

ORIENT OF

NORTH CAROLINA

May June 2025

SCOTTISH RITE

of Freemasonry Southern Jurisdiction USA



NORTH CAROLINA *SCOTTISH RITE* MASONS

Building a better Future for our loved ones

Special Mother's Day & Father's Day Edition

Welcome our new Brothers

**SPECIAL EDITION
INTERACTIVE**

TITLES AND OBLIGATIONS

You've heard it. I've listened to it, too. "He's doing it for the title."

I don't understand that mentality and hope I never do.

We do what we do in life not for a title but to be faithful to our obligations. If we are faithful to our obligations, everyone benefits. If not, everyone suffers.

My ordination vows came with a title but, more importantly, an obligation.

My degrees in Freemasonry, particularly in the Scottish Rite and crowning as a Sovereign Grand Inspector General came with all kinds of titles, but more importantly, with an obligation.

My dear friend and brother, Illustrious Doug Caudle, 33°, still sometimes calls me "The Right Reverend, Most Worshipful, Illustrious, Doctor Brother." All those titles came with obligations I've tried to live up to throughout my life.

Other titles come with obligations like Eagle Scout and husband. These titles come with obligations taken before God and people.

Yet, the most important titles never mention an obligation. It's just there. When I was born, I was a "son" to a "father" and a "mother." Eighteen months after I was born, I became a "brother" to Steven and nine years after that, to Laura. As I grew up, I became a "friend." I was a "Stat Man" for Head Coach Dean Smith at UNC. Later in life, I was blessed to have a "son" when I became John's "father." Now, I'm a "grandfather." If you haven't seen a picture of Canon and me together, look at a picture of us. You'll understand.



ILLUSTRIOUS A. GENE COBB, JR., 33°
SOVEREIGN GRAND INSPECTOR GENERAL OF NORTH CAROLINA

Our families have titles and obligations that freemasonry requires us to attend daily. If we are faithful to our trust, we will always strive to live up to our promises, whether the obligation is written or not.

Yes, I have a few titles, but the only one I ever sought in Freemasonry was the one my dear friend Doug Caudle put at the end of it every time: "Brother."

The only title that matters in life has nothing to do with our obligations, written or unwritten. No one can earn it because it is only received: "Child of God."

You are that! I am that! We didn't receive that title because of an obligation. We received it because of God's love, mercy, and grace. I pray we understand.

BUILDING WITH STONE

JUSTIN M. KING, 32°

As a child, I saw my house simply as a place where I slept, played, and spent time with family. It was where I woke up to the smell of breakfast and learned to tie my shoes. My house was routine, familiar, and comfortable— steady as the rising and setting of the sun. But as I grew older, I began to see that a house was more than just a physical space. It wasn't just where I lived, it was a reflection of who I was becoming. The walls weren't just made of wood and paint, they were built from my values, experiences, and the lessons I carried with me.

Over time, I realized that my house wasn't just about bricks and walls. It was a reflection of my mental, emotional, and spiritual state. The foundation wasn't just concrete. It was my values and beliefs— the things that kept me steady. I built walls within my house to set boundaries and to protect my peace. The rooms held different parts of me: my dreams, my struggles, my growth. When I ignored my well-being, I could feel my house as it started to lean— the floors felt uneven, and the walls seemed to close in. When I took the time to care for myself, my house stood stronger and more secure. It turned into a place I could truly rely on.

As I searched for ways to strengthen the foundation of my house, I found myself drawn to Freemasonry. It was here that I uncovered a new layer of my metaphor. A place where the values of brotherhood, integrity, and enlightenment became the cornerstone of my personal and spiritual development.

But a house is more than just a foundation. It is the rooms that give it shape, function, and meaning. As I traveled deeper into Freemasonry, I discovered

the Scottish Rite. It became a path that offered me new rooms to explore within the house of my journey. Each degree felt like stepping into a new space, designed to challenge my mind and inspire my spirit.

