

# Freemasonry in Michigan

In 2016 the Grand Lodge of Michigan will celebrate 190 Years of continuous work. However, Masonry has been alive in Michigan for far more years than 190! For over 250 years Masonry has worked, first in the territory and then in the State of Michigan.

During this period of time, Masonry has done its work well. Standing severely apart from all political and religious denominational complications, it has quietly addressed itself to its proper work and no agency has accomplished more to promote the amenities and charities of our progressive social life.

Throughout the civilized world, under the banner of our Order, men have been brought to together who recognize no other tie of fellowship; and no matter how unequal may be their social positions, they meet on the broad grounds of Masonic Brotherhood and, at once, forget everything but the Fraternal Tie which binds them together in a common humanity.

The life of an organization is like the life of a Man, is hedged by limitations, certain and uncertain,; but, in spite of them all Freemasonry has continued on the even tenor of its way, a bigger and better Fraternity as each successive year rolls along.

Freemasonry in Michigan has inherited a great tradition-brought by a mere handful of dedicated Craftsmen to a wilderness in a new land, it has aided in the area's development and progress-and, as we now progress in and through our new millennium we can safely realize that if each new generation of Masons takes the institution as it receives it from its predecessors, wisely enlarges its scope and functions, improves its aims broadens its organization and energies, expands and heightens its charities, preserves and secures its rituals and forms, then it must of necessity be transmitted to its successors purer and better than ever.

If each generation continues to accomplish work like this, all care and anxiety for the future might be thrown aside, our heritage safe, for it will surely continue as long as Man shall live to receive and spread its beneficence.

Through generations the masters had developed a moral code based on fundamental principles of building. Their purpose: "to fit themselves as living stones in that building not made with hands"; part of a spiritual temple, with God as the Grand Architect of the Universe. Allegories were drawn from the Bible, largely from the book of St. John.

As the chief architect of each cathedral alone had a complete plan, so, in our symbolism, God alone has the complete plan of his universe. The divine plan could only be known to those pure in spirit who dedicated their lives to the services of man and his Creator, thereby preparing rough ashlar for the temples structure. Each had to first sense the divine plan in his heart; another version of the age-old story of the eternal quest for the way of life.

The only real secret of Freemasonry is that there is but ONE Secret; that is, the plan of God on his ineffable trestleboard of life. This can be imparted to no man unless he is first prepared in his heart to receive it. And he must travel the rough and rugged path alone. It is symbolical of man's eternal seeking. Other symbols have been added, but they are exterior decorations on a rugged edifice; inspiring, helpful, but not a part of the basic structure.

# What is Freemasonry?

Many years ago, the famous Dr. Albert Schweitzer wrote these magnificent words:

“It is not enough merely to exist... Every man has to seek in his own way to make his own self more noble and to realize his own true worth.”

Those words capture the meaning of Freemasonry. As the world’s oldest and largest fraternity, our goal is to build a man’s most valuable possession, his character.

We believe that the strength of the family, the church, the community and our country rests with men of strong conviction, firm ethical and moral values and a devotion to our democratic system of government. As Masons, we help each other intensify our devotion to these enduring values.

In a day when it seems that few people really care about rising to the highest and best in life, it is good to know that there is an organization where a man can really improve himself.

In lodge meetings, there is not talk of politics, no discussion of religious issues, even though every Mason must affirm a belief in deity according to his own understanding, and devotion to his country.

Masons are concerned with developing their minds and enlarging their scope of knowledge. In a word, Masons are dedicated to becoming better men.

Men of every walk of life belong to Masonic Lodges. They are proud of the centuries of tradition, their belief in brotherhood, country and the many Masonic acts of charity and compassion.

The origins of Masonry reach back to Medieval times when the great cathedrals of Europe were built. The stonemasons who created these inspiring Gothic structures formed craft guilds to protect the secrets of their trade and to pass on their knowledge to worthy apprentices.

In 17th century England, these guilds began accepting honorary members, men of learning and position. These new members were not working stonemasons or even associated with the building trades. As “accepted Masons,” they eventually grew into a separate organization called Freemasonry, a moral and ethical society that taught the 18th century ideals of equality and the importance of education in freeing mankind from prejudice, superstition and social injustice.

