

# Tennessee Knight Templar News

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

February A.D. 2026 / A.O. 908

Edited by: Jesse J. Harper, KCT



On January 21<sup>st</sup>, Murfreesboro Commandery #10 conferred the Illustrious Order of the Red Cross and the Order of Malta on Don Knox, Konner Maynard, Matthew Meacham, and Rusty Wolsleger. They also had visiting candidates Martin Johnson and Clayton Cantrell from Manchester #40, and Luther Ledger from Dickson #41. There was a total to 32 Sir Knights in attendance.

Please be sure to share any photos from your conferrals or events so that they can be publicized.

## **\*\*\* 2026 Grand York Rite Session Information \*\*\***

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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 Jesse Harper with their name, email address, and Commandery number: [jesssharp@comcast.net](mailto:jesssharp@comcast.net)

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**

**February Message from the Grand Commander**



**Positive Attitudes**

Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity! How good it is when Masons work together in unity to advance the causes of Freemasonry. The Masonic fraternity needs each member to participate in some way, form, or manner. In this day and time, more than ever the country needs the principles of Freemasonry to help build strong and upright character. The first step taken by a candidate for Masonry in the lodge shows him that the foundation on which Freemasonry rests is the belief in and acknowledgment of a Supreme Being. He is taught that Freemasonry is a beautiful system of morality, veiled in allegory and illustrated by symbols. From the first moment, after the candidate signifies his belief in a Supreme Being, he is taught patriotism and brotherly love and all that is good and kind and charitable it encourages.

We share the common bond of a proud tradition and rich heritage. We belong to the greatest fraternity in the world. Freemasonry is a large and diverse organization; it offers each member multiple points of interest. It accommodates individuals with many perspectives, beliefs, and backgrounds. We take pride in the many charitable ventures that Masons provide both locally and globally. Freemasonry celebrates these successes due largely to the vision, experience, skills, leadership, and positive attitudes of many of its members.

The common denominator is the positive attitudes. We are able to achieve lofty goals and small, yet essential, tasks due to our positive attitudes. This "can do" spirit reduces obstacles and problems to challenges and opportunities. By taking "ownership" of Masonic projects and programs, those undertakings bring concepts to fruition and pride to the Brethren and the whole Masonic Family.

Positive attitudes can be encouraged as an organizational attribute. Respected members are in the best positions to lead by example. Newer brethren learn that positive attitudes are the normal culture. Many older members will blossom by being given opportunities to be active and constructive in both their lodges and communities. Even those who initially resist demonstrating a positive mindset may eventually adapt to the prevailing culture.

The following is the ancient definition of "Character of a Freemason" printed in the 1823 Farmer's Almanac: The real Freemason is distinguished from the rest of mankind by the uniform, unrestrained rectitude of his conduct. Other men are honest in fear of punishment, which the law might inflict; they are religious in expectation of being rewarded or in dread of the devil in the next world. A Freemason would be just if there were no laws, human or divine, except those written in his heart by the finger of his Creator. In every climate, under every system of religion, he is the same. He kneels before the Universal Throne of God in gratitude for the blessings he has received and humble solicitation for his future protection. He venerates the good men of all religions. Likewise, he disturbs not the religion of others. He restrains his passions because they cannot be indulged without injuring his neighbor or himself. He gives no offense because he does not choose to be offended. Furthermore, he contracts no debts which he is certain he cannot discharge because he is honest on principle.

As an organization, our self-image and public identity are among our most valuable assets. Those intangibles are the currency with which we operate the Craft today and plan for a better future. The one attribute that defines us as Freemasons, more than any other quality, is our positive attitude.

I challenge each of us as Masons, within the scope of our abilities, to be an active proponent of Freemasonry and to daily reflect the collective positive attitude of this great Fraternity.

Respectfully in your service,

Ronald J. Coates  
Right Eminent Grand Commander  
Grand Commandery Knights Templar of Tennessee

## **From the Eminent Grand Prelate**

Sir Knight Dickie W. Johnson, PGC

### **Prelates Devotion for February**

#### **If The Gospel Be Hid**

The Apostle Paul tells us in II Corinthians 4:3, "*But if the gospel be hid, it is hid from them that are lost.*" Jesus is King of Kings and Lord of Lords with the power and authority to even forgive sin! As believers in Jesus, we want the world to know this. There is one in particular that does not want the world to know about our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. That, of course, would be the god of this age, Satan.

