



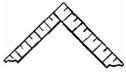
ST. JAMES LODGE NO. 47 F. & A. M.

CHARTERED JUNE 25, 1844

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STATED COMMUNICATIONS: 1ST AND 3RD THURSDAYS AT 7:30 PM
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Monthly Newsletter- August 2016



From the EAST

Greetings from the East Brethren!

HOME — such a simple seeming 4-letter word, and yet it has the power to immediately conjure up memories of places and people from long ago. I'd be willing to bet that when most of you read that word at least a flash of a specific place passed quickly through your mind. For some it might be the place you currently live, for some it might be the house you grew up in, for others it might be more of a general place and encompasses a larger area, but everyone has a place that the word evokes.

We talk about HOME in many different ways, saying that things are "homey" or maybe that certain things "smell like home". A common saying is "Home is where your heart is", and another is "Home is not a place, it's a feeling". We might say that our place of worship is our "spiritual home", or that when a loved one passes that they have gone to their "eternal home".

As society has become more mobile the definition and ties to HOME have changed. There was a time, not that long ago really, when the vast majority of people never traveled more than 25 miles from the place they were born. It is easy to define all aspects of HOME within that small bubble. A recent Pew Study indicates that just a bit less than 40% of Americans have lived their entire lives in their home town, they've had more opportunities to travel and see other places, but they've chosen never to move away from the place they were born. In the same study a similar portion of people (38%) answered that they define HOME as someplace other than where they actually live today.

I bring this up to ask three questions:

I believe that when people basically didn't move out of the communities they were born into it was much easier for religious and social institutions to be the center of communities. As a larger proportion of the community has become almost transient in nature those institutions have lost their centrality to the community experience, which is the opposite of what would be ideal. Ideally those institutions would have helped integrate the movers into the community. As a side effect of the increased movement of people the "stayers" have drawn more inward into extended family groups, again diminishing the community. My question to you is, Freemasonry was once seen as a portion of the glue holding a community together, in today's world how can we best aid in restoring a small sense of community?

I am one of those people who define home as someplace other than where I live. I really enjoy living in Louisiana, I would not trade the experiences I have had here, the friends I have made, and the events that have shaped my life for anything, but to me the word HOME smells like Sagebrush. I'm curious how you define HOME.

My final question is this, does your Lodge feel like a type of HOME to you? When we are fulfilling the promises of Freemasonry and are genuinely changing Men's lives and characters that is a powerful transformation. A transformation that can only take place in a place where you feel secure, accepted, and welcome; a place with a true sense of community. While I don't believe that a Masonic Lodge can ever truly be all that the word HOME encompasses for most people, I do believe that in order truly take good men and make them better men the Lodge must have some of the character of a place you could say is home.

Fraternally yours,

Jeff Maynor
Worshipful Master

FUTURE EVENTS:

I'd also like to take just a moment to remind you of some upcoming events at the Lodge:

- * On July 21st, depending on the progress of some of our Entered Apprentices we may be conferring a Fellowcraft degree, or we will have an educational topic presented.
- * On August 4th we will be conferring an Entered Apprentice Degree.

Finally I'd like to remind you that our fall Guest Night is coming up on September 1st (right before Labor Day weekend!) and it is never too early to invite a good man to join us for an evening of good fellowship.

You can always find the latest updates on upcoming meetings via our Google Calendar (<http://stjameslodge47.us13.list-manage.com/track/click?u=c8e5a610ca7299f26e504c51e&id=8401fa1111a&e=76d6d118ee>), which is available on our Website (<http://stjameslodge47.us13.list-manage1.com/track/click?u=c8e5a610ca7299f26e504c51e&id=edbe74c92b&e=76d6d118ee>), along with the latest copy of the Newsletter (<http://stjameslodge47.us13.list-manage.com/track/click?u=c8e5a610ca7299f26e504c51e&id=d07ca8b642&e=76d6d118ee>).

I look forward to seeing you all in Lodge, until then I remain,

Fraternally yours,

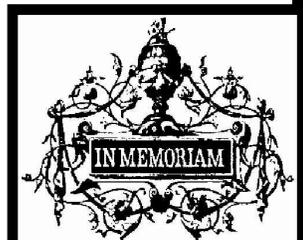
Jeff Maynor
Worshipful Master
St. James Lodge No. 47 F&AM



Brethren, it is my sad duty to inform you that W:Bro Naresh Sharma. passed away July 17th after a long illness.

