

# Tennessee Knight Templar News

SIR KNIGHT ROY T. SUTTON III, RIGHT EMINENT GRAND COMMANDER  
GRAND COMMANDERY KNIGHTS TEMPLAR OF TENNESSEE

October A.D. 2026 / A.O. 908

Edited by: Jesse J. Harper, KCT



On September 22<sup>nd</sup>, Dickson Commandery #41 conferred the Order of the Temple on Steven Kenneth Lampley  
Photo Courtesy of Past Grand Commander Burks Taylor

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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)

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



**From the Right Eminent Grand Commander**  
**ROY T. SUTTON III, KTCH**  
**RIGHT EMINENT GRAND COMMANDER**  
**Grand Commandery Knights Templar of Tennessee**



**October Message**

Sir Knights,

September was a busy month of Inspections and great fellowship. I want to thank the Knights of Coeur de Lion, Manchester, Murfreesboro, Cyprus, Cyrene, and Lookout for great meals and wonderful Inspections. I am proud of these Knights and all the Commanderies of Tennessee this year for the focus of giving our candidates the best experience possible.

As we start October, we will be having the last few Inspections of 2026 and we still have a great event coming up at the Outdoor Order of the Temple. I want to invite every Knight to join us in Chuckey, TN at Kary Branch. The Knights of Upper East TN have been working hard to make this a memorable experience for both visitors and our candidate.

We plan on using the outdoor grill to have hotdogs and hamburgers and will begin serving around 6pm. The plan is to start the conferral as soon as it's dark outside. We do recommend all visitors bring a camping chair to be comfortable and a jacket. It can get cool very quickly on the mountain after dark.

We hope everyone can join us Friday, October 9 for this and all are welcome to stay in the area for the final two Inspections the following day.

Please keep the upcoming dates in your calendar:

**Outdoor Order of the Temple** – October 9, 2026 at Katy Branch in Chuckey, TN

The Commanderies of Upper East TN will be conferring the Order of the Temple outside at Katy Branch in Chuckey, TN. There is no address for this location but directions can be found by searching Katy Branch on Google Maps. We will have signs to help guide anyone that would like to join us. The facility does have a shelter with bathrooms and a kitchen on site. Please bring your own chair for the conferral as most will happen in an open field. We will begin the conferral around 7pm (depending on daylight) and due to being in the mountains in October, I suggest bringing an extra coat with you.

**KTEF Golf Tournament** – October 17, 2026 at Graysburg Golf Course

The Golf Tournament that was originally scheduled for May was postponed to October due to weather. If you would like to register a team and support KTEF, please contact Sammy Dennison at [Sammy.dennison2013@gmail.com](mailto:Sammy.dennison2013@gmail.com), George Hughes at [gchughes30@gmail.com](mailto:gchughes30@gmail.com), or Chuck Stanton at [cstanton279@gmail.com](mailto:cstanton279@gmail.com). Lunch will be provided with the team fee and will be served at Noon and the Tournament will have a shotgun start at 1:30pm. Please reach out to these Knights if you or your Commandery would like to be a hole-sponsor.

**October Spotlight of the Constitution, Laws, and Regulations of the Grand Commandery, Knights  
Templar of Tennessee**

**Section 51.**

Commanderies may appear in uniform, without sword and chapeau, at the request of any Lodge, Chapter or Council to confer appropriate degrees and may appear in full uniform at any appropriate ceremony conducted by any Masonic body. 1974. 31.

**October Spotlight of the CONSTITUTION, STATUTES, DISCIPLINARY RULES, STANDING  
RESOLUTIONS, CEREMONIES, FORMS AND APPROVED DECISIONS OF THE Grand  
Encampment of Knights Templar of the United States of America**

**DISPLAY OF THE HOLY BIBLE**

The Holy Bible shall be displayed at all Conclaves of the Grand Encampment, the Grand Commanderies and all Constituent and Subordinate Commanderies on a stand, pedestal" or small altar in front of the Prelate's station on the floor of the Asylum, to the left (south) of the United States flag; it shall be placed with the top to the east, opened to the Gospel of St. Mathew, Chapter XXVIII, with a small wooden passion cross displayed thereon. Two crossed swords may also be displayed thereon.