"*The god of this age has blinded the minds of unbelievers, so that they cannot see the light of the Gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God.*" (II Cor. 4:4) The work of Satan is to deceive and blind people to the glory of God. His work is to try to keep us from having a relationship with God. Satan uses the allure of pleasures, power, and money that the world offers to blind people to God's love.

Satan is the slickest advertisement man the world has ever seen! He knows that when someone rejects Jesus, they are making him their god. So, it seems that more than ever the world needs the love that God has to offer. We need the peace that calms people and enables them to be good to each other. We need the gospel that tells us the story of Jesus and the love and salvation that He brought into the world.

Paul is right. If the gospel is hid, it is hid from those who need it the most. Jesus told us that a healthy person doesn't need a physician. There is a world around us that is perishing. Our only hope is the salvation that comes through Jesus the Christ.

Will the gospel be hid or will we tell the good news to others? Sometimes it may seem that the world does not want to hear what we have to say. Sometimes we may have to say it with our actions and our attitudes. Remember that Jesus said, "*Let your light so shine before men that they may see your good works and glorify your Father who is in Heaven.*"

The world needs to know that there is a God who loves us even when we are unlovable. That, Sir Knights, is grace, amazing grace, grace that is greater than all our sin!

In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

In His Service,

Dickie W. Johnson, PGC  
Eminent Grand Prelate  
Grand Commandery Knights Templar of Tennessee

# **KNIGHTS TEMPLAR AND KNIGHTS KADOSH, A LETTER FROM ALBERT PIKE**

Wylie B. Wendt, P.C., K.T.C.H., Kentucky

Originally printed: *Knight Templar Magazine*, December 1968

During the week of May 6, 1872, the Supreme Council of the Ancient and Accepted Scottish Rite, Southern Jurisdiction, convened in Louisville, Kentucky, and both Commanderies, Louisville No. 1 and DeMolay No. 12, tendered their services as escort to this visiting body of Masons. The offer was accepted.

It was a knightly act and fully appreciated by the brethren of the Supreme Council, as will be apparent in the following letter written to the Recorder of DeMolay Commandery by Brother (and Sir Knight) Albert Pike, Sovereign Grand Commander of the Supreme Council.

I esteem it (said Brother Pike) to be a singularly good omen for the future of Freemasonry that both Commanderies have, with rare and graceful courtesy, tendered, unsolicited, their services as escort. For although their ceremonial of investiture is different and their government not the same, the Knights Kadosh are Knights of the Holy House of the Temple, of which branch of the Poor Fellow Soldiers of the Temple of Solomon, the Princes of the Royal Secret, and the Inspectors General are but the chiefs. As a Templar degree, that of Knight Kadosh has in other countries been forbidden to be worked. Most of our Kadosh of American birth are also Templars of your branch of the Order and are sincerely desirous to maintain the most intimate relations of amity and brotherhood with the Knights Templar, all of whom are, as Master Masons, their brethren, and as Masons of the Royal Arch, their companions.

Be pleased, my very dear brother, to convey to your Commandery, on behalf of the Supreme Council, its earnest thanks and its glad acceptance of the brotherly service so courteously and kindly tendered.

And be pleased to assure the Commandery that, highly as the Supreme Council will value these generous offers as proof of the estimation in which the Knights Templar of Louisville held it and its members, it will value them far more for the fraternal feeling which has prompted them and the welcome assurance they give that in the State of Kentucky, hereafter, the Knights Templar and the Knights Kadosh, neither jealous of each other nor rivals, will walk hand in hand in the peaceful ways of Freemasonry, pursuing their common purpose of extirpating the worst evils that afflict humanity: injustice, untruth, uncharitableness, and intolerance.