W:Bro Adib Shahla lost his mother July 20th.

We pray that their loved ones are comforted by our sharing their sorrow and caring.





St. James Lodge No. 47
Post Office Box 444
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Newsletter

August 2016

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NOTES

Membership Rosters are available in the Tyler's room when you attend Lodge or can be emailed by making a request to Bro Richard Black at rwblack@gmail.com Please inform him of changes in your mailing address, email address or phone numbers.

If you received a copy of this newsletter by US Postal Service, have computer access with an e-mail address and want to help the Lodge save money, please send your e-mail address to Bro Richard Black at rwblack@gmail.com so that he can update the database.

You will then receive an e-mail each month with a link that you can follow to read the latest news letter on line.

Other Masonic Events

Acacia Shrine meets at 7:00 PM every 3rd Wednesday at 7991 S. Commerce Ave. Dinner is served at 6:00 p.m.

Downtown York Rite Bodies meet on the 1st Saturday of each month at 8:00 a.m. with breakfast at 7:30 a.m. at St. James Lodge.

Lodge of the Nine Muses #9, F&AM, meets on the 2nd Wednesday of each month at St. James Lodge. The meeting starts at 6:30 PM. If you are interested in visiting, contact one of the members for dress code and other details.

Livingston Certificate Association meets at 6:30 P.M on the first Friday of each month, with dinner at 6 P.M., at Pine Grove Lodge # 288 on Pine Street, in Ponchatoula, LA.

Scottish Rite Baton Rouge Valley meets on the 2nd Monday of each month, dinner at 6:30 PM, meeting at 7:30 PM, at the Consistory on Florida Boulevard. The Advisory Council meets at the Consistory at 6:00 P.M. on the 2nd Monday of the month, prior to the normal stated meeting.

Baton Rouge Certificate Association meets at 7 P.M. with dinner at 6:30 P.M. on the third Friday of each month at Trinity Union Lodge # 372.

Your article could have been here. Submit articles to Bob Zinn, N5bz@cox.net

DEADLINE FOR ARTICLE SUBMISSION: 3 days after the 2nd regular meeting of the month!

If it isn't in my e-mail box by then it won't go in the newsletter for that month.

Request To Membership:

Please notify our Secretary, W: Bro Mark Paxton, and Bro Richard Black rwblack@gmail.com of any change in your postal address, email address, or phone number!!!!

Greetings Brethren,

I have seen some interesting things over the past few weeks. I have seen new brothers initiated, others raised. There was a Table Lodge, which I had never before been a part of. I have seen friendships formed, and quarrels between brothers.

I watched the great St. James building debate take shape, which, in my opinion, was comparable to watching a thunderstorm blow up on a hot Louisiana summer afternoon: a great sight to behold that was both awe inspiring and terrible, sometimes leaving in its path, a little destruction. The winds blow, lightning flashes, hail falls at times, and sometimes a tornado finds its way to a trailer park. After the storm, there are Blue skies, birds sing, and life giving rain replenishes an often dry earth. This is the blessing, disguised by the fearful thunder, which came before.

I watched the discussion from afar, often not interjecting my opinion of the matter. I heard tempers flashing, and men speaking passionately of what they believe the right course of action should be. The storm, if you would, has given us a show.

I believe it is time for us to collectively look forward to the storm passing, and think of what we will do, as a lodge, when the skies clear.

We have to remember that the lodge is us, we are the brick and mortar, and that its foundation is built upon our mutual desires to do what is best for St. James.

As long as we remember this, we can outlast any winds that come against us.

As always in my closing, I ask all of you to please bring forth your food ideas to me. Larry and I will endeavor to prepare whatever the lodge may want, and we are happy to serve. Volunteers are always welcome, and strongly encouraged. Help us out when you can. Many hands do indeed make smaller chores.

Casey Guy
Junior Warden

Was Jesus a Carpenter or a Stone Mason?

It may be that as speculative Masons, we would not care what occupation an individual practices. That may be the case generally unless the individual is Jesus Christ.

It was brought to my attention several months ago, that Jesus may not have been a carpenter. This notion was presented to me by someone that I respect and know to be a Bible scholar. She suggested that I do some research by starting with the original Hebrew texts of Matthew, one of the 12 Disciples and Mark, who was not one of the 12 and wrote his gospel in Greek.

With this in mind, did God actually say that His Son was a carpenter during His 30 year stay on earth?

