

ALTERNATE CORNER-STONE CEREMONY

This ceremony is provide for use in laying corner-stones when, in the opinion of the Grand Master or other governing Masonic official, it is necessary in the particular circumstances involved.

GRAND MASTER: From time immemorial it has been the custom of the Fraternity of Free and Accepted Masons to lay, when requested so to do, with their ancient forms, the corner-stone of buildings being erected for the worship of God, for charitable objects, or for the purposes of the administration of free government. Brethren, please join me in singing *America*.

(The anthem having been completed, the Grand Master continues...)

Right Worshipful Grand Secretary, you will now deposit in the corner-stone the memorial prepared for that purpose, the list of which you will read.

(Grand Secretary reads the list.)

GRAND MASTER: Right Worshipful Deputy Grand Master, what is the proper Jewel of your office?

DEPUTY GRAND MASTER: The Square.

GRAND MASTER: What are its moral and Masonic uses?

DEPUTY GRAND MASTER: To Square our actions by the Square of virtue and to prove our work.

GRAND MASTER: Apply that implement to the foundation stone, attest its value and workmanship, and make report.

(The Deputy Grand Master, applying the square to the stone, makes report.)

DEPUTY GRAND MASTER: Most Worshipful Grand Master, I find the stone square and well fitted for its use. The craftsmen have performed their duty acceptably.

GRAND MASTER: Right Worshipful Senior Grand Warden, what is the proper Jewel of your office?

SENIOR GRAND WARDEN: The Level.

GRAND MASTER: What is its Masonic use?

SENIOR GRAND WARDEN: It is used to lay horizontals, and it morally teaches us equality.

GRAND MASTER: Apply that implement to the foundation stone and make report.

(This is done.)

SENIOR GRAND WARDEN: Most Worshipful Grand Master, the work of the craftsmen has been well done. I find the stone level.

GRAND MASTER: Right Worshipful Junior Grand Warden, what is the proper Jewel of your office?

JUNIOR GRAND WARDEN: The Plumb.

GRAND MASTER: What is its Masonic Use?

JUNIOR GRAND WARDEN: Morally and Masonically it teaches rectitude of conduct. It also is used to try perpendiculars.

GRAND MASTER: Apply that implement to the several sides of the foundation stone, and make report.

(Done.)

JUNIOR GRAND WARDEN: Most Worshipful Grand Master, I find the stone to be true and plumb. The craftsmen's work is well performed.

GRAND MASTER: Brethren, this corner-stone has been tried and tested by the proper implements of Masonry. The craftsmen have well and skillfully performed their duty, and I do now declare this stone to be well formed, true and trusty, and correctly laid, according to the ancient customs of our craft.

The Deputy Grand Master then approaches with the vessel of Corn, and scattering it on the stone, says:

DEPUTY GRAND MASTER: I scatter this corn as an emblem of plenty. May the fruits of this land be bounteously showered upon us, and ever inspire the hearts of our people with Virtue, Wisdom and Gratitude.

The Senior Grand Warden proceeds to pour the Wine upon the stone, saying:

SENIOR GRAND WARDEN: I pour this wine as a symbol of joy and gladness. May our national, state and local governments prosper, and may our union of states be preserved and cemented in a bond of Friendship and Brotherly Love, which shall endure through the eternity of time.

The Junior Grand Warden then pours the Oil on the stone, saying:

JUNIOR GRAND WARDEN: I pour this oil as an emblem of peace. May we abide in peace continually, that we may shelter and protect the widow and orphan, shielding and defending them from the trials and vicissitudes of the world; bestowing mercy upon the bereaved, the afflicted and the sorrowing, that they may know sorrowing and trouble no more.

GRAND MASTER: May the inhabitants of this place find an abundance of the necessaries, conveniences and comforts of life; in the erection and completion of this building, may the workmen be protected from every accident, and the structure preserved from decay, and may we all rejoice in an ample supply of the Corn of Nourishment, the Wine of Refreshment, and the Oil of Joy.

(The Grand Master strikes the stone three times. [Invites any guests to join him,])

GRAND MASTER: To the unmeditative man, the ceremony we have just performed may be barren and meaningless; but to the thoughtful student it is permeated with the symbolism of the building of human character. In that sense we are all architects; and I charge you, my Brethren, to use them in a symbolic sense to try and test each thought, each word, and each action, that no stones may go into the building of your spiritual buildings that are not Just, Right and True.

Closing with the following:

GRAND MASTER: Brethren, let us salute the efforts of the workers on this structure, for they have, in their labors, dedicated it to its proper destiny. With me, my Brethren, the traditional public honor of our Fraternity.

(3x3)

GRAND MASTER: Brother Grand Marshal, you will make proclamation that the cornerstone has been laid in *Ample Form*.

The Grand Marshall then makes the following proclamation:

GRAND MARSHAL: In the name of the Most Worshipful Grand Lodge of Free and Accepted Masons of Washington, I now proclaim that the corner-stone of the _____ has this day been found Square, Level and Plumb and has been laid in Ample Form, agreeably to the ancient usages and customs of the Fraternity.

GRAND MASTER: We will now have some suitable remarks from our Grand Orator.

The Oration.

(An appropriate ode is then sung; for example, God Bless America would be appropriate.)

GRAND MARSHAL: The Brethren will now retire.

(The Grand Marshal escorts the grand Master Out and they are followed by the other Grand Lodge Officers and visiting dignitaries. If refreshments are served at that site, or if tours of the newly dedicated edifice are contemplated, the Grand Marshal leads the procession to the appropriate location.)