George Washington's Lodge

Fredericksburg

Lodge No. 4

November 2026

Trestle Board

W∴M∴ Seth Roderick

Magnanimity - Fidelity - Honor

First Recorded Meeting - September 1, 1752
Scottish Charter - July 21, 1758
Virginia Charter - January 30, 1787

Ill. Bro. George Washington
Initiated November 4, 1752
Passed March 3, 1753
Raised August 4, 1753

803 Princess Anne Street
Fredericksburg, Virginia 22401

November 2026 Events

1	**2** Dinner 6:30 PM Stated Communication 7:30 PM	**3**	**4** Practice or Called Communication 7:00 PM	**5**	**6**	**7** Pancake Breakfast 8:00 - 10:00 AM
8	**9**	**10**	**11** MM Practice 7:00 PM	**12**	**13** Fraternal Visit to PH Lodge #61 6:30 PM	**14**
15	**16**	**17**	**18** FC Return & MM Degree 7:00 PM	**19**	**20**	**21** Lodge Clean Up 9:00 AM to 12:00 PM
22	**23**	**24** District 8 Ritual School 7:00 PM	**25**	**26** Happy Thanksgiving!	**27**	**28** OES #29 Christmas Craft Show 9:00 AM to 3:00 PM
29	**30**					

Masonic Anniversaries

Rt. Wor. Dennis L. English	55 yrs.	Bro. Charles L. Doyal	30
Bro. John R. Dodson	53	Bro. William H. Peck	29
Rt. Wor. Bruce Z. Hollmann	48	Bro. Jonathan B. Stevens	23
Wor. William G. L. Turner	48	Bro. Raymond L. Nelson, Sr.	18
Bro. Bruce J. Adkins	47	Bro. Travis D. Miller	7
Bro. Terry L. Bruss	44	Bro. William J. Kimble	1
Bro. Withers W. Moncure, Jr.	37	Bro. Maxwell K. Pate	1

Master's Message

State of the Lodge, October 2026

Seth Roderick, WM

October was a month in which the public and private lives of Fredericksburg Lodge No. 4 came together once again. Within the Lodge, the Brethren worked on ritual, helped each other grow in Masonry and personally, and reinforced the practices that sustain our Fraternity.

Masonic Family Day at MAHOVA gave us an opportunity to share the old obligation bible with residents and visitors of that great institution and to share fellowship with Masonic families from across the Commonwealth. The Masonic Home of Virginia is a wonderful place, and I encourage every Brother to visit.

The History Walks tours brought hundreds of visitors through our doors and into the cemetery in October. Many people know the building as a historic landmark or have passed by the cemetery but have little understanding of the Fraternity that has cared for these places for over 200 years. By sharing the Lodge's story, we helped connect the history of Freemasonry with the history of Fredericksburg itself. The Halloween-season approached that history from a different direction, drawing upon the public's curiosity about old buildings, local stories, and unexplained experiences. Whatever first brought visitors inside, each program gave us an opportunity to show that the Lodge remains active, cared for, and connected to the community around it.

That public presence extended beyond Princess Anne Street. Our participation in Freedom Forge Foundation's "Revolution on the Rappahannock" placed Lodge No. 4 alongside other organizations interpreting the region's Revolutionary heritage. The community-engagement booth allowed us to discuss the Lodge, the wider Masonic family, and the role our members have played in the history of Fredericksburg. It was another expression of our theme for the year, "Civic Duty as a Virtue."

Officer Move-Up Night at October Stated Communication gave our progressive line the opportunity to introduce themselves as future stewards of the Lodge. By assuming new stations and responsibilities, our officers gained experience that will help prepare them for their stewardship in 2027. Leadership in the Lodge develops over time through observation, participation, mistakes, and encouragement. Our Lodge will be in good hands next year.

The Worshipful Master was invited to give a presentation to the Fredericksburg Rotary Club on the history of the Lodge, and the ways its members connect with other civic organizations in the community through fellowship. Civic networks help responsible people find partners. Freemasonry gives men a language of character. Rotary gives business and professional leaders a channel for Service Above Self. The Fredericksburg area receives the benefit when its members put those values to work across the whole community.