Among these rooms is the kitchen. Like any house it is a place of warmth and nourishment, but here it is not just for the body, but for the mind and spirit. It's where conversations flow, lessons are passed down, and bonds are strengthened over shared meals. Just like a kitchen feeds the body, the Scottish Rite feeds a hunger for knowledge, offering something new to digest with every lesson. And then there's the lodge room. It's the heart of the house, where we gather, reflect, and grow together. Within its walls, traditions come to life, wisdom is shared, and the work of self-improvement never stops. These spaces remind me that a house isn't just where you live; it's where you learn, evolve, and find a sense of belonging.

As I reflect on my journey thus far, I know that my house will never be truly finished. There will always be repairs to make, new rooms to explore, and spaces to refine. But through Freemasonry, I have learned that I do not have to build alone. My brothers stand beside me, offering support, guidance, and wisdom, just as the beams of a house rely on one another for strength.

My house is no longer just a place. It has become a living reflection of who I am and who I strive to be. The foundation remains solid, and the structure of my house is steadfast. And for that, I am grateful. Because no matter where life takes me, I know that within this house - within Freemasonry - I will always have a home.

Join the *SCOTTISH RITE* Valley of Raleigh

SECOND THURSDAY 6:30 - 9PM

Valley of Raleigh

Ill. David Wicker, 33°, Personal Representative

Ill. Don Butto, 33°, General Secretary

(919) 795-8505

RaleighScottishRite.org

A JOURNEY OF BROTHERHOOD AND RENEWAL

RUSTY WOOMER, 32° KCCH – VENERABLE MASTER
RORY BYERS, 32° KCCH – PRELATE

Like many other Valleys, the Valley of Asheville was abuzz with activity during the week of March 10th. Seven of our Brethren joined more than 40 Scottish Rite Masons from across the Orient of North Carolina for a three-day train trip to the Washington, D.C. area. This unforgettable experience strengthened our bonds of fellowship and deepened our appreciation for the Craft.

Our journey began with a tour of the George Washington Masonic National Memorial in Alexandria, VA. From there, we traveled to Washington, D.C., where we visited the House of the Temple, the headquarters of the Supreme Council, 33°. A highlight of the visit was the opportunity to meet with Illustrious James D. Cole, 33°, Sovereign Grand Commander, who graciously shared his insights and encouragement with us.

That evening, we enjoyed fraternal hospitality at the Valley of Washington, Orient of D.C., where we broke bread with our Brethren and witnessed a moving Ceremony of Remembrance and Renewal. This solemn and thought-provoking ceremony reminded us of the core principles of our Craft.

The 8 ½-hour train ride to and from Washington was not just a means of transportation but an extension of our fraternal journey. Conversations, shared experiences, and the spirit of brotherhood made the long ride feel far too short. Many of us returned with a renewed love, respect, and appreciation for Freemasonry and the Scottish Rite.

Upon our return to Asheville, we gathered the very next evening for our Stated Meeting, where

we conducted our own Ceremony of Remembrance and Renewal, beautifully exemplified for our Brethren.

Only two days later, we held our Spring Reunion, welcoming Brothers Gary Clark and Bryan Buchanan into the Scottish Rite. Brother Bryan received the Lodge of Perfection and Chapter Rose Croix degrees in the Valley of Fayetteville before completing his journey with us in Asheville. A particularly special moment was seeing Bro. Andrew Clark, Gary's son, stand beside his father, having recently been crowned a Master of the Royal Secret.

As always, the Valley of Asheville remains steadfast in our commitment to Masonic fellowship, education, and service. This journey to Washington, D.C., and our subsequent ceremonies at home have reinforced the bonds of our Brotherhood, reminding us why we labor in the quarries of Freemasonry.



E. D. "RUSTY" WOOMER, JR., 32° KCCH PROUDLY POSING WITH ILLUSTRIOUS JAMES D. COLE, SOVEREIGN GRAND

Join the *SCOTTISH RITE* Valley of Asheville

SECOND THURSDAY 6:30 - 9PM

Valley of Asheville

Ill. Barry Rigdon, 33°, Personal Representative

Ill. Tony Rathbone, 33°, General Secretary

(828) 550-6097

AshevilleScottishRite.com

MAUNDY THURSDAY

ILL. JOHNNY C. SURLES, 33°

Maundy Thursday holds deep spiritual significance for many religious and fraternal traditions, including Freemasonry. Within the Scottish Rite of Freemasonry, particularly in the Southern Jurisdiction of the United States, Maundy Thursday is commemorated as a solemn day of remembrance, humility, and renewal. It is a time for Freemasons to reflect on their duties, and the principles of brotherhood, and the eternal truths of life and death.

