

LODGE CHAPLAIN'S HANDBOOK



Published By:

**GRAND LODGE FREE AND ACCEPTED MASONS
OF WISCONSIN**

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2009

**Dedicated to Lodge Chaplains
for their information and to provide a guide
to useful resources.**

The District Chaplains are appreciative of the leadership of the following brothers who have helped to create this document:

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MISSION STATEMENT

The Lodge Chaplain brings the Masonic concept of spirituality to Lodge meetings, provides ministry to and for members, and to brings a moral conscience to the Lodge, is an officer of the Lodge charged with a caring and supporting role between the fraternity, its members and their families, doing so with dignity, concern for others, with a caring heart, an attentive ear, and confidentiality in relationships, and reminds the Lodge that the basic tenets of Freemasonry are spiritual and are central to the life of Freemasonry.

A LITTLE HISTORY

From Coil's Masonic Encyclopedia: Lodge Chaplain: "In some jurisdictions, an officer of the Lodge and other Masonic bodies to offer prayers or read scriptures, some Lodges have no such office".

Grand Chaplain: An officer in the Grand Lodge of England and all Grand Lodges in the United States. "It is not an old institution, having been originated apparently in 1775, and being first mentioned in the English Constitutions in 1784." (N. King, FPS, Philalethes Society)

From the Catholic Encyclopedia: Chaplain – "In its religious spirit, Anglo-Saxon Masonry after 1730... It is principally due to the conservation of English-speaking society in religious matters, to the influence of ecclesiastical members, and to the institution of "lodge chaplains" mentioned in English records since 1733...

Still, in some older manuscripts, there were lodge chaplains active in lodges prior to 1717, each lodge being autonomous. Their duties, other than in the opening and closing prayers, were not described.

There are Grand Chaplains in all United States jurisdictions. Many jurisdictions do not have district teams, as we have in Wisconsin, but all regular Masonic Lodges, in all jurisdictions, now have the appointed office of "Lodge Chaplain".

CHAPLAINCY DEFINED

The Chaplain must always work under the direction of the Worshipful Master of the Lodge.

Chaplains provide respectful spiritual and emotional care to persons of all faiths and spiritualities. As chaplains, we make ourselves available to walk beside persons on their journey, both in times of struggle and in times of joy.

Illness can be a painful and isolating experience full of uncertainties and losses. As chaplains, we listen attentively to the person and seek to understand and participate with that person's frame of reference. We converse in a supportive and inquiring manner rather than impose our perspective upon the other person. For all, we seek to empower persons to creatively encounter their situations with possibilities for healing and renewal.

We are committed to responding to every referral in a timely manner and making follow-up visits with patients and family members on a regular basis. We rely on a collaborative approach to helping those who would benefit from our services. Thus, we rely on patients, families, friends and brothers to make us aware of the need for our services.

The chaplain must be mature and sensitive and have earned the respect and trust of his fraternal brothers and their families. Working with Lodge officers, brothers and their families will offer you an opportunity to relate to them at a level where you will become sensitive to needs not yet expressed. Be alert for personal, family, or social situations that may require special care. The supportive presence, listening, and empathy of a Lodge Chaplain can be a tremendous help to brothers, patients, and their families.

There is cultural craving for less hostility and prejudice, and more mercy, graciousness, and social justice. There is a search for a larger vista of hope and meaning which touches both the joyful times and painful grief times of our human condition. Chaplains help navigate through these times. We do everything within our power to assist those who might benefit from our services.

We help families cope with loss, and the elderly to cope with aging so they may all feel at peace with themselves. As chaplains, we are open, sensitive, and non-judgmental.

Entering the saddest of moments is not easy for a chaplain, but he brings experience, knowledge, training, and skills to the tragedy. The Chaplain makes an important difference in the lives of persons touched by tragedy.

THE CHAPLAIN AND HIS DUTIES

From: FREEMASONRY AND ITS ETIQUETTE, by William Preston Campbell-Everden. Originally published in London, England in 1955, and based on the work of London Lodge of the Grand Lodge of England.

