

SCOTTISH RITE

of Freemasonry Southern Jurisdiction USA

TIME TO REFLECT

A GENE COBB, JR., 33° SGIG

Every two years, the Supreme Council gathers in Washington for the Biennial Session. It is a time to celebrate our achievements, promote our progress, and focus on our future. I hope to see as many of you in Washington this year for the Biennial Session as possible.

This year, scholarships will be awarded from over six hundred youth. RiteCare, our charity for children, will offer its report on our philanthropic endeavors. Membership will share the progress of our educational programs, VMAP, and Fellows Program. Decisions made by the Council will be shared in Finance, Jurisprudence, and plans for the 250th anniversary of our country. We will remember those who have passed to the celestial lodge above. This year, I will be privileged to lead the Albert Pike Memorial Service at St. John's Church at 3:00 p.m. on Sunday, August 18, 2025.

Our progress depends on the work of the Valleys and the Orients of this Mother Council of the World Jurisdiction. I believe that the strongest Valleys work within themselves and with other Valleys of the Orient to help others at all times. That means we do not operate as silos. We operate in every way we can to resource and help each other learn, subdue passions, and improve ourselves in Masonry.

Any focus on our future must continually find ways to converse openly with civility. Arrogance has become too acceptable today, and I consider it unmasonic conduct. Kindness needs to re-emerge in all our present undertakings. From a website, I posted this message on Facebook some time ago:

It's OK to have an opinion. It's OK to disagree with someone's opinion.

It's not OK to humiliate someone because they don't think the same way you do.

Show some respect. Society needs more of it. Scottish Rite Masons in North Carolina, whether attending Biennial, Valley Meetings, Orient Opportunities, Reunions, or whatever, can bring kindness to the world.

The first song I ever learned to play on the guitar was "Try a Little Kindness" by Glen Campbell. I was just reflecting on that memory the other day and came away with this thought: "I think I will!"

It is time to reflect.

Join Us October 3-5 NC Scottish Rite 3-Day Getaway in New Bern

Escape to the charming coastal town of New Bern, North Carolina, for an unforgettable 3-day adventure filled with socializing, exploration, and world-class golf! Whether you're a golf enthusiast or just looking for a relaxing getaway with friends, New Bern offers the perfect blend of Southern hospitality, scenic beauty, and exciting activities.

Why New Bern?

Historic Charm: Stroll through the vibrant streets of downtown New Bern, home to historic sites like Tryon Palace and quaint shops perfect for exploring.

Join Us for a 3-Day Golf Getaway in New Bern!
NCGolfTournament.com

Social Vibes: Enjoy lively evenings at local restaurants, breweries, and waterfront venues, perfect for connecting with friends old and new.

**VOLUNTEERS
NEEDED**

at the

Scottish Rite Table
Annual Communications

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SGC COLE PAYS A VISIT

BY KENNY BELL, 32°

The Valley of Fayetteville hosted an historic event at its monthly meeting May 21.

The Valley, which received its Lodge of Perfection charter in August 2023, hosted Ill. James D. Cole, 33°, the Sovereign Grand Commander of the Scottish Rite, Southern Jurisdiction. The young men from the Marquis de Lafayette DeMolay chapter assisted with the meal, after which the meeting was opened. The Most Worshipful Grand Master of North Carolina, Robert D. Rideout, was officially received, followed by Ill. A. Gene Cobb Jr., 33°, the Sovereign Grand Inspector General of the Orient of North Carolina, and finally, Ill. Cole.

Some 70 Scottish Rite brethren from across the Orient attended the event. Ill. Cole spent considerable time answering questions during his “town hall” portion of the meeting. He spoke on some of his worldwide travels in his role, and on his vision for Scottish Rite.



SECRETARY HONORED

WBro. James Pugsley, the Valley of Fayetteville’s Secretary since its inception in 2023, has been appointed to a national position with the Heroes of ’76, an affiliated auxiliary organization of the National Sojourners.

Pugsley was installed as National Sentinel in early June at the National Sojourners Convention in Omaha, Neb. That office places him in line to become the National Commander of the Heroes of ’76 in eight years.

