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Email: info@JFSwartsel251.org **Website:** www.jfswartsel251.org **Phone:** 813-949-4814

Facebook: www.facebook.com/jfswartsel251

Meetings: 1st and 3rd Thursdays

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

R.: H.: Adam Feldman - W.: Allan Jenkins - W.: Jerry M. Snell Jr. – W.: Marty Greif –
W.: Wade Angel – Br. Jack Jones – Br. Denis Monefeldt –
Br. Per-Henrik Nordstrom – Br. Carlos Perez – Br. Anthony DeLuna



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

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

McKittrick Elementary School

“Helping Paws Program”

Rainbow Assembly (Hillsborough County)

De Molay (Hillsborough County)

Shriners’ Hospital

Lifepath Hospice

Jobs’ Daughters

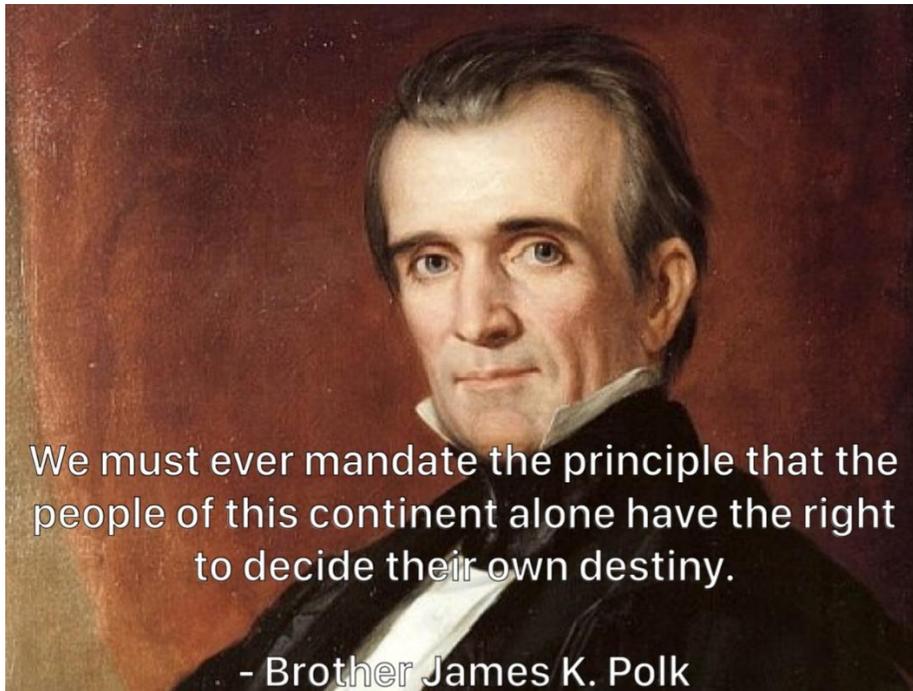
Land O Lakes High School

Steinbrenner High School

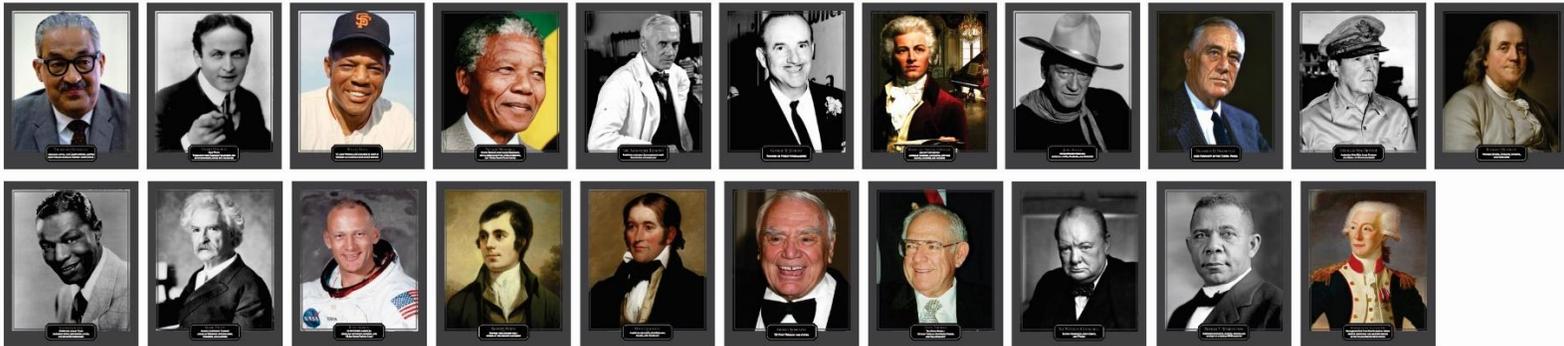
Heart Dance Foundation

Metropolitan Ministries

The Joshua House



If they could do the things they did then,



imagine the things that we can do now.

