

Unity Lodge #58, A.F. & A.M.

Thorndike, Maine



Greetings Brother:

Minutes of the last meeting are enclosed, please notify me of any needed corrections.

Upcoming events include:

April 20, 2016: Our stated communication with work in the Master Mason degree. 6:30 Supper, 7:30 Meeting
April 21: MM degree at Liberty Lodge.

April 27: meet the candidates who are running for Grand Lodge office this year at Bethlehem Lodge (317 Water Street, Augusta) There are 3 candidates for Deputy Grand Master, the winner of the election May 3 will be Grand Master two years from now. There are also 2 candidates for Grand Secretary as well as other offices.

April 30: The Woodchopper Degree at Messalonskee Lodge in Oakland. For info email Travis Wood: theterrifc12th@gmail.com

May 3 and 4: Grand Lodge annual communication at Kora Shrine Center, Lewiston.

May 7: Roast Pork public supper at the Rockport Masonic Center, Simonton's Corner. 5:00 – 6:30pm.

May 18: Our May Stated Communication.

Probably uninteresting data: As of April 21 Unity Lodge should have 47 members. The oldest is 99, the youngest 26, the average age is 64. 9 (19%) have 50 or more years of membership and 6 more have 40-50 years of membership.

If you do not have a dues card with the year 2016 on it you probably owe dues which with assessment for Grand Lodge tax are \$55 per year. Money can be sent to the prior secretary Mayo Cookson, to the current secretary or better yet attend a meeting and enjoy fellowship with other members –and pay in person.

I hope to see you soon.

Fraternally,

Bruce, Secretary

Bruce Hutchins, 1053 Halldale Rd, Montville ME 04941. tel/fax 382-6226, email bruce@hutchinsbrothers.com
I do use computers regularly and would like to be able to send out notices via email to save cost and time while letting you know what is happening. If you would like to receive email please send me a message to the address above and also let me know if there is any interest in having a Lodge Facebook group to help stay in touch. Other suggestions are also welcome.

Stated meeting are on the third Wednesday of the month at 7:30 with a 6:30 supper

Masonic Etiquette Part One
(Not all of these are strictly customary here but are good general ideas)

Learn the Do's and Don'ts of Masonic Etiquette

Masonic Etiquette, for the most part, is merely good manners and respect for your lodge, its members, its Worshipful Master and the convention of Freemasonry, in general.

Unfortunately, Masonic Etiquette ...or Blue Lodge Etiquette, (as it is called in the United States) is largely unpublished as well as unspoken, therefore, up until now, it has been more difficult to learn its rules and nuances.

You may study ritual work, degree work, floor work and know all Masonry's glorious history, Masonic symbols, jewels, etc. but there is very little written about how to comport yourself so you do not look foolish or be regarded as disrespectful.

Some are small things, and some are not, but your Lodge conduct is continually on display.

Few Masonic mentors include a list of proper Lodge behavior, as they have learned it, themselves, incident-by-incident, and usually learned by them after their having made an error and being kindly informed by another member as to the correct Masonic etiquette of the situation.

CONFORMING TO MASONIC ETIQUETTE

Over time, and by watching others, members conform themselves to exhibit proper Masonic etiquette behavior to learn lodge customs.

As a newly Entered Apprentice, Fellowcraft or Master Mason, it is expected that you will exhibit the proper decorum and propriety in observance of the formal requirements which govern behavior in polite societies... BEFORE someone takes you aside to explain your errors...or you wouldn't be reading this.

RULES OF MASONIC ETIQUETTE

THE MASTER'S AUTHORITY:

During his term in office, the brother who has been elected as Master is the most powerful member of the Lodge. He also shoulders all of its many responsibilities.

The Worshipful Master has the authority to:

1. Rule any brother out of order on any subject at any time.
2. Decide what can and cannot be discussed. Should a brother believe that the Master is arbitrary, unjust or unfair or is acting in an illegal manner, he can appeal to the District Deputy Grand Master.

If that officer agrees that the appeal is a valid one, he will forward the complaint to the Grand Master.

If, however, that brother insists on speaking after the Master has ruled that he is out of order, he may be committing a Masonic offense.

Courteous brethren accept the requests made by the Master to serve on various committees such as the examination committee, the investigation committee and other duties, as determined by the Lodge's needs.

The following items are not Masonic offenses, They are simply a lack of Masonic Etiquette...or in other words, considered to be "bad form" or bad manners.

So... Let's begin:

1. WALKING BETWEEN THE ALTAR AND THE WORSHIPFUL MASTER:

Brethren do not pass between the Altar and the East when the lodge is open.

Why? As a courtesy to the Master, it is necessary that the three Great Lights which shine their eternal light and wisdom upon the Master to help him govern the lodge should never be in shadow, not even for a millisecond, during the processes of an initiation or degree work.

2. SITTING IN THE EAST:

Brethren do not take a seat in the East without an invitation... even if all other seats are full.

Why? While all Brethren within a tiled room are equal to one another, and the officers are servants of the brethren, all lodge officers have worked and studied long and hard for their lodge.