Bro. Pugsley is a Past Master of Lebanon 391 in Hope Mills, and is active in many other Masonically affiliated organizations.

Join the *SCOTTISH RITE* Valley of Fayetteville

Valley of Fayetteville

Ill. Thomas Pope, 33°, Personal Representative

James Pugsley, 32°, General Secretary

(910) 574-1005

ScottishRiteFayettevilleNC.com

SEPTEMBER 27

BROTHER GREG ROHALY IS AWARDED THE GREENSBORO SCOTTISH RITE SERVICE AWARD

After a hiatus, the Greensboro Valley has restarted the Valley Service Award. The first awardee is Greg Rohaly who has been very active since joining the valley. He has joined the KSA and has been very active with the stag crew for the reunions.



(Brother Rohaly and Personal Representative Shaun Bradshaw, 33°)(Photo Credit: Ashley Cooke 32° KCCH)

BROTHER BRAMFIELD RECOGNIZED FOR 50 YEARS AS A SCOTTISH RITE MASON

Brother Stephen Lee Bramfield, 32° was recognized at the June meeting of the Greensboro Scottish Rite Valley for fifty years as a Scottish Rite Mason. His many years of service are a testament to his love of the fraternity.



(Brother Bramfield and Personal Representative Shaun Bradshaw, 33°)(Photo Credit: Ashley Cooke 32° KCCH)

FALL 2025 REUNION DATES SET

The Greensboro Valley will present all twenty-nine degrees at the Fall 2025 Reunion. This will begin on October 8th which will begin with the Feast of Tishri. The Reunion will continue on October 17th-18th; October 24th-25th; and will conclude on November 12th at the November stated meeting where the 32nd degree will be conferred. If you are interested in participating in a part for the reunion please contact Valley Secretary Gary Handy at greensborosr@gmail.com or by phone at (336) 275-3579.

Join the *SCOTTISH RITE* Valley of Greensboro

Valley of Greensboro

Ill. Shaun Bradshaw, 33°, Personal Representative
Ill. Gary Handy, 33°, General Secretary
(336) 275-3579

GreensboroScottishRite.org

OCTOBER 8,17,18,24,25 AND NOV 12



EXPLORING THE OLD TESTAMENT THROUGH A MASONIC LENS

RUSTY WOOMER, 32° KCCH
RORY BYERS, 32° KCCH NEWSLETTER

The Valley of Asheville has embarked on a thoughtful and unique educational journey, one that speaks to the very heart of Freemasonry. Recognizing that the Holy Bible is not merely a symbolic fixture, but a foundational element present and open whenever the Lodge is at labor. A new series of educational pieces has been introduced.

This endeavor spans the many bodies of Masonry—Blue Lodge, Scottish Rite, York Rite, and beyond, each of which draws significant ritual and symbolic instruction from the Holy Scriptures, particularly the Old Testament. In acknowledgment of this profound influence, it became fitting to explore the thirty-nine books of the Old Testament in a structured and reverent manner.

The result: a five-part educational series spread throughout the year (though not necessarily presented consecutively). The approach is not designed as a Bible study or Sunday School lesson, but rather as a broad overview, a literary and philosophical summary that allows Brethren to better appreciate the sacred source material so often referenced in our ritual and teachings.

Each session begins with a synopsis of one or

Join the *SCOTTISH RITE* Valley of Asheville

SEPTEMBER 13

North Carolina *SCOTTISH RITE* Newsletter Valley Editor: Rusty Woomer, 32° KCCH

more Old Testament books, using summaries that, while brief, are deeply informative. These summaries do not cite authorship and are shared as written, serving as a lens through which Masons can understand the deeper narrative and spiritual values at play in the rituals they encounter.

To illustrate the tone and style of the presentations, consider the entry on The Book of Ruth:

Ruth is a cameo story of love, devotion, and redemption set in the black context of the days of the judges. It is the story of a Moabite woman who forsakes her pagan heritage in order to cling to the people of Israel and to the God of Israel. Because of the faithfulness in a time of faithlessness, God rewards her by giving her a new husband (Boaz), a son (Obed), and a privileged position in the lineage of David and Christ (she is the great-grandmother of David). So far, three of the five parts have been presented, and the response has been overwhelmingly positive. Brethren have expressed a renewed appreciation for the scriptural underpinnings of the Craft and welcomed the opportunity to revisit these sacred texts in a context that aligns with their Masonic journey.

