

J. F. Swartsel lodge No. 251 F. & A.M. Trestleboard

Published monthly Volume MMXX Issue No. 4 –April 2020 AD, 6020 AL

Per the order of the Grand Master, our Stated Communications, practices, and Lodge events have been cancelled for April.

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Please continue to pray for the recovery of Worshipful Stuart Graff. If you are aware of any other Brother that is in distress, please let us know.

Your Catechism Instructors for the three symbolic degrees in Freemasonry are:

W. Jerry M. Snell, Jr. - W. Stephen Edson – W. Stuart J. Graff – Br. Allan A. Jenkins

Who does J. F. Swartsel Lodge support in the community?

DONATE  DONATE  = \$ DONATE 

The Lutz Fire Department TOPS (take off pounds sensibly) Lutz chapter 56 BSA (Boy Scouts of America) pack and troop 12; Lutz Lutz Little League Baseball Awards college scholarships in N.W. Hillsborough County Mc Kitrick Elementary “Helping Paws Program” Rainbow Assembly (Hillsborough County) De Molay (Hillsborough County) Shriners’ Hospital Lifepath Hospice Jobs’ Daughters Monthly Bingo jackpots at the Florida Masonic Home in St. Petersburg

**Freemasonry will make
you a better man... but it
is up to the efforts of
men like us to make this
a better Fraternity!**

My Brothers all,

In this time, it is important to keep all of our Brothers and Sisters in your prayers. If you are in need of assistance, or know of someone who is, please see to it that one of your Officers know.

As you have likely already read in the Grand Master's Directive 3, we are to cease all Masonic gatherings until at least [May 4th](#). Most of our schedules are becoming progressively more "free" as events cancel around us, and I for one am starting to feel a little cabin fever setting in...

I think to the list of things we were looking to accomplish at Swartsel, and the month of April is a prime opportunity to work on a building devoid of activities, if only to satisfy my own aversion to sitting still.

I am certain someone reading this has things in mind that they would like to see done at our building. If you too are finding yourself with "nothing to do" or getting a little stir crazy, please reach out to me so we can coordinate our efforts. It is my hope that we can continue to improve our second home during this difficult time... if only to return some normalcy to our lives while external stimuli are putting things in a constant state of flux.

I appreciate the efforts of every one of you, and wish health and safety for you and your families. If you are in need of Masonic assistance during this time, please know that I am only a call away.

It's always darkest before the dawn...

Fraternally,

Adam Feldman

[727-504-7671](tel:727-504-7671)

Worshipful Master, 2020

J.F. Swartsel Masonic Lodge #251, F.&A.M.

A very special thank you to [all](#) of our Past Masters -

Without their guidance, we wouldn't be where we are today

The Past Masters of J.F. Swartsel who are still with us today, and continue to carry the torch of Light on behalf of Freemasonry

1965 W •Thomas B. Daughtey - 1973 W •Stanley E. James - 1976 W •Phillip V. Getz -1981 W •Edward B. Wilson - 1985 W •Charles Inman - 1986 W •Gary F. Gentry - 1992 W •Floyd A. Dozier - 1995 R •W •Donald R. Bell, PDDGM - 1998 W •Gary A. Richey - 1999 W •David B. Lambert, Sr. - 2000 W •David B. Lambert, II - 2001 W •James R. Lambert - 2002 W •Gregory A. Lambert - 2003 W •Joseph E. Fara, Sr. - 2007 W •William L. Boortz - 2008 W •Gregory L. Savage - 2009 W •Drew M. Keenan - 2011 W •Richard D. Sego - 2012 W •Jerry M. Snell, Jr. - 2013 W •Gregory L. Savage - 2014 W •Jeffrey T. Sklet - 2015 R •W •Charles C. Osborne, PDDGM - 2016 W •Danilo O. Valdez . - 2017 R •W •Charles J. "Sam" Pesola, PDDGM - 2018 W •Martin A. Greif - 2019 W •Jerry M. Snell, Jr.

