

GRAND MASTER’S MESSAGE

My Brothers,

As I started my Article for this issue of the Masonic Light, I was going to ask each of you to pray often for Most Worshipful Mike Smith. I got interrupted while writing and by the time I got back, I was informed that Most Worshipful Michael D. Smith, Past Grand Master, SGIG in South Carolina, Lt. Grand Commander, Supreme Council, Southern Jurisdiction, great Mason and friend to all, had passed away.

Not only was he a great man in himself, he was a son, husband to Lynn, father to Duane and Chris, a mentor to many, willing to help anyone who needed help and particularly those children who attended the Rite Care Centers for speech therapy. He was a friend to all. He will be sorely missed by all.

Not only have we lost PGM Mike since the last Masonic Light Article, we lost Most Worshipful Robert V. (Bob) Pinkston (1995–1997).

Most Worshipful Bob passed away on September 30, 2021. His funeral was held with Masonic Rites on October 5, 2021 in Beaufort, SC.

Most Worshipful Bob was gentle man. He was friends to all and willing to help whenever he could. Sue and I had the privilege of traveling with him on several occasions to other Grand Jurisdictions. You could tell he was ready to travel by looking in the back of his van. He had clothes for every occasion ready to change into. At the time of his death MW Bob was 92 years young.

Not all happenings over the past two months were sad.

Your Grand Lodge Officers have been traveling all over the state visiting a number of Lodges to let you know that we care and are open to listening to your needs. One or more of us have attended each Inspirational Meeting that has been held, speaking at many.

Your Grand Lodge Officers had the opportunity to open the Grand Lodge and the Lodges listed below into Special Communication to dedicate two Past Grand Master Grave Markers. Concordia Lodge #50 for Most Worshipful Orlando Sheppard, PGM (1899 – 1901) and Hiram #68 for Most Worshipful G. Ray Marsh, PGM (1989 – 1991) and rededicate Indian Land #414 for their 50th Anniversary, Blue Lodge #142, Damascus Lodge #161 and Aiken Lodge #156 for their 150th Anniversaries.

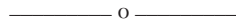
Your Grand Lodge was also privileged to be asked to take part in the Dedication and Consecration of a new monument of The Baron Johann de Kalb at the new Revolutionary War Visitor Center in Camden, SC. The Grand Lodge was well represented and looked on as the Grand Lodge Officers conducted the Dedication Ceremony using the Lafayette Trowel which was used in the Dedication Ceremony of de Kalb’s burial site at the Bethesda Presbyterian Church in Camden. What an awe-some experience!

As you can see, we have been quite busy the first six months of our journey. We plan to be just as busy the next

six months.

Since this will be the last Masonic Light published before Christmas, we hope you have a very Merry Christmas and Happy Hanukkah with your family and friends. We also hope you have a very Happy and Prosperous New Year. Be safe if you are traveling and pray for each other that the New Year brings health and prosperity.

Fraternally,
Ron Mitchum
Grand Master



MASONIC EDUCATION CORNER

Do you believe Santa Claus is a Mason?

Ho, Ho, Ho, and Merry Christmas, are words that bring smiles to the face of everyone that hears them. That Little Old Man dressed in a red and white suit inspires both young and old, but have you ever considered the possibility that Santa Claus is a Mason?

As we explore the life of St. Nicholas, we discover that he was a 4th Century Turkish Bishop, who had originally been a rich nobleman.

Legend tells that St. Nicholas traveled about the country helping the poor. One of the stories about him was that he had helped a poor man who could not afford to pay for weddings for his three daughters.

Another story tells us that St. Nicholas climbed onto the roof and threw a handful of gold coins down the chimney. These coins fell into the girls’ stockings that had been hung up by the fire to dry. The girls were then able to marry well and lived happily ever after. He has been considered the “Patron Saint of poor children” ever since.

But was he a Mason? Well, let us examine the possibilities. He was a man of faith who relieved the poor. He was sincerely devoted to the service of God, and he instilled the lessons of friendship and morality, and brotherly love in the hearts and minds of the children. He taught them that your rewards in life are based on your behavior. Are these the qualities of a Mason?

Well, let us fast forward to modern times. MWB Ken Dyer, Past Grand Master of Mississippi, asked two questions in an article he wrote on December 16, 2013.