Thank you to **all** of our Past Masters - Who laid the foundation for us to build upon

[The Past Masters of J.F. Swartzel, Palma Ceia and Community Lodge](#)

Please follow the link to our website for a complete list of past masters.



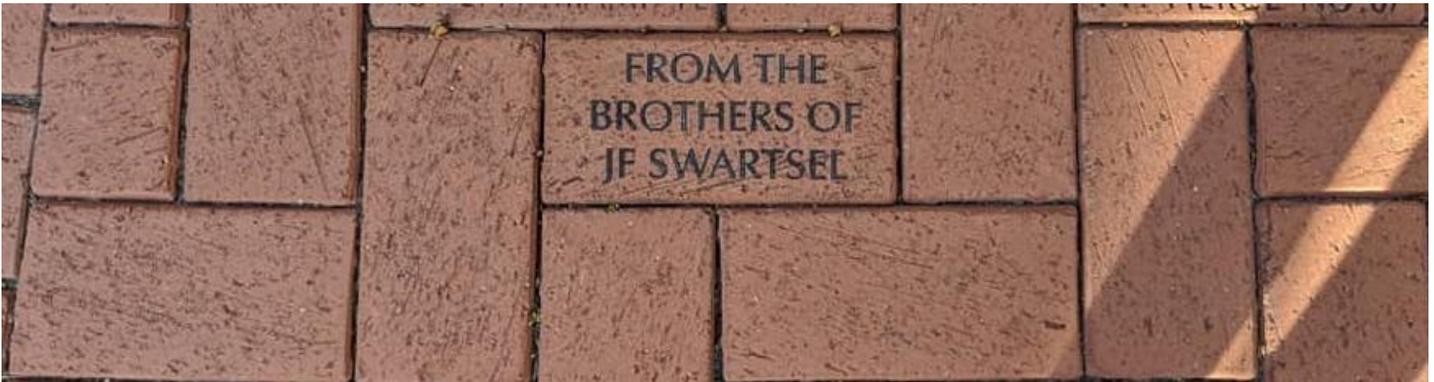
Your 2026 J. F. Swartzel Officers are as follows:

Worshipful Master Brother Joe Circhirillo
Senior Warden Brother Thomas Holland Overman
Junior Warden Brother Jack Wilbur Jones
Treasurer R :: H :: Jeffrey Thomas Sklet
Secretary W :: David Bruce Lambert Sr.
Chaplain W :: Wade Edward Angel
Marshall W :: Brian Andrew Reach
Senior Deacon Brother Denis Graham Monefeldt
Junior Deacon Brother Kyle John Jesso
Senior Steward Brother Per Henrik Johann Nordstrom
Junior Steward Brother Carlos Andres Perez
Tyler Brother Jose Luis Valdes Jr.
Musician Brother John S Nagy
Historian W :: Samuel McPherson





Please remember your Lodge boosters and thank them!



Chair Chatter

From the Secretary: Worshipful David Lambert, Sr.

Brethren,

Please check your Dues Card to see if you have paid your 2026 Dues, and if you have changed your address, please give me a call @ (813) 838-7705 or email me at dlambert7907@gmail.com so I can update your records.

Calendar of Important Lodge Dates:

March 2026.

- 3rd 6:30 PM, Degree Practice.
- 4th (6:PM – 7:PM, MLT), (7:PM – 8:PM), District 19 School of Instruction @ John Darling Masonic Center.
- 5th Stated Communication of J. F. Swartsel Lodge, Dinner 6:30 PM, Lodge Opens at 7:30 PM.**
- 7th **9:AM - Lodge cleaning day.**
- 10th 6:30 PM, Degree Practice.
- 13th 7:PM - Masonic Park Board Meeting @ EGYPT Temple.
- 14th 5:30 PM – Friendship Chapter No. 209 Installation.
- 16th 7:30 PM – Friendship Chapter No. 209 meeting.
- 17th 6:30 PM, Degree Practice.
- 18th 7:PM – Plant City York Rite at J. F. Swartsel No. 251, (Chapter & Council).
- 19th Stated Communication of J. F. Swartsel Lodge, Dinner 6:30 PM, Lodge Opens at 7:30 PM.**
- 20th 5:PM – 7:PM, Third Friday FULL Menu Fish Fry at J.F. Swartsel.**
- 21st Trestleboard Articles to R.: H.: Jeff Sklet.
- 23rd 6:30 – 8:30 Master Mason Association of Hillsborough County @ EGYPT Shrine.**
- 26th 7:PM - Plant City York Rite at J. F. Swartsel No. 251, (Commandry).
- 27th 7:PM, DeMolay Advisor's Meeting.
- 28th 9:AM – Noon, Open Books at Zone School of Instruction @ Universal John Darling Masonic Center

