

Wisconsin Forward

Grand Commandery of Wisconsin

gkctwis.org



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July 2025 Greetings to the Sir Knights of Wisconsin

Greetings Sir Knights and Ladies of the Commandery Community,

Let me first say how appreciative I am at the confidence you bestowed on me by electing me to the auspicious position of Grand Commander of Knights Templar of the State of Wisconsin. My Masonic journey began 18 years ago when my son, Jacob Lancelle, currently elected as the Grand Generalissimo, suggested I investigate this thing called Masonry. At first, I was a little hesitant as I knew almost nothing about it. However, not shying away from any challenge, I dove headfirst into the process. I joined by being raised at the last "Man to Mason" class on 29 April 2006. Looking back, it was a far cry from the current version, "Day of Light". I left the "Man to Mason" event almost as confused as when I started. As time went by, I was thoroughly educated by my brothers at the lodge. Like a lot of us we were "voluntold" to sit in an officer's chair which will further educate one in the mysteries of Masonry. Things like, cooking and cleaning and being the Junior Wardens "Gofer".

When I decided to join York Rite, it too was like drinking from a fire hose. The day we, the 4 newest members, entered the room, the old guard, who'd been keeping York Rite afloat for years, said, "here are the keys to the building - don't burn it down." We had to learn very quickly to put out candles during the Order of the Temple.

During this time, I lost my wife of 34 years to cancer. Needless to say, it took me a while to gather myself and move on with my life. Masonry was a big part of my healing. I got support and understanding from my brothers Masons and friends.

My road to where I'm right now started 10 years ago when I was elected as the Grand Sentinel, back when all Commandery Officer Positions were elected at Conclave. As time progressed, I thought the experience of going up the ranks would give me a flavor of what the Grand Commander's position is like. I WAS WRONG. The position is very heavy in the administrative aspect of organizing the events of the Commandery. I find the position, so far, is both challenging and almost overwhelming. But with the guidance and help from my Grand Commandery Officer Corps, we will prevail and forge ahead.

I am also a member of the Grand Council as the Grand Captain of the Guard of the Royal and Select Masters of the State of Wisconsin. I am a member of numerous "by invitation" organizations, York Rite Sovereign College of North America, Holy Royal Arch Knight Templar Priests, Knight York Cross of Honor and Red Cross of Constantine.

The upcoming Commandery year will be one that shows growth and further education and training. All General Orders and the 4 "School of the Knight" sessions, 2 in Madison and 2 in Neenah, schedules will be posted online at <http://gcktwis.org/>. The summer "School of the Knight" will be held in Madison on 23 Aug and 20 Sept in Neenah. I ask that as many Sir Knights as possible attend these training sessions. They will begin at 9 am with carbs and coffee with a \$15 luncheon. The session will cover Reception of Grand Officers, Reception of the Flag and Full Form Opening. We will cover the Order

of the Temple and pay focused attention to the Sword Manual during the 10 January session in Madison and the 24 January meeting in Neenah. By focusing on training in a relaxed, open book environment, all attending Sir Knights, new and the old heads, will hopefully learn or unlearn things we have all done in the past.

My emphasis this year is to have fun, learn something new every day and encourage worthy Masons to join York Rite and become part of the family, "This Thing of Ours". I heard a long time ago that the best way to support Masonry is to replace yourself. Seek those you want to become a part of "US".

My door, phone and email are open to anyone who has questions, remarks or to just chat.

Courteously yours,

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