

Semper Fidelis

TRESTLEBOARD



May Brotherly Love Prevail, and Every Moral and Social Virtue Cement Us.

Did You Know?

The story of Benjamin Franklin proposing a turkey for the National Bird is believed to be a myth. He did, however, criticize the Bald Eagle and praised the Turkey in a letter to his daughter in 1784.

Officers of the Lodge 2026

Master - WB J.P. Ledford
 Senior Warden - Antonio Saenz, Jr
 Junior Warden - Jimmy Johnson
 Treasurer - Earl Wilson, Jr
 Secretary - WB Jason Caldwell
 Senior Deacon - Nate Bailey
 Junior Deacon - Austin Dorschel
 Senior Steward - Steve Lewandowski II
 Junior Steward - Jeff Blackwell
 Chaplain - WB Denny Norris
 Tyler - Harry Weatherly, Jr

INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

Look to the East	3
On the Secretary's Desk	4
Upcoming events	4
Birthdays	5
Necrology	5
Wisdom of Yoda	5
Pictures	6
Grand Lodge Recap	7-8
Education	9-11



Brethren, please do not forget to take a moment, as we always do in our Lodge; to remember the sick, ailing, and those away from their families defending our way of life...and add to it our families.

Look to the East

It is easy to get lost in the details when working toward an important goal. We can spend so much time worrying about every small decision, mistake, or obstacle that we lose sight of why we started in the first place. Details matter, but they should support the larger purpose rather than distract us from it. Keeping the end result in mind helps us decide which things deserve our attention and which things deserve our attention and which things can simply be handled and moved past.

Maintaining focus on the end result also helps us stay motivated when the process becomes difficult. Instead of becoming discouraged by every setback, we can remind ourselves of what we are trying to accomplish and continue taking steps in that direction. Progress does not require everything to be perfect; it requires consistency, patience, and a clear sense of purpose. When we keep our eyes on the destination while managing the details along the way, we are more likely to remain focused, productive, and confident in reaching our goal.

JP Ledford
Master



On the Secretary's Desk

Brethren,

We are in the busy part of the year for our Lodge. Take the opportunity to come and enjoy the events planned. Everyone is welcome at Semper Fidelis Lodge. For example, the Awards and Widows is an event that we celebrate EVERY Widow as well as the Brethren who have aided in the successful year at our Lodge. Ladies Night Out is not only for those who are married, but for all Brethren to come and fellowship and celebrate our significant others. Come support our Lodge and enjoy the fellowship our Fraternity provides.

This may be learning a part for a Degree, helping with the Breakfasts, getting involved with the committees, coming to help with cleanups, coaching, mentoring, or simply attending Lodge functions. Our Lodge has always been special because of the varied age of our Brethren and those teaching the newer generations of Masons on the variety of stages of life and Masonry. You petitioned to become a part of something bigger, take that step to be something more.

If you need something, please feel free to call any of your officers, because, unfortunately, if we do not know about what is happening in your life, we cannot be there for you as Brothers.

If you have any updates to your mailing address, phone number, email address, please send to: semperfidelisldodge680@gmail.com.

Jason Caldwell
Secretary



.....

“THE REAL
SECRETS OF
MASONRY
IS SPOKEN
TO YOUR HEART
AND FROM IT
TO THE HEART
OF YOUR
BROTHER!”

UPCOMING EVENTS

Brethren,

Upcoming events are in the works and if you have any ideas for our Lodge bring them up so we can all benefit from your ideas.

- 02-03 Oct - OES Grand Matron Visit
- 03 Oct - Breakfast
- 05 Oct - Sojourners
- 08 Oct - Ritual Workshop
- 09-11 Oct - Oxford Homecoming
- 11 Oct - DeMolay Meeting
- 13 Oct - Order of Eastern Star
- 14 Oct - Stated - GL Recap
- 17 Oct - Breakfast
- 24 Oct - Sojourners 10am
- 24 Oct - Awards and Widows Luncheon 3pm
- 25 Oct - DeMolay Meeting
- 27 Oct - Order of Eastern Star
- 28 Oct - Stated - Disabled American Veterans



All of these events are located on the calendar online with details.

Please log onto Grand View at nc.grandview.systems.

If anyone wants to help with the upcoming events, please let the Officers know.

