



Orange County Scottish Rite

ORIENT OF CALIFORNIA, SOUTHERN JURISDICTION

Volume 44, Issue 03

March 2024

Enchanting Evening: Our Valley Hosts Monthly Ladies' Event!



Our monthly Ladies' Night Program is run by and for the Women of the Scottish Rite. Come on down!



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!



You're Invited...

**Scottish Rite
Ceremony of
Remembrance and
Renewal**

March 4, 2024
Anaheim DeMolay Center

See details inside



3rd Moon Cycle: “Wu Wei-ing” the Truth

Hon. James McCallion, 32° KCCH

Venerable Master, Director of Education



Turquoise stone and Aya vine snake relief on ceremonial pipe

In last month's issue, we reflected upon author and Shaman Jamie Sam's "*Wisdom Keeper*" of the 2nd Moon Cycle from the Thirteen Original Clan Mothers which focused on honoring (the) truth as it is seen from all living being's sacred perspective, recognizing that there is a truth in every lifeform's journey. We explored oral legends, and touched upon traditional pipe ceremony, one of many means by which we may commune with one another and explore our truths through open and honest talks. You were prompted to contemplate on how you would "Honor the Truth?" and endeavor to do so?" It was suggested that by waking-up and meditating during the 4th hour of the early morning (as is an ancient practice), that an inner revelation might surface, which would bring a depth to your perspectives that day.

For the month of March 2024, we will continue to reference some key teachings and insights from Jamie Sams, particularly focusing on the guidance of "the Guardian and Keeper of Justice," the Clan Mother of the **3rd Moon Cycle**, who teaches us how to develop the Self through ***Weighing the Truth*** in all things. This guidance teaches us the Divine Law. But what is the Divine Law?

From the viewpoint of Shamanism, the principles of Divine Law suggest that instead of punishing, we should help individuals (including ourselves) understand the consequences of one's actions and the lessons to be learned from them. The focus is on finding and accepting the truth of our actions and deciding what lessons we need to learn to make amends. According to Sams,

"The actions we take are based on our decision. If we decide to hurt another consciously, we have also made the decision unconsciously to receive the lessons connected to harming another. Weighs the truth teaches us that we are the ones who in finding and accepting the truth of our actions, must decide what we will learn in order to make amends for following that crooked trail."

As does the Keeper, so should we maintain clarity and impartiality by seeing all sides of a situation and not allowing the influence of personal biases but advocating for justice and equality for all beings. This is manifest by considering all perspectives to determine the truth of the situation, thus like a scale of justice, weighing all sides including a conscious consideration for the laws of cause and effect. It is here that rather than dwelling on weaknesses, it's important to focus on our strengths and what is right within us. Emphasis is placed on positive

vs. negative reinforcement, realizing in as much that criticism and judgment feed the “Shadow” or negative aspects of our nature, while praising right action allows our “Orendas” or spiritual essence to grow.

These teachings emphasize the importance of understanding the consequences of our actions, striving for impartiality and justice, and nurturing positive aspects of our nature. They suggest a path towards personal growth and spiritual development guided by the principles of balance and equity found within the Divine Law. There is a nice overlap between Shamanism and Taoism as it relates to a great many things, but particularly, this discussion.



Yin Yang

Taoism is a philosophical and spiritual tradition that originated in ancient China, often associated with the Chinese philosopher Lao Tzu (“the Old Boy”), who is traditionally considered to be a contemporary of Confucius and the author of the Tao Te Ching, a fundamental text of Taoist philosophy. “Ching” in Chinese means a classical book, or scripture, “Te” means virtue (as in the healing virtue of a plant), and central to Taoist thought is the concept of the “Tao,” often translated as “the Way,” “the path,” or the course of nature. From this one could derive the Tao Te Ching to mean “the magical or powerful and peculiar book of nature.” The Tao is seen as the fundamental principle that underlies the universe, guiding everything and yet transcending all concepts and categories.

When it comes to weighing the truth within Taoism, there are a few key principles and practices to consider:

Taoism emphasizes aligning oneself with the natural flow of the universe, rather than resisting or trying to control it. This involves cultivating a sense of harmony and balance in one’s actions, thoughts, and attitudes. This is the equity we concern ourselves with when considering Shamanism (reciprocity and harmonious relationships/existence).