This series reflects the timeless relevance of the Holy Bible in our fraternity, not just as an emblem of divine truth, but as a living document that continues to inform, instruct, and inspire. The Valley of Asheville is proud to offer this series and grateful to all those who have contributed to its success.

Valley of Asheville

Ill. Barry Rigdon, 33°, Personal Representative

Ill. Tony Rathbone, 33°, General Secretary

(828) 550-6097

AshevilleScottishRite.com

Sign Up for
Press Pool
July/August 2025



With Star Wars Day (May 4th) and Cinco de Mayo (May 5th) having passed, Charlotte Scottish Rite had its regular stated for May (May 7th). SGIG Dr. A Gene Cobb, 33° was in attendance as well as Maynard Edwards, 33° with Membership Services from the House of the Temple in D.C. Also, in attendance (and more importantly) were many of the spring class initiates, two of whom top line signer was Dr. Cobb, a father-son duo. The son, Anthony Barrile, also happens to be the DeMolay State Master Councilor (our version of Grand Master). The SGIG gave his regular accolades, praising the excellent secretarial work being performed by D.C. Heilman, 33°. Maynard Edwards informed us all about the Master Craftsman Program and the new “Ivory Key”, keyed (no pun intended) toward newer members, although even seasoned members could learn something from the course. As the lodge was closing an observation was made that all six positions in the East were filled by all six of the Scottish Rite’s coverings. (Yes, we know about the Grand Cross, but former Gov. James Martin GC wasn’t in attendance). From Left to Right: James Pearson 32° Knights of St. Andrews, Master of Kadosh, Ranjan Varghese, 32° Commander (Pro Tem), Garland Moore, 32° KCCH, 50-year member, Wise Master, Josh Bristol 32° KCCH, Venerable Master, Dr. A. Gene Cobb, 33° SGIG, D. Mack Sigmon, 33° Almoner. It should be noted that Brother Moore had to borrow his baby brother’s (Doug Moore) 50-year cap for the picture!



Join the *SCOTTISH RITE* Valley of Charlotte

FALL REUNION: OCT 24 & 25

North Carolina *SCOTTISH RITE* Newsletter Valley Editor: Gilbert Bailey, 33°

Valley of Charlotte

Ill. Gilbert Bailey, 33°, Personal Representative

Ill. D.C. Heilman, 33°, General Secretary

(704) 365-3579

CharlotteScottishRite.com

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July/August 2025

WHO WAS JOHNSTON BLAKELY?

THE NAMESAKE FOR THE JOHNSTON BLAKELY LODGE OF PERFECTION

BY: MATT MOORE, 32° KCCH, GENERAL SECRETARY

This inspired others to take an interest in the orphan and on February 5th, 1800, he was appointed to the position of Midshipman in the United States Navy. From 1793 to 1800, the Aratical Corsairs of Algiers Tribute from every nation to protect their vessels. The United States has paid up to that time more than a million dollars.

In May 1800, Captain Brainbridge in George Washington was sent to Algiers to carry the Tribute. The indignity offered to him and his officers in that port, caused the United States to send a squadron to the Mediterranean to protect American Vessels, and among them was a little craft, the Enterprise, while near the Island of Malta she was forced into an engagement with one of the corsairs, who during the fight, three times hauled down her colors and when the Enterprise drew near poured a broadside into her. After a desperate fight the pirate was brought to terms. She was dismantled and stripped and sent home under a jury sail. Here Johnston won promotion for courage and general good conduct under Commodore Preble.