From the Worshipful Master: Worshipful Joe Circhirillo

My Brothers,

I want to thank all the brothers who helped with our recent Fish Fry. Because of your hard work and dedication, it was a great success. We raised approximately \$700! I truly appreciate each of you for your time, effort, and commitment. I am looking forward to this month's meetings. We will have Masonic Education presented by Brother Rich Andrews. On March 19th, we will welcome the DDGM and his committee members for their official visit, which will take the place of our regular Masonic Education that evening. Please remember that we have practice every Tuesday night. On March 17th, during training, we will specifically practice the DDGM introduction. Our next degree will be the Master Mason Degree, scheduled for either the end of March or the beginning of April, depending on the readiness of our brothers. I encourage all brothers to attend our meetings regularly and to join us for practice. Remember practice, practice, practice makes us better in all that we do. The reason we are so strong is because we are Swartsel Strong. So long from the East. I look forward to seeing you at our next practice, our next meeting — or better yet, both. Remember, Masons make better men.

Fraternally,

W.:M.: Joe Circhirillo

From the Senior Warden: Brother Thomas Overman

Brothers,

My brothers our next degree will be a Master Mason degree. I will be in the east. Wish me luck and that my memory will be able to handle it. I have asked our WM to bring up the possibility of upgrading our speaker system in the West so us older guys can hear the business during lodge. We also need another working member on our yard aspect of the building committee. Please contact Brother Dickey Davis (813-298-8408) if you can help.

Fraternally,

Brother Thomas Overman

From the Junior Warden: Brother Jack Jones

Kiss the Cook *just figuratively Please!

My Brothers: As we all know our tradition @ JFS #251 is to assign the role of "Lodge Cook" to the Junior Warden (JW). Though this is not listed in the Grand Lodge of FL Masonic Digest as a "Duty" of the JW, it is typically assigned as the same in most lodges in our State. My assessment is that if the JW is responsible to Govern the Lodge while at Refreshment, thus comes the duty to Govern the kitchen. I have a hands-on personality, I like to get into the tactile parts of any project of which I may be a member. Personally, I am a traditionally a "Griller" and a Baker - I was never a cook; but that has changed. With my team of Super Stewards (Bros. Nordstrom & Perez) and several all around great Masons in our Lodge (like Bros. Davis, Jesso, Curtain & Bagnuik), we are getting the job done !!! So... I have taken hold of cooking for you, My Brothers, with joy!

__ It is tough, busy and a bit "dirty" - but I love working for the Craft of JFS #251, as well as all of our many visitors.

Know this: Your kind words and compliments on the meals that Our Team serves are much appreciated... exaggerations on our product are welcomed! :-)

A "dash" of Masonic Education - Food in Early Masonry

The laborers of the Kings and Nobles in ancient world, especially those working on large state projects, likely ate simple staples. This would often have been barley, wheat, beans, lentils, maybe dates, and some fruits—basically a very basic, plant-based diet that kept them sustained for long, hard days of work. However, the skilled Masons, who were the Craftsmen and overseers of the work, likely had access to a bit more variety in their nourishment. They might have eaten more animal protein, like small amounts of meat or fish, and probably a bit of wine or richer ingredients compared to the laborers. Though it was still fairly simple fare, it was a step up from the basic staples of the unskilled.

** I will constantly be working to nourish you with not only quality / healthy food and drink, but also to nourish our BOND of brotherly love.

Remember: The most important Masonic Lodge in the entirety of Freemasonry is OUR LODGE; we must continue to create and build upon our solid cornerstone made up of Wisdom, Strength, Love and Respect... it is up to us!

*May Brotherly Love & * Great Food * Prevail !!!*

Fraternally,
Brother Jack Jones



What have we been up to?

