



VIRGINIA LIGHT
NEWSLETTER OF THE ORIENT OF VIRGINIA

Volume XII, Issue 1

Spring 2021

**SAVE THE DATE: THURSDAY-SUNDAY
SEPTEMBER 23-26, 2021**

Holiday Inn-Tanglewood
4468 Starkey Road
Roanoke, VA 24018

- 2 How Do You Wear Your Masonry**
- 3 Feast of Tishri**
- 4 Conference Schedule**
- 14 Conference Golf Outing**



Deputy Of Supreme Council In Virginia

Illustrious Alan W. Adkins, 33° GC

How Do You Wear Your Masonry

My Brethren,

By the time you read this message, the 2020 Spring Workshop was conducted via Zoom technology, under the able leadership of Right Worshipful William A. Robertson, Jr., KCCH. I thank each Scottish Rite Mason who played a role in the Workshop. Virtual gatherings and meetings seem to be the norm these days as we continue to deal with the impact of the pandemic. In addition, I thank you for your fortitude and perseverance in carrying out the business of your respective Valley during these unusual times. Masonic education and welfare checks are very important whether dealing with a pandemic or not.

In this message to you as Deputy, I want to talk about "How do you wear your Masonry." During War World II, the Americans captured a battalion of Germans, among whom were several officers. One German officer, in particular, kept turning his lapel towards a young American officer who did not pay any attention to the German officer, who look puzzled and seemed not to understand the American's lack of interest, and who after questioning was sent off to pris-

on with the other German prisoners. Under his lapel, the German officer wore a blue Forget-Me-Not pin, a way the Germans, Russians, and other Europeans used to distinguish themselves as Masons because "Masonry having been banned by Hit-



ler and Stalin was punishable by death." Many years later at a reunion of military officers, the two met again and the German officer recognized the American officer, who did not remember the incident. The German officer related the story to him. Afterwards, the American explained he did not know the Forget-Me-Not pin was a means of identification. You see, Germans wore their Masonry under their lapel. I could go on and on about

the different ways to wear Masonry, but is this how we should wear our Masonry? I remember as a young adult meeting many men who were just a little different acting than others and you just knew they were Masons. These men were nicer and had a more pleasant demeanor and seemed to be more understanding and tolerant than most men. They did not need rings, belt buckles or any other objects to tell you they were Masons; somehow, you just knew they were Masons. If we live our life by the most solemn obligation of a Master Mason, where we promised certain things, then we do not need metallic objects to tell the world we are Masons, they will know by our acts and deeds.

In closing, I want to give a special note of thanks to Brother Steven F. Dowd, KCCH, Orient Webmaster, for his outstanding work on re-vamping the Orient website. If you have not already done so, please go to www.vascottishrite.org and check out the site. If you are pleased with what you see, please send a note of appreciation to Brother Steve. If you have a suggestion to further improve the new website, please let him know.

The Virginia Light©
Published quarterly for the
Brethren in the Orient of Virginia

Illustrious James D. Cole, 33°
Sovereign Grand
Commander of the Supreme Council, 33°, Ancient and Accepted
Scottish Rite, SJ, USA

Illustrious Alan W. Adkins, 33°
Inspector General,
Personal Representative to the
Sovereign Grand Inspector
General in Virginia

Bro. Gerald L. Frey, 32° KCCH
Virginia Light Editor

Copyright © 2020, The Orient of
Virginia under the auspices of The
Supreme Council, 33°, Ancient and
Accepted Scottish Rite, Southern
Jurisdiction, USA.

No part of this publication may be
reproduced without permission of
its Editor at :
virginialighteditor@gmail.com

**Deadline for next issue:
August 1, 2021**

Feast of Tishri

Right Worshipful Joel T. Bundy, 32° KCCH

Peace is our gift to each other.

Elie Wiesel

At the end of life we will not be judged by how many diplomas we have received, how much money we have made, how many great things we have done. We will be judged by "I was hungry, and you gave me something to eat, I was naked and you clothed me. I was homeless, and you took me in."