Happy Birthday Brothers

OCTOBER BIRTHDAYS

10/06 Marc Jay Owins
 10/07 Craig Andrew Comeaux
 10/08 James Steward Askins
 10/09 George Clinton Swift
 10/15 Gregory Wayne Power
10/17 Keith Elton Fountain
 10/20 William Jeffrey Davis
 10/23 Wade Lonzel Haynes
 10/25 Sean Delane Wester
 10/26 Keith David Burgess
 10/26 Gage Owens
10/26 Wesley Lee Sales
 10/28 Denver Cleo Jones
 10/28 Jason Patrick Thomas
 10/31 Leonard James Tippet II



Those in BOLD are over the age of 70

Necrology Report

Brethren,

As of our last report, we have not had any notifications of any Brother 'Laying down forever his working tools of life.'

Keep watching out for each other and ensure our Brothers are doing well.

Ensure your families know your wishes upon passing. Notifying the Lodge and requesting Masonic Honors (if you so desire) is vital to ensure we get things accomplished according to your wishes.



The Wisdom of Yoda

“The whole problem with the world is that fools and fanatics are always so certain of themselves, and wiser people so full of doubts.”

Bertrand Russell

Random pictures of the Lodge:



WB J.P. Ledford
receiving the
Lion and Pillar
Platinum Award
at Grand Lodge.



Ladies Night Out: On the sunset cruise
with our Friends and Family.



Br George Swift and
Br Kevin Waters at
their Fellowcraft
and Master Mason
Degrees



Grand Lodge Recap

Synopsis of the 239th Annual Communication

of the Grand Lodge of Ancient, Free and Accepted Masons of North Carolina
September 25–26, 2026 · Benton Convention Center, Winston-Salem

Brethren, the 239th Annual Communication has closed. Grand Master Steve M. Norris presided, and by the close of business 294 of our 323 lodges and 861 delegates were present.

REPORTS AND BUDGET

The Final Report of Past Grand Master Robert W. Rideout was Received, and the Interim Report of Grand Master Norris was Accepted and entered on the record. The Orders of both Grand Masters were Approved, and the reports of the Boards, Committees and Commissions were Received and Accepted. The Proposed Budget for 2027 was Approved.

HONORS

- Joseph Montfort Medal: RW Randy D. Ward, Grand Lecturer, for his service to the fraternity.
- Thomas Warren Gregory Masonic Leadership Award: W Johnny D. Sutphin, Black Mountain Lodge No. 663; W Johnny C. Surles, Zion Lodge No. 81; and W Job R. Connor, Bladen Lodge No. 646.
- Order of the Long Leaf Pine: MW Robert W. Rideout, PGM, conferred by Governor Josh Stein for his service to North Carolina in the Hurricane Helene relief effort and to his country, and presented by MW A. Gene Cobb, Jr., PGM.
- Honorary Membership in the Grand Lodge: MW Andrew H. Barnett, Grand Master of Alabama, and MW Roy C. Etherton, Past Grand Master and Grand Secretary of Tennessee.

IN MEMORIAM

The Grand Lodge remembered the 1,088 Master Masons who laid down their working tools since our last Annual Communication, and marked the passing of Brother Edward J. Steel, Past District Deputy Grand Lecturer, who had been named to serve as Grand Lecturer.

AMENDMENTS TO THE CODE

- Amendment Group 1: Consolidated lodges take the name and number of the oldest lodge: Failed
- Amendment Group 2: Standing Committee on Insurance: Approved
- Amendment Group 3: Income other than dues and the cost of lodge operations: Referred to the Board of General Purposes
- Amendment Group 4: Temple Corporations for lodges sharing meeting space: Approved
- Amendment Group 5: Grand Sword Bearer, Grand Pursuivant and Grand Standard Bearer as appointed offices: Approved
- Amendment Group 6: Limits on changes to the adopted budget: Referred to the Board of General Purposes

APPEALS AND RESTORATIONS

On the report of the Committee on Appeals, the Grand Lodge affirmed eleven expulsions, one dismissal, one reprimand and one one-year suspension, and modified one expulsion to a suspension of six months. Both petitions for restoration were granted.

