



THE OCCASIONAL BULLETIN

Texas Lodge of Research
July 2025 Number 2

2025 Meetings (Currently Scheduled)

September 20: Arlington Lodge
No. 438 (Arlington, Texas)

2025 Meeting Times

10:00 a.m.

2025 Host Hotels

To Be Determined

2025 No Host Dinners

To Be Determined



From the Master's Desk

I would like to begin by thanking everyone who was able to attend the June 21, 2025 stated meeting and Anson Jones lecture. The meeting was both substantive and informative. There were a lot of issues to cover and I will get to those in a moment.

First, I would again like to thank PM Christian Moore and Bro.'s George Moxley and Kyle Nigro for all of their assistance for both the meeting and the lecture. The groundwork for the lecture begins almost a year prior to the meeting, from selecting the lodge to host the meeting, and a separate dinner venue for the lecture, a block of rooms for the hotel, finalizing the agenda for the meeting and, finally, preparing the introduction for the Anson Jones

speaker. A year does not seem to be enough time!

I would also like to thank the brethren of Onion Creek Lodge No. 220, A. F. & A. M. for hosting the meeting. We had to change the lodge venue due to unforeseen circumstances, and we were most fortunate that their calendar was clear and were able to accommodate us.

Before I go further, our next meeting is scheduled for September 20, 2025 and will be hosted by Arlington Lodge No. 438, A. F. & A.M. The brethren of Arlington Lodge No. 438 just celebrated their 150th anniversary as an active lodge. From all the Facebook© pictures and commentary, it was a very successful celebration!!! Preparations for the meeting will begin in earnest so watch the website for updates; emails will also be sent out to those who have a current e-mail address on file. I look forward to sitting in this lodge in September.

One of the updates that occurred at our June meeting is that we are very close to publishing the Transactions for PGM David Dibrell/PM Christopher Livingston. I completed my review this weekend and sent my comments, such as they were, to PM Wayne Sirmon, our Transactions Editor. I do not have an exact date when this issue will be at the printer and ready for mailing, but it will be mailed out sometime in July. Though I was

present for most of the papers presented during time covered by this edition, it was refreshing to read them once more and I think you will find them all enlightening.

That brings us to the PGM Dodson/PM Charles Maddox edition. Work on this edition is mostly complete but there are a couple of items left to complete, and those items have been requested. Once that is received, a draft will again be reviewed so that the final edition can be sent to print. It is my hope that it will go to print either in September or October of this year.

Then we will move on to the next edition. The goal is to get as many reviewed and sent to you as soon as feasibly possible. My thanks to PM Sirmon for all his work in getting us back on track with our premier publication.

As many of you know, artificial intelligence is becoming a topic of immense interest in many circles: government, education, industry, etc. Just as with the internet, artificial intelligence can be used for many different applications...for good and for not so good. One of the questions that I have posed to the Lodge is what impact this could have on papers submitted to Texas Lodge of Research, specifically what uses of this type of application would, and would not, be considered acceptable. I have appointed a committee comprised of

the Editorial Committee, the Transactions Editor and the Occasional Bulletin Editor for their insight and contribution. PM Wayne Sirmon will serve as the chair. I have asked for a preliminary report to be presented at the September meeting.

One of the first tasks that any master of a lodge in Texas is required to perform is appointing an audit committee to review and report on the financial condition and ledgers of the lodge. The audit committee, comprised of Bro.'s Chris Galloway, as chair, Chuck Spring and Tyler Rowe, completed their work and presented their report at the June meeting. A few minor issues were discussed but the overall report was received with appreciation and my thanks.

We also installed two officers over the weekend: PM and Rev. Jerry Yelvington as Chaplain and our Junior Deacon Charles Springer.

By way of a reminder, while publication will continue to be published quarterly, any lodge member that would prefer to receive this publication via electronic means only, please contact Truitt Bradly at his email address at secretary.texaslodgeofresearch@gmail.com and let him know that you would like to receive the Occasional Bulletin via email. Members who would prefer to continue to receive a printed publication will be mailed one as

always and there is nothing more you need to do.