Mother Teresa

So once by water, now by fire

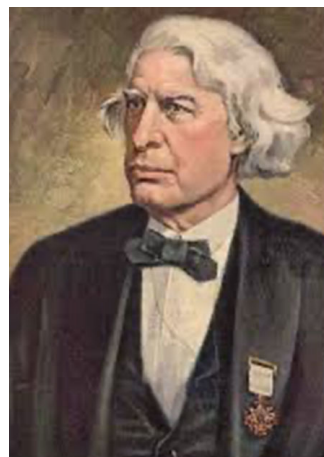
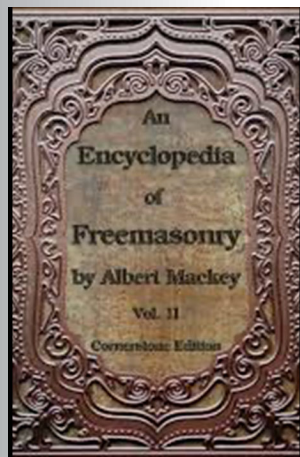
Kerry Livgren

In the seventh month of the year, the seventh feast of the Jews is celebrated for seven days, from Tishri 15 to 21. Sukkot is also known as the Feast of the Tabernacles, or Feast of Booths. Wine was poured on the altar to accompany sacrifices during the Jewish Temple periods. During Sukkot, there is a unique ceremony, a pouring out of water on the altar. This is called nisukh ha-mayim. As it was associated with Sukkot and the thanksgiving of the fall harvest, it may have represented a prayer for winter water. The Talmud would tell of the priests and sages obtaining the water from the banks of a stream near the Temple, and with it singing and dancing, juggling torches, knives and eggs all while drinking wine. This dancing and festivities continue even today in remembrance of this water ritual.

For millennia there has been purification by water. God purified through The Flood. Man purified spiritually and morally through the washing of the hands or body with water. Albert Mackey wrote that its symbolism was "of the internal purification of the heart." According to his revised *Encyclopedia*, lustration derives from the Latin for both washing and atonement. These are intertwined with the purification of the soul, to lustrate with water then made incarnadine from the stain of wine, sacrifice, or our transgressions. Even Lady Macbeth hoped that "a little water clears us of this deed." Purification can be related to a ritual or ceremonial cleansing, to be made morally or spiritually pure, or the removal of impurities or undesirable elements.

"Internal
purification of the
heart"

Albert Mackey



Continued on page 6.

97th Scottish Rite Conference of Virginia Friday, September 24, 2021

- 9:00-4:00 AM **Registration**
Main Lobby
- 10:00 AM **Program** "Calling All Brethren".M.W. and Ill. Lewis Kerford Campbell
BALLROOM C, D, E
- 10:30 AM **Program** "The Ages of Man," Ill. Samuel G. Welty, 33°
BALLROOM C, D, E
- 11:00 AM-12:30 PM **Lunch**
Hospitality Suite TBD
- 12:45-1:30 PM **Program**
Ballroom C, D, E.
- 1:45- 2:30 PM Scottish Rite Foundation of Virginia (Directors)...
Philip N. Rhodes, KCCH, President
Ballroom C, D, E
- 2:45-3:30 PM Presidents/Vice Presidents/Nominations - William A. Parks, Jr.33°
Ballroom C, D, E
- 3:30-4:15 PM Secretaries, Treasurers, Personal Representatives
Ill. Alan Wayne Adkins, 33°, G.C. Deputy in Virginia
Ballroom C, D, E
- 4:15-6:00 PM **Social Hour**
Hospitality Suites
- 6:00 PM **Banquet**
Ballroom A, B, C
- 6:15 PM Welcome by Conference President - William A. Parks, Jr.33°
Invocation
TBD
Presentation of Colors...Patrick Henry High Scholl Junior ROTC, Ill John F. Hartsock, 33°

Dinner

- Introductions - William A. Parks, Jr, 33°
Introduction of the Sovereign Grand Commander, Southern Jurisdiction, AASR
William A. Parks, Jr.,33°
Introduction of Distinguished Guests - Ill. Alan Wayne Adkins, 33°, G.C.
Introduction of Ill. Mark A. Tabbert, 33°, B.F., Director of the Library and Museum
Collections of the George Washington Masonic National Memorial Association
Benediction - TBD
Casual Dress for Friday's Proceedings/Coat & Tie for Banquet

Hospitality Rooms Open

Thursday-Sunday,
September 23-26, 2021
at:

Holiday Inn-Tanglewood

RT. 419 & I-81
4468 Starkey Road
Roanoke, VA 24018



97th Scottish Rite Conference of Virginia Saturday, September 25, 2021

Thursday-Sunday,
September 23-26, 2021
at:

Holiday Inn-Tanglewood

RT. 419 & I-81
4468 Starkey Road
Roanoke, VA 24018

8:00 AM – 2:00 PM **Registration**

Main Lobby

8:30 AM **Opening of the 97th Annual Session**

Welcome - William A. Parks, Jr. 33°

Ballroom C, D, E

Benediction - TBD

Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag of our Country - Ill John F. Hartsock, 33°

Necrology Service - Ill. Alan Wayne Adkins, 33°, G.C.