“The Constitutions provide that the Master ‘may’ also appoint a Chaplain; and in any Lodge which has among its members a duly qualified Brother, it is desirable that a Chaplain should be appointed; and, as a matter of course, all the devotional portions of the opening and closing of each Degree and in each of the three Ceremonies would then be performed by him. The impressiveness and the solemnity of the whole proceedings may be enhanced by having a Chaplain to perform these important duties”.

The following optional address may be delivered to the appointed Chaplain on his investiture by the installing officer:

“W. Bro..., I now appoint you Chaplain of this Lodge, and are now invested with the Jewel of your Office, the Open Book. This represents the Volume of the Sacred Law, which is always open on the Master’s Pedestal when the Brethren are at labor in the Lodge. The Volume of the Sacred Law is the greatest of the three great, though emblematical, lights in Freemasonry. The Sacred Writings are given as the rule and guide of our faith. The Sacred Law will guide us to all Truth, direct our steps in the paths of Happiness, and point out to us the whole Duty of Man. Without it, the Lodge is not “just”; and without an openly avowed belief in its Devine Author, no Candidate can be lawfully initiated into our Order.

Your place in the Lodge is near the Worshipful Master, and as, both in the opening and the closing of the Lodge in each Degree, as well as in each of the three Ceremonies, the blessing of the Almighty is invoked in our proceedings, it will be your duty, as far as it may be possible, to attend all the meetings of the Lodge, in order that you may exercise your sacred office in the devotional portions of our Ceremonies”.

WELCOME TO THE CHAPLAIN'S CORNER

As a team, the Lodge Chaplain and the Worshipful Master make an important difference in the lives of persons touched by tragedy. We work together. Chaplains represent a wide variety of religious traditions and levels of preparation. But the Chaplain is not the religious leader of a particular tradition serving a particular congregation or agency. Each Lodge Chaplain is for everyone in the Lodge, and his functions are broad, yet limited.

Chaplains serve the many personal and spiritual needs of individual where they are, when they need the support of another person who comes to them without judgment, with openness, and cares for them until the crisis is over. Chaplains respect the persons they serve, even though there may be differences in religious experience, economic status, or other factors, and they comfort people who are shaking with fear with a gentle touch. Or, if someone asks, a prayer will be offered in guarded privacy to support the trembling of spirit that comes in difficult moments.

Chaplains are aware that we participate in spiritual care at some level. Issues of meaning, relationships, peace with God, among other things, can become quite focused, even to the point of struggle or crisis, during times of terminal illness. The supportive presence of a Lodge Chaplain can be a tremendous help to members and their families.

The social, emotional, physical, and spiritual needs of our elderly, ill members and their families are enormous. But, as Lodge Chaplains, we try to do everything in our power to make life a little better for them.

You, as a Lodge Chaplain, have the opportunity to be a friend to members and Lodge officers, and to contribute to their spiritual welfare and growth. By virtue of your position and personality, you can encourage members in their Masonic work and other aspects of their lives. Ask officers and members to inform you of accidents, illnesses, and other problems of members. You should become aware of situations where a call would be appropriate and beneficial. If a member misses several meetings, it may be an indication that something is wrong. As Chaplain, you have the opportunity to visit and discover the problem, and offer a remedy. Be alert for personal, family, or social concerns that may require special care.

As Chaplains, we make ourselves available to walk beside persons on their journey, both in times of struggle and in times of joy. We seek to sustain, guide, and nurture spiritual and emotional well-being through relationships, conversations, ritual, and

symbols. We listen attentively to the person and seek to understand and to participate with that person as much as possible within that person's spiritual/cultural/personal frame of reference. We converse in a supportive and caring manner rather than imposing our perspective upon the other person. For all, we seek to empower persons to creatively encounter their situations with possibilities for healing and renewal.

IMPORTANCE OF THE LODGE CHAPLAIN

The basic tenets of Freemasonry are spiritual, and need to be interpreted and understood by Masons because they underlie everything in Masonry.

