

# THE MOST WORSHIPFUL GRAND LODGE OF ANCIENT FREE AND ACCEPTED MASONS

OF THE STATE OF CONNECTICUT

## **POLICY AND PROCEDURES MANUAL**

### **RITUAL**

#### **Applicability and Responsibility**

This document is applicable to all Constituent Lodges of the Grand Lodge A.F. & A.M. of Connecticut, and may be of some use to coordinate and appendant bodies.

Responsibility for maintaining this document rests with the Committee on Masonic Education, and with the approval of the Grand Master.

#### **References**

*Official Ritual, Grand Lodge of Connecticut, A.F. & A.M., Fifth Edition*

*Grand Lodge of Connecticut Constitution, Masonic Law, Practice, Rules and Regulations:*

Section 4007 (j)     Duty of All Masons is to Perfect Themselves in the Ritual

Section 7000        Use of Particular Ritual

Section 7001        Unauthorized Printed Rituals Forbidden

Section 7004        English Language Only to be Used

#### **Discussion**

Ritual is the language of Masonry, both in conducting the business of Masonry and in instructing candidates for Masonry. While other organizations such as town meetings, clubs, etc., have their ways and choices of procedures and words to conduct their business, Masonry borrows on antiquity, custom, and tradition to conduct its affairs in a special way.

The purpose of ritual, especially in instructing candidates for Masonry, is to teach. How well this is accomplished will probably determine the immediate future of the candidate as a Mason. The poorly taught candidate will possibly drift away, having failed to find the Masonry he expected; well taught candidates are more likely to take part in the affairs of the Lodge, and therefore become more active Masons. Our duty, as Masons, is to ensure that each candidate receives the best we are able to impart.

## **Official Ritual**

The Grand Lodge of Connecticut permits considerable latitude in the use of rituals. The maxim is "In essentials unity; in non-essentials liberty". The differences to be found in this jurisdiction did not appear suddenly. They are traditions derived from the various Provincial Grand Lodges which originally chartered Lodges in Connecticut. They are permitted by the Grand Lodge even though there is a "standard" ritual prepared by the Custodians of the Work. This does not mean that a Lodge may change the ritual in use from year to year, or become lax or slipshod. Lodges should adopt one style of degree work and perform it with dignity and decorum. The Standard Work of the Grand Lodge of Connecticut is contained in the Official Ritual referenced above. Some brethren have earlier editions of the Ritual which may be used without difficulty. Whenever questions arise, the latest edition shall take precedence.

## **Degree Work**

All Masons should be taught how to prepare candidates "in their hearts" and should not lead them to believe that Masonic degrees are "horseplay". There should be no joking or suggestions about "riding the goat" or "backing down."

No candidate should approach initiation with apprehension or fear of something vulgar or brutal. Candidates should be encouraged to look forward to a stimulating mental and spiritual experience and should never be made to feel embarrassment, resentment, or animosity. Degree work should be performed with reverence and safety.

Particular care should be taken to learn if a candidate has any physical defect, recent illness, or condition which excitement or physical exertion may aggravate. The second section of the Master Mason Degree should be presented as a beautiful drama stressing the universal and meaningful lesson of this degree. The candidate should be so conducted that he understands that he is portraying a noble character. The second section should NOT be regarded as an opportunity for horseplay, joking or showing off.

The officer administering the obligation may or may not kneel as he chooses. It is immaterial whether candidates face east or west during investiture with the apron. "Amen" should conclude every prayer, the brethren giving the customary response. The lesser lights may be used in all degrees, but they must be lighted during the Entered Apprentice degree.

Frequently, Lodge officers have been confused concerning the matter of passing between the station of the Worshipful Master and the altar. It is accepted practice that the only instances when an officer or member passes between the Worshipful Master and the altar are as directed by the ritual: in conducting candidates, in the conferring of degrees, in the presentation of distinguished guests, and in the installation ceremony.

## **Hints on Learning Ritual**

In learning ritual, it is helpful to first learn the "story" being told, and then try to retell that "story" using the prescribed words. It is important that all who participate in the ritual of a Lodge learn it correctly so as not to give it a different meaning.

The brother should strive to perfect himself in the exemplification of his part of the ritual so that he will be able to recite it accurately and impressively without conveying to the candidate the impression that it is something committed to memory. The following are some hints on learning the ritual:

*Before memorizing any part of the ritual:*

Learn to read it fluently and deliberately.

Constantly check your copy of the ritual if you are in doubt of a word or passage. If a wrong word or passage is learned, habit will make it more difficult to correct the mistake.

Consult the dictionary for the correct pronunciation and definition of any unfamiliar word. Appended to this document is a pronouncing guide for some of the more unusual words found in the ritual.

