

# Third Masonic District

<https://www.glpad3.org/>

**From the Desk of the Bro. Jeffrey R. Miller, District Deputy Grand Master**



Fraternal Greetings Brethren!

I hope this newsletter finds you and yours healthy and safe. As we navigate these uncharted waters, remember your Masonic teachings and values. We are to relieve the necessities of our Brethren to the utmost of our power and ability. During this time, please contact Brethren in your Lodges that may be living on their own or may have difficulties getting around. A

friendly conversation between Brothers may go a long way to help relieve their fears and anxieties during this period of uncertainty. Offer your assistance, or help them find assistance if they are in need, while maintaining your own safety. All members of the Lodge can and should do this, not just the Worshipful Master and other officers. Remember your charge "He is to be a man of benevolence and charity; not sitting down contented, while his fellows, much more his Brethren, are in want, when it is in his power, without prejudicing himself or his family, to relieve them." "If you faithfully observe these duties, the world will observe how Freemasons love one another, in obedience to the will of God." To that end I'm asking for the following actions:

To the Secretaries of District 3:

Please put together a list of widows and mature members. Include any other member that you know has specific needs. Forward the list to your Worshipful Master and copy me also.

To the Worshipful Masters of District 3:

Divide the list between you, your officers, and other Brethren. Please have each person on the list called on a regular basis throughout this crisis. Report back to me your progress or if you need assistance from me. The Almoner fund is available if needed.

Be safe and follow the guidelines set forth by our Government officials. I will see everyone when our Right Worshipful Grand Master Thomas Gamon IV in his wisdom sees fit to resume our Labors.

Have a great day in Freemasonry!!

Jeffrey R. Miller DDGM03



## Event Announcements

All Masonic meeting and events are suspended until further notice due to the COVID 19 outbreak by direction of Brother Thomas Gamon IV, Right Worshipful Grand Master of the Grand lodge of Pennsylvania.



**From the Desk of the Principal, Third Masonic School of Instruction Bro. Kenneth W. Womack**

Brethren All,

When we last met at the school of instruction on February 24th, I don't think any of us anticipated the events of the past few weeks or the impacts of those events on Freemasonry in Pennsylvania or across the nation, if not the entire world. Things are certainly different and may be for the immediate future.

Perhaps there is some good to come from this in terms of Freemasonry. We have a chance to take a break from what are typically the busy months at the beginning of the Masonic year. In the short term, there will be fewer stated meetings, fewer extra meetings, fewer rehearsals, fewer official visits, fewer SOIs, fewer banquets and for those in appendant Masonic bodies, fewer meetings there too.

I bring this up because it also provides an opportunity for us. Brother Denny McClanahan, Past Principal, School of Instruction, sent me an e-mail suggesting that this is an excellent opportunity for line officers to study their respective required ritual rather than to let all those free nights, and the time that was spent preparing for them before we cancelled the meetings, pass while waiting for us to resume Masonic activities. I believe it is an opportunity for not only the line officers, but for all Brethren, to spend some time on ritual. Line officers know what is expected of them as they move through the chairs. For those of you who are not line officers yet, consider trying to learn an opening or closing charge and then offering to do it for your Worshipful Master during a stated meeting. Think about learning the oath of examination or even the funeral service and be ready to do that given an opportunity in the Lodge.

I don't want to imply that you should take every one of those now vacant nights as a result of the cancellation of our meetings to hole up in a bedroom or home office and spend it all on learning ritual. Take an opportunity to do things with family and friends that you may not have been able to do with a busy Masonic schedule. But consider using some time to better your knowledge of our ritual and to better prepare yourself, and as a Mason, "...to apply himself closely to the business of Freemasonry, that he may the sooner become skilled therein, both for his own credit and for that of the Lodge, and thereby earn advancement as the wages of his labors."

We will revise the meeting schedule as soon as we know when the SOI will resume. I look forward to seeing you then.

## April 2020 Newsletter (continued)

### Grand Lodge COVID-19 Protocol

Due to ongoing concerns surrounding the Coronavirus, effectively immediately and until further notice, I am directing any and all lodge activities be cancelled, including, but not limited to: extra, special and/or stated lodge meetings; social functions; schools of instruction, etc., as well as youth group and community meetings/events that may be scheduled in your lodge building. Lodge officers may pay lodge bills in the ordinary course without lodge approval. This will be in effect until the end of April, by which time we will evaluate the situation and provide additional guidance as needed.

While it may be disappointing to cancel events, these measures are being taken out of an abundance of caution to safeguard the well-being of our brethren, their loved ones and our communities.

I also want you to be aware, that public tours of the Masonic Temple in Philadelphia have been cancelled until further notice. In addition, while we are not aware of any cases at any of our Masonic Villages, we are cancelling public events and limiting activities at all of our campuses, as well as screening visitors to our health care facilities.

Similarly, while we do not know of any cases within any of our Masonic youth groups, the Pennsylvania Masonic Youth Foundation is suspending all youth group activities and sponsored events at our Masonic Conference Center-Patton Campus until further notice.

Sincerely and Fraternally,  
Thomas Gamon, IV  
R.W. Grand Master

### Coronavirus: Safety Tips for You

The American Red Cross is closely monitoring the outbreak of coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) and following the latest guidance from the Centers for Disease Control (CDC).

