

Tuckahoe Lodge Memorial Service - 2015



This memorial service was originally written, and first presented in Tuckahoe Lodge in 1981. Since that time it has been revised several times and is presented annually in December as a public ceremony with the approval of the grand Lodge of Virginia. Accessories used for the service: A small table, draped in black, placed near the podium in the East. On the table: one white candle, a white leather apron, and one sprig of evergreen. The overhead lights are extinguished and the Speaker lights the lone candle. Appropriate instrumental music is provided by the Lodge Musician, softly under the presentation.

Soft music begins...as the speaker approaches the podium...

Speaker: My Brethren and friends: I light this lone candle in loving memory of those brethren who served Tuckahoe Lodge well and faithfully during their lifetime and have answered the summons to enter into the presence and safekeeping of their God in the Celestial Lodge above. For many years it has been our custom in Tuckahoe Lodge to assemble, and for a brief time set aside the regular business of the Lodge, then pay our last tribute of respect to those Brethren who have laid down the working tools of life, and entered into the joy of their creator. In keeping with this custom, we have assembled tonight to console one another in this hour of remembrance, and to ponder within our hearts the depth and significance of this occasion.

One by one they pass away, the Brothers of our Craft that we adopt; they are our Companions of Choice. **Ten** of our brethren, whose hands we have clasped in the bonds of fellowship have passed from our sight, and we know that we shall not meet them on earth again. Tonight we remember our departed brethren for the strong grip of friendship, for their pledge of our defense, and their vow of aid and wise counsel. Remember them for their every virtue and for their every evidence of goodness. God has claimed their souls from their mortal remains of this earth, and His will is now accomplished. Those whom we honor tonight are now ready for their final degree.

However, it's not enough to raise eulogies to the departed. We must also look upon their death as an opportunity to refine our own philosophy and understanding of death. And that, my friends, has to be a part of the philosophy of life. Masonry, be it anything at all, is a teaching experience, and not the least of the lessons that it teaches is one of the uncertainty, and frailty of human life. It is our desire for one last time, to call out and remember the names of those whose service to this Lodge has been cut short by the ever-advancing scythe of time. Brother Secretary, be pleased to read the Masonic record of those whom we honor tonight.

The Secretary reads the name, date of raising, and date of death, of the brethren to be honored.

Speaker: On this table before me are two symbolic emblems of Freemasons, the meaning of which is explained to each man as he begins his Masonic journey. The first is *a lambskin*, or white leather Apron. It represents innocence and is acknowledged around the world as the time-honored badge of a Freemason. It is older than the Golden Fleece or Roman Eagle, and carries with it more honor than the Star and Garter, when worthily worn.

The evergreen is an emblem of our faith in the immortality of the soul. By it we are reminded of that immortal part of man that survives the grave and will never die. We have consigned the remains of our brethren back to the earth, ashes to ashes, and dust to dust. We cherish their memory in our hearts, and we now commend their spirit unto God who gave it. As a token of remembrance and our heartfelt thanks, this evergreen is offered tonight in memory of all members of the US military who have served and paid the ultimate price in the ongoing efforts to protect and preserve the freedoms that we all enjoy. May they rest in peace.

Brethren and Ladies, please rise as the Chaplain offers our evening devotion.

*Music ends as the Chaplain kneels at the altar and begins his prayer.
Music will resume following the benediction below.*

Chaplain: The Lord giveth and the Lord taketh away. Blessed be the name of the Lord. Thou, O God, art the creator and sustainer of this universe and all life within its limitless boundaries. Thou hast given us life, and determined the number of our days. We acknowledge Thee in this sweetly solemn moment, remembering our fallen Brethren as we honor their memory, reaching forth in expectation to commit them for eternity into Thy tender care and keeping. Bless us in these moments and grant that that we shall take from them renewed inspiration, courage and dedication to our faith, and strict adherence to our Masonic principles. Amen. So mote it be.

Following the prayer the Speaker offers this benediction.

Speaker: May the *light* of God surround you, may the *love* of God enfold you, may his *power* protect you and the *presence* of God watch over you. Peace be with you, now and forever more.
* My friends, I invite you to close this time of remembrance by joining together and singing the first and last verses of Amazing Grace.

** At this point the Lodge Musician will provide music for 2 verses of Amazing Grace*

So mote it be. Amen.

*Once the second verse is completed the WM seats the Lodge
and the overhead lights are again turned on.*

Lodge Memorial Service written and presented by Douglas Messimer, PM.
Music provided by Bro. Richard Turochy, Lodge Musician.
Presented as a public ceremony 12/3/15

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