Masons continue to use the simple tools of the ancient stonemasons - the square and compasses, the trowel, plumb and level as symbols to teach their ideals. A Mason is oathbound to build his life and character with the same care and precision that stonemasons used to construct the cathedrals and temples centuries ago.

Today, there are almost five million Masons in the world, with the United States claiming about three million of the total membership.

Freemasonry has an outstanding record for helping others. Along with scholarships and loan funds to assist young people in furthering their education, Masons support many community based charitable projects. Retirement homes and hospitals for the elderly provide care for those who no longer can care for themselves.

Yes, Masons are members of a fraternity that has its secrets, but the many character-building activities of Freemasonry indicate that it is far from a secret organization. Masons are active in their dedication to improve life. Always ready to undertake a difficult task in a quiet, dignified way, today’s Masons go about the job of extending the hand of brotherhood. For the man who is looking for deeper meaning in life and who wants to be part of a fraternity committed to his growth and improvement, Masonry is filled with marvelous opportunities and limitless possibilities.

Credit to the History of Michigan Freemasonry  
by J. Fairbairn Smith

# Petition for the Degrees



## FEES FOR DEGREES

\*E.A. Degree \$ \_\_\_\_\_ F.C. Degree \$ \_\_\_\_\_ M.M. Degree \$ \_\_\_\_\_ Total \$ \_\_\_\_\_

\*(Must Accompany Petition)

Date \_\_\_\_\_

To the Worshipful Master, Wardens and Brethren

Of \_\_\_\_\_ Lodge No. \_\_\_\_\_

I, the undersigned, respectfully state, that, unbiased by friends and uninfluenced by mercenary motives, I freely and voluntarily offer myself as a candidate for the Degrees of Masonry; that I am prompted to solicit this privilege by a favorable opinion conceived of the institution, a desire for knowledge and a sincere wish of being serviceable to my fellow creatures and should this petition be granted, I will cheerfully conform to all the ancient established usages and customs of the Fraternity.

Full Name \_\_\_\_\_ Age \_\_\_\_\_  
(Print) First Middle Last

I was born at \_\_\_\_\_ on the \_\_\_\_\_  
City/State or Country Day Month Year

I reside at \_\_\_\_\_  
No. Street City-Town-Village State Zip Code

My occupation is \_\_\_\_\_ My email is \_\_\_\_\_

I am employed by \_\_\_\_\_

My telephone numbers are: Preferred \_\_\_\_\_ Alternate \_\_\_\_\_

I have resided at the address given for the last \_\_\_\_\_ years. Spouse's Name \_\_\_\_\_

For the five years last past I resided at the following addresses and places:

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Have you ever before petitioned any Lodge for the Masonic Degrees? \_\_\_\_\_ If so, give the name, number and location of the Lodge with full explanation \_\_\_\_\_

I am a citizen of \_\_\_\_\_ I have \_\_\_\_\_ been convicted of a criminal offense.

Two business acquaintances  
Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Addr: \_\_\_\_\_  
City/St/Zip: \_\_\_\_\_ Ph: \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Addr: \_\_\_\_\_

City/St/Zip: \_\_\_\_\_ Ph: \_\_\_\_\_

All of the statements I have made in this petition are true and correct to the best of my knowledge.

Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Print Name \_\_\_\_\_

We the undersigned, are personally acquainted with the above named petitioner, and from our confidence in his integrity do cheerfully recommend him as a proper candidate for the Degrees in Masonry.

Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Lodge \_\_\_\_\_ No. \_\_\_\_\_

Print Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Lodge \_\_\_\_\_ No. \_\_\_\_\_

Print Name: \_\_\_\_\_

I agree that I may be required to submit to a Criminal Background Check. I further agree that in the event that I am required to submit to a Criminal Background Check, the cost of **\$25.00** will be borne by me and is NOT refundable:  Yes I agree.  No I do NOT agree.

# Recommendation of Committee

The undersigned Committee, to whom was referred the petition, after due consideration, report the same back to the Lodge, and recommend that the prayer of the petitioner be

\_\_\_\_\_.  
(approved/disapproved)

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Signed)

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Print Name)

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Signed)

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Print Name)

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Signed)

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Print Name)

Committee

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Initiation Date)

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Lodge)

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Passed Date)

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Lodge)

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Raised Date)

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Lodge)

Degrees