EA practice. Just another one? Nope! Our 2 FC's pitched in as practice candidates to help us get the floorwork nailed down. These two are already superstars!!



MLT and District School. Great turnout out for MIT and District School! Congratulations to PTF United for having the most members in attendance. They retain the Column Under Construction for another month. Hopefully we can get a few more Brothers from Swartzel next month.



Another great turnout for our stated meeting. We have a fantastic meal cooked for us by the Sisters of Friendship Chapter of the Order of Eastern Star. They will be helping out our Junior Warden on occasion during the year. Good news for us 😊.



Another fun night at the Shrine for the Brothers of Swartsel 😊



Come for Dinner. Stay for the Degree.

The Brothers of J.F. Swartzel and A.W. Windhorst were treated to an exceptional evening of fellowship and craftsmanship. Our Junior Warden and his team delivered a truly outstanding meal, setting the tone for what followed—an impressive Entered Apprentice Degree, executed with precision and pride.

A night that reminded us why we gather: good food, strong fellowship, and ritual done right





Some Brothers went down to PTF United for a Fellow Craft Degree. Congratulations to the Brothers of PTF United for doing a wonderful job! It is always good to go visit other Lodges and fellowship with the Brothers of the Fraternity.



Happy President's Day



Thank you to each and every Brother who played a part in making this happen. You gave more than your time—you gave heart.



Happy Mardi Gras!



TODAY IS ASH WEDNESDAY 2026

Genesis 3:19: "By the sweat of your brow you will eat your food until you return to the ground, since from it you were taken; for dust you are and to dust you will return."

Ash Wednesday marks the official beginning of Lent, a 40-day liturgical season of prayer, fasting, and repentance leading up to Easter. Observed by many Western Christian denominations, including Catholics, Lutherans, and Anglicans, it serves as a solemn reminder of human mortality and the need for reconciliation with God.

THE RITUAL OF ASHES

The most recognizable feature of the day is the application of ashes to the forehead, usually in the shape of a cross.

Source: The ashes are traditionally made by burning palm branches blessed during the previous year's Palm Sunday celebrations.

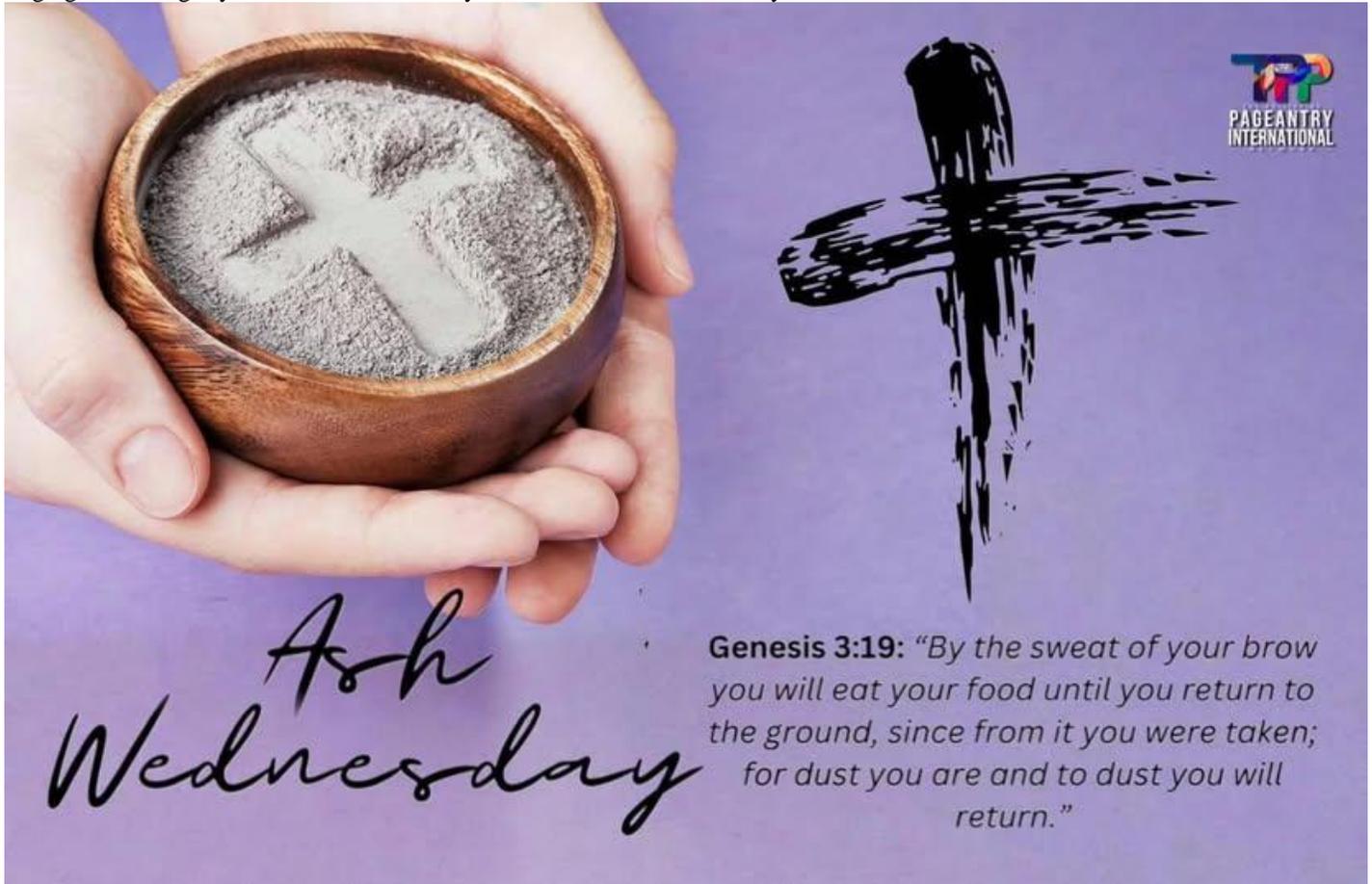
The Message: As the ashes are applied, the minister typically says, "Remember that you are dust, and to dust you shall return" or "Repent and believe in the Gospel".