Taoist teachings often present paradoxical ideas that challenge conventional notions of truth and reality. For example, the famous opening lines of the Tao Te Ching state, “The Tao that can be told is not the eternal Tao (1); The name that can be named is not the eternal name (2).” This suggests that ultimate truth transcends language and conceptual understanding. This similar construct can be found in many of the esoteric philosophies of Freemasonry such as the Knight of the Brazen Serpent when Idris is asked why he is looking for his eyeglasses outside of the tent (he had lost them somewhere inside) and he responds, “because the (moon) light is better out here.” Albert Pike also warns us not to replace that which is being symbolized, with the symbol itself. Bruce Lee even reminds his student “it’s like fingers pointing at the moon. If you look at the finger, you can’t see the Moon.” Truth is elusive and embracing paradoxes is a huge signature in the Tao Te Ching and Taoist philosophy in general as exemplified by the Yin Yang symbol, the balance of opposites or rather, “the explicit differences of an implicit Unity.” Yin representing darkness, feminine energy, surrender, creativity, and chaos, and Yang being light, masculine energy, force, control, and order.

Taoism encourages practitioners to cultivate a sense of non-attachment to fixed beliefs and concepts. Instead of clinging rigidly to particular ideas or ideologies, one should remain open-minded and adaptable, recognizing that truth is multifaceted and dynamic.

There is a strong emphasis on intuitive knowing and inner wisdom. Rather than relying solely on external sources of authority or knowledge, individuals are encouraged to trust their own intuition and direct experience in discerning truth.

The teachings often advocate for simplicity and spontaneity as pathways to truth. By letting go of unnecessary complexity and allowing things to unfold naturally, one can gain deeper insights into the nature of reality.

In weighing the truth within the context of Taoism, individuals are encouraged to approach the world with humility, openness, and a willingness to embrace paradox and uncertainty. Ultimately, the pursuit of truth in Taoism is not about arriving at definitive conclusions or dogmatic beliefs, but rather about cultivating a deeper understanding of the interconnectedness and fluidity of existence.

無為

Wu Wei ("Non-doing" or "Doing nothing")

Within the philosophy of Taoism is the principle of Wu Wei ("Not Doing"). We practice Wu Wei in order to achieve the Tao or Natural Way in our lives. Essentially the Tao manifested through man is "Te," that virtue we discussed earlier.

"Wei" means to act, to strain, to strive, or to interfere, and so the Taoist manner of life is Wu Wei; "Don't Force It." As Bruce Lee would say "Be like water my friends." Go with the flow.

I ask that in the Moon of March, you contemplate how you can balance your thoughts through "Weighing Truth?" And how will you endeavor to do so (hint: it's explained in the Royal Secret of the 32nd Degree).

Aho,

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

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.



Embracing Renewal: Spring's Arrival and the Promise of New Beginnings

Russ Hennings, 32°
Wise Master

As the chill of winter begins to thaw and nature awakens from its slumber, we find ourselves on the cusp of a new season—a season of renewal and rebirth. With the arrival of spring, we are reminded of the eternal cycle of life and the promise of new beginnings that lie ahead.

Spring is a time of transformation, a period of growth and rejuvenation that breathes new life into the world around us. The vibrant colors of blooming flowers, the cheerful melodies of songbirds, and the gentle warmth of the sun remind us that change is inevitable and that with change comes opportunity.

In our Orange County Valley, we embrace the advent of spring as a time for reflection and renewal. It's a chance to shed the burdens of the past and embrace the possibilities of the future. As Scottish Rite Masons, we understand the importance of continuous growth and self-improvement. Just as nature undergoes its annual transformation, so too do we strive to evolve and adapt in our journey towards enlightenment.

Spring's arrival also serves as a reminder of the importance of Brotherhood and camaraderie. As we emerge from the darkness of winter, we gather to celebrate the bonds that unite us as Masons. Whether it's through fellowship at our Valley meetings or engaging in charitable activities within our communities, we come together to support one another and spread the light of Masonic values.

But perhaps most importantly, spring is a time of hope—a reminder that even in the darkest of times, there is always the promise of a brighter tomorrow. Let us all carry this message of hope with us wherever we go, spreading positivity and optimism in all that we do.

As we welcome the arrival of spring, embrace the spirit of renewal and rejuvenation. Take this opportunity to reflect on your journey thus far and set intentions for the path ahead. Together, we usher in a season of growth, enlightenment, and boundless possibility.

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32nd
TO BE PERFORMED**

APRIL 26 - 28, 2024, SAN JOSE & OAKLAND

You're Invited...



