



Orange County Scottish Rite

ORIENT OF CALIFORNIA, SOUTHERN JURISDICTION

Volume 44, Issue 02

February 2024

CONGRATULATIONS TO OUR 2024 OFFICERS!



2024 Officers and Installation Team – Orange County Scottish Rite, Orient of California, Southern Jurisdiction



Ladies Night

Every month we host an event during our Stated Meeting.
All ladies and partners are invited to attend and participate.

Dinner is included!

CALIFORNIA STATEWIDE REUNION



**ALL DEGREES
4th
THROUGH
32nd
TO BE PERFORMED**

APRIL 26 - 28, 2024, SAN JOSE & OAKLAND



2nd Moon Cycle: The Wisdom Keeper

Hon. James McCallion, 32° KCCH

Venerable Master, Director of Education

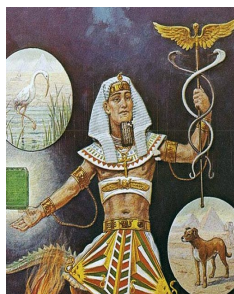


In last month's issue ([December 2023's Newsletter](#)), we introduced indigenous esoteric symbolism such as the Zia, Giizisoo-Mazina'igan (Myth of the turtle's back), and elements of Shamanic meditation called "Tiyoweh" or stillness. I invited you to explore the Journey of the 13 Moons; a call to action employing both oral legends, and a monthly ancient discipline towards clarity and wholeness. A primer was offered into discovering the truths within yourselves. We reflected upon the **1st Moon Cycle: "Talks with Relations,"** which focused on developing a meaningful awareness with those of whom we interact and respecting the sacred space (of ourselves and others). You were prompted with the inquiry "What is Truth?" and asked "how will you endeavor to learn it?" It was suggested that by finding solitude in Nature and facilitating "Tiyoweh (the stillness)", that you might begin this inward journey. As the old Taoist axiom espouses, "when you quiet the mind, it has much to tell you."

For the month of February 2024, we will continue our journey of seeking Truth by calling forth the guidance of the Wisdom Keeper, the Clan Mother of the **2nd Moon Cycle**. She teaches us how to develop the Self through **Honoring the Truth** in all things.



Thoth



Hermes Trismegistus

Not Dissimilar to Thoth, scribe of the Egyptian Gods, Hermes Trismegistus, or even a Secretary of a Masonic lodge, she was keeper of the stone libraries, protector of sacred traditions, and the guardian of remembering. To honor the truth of all that has been, it is necessary for us to rely on more than just tradition, culture, and story. Wisdom Keeper honors the truth as it is seen from each person's sacred point of view, knowing that there is a truth in every lifeform's journey.

As Masons, we may find commonality in this philosophy. Without question, we honor (or should we so aspire) each other's personal, spiritual, and Masonic journey, accepting that although we may differ, we are bound by something stronger; deeper. That we are compelled to lift each other up and take heed in each other's life lessons

for they may become our own (or conversely, that we may offer solace and thus reduce their unnecessary suffering – our ultimate purpose in life).

To that extent, if we view this through the lens of Shamanism, one will see that knowledge from this expansive view of the “Planetary Family” is the key to self-development and is the medicine that teaches us of being totally present in any given moment (the key to self-mastery). That all parts compose the whole, each part being equal and every part contributing towards the enrichment of all. There is a great honor in self-restraint in that sometimes we learn and teach simultaneously when we are quiet and listen to others. We learn by being receptive, we also teach when we allow others to share their wisdom.



“1st Pipe Ceremony” painted by James Roderick

In traditional Pipe Ceremony (“Pipe Circle”), blessed tobacco is shared among a group of those communing to form a pact, pray, or open negotiations with intent of truthful, respectful, and meaningful “good talks.” Participants sit in a circle with the pipe carrier acting as a sort of Senior Deacon, or host of the ceremony, handling the sacred tobacco, leading prayers to the 4 directions, the spirit world, Mother Earth, and all living creatures within the space between. Upon conclusion of the ceremony, the pipe carrier usually shares their introspection such as the inspirations, curiosities, and gratitude they have found along their life journey. It is common for the others in the group to share their reflections as well.