Minutes of last Annual Session - Brian R. Croteau, KCCH

Introduction of Distinguished Guests - Ill. Alan Wayne Adkins, 33°

Remarks of Grand Master of Masons in Virginia - M.W. Douglas Vernon Jones

Reports of the Valley President and Vice Presidents

Remarks of the Deputy in Virginia - Ill. Alan Wayne Adkins, 33°, G.C.

10:30 – 10:45 AM **Break**

10:30AM – Noon: **Ladies' Brunch**

VISTA ROOM

10:45 – 11:15 AM Remarks of Ill. Mark A. Tabbert, 33°, "Understanding Craft History"

11:15 AM Election/Installation of Officers, SR Conference of Virginia for 2022

11:30 AM Annual Meeting of the Scottish Rite Foundation of Virginia for 2021

11:45 AM Adjournment and Benediction, TBD

11:45 -1:00 Lunch for Attendees and Guests

Hospitality Rooms TBD

2:20 PM KCCH Investiture at Valley of Roanoke Scottish Rite Temple

622 Campbell Avenue, Roanoke, VA 24016

presented by Valley of Newport News

6:00 PM **Banquet**

Ballroom A, B, C

"Pledge of Allegiance as You've Never Seen it Before"

ROTC and Ill. John F Hartsock, 33°

Welcome by Conference President

William A. Parks, Jr, 33°

Dinner

Recognition of Past Conference Presidents and Introduction of Conference Officers

