

GRAND LODGE OF KENTUCKY FREE AND ACCEPTED MASONS

CEREMONY FOR LAYING CORNERSTONES

The laying of a cornerstone is a Masonic ceremony to which the public can be invited. Therefore, a Lodge of Master Masons should be opened, and called to refreshment, prior to the time of the Ceremony of laying the Cornerstone. Grand Officers and all Master Masons should be clothed as such. As this ceremony is a Masonic one, no one except Master Masons should ask to participate, except when requested to by The Grand Master.

The cornerstone should be laid during the erection of the building and not wait until the building is completed.

The equipment to be furnished is a table, approximately four feet square, covered with a white cloth. A bucket of mortar and a trowel, square, level and plumb.

As the cornerstone is symbolically laid, it will be necessary for a stone mason to be present to permanently set the stone.

GRAND OFFICERS ASSEMBLE IN FRONT OF THE TABLE.

GRAND MASTER RAPS ONCE * AND SAYS: **“I now declare this lodge at labor on the Master Masons degree.”**

GRAND MASTER – From time immemorial it has been the custom of this ancient and honorable fraternity of Free and Accepted Masons to lay, when requested so to do, the cornerstones of buildings erected for **Worship, Education, Charitable, Masonic, and Justice**. This cornerstone, we lay and gladly proclaiming our obedience to the law and our desire to show publicly our respect for the government under which we live. As Freemasons we are taught; “Before entering upon any great and important undertaking we must first to invoke the blessing of Almighty God”. Let us, pray, Brother Grand Chaplain.

Prayer

GRAND CHAPLAIN - Supreme Grand Architect of the Universe, by whose almighty word all things were made, mercifully look down upon thy servants now assembled in thy name and bestow upon us wisdom, and strength of mind. Grant us harmony and holiness in all our work. Bless all who reverence thee, and make them true and faithful unto thee, and when the time of our labor has ended, allow us to pass through the “valley of the shadow of death” supported by thy rod and thy staff to those mansions where love and peace and joy reign forever before thy throne. AMEN

Response By All – So mote it be.

GRAND MASTER – Right Worshipful Grand Treasurer, it has ever been the custom upon occasions like the present to deposit a chest, containing various articles, within the cavity of this cornerstone. Has such a deposit been prepared?

GRAND TREASURER – It has, Most Worshipful Grand Master, and the various articles are safely enclosed in the chest before you.

GRAND MASTER – Right Worshipful Grand Secretary, you will read, for the information of the Craft and the people here assembled a record of the contents of the chest.

GRAND SECRETARY READS THE LIST

GRAND MASTER – Right Worshipful Grand Treasurer, you will now deposit the chest in the cavity, and may the God grant that many years shall pass before it shall again be seen by man.

GRAND TREASURE DEPOSITS THE CHEST IN CAVITY

THE DEPUTY GRAND MASTER, GRAND SENIOR WARDEN AND GRAND JUNIOR WARDEN TAKE THE SQUARE, LEVEL AND PLUMB FROM THE TABLE

GRAND MASTER – Brother Grand Officers we will now proceed to lay the cornerstone of the edifice, here to be erected, according to the custom of our ancient craft.

GRAND MASTER SPREADS CEMENT ON THE FOUNDATION STONE.

GRAND MASTER – Brother Craftsmen you will now lower the stone.

STONE IS PLACED IN CAVITY

GRAND MASTER – Right Worshipful Deputy Grand Master, what is the proper implement of your office?

DEPUTY GRAND MASTER – The Square.

GRAND MASTER – What are its moral and Masonic Uses?

DEPUTY GRAND MASTER – Morally, it teaches us to square our actions by the bright rule of virtue, and by it we prove our work.

GRAND MASTER – Apply the implement of your office to the cornerstone, and report.

DEPUTY GRAND MASTER APPLIES IMPLEMENT TO CORNERSTONE, BOWS TO THE GRAND MASTER AND SAYS:

DEPUTY GRAND MASTER – Most Worshipful Grand Master, I find the stone to be square. The craftsmen have performed their work.