The new Lodge museum is complete and in good order to share the history of the Lodge and its significance in Fredericksburg's broader history. This was a huge undertaking led by Worshipful Brother Mike Dove, with the assistance of Worshipful Brother Jamie Snyder, Worshipful Brother Chris Tripp, Brothers Ken Carey, Brian Hesler, John Morris, Joel McKinley and others, including many, many volunteer hours of professional curator support from Ms. Kylie Thomson. Together over 500 hours went into its creation.

The new porch is (really) almost complete. The concrete has been poured and finishing touches are underway. Chris Huie and his crew from Abby Construction have done an outstanding job in the much-needed rehabilitation of our front porch and façade. This project will serve the Temple well for decades (maybe a century) to come.

October's activities showed the many ways Fredericksburg Lodge No. 4 serves as a participant in the life of our community. The month required the labor of many hands, both visible and unseen. To every Brother who practiced a part, prepared a room, cooked a meal, welcomed a guest, staffed an event, shared our history, or offered counsel, thank you!

Sincerely and Fraternally,

Seth Roderick, WM





Secretary's Corner

My Brethren,

The end of the year is rapidly approaching. I hope you have gotten to enjoy some of this fine fall weather and that you got to attend the Grand Master's Official Visit and Grand Annual Communication this month. There's still a lot to be done this year with at least two more degrees to confer and elections and installation in December. Also rapidly coming up is a new dues year. Dues for next year are due as of January 1, 2027, as we will incur the Grand Lodge assessment for all members on the roll as of that date. If you have not yet paid this year's dues, or have a previous balance, please reach out to us to discuss and make payment arrangements or, if you are experiencing hardship, please reach out to us to see about having your dues remitted. To make things even more convenient, note that you can now pay your dues in installments through the store on the Lodge's website. There's absolutely no reason things should get to the point where you're in danger of suspension.

Next year's dues will be going up from $225 to $240. We know that everything has gotten more expensive and both we and the Grand Lodge are endeavoring to keep your costs down. The Grand Lodge assessment will increase by $15 next year. This is smaller than the increase that was originally proposed and is the first such increase in several years. In addition, the Lodge dues as specified in your bylaws contains a provision for a Cost of Living Adjustment, or COLA. This is indexed to the rate of inflation as determined by the Consumer Price Index (CPI) calculated by the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, using the method given in Sect. 2.86 of the Methodical Digest. The bylaws voted on by the Lodge state that the dues consist of a base amount plus the Grand Lodge assessment plus the COLA. Recognizing the strain on many of our members' household finances, the decision has been made to only increase the dues to cover the increased assessment and not apply the COLA. Note that total dues have remained steady for the past two years. It is interesting to note that the dues for next year would be $20 higher had we be applying the COLA each year.

I mention all this not to bore those of you who are not accountants or other financial experts to tears, but to be completely transparent, and to impress on you that despite rising costs for utilities, food, and continual building maintenance—including resurfacing of the front porch—we are working hard to keep your dues low. Masonic historians have noted many times that previous generations paid a much higher percentage of their wages in dues than we do today. As costs rise, we rely on your timely payment of dues more than ever before to keep our Lodge running smoothly and to enable us to undertake the great work of Masonry for generations to come.

S&F,

Christopher Tripp, PM
Secretary

The Reflection Chamber: Blessings Are Everywhere

by Justin Garrett, Chaplain

Howdy, my Friends and Brothers! The weather has certainly snapped. While it's certainly a dismal experience for a boy from the tropics such as myself, I'm glad someone out there is enjoying it.

In the summer of 2005, my family was in transition. My father had just received orders to have a permanent change of station to Virginia from Florida. Instead of having me there, they left me with my grandparents in Illinois to enjoy the summer. My uncle was living with them at the time, and every night, it was a similar ritual: He would play a computer game, I'd watch, and I'd follow him out to enjoy the fresh air outside as he smoked a cigarette. I remember looking up at the night sky and admiring the backdrop of the tiny specks of light against the dark azure background of the sky, and I remember seeing a shooting star. I turned to my uncle and mentioned it with wonder and excitement.

"Shooting stars happen all the time. People just never look up."