Traditionally, Maundy Thursday is observed on the Thursday before Easter and marks the Last Supper of Jesus Christ and his disciples. The term “Maundy” comes from the Latin word *mandatum*, meaning “commandment,” referencing Jesus’ commandment to love one another as he loved them. This message of love, humility, and service resonates strongly within the teachings of Freemasonry, which emphasizes moral integrity, charity, and universal brotherhood.

In the Masonic context, Maundy Thursday is observed through a ritual known as the “Mystic Banquet” or “Ceremony of Extinguishing of the Lights,” as explained in the 18°, Knight of the Rose Croix. This ceremony is not simply a religious observance; rather, it is a deeply symbolic rite that blends Masonic philosophy with elements of early Christian tradition. It is an occasion to honor the ideas of sacrifice, rebirth, and spiritual enlightenment.

The ceremony of the Mystic Banquet is designed to be introspective and moving. It recalls the themes of the Last Supper, but within a symbolic framework that encourages the participant to contemplate the triumph of light over darkness, knowledge over ignorance, and spirit over materialism. Candles are extinguished one

by one during the ritual, representing the fading of truth and virtue in the world, and then one candle is relit – symbolizing hope, resurrection and the enduring light of truth. This act serves as a powerful reminder that even in the darkest of times, light and wisdom endure.

Unlike typical Masonic meetings, the Maundy Thursday observance is open to non-Masons and family members, depending on the lodge and jurisdiction. It provides an opportunity to demonstrate the moral and philosophical foundations of Freemasonry to a wider audience while reinforcing the spiritual obligations that Masons undertake in their personal and collective journeys.

For many Freemasons, Masonic Maundy Thursday is a cornerstone of their spiritual year. It is not merely a ritual – it is a time to renew their personal commitments to virtue, to remember those who have passed, and to seek a deeper understanding of their place in the universe. It speaks to the heart of Masonic ideals: that all people are connected by a shared divine essence and that through brotherly love and selfless service, the world can be made better.

In a world too often marked by division and discord, Masonic Maundy Thursday offers a moment of unity, reflection, and quiet strength – a sacred space to honor the enduring light within all of us.



The William Jesse "Jesse" Crippe 32° Memorial 2025 Spring Reunion
L to R: Joseph Evans, Sr., William Miller, Jimmy Davis, George Miller, Nathaniel Benicichelo, John Lane, Larry Filyew, Gary Troup, Len Tippett, Chris Isenhart, Odell Williams, II, Russell Rainear 33°, Eric Blevins, II, Asa Buck 33°, SGIG II A. Gene Cobb 33°, III, Johnny Surles 33°, Matthew Howell, Hon. Russ Bauer 32° KCCO, Rob Dugat, Bradley Byrd, Keith Willis, Edward Butts, Zachary Carpenter, Chris Sykes, Derek Moore, Jeffrey Donahoue, Will Pully, Phil Styron, Donald Porter

Join the *SCOTTISH RITE* Valley of New Bern

SECOND MONDAY 6:00 - 9PM

Valley of New Bern

Ill. Asa Buck, 33°, Personal Representative

Ill. Johnny Surles, 33°, General Secretary

(252) 638-4031

ScottishRiteNewBern.org

NEW VALLEY PERSONAL REPRESENTATIVE



Illustrious Brother M. Kirby Matthews, Jr., 33° has been appointed as the Winston-Salem Scottish Rite Valley's new Personal Representative to the S.G.I.G. We would like to congratulate Brother Matthews on his new position, wish them the best, and thank him for all that he does for our Valley.

WELL DONE BROTHER

The Winston-Salem Valley extends a big fraternal thank-you to Illustrious Brother George Kalamaras, 33°, who recently retired as our Valley's Personal Representative to the S.G.I.G.. Thank-you for all of the hard work, friendship, and dedication to our Valley and the Scottish Rite. Well done brother!