I have the honor to be, as Templar and Kadosh, and in the bonds of Masonic and Knightly brotherhood,

Faithfully and affectionately yours,  
ALBERT PIKE  
Sovereign Grand Commander

Later, members of the Supreme Council were guests of the Knights Templar at a banquet, which brought from the Sovereign Grand Commander another communication under date of May 27, 1872. He wrote:

The Supreme Council, lately in session in your hospitable city, has charged me to communicate its grateful acknowledgement for the excellent courtesy and brotherly kindness displayed by your bodies in acting as escort of the Supreme Council upon the occasion of its holding a Lodge of Sorrow during its late session, as well as for the elegant banquet given its

members and those in attendance upon its session, and for your many other courteous acts of kindness and hospitality and generous welcome.

I perform this duty with infinite pleasure and beg you to accept assurances of the fervent desire of the Supreme Council and all of its members for the increase and prosperity of your Commanderies, and the advancement of your Order, and for your own individual happiness and good fortune."

Signed,  
Albert Pike, Sovereign Grand Commander

The above information was taken from the History of DeMolay Commandery No. 12, Knights Templar, Louisville, Kentucky, printed in 1897.

### **“. . . For Brethren to Dwell Together in Unity”**

An Observation by The Reverend William R. Deutsch, Vicar  
St. John's Episcopal Church, Lockport, Illinois  
Eminent Commander, DuPage Commandery No. 88, Lombard  
Originally printed: *Knight Templar Magazine*, February 1969

Sir Knight Wylie Wendt has done the Craft a great service in his interesting article in the December 1968 Knight Templar Magazine. By reprinting and making Albert Pike's letter generally available, he reminds us that the Knights Templar and the Knights Kadosh are “branches of the same Order.”

We can expand this further. Everyone knows that the York and Scottish Rites differ widely. These differences are striking. The York Rite (like Symbolic Masonry) is organized locally; the bodies of the Scottish Rite include much larger areas. The Scottish Rite has 33 degrees; although the York Rite does not number its degrees, there are 13 degrees and orders. The York Rite, again like Symbolic Masonry, normally confers its degrees and orders on individual candidates; they are “lodge room” degrees. The Scottish Rite degrees are designed for conferral on large groups, are dramatic in form, and are often produced with the skill and polish of the professional theatre. We could extend this list to a much greater extent, but the point is clear. There are great differences between the two Rites.

But there is also a unity. While the differences lie on the surface, the similarities must be sought for in the nature and symbolism of the ceremonies themselves. Is it not interesting that the 13° and 14° of the Scottish Rite have what is really the same legend as the Royal Arch of the York Rite and incorporate much of the “cryptic” degrees? The 15° and 16° cover much of the same ground as the Order of the Red Cross and parts of the Royal Arch degree. The Knight Templar and the Kadosh are, as Sir Knight Wendt reminds us, related. I am convinced that there is a connection between the Order of Malta and the Rose-Croix degree. A study of these striking similarities leads us, it seems to me, to the conclusion that the York Rite and the Scottish Rite give us two forms of the same degrees.

This conclusion is bolstered by the fact that the 5°, 9°, and 10° contain matter that is included in the Master Mason's degree as we know it but which is omitted in the French forms of the Sublime degree. Can we not say that the Scottish Rite and the York Rite are, respectively, the French and English forms of the same degrees? What we know of the historical origins of the two Rites tends to confirm this.

Of course, each Rite has degrees not found in the other. (The Scottish has more than the York.) But this is an accident of history.

The lesson to be learned from this is simple but easily obscured in our daily Masonic practice. There are not two different Masonries—York and Scottish Rite. There is only one Masonry, which

brethren of both Rites share. Each has emphasis and values peculiar to itself, but each is a valid descendant of common ancestors. Many of us belong to both Rites; all of us should rejoice in the brotherly bond of Masonic unity. There is no room for animosity or ill-feeling between the two Rites; we should, all of us, strive to achieve in our fraternal lives the concord inculcated in that verse of scripture so dear to the heart of every Freemason: "Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity!"

(Sir Knight Deutsch, the author, is a former Grand Prelate of the General Grand Chapter.)

