

Table Lodge (The Ceremony of Seven Toasts)

A Table Lodge is part of the mysteries of our order. Therefore, the proceedings should be held in a place that can be securely tiled, preferably the dining room of the Lodge. The ceremony is a tiled Lodge open on the Entered Apprentice Degree using the ritual that follows. The membership of any visiting brethren must be verified.

The Table Lodge is a Lodge of Entered Apprentices to enable Entered Apprentices and Fellowcrafts to benefit by table instruction and enjoy Masonic fellowship early in their Masonic life. It was also an ancient custom that the initiates served during the hour of refreshment.

Minimum standards require that a Table Lodge be held in connection with a dinner, and not otherwise; a dinner in the dining room, a complete dinner (not sandwiches and potato chips), with a menu that will enhance the image of the Masonic Fraternity. Minimum standards call for attractive dining room decor; proper table coverings; tasteful decorations, such as floral centerpieces, candles, etc.; and the toasts served in glasses (not paper cups).

The Lodge building should be free of all competing events. A Table Lodge is complete in itself. It should not be combined with installations or presentations of awards.

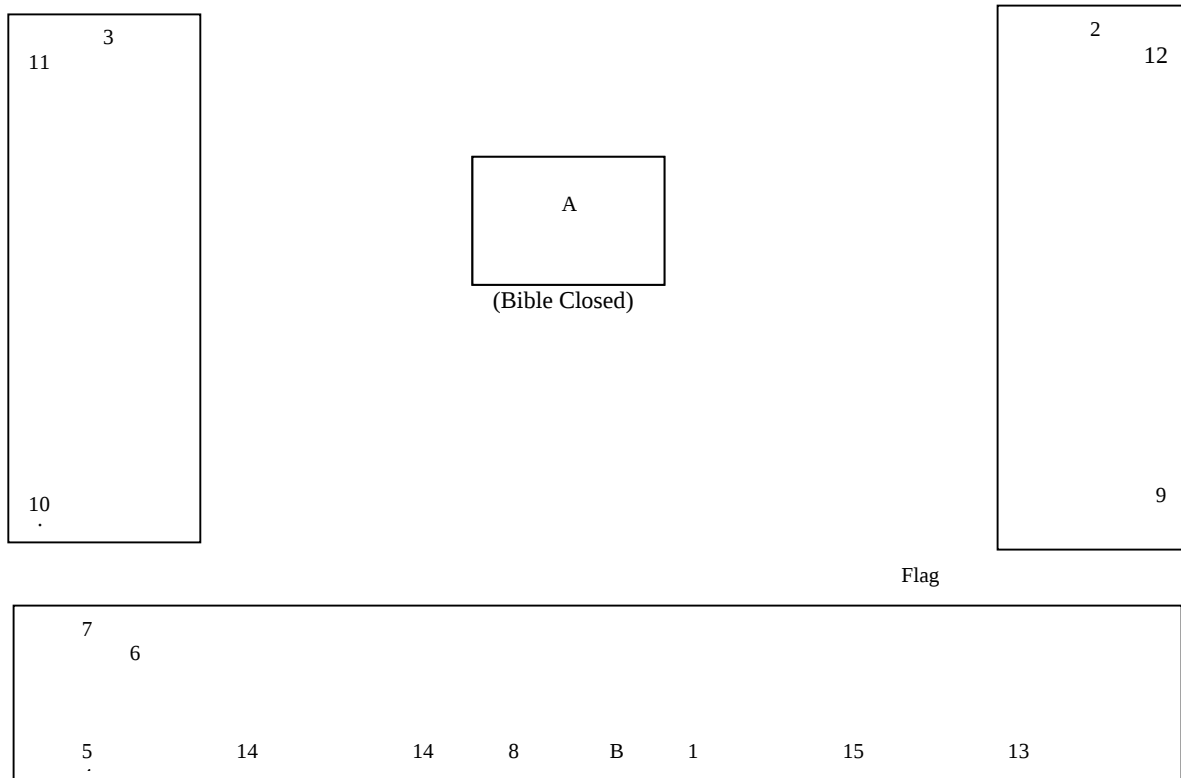
The Table Lodge is an occasion for fellowship and is festive by nature. Therefore, the program should be in this spirit. Music during the dinner is to be encouraged, but it should be appropriate to the occasion and the Masons must provide it.

Ideally, the speaker should be introduced, and give his program, after the conclusion of the third toast.

If wine or beer are to be served, the Grand Master must grant dispensation. A non-alcoholic beverage (such as grape juice, ginger ale, etc.) must always be available for those not wishing to have wine during a toast.

A diagram, which illustrates the recommended table and seating arrangement follows. If possible, all brethren should be seated on the outside of the horseshoe.