Introduction of Distinguished Guests

Brian R. Croteau, SR Conference Secretary

Audio-Visual Presentation by RiteCare Clinic, Radford University

Presentation and Remarks

William A. Parks, Jr, 33°

Remarks of Incoming Conference President

Ill. J. Leon Stocks, 33°, Valley of Norfolk

Remarks and Benediction

Ill. Alan Wayne Adkins, 33°, G.C., Deputy in Virginia

Caps, Coat and Tie, Black Tie for Officers and Head Table

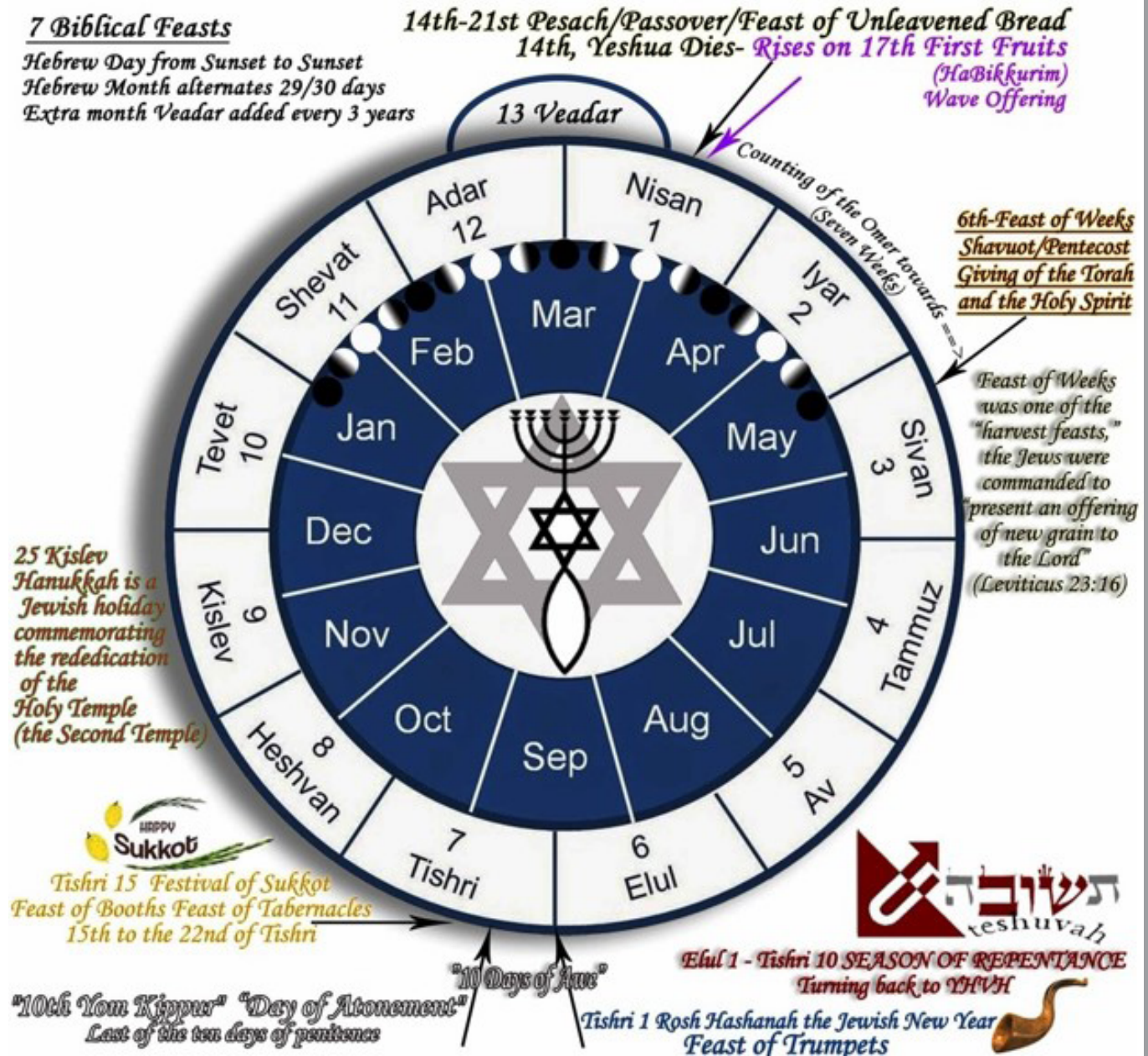
Hospitality Rooms Open



Feast of Tishri

Continued from page 3.

We see purification in our ritual of circumambulation. Again Mackey writes that the ancient Greeks would walk around an altar three times before making a sacrifice. They called it from the right to the right. The Romans added lustration with its symbology of purification, to the circumambulation, and over time purification became associated with the walking movement itself. The movement is typically from the East through the South to the West, being clockwise, or sun-wise. With this symbology, we can understand that the circumambulation during masonic rituals hails to the purification of the candidate before taking the obligation.



Continued on page 5.

Feast of Tishri

Continued from page 6.

Purification by water



Salt. It is a rock we eat and has been part of civilization from the beginning. Homer called it divine. Plato felt it was especially dear to the gods. Halite, or rock salt, is commonly found throughout the world as lakes and riverbeds have dried up, leaving behind salt beds composed of the mineral NaCl (sodium chloride) with many impurities. These impurities impart color, and different tastes to the salt. Man has used salt for millennia to cure meats, and also to enhance the flavors in food. To extract NaCl out of rock salt requires a purification process, but one that can be easily performed with fire, water, a setting apart, and tincture of time, such as using a Bunsen burner with filter paper. Scaling this concept to other minerals and substances is part of Chemistry, itself derived from Alchemy. The story of the purification of salt then mirrors that of the spiritual purification of man and the world, through water and by fire.



Continued on page 9.

The Scottish Rite Research Society

The benefits of membership in the Scottish Rite Research Society are many. Some are intangibles, such as the potential for interaction and discussions with the brightest minds in contemporary Masonic philosophy and debate. The most important benefit is the availability of what we all came here for, which is more light in Masonry. This is manifest most particularly in SRRS publications and Masonic conferences.

The tangible benefits of membership in the SRRS include:

- Access to some of the most thought-provoking ideas in contemporary Masonic research
- A 10% discount on Society books and certain items bought at the House of the Temple or via the on-line Store
- The annual hardback volume of *Heredom*®, the preeminent publication of scholarly Masonic research
- The Society's quarterly research journal, *The Plumblin*e®
- Early notice for upcoming conferences and meetings on issues of Masonic importance
- Your SRRS membership card and lapel pin SRRS Members may also receive:
- Special discounted offers on advanced sales throughout the year
- A bonus book or other item

TO JOIN

There are two levels of membership in the Society.
Annual membership \$52.00 or Life membership available for \$1,300.

In addition to receiving *Heredom*, *The Plumblin*e, and discounts on Scottish Rite merchandise, SRRS members who pay their dues before the end of the year they are due occasionally receive an extra "bonus item" produced for that year. This is our way of saying "thank you" to members who stay dues-current.

Remember to visit the Scottish Rite Research Society section of the Store to see what products are available with your membership discount.

On-line

Join us via our on-line Store and click on "Scottish Rite Research Society."

By Telephone

Call the Scottish Rite Store toll-free at 1-866-445-9196, Monday through Thursday, from 7:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. Eastern Time. Please have your credit card (VISA, MasterCard, American Express, Discover) information ready.

On-line

Join us via our on-line Store and click on "Scottish Rite Research Society."



Certain faculties of man are directed toward the Unknown—thought, meditation, prayer. The unknown is an ocean, of which conscience is the compass. Thought, meditation, and prayer, are the great mysterious pointings of the needle. It is a spiritual magnetism that thus connects the human soul with the Deity. These majestic irradiations of the soul pierce through the shadow toward the light. Arturo de Hoyos, Ed., *Albert Pike's Morals and Dogma*. (Washington D.C.: The Supreme Council, 2011), 77

Feast of Tishri

Continued from page 9.