### Conferral and Inspection For Tennessee



Sir Knight A. E. McClanahan, who was Knighted January 31, 1918, conferred the Order of the Temple on a group of 38 candidates on this 50th Anniversary as a Knight Templar. Sir Knight McClanahan

is a past presiding officer of all four of the Grand York Rite Bodies in Tennessee and a member of Nashville Commandery No. 1.



Grand Commander B. T. Dawkins, first from left, made his official visit to Kings-

port Commandery No. 33 at Kingsport, Tennessee, November 9.

Photo originally published: *Knight Templar Magazine*, February 1969

## Easter Sunrise Service Trip

Sir Knights,

Just a reminder about the upcoming Easter Sunrise Trip, I currently have 10 spots left on the bus for anyone that would like to ride to Arlington, VA with us. The bus tickets are \$150 for each person and will include all transportation during the trip. All bus payments must be received by me by March 1, 2026. Please contact me at 423-384-5011 or [rtsutton3@gmail.com](mailto:rtsutton3@gmail.com) to reserve your spot.

I hope this will be a memorable trip for all the Sir Knights and wives. We have on our itinerary for the Grand Commandery to lay a wreath at Arlington National Cemetery, tours of the Capital, and several great restaurants. We will end our trip with the Grand Encampment Easter Sunrise Service at the George Washington National Masonic Memorial.

Below is the itinerary and I hope you'll join us to celebrate the Resurrection of our Savior this Easter.

### **Friday 4/3/2026**

7:00 AM EST

Leave Kingsport Lodge No. 688  
2317 Ft. Henry Dr. Kingsport, TN 37664

10:30 AM EST

Stop at Raphine, VA for Lunch  
White's Travel Center- 2440 Raphine Rd. Raphine, VA 24472  
Quaker Steak & Lube, Nathan's Express, White's Deli, Popeye's Kitchen, Papa Johns, & Subway

11:15 PM EST

Leave Raphine

2:15 PM EST

Arrive at Hotel  
Hilton Garden Inn Arlington/Courthouse Plaza- 1333 North Courthouse Road Arlington, VA 22201  
703-528-4444

3:15 PM EST

Leave hotel for Arlington National Cemetery  
1 Memorial Ave. Fort Myer, VA 22211  
Sir Knights requested to be in Uniform minus Sword and Belt

5:00 PM EST

Leave Arlington National Cemetery for Dinner  
McNamara's Pub and Restaurant- 567 23rd St. South Arlington, VA 22202

7:30 PM EST

Return to Hilton Garden Inn Arlington/Courthouse Plaza

## **Saturday 4/4/2026**

Breakfast at Hotel (Complimentary in private room with group code)

8:40 AM EST - 4PM EST

Trip to Old Town Trolley Tours - Group Code - GCTN

Beginning and Ending Location- 50 Massachusetts Ave. NE Washington DC 20002

Lunch on your own.

10:30 AM EST - 3 PM EST

Trip to Fashion Centre at Pentagon City- 1100 S Haynes St. Arlington, VA 22202

Lunch on your own.

6:30 PM EST

Leave Hotel for Dinner

Founding Farmers- 1924 Pennsylvania Ave. NW Washington DC 20006

8:30 PM EST

Return to Hilton Garden Inn Arlington/Courthouse Plaza

## **Sunday 4/5/2026**

Breakfast at Hotel (Hotel will provide free packed breakfast to go)

6:30 AM EST

Leave Hotel for G.W.N.M.M.- 101 Callahan Dr. Alexandria, VA 22301

Sir Knights requested to be in Uniform minus Sword and Belt

Ladies if you are a member of the Beauceant please wear your Red, Black, & White

7:40 AM EST

Parade steps off

8:00 AM EST

Easter Sunrise Service

11:00 AM EST

Return to Hilton Garden Inn Arlington/Courthouse Plaza

12:00 PM EST

Final Checkout and Leave Hotel

3:00 PM EST

Stop at Raphine, VA for Lunch

3:45 PM EST

Leave Raphine

7:00 PM EST

Arrive at Kingsport Lodge No. 688- 2317 Ft. Henry Dr. Kingsport, TN 37664



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## **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.

## **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](mailto:TNKTNewsEditor@gmail.com)