Since these concepts are central to the life of Freemasonry, someone in each Lodge needs to be charged with reminding the Lodge of this fact and with exemplifying it as well. Throughout the life of Freemasonry, the Lodge Chaplain has been given this task, and the importance of the Lodge Chaplain cannot be overstated.

The Lodge Chaplain has a unique responsibility to provide a great service to the Lodge, and he should occupy an important position in the Lodge structure. The lines of communication between the Lodge members, officers and the Chaplain should be open and utilized for the purposes intended.

The Lodge Chaplain is an officer charged with a caring and supportive role between the fraternity, its members, and their families. He also represents the Lodge and the Master both within and outside the Lodge building.

It is important that the Worshipful Master, along with other Lodge officers, understand the role of the Chaplain.

To relieve the distressed is an expression of offering our sincere affection for the less fortunate. To soothe the unhappy, to sympathize with their misfortune, to be compassionate with their miseries, and to restore peace to their troubled minds is the grand aim of Chaplains and all of Freemasonry.

ATTRIBUTES

The Worshipful Master is urged to consider and appoint a brother with the following attributes:

COMPASSION The deep concern in serving through organizations and activities that benefit others.

CONFIDENTIALITY The ability to keep confidences, even though at times it may be risky, and the ability to really listen and hear what is being said.

RESOURCEFULNESS The willingness to assume responsibility and an interest in doing things in a different way that will better serve the Craft. Think “out of the box”.

SOCIABILITY Being a “people person” is essential in Freemasonry because it is a people oriented activity. Be able to communicate with members, guests, friends, and families. Take the initiative in meeting newcomers and welcome them.

ORGANIZATION Working with the Worshipful Master, organize, or suggest, Lodge activities, such as a Clergy Night, other activities, a visitation committee, a telephone squad, or any program that will add to the spiritual quality and understanding of the Lodge members.

FAITH The Lodge Chaplain should be someone who is active in his religious faith, church, synagogue, mosque, or temple. He should be at ease with prayer and devotion, and be willing to learn about Freemasonry and its relation to various religions. Freemasonry is not a religion, nor has it a unique theology, but respects all religions and philosophies.

SPIRITUALITY An attitude of openness and a relationship to God which can almost be seen, and is a unique combination of all the above attributes.

SPHERE OF INFLUENCE

The role of the Lodge Chaplain includes:

The regular opening and closing prayers.

The ambulatory “Lessons” in each degree.

(All are in the Cipher, and should be memorized)

Prayers preceding special meetings, dinners, or other occasions.

A booklet available on the Grand Lodge website contains prayers for most occasions, or can be improvised as appropriate.

Visit and comfort the sick, shut-ins, and bereaved.

Since the Chaplain should not be solely responsible for such visits, there should be a group of volunteer assistants for this purpose. It will also serve to demonstrate that more than one individual cares about the homebound or hospitalized Brother and his family.

Mediate distress.

It is most undignified for a man in distress to be asked to approach more than one officer in the Lodge when he is in need. The Chaplain is the obvious choice, since he is trusted by both the Lodge and the individual Mason to preserve the utmost dignity and confidentiality in these matters.

Mediation can also be a goal for stress between brethren or between a brother and the Lodge. An eye toward this type of service should be open, particularly when visiting, or in connection with “inactive” persons.

Memorial Services.

There are several memorial services in the Masonic Handbook (Chap. X, pp. 65-141), and these may be modified to fit the specific circumstance.

A “Memorial Tribute” booklet is available from the Grand Lodge, and can be given to the family following the service.

CIRCUMABULATORY LESSONS FROM THE SCRIPTURES

These are in the Cipher as part of each degree, and should be memorized:

Entered Apprentice Degree from Psalm 133

Fellowcraft Degree from Amos 7:7-8

Master Mason Degree from Eccles. XII, 1-7

**THOSE OUTSIDE THE FRATERNITY
MAY VIEW US AS
A SECRETIVE GROUP**

At Memorial Services, Freemasonry
should be seen by the uninformed
as having dignity,
concern for others,
a caring heart,
and an attentive ear.