Purification isn't always for the good. There have been men throughout the ages who have tried to purify their lands of the undesirables. The operative condition here is to divine what is undesirable. It is easier when considering impurities within salt, or a bacterial colony blooming within the blood, or even a contaminant in the water supply (lead in Flint, MI). What is problematic is when those in power determine that others under their influence and control need to be removed to purify their lands, based on an ideal erroneous and flawed. This was Nazi Germany, and we all recall the genocide of the Tutsis by the Hutus. In addition to the Holocaust and atrocities in Rwanda, modern man has seen the same in Armenia (1915), Cambodia (1975), Bosnia (1995) and Darfur (2003). Stalin summed up the why with these eight words- "Death solves all problems - no man, no problem". Much better to live by those lines learned in Sunday School that all are precious, whether red, yellow, black or white.

Genocide

Death solves all
problems-
No man,
No problem.

Joseph Stalin



Continued on page 10.

Feast of Tishri



The Scottish Rite Philosophy of the Feast of Tishri

The Feast of Tishri as practiced by the Scottish Rite has three overarching themes. First, it mirrors the Jewish Sukkot in lessons thereof and somewhat in appearance. After the forgiveness of Yom Kippur a few days earlier comes fellowship, not only with our brothers of the Scottish Rite, but with all the children of the world, and some from beyond (the mystical Heavenly guests). We should find ourselves in a time of celebration and thanksgiving, remembering where we came from, and how much we remain dependent on others for what we need in our lives. The allegory from the sukkah teaches us to be humble, but not dour, instead to rejoice with a jocund spirit, and with charity and hospitality for others, whether tinker, bedlam beggar or our neighbor from across the street..



Introspection

- **Forgiveness**
- **Fellowship**
- **Thanksgiving**
- **Humble**
- **Charity**

Themes of Tishri

- **Introspection**
- **Live in peace**
- **Equality of man**

Continued on page 11.

Feast of Tishri



Live...In...Peace

- **King David**
- **שלום המלך Solomon**
- **Peacemaker**
- **Aequanimitas**

Secondly, as King Solomon dedicated the Temple during Sukkot, we should therefore think on the symbolism of the Temple, in particular the hope for amity among all people. The Warrior King David was not allowed to build the Temple, but the privilege and honor was instead granted to his son, Solomon, a man of peace. Even his name means peace, from the Hebrew שלום Shelomoh which is derived from Hebrew שלום shalom, or peace. Only under the banner of peace can we all sit together as lion and lamb, breaking bread and drinking wine. Many have longed for such halcyon days through the millennia. Jesus blessed the peacemakers during His sermon on the Mount. From Mother Teresa to Mahatma Gandhi, Thich Nhat Hanh, and even John Lennon, there has been a long list of peacemakers who hunger and thirst after harmony in a troubled world. These are they who contemplate on a different philosophy of life, reflecting on that watchword of the dying Antoninus Pius- Aequanimitas.

Finally, it admonishes us that we are all equal regardless of faith, color, or ideology. Illustrious Brother Kleinknecht, 33°, Sovereign Grand Commander, wrote that “the consecration of the Temple must also be observed at the Feast of Tishri because it teaches the equality and unity of all members of the Rite.” This in the same way as the Jewish people under King Solomon were united in their devotions to God. We have been taught that the blood in our veins is the same as that of all others, whether of high or low station, and derived from the same almighty parent. We are all equal under God. Saint Paul wrote in his epistle to the Galatians 3:28 “There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female...”

What follows are expositions on how we are to come to such a fellowship as exhorted in the Feast of Tishri. What are those fundamental qualities we should emulate and strive for? What are those truths inculcated in our Masonic teachings of making good men better? In the Scottish Rite, the foundational teaching centers around the universal equilibrium, of finding balance within ourselves and in our relationships to others and the world around us. To be able to create such a balance, we need to have a comprehensive understanding of the equality of man, of what it means to integrate into various societal layers, in other words, our “beehive”, being cognizant of the beam in our own eyes, but finding the courage to be, and to honestly see deep within ourselves and as we struggle on our journey towards that unvarnished Truth. As Kerry Livgren wrote during his journey in his song Progress “Something’s missing in our picture of the future, It seems our latest observations’ incomplete” we know that as a Secret Master of the Scottish Rite, at least we have a template as a guide to the future that waits us.

Continued on page 12.

Feast of Tishri

Continued from page 11.



Equality of man

Whether cleansing “humours”, bacteria, or our own calumnious language and transgressions, we should remain ever vigilant to constantly be prepared to put our hands back under the water, again, even seventy times seven. May we become that river of living water as a testimony to others in our lives, and therefore find change for that paradigm- to be a new creation.