1. Do you believe in Santa Claus?
2. Do your actions demonstrate your belief?

MWB Dyer said, “Perhaps if we remember, what a little 8-year-old girl named Virginia learned many years ago when she wrote to the New York Sun News Newspaper on December 21, 1897, regarding the existence of Santa Claus, many would return to the teaching of Masonry.” The newspaper editor responded, “Yes, VIRGINIA, there is a Santa Claus. He exists as certainly as love and generosity and devotion exist, and you know that they abound and give to your life its highest beauty and joy. Alas! How dreary

would be the world if there were no Santa Claus? It would be as dreary as if there were no VIRGINIAS. There would be no childlike faith then, no poetry, and no romance to make tolerable this existence. We should have no enjoyment, except in sense and sight. The eternal light with which childhood fills the world would be extinguished.”

Brothers, my question to you is do you believe in Santa Claus? We as Masons are taught those lessons that are exhibited in the spirit of Santa Claus, kindness, friendship, charity, and relief.

St. Nicholas, aka, Santa Claus, brings joy and happiness to the world. We as Masons should bring joy and happiness to the world by kind words, thoughtful actions, and charitable deeds. Remembering, that it is the duty of every Mason to relieve the less fortunate.

This holiday season, let your actions show that you believe in Santa Claus. As you gather in your Lodges this Christmas Season, remember the lessons taught by the spirit of Santa Claus and do something to bring relief to the less fortunate in your community.

As you gather with your families and eat way too much, do what the Great Light in Masonry says to do, feed the hungry. There are homeless people in every community. I challenge each of you to prepare extra plates and find, as our lessons teach us, some unfortunate creatures and give the blessing of the season.

Yes, I believe in Santa Claus! He might wear an apron, he might wear a double headed eagle cap, a chapeau, or a Fez, but the happiness he spreads lets me know that Santa Claus is alive and well. **I believe that Santa Claus is a Mason!**

Brothers as we celebrate the Christmas Season, don’t forget the ***Reason for The Season***. As you celebrate with your family, thank God for the gift of his ***Son***.

I wish you and your family an incredibly happy and blessed Christmas Season.

’Twas the night before Christmas and all through the Lodge.....

Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.

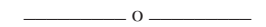
Thomas E. Watson, SGW
Chm., Masonic Education
Committee

After I completed this article, my dear friend, **MWB Michael D. Smith, Sr.**, passed away. We lost a true Santa Claus. Mike gave gifts to everyone that crossed his path, from the children at the Rite Care Centers to the Brothers in the Lodge to the homeless and hungry on the street. Yes, Mike was a real Santa Mason. I think about the countless gifts of wisdom he gave me as we travelled through our journey in Masonry. I challenge each of you to thank God for the gifts Mike gave you.

I am a better man for having known such a great **Mason**. He was my mentor, my advisor, my brother, but mostly, he was my **FRIEND**. Farewell my friend, I will see you again.

Please Keep Lady Lynn, Worshipful Brother Duane, Worshipful Brother Chris and the rest of his family in your prayers as they face difficult days ahead.

Thomas E. Watson, SGW
Chairman, Masonic Education Committee



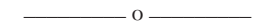
GRAND LODGE SPECIAL COMMUNICATION

Brethren, our Grand Master, Most Worshipful Brother Ronald C. Mitchum has scheduled and will be calling the Grand Lodge to meet in the following Special Communication:

SPECIAL COMMUNICATION SATURDAY, DECEMBER 4, 2021, SPARTANBURG, SC:

For the purpose of rededicating St. John’s Lodge No 333 in Celebration of the Lodge’s 100th Anniversary. Lunch will be served at the Lodge at 11:30 am. The Grand Master, with the assistance of the Grand Lodge Officers, will open the Grand Lodge and St John’s Lodge No 333 on the First Degree at 12:30 pm. The Rededication Ceremony should begin at 1:00 pm and is open to the public. St. John’s Lodge No. 333 is located at 190 W. Main Street, Spartanburg, SC 29309.

NOTE: Elected Grand Lodge Officers, Subordinate Grand Lodge Officers and the District Deputy Grand Master of the Host Lodge’s District should be present. Elected Grand Lodge Officers and Past Grand Masters should wear black tails with black bow tie, black vests, jewel, and apron. All other Grand Lodge Officers should wear black tuxedos with black bow ties, black cummerbunds or black vests, jewel and aprons.



INSPIRATIONAL MEETINGS

Saturday, December 11, 2021, 5:30 pm 26th District, RW David A. Thompson, DDGM, at Sumter Masonic Temple located at 215 Alice Drive, Sumter, SC 29150. Guest Speaker will be WB Zan Tracy Pender, PM. Dinner will be served.