Your 2020 J. F. Swartsel Officers are as follows:

Worshipful Master W • Adam Scott Feldman
Senior Warden Brother Samuel McPherson
Junior Warden Brother Raymond Joseph Ciunci
Treasurer W • Stuart Jay Graff
Secretary David Bruce Lambert Sr.
Chaplain W • Jerry Marvin Snell, Jr.
Marshal Brother William Joe Schmidt
Senior Deacon Brother Wade Edward Angel
Junior Deacon Brother Dennis Morgan Victor Martin
Senior Steward Brother Brian Andrew Reach
Junior Steward Brother Allan Arthur Jenkins
Tyler W • Danilo Orlando Valdez
Musician Brother John Nagy
Historian W • Jeffrey Thomas Sklet



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The link is <http://smile.amazon.com/ch/59-2740213>



Please remember your Lodge boosters and thank them!

R.:W.: Ronald E. Stanley - R.:W.: Donald R. Bell - Mark L. Lager - Daniel Allen - Brad Sollberger - Ernest P. Sidlow

Chair Chatter



From our Secretary: W ¤ David Bruce Lambert, Sr.

Brethren,

It is with great disappointment that the officers of J. F. Swartsel Lodge under the direction of the Grand Master had to cancel the May 16th Car show and Bar-B-Que. **It was of course for the good of all.** A lot of hard work and Time was involved preparing for it, thank you Brothers. Hopefully this virus / pandemic will be over soon, and we can get back to normal. You don't know how much you miss the fellowship of your brothers until something like this happen. God bless you all and stay safe.

From our Senior Warden: Brother Samuel McPherson

Brothers, hopefully you enjoyed our annual wild game night the brother worked hard to make it a great meal when you see them thank them for a great meal.

I want to thank the brothers of J F Swartsel Lodge for their participation in visiting Holyrood Lodge this past month, when we are visiting other lodges it make me very proud to be a mason and member of this lodge because we are mostly out numbering the lodge we are visiting I am sure they are very appreciative. Let's continue to build better relationships and better men, Thank you, brothers. Question: are you builder? Let's talk about it

The Builder

The chief architect of King Solomon's temple was and is often referred to as "The Builder." This term is also applied general to the Craft, for every speculative mason is as much a builder as was his operative predecessor.

Masons are known as moral builders. As the operative Mason spreads the cement to bind the stone, speculative masons spread brotherly, love, relief, and truth to bind men morally and spiritually. The operative builder, builds for a century and the speculative builder, builds for eternity. In this sense "The Builder" is the most noble title that can be stowed on a Mason. (William R Fischer)

Brothers, The Coronavirus Pandemic is upon us and while we should obey the new regulations of our Government and Grand Lodge we should also remember Life goes on we cannot be paralyzed by it but take advantage of the situation and get to know more about your roommate, spouse or significant other also don't forget your neighbors we are the Builders, good men becoming better men. Stay well and healthy.

From our Junior Warden: Brother Raymond J. Ciunci

Well it's April Brothers and greetings from the South!! We are all living in challenging times I pray that each of you have and continue to do well.

Before each lodge meal you have heard me pray especially for our first responders (Police and Fire Departments) as well as our Military because they give all they have to protect us. Under our current threat of the corona virus I am going to add a request that you also pray for or medical personnel. These people are duty bound to care for the sick among us and as you know some of them get sick as a result. Please pray for them.

Am looking forward to seeing you all again.

From our Senior Deacon: Brother Wade E. Angel

My Brothers, during this health crisis that we are currently in, I am sure many of you feel as I do. I too miss coming to the Lodge and sharing fellowship with my Brothers. Our Lodge is our home away from home. Our Brothers are family. We are all homesick. This will pass, and we will once again gather and welcome each other over dinner and conduct our meetings. In the meantime, pray for your Brothers and their families, practice good sound stay at home practices. Help others when you can but keep safe distances. Heed the warnings of the experts. Keep in touch with friends and Brothers by phone, text, and social media. When this is all over, we will open our home, and be proud to gather once again. Be safe, be faithful, and be vigilant. I can't wait to see you all again.