**Put our hands back under the water...
seventy times seven**

A Smile on the Valley

Masonic Brethren, their families, friends and businesses can now help their Valley at no cost to themselves and it's never been easier. When you shop on Amazon.com, you can direct a portion of your purchase price be sent to the RiteCare of your choice (see listing below), thanks to Amazon's charitable program called Amazon.Smile. This program, Amazon takes 0.5% (one-half of one percent) of the price of any item purchased and donates that money to the shopper's charity of choice at no additional cost.

- Scottish Rite Childhood Language Center—Richmond
- Norfolk Scottish Rite Foundation Inc.—Norfolk
- Portsmouth Scottish Rite Foundation Inc.—Portsmouth
- Tidewater Scottish Rite Speech and Language Foundation Inc. Newport News—Newport News
- Scottish Rite Museum and Library Of The Valleys—Lexington
- Roanoke Scottish Rite Language Disorder Clinic Inc.—Roanoke



1- Go to <https://smile.amazon.com> (You must always use this address instead of amazon.com. The RiteCare Center of your choice will not receive money if you do not.)



2- If you already have an Amazon login, log in here.



3- If you do not have an Amazon login, create an account by clicking on "Create an account."



97th Annual Scottish Rite Conference of Virginia Golf Outing

Thursday, September 23, 2021

Hanging Rock Golf Course
1500 Red Lane, Salem, VA 24153

Tee Time: 1:30 PM followed by Lunch

Format: 4-ball Scramble, Captain's Choice

\$75.00 includes Lunch, Golf, and Prizes

Contact: Steve Willis, KCCH

540-389-7275, swillis616@gmail.com

Mail Check payable to: Roanoke Valley Scottish Rite

628 Campbell Avenue SW

Roanoke, VA 24016



Scottish Rite Chirp



The Scottish Rite of Freemasonry—Southern Jurisdiction is making a new tool available exclusively to Scottish Rite Masons, known as SR Chirp. This is a personal communication and messaging utility which operates as a mobile phone application and is unique to the Scottish Rite.

Maintaining meaningful personal communications in today’s fast-paced and technology intense day can be challenging. Smartphones are everywhere, and a variety of services including Facebook, Twitter, and text messaging make keeping in touch possible using many different methods.

Each popular technology provides benefits as well as challenges. With so much information available to us, it’s often hard to keep track of some of the messages that are most important.

The name “Chirp” was selected by the application’s developer, which has other business-to-consumer projects apart from the Scottish Rite. SR Chirp messages are known as “Chirps.”

Using the application, Scottish Rite members may to “Chirp” to each other and share their experiences, day-to-day interactions and thoughts, updates from their local Valleys and Orients, or simply stay connected throughout the jurisdiction.

The application enables Scottish Rite Masons to quickly and conveniently communicate and interact. Although SR Chirp is similar to text messaging in some ways, because SR Chirp is usable only by Scottish Rite members, it becomes simple to separate communications with brothers from the sometimes overwhelming number of messaging that are part of our personal and business lives.

SR Chirp is a Smartphone app that enables Scottish Rite Masons to communicate quickly and conveniently.

Scottish Rite Chirp

SR Chirp users also customize the messages that they desire to see. A user might elect to view only messages from his own Valley, or might decide to reach out to another Valley where he is traveling. Because the application is location-aware, users can elect to see messages and interact with other users easily and conveniently wherever they are—and not see messages from locations or Valleys that are not of immediate interest.

SR Chirp is available as a free download on Android mobile platforms and coming soon for Apple devices.

Installation is simple and registration requires only that you confirm your membership and create a user ID through the my.scottishrite.org portal if you have not already done so. Activation instructions are included with the application installation.

Please download SR Chirp and be part of the online and mobile community. We're looking forward to getting acquainted!

SR Chirp is available as a free download on both Apple iPhone and Android mobile platforms.

Here are the mobile links to download the free app from your phone.



Apple:

<https://itunes.apple.com/us/app/sr-chirp/id911534384?ls=1andmt=8>

Android:

<https://play.google.com/store/apps/details?id=net.scottishrite.srchirp>

The universal link will route your phone to the appropriate store when clicked from your phone.

<http://qrs.ly/gr49ng2>

You can scan the QR code to take to either store your phone supports as well.



Twenty-eighth Degree “Knight of the Sun or Prince Adept”

Summary

Be a lover of wisdom. This degree points out seven truths: There exists an indefinable and incomprehensible principle that governs the universe. Human life is but a speck of eternity. Universal equilibrium is a result of a balance between similarities and contrasts. The absolute is the soul in its proper essence. The visible is the invisible. Evil, disaster, and misery are indispensable for universal equilibrium. Similarities are the only keys for comprehending nature. The majority of men fail to realize their errors. Masons are required to take up the arduous struggle against error. the moral code of Masonry is more extensive than that of philosophy.

