



TRESTLEBOARD



Temple Lodge #16 Ancient Free and Accepted Masons

Chartered 1790

Editor – Bro. Jon Fischer, 32°, MSA

September 2025

9 Country Club Road, Cheshire, CT 06410

Stated Communications: First and Third Thursdays 7:30 pm

From our Worshipful Master, Eric Desmond

On the First Day of Creation, God's initial creative act was to speak "light" into existence, bringing order out of chaos and giving structure to a "formless and empty" world. Genesis 1:2. As the Bible later explains, "[t]he light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it" – which is to say that "light" drives away the darkness. John 1:5. The creation of "light" did not, however, refer to the formation of the Sun (or the Moon, which Pink Floyd explained in *Eclipse* has no dark side because it is all dark).

My belief is that "light" is an allegory for something more intrinsic and worthwhile to the human condition. Therefore, just as light, whether by Sun, incandescent bulb or candle, overcomes the dark, the Masonic reference to "light" is an allegorical reference to knowledge and that with knowledge a Mason may endeavor to overcome ignorance.



Religions and societies throughout history have allegorically referred to "light." The Bhagavad Gita states that "I, residing in their heart, destroy the darkness of ignorance by the shining lamp of knowledge." Hindus furthermore celebrate the Festival of Lights, or Diwali, a central theme of which is the victory over (or at least battle between) light over darkness, knowledge over ignorance, and hope over despair. The familiar yin and yang of Chinese philosophy in like manner illustrates how opposing forces (i.e., good and evil) are complementary in that they are both interconnected and opposing.

In Masonry, to me, "light" symbolizes more than the literal absence of darkness in the presence of sunlight, it symbolizes the intention for knowledge to overcome ignorance in the enduring philosophical battle between good and evil or hope and despair. The importance of "light" is reflected in the fact that it is one of the first representations of Masonic ideals presented to the youngest apprentices, with certain tools of operative masons thereafter shown to those apprentices while seated in a specific location in Lodge, architecturally considered to be the least accessible to sunlight, so that they may receive "light."

Freemasonry recognizes the value of battling darkness and ignorance with "light" and knowledge. In doing so, however, I do not believe that Masons naively suggest that darkness and ignorance are easily overcome. Rather, Masons recognize that we, at best, pursue a balance between the darkness of ignorance and "light" of knowledge through our Masonic journey. After all, Masonry's flagship ideal of "making good men better" inherently alludes to the noble journey upon which Masons embark rather than attempting to demarcate the journey's destination.

I believe that receiving "light" in Masonry is best understood as seeking *enlightenment* through Masonry, an ever-continuing endeavor to improve oneself with the assistance of one's Brothers. Without such journey – the path for which each Mason sets for himself – growth ultimately stagnates and the journey itself is of little worth. Or, in the words of Brother Benjamin Franklin, "[w]ithout continual growth and progress, such words as improvement, achievement, and success have no meaning."



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I also believe that allegories are useful tools, and recognize that human history has made use of them for various purposes, whether through the older *Aesop's Fables* or the timelier *Animal Farm* by George Orwell. Thus, seeking to receive “light” – or pursuing enlightenment – through Masonry is aptly aided by allegories that reference “light” and darkness or good and evil or hope and despair, which brings us to the most recent improvement to Temple Lodge #16.

Temple Lodge #16 has improved the Lodge through the installation of the Mosaic Pavement below its Altar. By placing the representation of light and darkness, or good and evil, in the center of Lodge, with the Blazing Star placed in the center of the Mosaic Pavement underneath the Altar, it is hoped that candidates and the Brethren alike will more readily visualize the balance of these forces and reflect upon their Masonic journey. In a prior monthly message, in which was introduced the intention to hold a fundraiser for the installation of the Mosaic Pavement, I referenced an early volume of Masonic instruction, and do so again because it reinforces the purpose of this improvement.

As Albert Mackay explains, “[t]he mosaic pavement is an old symbol of the Order. It is met with in the earliest rituals of the last century. It is classed among the ornaments of the Lodge in combination with the indented tessel and the blazing star. Its party-colored stones of black and white have been readily and appropriately interpreted as symbols of the evil and good of human life.” See Albert G. Mackey, *An Encyclopaedia of Freemasons and Its Kindred Sciences, Volume II* (New York and London: The Masonic History Company, 1916), p. 493 – 494.