From our Junior Deacon: Brother Dennis M. Martin

My Brothers,

This is a very strange and challenging time for all of us, but remember, the Craft has weathered much more drastic times than this throughout the course of its history. I draw your attention to the presentation that Brother Reach and I made a couple of months ago, about the Masonic origin of the Forget-Me-Not – that too was a trying time, but we (the Craft) survived.

Some time during this Masonic year, I plan to make a presentation on Rosslyn Chapel, which is just outside of Edinburgh. [If we do journey there as a group, as has been discussed, Rosslyn will definitely be a part of the itinerary.]

Rosslyn Chapel was built in the village of Roslin by William Sinclair, 1st Earl of Caithness, starting in September 1456 – 36 years before Columbus discovered America!

The chapel has long been connected with the Knights Templar and Freemasonry. The builder of the chapel, William Sinclair, has been claimed as the hereditary Grand Master of Operative Scottish stone masons. One of his descendants, William Sinclair of Roslin, became the First Grand Master of the Grand Lodge of Scotland and several other members of the family have held that honored position.

The decorative carving inside the Chapel was carried out by operative masons over a 40 year period. At the east end of the nave stand 3 pillars, and are named the Master Pillar, the Journeyman Pillar, and the most famous of all, the Apprentice Pillar, which has quite a legend behind it. To hear that story, you'll have to come along to Lodge and hear my presentation!

Stay strong, my Brothers, stay well and may the Great Architect of the Universe wrap his loving arms around you and your family. I hope and pray to see you all in Lodge sooner than later.

From our Junior Stewart: Brother Allan A. Jenkins

My Brothers,

Masonry teaches us to work on our personal and spiritual development. We are all on the same path, some at different points than others, but the same path. We are there to encourage, advise, and assist along the way.

At this time, we are not meeting at our usual times or in contact with one another growing together. The question is – Can you continue to grow alone? Can you work on your masonic journey while we are all on a stay at home order?

The answer to that question is uniquely yours. You may be able to continue your journey in the privacy of your home. If you can and do, I applaud you! There are many things that we can unpack from our catechisms while at home. Spend time to understand it on a deeper level and this time at home may pay large dividends for you.

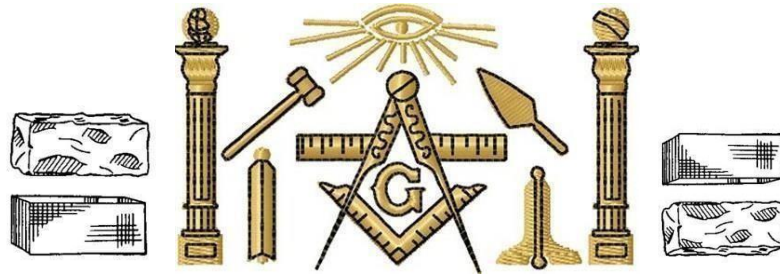
Others may need some encouragement and coaching along the way. That is ok as well. I would ask that anyone with questions about what they should be working on or studying to reach out to your instructor or mentor. Ask the questions and continue on your journey. In the book Observing The Craft by Andrew Hammer, chapter 3 is all about distractions (it's a long chapter, as there are many). This chapter teaches us to deal with distractions or things that take away from our craft or development. This environment that we are in now definitely presents some unique distractions for us all. It is ok to be distracted in this time; however it may be better to find a way to be productive. Calling a brother and getting some assistance along the way may be very helpful to you.

The Brothers at our lodge have a wealth of knowledge and experience. Please ask someone and I am sure that they will be glad to hear from you. The Brother that you call for assistance may be a Brother in need himself.