In 1813, he was put in command of the Enterprise and in 1814, he was offered the command of the new sloop of war, Wasp. He accepted, and Lieutenant Burrows took

command of the Enterprise, which two weeks after captured the Boxer in a Burrow received the sword of the Captain of the Boxer in a fight in which the commanders of both ships were mortally wounded Burrow received the sword of the captain of the Boxer as he lay upon the deck and exclaimed, "Now I am satisfied! I die Contented!". The bodies of both commanders were buried with all the honors of war. Blakely in writing to a friend said, "I shall ever view it as one of the most unfortunate events of my life, having quitted the Enterprise the moment I did. Had I remained in her my name might have been classed with those who stand so high. I have no cause to congratulate myself now. The Wasp unfinished is a harmless drone in the waters of the country."

In May 1814, he passed the British blockade and began his cruise in the British channel, capturing and during many English Merchant ships, and spreading terror among the merchant marine. On June 28th, 1814, he engaged and captured the Reindeer, a Brig sloop of 18 guns and 118 men. Soon after he fell in a convoy of ten merchantmen under protection of a 74, the "armada", and cut in and captured a valuable prize.

Story to continue Next Issue...

Join the *SCOTTISH RITE* Valley of Wilmington

NOVEMBER 7 & 8

Valley of Wilmington

Ill. Earl Wells, 33°, Personal Representative
Matt Moore, 32° KCCH, General Secretary
(910) 762-6452

WilmingtonScottishRite.org

ARTICULATION DIFFICULTIES

By Stan Bevers, 32°, KCCH

The clinic at Western Carolina University does a tremendous job working with children and adults with speech and language difficulties. As I work in the Special Education field, I see many of these issues in my own students on a regular basis, giving me unique exposure to the difficulties these patients face. To broaden the understanding of these clinical diagnoses amongst our brethren, I would like to share some information about one of the diagnoses treated at the clinic, specifically, articulation difficulties.

Individuals exhibiting articulation issues have difficulty forming sounds to generate speech. These difficulties manifest in different ways, but normally as a challenge to create spoken communication. Articulation issues are not related to brain, mouth, or hearing impairment; Therefore, to avoid confusing articulation with other similar disabilities, patients require diagnoses by professionals trained to recognize key differences.

There are Four types of articulation difficulties:

Substitution: Replacing one sound for another (Wabbit, instead of Rabbit)

Omission: Leaving out a sound (Cuh, instead of Cup)

Distortion: Altering a sound, often resulting in a lisp (“th” sound instead of “s”)

Addition: Adding more sounds (such as puh-leez instead of please).

Roughly 5% of children in 1st grade have a speech disorder, which may include stuttering, speech/sound disorders, or dysarthria. While many children with these difficulties improve with maturation, most can benefit quickly and effectively from the skills of trained professionals.

The Western Carolina University Speech and Hearing Clinic is providing the expertise needed in our region to help these patients, and Articulation issues are among the most common problems receiving treatment. In future editions, I will discuss other Speech & Language issues, as well as giving an overview of the treatments for which our charitable efforts enhance.