Join us for the cherished annual **Scottish Rite Ceremony of Remembrance and Renewal**, where we honor the memory of our departed members. Presented by Wise Master Russ Hennings, 32°, and our cadre of Chapter Rose Croix Officers.

Held each near the vernal equinox, this time-honored tradition holds special significance within Scottish Rite Freemasonry. It's a heartfelt occasion where our Brethren, Widows, families, and friends gather to pay tribute to those who have passed on.

Beyond remembrance, it's a chance for us to come together, mend any differences, and reaffirm our dedication to each other and to the broader human community. We invite you to join us in commemorating and celebrating the lives that have touched ours.

The event will take place during our Stated Meeting fellowship in March, and is open to all.



Embracing Renewal in Freemasonry

**Alejo Velarde, 32°
Commander of Kadosh**

Embracing renewal within Freemasonry involves a deep commitment to the timeless principles and values of the craft while remaining open to evolving perspectives and practices. It entails a dedication to personal growth, moral integrity, and the pursuit of truth. Freemasonry teaches its members to constantly seek renewal through self-reflection, education, and service to others. This renewal is not just about individual improvement but also about revitalizing the organization itself, ensuring its relevance and vitality in a changing world. By embracing renewal, Freemasonry honors its rich heritage while embracing the challenges and opportunities of the present and the future, ensuring that its light continues to shine brightly for generations to come.

Embracing renewal within Freemasonry also involves a commitment to inclusivity and diversity, recognizing that the strength of the craft lies in its ability to bring together individuals from all walks of life, regardless of race, religion, or background. This inclusive approach fosters a rich tapestry of ideas and experiences, enriching the Masonic journey for all members. By embracing renewal in this way, Freemasonry continues to be a beacon of unity and understanding in an increasingly fragmented world, embodying the timeless principles of brotherly love, relief, and truth in a modern context.

Excited to reunite with everyone at our March Stated meeting!



More details and tickets available here: <http://tinyurl.com/20s-Speakeasy>



Our New Masonic Year

**Barry McKinley, 32°
Master of Kadosh**

Dear Brothers of the Orange County Scottish Rite,

As we embrace the arrival of March, I extend my warmest greetings to each and every one of you. This month, let us turn our attention to the theme of continued growth and the bright future that lies ahead for our beloved Orange County Scottish Rite.

Within our fraternity, the pursuit of knowledge, personal development, and spiritual enlightenment are perpetual endeavors. Let us reaffirm our commitment to these principles and strive for continuous improvement in all aspects of our Masonic journey. By nurturing a culture of learning and growth, we can unlock new opportunities for ourselves and future generations of Masons.

In the spirit of progress, I am thrilled about the Roaring 20's fundraiser night for the RiteCare Childhood Language Center of Orange County. This festive occasion promises to be an evening filled with laughter, camaraderie, and philanthropy. As we come together to support this noble cause, let us revel in the joy of giving back to our community and making a positive impact in the lives of children in need.

The Roaring 20's fundraiser night serves as a reminder of the transformative power of unity and collective action. Through our combined efforts and generosity, we have the ability to effect meaningful change and create a brighter future for those around us. I encourage each and every one of you to join us for this memorable event and to contribute in any way you can.

As we look ahead to the days and months to come, let us embrace the spirit of optimism and possibility. Together, let us envision a future where our fraternity flourishes, our bonds of brotherhood grow stronger, and our impact on the world continues to be felt for generations to come.



March Meal - Deli Nerds!

Kabobs! Steak, Chicken, & Fish Kabobs with
Israeli Couscous salad, Orzo pasta salad, and
Baklava Dessert





From the General Secretary

Jamie Hopkins, 32° KCCH
General Secretary

Brethren: March is a great time to reaffirm your commitment to Masonry and the Scottish Rite. Attendance at our Stated Meeting on March 4th is the ideal opportunity to enjoy the benefits of your membership and to show your support of the Craft. The meeting begins at 6:30 pm at the DeMolay Center in Anaheim and is immediately followed by a good meal and fellowship.

Our Spring Reunion is scheduled for May 10th & 11th. Now is the time to get your petitions to the Valley Secretary for worthy Master Masons from your Blue Lodge. If you (or your potential candidates) have any questions, please contact the Valley office. Petitions for degrees are available on our website or can be emailed to you by contacting our office. If any members are unclear about their dues status, email or call the office.