Dining Room Arrangement



- 1. W.M.
- 2. S.W.
- 3. J.W.
- 4. Treasurer
- 5. Secretary

- 6. S.D.
- 7. J.D.
- 8. Chaplain
- 9. S.S.
- 10. I.S
- A. Position of the Altar
- B. Position of the Podium

- 11. Tyler
- 12. Marshall
- 13. Guest Speaker
- 14. Guests
- 15. Grand Master

OTHER TABLE ARRANGEMENTS ARE PERMISSIBLE AND MAY BE NECESSARY TO ACCOMMODATE THE FACILITIES.

THE FOLLOWING IS RECOMMENDED AS THE CEREMONY FOR A TABLE LODGE HERE, TOO, IT IS POSSIBLE AND EVEN DESIRABLE TO MAKE SOME MODIFICATIONS TO ADAPT THE PROGRAM TO THE LODGE SITUATION AND THE WISHES OF THE INDIVIDUALS IN CHARGE OF THE PROGRAM. THERE ARE MANY PERMISSIBLE VARIATIONS OF THE TABLE LODGE

TABLE LODGE

The opening of the Table Lodge: dishes are all cleared except for the goblet of each person.

(* * *) *Master calls up the lodge for invocation*

Chaplain: Supreme Ruler of the Universe, we would reverently invoke Thy blessing at this time. Wilt Thou be pleased to grant that this meeting, thus begun in order, may be conducted in peace and closed in harmony. Amen.

Response: So mote it be. (*)

(* *) Wardens rise

W.M.: Brothers Senior and Junior Warden, invite our brethren to assist us in opening a Lodge of Entered Apprentices and one of table instruction.

S.W.: Brethren, assist us in opening a Lodge of Entered Apprentices and one of table instruction.

J.W.: Brethren, assist us in opening a Lodge of Entered Apprentices and one of table instruction.

W.M.: Brother Senior Warden, are you a Mason?

S.W.: All my brethren know me as such.

W.M.: What is the first care of a Mason?

S.W.: To see if the lodge is tiled.

WM.: Satisfy yourself.

S.W.: It is, WM.

W.M.: What is the second?

S.W.: To see if the brethren are in order. *(After looking about)*, They are, WM.

WM.: Why are we met together?

S.W.: To erect a temple of virtue.

W.M.: How long must we work?

S.W.: From midday to midnight.

W.M.: How long a time is required to make an Entered Apprentice?

S.W.: Three years.

W.M.: What is your age?

S.W.: Three years.

W.M.: What is the hour?

S.W.: Almost midday.

W.M.: In consideration of the hour and age, inform our brethren that a Lodge of Entered Apprentices and one of table instruction is open and we are about to begin our works in the usual manner.

S.W.: *(Calls up lodge) (* * *)* Brethren, in consideration of the hour, a Lodge of Entered Apprentices and of table instruction is open and we are about to begin our works in the usual manner.

J.W.: Brethren, in consideration of the hour, a Lodge of Entered Apprentices and of table instruction is open and we are about to begin our works in the usual manner.

Charge to the Brethren - Worshipful Master

W.M.: Brethren, in this solemn hour, I charge each of you to re-dedicate yourself as a Freemason to the noble and glorious purpose of bringing light to dispel darkness - to the service of him in whom you put your trust - to the precepts set forth in the great light in Masonry the rule and guide of our faith.

I charge you to keep your apron, an emblem of innocence, unspotted by the world - to practice that most excellent gift of charity - to make constant and proper use of the square of virtue, the level of equality, and the plumb of rectitude.

Craftsmen in the quarries, I summon you to greater loyalty to your lodge and your Fraternity - to integrity in all your dealings with your fellow men - to study to show yourself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not be ashamed. Guard against innovations, my brethren. Preserve the landmarks. Maintain the reputation of our Fraternity. Aid and succor the needy. Remember your brother's welfare. Be circumspect always in speech. Assist and support him who is falling. Whisper good counsel in the ear of him who needs encouragement. Let each of

us make use of the trowel to spread the cement of brotherhood. Let us labor with the common gavel that these rough ashlar may be made perfect ashlar. And finally, my brethren, remembering how once you stood in the northeast corner a just and upright Mason, I give it to you strictly in charge ever to walk and act as such.

Response: So mote it be. (*Master seats lodge.*) (*)

Ceremony of the Seven Toasts

There then follows the Ceremony of the Seven Toasts. The brethren who are to offer the toasts are chosen in advance and should be fully prepared. They should have cards or notes with the toasts written on them.

The seven toasts which follow are recommended but may be changed or substituted for at the option of the lodge except for the first and last; to our country and the tiler's toast. These two should always be given. The toast to the local Lodge and the one to our visiting brethren should be included and if a Grand Lodge Officer is in attendance, the toast to the Grand Master and the Grand Lodge should be included. Other toasts may be used for special occasions such as a toast to the initiates, to the Past Masters, or others.