Saturday, January 15, 2022 4:00 pm, 30th District, RW Randall G. Owens, DDGM, at J.J. Mitcheom Community Center located at 2233 Hemingway Highway, Hemingway, SC 29554. Guest Speaker will be MW Ronald C. Mitchum, Grand Master. Dinner will be served.

INSTRUCTIONAL MEETINGS

Saturday, December 18, 2021, 8:00 am, 30th District, RW Brother Randall G. Owens, DDGM, St. Peter's Lodge No. 54, Manning. Breakfast will be served.

Friday, January 7, 2022, 7:30 PM, 22nd District, RW Brother Nelson D. Horton, DDGM, York Lodge No. 385, 1256 West Charlotte Hwy., Rock Hill. Supper will be served.

Saturday, January 8, 2022, 8:30 am, 4th District, RW Brother Craig B. Dopson, DDGM, Evergreen Lodge No. 153, 510 Elm St East, Hampton. Breakfast will be served.

Saturday, January 8, 2022, 9:00 am, 10th District, RW Brother Ronnie D. Thompson, DDGM, Boyleston Lodge No. 123, 1310 Dutch Fork Road, Irmo. Breakfast will be served.

Saturday, January 8, 2022, 8:00 am, 24th District, RW Brother Richard L. Robinson, DDGM, Camp Creek Lodge No. 317, 1864 Stinson Road, Lancaster. Breakfast will be served.

Saturday, January 8, 2022, 6:00 pm, 29th District, RW Brother Donald C. Cox, DDGM, Loris Lodge No. 205, 3517 Casey Street, Loris. Supper will be served.

Thursday, January 13, 2022, 6:30 PM, 13th District, RW Brother William R. Bryant, Jr., DDGM, Palmetto Lodge No. 19, 316 Hillcrest Dr., Laurens. Supper will be served.

Thursday, January 13, 2022, 6:30 pm, 20th District, RW Brother Jeffery L. Honeycutt, DDGM, Boiling Springs Resource Center, 1850 Old Furnace Road, Spartanburg. Supper will be served.

Friday, January 14, 2022, 6:00 PM, 3rd District, RW Brother James B. Jenkins, Jr., DDGM, Cottageville Methodist Church, 44 Peirce Road, Cottageville. Supper will be served.

Saturday, January 15, 2022, 8:00 am, 8th District, RW Brother Richard R. Barton, DDGM, Cayce Lodge No. 384, 1701 Twelfth St., Cayce. Breakfast will be served.

Saturday, January 15, 2022, 8:30 am, 12th District, RW Brother Bruce Keisler, DDGM, Amity Lodge No. 87, 1304 Caldwell St., Newberry. Breakfast will be served.

Monday, January 17, 2022, 6:45 pm, 5th District, RW Brother L. A. Gardner, Jr., DDGM, Harmony Lodge No. 17, 30 Burr St., Barnwell. Supper will be served.

Monday, January 17, 2022, 6:30 PM, 23rd District, RW Brother James K. Mobley, Sr., DDGM, Great Falls Lodge No. 277, 1 Masonic Avenue, Great Falls. Supper will be served.

Thursday, January 20, 2022, 6:00 PM, 15th District, RW Brother L. Joe Granger, DDGM, Seneca Lodge No. 185, 205 N. Townville St., Seneca. Supper will be served.

Thursday, January 20, 2022, 6:30 PM, 19th District, RW Brother Jim Padgett, DDGM, Philadelphia Baptist Church, 3119 Highway 56, Pauline. Supper will be served.

Friday, January 21, 2022, 7:00 pm, 14th District, RW Brother Barry L. Volrath, DDGM, Mt. Bethel Church, 2603 Due West Highway, Belton. Supper will be served.

Saturday, January 22, 2022, 8:30 am, 6th District, RW Brother Jacob Anthony, III, DDGM, Aiken Lodge No. 156, 443 Laurens St NW, Aiken. Breakfast will be served.

Saturday, January 22, 2022, 6:00 PM, 25th District, RW Brother Stephen E. Buffkin, DDGM, Darlington County Red Fez Club,

1134 Andrews Mill Road, Lamar. Supper will be served.

Saturday, January 22, 2022, 10:00 am, 28th District, RW Brother Johnson B. Dean, DDGM, Mackey Lodge No. 77, 111 South Third Avenue, Dillon. Lunch will be served.