WINSTON-SALEM SCOTTISH RITE MASONIC CHARITY GOLF TOURNAMENT

The Winston-Salem Scottish Rite will be holding its fourteenth annual charity golf tournament on Wednesday, June 18, 2025. This event will be held at an exciting new location, the Bermuda Run Country Club West Course. We have plenty of room for golfers, sponsors, and volunteers. Join us for this special event to raise funds for the clinics at Appalachian State University, East Carolina University, and Western Carolina University. Please help us continue to support the great work being done at these clinics.



SCOTTISH RITE Valley of Winston-Salem

SECOND THURSDAY 6:30 - 9PM

Valley of Winston-Salem

Ill. Kirby Matthews, 33°, Personal Representative

Ill. Michael Fischer, 33°, General Secretary

(336) 723-1217

WinstonSalemScottishRite.org

VALLEY OF WILMINGTON 2025 SPRING REUNION

HARRY STEELE, 32° KCCH

On March the 7th and 8th the Valley of Wilmington held in honor of the following brothers Jimmy “Marty” Hunt, 32° KCCH, William “Biscuit” Moore, 32° KCCH, E.J. Highsmith, 32° KCCH Memorial Spring Reunion at the Ill. E. Earl Wells Scottish Rite Center. It was well attended and received.

Congratulations to our new Valley of Wilmington Scottish Rite Brothers. We enjoyed two days of Brotherly fellowship with great meals prepared by our own valley Chef, and caterer Ill. Happy Buffkin, 33° and his lovely wife Belinda who knows how to put together a good spread! We thank everyone for their hard work that made this reunion successful.



Jimmy “Marty” Hunt, 32° KCCH
William “Biscuit” Moore, 32° KCCH
E.J. Highsmith, 32° KCCH
Memorial Reunion
Spring 2025

First Row: Steve Bland, 32° KCCH; Aaron Jackson 32° KCCH; Ill. E. Earl Wells, 33°; Matt Moore 32° KCCH; Ill. Michael Saviak, 33°; John Shawver, 32°. Second Row: Christopher Vandall, 32°; Brandon Summerour, 32°; Richard Armistead, 32°; D Lane Marshburn, 32°.

Join the *SCOTTISH RITE* Valley of Wilmington

SECOND THURSDAY 6:30 - 9PM

Valley of Wilmington

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

WilmingtonScottishRite.org

VALLEY HOLDS ANNUAL REMEMBRANCE AND RENEWAL

JASON F. HICKS, 32°

At the April meeting, the valley observed the ceremony of remembrance and renewal. The Valley honored the memories of: William P. Amos; Harry A Green, Jr.; Roger A. Hinson; Gary P. Kane; James S. Lynch; John M. Marsh; Charles B. Nelson; Tom T. Shelton; William L. Shields; Eddie H. Sykes; Allen D. Spain; and Teddie R. Thompson.

FALL 2025 REUNION DATES SET

JASON F. HICKS, 32°

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.

THANK YOU, CHRIS WRIGHT, 33°

BY: JASON F. HICKS, 32°

For many years, Chris Wright, 33° has been the Director of Ceremony for the Annual Ceremony of Remembrance and Renewal. He has decided this would be his last year to serve in that capacity. We thank him for the many years of coordination and dedication to the valley.

Join the *SCOTTISH RITE* Valley of Greensboro

SECOND WEDNESDAY 6:30 - 9PM

Valley of Greensboro

Ill. Shaun Bradshaw, 33°, Personal Representative

Ill. Gary Handy, 33°, General Secretary

(336) 275-3579

GreensboroScottishRite.org

2025



Saturday, October 4, 2025
The Emerald Golf Club

No rain dates are scheduled

The North Carolina Scottish Rite Masonic Foundation is a 501(c)(3) corporation and your donations are tax deductible.

Register Today!

To prepay using credit cards, please call (917) 359-0371.
Credit cards will also be accepted at the course.

Played with a "scramble" format (captain's choice) it will provide an opportunity for players to enjoy a round of golf with friends, win prizes, and promote the main charitable endeavor of the Scottish Rite.