One theologian, Preston Sprinkle, who received a Ph.D. in Scotland in New Testament studies and taught at Nottingham University, and Cedarville University, stated, "Maybe, but maybe not. The text is not that clear." He concluded that most likely, Jesus was not a carpenter but a stone mason; however, this is just as unclear as the tradition about Jesus being a carpenter.

So what was Jesus' vocation growing up?

To be clear, we don't have any record in the New Testament about Jesus working with wood, laying stones, or helping his "adoptive" father out in the shop. The only references we have to Jesus' vocation are the two times when He is called a *tekton* or the son of a *tekton* (the word often translated "carpenter").

"Is not this the carpenter (*tekton*), the son of Mary and brother of James and Joses and Judas and Simon?" (Mark 6:3).

"Is not this the carpenter's (*tekton*) son? Is not his mother called Mary?" (Matt 13:55)

Now, *tekton* could refer to a carpenter or a stonemason, but the word simply refers to "one who works with his hands." If someone wants to describe a carpenter, the phrase they'd use would be "a *tekton* of wood;" if a mason, then "a *tekton* of stone." The absence of either stone or wood as a modifier indicates that the gospel writers didn't specify which occupation Jesus and his "adoptive" father were engaged. Mark 6:3 and Matthew 13:55 simply say that they worked with their hands—they were laborers who performed physically demanding and socially shameful jobs, which is the point. In highlighting Jesus' occupation, the point is not that Jesus was a carpenter and not, say, a fisherman or a mason (or a mason and not a carpenter, etc.), but that Jesus was a blue-collar worker and not a white collar worker; a peasant and not a noble; a man of humble origins and was not born into a family of high social standing.

So how did the tradition arise that Jesus was a carpenter?

In the early church, some leaders assumed that Jesus worked with wood. Justin Martyr, an early Christian apologist, for instance, noted that Jesus made various farm instruments out of wood—plows, yokes, and other tools (Dial. 88). In an effort to glorify Jesus' humble occupation, the Gnostic Infancy Gospel of Thomas has the boy Jesus miraculously extending wood that his father cut too short. Dr. Sprinkle wrote, "In any case, the retelling of Jesus' vocation as a woodworker became as firm as a 2x4, so that even today this tradition is more or less assumed."

Again, maybe Jesus was a carpenter or a stonemason—or maybe he tried his hand at both. The text isn't clear. The point of the reference to his occupation in Mark 6/Matt 13 is to show that our Savior, born in a feeding trough to an underprivileged couple with a shameful reputation (does anything good come from Nazareth?), learned the trade of a peasant. He was a *tekton*, he worked with his hands, unlike the high and mighty kings of the day. In doing so, Jesus exemplifies Deuteronomy 17—the king whose "heart may not be lifted up above his brothers."

As a pastor I find such questions interesting and I believe as Masons, we should study the Scriptures and not just read through the verses. It is through studying that we find answers to those questions we have yet to consider.

Fraternally,
Larry

Education committee article **Fulfilling the Promises of Freemasonry to the Lodge**

In the book of Luke, Chapter 10; verses 38-42 of the Christian Faith, is the lesson of Mary and Martha serving. I say serving, because Mary sits and listens to the Rabbi teach, while Martha prepares for the feast. Outdone by Mary not helping, Martha asks the Teacher to tell Mary to help her. For those who know the story, we know that doesn't happen.

The lesson is that we are all called to serve in different ways. It is our duty to serve each other in ways that focus our talents as well as our abilities to make the world a better place. Some of us are *Contemplatives*, who study and teach the philosophy of Freemasonry. Others use their work in the superstructure of the lodge, the building itself. And still others serve outside the fraternity. The goal of all is **to become a better man than you were before.**

In Freemasonry we are said to meet on the level. In the lesson of Martha and Mary, we see that service is on the level even if not seen as equal. Oddly, I was recently told, "You're young and you don't know..." While blatantly patronizing, I think it is on the same level as saying, "You're so old, you can't possibly understand how today's world does..." But to be honest, I've never understood St. James' service mentality. The mantra seems to be, 'write a check' rather than, 'what can we do.' This is confusing to the younger generations (those under 55 years of age), because we tend to be looking for personal fulfillment and that old axiom "members take pride in what they help build." If all we do is pass the hat and pay for meals, cleaning the building, etc. how will we grow or become better men?

How are you fulfilling your service and how can you improve those around us?