It is to be opened by the Grand Prelate or Prelate, immediately after the Conclave is declared convened or opened; and closed by the Grand Prelate or Prelate when the Conclave is declared adjourned or closed.

The altar shall be covered with a black or white cloth cover; on the front of which a red Passion Cross may be embroidered. (1967, p. 245).

Sir Knights, as always, both myself and your Grand Officers are here for any questions or help you or your Commandery may need. Please reach out to us for any Conferrals happening in your local Commanderies so we can help promote them through email and social media.

Roy T. Sutton III, KTCH  
Right Eminent Grand Commander  
Grand Commandery Knights Templar Of Tennessee



# From the Eminent Grand Prelate

Sir Knight Gary W. Coates

## Prelates Devotion for October

### Harvesting God's Love

*"There is a time for everything, and a season for every activity under the heavens." – Ecclesiastes 3:1*

October is a beautiful month; the air cools, the leaves change color, and it's a perfect time to slow down, reflect, and draw closer to God. It is a time to harvest and realize that Autumn is a part of God's divine design. October is the ideal time of year to seek His counsel, renew our trust, and realign our hearts with His promises as the year enters its last quarter.

This well-known verse serves as a reminder that every season has its purpose. October symbolizes transition and change, prompting us to reflect on the cycles of life. Recognizing these times helps us embrace our own journeys and reminds us to trust in God's timing for each phase of our lives.

*"How many are your works, Lord! In wisdom you made them all; the earth is full of your creatures." – Psalm 104:24*

This verse beautifully captures the creativity of God in nature. As we celebrate October, we're reminded to marvel at the works of His hands. The earth is rich with life and beauty, encouraging us to appreciate the gifts around us and recognize God's intention in making such a world.

*"But those who hope in the Lord will renew their strength. They will soar on wings like eagles; they will run and not grow weary; they will walk and not be faint." – Isaiah 40:31*

In this season of transformation, we are called to renew our strength through faith. October often brings a sense of renewal as we prepare for the upcoming months. Trusting in God ensures that we can overcome our challenges, reminding us that He is our source of strength.

Sir Knights, as we go forth in this time of harvest, let each of us reflect on the past, endure today, have faith in tomorrow, and with a childlike trust in our crucified and ascended Savior, look forward to glorious reunion with our Blessed Redeemer.

"Turn on your heart light!"

"Let It shine for all the world to see!"

In God's Service,

Gary W. Coates, KTCH

Eminent Grand Prelate

Grand Commandery Knights Templar of Tennessee

## Knight of the Holy Land Jewel

Sir Knights,

The Knights Templar Holy Land Pilgrimage is a program of the Grand Encampment Knights Templar of the United States of America.

Our Mission: To send credentialed Christian Ministers on a Biblical study and historical and cultural immersion experience who would not have the opportunity otherwise.

Purpose: To strengthen Christian ministry by providing an intensive travel and study program for credentialed ministers in the form of a study pilgrimage to the Holy Land.

Our experience tells us how much the opportunity to “walk where Jesus walked” can positively affect the preaching, teaching, and spirituality of Christian ministers. It is our plan to immerse the Pilgrim ministers in the land, the sights, the sounds, the history, and the cultures of the Holy Land, past and present.

The Grand Commandery of Tennessee has recognized the value of such a program and has made a commitment to support this important ministry. A few years back, an Endowment Fund was established so that we might be able to have funding available to send at least one minister annually in perpetuity. And while we have made tremendous progress in raising the needed funds for this Endowment, the designated goal has not yet been realized in order to begin utilizing the benefits from its investments.

One of the fundraising tools that was initially employed for the Endowment, was the design, creation, and sales of our Tennessee Holy Land Pilgrimage Jewel (pictured below), which has been approved by the Grand Encampment of Knights Templar, USA, to display on our Class A uniforms. This Jewel program is still in place, and the opportunity to support our Endowment through this endeavor is still readily available.