Foursome Golf Team . . . \$400

includes 18 holes of golf and lunch for 4 and 2 golf carts

Individual Golfer \$100

includes 18 holes of golf and lunch for one

WOULD YOU LIKE TO INCLUDE A PROMOTIONAL SIGNAGE AT A HOLE

- \$200Business
- \$200Scottish Rite Valley
- \$100Individual
- \$100Blue Lodge / Member

Payment Options

TO PREPAY USING CREDIT CARDS,
please call (917) 359-0371.
Credit cards will also be accepted at the course

CHECKS PAYABLE TO:
North Carolina Scottish Rite Masonic Foundation
MAIL TO:
PO Box 7253
Wilmington NC 28406-7253



NC GolfTournament.com

Join the *SCOTTISH RITE* Valley of Charlotte

FIRST WEDNESDAY 6:30 - 9PM

Valley of Charlotte

Ill. Gilbert Bailey, 33°, Personal Representative
Ill. D.C. Heilman, 33°, General Secretary
(704) 365-3579
CharlotteScottishRite.com

AWARDS MAKE SERVICE UNFORGETTABLE

KENNY BELL, 32°

The year was 1998. The location was the Officers Club at Fort Bragg, seated at a table with my parents, Sue and Tommy Bell.

The table was covered with a white cloth, dinner plates, silverware, glasses, and more. My parents were dressed in their Sunday best, as was I in my Air Force Junior ROTC uniform. I had been in command of my high school unit – Terry Sanford NC-032 – for the past year as a Cadet Colonel.

The occasion? Awards night, and many organizations were on hand to honor worthy cadets. One of those groups was the Scottish Rite. I've never forgotten the thrill of hearing my name called as an award recipient, first for The Daedalian and later an American Legion Scholastic Award. The next year, I received the Reserve Organization award.



I didn't receive the Scottish Rite award given to an ROTC cadet, but now I'm in a position to recognize

worthy recipients at schools in and around Cumberland County.

The Scottish Rite award is given to cadets that meet the following requirements.

1. Contribute the most to encourage Americanism by participation in extracurricular activities or community projects
2. Demonstrate academic excellence by being in the top 25% of their class
3. Demonstrate the qualities of dependability, good character, self discipline, good citizenship and patriotism
4. Not have been a previous recipient of this award



My path wouldn't lead me into the military, but 19 years later, I did become a Mason in Stedman No. 730. Less than two years later, I joined the Scottish Rite, and was eventually asked to be the presenter of the Scottish Rite award. The first time doing that will have come at Terry Sanford High School, my alma mater.

I'm overjoyed beyond words that I can at last give something back to the JROTC program. I believe this is a very important part of our Americanism program. All valleys should make it a priority to reach out to the high schools in your area and ask if they are interested in having this award presented. I can assure you that being chosen as a recipient will be a highlight of the student's life.

Join the *SCOTTISH RITE* Valley of Fayetteville

THIRD WEDNESDAY 6:30 - 9PM

Valley of Fayetteville

Ill. Thomas Pope, 33°, Personal Representative

James Pugsley, 32°, General Secretary

(910) 574-1005

ScottishRiteFayettevilleNC.com

THOUGHTS FROM THE VALLEY OF FRANKLIN

STAN BEVERS, 32° KCCH

The Valley of Franklin has set a few goals for 2025 under the leadership of Venerable Master Brian Jenkins. Since we are currently just a Lodge of Perfection, we want to grow beyond our current status to include a Chapter of Rose Croix, Council of Kadosh, and Consistory. While we cannot expect to achieve all three additional bodies within this calendar year, we certainly want to lay the groundwork positioning ourselves for full Valley status as quickly as possible. Other goals for 2025 include membership expansion, improved website and communication presence, and increased Blue Lodge outreach. All of these goals tie into our primary mission of growing beyond a Lodge of Perfection, under the guidance and approval of Sovereign Grand Inspector General, Illustrious A. Gene Cobb, Jr. , 33° and the guidelines he has given our Valley.

However, the Supreme Council of the Southern Jurisdiction has provided us with a tremendous template for achieving these stated goals, plus much more, through the Valley Membership Achievement Project (VMAP). VM Jenkins has served the Valley of Franklin as our VMAP Chairman for the past three years, and has brought this leadership experience to the forefront as our new Venerable Master. VM Jenkins has directed the Valley to make an even stronger commitment to VMAP, as he believes the VMAP format to be an excellent tool for growth management. Indeed, a Valley would need to come up with a very obscure set of goals before finding worthwhile objectives not already incorporated in VMAP.