An old adage states "You get out of Masonry what you put in to it." Greater involvement leads to greater understanding of our fraternity as well as greater satisfaction. Each of us needs to see where we can do more for our Valley. Remember that Masonry takes good men and makes them better.

Have an outstanding Spring.

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



The Orange County Scottish Rite Valley

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Hours: Monday, Wednesday, Friday 10am-2pm • www.ocscottishrite.org

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



Personal Representative of the SGIG Orient of California

III. Ralph C. Shelton II, 33°

March is a most exciting month indeed. In February, we published in this newsletter the message of the upcoming change in the bylaws, and it was read at the February stated meeting, so now we will vote at the March meeting. Should the resolution pass, we will begin meeting on a new day - the second Monday of the month. This should relieve some of that "first week anxiety" we so often experience, with all our lodge stated meetings backed up against the Valley and so many other organizations. Even more exciting, once the resolution is in place, we'll meet in our new home, the Orange Masonic Center. This location is warm, welcoming, very Masonic in look and feel, and a bit easier to reach, especially for our South OC brothers.

Looking ahead, we will welcome a visit from the San Diego Scottish Rite Bodies at our April 8 stated meeting. This is something very new indeed, and they have indicated that a large contingent will be making the trip. You won't want to miss this opportunity to meet the members from the south as we gather in inter-Valley fellowship, the first of many such outings to come. We'll have great food, a very entertaining program (Masonic Jeopardy - always a blast) and here's another important thought - we don't want to be outnumbered by our visitors!

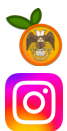
The following month, we bring back a Valley tradition when we have as our special guest the Deputy Grand Master of Masons in California, RW and III. Arthur Salazar. In years past, the DGM paid us a visit each year, but we haven't done that for a while. III. Art has agreed to kick this back off, and I'm sure he will be accompanied by some of the other Grand Officers. So be sure to be with us May 13 for this special occasion.

If you haven't joined us for a bit, be sure to make these next few meetings to get a good idea of how your Valley continues to improve and drive engagement. We truly are the crossroads of Masonry in Orange County, and a great place to fellowship, learn, and do Masonry the Orange County way.

Sincerely and fraternally,

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

Visit your valley online, and be sure to like and follow us on social media!



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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.



Ritecare Childhood Language Center of Orange County

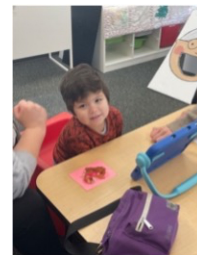
Francine Wenhardt, M.S., CCC

Happy February! This month continued to be one of great success at CLC. Our Chapman interns have been providing their clients with creative, focused lessons. February was also a month of fun! Everyone enjoys Valentine's Day, and children practiced their language skills while making Valentines for their parents, decorating cookies, and decorating the Center.



Lincoln had multiple opportunities to work on his "L" sound with lots of love on Valentine's Day.

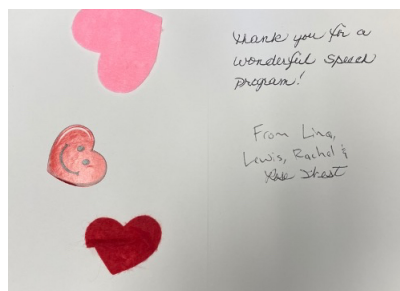
Uly is working on following directions and using the early developing sounds. He loves being active and enjoyed the Little Old Lady bean bag toss and making a Valentine for his mom.



Kelly's clients helped decorate our tree with their hearts.



We continue to be grateful for all the Scottish Rite support that allows us to not only have the clinic experience for the Chapman graduate students, but also allows us to give generously into the lives of each child who walks through our doors.



Scottish Rite of Freemasonry Southern Jurisdiction



III. James D. Cole, 33°
Sovereign Grand Commander



III. Frank Loui, 33°
Sovereign Grand Inspector General, Orient of
California



III. Ralph Shelton, 33°
Personal Representative of the
Sovereign Grand Inspector General, Orient of
California

Orange County Valley Scottish Rite of Freemasonry

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Expert Justin DaSilva, 32°	Expert Justin DaSilva, 32°	First Deacon Justin DaSilva, 32°	Expert Justin DaSilva, 32°
Assistant Expert Keith Jones, 32°	Assistant Expert Keith Jones, 32°	Second Deacon Keith Jones, 32°	Assistant Expert Keith Jones, 32°
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All articles for publication must be submitted prior to the 15th of the month.