Learn the full meaning of any "strange" sentences. It is difficult to memorize words or sentences that you do not understand.

Decide how every sentence should sound when read or recited aloud. Decide where voice inflection should occur, and where emphasis should be placed. Always read the sentence in the same way, never deviating from what you have established to be the proper way to do it.

Avail yourself of every opportunity to see others perform the ritual. Make a note of what you do and do not like about the way they have given it.

Understand that these tasks, which are to be done before memorizing, are just as important as the actual job of memorizing and will require as much of your time as the job of memorizing the lines.

These first steps are very important because the more familiar you are with the ritual, the easier it is to memorize it. Don't be impatient to start memorizing.

*When memorizing the ritual:*

Never attempt to learn too much at any one time. Take a little at a time, but frequently and persistently.

Concentrate on whatever you are studying. Try to be alone, if possible, without distractions from children, radio, television, etc. Don't let your mind wander.

Do not skip around in learning your part of the ritual. Always take it in proper sequence.

Spend as much or more time in reviewing material already learned. Try not to learn anything new unless you are fairly confident of your ability to recite what you have already learned.

Practice material already learned during your odd moments; i.e., while driving your car, taking a walk, shaving, etc. If possible, have a brother assist you when you rehearse.

Always recite your lines in the same manner, never changing voice inflections or emphasis, once you have decided how they ought to be done. That is, memorize the **way** you say it.

Some prefer to recite aloud when practicing (even before a mirror to observe facial expressions), others prefer the silent method. Whichever you prefer, do what is easiest for you.

Strive for perfection. We may never attain it, but only by trying are we able to limit our mistakes to a relatively small percentage. Some can learn the ritual with less effort than others, but all can learn it if enough interest and determination is shown.

### **Presentation of Ritual**

The delivery or presentation of the ritual is as important as learning it. You may know it word-perfect, but if your presentation is bad, you can lose the whole meaning of what you are trying to present.

Here are several hints for the presentation of the ritual:

#### *Ritual delivery:*

Always remember that you are primarily talking to the candidate. However, speak with enough volume that all present can hear. Look at the candidate when talking to him. Stand straight, don't rock or sway, and place your hands in a comfortable position.

Do not let your mind wander to that "hard part" that comes later on. Think only of what you have to say at the moment.

Have just one person in the Lodge do the prompting when necessary. If there is more than one prompt, the person delivering the ritual will become confused.

Never get flustered if you need help. Graciously accept prompting and go on without worrying or becoming embarrassed because you had to be prompted.

You can hardly talk too slowly, but you can easily talk too fast. Force yourself to speak slowly and deliberately.

Get all the "expression" into the lecture that you possibly can without assuming an unnatural tone of voice. A dull monotone voice will detract greatly from the delivery of the ritual. There is a rhythm to the delivery of the ritual. Find it and use it.

## Appendix

### A PRONOUNCING GLOSSARY

Correct pronunciation of words is of the greatest importance in good ritualistic presentation. Practice reciting the following words so that they may be pronounced correctly:

abacus	<u>ab</u> - i - kus
acanthus	a - <u>kan</u> - thus
acceptable	ak - <u>sep</u> - ta - bl
accessory	ak - <u>ses</u> - o - ree
almond	<u>al</u> (rhymes with gal) - mund OR <u>am</u> - und OR <u>a</u> - mund
Ammonitish	Am - mo - <u>night</u> - ish
appurtenance	ap - <u>pur</u> - ta - nens
architect	<u>ar</u> - ka - tekt
architecture	<u>ar</u> - ka - tek - chur
artificer	ar - <u>tif</u> - i - ser
assurance	a - <u>shoor</u> - ans
atrocitiy	a - <u>tros</u> - i - tee
avouchment	a - <u>vouch</u> ( rhymes with couch ) - ment
bade	bad, the opposite of good
beneficient	be ( e as in eel ) - <u>nef</u> - i - sent
bourne	born OR boorn
bouyed	<u>boo</u> - eed
Callimachus	kal - <u>lim</u> - a - kus
caviling	<u>kav</u> ( a as in at ) - il - ing
celestial	si - <u>les</u> - chal
chapters	<u>chap</u> ( as in chapter ) - i - ters
clandestine	kla - <u>des</u> - tin
column	<u>kol</u> - im ( no "y" sound )
competency	<u>kom</u> - pe - tin - see
consummate	
[adjective]	kon - <u>sum</u> - it ( greatest )
[verb]	<u>kon</u> - su - mate ( to carry out )
contemplate	<u>kon</u> - tem - <u>plate</u>
contemplative	kon - <u>tem</u> - pla - tiv
contribute	kon - <u>trib</u> - yoot ( rhymes with lute )
cornice	<u>kor</u> - nis ( rhymes with kiss )
derogatory	de - <u>rog</u> - a - <u>tor</u> - ee
destined	<u>des</u> - tind
detestation	de - tes - <u>ta</u> - shun
deviate	<u>dee</u> - vee - <u>ate</u>
dissemble	di - <u>sem</u> - bl
divested	di ( i as in give ) - <u>vest</u> - ed