This Mosaic Pavement, with the Blazing Star and Altar placed thereon, is the centerpiece of Temple Lodge #16. Candidates becoming the youngest of apprentices and seasoned Brothers alike will be able to visualize the balance about which we speak during our lectures and lessons, as well as their role in the battle between light over darkness, knowledge over ignorance, and hope over despair. As Shawn Eyer explained better than I ever could, “[w]hen we remember the Blazing Star in the center of the Lodge, this Masonic teaching strongly resembles the ancient Hermetic maxim adopted by so many philosophers, that ‘God is an intelligible sphere, whose center point is everywhere, and whose circumference nowhere.’ We may stand in awe in contemplation of the Infinite, but more awesome still is the fact that aspects of Infinity are indeed intelligible and may be represented by symbols and referenced by our ritual.” Eyer, Shawn, *The Mystery of the Mosaic Pavement*. Philalethes, Vol. 62, No. 4, pg. 96 (Fall 2009). The article is presently available at the following hyperlink:

https://scholar.harvard.edu/files/seyer/files/eyer_mystery_mosaic_pavement.pdf.

It is with sincerest gratitude that I thank those who have participated in the funding or installation of the Mosaic Pavement, Blazing Star and Indented Tessel. It is with heartfelt appreciation that I thank each Brother who supported the installation with their donations. Because this was a donation-driven endeavor, without such donations the material could not have been obtained.

It is also with sincere gratitude and awe that I recognize the several Brothers who labored monumentally in preparing the Lodge room for placement of the Three Lesser Lights by the Altar (including by running electricity



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to the middle of the room), prepping the floor (including by removing carpet and leveling the concrete) and installing the Mosaic Pavement, Blazing Star and Indented Tessel (in order of title as I stand by my rule that all Brothers, regardless of title, are equal): R.W.B. David Stewart, W.B. Steven Blake, W.B. Phil Sharkey, III, W.B. Bruce Taylor, Brother Jon Fischer, Brother John O'Reilly and Brother Phil Sharkey, Jr. It should also be noted that without the research and time of Brother Phil Sharkey, Jr. there would likely have been no Mosaic Pavement installation.



And, it is my sincerest hope that this improvement will long serve Temple Lodge #16 as it continues “making good men better.”

As for upcoming September and October events, there are several which I hope Brothers will consider attending.

- We will be having a business meeting on September 4, 2025 at 7:30 PM. There will be a short presentation (video) provided by R.W.B. David Stewart, in addition to a presentation by Brother Phillip Sharkey, Jr. There will be no dinner beforehand.
- We will be hosting an Entered Apprentice Degree, with dinner beforehand, on September 18, 2025. Dinner will start at 6:30 PM with Lodge opening at 7:30 PM. Please join us as we welcome two candidates. Please check the Lodge website at <http://www.temple16.org> for more information.
- We will be having a business meeting on October 2, 2025 at 7:30 PM. Please check the Lodge website at <http://www.temple16.org> for more information as it becomes available.
- We will be hosting a Table Lodge at Temple #16 on October 16, 2025. This Table Lodge will celebrate Oktoberfest, with a German menu that will include schnitzel and German-style beer brewed by W.B. Phil



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Sharkey, III and Brother Phil Sharkey, Jr. The table lodge will start at 6:30 PM.

- We will be hosting another Comedy Night on October 25, 2025. More information forthcoming.

We look forward to seeing you at Lodge.

Your humble caretaker,

Eric Desmond
Worshipful Master
Temple Lodge #16

Up Coming Events at Temple Lodge #16

September 3rd : Stated Meeting, Day Spring Lodge #30 at Temple Lodge #16

September 4th : Stated Meeting, 7:30 pm,

September 7th : Rainbow for Girls

September Eastern Star

September 11th : CMTA Meeting, 7:00 pm

September 12th : Men's Lunch, 12:00 pm,

September 18th : Stated Meeting, 7:30 pm, Entered Apprentice Degree, with
dinner beforehand at 6:30 pm

September 21st : Rainbow for Girls

September 25th : COMEDY NIGHT!

October 2nd : Stated meeting, at 7:30 PM

October 16th : Table Lodge at Temple #16



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An Update on the New Tile Floor in the Lodge Room

Thanks to the efforts of Phil Sharkey Jr. the mosaic tile floor has been installed on the lodge room floor.

We would like to thank Phil Sharkey Jr., Steve Blake, Jeff Summers, John O'Reilly, and to a lesser degree, myself for their efforts at cutting the carpet, spreading the leveling compound and adhesive, and laying the tiles. A monumental effort that greatly enhances our lodge.

Please make an effort to attend our next meeting on September 4th where we highlight the floor and the brothers whose efforts culminated in this addition to our lodge.





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Some of the best Masons I've ever met rarely say much.

But when they do, it matters.

They're not flashy. They don't quote ritual to show what they know.

They just live it.

Quietly, consistently, and with intention.

Their handshake means something.

Their word holds weight.

You notice how they carry themselves before they ever open their mouth.

That is Masonic education in its purest form.

Not theory. Not degrees. Just a life that teaches by example.

The problem is, too many Brothers never get close enough to see that kind of man in action.

Or they don't realize they're supposed to become one themselves.