GRAND LODGE OFFICERS FOR 2027

Elected

Grand Master: Gilbert D. Bailey (693)	Junior Grand Warden: C. Alvin Billings, Jr. (409)
Deputy Grand Master: Michael A. Register (493)	Grand Treasurer: Lewis R. Ledford (27)
Senior Grand Warden: Philip R. Johnson (106)	Grand Secretary: Jonathan A. Underwood (770)

Appointed

Senior Grand Deacon: J. David Cashion (435)	Grand Orator: Noah T. Goode (205)
Junior Grand Deacon: Gary D. Handy (629)	Grand Historian: L. Scott Brand (461)
Grand Marshal: John E. Burns (708)	Judge Advocate: Matthew W. Cockman (409)
Senior Grand Steward: Russell Bridges (262)	Grand Tyler: Glenn R. Sigmon (31)
Junior Grand Steward: Kenneth W. Lambert (693)	Grand Pursuivant: Tommy R. Mills (277)
Grand Chaplain: A. Gene Cobb, Jr. (127)	Grand Standard Bearer: Ronald J. Coleman, Jr. (693)
Grand Lecturer: [To be announced]	Grand Sword Bearer: Jorge Iván Izaguirre-Medina (693)

240TH ANNUAL COMMUNICATION

The Grand Lodge will meet in Annual Communication at the Benton Convention Center, Winston Salem, beginning Friday, September 24, 2027.

Fraternally,

Jonathan A. Underwood
Grand Secretary



NORTH CAROLINA
FREEMASONS

Education

The Role of the Four Cardinal Virtues in Modern Decision Making

Brethren, today I invite you to reflect on the 4 Cardinal Virtues... Temperance, Fortitude, Prudence, and Justice ... and their relevance in our lives as Masons and as men living in a complex, modern world. These virtues, central to Masonic teachings, are not relics of the past. They remain highly practical tools for navigating the ethical dilemmas we face today, whether in our personal lives, our professions, or within our communities.

What Are the Cardinal Virtues?

The Cardinal Virtues are so named because they form the hinge upon which all other virtues depend. These virtues are not unique to Freemasonry; they have roots in classical philosophy, particularly in the teachings of Plato and Aristotle. The beauty of these virtues lies in their universality. They guide us in our interactions with others and in how we approach life's challenges. Temperance reminds us to exercise moderation and self-control. Fortitude inspires courage in the face of adversity. Prudence teaches us to act wisely and make informed decisions. Justice encourages fairness and integrity in all our dealings. Let's explore how these virtues serve as a moral compass in resolving the ethical dilemmas we encounter in our fast-paced, modern lives.

Temperance: The Strength of Moderation

In a culture that often glorifies excess, be it in consumption, ambition, or even leisure, temperance serves as a necessary counterbalance. Temperance teaches us to govern our desires and maintain equilibrium in all aspects of life. Consider the pressures of modern consumerism. Advertisements constantly push us to acquire more, spend more, and consume without restraint. A Mason guided by temperance recognizes the fleeting satisfaction of material excess and prioritizes what truly matters: relationships, personal growth, and service to others. In decision-making, temperance is about finding the middle path. For instance, when managing a conflict, temperance prevents us from overreacting or retreating entirely. Instead, it encourages a measured response, one that seeks resolution without compromising dignity or respect for others. As Masons, temperance reminds us to square our actions, ensuring they are balanced and harmonious.

Fortitude: The Courage to Act

Fortitude is often misunderstood as brute strength, but in the context of Masonry, it is far more nuanced. Fortitude is the courage to act with integrity, even when faced with fear, opposition, or uncertainty. In modern life, fortitude is required when we are called to make difficult decisions. Think of situations where you must stand up for your values, whether it's speaking out against unethical practices at

work, supporting an unpopular but just cause, or confronting a personal challenge. It's easy to remain silent or to take the path of least resistance, but fortitude demands that we act in accordance with our principles, even when it's uncomfortable. Within the Lodge, fortitude is symbolized by the strength of the pillars that uphold the structure. It reminds us that we, too, must be pillars of strength in our communities and families. A Mason with fortitude does not shy away from responsibility but embraces it with determination and resolve.

Prudence: The Wisdom of Deliberation

In today's world, where decisions are often made in haste, prudence is a virtue we cannot afford to neglect. Prudence calls us to weigh our options carefully, to seek knowledge, and to consider the potential outcomes of our actions. Imagine a scenario where you are offered a promotion at work, but the new role requires more hours, potentially taking you away from family and Lodge commitments. Prudence urges you to pause and evaluate: Is this promotion aligned with my long-term goals? How will it affect my relationships and responsibilities? Acting without reflection may lead to regret, but prudent decision making allows you to proceed with confidence, knowing you've considered all angles. In a Masonic context, prudence reminds us to seek light before making decisions. We are encouraged to consult with mentors, reflect on our principles, and use reason as our guide. A prudent Mason understands that wisdom is not just about knowing what to do but understanding when and how to act.