Symbolism: Ashes have been used since biblical times to express grief, mourning, and penance.

Duration: The Lenten season lasts for 46 days in total; the "40 days" refers to the fasting days, as Sundays are excluded because they are considered weekly celebrations of the Resurrection.

HISTORICAL SIGNIFICANCE

The practice evolved from the early church's custom of public penance, where grave sinners were sprinkled with ashes and excluded from the community until Holy Thursday. By the 11th century, the practice of receiving ashes was extended to all members of the congregation to signify universal human frailty and the need for God's mercy.



ASH WEDNESDAY

Genesis 3:19: "By the sweat of your brow you will eat your food until you return to the ground, since from it you were taken; for dust you are and to dust you will return."

PAGEANTRY INTERNATIONAL

Last month, you helped us sell out and exceed our charity goal.
This month, we're scaling up — more food, more fun, and a bigger impact.
Join us and help us raise the bar again. Let's outperform expectations and make a real difference.
And yes — the food is ridiculously good.

J.F. Swarstel
Lodge No 251



Fish Fry

FUNDRAISER

Join us for a Fish Fry Dinner
Fundraiser the 3rd Friday of
every month

Friday
February 20th, 2026
5:00 - 7:00 PM

3109 Lutz Lake Fern Rd
Lutz, FL 33558

\$15

*All you can eat Swai fillets,
french fries, cole slaw,
hushpuppies, grits,
tea and dessert*

Dine in or Take-Out

www.jfswarstel251.org

<https://www.facebook.com/jfswarstel251>

And the Gavel is GONE!

PTF United Lodge No. 153 showed up in Due Force to reclaim the Traveling Gavel — and they didn't come empty-handed. The Brethren also presented a very generous donation to our Community DeMolay Chapter at JF Swartzel.

We were also honored to hear RW Jack Hampton share his vision and ideas for the Grand Lodge, outlining a strong path forward for the Craft.

That's what real leadership and Brotherhood look like — tradition honored, the future strengthened, and momentum building. Well done, Brothers.



What a night at the fish fry! We were slammed from the get go. Thanks to everyone who came out to enjoy the experience 🐟🐟.



Another fun night at the range. Pew Pew 😁



We caught 10 nice Blue Catfish this afternoon, heavy rain set in and shut us down.



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"Soft and safe be the earthly bed of our Brother; bright and glorious be his rising from it. Fragrant be the acacia spring which shall flourish there. May the earliest buds of spring unfold their beauties over his resting place, and, in the bright morning of the world's resurrection, may his soul spring into newness of life and expand into immortal beauty in realms beyond the skies. Until then, dear Brother, Farewell!"

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J. F. SWARTSEL LODGE NO. 251 F.&A.M.



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