The Knight of the Holy Land Jewel can be obtained through a cumulative donation of \$1000. This can be made in either a single donation or over the course of multiple payments, which are tracked through our Grand Recorder's office. It is available for purchase by both Sir Knights, and to Commanderies for presentation. This is a very simple way to show your support for this ministry, and EVERY Tennessee Sir Knight is encouraged to participate. If you would like to participate in the support of OUR Endowment, a link to the proper form is attached for your convenience. Just complete it, enclose the funds as desired, and send it in to the Grand Recorder. It's just that simple.



If ONE lost soul can come to know Christ as Lord and Savior over their life, it will have been worth every penny spent. So ask yourself, “What is MY salvation worth to me?” Please take time to pray over this opportunity and follow your heart where the Lord leads.

May God Bless each of you,

Bobby Blankenship, KTCH  
Very Eminent Deputy Grand Commander

## A Message from the Civic and Patriotic Committee

September 29, 2026

Sir Knights,

As we enter the final quarter of 2026, the Civic and Patriotic Committee would like to remind you to continue with your Observances.

A civic or patriotic observance can be any activity that is connected to your community or celebrates our state or nation. Being 2026, we are still celebrating our nation's 250<sup>th</sup> Birthday. Even though it is past July 4<sup>th</sup>, we can still celebrate our 250<sup>th</sup>. October 7 is the anniversary of the Battle of Kings Mountain, in which Tennesseans took a major part. Find opportunities to celebrate milestones in your community and incorporate them into your annual schedule of observances.

In November we have three major opportunities to hold an observance. Election Day as well as Veterans Day would be suitable for a program. If your Commandery is able, consider having a few of your knights sign up as poll workers with your county election commission. Present a flag for display to a local public or private school. Present the Colors at a local Veterans Day program. Honor an elected official or veteran in your community. Purchase restaurant gift cards for military recruiters in your local area. These are just a few suggestions.

Thanksgiving is one of our major holidays, and was originally proclaimed by Brother and President George Washington to give thanks for our new form of government. This would be another excellent opportunity to hold a civic/patriotic program in your Commandery. Perhaps your Commandery would be able to help serve food at a shelter for the homeless or help with other programs for those less fortunate. These are ways to let the community know who we are and what we stand for.

Looking farther in the calendar, please remember to plan your Commandery's Christmas Observance, or join with others in your battalion. This can be either open to the public or for knights only. It is permissible to hold two observances, one open and one closed. Be sure to note this in your report.

Thank you to all who have diligently submitted reports, and as always please feel free to contact us if you have a question.

Courteously,

Robbie Beam PGC,  
Civic and Patriotic Committee, Chairman

## Reflections on 9/11

I was asked by our Right Eminent Grand Commander to commit a few words, to commemorate the 25th anniversary of the 9/11 attacks and their impact on our Fraternity. I can offer only a personal reflection on that day and my experience as a Mason.

September 8, 2001, was a hot, dry Saturday. Before dawn, I began receiving my York Rite degrees and Commandery Orders. It was a long day, culminating that evening in the Order of the Temple. Without revealing our ritual, I left remembering one vow: to wage war against the enemies of innocent maidens, destitute widows, helpless orphans, and the Christian religion. A few days later, that vow came sharply to mind.

Tuesday, September 11, 2001, was my first day back at work as a patrol sergeant for the Jackson, Tennessee, Police Department. The night before, I prepared my equipment as usual. Then my wife called to say we were under attack. Like most Americans, I turned on the news in horror. I do not remember ever feeling angrier than I did watching people jump from the World Trade Centers to their deaths. As more information emerged, we learned we were at war with an enemy who had twisted religious belief into violence against innocents. I was 34, with three children at home, and wanted to grab a rifle and fulfill the obligation I had taken only days earlier. I believe that day was the last time America stood united as one people.

Several years later, I found a way to get into that fight. The U.S. government created a program to send American police officers to train forces in Iraq and Afghanistan. By then, I had been a police officer for 16 years and had recently watched a coworker die after being fatally injured during an attempted robbery. The program seemed like a way to serve my country. It was not necessarily the wisest decision I ever made, but life is full of unwise decisions. This is what makes us humans who we are. I spent a year in Iraq as a police trainer and became deeply disillusioned. The 2005–2006 insurgency took many good American lives. My bunk mate at Camp Victory, Brian M. Brian, was killed by an IED in East Baghdad in October 2006. My interpreter, an Armenian Iraqi Christian, named Matthias, was killed by a sniper that December.