It is, therefore, the Master's prerogative to recognize this devotion and their loyalty by inviting distinguished visitors or a special member whom the Master wishes to honor to sit with him in the East.

In other words, if you were in church, synagogue or mosque and the pews were full, would you go up and sit beside the Pastor, Rabbi or Imam (Muslim Priest)?

3. ALWAYS FULLY DRESSED: (*This is not customary here or only if entering after the lodge is opened*)

Brethren do not enter their Lodge room either without their apron nor while putting on that apron...not even the tying of its strings.

Why? In respect to the formalities of their Lodge, officers expect that the Brethren will have the courtesy to enter it fully dressed and ready for the labor.

They should not have to wait for a member to be fully "dressed", even just tying or adjusting their apron, to salute that member. It is expected that you will be properly and entirely dressed when you pass by the Tiler and enter your lodge room.

4. STAND WHEN YOU SPEAK:

No man sits while speaking in the lodge room, no matter if he addresses an officer or another brother.

Why? All lodge activity is based on each man in the lodge as being a servant of the Brethren. This includes the Worshipful Master and his officers.

While the man, himself, who has been elected Worshipful Master does not gain any special honor, personally, as the Worshipful Master, it is to the Worshipful Master as the Master of the Lodge that a member stands to address.

It is simply a form of respect ...and no different than attending a shareholder's meeting or a City Council meeting.

It is expected that if you wish to address the audience, you will stand so all may see who is speaking.

5. TALKING:

"Side" talk while a degree is being conferred is considered bad manners.

Why? The lodge room is a Temple of the Great Architect of the Universe. The brethren within are working to make the best ashlar (stones) for His spiritual temple.

Just as it is impolite to talk in a church, synagogue or mosque service, so it is improper to distract the officers, the workers in the degree or the candidate.

Talking without asking to do so shows irreverence for the proceedings. God's house is not for social conversation within the lodge room. It is for worship and learning the lesson of the day which is being taught.

Unless you have requested of the Master to speak, silence is the rule. This also means no whispering.

HOW? If you have something of interest to say, raise your hand. When the Master recognizes you, you must stand up, and be recognized by the Master to speak. To address the brethren, you should say:

"Worshipful Master, Right Worshipfuls, Worshipfuls, Wardens and Brethren".

If the Most Worshipful Master is in attendance, you should say:

"Worshipful Master, Most Worshipful, Right Worshipfuls, Worshipfuls, Wardens and Brethren."

6. SPEAKING:

If you wish to offer a predetermined motion or matter for discussion, advise the Master beforehand.

Why? Advising the Master before the meeting that you intend to bring up a specific motion or a matter for discussion is an important courtesy.

You may, indeed, do it without advising him in advance, but the Master may have plans of his own for that meeting, for which your proposed motion or discussion may not easily fit into the allotted time frame.

As a courtesy to him, his work, and his dedication to the members, it is best to ask him privately, beforehand, if he will be able to recognize you to speak your purpose. This saves "face" for both of you.

You will not publicly be refused and he will not have to seem disagreeable or arrogant in his refusal of your motion. If you wish to speak, (see number 6.), above.

7. OBEY THE GAVEL:

You must immediately obey the gavel.

Why? Failure to immediately obey the gavel is a GRAVE DISCOURTESY and VERY poor Masonic Etiquette.

The Master is all powerful in the lodge and his word is final.

He can put or refuse to put any motion.

He can rule any brother out of order on any subject at any time.

He can say what he will, and what he will not, permit to be discussed.

Brethren who think him unfair, arbitrary, unjust, or acting illegally have redress.

The Grand Lodge can be appealed to on any such matter. However, in the lodge, the Master's gavel, which is his emblem of authority, is supreme.

When a brother is rapped down, he should obey at once, without any further discussion. It is VERY bad manners to do otherwise. In fact, it is perilously close to the line between bad manners and a Masonic offense.

Masonic etiquette decries anyone who does not obey the gavel.

8. TURNING YOUR BACK:

Never turn one's back on the Master to address the lodge without first receiving permission from the Master to speak.

Why? Any debates that are in motion must be conducted using proper Masonic etiquette. One always stands to order when addressing the chair.

Customs differ in various jurisdictions as to the method of salute, however some salute should always be given when addressing the Master.

Two brethren, both on their feet, simultaneously arguing a motion, who are facing each other and ignoring the Master is unacceptable.

9. SALUTE:

Some lodges (not all) offer salutes to the Master. Each of the brethren will salute the Master when they enter and when they leave their Masonic Mother lodge room or any other Masonic lodge room.

Some lodges offer salutes to the Senior Warden.

Why? The Masonic etiquette of saluting the Master is your renewed pledge of fealty and service. It is your public display of decorum before all other brothers of your obligation.

It shows your courteous respect for all that the Master stands for and shows that you acknowledge his authority.

Salutes should reflect your heart-felt respect for all that for which he stands.

The salute to the Master is your pledge of honor and service, your publicly shown obligation. A lazy, sloppy or improper salute is to be Masonically impolite and, thus, to exhibit poor Masonic etiquette.