I ask that in the Moon of February, you contemplate how can you “Honor Truth?” And how will you endeavor to do so (hint: wake up at 4am and meditate on that tranquil earthly hum before Humanity wakes up and disrupts that peace)? Listen for it... can you hear it?

“The Breeze at dawn has secrets to tell you. Don’t go back to sleep.” - Rumi

On a separate note, Apache Lodge #69, Gila Valley #9, and White Mountain #3 invites all Master Masons to the 6th annual “Lost Dutchman Outdoor 3rd Degree” on Saturday, March 2nd at the Lost Goldmine East Trailhead on Forest Road 77 in Gold Canyon, AZ. Cost is \$35 and 2024 dues cards required for any brothers who want to travel and see an outdoor degree. Please contact me for more information.

Aho,

Hon. James McCallion, 32° KCCH
Venerable Master, Director of Education



Agape: Nourishing Brotherhood in the Scottish Rite

**Russ Hennings, 32°
Wise Master**

In the heart of Masonry, there exists a concept that transcends words and rituals—a concept known as "Agape." It's a term that encapsulates the very essence of our fraternity, nurturing the bonds of brotherhood and unity that define us as Scottish Rite Masons.

Agape, often described as love, is not a mere sentiment. It's a profound and selfless love, a love that extends beyond the boundaries of family and friends to encompass all humanity. In our valley, Agape is not just a word; it's a way of life.

At the core of Agape is the value of Brotherly Love. It's the foundation upon which our fraternity stands, a commitment to treating every Mason as a brother and extending our love and support to one another. Through Agape, we create an environment where every Mason feels valued, respected, and welcomed.

Tolerance, another cornerstone of Agape, teaches us to embrace diversity and differences of opinion. It's a reminder that in unity, there is strength. Through Agape, we cultivate an atmosphere of understanding, where diverse perspectives enrich our discussions and broaden our horizons.

Charity, a fundamental aspect of Agape, extends our love and compassion to those in need. Whether through philanthropic initiatives, community service, or support for the CASRF, we channel our Agape into actions that make a positive impact on society. Our commitment to Charity is a testament to our dedication to improving the lives of others.

Truth, the final pillar of Agape, encourages us to be honest and sincere in our interactions. It's a commitment to open and transparent communication, ensuring that our bonds of brotherhood are built on a foundation of trust and integrity.

Agape is not confined to our rituals and meetings; it's a way of life that extends beyond the walls of our Valleys. It's the warm handshake, the supportive embrace, and the genuine concern for the well-being of our fellow Masons. It's the spirit of fraternity that unites us, transcending age, background, and circumstance.

SCOTTISH RITE

**RiteCare Childhood Language
Center of Orange County**

Roaring 20's Speakeasy Casino Night
Hosted by the Orange County Valley Scottish Rite

Games! Food! Drinks!

Friday 3/8/24
Orange Grove Lodge
71 Plaza Square, Orange, CA 92866
6pm-11pm

Dance the Charleston, wear your roaring
20's costume and have a fun evening
fundraising for the RiteCare Childhood
Language Center of Orange County!

\$75 per ticket
(Net Proceeds benefit the RiteCare Childhood
Language Center of Orange County)

In our Masonic journey, Agape is the thread that weaves through every degree, every lecture, and every conversation. It's the force that binds us as brothers and fuels our commitment to self-improvement, community service, and the pursuit of knowledge.

As Masons, we understand that Agape is not a destination but a continuous journey—a journey where we strive to embody the principles of Brotherly Love, Tolerance, Charity, and Truth in our daily lives. It's a journey of growth, unity, and unwavering brotherhood.

Agape is the living embodiment of our Masonic ideals. It's a commitment to love, tolerance, charity, and truth that extends beyond the boundaries of our fraternity and enriches the world around us. As Scottish Rite Masons, we embrace Agape as a guiding light on our journey of self-improvement and service to others, knowing that through our actions, we nourish the bonds of brotherhood that define us.