After coming home, I realized I had changed. I drove in a serpentine pattern and expected every piece of roadside trash to contain an IED. Many who served during the Iraq War carry similar burdens. I later channeled much of that experience into the National Sojourners, which serves as a form of therapy for veterans of Vietnam, Iraq, and Afghanistan. For our young men who are veterans of the wars, I cannot recommend this Masonic organization enough.

I later spent a year as a police trainer in Afghanistan, working out of Bagram Airfield. On September 11, 2013, our squad was ambushed in a neighborhood where indirect fire had been launched at the airfield. It mattered to me to return fire there rather than on American soil. Despite heavy fire from both sides, no one was hit, to my knowledge on either side. Several weeks later, one of our young sergeants was killed nearby after a similar incident. I came home for good in January 2014. Each return from overseas revealed a changed America. I missed important years with my two youngest daughters: two years while working for the United Nations in Haiti and nearly a year in Afghanistan. None of it would have happened without September 11, 2001.

During my travels, I met Masons from many countries—men of great character who were proud of their membership. I also encouraged young soldiers to consider the Masonic Fraternity as a place for male camaraderie when they returned home. My counterpart in the 118th MP Company accepted that invitation, as did a young specialist with whom I still speak periodically.

These are among the greatest Americans alive, and I am pleased that many have joined our Fraternity and continue to contribute. As I write this, it is September 11, 2026. I now oversee a school resource officer program of 30 personnel. This morning, I reminded my two sergeants that today marks the 25th anniversary of

the 9/11 attacks, that we are again at war, and that children remain high-value targets. I left the United States hoping that carrying a rifle might spare my children and grandchildren from threats against Western civilization and our Christian religion. I no longer have faith in that goal. I hope that, in God's good time, our Redeemer will return and end humanity's relentless urge to kill one another forever.

My prayer for America is that we focus on what's important now instead of trying to destroy one another. Our Fraternity is a powerful force for good. I am biased, having had the privilege of serving as Grand Commander, but I believe that if we show our fellow citizens what our Commandery Orders truly mean in practice, they will see that we back our faith with action, and make the world a better place, because we Masons were in it.

Billy Barnett Young, PGC

## 2026 Grand Commandery Inspection Schedule

### Week 7

|          |          |                    |                                       |             |
|----------|----------|--------------------|---------------------------------------|-------------|
| Thursday | 10/01/26 | Greeneville No. 43 | 540 E. Andrew Johnson Hwy Greeneville | 7:00 PM EST |
| Friday   | 10/02/26 | Appalachia No. 45  | 5400 N. Broadway St. Knoxville, TN    | 7:00 PM EST |
| Saturday | 10/03/26 | Carter No. 37      | 410 E Doe Ave. Elizabethton, TN       | 9:00 AM EST |
| Saturday | 10/03/26 | Watauga No. 25     | 304 W. Watauga Ave. Johnson City, TN  | 3:00 PM EST |

### Week 8

|          |          |                  |                                  |             |
|----------|----------|------------------|----------------------------------|-------------|
| Saturday | 10/10/26 | St. Omer No. 19  | 35 5th St. Bristol, TN           | 9:00 AM EST |
| Saturday | 10/10/26 | Kingsport No. 33 | 2317 Ft. Henry Dr. Kingsport, TN | 3:00 PM EST |

RIGHT EMINENT GRAND COMMANDER ROY T. SUTTON III HOMECOMING  
MEALS SERVED ONE HOUR PRIOR TO THE MEETING

## September Inspection Photos



Coeur de Lion Commandery #9



Manchester Commandery #40



Murfreesboro Commandery #10

## September Inspection Photos



Cyprus Commandery #23



Cyrene Commandery #34



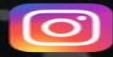
Lookout Commandery #14



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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