



Orange County Scottish Rite

ORIENT OF CALIFORNIA, SOUTHERN JURISDICTION

Volume 45, Issue 11

November 2025

November at the Orange County Scottish Rite



Remember we now meet on the fourth Monday of the month!

Our next meeting is **Monday, November 24th.** See you there!



Legacy in Motion: Reflections from the East

**Russ Hennings, 32°, K.C.C.H.
Venerable Master**

There are moments in our calendar that remind us why we do what we do. The Feast of Tishri this past month was one of them. The table was beautifully set, the words shared were rich with meaning, and the bonds between us—as Brothers and as a Valley—grew stronger. My thanks to all who participated and helped us renew our commitment to our values, to our traditions, and to each other. The Feast always invites us to pause, reflect, and remember the journey we're on together. This year, that reflection has even more weight behind it.

Just days later, our Día de los Muertos & Halloween Costume Ball Fundraiser brought the festive spirit—and an incredible sense of purpose. With fortunes being told, costumes dazzling, altars glowing, and a haunted house that rivaled anything in town, we brought our Masonic community and extended families together for a night to remember. And we raised funds for the RiteCare Childhood Language Center of Orange County, ensuring that children in our area continue to receive life-changing therapy. That's not just a fun night—that's transformational philanthropy in action.

But we're not slowing down. Our November Stated Meeting will include the Cap & Ring Ceremony for our newest 32° Scottish Rite Masons. If you're among our newly elevated Brothers, please make every effort to attend—we want to celebrate you. And I encourage you to bring your spouse or significant other to join in the moment. These experiences remind us why Scottish Rite Masonry is so meaningful—and sharing them with our loved ones deepens that connection.

Looking back over the past year, it's impossible not to feel a sense of pride. We've welcomed more new members than we've seen in years. Our reunions have been full, our Open House had real momentum, and the spirit of our Valley has never felt stronger. The reason? The work.

To every brother who has mentored a candidate, made a follow-up call, staged a degree, staffed an event, cooked a meal, or just showed up with a smile and a handshake—thank you. You are the reason we're growing. You are the reason this Valley feels alive. You are building a legacy.

Approaching the end of 2025, let's carry that energy forward. Let's keep telling the story of this incredible Valley to our Blue Lodges. Let's keep inviting others into this experience. And let's keep building something that will outlive us. The names may fade, but the work endures.





The Spirit of the Scottish Rite: A Season of Gratitude and Brotherhood

Alejo Velarde, 32°
Wise Master

As we enter the Thanksgiving season, it's a perfect time to reflect on the many blessings that come from being part of the Scottish Rite a fraternity where friendship, knowledge, and service come together in a powerful and inspiring way.

The Scottish Rite stands as one of Freemasonry's greatest treasures, offering opportunities for deeper understanding, personal growth, and lifelong fellowship. It is a place where men of good character come together to seek truth, promote charity, and strengthen the bonds of brotherhood. Each degree enriches not only our understanding of Masonic teachings but also our appreciation for the virtues that define a good and honorable life.

This time of year, reminds us to give thanks not only for our families and loved ones, but also for the brothers who walk beside us on this Masonic journey. The lessons of the Scottish Rite encourage us to practice gratitude daily, to lend a helping hand to those in need, and to remember that service to others is one of the highest forms of thanksgiving.

As we gather with family and friends to celebrate this season of gratitude, let's also take a moment to reflect on how we can carry the light of Masonry into our communities. Whether through acts of kindness, volunteering, or simply offering a word of encouragement, we continue the legacy of the Rite by living its values.

From all of us in the Scottish Rite family Happy Thanksgiving!

May your homes be filled with warmth, your hearts with gratitude, and your travels be safe.

Be safe out there, Brothers, and may the blessings of peace and fellowship be with you all.

SCOTTISH RITE NEWS

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All articles for publication must be submitted prior to the 10th of the month.