Fraternally yours,

Russ Hennings
Wise Master

ANNOUNCEMENT: BYLAW RESOLUTION

At the March Stated Meeting, the Valley will consider the following resolution -
RESOLVED that the bylaws of the Orange County Valley Scottish Rite Bodies and the several Bodies thereof, being the Lodge of Perfection, Chapter Rose Croix, Council of Kadosh and Consistory, be amended to provide that the regular Valley Stated Meeting will be held on the 2nd Monday of each month commencing with the April, 2024, stated meeting, and that the location of said meeting be held at the Orange Masonic Center, located at 71 Plaza Square, Orange, California.



Love

Alejo Velarde, 32°
Commander of Kadosh

Love is a profound and intricate emotion, encompassing various forms such as romantic, platonic, familial, and self-love, brotherly love holds a significant place in the realm of human emotions. Brotherly love, often associated with camaraderie, friendship, and mutual support, is a bond that extends beyond blood relations.

It embodies the idea of treating others as one would treat a brother, fostering a sense of unity and solidarity among individuals. Additionally, the concept of brotherly love is echoed in certain philosophical and fraternal organizations, such as Freemasonry.

Masonry emphasizes the importance of brotherhood, encouraging members to cultivate a sense of fellowship, moral integrity, and mutual respect. The principles of Masonry align with the idea that fostering brotherly love contributes to a harmonious and supportive community, both within and beyond the confines of the organization. In essence, the various facets of love, including brotherly love, play a vital role in shaping human connections and building communities based on shared values and understanding.

Furthermore, brotherly love extends its influence into various aspects of life, including the realms of philosophy, spirituality, and ethical conduct. In philosophical discourse, the concept often transcends familial ties, emphasizing a universal connection among all individuals. Spiritually, brotherly love aligns with the idea of interconnectedness and shared humanity, promoting compassion and empathy. Ethically, it serves as a guiding principle for moral conduct, encouraging individuals to treat each other with kindness and consideration. Within the context of Freemasonry, brotherly love is not only a guiding tenet but also a lived experience among members who come together in a spirit of unity and mutual support. The Masonic principles of equality, tolerance, and charity further underscore the significance of cultivating brotherly love in creating a more just and compassionate society.

In essence, the embrace of brotherly love enriches our understanding of human connections, fostering a sense of community grounded in shared values and a commitment to the well-being of all.



Our New Masonic Year

Barry McKinley, 32°

Master of Kadosh

Dear Brothers of the Orange County Scottish Rite,

It is with great pleasure and fraternal pride that we extend our warmest congratulations to Honorable Brother McCallion on assuming the esteemed role of Venerable Master. As we embark on this new Masonic year, we eagerly anticipate the leadership and vision that Venerable Master McCallion will bring to our beloved valley.

In the coming months, we look forward to continued Masonic education, fun social gatherings, and being a place for different Masonic lodges to come together. The Orange County Scottish Rite remains committed to fostering unity, providing enriching experiences, and serving as a hub for Masonic education.

Venerable Master McCallion's commitment to Masonic education is unwavering. As a Scottish Rite Valley, we believe that a deeper understanding of our principles leads to personal growth and a stronger bond among our brothers. Through informative lectures, workshops, and discussions, we aim to create an environment that nurtures the intellectual curiosity of our members.

The fun social gatherings that await us provide an opportunity to strengthen the fraternal bonds that make our brotherhood unique. Whether it's a festive dinner, a charity event, or a casual gathering, these moments allow us to connect on a personal level, forging friendships that extend beyond the confines of our rituals.

As we gather in our sacred space, let us reflect on the bonds that unite us as brothers. May this Masonic year be filled with shared experiences, personal growth, and the flourishing of our Orange County Scottish Rite family.



From the General Secretary

Jamie Hopkins, 32° KCCH
General Secretary

Brethren: February is here and our new Valley officers for 2024 are installed. Our Installation ceremony in January was an outstanding event officiated by our SGIG Illustrious Frank Loui 33° and Illustrious Brother Art Salazar 33°. This function was well attended and was followed by a fine meal of Italian food. If you were unable to attend this year, please make a point of attending next year.

Our Stated Meeting for February will be on Monday, February 5th at 6:30 pm. Our Personal Representative has made a point of keeping our meetings shorter and our dinners better with improved food and speakers. As a result, attendance at monthly meetings is up. Also, he has asked every Brother to speak to at least one Blue Lodge Brother who is a possible candidate for OCSR membership about the advantages and opportunities available through participation in the Valley of Orange County. Our Spring Reunion is coming up in early May, so please ask interested Blue Lodge Brothers to complete a petition for our degrees. If you need petitions or have any questions about applying for our degrees, please contact the General Secretary at the Valley office.