Join the *SCOTTISH RITE* Valley of Franklin

SEPTEMBER 6 & 13

Valley of Franklin

Jack Williams, 32° KCCH, Personal Representative

Drew Norton, 32° KCCH, General Secretary

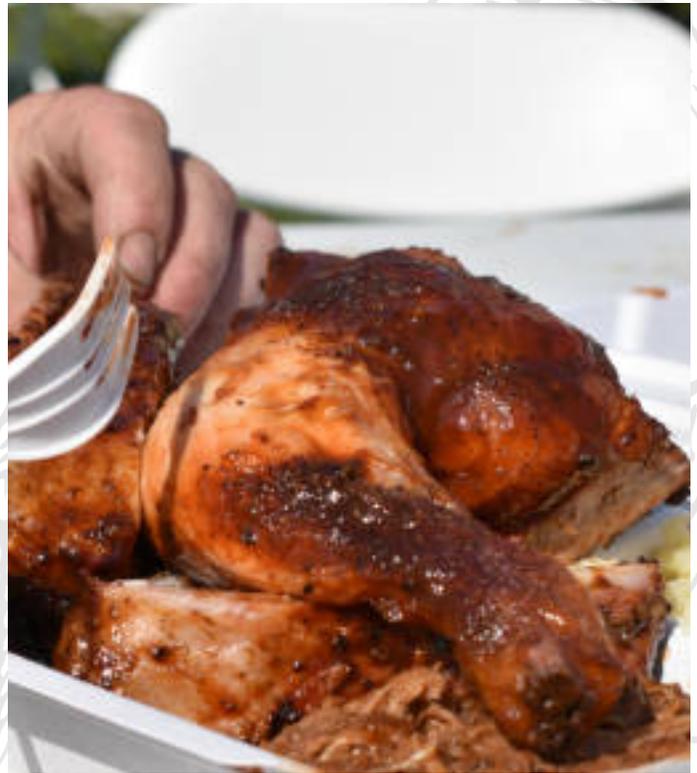
(828) 226-1976

FranklinScottishRite.org

VALLEY OF NEW BERN CHICKEN PLATE DINNER

Merriam-Webster dictionary defines charity as “a generosity and helpfulness especially toward the needy or suffering.” Charity is seen throughout multiple religions to include Christianity, Judaism, Islam, and Buddhism. Charity is one of the defining elements of Freemasonry and remains one of the most inspiring and recognizable elements to those within and outside of the brotherhood. Freemasonry has a long history of giving back to their communities through fundraisers, volunteer work, and a multitude of other efforts. The North Carolina Masonic Foundation website states that North Carolina masons raised over \$800,000 for charity last year. Charity is also a way that brothers can continue to not only make good men better, but also to continue to make their communities a better place.

The brothers of the Valley of New Bern continue to embody that element by holding a BBQ chicken dinner fundraiser to raise funds for RiteCare, the Scottish Rite of Freemasonry of the Southern Jurisdiction of the United States’ charity that provides speech therapy and literary assistance to children in need. In addition to a nutritious dinner, those that entered were entered into a drawing for a \$500 gift card. The Valley was able to sell hundreds of



tickets and raise over thirteen thousand dollars for charity. Additionally, this dinner continued to show the connection the Valley has with the community, with the Fire Department Fair Grounds in Trenton allowing the brothers to utilize their various cookers for the preparation of the meals. It is undoubtedly that each brother that assisted with preparing the meals, sold tickets, or assisted in the distribution of the meals felt a sense of pride and accomplishment from the work they did as well as contributed to the continued efforts that Freemasonry and the Scottish Rite bring to the community.

Join the *SCOTTISH RITE* Valley of New Bern

OCTOBER 17 & 18

Valley of New Bern

Ill. Asa Buck, 33°, Personal Representative

Ill. Johnny Surles, 33°, General Secretary

(252) 638-4031

ScottishRiteNewBern.org

A QUICK REFLECTION ON SELFISHNESS VS SELFLESSNESS

I find myself sitting in the East again this year in one of my blue lodges, and I could not be happier to be here. I am fortunate in that I have surrounded myself by great men who want to do great work in our Masonic, and surrounding communities. The year may be halfway over, and yet, there is still so much more work to be done, especially on a personal level. The teachings of the Fraternity tell us that the greatest work we can perform is charity. Happy is the man who has sowed in his breast the seeds of benevolence; the produce thereof is love and peace. Contrarily, a man who practices selfishness in his actions would be thereby considered to be evil and immoral because it prevents him from reaching his sense of spiritual perfection. When plagued under these thoughts, he would be content in not setting worthwhile goals, and would strive to keep others from reaching theirs. By these actions, this selfish man is self-centered, petty and small. He thinks in destructive terms and seethes with resentment at others' good fortune, hurting himself in the process. Why would a Mason act in such a manner? It could be for a variety of reasons. But we are morally bound by duty to remind him that it is by the square we learn morality, by the level, equality, and by the plum, rectitude of life and conduct. The greatest aim of every worthy man, especially we as Freemasons, is to soothe the unhappy, to sympathize with them in their misfortunes, to compassionate their miseries, and to restore peace into their troubled minds. Be mindful Brethren. Look for verbal and non-verbal cues to understand your Brother's needs and provide support in whatever form that may take. But most importantly, listen. Do not fall into the trap of selfishness, but rather look into ways of practicing selflessness.