Super Breakfast Rescheduled to December 6

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

As we enter November, I'd like to offer a gentle reminder about the importance of our shared commitments to the Valley and to the Childhood Language Center. We have a couple of key fundraisers each year—two that directly support our Valley and two that help fund our Language Center. These fundraisers are truly the backbone of what we do.

Recently, participation has been a bit quieter, and I want to encourage everyone to remember that even if you can't attend in person, your support—whether through a donation, tickets, or lending a hand behind the scenes—makes a world of difference. It's these acts of involvement that keep our Valley strong.

Upcoming Fundraiser Notice: Please note that our Super Breakfast, our next fundraiser which supports the Valley directly, has been rescheduled to December 6th. This is a great opportunity for us to come together and show our support in whatever way we can.

Thank you all for the many ways you contribute—seen and unseen—to keep our Valley and our mission strong.



Gratitude, Remembrance, Renewal - Closing the Year Together

**Joshua S. Price, 32° KSA
Master of Kadosh**

As the year continues to wind to a close, I want to take a moment to express my heartfelt thanks to all who joined us for our recent events.

Our annual Feast of Tishri was an overall rewarding success, rich in meaning and made even more memorable by the presence of many of you, especially many of the smiles from the faces of our new brothers from our Fall Reunion class. Likewise, our Halloween & Día De Los Muertos Costume Ball on November 1st brought a welcome spirit of laughter, fellowship, and fun that truly showcased the unique camaraderie of our Valley.

As we move into this season of reflection, we turn our focus to the Remembrance and Renewal Ceremony at our upcoming Stated Meeting on November 24th. This evening will be especially significant as our new Masters of the

Royal Secret receive their 32° caps and 14° rings, symbols not only of completion, but of commitment. I encourage each of you to invite your significant other to take part in this meaningful moment by placing your cap upon your head. It is a powerful gesture, one that honors both the journey behind and the path that now lies ahead in service to our Valley and the Craft.

Finally, as we look toward December, I invite everyone to join us for our Super Breakfast on December 6th. This is one of the best opportunities of the year to support our Valley directly, enjoy great food, and strengthen the bonds that unite us. Purchase a ticket (or better yet, three) and bring along a few family members or friends to share in the warm fellowship that sharing a meal together always brings.

My brothers and family, thank you all for your continued dedication, enthusiasm, and support. May the final months left to us in this year remind us all that renewal and gratitude are not simply moments—they are the heart of the work we strive to do and the spirit of the trust and goodwill we strive to continue to build and maintain between us and throughout our valley.



From the General Secretary

Jamie Hopkins, 32° KCCH
General Secretary

Congratulations to our newest Masters of the Royal Secret. In late October, we held our Fall Reunion and welcomed 6 new 32° Masons in to the Valley of Orange County. The Valley performed the 5 mandatory degrees along with 2 additional degrees. The classroom instruction for the remaining 22 degrees was superb. We also held our Fall Super Breakfast on the Sunday before Reunion weekend. The food was very good and a great time was had by all. We thank all the Brothers and their families and friends who attended the breakfast. We also thank the Brothers who kindly sent in donations and were unable to make it. All ticket sales go directly to support our Valley. Your generosity is greatly appreciated.

Payments for 2025 dues are coming in steadily. Another dues mailing will go out from our Supreme Council in early November for dues not received by early October. If you have any questions whatsoever about your dues status, please contact the Secretary at the email below.

Our November Stated Meeting is on Monday, November 24th at 6:30 pm at the Orange Grove Lodge in Orange. We will be holding our Cap & Ring Ceremony for our newest members. Please come by and welcome these Brothers. Have an outstanding Thanksgiving.

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



<https://www.ocscottishrite.org>



<https://www.instagram.com/ocscottishrite>



<https://www.facebook.com/ocscottishrite>



<https://twitter.com/ocscottishrite>

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.



Caps, Rings and New Beginnings: Welcome Our New Masters of the Royal Secret

Hon. James Olivier, 32° KCCH
Prelate, Director of The Work

Another year of reunions down, and I am thrilled with the results we've been seeing from our cast and crew. Our new Brethren have been excited by the performances, and we've seen renewed interest in participation from Brothers new and old. Thank you all for your efforts!