We will get through this time and we may be better off for having gone through it. That all depends on you!

Be well and stay safe!

Masonic Education by Brother John Nagy



Cracking Ritual:

“The pride of thine heart hath deceived thee, thou that dwellest in the clefts of the rock, whose habitation is high; that saith in his heart, Who shall bring me down to the ground? Though thou exalt thyself as the eagle, and though thou set thy nest among the stars, thence will I bring thee down, saith the Lord.”

– Obadiah 1:3-4 (AKJV)

How subtle Ritual truly is. Its soft embrace cleverly disguises many nuances unseen by those who seek them not. Returning its embrace often brings forth Light hidden by the Shadows of Ignorance. Seek it and you shall Find wonders.

Sometimes it's the little things that go unnoticed, until they begin to irritate you. This occurred recently when I was tickled in a most annoying way by the phrase, “cleft of the rocks”. I didn't know why it kept fluttering under my nose, but it was clear that it was not going away on its own. After numerous unwanted assaults, I finally took a mindful notice of it and grabbed hold. As I did, I was reminded that I was a Mason and I Work on Rocks. This hard reminder compelled me to look up the word, “cleft[1]” to obtain a more solid understanding. I'm glad I did!

Upon its examination, I connected further to subtle Allusions within Ritual. There was the obvious connection to the Ruffians that were found hiding in the cleft of the rocks. There was another one to the hollows where our heels find solace as we progress from candidate to Master but no more once there! There was also the not so common connection to the now obsolete meaning of the word, “cowan”, that meant at one time “hollow, gap, crevice, indent or hole”. The matter continued to roll around within my mind as I found more associated Allusions and connections. When I laid each of them out upon my working slab, I had a profound insight. These Allusions point to Unfinished Work!

Masons are told that specific Work must be Completed to Achieve Mastery. That Work is clearly pointed toward by Ritual (but is not the Ritual itself.) Even the Third Degree Allegory directs us back to Completing that Work. This Allegory also warns us about making any effort to dismiss any of Work. Ritual also tells us through Allusion that, when our Work remains unfinished, our Word's Value is ripped from us, our Desires become fodder for beasts and fowl and our very Being is Torn in Two differing Directions; Allusions and Warnings that few Brothers glean initially.

But do all Brothers heed such warnings? Many don't. Ritual tells us how to recognize them though. Their very looks betray them! How? Let's review:

It tells us that we can Recognize Cowanistic Brothers[2] by their unfinished Work.

- 1) The cowans of their feet are only used as resting places for heels that have yet to walk the path.
- 2) You'll always see gaps in their Work.

It is not their concern though. They remain complacent to Progress no further and to receive less for unfinished Work.

It also tells us that Ruffian Brothers are quite a different matter.

- 1) They desperately want what they have yet to earn.
- 2) They feel entitled to more and attempt to dishonestly receive it but are unwilling to legitimately Work for it.
- 3) Their Ashlars are wholly divided. Their entire being is “Severed in Twain!” Recognize them by their arrogance but more so by the cleft in their Ashlars, where you shall find their true selves hiding.

It's truly amazing the insights you can glean when you take a crack at probing what irritates you. Sometimes you get to view new holes. Every time though, you get whole new views!

Points to Perpend:

1. What have you yet to Pursue?
2. How does this Affect you and others?
3. What can you Do about this?

[1] Cleft (noun) – a fissure, rift, break or split; a deep division between two parts of the body.

[2] Brothers who remain complacent with their unsquared Ashlars and untempered Cement.



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Before being informed that we had to cease Masonic activities, we participated in a couple events in the month of March:



Members of J.F. Swartsel were responsible for running 3 polling stations out of our Lodge as well as two Drop Sites for the recent Election!



On Saturday, March 21st members of our Lodge met up at Tampa Bay Shooting Clays. It was a fun break from what had already become an endless news cycle of COVID-19!