Dues payments for memberships are still coming in steadily and we appreciate all of the Brothers who made payments. If you have any questions about your membership status or have a particular situation, please contact our office directly. Lastly, we wish a successful year for our new Venerable Master, Honorable James McCallion 32° KCCH, his Heads of Bodies and their respective lines.

Fraternally,
Jamie Hopkins, 32° KCCH

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We need your email address so we can electronically send you the Scottish Rite News.
Call the office at (714) 543-7277 and give it to our Secretary or leave a message.



Personal Representative of the SGIG Orient of California

III. Ralph C. Shelton II, 33°

As February opens, we have much to celebrate and much to consider. February is the month of Valentine's Day as well as President's Day. For our Valley, it is the beginning for our Heads of Bodies and their officers, and as we progress through the month, an opportunity to consider our exciting improvements for our Valley. And it all ties together with the Masonic concept of love, compassion and charity.

First, let's look at a big improvement from your Valley leadership. We have, since our inception, met on the first Monday of the month. In response to the comments of many of our members, we realize that the first week of the month is a very, very busy one, and that our Stated Meeting date conflicts with some craft lodges. So, to address these issues, you will see a proposed resolution elsewhere in this newsletter that will enable us to meet at a less conflicting time - the second Monday of each month. Additionally, our current location has been a challenge for many of our members who are located to the south, so, after discussing our options and reaching out to some Hall Associations, we are happy to share that we have formed a relationship with Orange Masonic Center. For anyone north of Irvine, this represents only a small change, but for our South County brethren, this can be a travel time savings of 45 minutes to an hour. So, assuming that the bylaw revision passes in March, we will commence meeting at 71 Plaza Square on the second Monday of May - be sure to mark your calendars accordingly.

Those of you we have not seen in a while will find a very vibrant and motivated membership when you come to meetings - interesting programs, a welcoming environment and our new Valley Heads of Bodies. And mark your calendars for a few returning events we haven't seen in a while. At our May Stated, we will have as a special guest one of our own Valley members, and the Deputy Grand Master of Masons in California, Right Worshipful and Illustrious Arthur Salazar. In years past, we hosted the DGM annually, and he always shared his vision of the coming Masonic year, and we are pleased to bring this event back. Keep in mind that ALL MASONS are invited to attend, and we will be inviting the officers and members of our area lodges to join us. While they won't be in the brief and efficiently run business meeting, they can join us for dinner and RW & III. Salazar's presentation, and hopefully mingle with the members of the Grand Family that may join him.

I am pleased to share that our Knights of St. Andrew are coming together nicely, and you are all encouraged to meet and greet these Masters of the Royal Secret who will serve our Valley in a supporting role. This year has already seen the return of the Honormen's Dinner, and there is much more to come.

I look forward to seeing you at our Stated Meetings in Anaheim in February and March, as we prepare to move to our new home, and to have you on hand when we celebrate our new home, our Deputy Grand Master visit, and so much more new, revived and exciting activity in our Valley. Each of you will find their own place in the Valley once again, and your leadership will be there to help you settle in.

Sincerely and fraternally,

III. Ralph Shelton, 33°
Personal Representative of the SGIG, Orient of California

Calling All Writers!

You don't have to be a head of body or a member of the line to contribute to this newsletter. If you have something to say from a masonic perspective — perhaps insights into your masonic ruminations, scholarly endeavors you'd like to share, or general news for the brethren — this newsletter is your conduit for those ideas. I encourage any and all brothers who'd like to contribute something to this newsletter to send their ideas to:

editor@ocscottishrite.org



February Meal - Tacos Los Cholos!

Carne Asada, Pollo, and El Pastor tacos with beans and rice



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Stated Meetings on the first Monday of the month, 6:30 pm; dinner follows at 7:15 pm (reservations requested) at the Anaheim DeMolay Center, 303 W. Lincoln Ave. Anaheim, CA 92805

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All articles for publication must be submitted prior to the 15th of the month.