So what comes next for the Valley of Orange County's ritual teams? Practice, practice, practice! We are currently finalizing plans for 2026, with the primary focus on the statewide reunion taking place at the Valley of Pasadena from August 21st to 23rd. This is going to be a huge undertaking with many of the Valleys in the Orient of California participating in performing in full form, all 29 Degrees of the Scottish Rite. The Valley of Orange County is scheduled now to exemplify the 12th and 31st Degrees for a class of potentially 150-200 members; needless to say, this is a big deal! Make sure you mark your calendars, and we will provide more information for those wishing to attend as details become available.

Up next will be our bi-annual Cap and Ring Ceremony, and we'll close out the year to prepare for the annual Installation of Officers in January (can you believe it's already that time again). So thank you all again for your support, and to those who participate, thank you for your time and dedication to the craft.



Classroom to Conversation - Reflections on Our November Series

Hon. James McCallion, KCCH PVM
Director of Education

Our classroom lecture series, held on Saturday, November 1, was an enchanting event! While we presented the origins of the Scottish Rite, an introduction to Rosicrucianism, and an exploration into the implications of the "New Law - the Law of Love," as taught in the 18th Degree, we observed how a typical educational event can organically evolve into a deep and meaningful discussion.

It was a pleasure to see the class engage and participate in a way that helped them discover both answers and new inquiries of deeper meaning for themselves. The lessons of the Scottish Rite are at your fingertips, and you are empowered to make it the educational experience you desire.

We will reconvene in the first quarter of 2026 for yet another memorable experience, taking a closer look at the Master Craftsman series. Please stay tuned to our Valley's newsletters for upcoming announcements.



Fall Fun & New Smiles - Clinic Highlights

Danielle Pulliam, M.S., CCC-SLP, Clinical Supervisor

Fall is in full swing at the clinic! We're celebrating with festive decorations and plenty of fall- and Halloween-themed activities. Everyone is looking forward to our dress-up days at the end of the month. We're also excited to share that our clinic has welcomed many new clients this term. Our clinicians are building strong, meaningful connections with families—so much so that some have even been invited to clients' birthday parties! The children have been especially loving our new therapy toys, which have added extra fun and motivation to their sessions. We're embracing all the fall fun and look forward to sharing more special moments in the months ahead!





Friendship, Crafts, and Holiday Cheer!

Erin McKinley

If you've ever wondered what we're all about, the Blue Slipper Club is a warm and welcoming group for the significant others of Orange County Scottish Rite Masons. While our gentlemen are off in their meetings, we get together for a bit of fun, fellowship, and enjoyable activities.

We've had a ton of fun recently, and we're excited to welcome even more members into the fold. For our November meeting, we'll be making custom fall-themed candle holders together—a fun and easy craft that everyone can take home. And as we get closer to the holidays, we have more festive plans in store—so stay tuned!

A huge thank you to all the ladies who joined us for the Dia de los Muertos fundraiser on November 1st. It was so great to see amazing costumes. It was a wonderful success, and we're looking forward to seeing new faces at our upcoming gatherings.



Still Fighting Dragons

Sir James Cates
Knight Orator

Some may say dragons never existed, while others will try to claim they were merely the odd dinosaur still roaming the earth into the Middle Ages, and yet others will claim it was much more than that. Whatever the stance or belief on dragons, the tales of valiant knights fighting and defeating them have been told throughout the ages. My personal favorite is the Man from La Mancha, or Don Quixote. However, I will not digress.

We knights no longer sit astride war steeds leading the charge headlong into battle against the armies of the enemy. We no longer follow a single leader, be it king, duke, lord or any other, to perform heroics in their name. We no longer begin, or aid in, long campaigns of some just and noble purpose. However, we, as knights, do indeed still fight dragons.

Dragons come in many forms besides those in fairy tales and mythology. We fight the dragons of injustice, the dragons of poverty, the dragons of pain, the dragons of hate, the dragons of discomfort, the dragons of

disharmony, the dragons of discourse, the dragons of anything that causes harm, disillusion, suffering and discordance.

