

THE COMMUNIQUE

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From the Grand Master ...

Brethren,

I hope this finds you safe and feeling well. This is a difficult time for all of us, and nobody knows how long it will last, but be assured, it will not last forever.

Although all in-person Masonic *meetings* and *events* have been called off, that does not mean that Masonry is called off: true Freemasonry dwells in the heart of each and every initiate.

Mystic arts and rites reposing; Sacred in each faithful breast.

This is an opportunity to slow down and reflect on the lessons our Craft has to teach. There is time to go over your ritual by yourself to prepare for when we resume labour. There is time to read those books you always wanted to but didn't have the time. The College of Freemasonry continues to offer its courses on-line, and although there may be some reference books that you cannot access because the libraries are closed, there is much you can complete using what you have at home already and what they have on-line at <https://grandlodge.on.ca/index.php/publications/college-of-freemasonry-books>.

There are some excellent podcasts out there to listen to, and Masonic websites to explore. And, if so inclined, this would be a great time to write something up to share with your brethren when lodges resume.

As I said last month, Mentoring is a life-long process. In this time of human need for connectiveness when you are reaching out to the vulnerable members of your lodge, call your mentor and have a chat, then connect with those whom you have mentored. They'll be glad to

hear from you. And don't forget the widows of your lodge. They may need help with picking up supplies. Your involvement in helping your non-Masonic neighbours also will not go un-noticed.

I have been extremely impressed by the number of initiatives that I have heard our brethren have been taking. From offering to fetch groceries and medicines to revamping their businesses to make needed supplies. Thank you brethren!

Social distancing and isolation can be very hard on your mental health. There are help lines to call if you need them. Check with your local health authorities for the numbers. Also, the Big White Wall is a good on-line resource <https://www.bigwhitewall.com/>.

Remember that your brethren are thinking of you. Check the public health updates regularly. Stay home as much as you can. Look after yourself and look out for each other

I close off with a verse from our parting ode:

*God of light, whose love unceasing, Doth to all Thy works extend.
Crown our Order with Thy blessing; Build, sustain us to the end.*

Happy to meet; Sorry to part; Happy to meet again.

David J. Cameron
Grand Master

From the Deputy ...

My Brethren:

Welcome back to where we left off on our renewal of your Board of General Purposes and the Grand Lodge programs. It seems strange to be writing this with all our Masonic meetings in recess, but I want to let you know that the work of your Grand Lodge continues in our homes and with each other via video and teleconferencing.

This month, I would like to report on the progress of the Communications Pillar, under Chairman R.W. Bro. Tom Siemiernik, with an update on the progress of their special assignments given to them this year:

- 1) Support the Grand Lodge Committee communications efforts by providing the service of reviewing all Grand Lodge Committee documents for proper grammar and spelling and Grand Lodge branding and protocol prior to publication.

V.W. Bro. Rob Leffley and his team have been offering this service to the Committees of your Grand Lodge for the last several years quietly behind the scenes to assist the Grand Lodge Chairman in making their publications appear as professional as they do. The protocol for having documents reviewed by Publishing Review Committee is for the Pillar Chairmen to submit the document to be reviewed. After the document has been reviewed, it is returned to the Pillar Chairman with the recommended revisions. The originating Committee takes these suggested revisions into account, revises as necessary, and then the Pillar Chairman forwards the approved document to the Email Distribution team or Grand Lodge office for mass communication. Bro. Leffley and his team are to be commended as all documents are reviewed within a few days, larger ones may take up to a week and when documents are received, they are sent immediately to reviewers.

- 2) Library and Museums Committee needs to get the catalogue search working on their web site.

R.W. Bro. Lanny Salmon and his team were quick to get this very important Library service working again when it was discovered to be out of service.

- 3) Library and Museums Committee needs to revise their brochure for circulation via hard copy as the on-line Guidelines to view and order material was not functional.

The Library and Museum Committee was quick to reproduce their brochure and circulate it to assist with this function and correct the web site.

- 4) Explore the publication to assist Lodges in the preservation of their antiquated possessions a la "Caring for your Masonic Treasures" from the Massachusetts Scottish Rite.

The Grand Archivist, R.W. Bro. Dan Glenney, has produced such a document and future plans include placing current documents more appropriately on the new Grand Lodge web site to ensure wider distribution, plus using the documents as a guideline for the assessment of the Masonic collection at Grand Lodge.

- 5) Share the Events Digest and Resource Digest with every Mason in our Grand Jurisdiction.

The Email Distribution Committee, under the direction of R.W. Bro David Neave, has the year-long charge to be the repository of Pillar documents so approved for distribution and Grand Lodge event communications that have been approved by the Grand Secretary via the Resource and Event Digests to every Mason. At this time, they are doing so via the Lodge Secretaries who have been further charged to forward these emails on to their membership via their electronic Summons database. Changes are coming where the Digests will be emailed to each individual member, but the current method is a big improvement over going through the District Deputy Grand Masters in past years.

- 6) Review and report on potential copyright infringement regarding educational materials on the web site.

In addition to the regular work our Web Site Committee has been charged with under the direction of the Chairman and Web Master, R.W. Bro. Michael Locke, the team was charged with assuring our web site was not in violation of any copyright laws with material we had posted on the site.

We have received a lot of very positive comments on the changes that have been implemented on the Grand Lodge web site in the past year and look forward to the continued improvements being made by this team daily!

Please tune back in next month to hear how your Grand Lodge Operations Pillar is supporting these efforts. See you then!

***Thomas W. Hogeboom
Deputy Grand Master***

From the Grand Secretary ...

Office Procedures during the next few weeks:

As has already been communicated the Grand Lodge office is closed until further notice. However, your Grand Lodge staff is continuing to serve the essential needs of the brethren by working from home.

Naturally, we are receiving many queries regarding policies and procedures to be followed during the time that **all our in-person Masonic meetings and events** have been cancelled. We ask for your patience and understanding in writing to us, as in many cases we do not yet have complete answers.

Just to be clear - cancellation of 'All' Masonic events means just that. **No** in-person meetings of any kind (including Committee of General Purposes, officers meetings, social events, etc.). No investigating of any potential applicants. No elections and no installations. Lodges have blanket dispensation for the cancellation of all such events.

Activities to be encouraged include studying, writing, calling your brethren by phone and audio or video conferencing.

We are however dealing with circumstances as they arise as well as planning for the longer term. Our thoughts are also being directed to the effort that will be required to resume our labours when given permission to do so.

The District Deputy Grand Masters have already been given instructions for the completion of the L-Forms for Official visit cancellations and we are investigating options for such things as postponement of Amalgamations and Surrenders of Warrants; rescheduling of the Grand Master and Deputy Grand Master itineraries, shortened times for officers in the chairs, etc., etc.

As the Grand Master has previously granted a blanket dispensation for the cancellation of meetings in the next while, please do not submit requests for such dispensations to the Office. If you are requesting dispensation for other events, please also refrain from sending them in to the Office until permission to resume our labours has been granted.

We will communicate any resolutions to the many issues facing us as soon as we can. Again, we appreciate your patience and understanding while we attempt to respond to your queries and concerns.

D. Garry Dowling
Grand Secretary