Tuesday, January 25, 2022, 6:00 pm, 11th District, RW Brother James W. Logan, DDGM, Mathews Lodge No. 358, 328 Kirksey Drive, Greenwood. Refreshments will be served.

Thursday, January 27, 2022, 6:30 pm, 1st & 2nd Districts, RW Brother Mark J. Beasley, DDGM & RW Brother Robert H. Heck, Jr., DDGM, Charleston County Masonic Association Center, 1285 Orange Grove Road, Charleston. Supper will be served.

Thursday, January 27, 2022, 7:00 pm, 9th District, RW Brother Dee Doolittle, DDGM, Mine Lodge No. 117, 221 Greenwood Highway, McCormick. Supper will be served.

Thursday, January 27, 2022, 6:30 pm, 17th & 18th Districts, RW Brother Kenneth Lothridge & RW Brother Mark Bennett, Greenville Shrine Club, 119 Beverly Road, Greenville. Supper will be served.

Thursday, January 27, 2022, 6:30 pm, 21st District, RW Brother James P. Willis, II, DDGM, Spartanburg Shrine Club, 1450 Fernwood-Glendale Road, Spartanburg. Supper will be served.

Friday, January 28, 2022, 6:00 pm, 16th District, RW Brother Patrick J. Mulligan, DDGM, Bates Lodge No. 189, 439 NE Main St., Easley. Supper will be served.

Monday, January 31, 2022, 7:00 PM, 7th District, RW Brother Dan Welch, DDGM, Vance Lodge No. 230, 1316 Camden Road, Vance. Supper will be served.

Saturday, February 5, 2022, 9:00 am, 26th & 27th Districts, RW Brother David A. Thompson, DDGM & RW Benjy Byers, DDGM, Hampton Lodge No. 204, 206 South McQueen St., Florence. Lunch will be served.

_____ o _____

IN MEMORIAM

GRAND MASTER
1995-1997
ROBERT VAN PINKSTON, SR.
January 24, 1929 Salisbury, NC
September 29, 2021 Pickens, SC

IN MEMORIAM

GRAND MASTER
2017-2019
MICHAEL DUANE SMITH, SR.
April 29, 1957 Spartanburg, SC
November 14, 2021 Spartanburg, SC

IN MEMORIAM

DAVID HILL JEFFCOAT, JR.
PAST DISTRICT DEPUTY GRAND MASTER
October 7, 1925 Norway, SC
October 2, 2021 Orangeburg, SC

HUBERT FRANKLIN WALDREP
PAST DISTRICT DEPUTY GRAND MASTER
September 5, 1928 Spartanburg Co., SC
October 10, 2021 Woodruff, SC

WILLIE BURNS WISE
PAST DISTRICT DEPUTY GRAND MASTER
May 30, 1943 Scranton, SC
October 25, 2021 Pamplico, SC

WB Jerry Michael Spivey, Past Master and current Secretary of Charity Lodge No. 62, Elloree, SC passed away July 15, 2021.

Mrs. Michelle L. Roberts, wife of Brother David Roberts, current Secretary of Springdale Lodge No. 412, passed away November 1, 2021.

We wish to express our deepest sympathies, to the family, friends and Lodge Brethren.

_____ o _____



MERRY CHRISTMAS AND HAPPY NEW YEAR



We wish you and your family a very Merry Christmas and a Happy, Healthy, Prosperous and Blessed New Year. As we celebrate this Holiday Season with our families and friends, let us remember in our thoughts and prayers the men and women in our Armed Forces, who during the holiday season will be away from their families protecting our Country and our Freedom. As Masons, we should remember to visit and assist our shut-in Brethren and the families of those Brethren who have passed to the Celestial Lodge Above throughout the year, and more especially, during the Holiday Season.

Your Grand Lodge Staff

(USPS 332-760) Official bulletin of the Grand Lodge of Ancient Free Masons of South Carolina issued bimonthly from the Grand Lodge Building, 1445 Pisgah Church Rd., Lexington, S.C. 29072-7107
 ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED
 POSTMASTER: Send address changes to the Masonic Light, Gerald L. Carver, Editor, P.O. Box 2185, Lexington, S.C. 29071-2185.
 Telephone 803-808-4377
 E-mail: grandsecretary@segrandlodgeafm.org



Since 1928

Periodicals postage paid at Lexington, S.C. 29073-9998
 Subscription Rate: One Year, \$20.00; Life, \$100.00
 AUTO
 Vol. 95 December 2021/January 2022 No. 5