



Clemson Lodge No. 254 Ancient Free Masons

372 College Ave. Clemson, South Carolina

Chartered December 9, 1903

<http://clemsonlodge.org>



ANSWERS TO YOUR QUESTIONS ABOUT OUR FRATERNITY

WHAT IS FREEMASONRY?

Freemasonry is the oldest, largest, and most widely known fraternity in the world. But throughout its history, its structure and teachings have remained a mystery to many, and myths and misconceptions about the fraternity have arisen.

Exactly when Freemasonry began is not known for certain, but many historians trace the beginnings of Masonry to the Middle-Ages, when stonemasons and other craftsmen traveled throughout Europe. These men were known as free masons because, unlike bondsmen, they were free to move where their work demanded. These free masons would gather in shelter houses, or lodges, and eventually organized themselves into Masonic guilds, using the secrets of their craft to identify themselves as masons. The square and compass, the tools of the mason's trade, became the symbol of their brotherhood.

When the need for such builders declined, "Speculative" or "Symbolic" Masonry evolved, using the customs and tools of the craft to convey moral truths. The growing organization attracted men of integrity and good will, and the Masonic guilds began to accept members who were not masons, calling them "accepted masons". The fraternity finally became known in some jurisdictions as "Ancient Free and Accepted Masons", and in other jurisdictions as "Free and Accepted Masons". In South Carolina, the fraternity is known as "Ancient Free Masons".

Today, Freemasonry is composed of men bound together, not by trade, but by their desire to be fraternal brothers. The tools of those early builders have remained as symbols to help Masons understand and remember the teachings of the fraternity.

Through tile improvement and strengthening of the individual's character, Masonry seeks to improve the community and to make good men better through belief in the Brotherhood of Man and a Fatherhood of God, and the immortality of the soul.

The organizational unit of Masonry is the Blue Lodge or Craft Lodge. When a man has been accepted for membership, he proceeds through three degrees called Entered Apprentice, Fellowcraft, and finally Master Mason, which is the highest degree in Freemasonry. It is through these degrees that the teachings of Masonry are first presented.

Lodges organize to form a Grand Lodge, which governs Lodges in a specified territory. In most of North America, each state or province is governed by its own Grand Lodge. While the various Grand Lodges are bound together by tradition and custom, each is sovereign and autonomous in its own jurisdiction. There is no central governing body for any group of Grand Lodges or for Masonry as a whole, although some Grand Lodges do gather for Masonic conferences where they discuss issues of interest to the individual jurisdictions.

The only requirements for Masonic membership are that a man must be of good moral character, profess belief in a Supreme Being, and be at least eighteen years of age. Some lodges also impose a residence requirement.

One of the customs of the fraternity is that a man must join of his own free will. Masonry does not conduct membership "drives" to supplement its membership roster. A man desiring to become a Mason must first request a petition from a friend who is a Mason; then he must be recommended to the Lodge by two Masons and pass a ballot of Lodge Members. Masonry does not permit direct or open membership solicitation. A potential candidate should make his own decision and come of his own free will and accord.

The fraternity utilizes certain rituals, symbols and signs of recognition that are not made public, but Masonry is not a secret society. Its only secrets are its methods of recognition and symbolic instruction. It does not hide its existence, and many Masons proudly wear Masonic rings, tie clips or lapel pins. Masonry is NOT a religion, though it is religious in character, requiring a belief in the existence of a Supreme Being. Masonry accepts men regardless of their religion and encourages them to participate in their respective religious services and to worship according to their faith.

What is a Mason?

A Mason is a man and brother whose trust is in God; he will meet you on the Level and act upon the Square. Truth is his Compass and he is ever Plumb. He has a grip on all that is right. He is loyal to his order and whatever his degree; he is master of himself. In the lodge of life, he wears unstained the white lambskin of innocence. From his initiation as Entered Apprentice he travels ever toward the East in search of light and wisdom until he receives the Final, the divine Password that admits him into the ineffable presence of the Eternal Supreme Grand Master of the Universe - **GOD**.

The Masonic Belief

There is one God, the Father of all men.

The Holy Bible is the Great Light in Masonry, and the Rule and Guide for faith and practice.

Man is mortal, his soul is immortal. Character determines destiny.

Love of man is, next to love of God, man's first duty. Prayer, communion of man with God, is helpful.

The Masonic Teaching

Masonry teaches man to practice charity and benevolence, to protect chastity, to respect the ties of blood and friendship, to adopt the principles and revere the ordinances of religion, to assist the feeble, guide the blind, raise up the down trodden, shelter the orphan, guard the alter, support the government, inculcate morality, promote learning, love man, fear God, implore His mercy and hope for happiness.

Visiting Brethren Always WELCOME!

FOR MORE INFORMATION CALL

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