



Grand Commander



R: E: Ray Casey, Jr.

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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. 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

Companions and Sir Knights,

I had the privilege of representing NC at the Grand Encampment Easter Services in Washington DC on April 4th and 5th. The Saturday evening Grand Masters dinner was well attend by Grand Commanders from across the USA and other countries and truly a wonderful evening. On Sunday morning our NC Grand Commandery was represented by the following officers and wives:

- Grand Commander Ray Casey and his wife Linda
- Deputy Grand Commander Edward Allen
- Grand Senior Warden Charles Talley
- Grand Sword Bearer Ken Wical and his wife Nikki

My thanks for their attendance and representing our NC Grand Commandery.

The Grand York Rite Officers District and Area meetings have been well attended, but we always hope for better attendance from our local bodies and their officers and members. Meetings held so far have been in Fayetteville, Salisbury and Waynesville and our thanks to these bodies for such a great reception and meal for all. We have three additional District and Area meetings remaining: May 5th in Lenoir, meal at 6:30 PM, meeting at 7:30 PM at 602 Wilkesboro Blvd. SE; May 6th in Raleigh, meal at 6:30 PM, meeting at 7:30 PM at 9920 Falls of the Neuse Rd.; and May 9th in Greenville (Area Meeting) at 9:00 AM. No meal. Your

Grand York Rite officers are looking forward to greeting everyone in attendance at these remaining meetings. Please make every effort to attend and support York Rite Masonry here in NC.

Companions and Sir Knights, please remember that it takes all of us and more to make YORK RITE successful in NC. Try more, Be more and Do more and success will come. Please let your Grand Officers know of any festivals planned so if our schedules allow we can come be in attendance and support our local bodies.

In your service,

Ray Casey

Grand Commander of North Carolina



The North Carolina Delegation to the Grand Encampment Easter Services



North Carolina York Rite Bodies at Labor

NC York Rite Bodies Hold Joint Festival

The Wilson and Goldsboro York Rite Bodies hosted a Degree Festival on Saturday, February 28, 2026 in Wilson. Sixteen candidates from the Wilson, Goldsboro, Wilmington, Greenville and Elizabeth City Bodies participated in the Festival Degrees and Orders. It is interesting to note that this was the first combined “York Rite Degree Festival” held in the Third District in approximately 18 years. The Festival would not have been the success that it was had it not been for the assistance and support of several York Bodies, including Goldsboro, Wilson, Raleigh, Wilmington and New Bern.

The following Candidates were welcomed into the York Rite at the combined Festival (alphabetical order): Trey Aldapa, Patrick Aycock, Robin Aycock, Brian Burkett, Richard Bandy, Aaron Conover, Jim Fletcher, Clay Jasper, Jim Kolb, Joe Kyle, Bradley Moore, Ronald Raines, Shane Snedecor, Zachary Stanley, Steve White, and Corbett Williams.

This article and the accompanying photo were submitted by V.E. Deputy Grand Commander, Edward Allen



The Third District Joint Festival 2026 Class (pictured with Marc Fusco, Classroom Instructor)

Lafayette York Rite College #211

At a recent Stated meeting, Governor Greg Conner presented an excerpt on the Mark Masters, William Schaw (Master of Works to James VI) history telling of the Masons Word, Operative and Speculative Masonry, the Schaw lodges, the Mason John Theophilus Desaguliers behind The Hiram Legend Development (18th Century), and "the art of memory" from the book *The Origins of Freemasonry* by David Stevenson.

Charlotte AMD Councils Honor Leaders

The Charlotte AMD bodies formally recognized three members for their excellent work in serving as Sovereign Masters last year. Charlotte is fortunate enough to host three AMD Councils: Howell #3a, Four Crowned Martyrs #14, and Trinity #32. For the last several years, these three Councils have met conjointly and concurrently, rotating control of meetings among them. At their Stated meeting on April 29, the following Companions were honored: James Howell, Past Sovereign Master of Howell Council #3a; Brett Porterfield, Past Sovereign Master of Four Crowned Martyrs Council #14; and Richard Gelsomino, Past Sovereign Master of Trinity Council #32.



*Charlotte AMD Councils Past Sovereign Masters (L to R):
Richard Gelsomino, James Howell, and Brett Porterfield (photo courtesy of Rob Dull)*

NC Grand York Rite Officers Assist at Daughters of the Nile Installation

Grand Standard Bearer Mike Pritchard (pictured far left) and Most Excellent Grand High Priest John Walston, Jr. (pictured far right) were on hand for the Installation of Queen Jennifer Coconato (pictured front center) and her officers, for Latona Temple #154 Daughters of the Nile. Also assisting in the ceremony were members of the Demolay Honor Guard.



The Journey through Masonry: A Discussion on “Understanding Where We Fit”

When I was in college, one of my favorite songs was *My Place in This World* by Michael W. Smith. For those who are unfamiliar with it, the lyrics go:

The wind is moving, but I am standing still, a life of pages waiting to be filled. A heart that is hopeful and a head that is full of dreams. But this becoming is harder than it seems. (Chorus). If there are millions down on their knees among the many, can you still hear me? Hear me asking, ‘Where do I belong? Is there a vision I can call my own’? Show me. (Chorus).

The chorus is: *I’m looking for a reason. Roaming though the night to find my place in this world, my place in this world. Not a lot to lean on I need your light to help me find my place in this world, my place in this world.*

The reason I wanted to share this is that in studying my own life, that of some of my fellow Masons, and that of the Templar Knights, it appears we are all constantly looking for that which gives our life meaning as well to connect with our Creator. I personally think that this last aspect is key to the reasoning that to be a part of Freemasonry, a belief in one’s Creator is so important. It’s true that in order to keep one’s oath as sworn before God, a belief in a God is understandably necessary. But still, oaths can be broken intentionally or unintentionally. Honestly how many times have we each “promised” to do something and due to life we were not able to keep it?

The Knights Templar wanted a way to connect with their Creator while also discovering ways to learn more about themselves. They did this through their discovery of different types of knowledge; and also through service, battle, directives from their supportive religious authority, and fellowship with each other. Truly while working as an Order, they were trying to find “their place in that world,” just as we seek to find our own place within ours.

How often do we wonder if our Creator hears us? Among so many offering up prayers, making

requests, and even seeking wisdom - do we sit back and consider how we are heard among all the others? Some may consider themselves special in the eye of the Creator; while others may simply see us all as equal in His eyes. However, as individuals we are each seeking validation not only from each other, but from our Creator.

In Matthew 6:26 Jesus is quoted as saying:

Look at the birds of the air, for they neither sow nor reap nor gather into barns; yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not of more value than they?

Continuing in verse 31 Jesus goes on to say,

Therefore do not worry, saying ‘What shall we eat?’ or ‘What shall we drink?’ or ‘What shall we wear?’ ... For your heavenly Father knows that you need all these things. But seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added to you. Therefore do not worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will worry about its own things. Sufficient for the day is its own trouble.

Is it fair to say that our concerns as to how we fit in this world, and what we are destined to accomplish, are not justified? Considering what Jesus said, we are developing these possibly out of mere anxiety, from simply not knowing the answers. But instead of simply dismissing them, He speaks with compassion, assuring us that these anxieties are understood by our Creator; and that all will be provided if we truly trust in Him, rather than in these fears that do no more than weigh us down. We also need to trust in each other, as the Knights did and as many of our soldiers do now. We can support each other. Through our faith in our Creator, we will come to know that all will be as He wills it in the end, and that He is there with us through it all on this journey - allowing us choice, but still guiding our steps.

This article was submitted by SK S. Alex Wilson, of Ivanhoe Commandery #8