I am looking forward to seeing you in Arlington this September! If you have any questions, comments or concerns, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Fraternally,
Mark Dermit, W.M.:

Challenge (Encouragement)

(by Mark Dermit, W.M.)

This summer I would like to encourage everyone to pick a book of Masonic interest to read and then provide a summary of the contents and what you thought was most enlightening about it.

The first book that I selected to read is titled "Speculative Masonry" by Andrew MacBride published in 1914. It has a forward written by PM Andrew Hammer of Alba Lodge No. 222, F. & A. M. in Washington, D.C. and, according to the forward, has the distinction of being the only lodge in America to work the MacBride ritual.

I understand that summers are busy with family, vacations, installations, etc., but if we allow ourselves a moment to read, reflect and share more Light from the brethren then we are all made the better for it. So I should have mine ready for the next Occasional

Bulletin.

Who is the Funeral For?

(by Chris Galloway, Senior Steward)

While driving near La Vernia, Texas, I saw a sight that made me pause. A massive American flag was suspended from a fire truck ladder. Police cruisers lined the road, their lights flashing in solemn cadence. My first thought was, what happened?

As I drew closer, I realized I was passing a funeral home. Standing in dress blues, several officers saluted as a casket was ushered into a waiting hearse. The gravity of that moment reached deep inside me. A fallen brother, perhaps not of our Craft but of another sacred brotherhood, was being honored.

This poignant tribute called forth a memory from my past. I was first introduced to Freemasonry at my grandfather's funeral. His Masonic Brothers stood in quiet dignity, aprons donned, hands clasped in solemn respect. I didn't fully understand it then, but I do now. The funeral isn't just for the deceased. It's for those left behind.

We often say Freemasonry is the ultimate brotherhood. But what does that mean when a Brother lays down his working tools? What message do we send when we attend, or fail to

attend, his final rites?

In March 2025, I attended the funeral of a Brother who had long labored in the quarry of our fraternity. Only three of us showed up. Think of the dinners he missed with his family, the nights spent in lodge work, and his quiet contributions to our Craft. And yet, at the end, we were nearly absent. What message did that send to his widow? His children?

I'll be the first to admit I've been guilty too. Most funerals are during work hours. But excuses fade when duty calls. It's time we acknowledge that honoring the dead is also an obligation to the living.

So I propose this: let us form a Funeral Committee composed of our retired or more flexible Brethren. Their chief task should be to show up, represent the Lodge, and offer the embrace of Brotherhood to the grieving family.

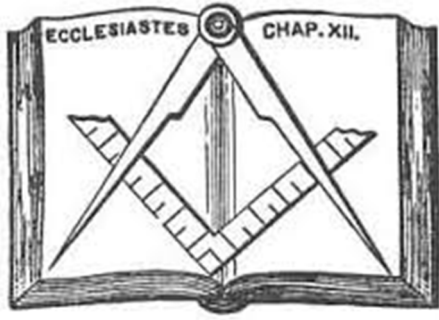
We are obligated to our Brethren and their families, those who supported them in their Masonic journeys. Let us not fail them when it matters most. Let our presence declare to all that this man was our Brother and that Freemasonry remembers.

In the end, the funeral is for the family but also for us: a reminder, a commitment, a call to action.

Ecclesiastes Ch 12:1-7 (KJV)

An Interpretation

(by Cody Cockroft)



Within the 39 books of the Old Testament of the Holy Bible (the Great Light) one will find a treasure of history and theology. Three of these books are primary books of Wisdom. They are Job, Proverbs, and Ecclesiastes.

The teachings of Freemasonry encourage us to seek Wisdom. Through contemplation we can find profound enlightenment. Wisdom serves as one of the three great pillars of Freemasonry; the other two being strength and beauty – all of which are reinforced in the third degree. Solomon is representative of Wisdom, Hiram King of Tyre is representative of Strength, and Hiram Abiff is representative of Beauty.