We know this is a stressful time and people want to know what they can do right now to protect themselves and their families. That's why the Red Cross is highlighting some everyday steps that people in the U.S. can take now. In addition, stay informed about what's happening in your local community and always follow the directions of state and local authorities.

#### LIMIT THE SPREAD OF GERMS AND PREVENT INFECTION

The Red Cross recommends the following steps to help prevent the spread of germs during this situation:

Stay home if you can and avoid gatherings of more than ten people.

Practice social distancing by keeping a distance of about six feet from others if you must go out in public.

Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds, especially after being in a public place, or after blowing your nose, coughing or sneezing. If soap and water are not readily available, use a hand sanitizer with at least 60% alcohol.

Avoid touching your eyes, nose or mouth with unwashed hands.

## April 2020 Newsletter (continued)

Avoid close contact with people who are sick.

Stay home if you are sick, except to get medical care.

Cover your nose and mouth with a tissue when coughing or sneezing; throw used tissues in the trash. If a tissue isn't available, cough or sneeze into your elbow or sleeve, not your hands.

Clean and disinfect frequently touched surfaces daily. This includes tables, doorknobs, light switches, handles, desks, computers, phones, keyboards, sinks, toilets, faucets and countertops.

If surfaces are dirty, clean them - use detergent or soap and water prior to disinfection. Full information on how to disinfect found [here](#).

Wear a facemask if you are sick. You should wear a facemask when you are around other people (e.g., sharing a room or vehicle) and before you enter a healthcare provider's office.

According to the CDC, COVID-19 symptoms include fever, shortness of breath and a cough. Symptoms may appear 2-14 days after exposure. Call your doctor for medical advice if you think you have been exposed to COVID-19 and develop symptoms.

### WHO IS AT A HIGHER RISK?

According to the CDC, early information shows that some people are at higher risk of getting very sick from this virus. This includes older adults and people who have serious chronic medical conditions like heart disease, diabetes and lung disease.

If you are at higher risk for serious illness from COVID-19 because of your age or a serious medical condition, it is extra important for you to take actions to avoid getting sick.

Stay home as much as you can and avoid crowds as much as possible. Take everyday precautions to keep space between yourself and others.

When you go out in public, keep away from others who are sick, limit close contact and wash your hands often.

Stock up on supplies.

Contact your healthcare provider to ask about obtaining extra necessary medications to have on hand in case there is an outbreak of COVID-19 in your community and you need to stay home for a prolonged period of time.

If you cannot get extra medications, consider using a mail-order option.

Be sure you have over-the-counter medicines and medical supplies (tissues, etc.) to treat fever and other symptoms. Most people will be able to recover from COVID-19 at home.

Have enough household items and groceries on hand so that you will be prepared to stay at home for a period of time.

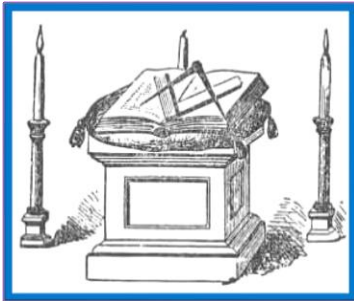
[Full information for those at a higher risk is available here.](#)

### FINDING UP-TO-DATE INFORMATION

You can find more information on COVID-19 safety [here](#). For the latest information, please visit the CDC website at [cdc.gov/covid19](https://www.cdc.gov/covid19).

If you live outside the United States, health and safety tips can be found through the [World Health Organization](#) and by following your local Red Cross or Red Crescent society's social media channels.

### Masonic Education



### THE ALTAR

In ancient times, as well as today, the altar is a structure, a place, where the divine and human worlds meet. A place built where ritual is performed, and a place on which a person may offer up their prayers and sacrifices to deity. The Hebrew word for altar is מִזְבֵּחַ, mizbeah meaning "to slaughter." Greek renders this word as θυσιαστήριον, thusiasterion "a place of sacrifice."

In Freemasonry "An altar stands at the center of every proper Lodge. It is the focal point of everything around it, and is easily seen by everyone present. No Lodge may be opened and do work, unless an altar and Volume of the Sacred Law be present. Everything that happens in the Lodge is tested and approved by Holy Writ, and anything that happens in opposition to this divine guide is not proper and should not be tolerated. The altar signifies that this is a sacred place and that all our actions are begun, continued, and ended under the Eye of God, who sees all things. Again, the first and most essential requirement for membership in Freemasonry is a true and committed belief in the reality of a Supreme Being, in whose wisdom the universe was created and is still sustained." 1

Inside religious houses of worship, altars are where we offer up sacrifices for the atonement of sin and to commune with deity. Inside well-regulated Masonic Lodges the altar is a sign of communion the one true and living God whom we know to be the Great Architect of the Universe. Who's watchful and every guiding eye is upon us. It also is a representation of the human heart. Though our words and actions may be hidden from the eyes of man, they are never hidden from the All-Seeing Eye.

[1] Miller, Larry M. *Thoughts on Masonic Education*. Right Worshipful Grand Lodge of Free and Accepted Masons of Pennsylvania, 2008.