Books, lectures, and lessons are useful, but only if they lead you to practice.

Only if they push you to become the kind of Mason others learn from without even realizing it.

So here's the question worth asking:

Are you collecting information, or building something with it?



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At a recent Stated Communication Worshipful Master Eric Desmond presented a service pin to Doctor Ted Noble in honor of his fifty years of service to the craft.





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SEPTEMBER BIRTHDAYS

First	Middle	Last	Age	Birthday	Years of Service
Steven	Earl	Blake	62	Sep 19	10.81
Costel		Calin	56	Sep 07	20.5
Tod	O.	Dixon	87	Sep 19	25.86
Robert	Steven	Jason	76	Sep 15	22.36
Wayne	Roger	Lawrence	71	Sep 13	41.07
John	Rudolph	Lesky	62	Sep 01	30.46
Eric		Martone	47	Sep 29	2.91
Gary		Matican	75	Sep 28	42.46
Arpan	Smitesh	Patel	37	Sep 05	15.12
Thomas	Armand	Ricard	71	Sep 10	22.29
David	James	Stewart	79	Sep 14	28.07
Thomas	Stephen	Veleber	61	Sep 10	16.37

Brother's Lunch

Are you looking for a gathering of brothers for some fun, food and enlightening discussions? Come and join us at noon on September 12th (the day after the CMTA meeting) at RESTAURANT on Main Street. A group of 6 to 10 brothers have been meeting for a while and we are now opening it to others who would like to join. Contact Phil Reed at reedtitle@gmail.com for reservations. It's the full menu, order what you want and pay for what you order.



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Temple Lodge #16 Officers for 2025:

Worshipful Master – **Eric Desmond**

Senior Warden – **Rodrigo Maltarollo**

Junior Warden – **Andrew Kazimer**

Treasurer – **Jonathan Hartman**

Secretary – **WB Mark Orsini**

Senior Deacon – **Phil Sharkey Jr**

Junior Deacon – **Kevin Ferguson**

Senior Steward – **John O'Reilly**

Junior Steward – **Kevin Dwyer**

Associate Steward – **Sam Stuckall**

Chaplain – **WB Bruce Taylor**

Marshal – **Tyler DeLavalley**

Tiler – **Jeff Sommers**

Organist – **WB John Lesky**

Historian – **RWB David Stewart**

School of Instruction – **RWB David Stewart**

Assistant Secretary – **WB Stuart Post**

Project Manager – **WB Phil Sharkey III**

Trustees – (3 year terms)

Kevin Ferguson, (26)

Rob Lawonka, (27)

WB Stuart Post, (25)

CMTA – (3 year terms)

WB Steve Blake (26) (Pres)

WB Bruce Taylor (28)(VP)

WB Phil Sharkey III (28)(Tres)

Phil Sharkey Jr (28) (Secty)

Tyler DeLavalley (28)

Kevin Dwyer (27)

RWB David Stewart (26)

Jon Fischer (26)

Mithie Thatson (27)

WB Eric Desmond (Master)

Rodrigo Maltarollo (SW)

Andrew Kazimer (JW)

Living Masters of Temple Lodge #16:

1968 **Wayne Davidson**

1980 **RWB George Nousiainen**

1982,83,95 **S. Kenneth Baril**

1984, 2002 **Stephen Eberle**

1989 **James Sygrove**

1990 **William Maturo**

1991 **John Sturges**

1996 **James Parys**

1997 **Garret Post**

1998 **Carmen Spizzoucco**

2000 **John Lesky**

2004 **Royal Watrous**

2005 **Michael Candela**

2006 **John Attwood**

2007 **Philip Reed**

2008 **Roger Jackson**

2010 **Michael Bonini**

2011,14 **Steven Canada**

2012 **Eric Gunther**

2013 **Eric Silver**

2015, 16 **Jonathan Martin**

2017, 18 **Stuart Post**

2019 **Steven Blake**

2020 **Fred Cargill**

2021, 22 **Philip Sharkey III**

2023 **Jason Polaski**

2024 **Bruce Taylor**

2025 **Eric Desmond**

Living Past Masters of Other Lodges who are members of Temple Lodge #16:

RW Gary Matican - Cosmopolitan #125 - 1991, 1995, 2003

RWB David Berger - Cosmopolitan #125 - 2005

WB Roger Jackson - Cosmopolitan #125 - 2009

RWB Robert Knowles - Center #197 – 2006

WB Emory Meyerjack - Ashlar-Aspetuck #142 – 2010

WB Mark Orsini - Liberty-Continental #76 – 2012, 2014, 2016, 2017

WB Steven Canada - Day Spring #30 – 2016, 2017

WB Gordon Hurlbert – Granite #119 – 2023, 2024

WB Garret Post – Ashlar #332 - 2023