Justice: The Virtue of Fairness

Finally, we come to justice, the virtue that ensures all our actions are guided by fairness, equality, and respect for others. Justice requires us to treat others as we would want to be treated, holding ourselves to the highest standards of accountability. In contemporary decision-making, justice often comes into play when navigating competing interests. For instance, as a manager, how do you balance the needs of your employees with the demands of your organization? Justice requires us to act with empathy while maintaining a commitment to what is fair and right. In Freemasonry, justice is not just about external actions; it's also about internal alignment. It asks us to live in accordance with our own moral code, ensuring our actions reflect our obligations and values. A Mason guided by justice does not play favorites or turn a blind eye to wrongdoing. He acts with fairness, even when it is inconvenient or difficult.

Applying the Virtues Together

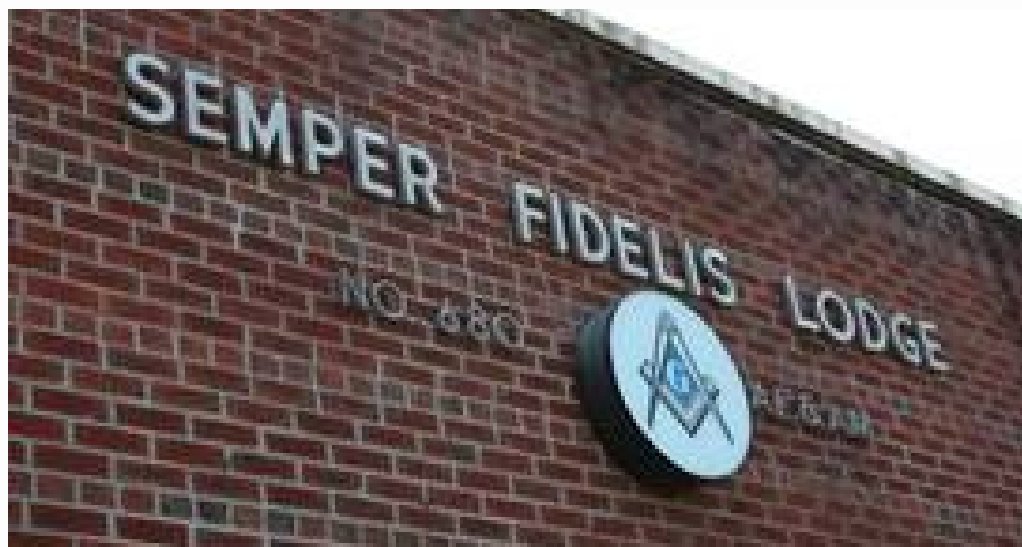
While each virtue has its own role, they are most powerful when applied together. Temperance ensures we approach life with balance. Fortitude gives us the courage to act; Prudence helps us evaluate a situation; and Justice ensures our

actions are fair and righteous. Let's take a practical example.... Imagine you're part of a committee tasked with allocating Lodge funds to a charitable cause. Temperance ensures that you don't favor one cause at the expense of others. Fortitude gives you the strength to advocate for the right choice, even if it's unpopular. Prudence helps you research and evaluate the needs of various organizations. Justice ensures the final decision is fair, equitable, and in alignment with Masonic principles. By applying these virtues together, you resolve ethical dilemmas, strengthen your character, and contribute to the harmony of your Lodge and community.

Conclusion

Brethren, the Four Cardinal Virtues are more than philosophical ideals, they are practical tools for navigating the complexities of modern life. They guide us in our decision-making, helping us act with wisdom, balance, courage, and fairness. As Masons, we are called to embody these virtues, not just within the Lodge but in every aspect of our lives. By doing so, we become better men, better brothers, and better builders of the world around us. Let us take these virtues to heart, using them to shape our decisions and actions as we continue our Masonic journey. In every challenge, may temperance, fortitude, prudence, and justice guide us toward the light.





Semper Fidelis Lodge #680

Emergency cell: (472) 206-9840

727 Henderson Drive
Jacksonville, NC 28540

Email:
SemperFidelisLodge680@gmail.com

Sign up for Grandview!!

- Keep your profile current
- Keep up with Lodge events
- Much Much More!!



<https://nc.grandview.systems>