We, as Masons, all strive to do this. It's not something strange to any of us. We all work to defeat those dragons that make our world a lesser place than we know it to be. We, as Knights of Saint Andrew, take it as a specific and direct challenge to do that little extra, to push ourselves a little more to improve ourselves in all areas and become better men, to be good and worthy Knights of our order.

Being a knight isn't the fancy costumes we wear, it's not the fanfare we present, it's not even the education we are expected to pursue. It is, I believe, much more than that. It is the desire to not only pursue these valuable and valiant things, but by donning our knightly attire, we are also making a bold statement to the world, especially within masonry, that we Knights of Saint Andrew are willing to at least work a little harder, go that extra distance, to be part of something nobler than ourselves. I am honored and humbled that I'm allowed to play a small role in this order, and by that, am helping fight dragons.

If you are interested in learning more about the Knights of Saint Andrew, please approach one of us and ask. Have a wonderful month!



Special Guest Speaker: Hon. Brother Richard S. Nowacki, 32° KCCH

**Shawn E Bell, 32°
Editor**

The Orange County Scottish Rite Valley will have the pleasure of welcoming Hon. Brother Richard S. Nowacki, 32° KCCH, as our special guest at the November stated meeting on Monday, November 24, 2025.

Hon. Nowacki currently serves as the Western Region Donor Officer for the Supreme Council, 33°, Southern Jurisdiction, USA, where he helps guide the philanthropic vision of the Scottish Rite across the western states. Since assuming that role in 2022, he has been instrumental in helping raise over \$20 million in support of both local Valleys and national Scottish Rite causes.

A lifelong Mason and dynamic speaker, Brother Nowacki brings with him an inspiring message about the power of Scottish Rite philanthropy — from the preservation of historic temples to the life-changing work of RiteCare Childhood Language Programs. His presentation will remind us that the true strength of the Rite lies not only in ritual and fellowship, but in the lasting legacy we build through generosity and service.

His commitment to growth and engagement is well known. He has served as Wise Master of the Ainsworth Chapter of Rose Croix, chaired the VMAP initiative, and supported the preservation of the nation's oldest continuously operating purpose-built Scottish Rite Temple. His energy, insight, and optimism make him one of the Scottish Rite's most engaging ambassadors.

We encourage all members and guests to attend this very special evening and hear firsthand how each of us can contribute to the ongoing mission of the Scottish Rite — to make a profound difference in the lives of children, families, and communities across our jurisdiction.

Don't miss this opportunity to welcome Brother Nowacki to the Orange County Valley and be inspired by the broader vision of Scottish Rite philanthropy in action.

2025 Orange County Scottish Rite Calendar

Stated Meetings are held monthly, Fourth Monday of the month, 6:00pm – 9:00pm
 Unless otherwise noted, all events are at the Orange Masonic Center, 71 Plaza Square, Orange
 Our Stated Meeting Meals are \$25 per person

Cap and Ring Ceremony - Presented by the Consistory - Attend our OCSR Stated Meeting on November 24, 2025 (Monday) - 6:00 – 9:00pm

Holiday Feast – Immediately following our OCSR Stated Meeting on November 24, 2025 (Monday) - 6:00 – 9:00pm

Super Breakfast - Presented by the Council of Kadosh - December 6, 2025 (Saturday) - 7:30 – 11:00am

Childhood Language Center Christmas Party, Holiday Dinner & Celebration - Attend our OCSR Stated Meeting on December 22, 2025 (Monday) for our holiday festivities, meet our CLC family. The children will receive their gifts from Mr. and Mrs Santa Claus! 6:00 – 9:00pm





Personal Representative of the SGIG Orient of California

Ill. Ralph C. Shelton II, 33°

Your Valley continues to prosper, and I could not be more pleased. The past few months have been busy, with new members, renewed fellowship and excitement at the Orange County Scottish Rite.