GRAND MASTER – Right Worshipful Grand Senior Warden, what is the proper implement of your office?

GRAND SENIOR WARDEN – The Level.

GRAND MASTER – What are its moral and Masonic uses?

GRAND SENIOR WARDEN – Morally, it teaches us equality, and by it we prove our work.

GRAND MASTER – Apply the implement of your office to the cornerstone and report.

GRAND SENIOR WARDEN APPLIES IMPLEMENT TO CORNERSTONE, BOWS TO THE GRAND MASTER AND SAYS:

GRAND SENIOR WARDEN – Most Worshipful Grand Master, I find the stone to be level. The craftsmen have performed their duty.

GRAND MASTER – Right Worshipful Grand Junior Warden, what is the proper implement of your office?

GRAND JUNIOR WARDEN – The Plumb.

GRAND MASTER – What are its moral and Masonic uses?

GRAND JUNIOR WARDEN – Morally, it teaches us rectitude of life and conduct, and by it we prove our work.

GRAND MASTER – Apply the implement of your office to the cornerstone, and report.

GRAND JUNIOR WARDEN APPLIES IMPLEMENT TO CORNERSTONE, BOWS TO THE GRAND MASTER AND SAYS:

GRAND JUNIOR WARDEN – Most Worshipful Grand Master, I find the stone to be plumb, the craftsmen have performed their duty.

GRAND MASTER – This cornerstone has been tested by the proper implements of Masonry. I find that the craftsmen have skillfully and faithfully performed their duty, and I declare this cornerstone to be **well formed, true** and **trusty**, and correctly laid, according to the rules of our ancient craft. May this work, favorably begun, be continued and completed along with the blessings of Plenty, Health and Peace.

ONLY THE GRAND CHAPLAIN RESPONSE – So mote it be.

DEPUTY GRAND MASTER PRESENTS TO GRAND MASTER THE VESSEL OF CORN

DEPUTY GRAND MASTER – Most Worshipful Grand Master, I present the corn of Nourishment.

GRAND MASTER SCATTERS CORN ON THE STONE SAYING

GRAND MASTER – I scatter this corn as an emblem of plenty. May the blessings of heaven be showered upon us, and upon this noble undertaking, and may God inspire all hearts with virtue, wisdom and gratitude.

ONLY THE GRAND CHAPLAIN RESPONSE – So mote it be.

GRAND SENIOR WARDEN PRESENTS TO GRAND MASTER THE VESSEL OF WINE

GRAND SENIOR WARDEN – Most Worshipful Grand Master, I present the wine of Refreshment.

GRAND MASTER POURS THE WINE ON THE STONE SAYING

GRAND MASTER – I pour this wine as an emblem of joy and gladness. May God protect and safeguard the people of this beloved country with peace and harmony, and give to them joy and gladness and every blessing.

ONLY THE GRAND CHAPLAIN RESPONSE – So mote it be.

GRAND JUNIOR WARDEN PRESENTS TO GRAND MASTER THE VESSEL OF OIL

GRAND JUNIOR WARDEN – Most Worshipful Grand Master, I present the Oil of Joy.

GRAND MASTER POURS THE OIL ON THE STONE SAYING

GRAND MASTER – I pour this oil as an emblem of peace. May its blessings abide with us continually, and may God shelter and protect the widow, the orphan, the bereaved, the afflicted and the sorrowing, the enjoyment of every good and perfect gift.

ONLY THE GRAND CHAPLAIN RESPONSE – So mote it be.

Invocation If Building is Erected

GRAND MASTER- May the corn of nourishment, the wine of refreshment and the oil of joy, together with all the necessities of life be abundant among men throughout the whole world. May the blessings of Almighty God rest upon this undertaking. May the structure, here erected, planned in **wisdom**, supported by **strength**, and adorned in **beauty**, long be preserved as a monument of the energy and liberality of its founders,

and of this free and enlightened government, under whose protecting care it is our privilege to live. Amen.