dotage	<u>do</u> ( rhymes with toe ) - tij ( like age )
ecliptic	e ( as in me ) - <u>klip</u> - tik
effluvia	i - <u>floo</u> - vee - a
eligible	<u>el</u> - i - ji - bl
entablature	en - <u>tab</u> - la - chur
Ephesus	<u>ef</u> - e - sus
Ephraimites	<u>e</u> - fra - im - ites
excess	
[noun]	ek - <u>ses</u>
[adjective]	<u>ek</u> - ses
exhorted	eg - <u>zort</u> - ed
exuberance	ig - <u>zoo</u> - ber - ens
fidelity	fi ( i as in pin ) - <u>del</u> - i - tee
frieze	freez ( rhymes with trees )
fruition	froo ( u as in you ) - <u>ish</u> - on
gauge	gaj ( rhymes with page )
guttural	<u>gut</u> ( rhymes with hut ) - er - il
hecatom	<u>hek</u> - a - tom ( as in home )
hele	hail ( as in nail )
hieroglyphical	<u>hi</u> - er - o - <u>gliff</u> - ik - al
homage	<u>hom</u> ( o as in off ) - ij
impious	<u>im</u> - pee - is
implicit	im - <u>plis</u> - it
imprecations	im - pri - <u>ka</u> - shuns
inclemency	in - <u>klem</u> - en - see
inculcated	in - <u>kul</u> - kate - ed
indissoluble	<u>in</u> - di - <u>sol</u> - yi - bl
inestimable	in - <u>es</u> - ti - ma - bl
infamous	<u>in</u> - fa ( a as in ask ) - mus
irrevocable	ir - <u>rev</u> - i - ka - bl
Jachin	<u>jay</u> - kin
Jephthah	<u>jeff</u> - tha
lamentable	<u>lam</u> - en - ta - bl
legible	<u>lej</u> - i - bl
libertine	<u>lib</u> - ir - teen
mercenary	<u>mur</u> - sa ( a as in say ) - <u>nair</u> - ee
metopes	<u>met</u> - oh - pays
modillions	moe - <u>dil</u> - yuns
Mosaic	moe - <u>zay</u> - ik
Naphthali	<u>naf</u> - ta - lee
nauseous	<u>naw</u> - shus OR <u>naw</u> - zee - us
non-age	<u>non</u> - aj
obdurate	<u>ob</u> - doo - rit

obeisance	o - <u>bay</u> - sans OR o - <u>bee</u> - sans
palliate	<u>pal</u> ( rhymes with shall ) - e - ate
Parian	<u>pay</u> - ree -en
patriarch	<u>pay</u> - tree - <u>ark</u>
patron	<u>pay</u> - trun
pectoral	<u>pec</u> - ter - il
penal	<u>peen</u> - l
Pharaoh	<u>fay</u> - ro
pilasters	pi - <u>las</u> - terz
pomegranates	<u>pom</u> - <u>gran</u> - its OR <u>pum</u> - i - <u>gran</u> - its
premises	<u>prem</u> - is - is
putrid	<u>pyoo</u> - trid
putrification	<u>pyoo</u> - tri - fac - shun
Pythagoras	pi - <u>thag</u> - o - ras
reciprocally	ri - <u>sip</u> - ri - kal - ly
recognize	<u>rek</u> - og - <u>niz</u>
repudiate	ri - <u>pyoo</u> - dee - ate
repute	ri - <u>pyoot</u>
requisite	<u>rek</u> -qwiz - it
ruffian	<u>ruf</u> - ee - in
scythe	sith ( long l )
seraph	<u>ser</u> - ef
subtilty	<u>sub</u> - til - tee
Succoth	<u>sook</u> - os OR soo - <u>kote</u>
superficies	<u>soo</u> - per - fish - ez
superfluous	soo - <u>per</u> - floo - es
symmetry	<u>sim</u> - i - tree
synonymous	si - <u>non</u> - i - mus
tenet	<u>ten</u> - it (not tenant)
terrertial	te - <u>res</u> - tree - il
tesselated	<u>tes</u> - i - <u>late</u> - ed
triglyphs	<u>tri</u> - gliffs
Tyre	tire
unfeigned	un - <u>faind</u>
vicissitudes	vi - <u>sis</u> i - toods
volute	vo ( as in note ) - loots
votaries	<u>vo</u> - ti - rees
vouchsafe	vouch - <u>safe</u>
zealous	<u>zel</u> - us