Our fall Reunion Class in October was a tremendous success, welcoming a new group of Brothers into the deeper light of the Rite. The degrees were capably conferred on the largest class we have had - 12 new members - in well over a decade. The bonds of brotherhood were strengthened as each candidate took his next step on the Masonic journey. In November, we will hold our Cap and Ring Ceremony, at which we will present the regalia to our new Masters of the Royal Secret. Family and friends are warmly invited to join us as we celebrate this important milestone in their Masonic advancement, and it's an excellent opportunity to invite Masons interested in the Rite..

We are also honored that Illustrious Arthur L. Salazar, Jr., 33°, Deputy of the Supreme Council for the Orient of California—and now the Most Worshipful Past Grand Master of Masons in California—will be in attendance at our November meeting, adding further distinction to an already meaningful evening. Having just completed his service as the leader of our Grand Lodge, he is busily moving forward in his new role, and we are fortunate that he can join us in November - particularly since he now has 20 Valleys to oversee.

As we close the year, our attention turns toward the spirit of giving that defines the holiday season. Our Valley will host its annual Christmas Party for the staff of our Language Center, as well as the children and families it serves.. This cherished tradition allows us to share the joy of the season with those we serve year-round, offering gifts, food, and celebration in gratitude for the incredible work our therapists and staff do every day.

From reunions to recognition, from leadership to laughter, this has truly been a season of celebration and growth. The Orange County Scottish Rite continues to thrive—strengthened by our members, inspired by our mission, and united in our commitment to making a difference in the lives of others.

Sincerely and fraternally,

INSPECTOR GENERAL HONORARY
Ill. Ralph C. Shelton II, 33°
Personal Representative of the
Sovereign Grand Inspector General in California
In the Valley of Orange County

Scottish Rite of Freemasonry Southern Jurisdiction



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



III. Arthur Salazar, Jr., 33°
Deputy of the Scottish Rite
Orient of California



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



Jack C. Hennings Jr., 32°
Assistant to the Personal
Representative

Orange County Valley Scottish Rite of Freemasonry

| Lodge of Perfection | Chapter Rose Croix | Council of Kadosh | Consistory |
|--|--|---|---|
| Venerable Master Russ Hennings, 32° | Wise Master Alejo Velarde, 32° | Commander Barry McKinley, 32° | Master of Kadosh Joshua S Price, 32° |
| Senior Warden Larry Griffin, 32° | Senior Warden vacant | 1st Lieutenant Commander vacant | Prior vacant |
| Junior Warden Ross Hernandez, 32° | Junior Warden vacant | 2nd Lieutenant Commander vacant | Preceptor vacant |
| Orator Christian DeDios, 32° | Orator Christian DeDios, 32° | Orator Christian DeDios, 32° | Minister of State Christian DeDios, 32° |
| Almoner David Harrington, 33° | Almoner David Harrington, 33° | Almoner David Harrington, 33° | Almoner David Harrington, 33° |
| Secretary Hon. Jamie Hopkins, 32° KCCH | Secretary Hon. Jamie Hopkins, 32° KCCH | Recorder Hon. Jamie Hopkins, 32° KCCH | Registrar Hon. Jamie Hopkins, 32° KCCH |
| Treasurer Bro. David Gilman, 32° | Treasurer Bro. David Gilman, 32° | Treasurer Bro. David Gilman, 32° | Treasurer Bro. David Gilman, 32° |
| Prelate James Olivier, 32° KCCH | Prelate James Olivier, 32° KCCH | Prelate James Olivier, 32° KCCH | Prelate James Olivier, 32° KCCH |
| Master of Cermonies vacant | Master of Cermonies vacant | Marshall of Ceremonies vacant | Marshall of Ceremonies vacant |
| Expert vacant | Expert vacant | First Deacon vacant | Expert vacant |
| Assistant Expert vacant | Assistant Expert vacant | Second Deacon vacant | Assistant Expert vacant |
| Tiler Christian DeDios, 32° | Tiler Christian DeDios, 32° | Sentinel Christian DeDios, 32° | Tiler Christian DeDios, 32° |