MEMORIAL SERVICES

Be willing to help plan and participate in Memorial Services. Let your Worshipful Master know of your willingness. If he seeks your help, you should cooperate. Be able to present the Memorial Service from memory or to be able to read it well. Do not try to replace those in your Lodge who have traditionally done the Memorial Service, but let them know of your willingness to help. Use and distribute the “Memorial Tribute” booklet. It is a nice memorial for the family. Present it to the family at the conclusion of the service.

Don't be intimidated – we are NOT trying to supplant the church or any religious service. Rather, we are acknowledging the passing of a friend and brother.

PRIOR TO THE SERVICE:

Obtain all the necessary information on the deceased (fill out the “Memorial Tribute” booklet if you are using one.)

Familiarize yourself with the setting, determining the traffic flow for entrance, movement, and exit for yourself and brethren taking part.

Know where you will be standing, and the use of the lectern, public address system, etc.

Know where the immediate family will be seated so you can address them directly.

Know where the emblem (if any) is positioned.

Materials should be available. Make sure that there is enough acacia, and your sprig is large enough to demonstrate; that the aprons are clean and wrinkle-free and ties untangled.

The “Memorial Tribute” booklet should be filled out neatly, ready to present to the family, at this time or at a more convenient time.

Re-read your part to assure that it will be delivered smoothly; be sure to memorize comments in regard to the apron and acacia.

DURING THE SERVICE:

Move smoothly, with dignity, and without hesitation.

Speak in a clear, distinct voice, with a positive tone.

Use proper emphasis, and deliver with a sincere meaning.

Display the apron clearly while giving the apron comments, placing the apron while saying: "I now deposit this..."

Display the acacia clearly, make the initial comment, then turn to deposit it. After the deposit, make the closing comment as you salute.

After all the brethren have made their acacia deposit and have returned to their places, continue to the conclusion of the service.

Exit smoothly in the manner of your entrance.

AFTER THE SERVICE

Greet the family, express condolences, offer assistance and present the "Memorial Tribute" booklet to them.

Remain for any following religious service to demonstrate support.

Remain for a time if a reception is to follow.

MASONIC MEMORIAL SERVICES

Revised November 19, 2001

By

Grand Chaplain Ray D. Heilborn

Every Master Mason has the right to a Masonic Memorial Service when requested by his survivors. Upon receiving notice of the passing of a brother, the Master and the Chaplain should arrange for an immediate personal visitation with the widow or family. Bear in mind that the widow or family of the deceased may be totally unfamiliar with such proceedings, therefore the following guidelines should be carefully observed:

GUIDELINES

1. When a Master Mason dies, the Master of the Lodge, the Chaplain, and one or more of the members should call upon the widow or family, express sympathy, and extend Masonic Courtesies, which include:
 - a. Offering to provide a Masonic Memorial Service.
 - b. Offering to provide a Masonic Apron, if the deceased brother's apron is not available.
 - c. Offering to provide personal services, such as pallbearers (active or honorary), drivers, or notification of friends and relatives.
2. The Masonic Memorial Service is conducted at the request of the deceased brother's family. The Service is to be in the memory of the deceased brother. When asked to perform the Masonic Memorial Service, be aware that it is an honor and privilege to serve the family and friends of the deceased brother.
3. The Masonic Memorial Service should not be confused with a funeral service which should be conducted by a member of the Clergy chosen by the family.
4. The Masonic Memorial Service should be conducted in advance of the religious service, even the night before the religious service, if that is convenient for and acceptable to the family. It is imperative to consult with the Clergy involved to avoid duplication and/or embarrassment.
5. Remember that the purpose of the Masonic Memorial Service is to supplement the deceased brother's faith and religion and not to upstage it!
6. The deceased brother's Clergy should be invited to the Masonic Memorial Service.
7. The Master of the Lodge shall take proper steps to assure appropriate attendance. Many lodges organize a telephone committee to invite members to attend the Service.