Response By All – So mote it be

Invocation If Building Is Not Erected

GRAND MASTER – May the corn of nourishment, the wine of refreshment and the oil of joy, together with all the necessaries of life be abundant among men throughout the whole world. May the blessings of Almighty God rest upon this undertaking. May he protect the workmen from every accident. May the structure, here to be erected, be planned in wisdom, supported by strength, and adorned in beauty. And may it long be preserved as a monument of the energy and liberality of its founders, and of this free and enlightened government, under whose protecting care it is our privilege to live. Amen.

Response By All – So mote it be

GRAND MASTER GIVE THREE RAPS *** UPON THE STONE.

GRAND MASTER- Brother Grand Marshal lead us in giving the Public Grand Honors.

GRAND MARSHAL – Brethren, unite with me in giving the public Grand Honors together by three-times-three.

To Be Used If The Building Is Erected

GRAND MARSHAL- Most Worshipful Grand Master, I present to you Brother (or Mr.)..... the architect of this building, who is ready with the craftsmen for the work.

GRAND MASTER- Worthy Brother (or Sir): having thus, as Grand Master of Masons, laid this cornerstone, I now deliver these implements of operative Masonry into your hands that by the fullest confidence in your skill and tact, aided by faithful craftsmen, a fabric has risen which shall add new luster to this city and state. There was no envy, discord or confusion among the workmen. The important duties confided to you were performed not only to the satisfaction of those who have entrusted you with their fulfillment, but in such a manner as shall secure the approbation of your own conscience, and thereby redound to the honor of our common country. Brother Grand Marshal, you will make the proclamation.

To Be Used If The Building Is Erected

GRAND MARSHAL– Most Worshipful Grand Master, I present to you Brother (or Mr.), the architect of this building, who is ready with craftsman for the work.

GRAND MASTER- Worthy Brother (or Sir): having thus, as Grand Master of Masons, laid this cornerstone, I now delivery these implements of operative Masonry into your hands with the fullest confidence that by your skill and tact, aided by faithful craftsmen, a fabric will rise which shall add new luster to this city and state. May there be no envy, discord or confusion among the work-men. May the important duties confided to you be performed, not only to the satisfaction of those who have entrusted you with their fulfillment, but in such a manner as shall secure the approbation of your own conscience and thereby redound to the honor of our common country. Brother Grand Marshal, you will make the proclamation.

GRAND MARSHAL (Faces East) RAISES HIS BATON AND SAYS:

GRAND MARSHAL- Brethren, in the Name and by the Authority of the Most Worshipful Grand Lodge of Kentucky, Free and Accepted Masons; I Proclaim that the cornerstone of the structure, here (to be) erected, has this day been proved square, level and plumb, well-formed, true and trusty, and laid according to the rules of our ancient craft by the Grand Master of Masons. I proclaim it to the East. (Faces west) I proclaim it to the West. (Faces South) I proclaim it to the South. (Faces North) I proclaim it to the North. Let all take due notice and govern themselves accordingly.

If available a bugle may be used with blast of 1-2- &3 as Marshall proclaims.

GRAND MASTER- Brother Grand Chaplain lead us in our benediction.

Benediction

GRAND CHAPLAIN- Glory be to God on high, on earth peace and good will toward men! O Lord, we most earnestly beseech thee to bless this gathering; pour down thy mercies, like the dew that falls upon the mountains. We pray thee to bless all the workmen who (shall be) were engaged in the erection of this structure; (keep) Thank you for keeping them from accidents and harm; granting them health and prosperity in life, and finally, after this life, may we all through thy mercy and forgiveness, attain everlasting joy and happiness, in that holy temple, not made with hands, eternal in the heavens. Amen.

Response By All – So mote it be

GRAND MASTER *RAPS ONCE * AND SAYS: “I now declare this lodge of Master Masons closed.”*