“Knight of the Sun or Prince Adept”

DUTIES:

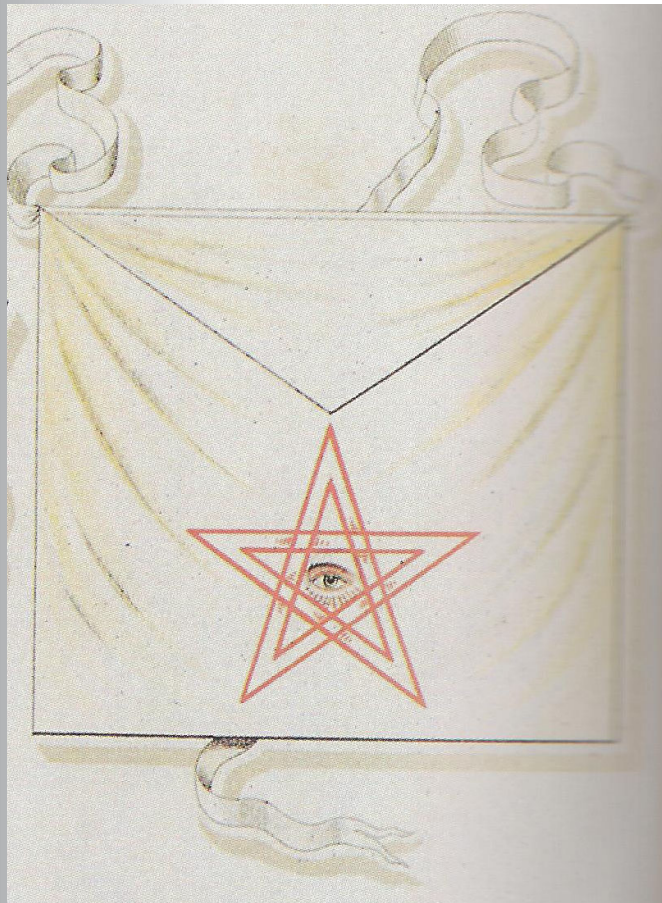
Be a lover of wisdom.
Be faithful to the promises you made within Masonry.

FOR REFLECTION:

Is the universe friendly to me?

IMPORTANT SYMBOLS:

Ancient of Days, Seal of Solomon (Macrocosm), Pentagram (Microcosm), triangles of red, green and white, the number seven. .



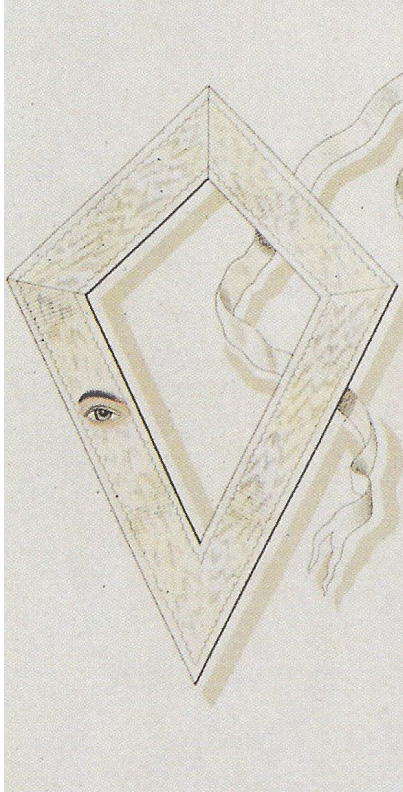
The apron is of pure white lamb-skin and has no edging or pattern except the interlaced pentagram, which is traced in the middle in vermillion.