Like Proverbs, Ecclesiastes is a book of instruction (didactic). It is written to and for the reader about practical

and philosophical issues of life. Unlike Proverbs, Ecclesiastes is written for a more mature audience (like Job). This is an audience capable of dealing with dark and difficult life questions. It is likely written for the ancient elite and educated.

Background

Solomon, son of David and the third king of Israel was the great, great grandson of Boaz (redeemer) and Ruth. Scholars generally agree he reigned over Israel between 970 and 930 BC and enjoyed many years of peace – peace which was necessary for the construction of the temple.

In 1 Kings 3:9 King Solomon requests not riches nor fame, but Wisdom from God, *“Give therefore thy servant an understanding heart to judge thy people, that I may discern between good and bad: for who is able to judge this thy so great a people?”* This pleased God and God responded in verses 11 - 13, *“And God said unto him, Because thou hast asked this thing, and hast not asked for thyself long life; neither hast asked riches for thyself, nor hast asked the life of thine enemies; but hast asked for thyself understanding to discern judgment; Behold, I have done according to thy words: lo, I have given thee a wise and an understanding heart; so that there was none like thee before thee, neither after thee shall any arise like unto thee. And I have also given thee that which thou hast not asked, both riches, and*

honour: so that there shall not be any among the kings like unto thee all thy days.

The author of Ecclesiastes refers to himself as the “Preacher (or Teacher)”, “Son of David”, and “King of Jerusalem”. Scholars generally agree that the author of Ecclesiastes is Solomon.

The word vanity (futile or meaningless) is translated to English from the Hebrew word “hevel”. In Hebrew, this word is best represented by vapor or smoke and is used thirty-eight times throughout the book as a metaphor.

The book of Ecclesiastes basically attempts to teach us how it is meaningless (futile) for us to attempt to find meaning and purpose in life apart from God - these material (earthly) things that have no lasting meaning or significance. The teacher stressed how important our use of time is and how certain death is (the great equalizer). Death renders the activities of our life as meaningless as it devours the wise and the fool, the rich and the poor.....death is unescapable.

With all of Solomon’s wealth and wisdom, he describes life as a perplexing puzzle. He accounts for the pleasures of the flesh, accumulations of wealth, and the reality of death.

The rite of circumambulation of the third degree is indeed solemn. However, it requires an understanding of the symbology of the meaning of these translated words that were written approximately 3,000 years ago to fully embrace its significance. The following is an attempt to bring forth symbolic light to these scriptures.

Ecclesiastes 12:1 - 7

1 Remember now thy Creator in the days of thy youth, while the evil days come not, nor the years draw nigh, when thou shalt say, I have no pleasure in them;

2 While the sun, or the light, or the moon, or the stars, be not darkened, nor the clouds return after the rain:

3 In the day when the keepers of the house shall tremble, and the strong men shall bow themselves, and the grinders cease because they are few, and those that look out of the windows be darkened,

4 And the doors shall be shut in the streets, when the sound of the grinding is low, and he shall rise up at the voice of the bird, and all the daughters of music shall be brought low;

5 Also when they shall be afraid of that which is high, and fears shall be in the way, and the almond tree shall flourish, and the grasshopper shall be a burden, and desire shall fail:

*because man goeth to his long home,
and the mourners go about the streets:*

*6 Or ever the silver cord be loosed, or
the golden bowl be broken, or the
pitcher be broken at the fountain, or
the wheel broken at the cistern.*

*7 Then shall the dust return to the
earth as it was: and the spirit shall
return unto God who gave it.*

Interpretation

Remember now thy Creator in the days
of thy youth

Many of us in our youth and
mid-age overlook our
surroundings and God in our
quest for riches and pleasures of
the flesh. We are encouraged to
look at the world, and work in it,
through the lens of the Word.
God should be our central
reference point.

While the evil days comes not

When our bodies and minds do
not work like they did in our
youth.

Nor the years draw nigh

Our time and years are coming
to an end



When thou shalt say, I have no
pleasure in them

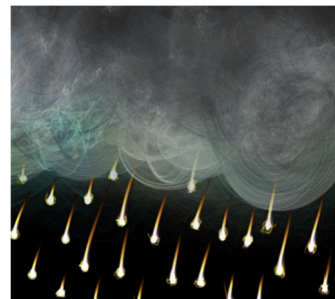
The time when we cannot do
that which took little to no effort
to do in our youth. Perhaps, all
we can do is sit and watch or
have someone else do it for us.