8. The Masonic Memorial Service must be executed with proficiency, sensitivity, dignity, and in a worshipful attitude and atmosphere.
 - a. The format of the Service should be well prepared.
 - b. The manuscript should be in large type, and, if necessary, double-spaced for easy reading.
 - c. It need not be memorized, but the Chaplain or other brother leading the Service should be practiced and familiar with the material so he is able to present it in a manner which will convey the proper feeling and meaning of the words. At the same time he should maintain proper rapport with those who are listening, by presenting the matter in a fluent and smooth manner.
9. A Masonic Memorial Service is PUBLIC. For many persons, the only exposure they will have to Freemasonry is a Memorial Service. A positive impression must be left with those in attendance.
10. In the rare situation where no Clergy-led funeral service is to be conducted, the Lodge may do so, when requested by the family.
11. The Clergy should perform the committal. If no Clergy is available for that purpose, the Lodge may do so when requested by the family.
12. In every case, and in every situation, the wishes of the family should be respected.

MASONIC MEMORIAL PIN PRESENTATION

When the time comes for the presentation of the Masonic Memorial Pin, the Worshipful Master or Chaplain shall call the family member to stand before him.

(PRESENTER) This Masonic Memorial Pin is being presented to you out of respect and gratitude for your gracious support of our brother during his Masonic work through the years. Masonry recognizes and supports the tradition of Masonic families who have accepted and practiced belief in Deity and the brotherhood of all and are dedicated to the high ethical concepts of Freemasonry.

The symbols on this Pin express very important Masonic ideals. The wreath which encircles the Pin has always been the symbol to designate a victor, one who has won a prize. In this instance, it denotes the successful life of our Brother, through his service and devotion to the Craft and its ideals. The outline of the State of Wisconsin signifies that our brother's service to Freemasonry took place with his relationship to persons and projects in Wisconsin.

The Square and Compasses have been the basic Masonic symbol for generations. By this symbol, Masons are taught to square their actions and keep them within due bounds. In his time as a Mason, our brother pledged himself to the duties, obligations, and high ideals of Freemasonry which he expressed by his life and relationships.

In the center of the Pin there is a broken column. We were taught that in ancient times, a column or pillar symbolized a prince, noble, or other prominent leader, and that person helped support or uphold the laws and traditions of the state or nation.

A broken column then, denotes a fallen or deceased individual who has been a valuable leader in his community. In Freemasonry, this broken column represents the passing of one who has been a vital part of the brotherhood of Freemasonry. Its symbolism today on this pin is that a strong supporter and practitioner of Masonic ideals have left us, but his influence and spirit remain alive in his family, friends, Lodge, community, and Nation.

We shall remember him with respect and brotherly affection. On behalf of the brothers of this Lodge, I am pleased and honored to present this pin to you.



Widow's Pin

TRAINING

Freemasonry and Religion

Attacks on the Craft

Symbolism

Special Presentations and Programs

Resources

Finally, get as much training as possible. Attend District meetings, Schools of Instruction, and other training opportunities, such as from discussions with your religious leaders, reading material, or some other source.

Remember, the purpose of the Chaplain's visit ought not be just to "stop and chat", even though that may be of value as well as fun. The purpose is to strengthen the bond of caring and among the members of the Craft, and to keep open to their needs and how we may be able to serve them. Every member should receive a visit when they are hospitalized, and they should know ahead of time that when that situation occurs, that the Chaplain or an officer of the Lodge should be informed that they will be going to a hospital. Even after they are admitted, someone in the family should see that the Lodge is informed of the circumstances, and whether visitations are allowed. Those in nursing homes, or who are shut-ins, should receive regular visits – with emphasis on holidays, or if a definite need for a visit exists. For shut-ins and nursing home residents, a fruit basket is most welcome, particularly at holiday time.

In instance of terminal illness or death of a member or in a family, a visit by the Worshipful Master, Chaplain, and another brother is suggested, and follow-up contact should be maintained as necessary. The Chaplain should be familiar with, and able to explain the availability of support services, including providing the Masonic Memorial Service for deceased members. A joint visit by the Worshipful Master and the Chaplain can be beneficial as it demonstrates true concern. Be alert to signs of needs, and take action to have those needs met.

