

THE COMMUNIQUE

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From the Grand Master ...

Noah Reuben, a student at the University of Rochester, wrote for an article in the New York Times (2020/09/17):

This has not been a good year. We have faced a global pandemic that threatens us as a species. I, in America, have been forced to grapple with our original sin, slavery, which has haunted our country since its founding. Hundreds of students have had to change the way they learn. It has not been a good year. I have found my record of these times defined by absence. In my senior speech I wrote for my high school that no one will ever hear. In the pictures I have on my phone of Times Square, empty for what will probably be the only instance in my lifetime. This year has challenged me in so many ways. However, I have found solace from the sickly absence which has haunted my year in a quote from a comic book called "The Sandman" by Neil Gaiman, "It's astonishing how much trouble one can get oneself into if one works at it. And astonishing how much trouble one can get oneself out of if one simply assumes that everything will, somehow or other, work out for the best." I will continue to assume that everything will, in fact, work out for the best. It is hope that fills the absences in my life. I have found myself becoming more hopeful. I have found myself looking forward to what is to come. As freshman in college, I find myself looking forward to the uncertainty that the next couple of years will bring as I find the certainty of uncertainty, in a strange way, comforting. I know that I am changing, and all I can hope for is that I am changing for the better.

Brethren,

I do not know if this young man is a Mason (yet) but he shows the character of one we would welcome into our Craft. Yes, he makes references to things some would think odd: comic books and pictures on his phone. But he also espouses things with which we, as Masons, are very familiar: writing speeches, striving to become a better man, and trust in Divine Providence. One might say he is a model candidate.

January is named after Janus, the Roman god of gateways. He had two faces: one looking back and one looking forward. And so January is a time when we take stock; we look back at the past year, and we look forward, with uncertainty, through the gateway to the new year. Whatever befalls us, let us act as the dictates of right reason prompt us, cultivate harmony, practice charity, and live in peace with all men.

*David J. Cameron
Grand Master*

From the Deputy ...

My Brethren:

Happy New Year my Brethren!

I trust that each of you have been able to enjoy the holiday season in some fashion regardless of the COVID-19 conditions and restrictions that we are continuing to work through. Sitting here in the new Ontario epicentre of Kingston, Frontenac and Lennox and Addington Health Unit where practically all social and recreational activities have been closed and gatherings of more than ten are restricted, it simply meant we had more turkey leftovers. I don't mean to sound flippant at this time of real suffering for many, but we do have to make the best of what we have and follow the government guidelines if we hope to come out the other side and resume our Lodge meetings and indeed our lives as we fondly remember.

Before we get further into the work of your Grand Lodge committees, I feel that a follow-up to last month's report of the Condition of Masonry Committee (COM) is required to let you know how the Management Committee has responded to the four COM recommendations to Grand Lodge.

- 1) That Lodges be required to provide a copy of the year-end financial report together with a copy of the audited statement.

Management Committee Decision: Based on history, rather than a Constitutional amendment, this request should be strongly suggested as a tool to assist the COM Committee in assessing the financial status of the Lodge. The Lodge Finance Advisory Committee is working on an easy two step program that will assist every member of the Lodge in understanding the financial status of the Lodge.

- 2) That District Secretaries be required to attend the District Deputy Grand Master Preparation (DDGMP) course prior to their appointment to the role to ensure that they are familiar with the duties of a District Secretary.

Management Committee Decision: This is no guarantee of aspiring DDGMs selecting competent District Secretaries. We need to stress the importance of picking the right District Secretary during the DDGMP sessions. And of course, encourage the aspiring DDGMs to bring along a Past Master with them as a feeler if they

would like and that a proper pass down occurs between the past and next District Secretary including L-form completion.

- 3) The Constitution be amended to require the completion of the L1 (Master/Secretary Report) and L4 (Master/Treasurer Report) no later than 5 days prior to the date scheduled for the OV of the DDGM.

Management Committee Decision: The Constitution is not the place to enforce this, but rather through the DDGMP and COM training process of aspiring DDGMs.

4) a) If a Lodge receives a Green Report – The DDGM should attend the Lodge and congratulate them on their achievement.

b) If a Lodge receives a Yellow Report – The DDGM and the District Secretary should attend the Lodge and offer suggestions or assistance to enable the Lodge to improve.

c) If a Lodge receives a Red Report – The DDGM, District Secretary and a local Grand Lodge Officer visit the Lodge and encourage the Lodge to accept assistance from the Grand Lodge Committees that would best enable the Lodge to improve their current situation.

Management Committee Decision: This too should be a training issue and not a Constitutional amendment. The COM and DDGMP teams need to be training our future DDGMs that the delivery of a report card should never be mailed out without a face-to-face explanation of the details by the DDGM and District Secretary to the Lodge Committee of General Purposes. It is at this time they could make any necessary suggestions to improve such as connecting a Lodge with an appropriate Grand Lodge Committee. We have no doubt any local Grand Lodge Officer would be willing to assist with this communication.

We will continue next month with another report of the work of your Grand Lodge Committees so stay tuned...and WELL until then!

All the best of the season with health and happiness abounding in 2022 – and a safe return to our Lodges too!

Thomas W. Hogeboom
Deputy Grand Master