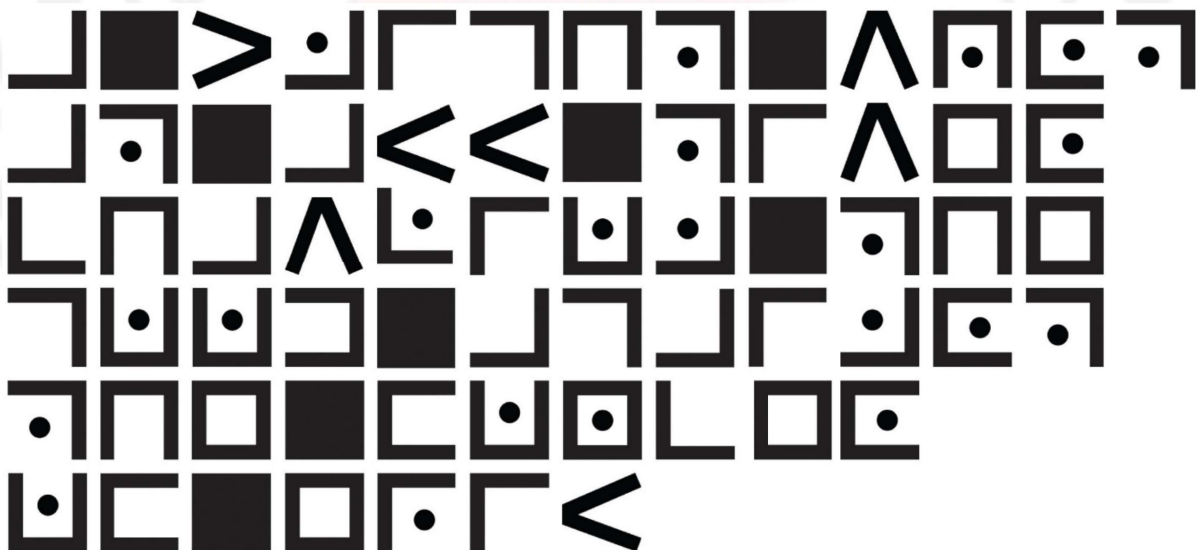
Saturday, April 26<sup>th</sup>-  
Baldwin Commandery #7  
Order of the Temple  
Eat at 8 AM  
Conferral at 9 AM

Wednesday, May 28<sup>th</sup>-  
Murfreesboro Commandery #10  
Order of the Temple  
Eat at 6 PM  
Conferral at 7 PM

Monday, June 9<sup>th</sup>-  
Baldwin Commandery #7  
Order of the Temple  
Eat at 6 PM  
Conferral at 7 PM

Monday, June 9<sup>th</sup>-  
Murfreesboro Commandery #10  
Order of the Temple  
Eat at 6 PM  
Conferral at 7 PM

## Something to Decipher



## MISSION

The mission of the Grand Commandery Knights Templar of Tennessee is to provide every Christian Freemason in Tennessee the opportunity and resources to develop, be engaged in, and exemplify a Christian chivalric lifestyle.

## THE VISION OF THE GRAND COMMANDERY OF KNIGHTS TEMPLAR OF TENNESSEE

The Knights of the Grand Commandery of Tennessee are a group of men who share the Christian faith, exemplary character, a dedication to excellence and the service of others, and a desire to share the chivalric experience with other Christian Freemasons. Our Knights are actively engaged with one another in accomplishing this goal and in maintaining this standard of lifestyle and behavior.



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## Request for Submissions!

Sir Knights – We need submissions for the *Tennessee Knight Templar News*. Is your Commandery going to confer any of the orders soon? Did you have some sort of unusual or fun event? Send us an article to share with the other Tennessee Knights and include photos if you have them.

We would also like to have your thoughts and ideas about how we can make Tennessee Templary more fun and exciting. Send us an article! Please send news and events going on in your Commandery to:

**TNKTNewsEditor@gmail.com**