Continued n page 18

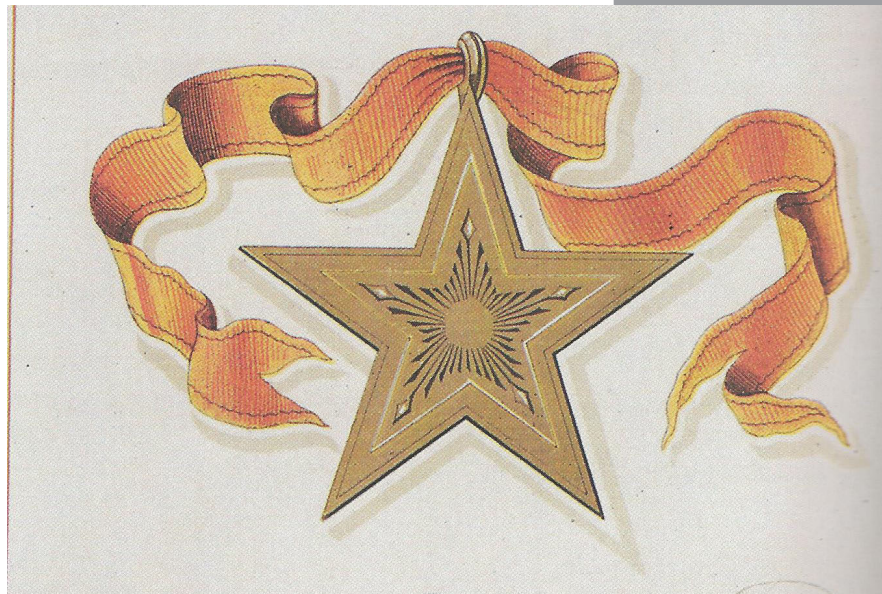
Twenty-eighth Degree “Knight of the Sun or Prince Adept”



Continued from page 17.



The order is a broad white watered ribbon worn as a collar. On the right side is painted an eye of gold, a symbol of the sun or of the Deity.



There are three jewels. The presiding officer wears a jewel that is a representation of the sun in gold, suspended by a chain of gold and worn around the neck. The reverse is a hemisphere of gold showing the northern half of the ecliptic and a zodiac, with the signs from Taurus to Libra inclusive. The other officers wear a jewel composed of a simple seven-pointed star of gold. The remaining member of the council wear a jewel that is a gold five-pointed star. Only the jewel of the degree is shown in the illustration.

Continued on page 19.

Twenty-eighth Degree “Knight of the Sun or Prince Adept”

Lessons of the Degree

“Nature reveals a power and wisdom and continually points to God. The visible is the manifestation of the invisible. In the universe two opposite forces provide balance. There is no death, only change. Philosophy is a kind of journey, ever learning, but never arriving at the ideal of truth. The moral code of Masonry is more extensive than that of philosophy.”

Continued from page 18.

Alchemy

The Hermetic philosophers may also be called speculative alchemists. The name ‘Hermetic’ comes from a tradition that the founder of alchemy was an Egyptian (Thoth) whom the Greeks called Hermes Trismegistus or Hermes the Thrice Great, identifying him with their Hermes, the Roman Mercury. Whether he was a great philosopher or a mythical figure embodying a secret doctrine is not known.

The tradition of Alchemy is best understood by separating its practitioners into two groups: the first group, whom we may term ‘operative alchemists,’ truly believed the transmutation of metals was possible. Their goal was to transform base metals, such as lead or copper, into silver or gold thereby creating wealth. The second group, the ‘speculative alchemists,’ were mystics who declared that alchemy was not the science of making gold, but a spiritual science of regeneration and a sacred art devoted to interpreting the mysteries of God and life. When we speak of alchemy in Masonry our reference is to the second group.

The speculative (or philosophical) alchemist sought knowledge or truth. In this respect their goal was identical to that of the Jewish Kabalists. The difference is that the alchemist looked, not to divine revelation, but to the earthly world around them. Together Kabalistic and Hermetic philosophy form a duality of human inquiry involved in the same quest but looking in different directions.

This, of course, is one reason why this degree is both Kabalistic and Hermetic, but there is another. The actual origins of both Alchemy and the Kabbalah have been the subject of much speculation. We do know for certain that both, as now understood, are products of the fertile medieval mind. Whether they have roots in the far more ancient past may be arguable but their impact on the mysticism of the 18th and 19th centuries is not. Many Masonic writers have assigned the origins of modern Freemasonry to the alchemically inclined Rosicrucians of the late 17th and early 18th centuries. Others have just as fervently denied any such association. Pike certainly believed alchemy and the Kabbalah to be of very ancient origin and the teachings reflected in the ritual and lecture of this degree reinforce that belief. Much of the detail in the ritual serves to provide the evidence for these ancient origins, explaining parallels and similarities, delving into language and symbols, seeking common threads.” (Hutchens, pp.248-251)

A Bridge to Light

Dr. Rex R. Hutchens, 33°, G.C.

An introduction to the Scottish Rite’s Degrees and symbolism, this book is the most popular exposition available, by one of the Rite’s most articulate philosophers and writers. The 4th Edition of this classic work includes the changes introduced with the adoption of the Revised Standard Pike Ritual; the official Ritual of the Ancient and Accepted Scottish Rite of Freemasonry, Southern Jurisdiction, U.S.A. Highly recommended by the Grand Archivist and Grand Historian.

Softbound version; illustrated. 343 pages.