Join the *SCOTTISH RITE* Valley of Raleigh

1-DAY REUNION - NOVEMBER 1

North Carolina *SCOTTISH RITE* Newsletter Valley Editor: Greg Hirsh, 32°

Jeremy Hicklin, Membership Chair

Who is your Valley Ambassador?

Brethren, do you know who is ambassador for your valley? Our 9 valleys have a formal ambassador program, brothers are assigned to lodges or districts and they help to promote the valley, especially to newly made Master Masons. These programs help to keep an organized approach to interesting Mason's to join the Scottish Rite and the level of success and size varies between the different Valleys.

What if I told you that every Scottish Rite Mason is an ambassador for their prospective valleys? Believe it or not, we all carry that responsibility to our valley, our Orient and ourselves. Brother, your next question might be, What do I have to do as an ambassador? Well, that is the easy part, and very easy to do. Every Scottish Rite brother, whenever in blue lodge, just has to wait for his queue! When the master asks "does anyone have anything for the good of Masonry?" Simply stand up, and say "The Valley of (your valley here), is here to help in further light in masonry and aid in fraternal assistance" and then sit down. Easy, right? This simple step, repeated regularly in our blue lodges will help to attract the very brothers who are seeking what we offer.

I know a skeptic will probably read and say this isn't necessary or that is not my job and that is okay. Just remember, not every man needs to be a mason, and not every mason needs to be a Scottish Rite Mason, but everyone deserves to know what is available to them. Sharing this simple message will accomplish just that, sharing the opportunity. In May, Grand Commander Cole was in Fayetteville and said he was not worried about quantity when it came to the Scottish Rite, rather only quality. He went on to say that Quality will always lead to quantity. So brother ambassador, help our valleys and Orient in obtaining the quality men that will fill our lodges with the quantity to help change the world we live in.

Valley of Raleigh

Ill. David Wicker, 33°, Personal Representative

Ill. Don Butto, 33°, General Secretary

(919) 795-8505

RaleighScottishRite.org



WELCOME NEW BROTHERS

The Winston-Salem Valley Scottish Rite welcomes our new Masters of the Royal Secret, Brothers Joshua Greene, David Longworth, Albert Medders III, Scott Miller, Caleb Reeves, and Jonathon Shuping.



Spring Reunion 2: (Back row left to right): Todd Hildebran, 33° - Director of the Work, Michael Fischer, 33° - Valley Secretary, Kirby Matthews, 33° - Personal Representative, Lewis Ledford, 33° (Past Grand Master) - Reunion Honoree, Bob Blair, 32° KCCH - Classroom Director
(Middle Row left to right): Joshua Greene, 32°, Scott Miller, 32°, A.J. Medders III, 32°
(Front row left to right): Jonathon Shuping, 32°, David Longworth, 32°, and Caleb Reeves, 32°

Spring Reunion 1: (Back row left to right): Mrs. Zandra Spencer Wallin (Widow of Reunion Honoree William Wallin, 32° KCCH), Michael Fischer, 33° - Valley Secretary, Kirby Matthews, 33° - Personal Representative, Lewis Ledford, 33° (Past Grand Master) - Reunion Honoree
(Middle Row left to right): Joshua Greene, 32°, Scott Miller, 32°, A.J. Medders III, 32°
(Front row left to right): Jonathon Shuping, 32°, David Longworth, 32°, and Caleb Reeves, 32°

100-YEAR CELEBRATION

The Winston-Salem Scottish Rite Lodge of Perfection will be celebrating our 100-year anniversary this year! We will have a special presentation by the Junior Grand Warden, Illustrious Brother Michael Register, 33° at our August Stated Meeting on August 14, 2025. We will also be presenting a special history presentation on our Lodge of Perfection at our October Stated Meeting on October 9, 2025.

NC *SCOTTISH RITE* Valley of Winston-Salem

FALL REUNION: OCT 24 & 25

Valley of Winston-Salem

Ill. Kirby Matthews, 33°, Personal Representative

Ill. Michael Fischer, 33°, General Secretary

(336) 723-1217

WinstonSalemScottishRite.org

North Carolina *SCOTTISH RITE* Newsletter Valley Editor: Christopher Pearman, 33°