While the sun, or the light, or the
moon, or the stars, be not darkened

When death finally prevails and
we are no longer a part of the
wonders of life and nature.

Nor the clouds return after the rain

Rain creates new growth and
life. A life you are no longer a
part of.



In the day when the keepers of the house shall tremble

The keepers of the house are the hands, arms, and legs. The trembling comes with the feebleness of old age.

And the strong man shall bow themselves

When the body begins to bow (or stoop over), or to become bow legged. When we can no longer stand erect.

And the grinders cease because they are few

The grinders are the teeth. Often, we lose our teeth in advanced age. This makes it harder to chew food or verbally communicate.

And those that look out of the windows be darkened

The windows are the eyes. Failing eyesight is a trait common to advanced age.

And the doors shall be shut in the streets, when the sound of the grinding is low.

Our ability to chew has been compromised and the sound of

our voice is low (we mumble). The doors are the lips. The streets are the mouth by which nourishment enters the body. The sound of the grinding is the human voice

And he shall rise up at the voice of the birds

The bird is the rooster. In old age, a man is restless in his slumbers. Early rising is common.

And all the daughters of music shall be brought low

The daughters of music are the ears. Hearing becomes less acute in the aged.



Also, when they shall be afraid of that which is high

As man ages, he fears to scale heights. His equilibrium is compromised.

And fear shall be in the way

Man becomes timid with age. Apprehension is common with

the first sign of danger. Very unlike a man in his youth.

And the almond tree shall flourish

The almond tree produces white flowers which is an allegorical reference to the color of man's hair when he ages (white/grey)

And the grasshopper shall be a burden

In the weakness of old age, even an insignificant creature like a grasshopper becomes a burden.

And desire shall fail

Self-explanatory. Appetites and desires of youth cease.

Because man goeth to his long home

Man literally goes to his grave

And the mourners go about the streets

Refers to the original custom of having official mourners who make public lamentations for the dead



Or ever the silver cord be loosed

The silver cord is that spiritual cord which connects man to his Creator the same way an umbilical cord connect the fetus to its mother. This is an illustration of the fragility of life. Think about a lamp suspended by a chain/cord.

Or the golden bowl be broken

The skull is referred to as the golden bowl (golden/yellowish color)



Or the pitcher be broken at the fountain

The pitcher is the great vein which carries the blood to the ventricle of the heart (here referred to as the fountain)

Or the wheel broken at the cistern

The wheel represents the aorta (great artery) which carries the blood from the ventricle of the heart (or cistern) and distributes it throughout the body.

Then shall the dust return to the earth as it was, and the spirit shall return unto God who gave it.

Upon decomposition (or fire) the body will return to mother earth where it originated and the Father will return the spirit to heaven.



Editor's Notes

(by Cody Cockroft)

If you have any ideas or interest in sharing a subject with the audience, please let me know. Calendar Year 2025 submission dates are as follows:

- September 30 (for October publication)
- December 30 (for January 2026 publication)

In closing, I want to bring forth a reminder of a significant historical event for Morton Lodge No. 72 and the Most Worshipful Grand Lodge of Texas. On November 15, 2025, Morton Lodge 72 will observe the 200th anniversary of the Gillespie

Monument. This is known as the oldest masonic edifice in Texas and west of the Mississippi River. It was constructed by William Morton, on his labor, in 1825 to honor a sojourning Master Mason.

Due to the length of the brief study into Ecclesiastes, and the limitation of the page count, the petition for Lodge membership has not been included in this edition.

From the Secretary's Desk

Texas Lodge of Research members can now order directly from Eternity Creations at sales@eternitycreations.com. The cost for a name badge is \$23.50.

If you have had a change of address and have not let me know, please email me or send me a note to the Lodge mailing address: P.O. Box 686, Hereford, Texas 79045-0686.



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