That said, the Valley of Franklin has some unique challenges. Given the sparsely populated mountains of Western North Carolina, many members need to travel an hour or more to attend our monthly meetings. As such, VM Jenkins has committed to “travelling” Reunions, through which we go to distant Blue Lodges to confer the degrees. We tried this last year, with great success.

Finally, in addition to our monthly stated communications, we want to start having special Scottish Rite meetings at distant Blue Lodges. These meetings will be for Masonic education, degree practice, and just plain fellowship. In doing so, we expect to shrink the distance for our current and prospective members so they may be more active participants in the Valley.

Join the *SCOTTISH RITE* Valley of Franklin

THIRD WEDNESDAY 6:00 - 9PM

Valley of Franklin

Jack Williams, 32° KCCH, Personal Representative

Drew Norton, 32° KCCH, General Secretary

(828) 226-1976

FranklinScottishRite.org

A HEARTFELT MOTHER'S DAY AND FATHER'S DAY MESSAGE

RITA DANIELS

As the Strategic Communication Team Leader for the North Carolina Scottish Rite, representing our vibrant community of 5,000 members, I am honored to share a special message this Mother's Day and Father's Day. These occasions offer us a moment to pause, reflect, and celebrate the extraordinary parents who shape our lives, our families, and our communities with love, wisdom, and unwavering dedication.

In the spirit of the Scottish Rite, where we cherish values like integrity, service, and brotherhood, I want to extend heartfelt gratitude to the mothers and fathers among us. Your tireless efforts—often quiet, yet profoundly impactful—mirror the principles we hold dear. You are the cornerstone of our homes and the heartbeat of our communities, embodying the strength and compassion that define parenthood.

Honoring Mothers: The Light of Our Lives

To the mothers of the North Carolina Scottish Rite and beyond, your love is a guiding star. Whether you're nurturing young minds, offering sage advice, or simply being a comforting presence, your influence is immeasurable. You teach us resilience, kindness, and the power of unconditional love. This Mother's Day, we celebrate you—not just for the sacrifices you make but for the joy you bring to every moment. Your ability to balance countless roles with grace inspires us all, and we are endlessly grateful for the warmth and wisdom you share.

Celebrating Fathers: Pillars of Strength

To the fathers, you are the steadfast pillars who provide stability and courage. Your guidance, whether through words or actions, shapes the next generation and strengthens our collective spirit. From teaching life's hard lessons to sharing moments of laughter, you instill values that echo through time. This Father's Day, we honor your commitment, your sacrifices, and the quiet pride you take in watching your families grow. Your example of duty and devotion is a legacy we cherish within the Scottish Rite and beyond.

A Unified Tribute from the Scottish Rite

As members of the North Carolina Scottish Rite, we know the power of community and connection. Mothers and fathers, you are the foundation of this community, weaving bonds that make us stronger together. Your love and leadership reflect the Masonic principles of faith, hope, and charity, and we see these values in action every day through your parenting. Whether you're a member of our organization or part of the broader North Carolina family, know that your contributions as parents are seen, valued, and celebrated.

This Mother's Day and Father's Day, let's take time to express our gratitude. Call, write, or simply spend time with the parents who have shaped your life. Share stories, laugh together, and honor their legacy by living out the values they've instilled in you. For those who may no longer have their parents with them, may you find comfort in their enduring lessons and the memories that continue to guide you.

A Personal Note

On a personal note, as I reflect on my role within the Scottish Rite, I am reminded of my own parents' influence. Their love and encouragement have been my anchor, and I know many of you share similar stories. Let's use these special days to not only celebrate but also to recommit to being sources of love and support for one another, just as our parents have been for us.

From all of us at the North Carolina Scottish Rite, Happy Mother's Day and Happy Father's Day. May these days be filled with joy, gratitude, and the warmth of family. Thank you, mothers and fathers, for all that you do. You are our heroes, today and always.

With deepest appreciation,
Rita Daniels
Strategic Communication Team Leader
North Carolina Scottish Rite