The person offering the toast should arise and rap three times. When the brethren have risen and come to order, he holds his glass at arm's length and offers his toast. The brethren respond by extending their glasses and repeating the toast. Then all participate after which they are seated. The Master should always offer the first toast "To our country." The officer recommended for the other toasts follows:

- 1) To country. **W.M.**
- 2) To the Holy Saints John. **Treasurer.**
- 3) To the memory of our departed brethren. **Chaplain.**
- 4) To the Grand Master. **Secretary.**
- 5) To our Lodge. **J.W.**
- 6) To our visiting brethren. **S.W.**

7) To all Freemasons wheresoever dispersed. **Tiler.**

Optional Toasts
Toast #1 W.M.
(To our Country)

(***).

W.M.: Brethren, I have the honor to propose a toast to our country; long may our land be bright with freedom's holy light; Protect us by thy might, great God, our king!

With me, brethren.

(Reach for glass. All raise their glasses, holding them breast high and at full arm's length.)

W.M.: To our country!

Response: To our country.

W.M.: (*)

Toast #2 Treasurer
(To the Holy Sts. John)

(***).

Treasurer: Let us now drink a toast to the memory of the Holy Sts. John: May their saintly qualities inspire each of us to live a life of more exalted usefulness. With me, brethren - to the Holy Sts. John!

Response: To the Holy Sts. John.

W.M.: (*)

Toast #3 Chaplain
(To the Memory of Departed Brethren)

(***).

Chaplain: May I propose a toast now to the memory of our departed brethren: May their contribution to our brotherhood inspire us to more earnestly dedicate our lives to the service of our fellow men. With me, brethren - to the memory of our departed brethren!

Response: To the memory of our departed brethren.

W.M.: (*).

(Note: The speaker should be introduced at this time for his program.)

Toast #4 Secretary
(To the Grand Master)

(***).

Secretary: Brethren, I have the honor to propose a toast to the Grand Master of Masons in Wisconsin: symbol of our continuing relationship to an ancient Craft; to the Grand Lodge over which he has been called to preside. May he direct with wisdom, decide with justice, and plan with a vision worthy of the fraternity he serves.

With me brethren - to the Grand Master!

Response: To the Grand Master.

W.M.: (*)

**Toast #5 Junior Warden
(To our Lodge)**

Note: WM. does not participate in #5 at all. Do not stand or toast. (#5 is to the Lodge)

(***).

J.W.: Brethren, it gives me special pleasure to call for a toast to our Lodge; the Lodge so close to the hearts of its members, commanding through long years an interest and loyalty unshaken by adversity and unspoiled by prosperity. So may we reflect its integrity and stability in our daily lives.

With me, brethren - to our Lodge!

Response: To our lodge.

W.M.: (*).

**Toast #6 Senior Warden
(To our Visiting Brethren)**

(***).

S.W.: Brethren, a toast to our visiting brethren: our guests of the evening who will not doubt the cordial hospitality of our welcome. May this occasion persuade them to share our hospitality whenever circumstances permit.

With me, brethren - to our visiting brethren!

Response: To our visiting brethren!

W.M.: (*).

Toast #7 Tiler
(To all Freemasons wheresoever dispersed)

(***).

Tiler: And now let us drink the age-old traditional toast to the Craft - to all Freemasons, wheresoever dispersed over the face of the earth: may our brethren of all nations be united under the mantle of universal friendship and brotherhood for the benefit of all mankind.

With me, brethren - to all Freemasons, wheresoever dispersed!

Response: To all Freemasons, wheresoever dispersed!

W.M.: (*).

Responses to all Toasts

- 1) To our country. (With Master, raise glass and drink toast briefly. Glasses are returned to arm's length, breast high, then glasses set down and brethren are seated. This procedure is followed for each toast).
- 2) To the Holy Sts. John.
- 3) To the memory of our departed brethren.
- 4) To the Grand Master.
- 5) To our Lodge.
- 6) To our visiting brethren.
- 7) To all Freemasons, wheresoever dispersed.

(Put several copies of the responses on tables so men can follow.) (At last response, WM. Gavel once to seat the lodge.)

W.M.: (* *) Brothers Senior and Junior Warden *(Wardens rise)*
Are all the brethren in order?

S.W.: They are WM.

W.M.: What is the hour?

S.W.: Midnight.

W.M.: What is your age?

S.W.: Three years.

W.M.: In consideration of the hour and age, inform all our brethren that we are about to close this Lodge, ending our work in the usual manner.

S.W.: (* * *) Brethren I inform you, on behalf of the WM., that we are about to close this Lodge, ending our work in the usual manner.

W.M.: My brothers, the Lodge is closed. (*) You are dismissed.