That line stuck with me my whole life. People would have the same moment of excitement and I'd say the same thing my uncle did. I remember visiting several years later, smoking a pipe in the backyard and reading Aldous Huxley's *Brave New World* and occasionally looking up at the stars, hoping to relive that moment.

The Baal Shem Tov was a Rabbi who lived in the 1700s, whose name was actually Israel ben Eliezer. His namesake literally means "Master of the Good Name." One of the fun things about him was that people would claim he could perform miracles. When asked about it, he shared a completely different idea: What if nature is just a series of miracles that happen so seamlessly, we never notice? If the sun rose only once ever in history, everybody would scramble over it. Some would think it's the end of the world, some would throw a whole party over it, people would bring their children to witness history, all of humanity would stand in awe as it happened. But the sun rises every day. The birds chirp as they always have, we breathe in, we breathe out. We see so much of life and accept it as it is. The miracle of having food to eat, of having a bed to lay in, of falling in love, of children being born, of life, of death, of everything. The reality of nature happens so seamlessly we never notice. It's only when something happens that we take stock. You take breathing for granted until you're sick. You take drinking for granted until you're thirsty, you take having strong teeth for granted until you've got a toothache. Have you noticed the blessings you have just in your immediate vicinity as you're reading this paper?

Blessings don't always come so easily. They're not always just dusted upon your head like sugar on a funnel cake. Well, even then, the funnel cake still had to go through a deep fryer to get that dusting in the first place. Jacob wrestled with God and walked with a limp from then on. Job had to lose it all to gain it all again. Suffering is not a failure or a punishment in and of itself. Perhaps it's the very thing which prepares you for that blessing. If not for one struggle, I would not have overcome it to be able to help the next person. If not for some of your struggles too, you would not have had the same level of compassion for others to the extent you do.

I'll even admit to you all, with the change of season, my depression, bits of paranoia, moral injury, and a little post-traumatic stress have been getting the better of me. Autumn has always been a time of struggle in my case. The wisdom I gained was undoubtedly a blessing, but it certainly came at a cost.

If you've read through all of my articles over this past year, you'll hear similar tropes that what we do now prepares us for what's to come. What may seem like an ugly duckling blossoms into a beautiful swan. A tough experience gives way to a good one. We might struggle with the challenges that raising children presents, but as they grow, we see glimpses of their greatness and that somehow makes it all worth it, seeing them grow into the young men and women they're destined to be. Just like my Masonic students, whether my day was good or bad, I found a way to get them amped up to learn their catechisms. Where are they now? They've gone on to forge their own paths and become legends in their own rights. It's beautiful watching them excel in the places they've decided to take their Masonic careers.

It reminds me of the Pelican In Her Piety. In Medieval folklore, pelicans were alleged to tear at their own breasts to feed their young in moments of desperation. It became adopted as a Christian symbol of self-sacrifice for the sake of others. Imagine, though, how the chicks hardly notice the sacrifice of their mother, and are aware only of the nourishment they gain. It can seem quite thankless oftentimes, and yet something within us compels us to continue despite the struggle. Still, just as the chicks failed to notice the source of the nourishment, how often do we fail to notice the source of ours? Our fraternity, and the whole world, in fact, is full of people who answer the phone in the middle of the night, who listen to us when we need to vent, who assure us when we don't know where we're headed. Reflections of that divine light which God implanted in Man to help reveal Himself to us, through each other. The real pelican is perhaps God himself, endeavoring to ensure that we still get fed. It might seem like an odd or roundabout way of getting fed, and yet you ate.



The same is true for all of the human race. Short, tall, black, white, fat, skinny, young, or old; there is a compulsion to care for one another. Whether you realize it or not, there are people who are secretly cheering you on, secretly hoping for your success, secretly praying for your triumph. The things in nature are dying away as you read this. The trees are shedding their leaves, the animals are preparing to hibernate, there is nothing left to harvest. In a few short months, the bitter cold will render the ground almost impenetrable, and yet, whether you see it or not, the seeds in the ground will remain dormant, ready to germinate at the first hint at the warmth of the sun. What first appeared dead has come back to life.

The mosaic pavement beneath your feet is a constant reminder that, with each step you take, you're never fully in the white or black. You're never fully in a good or bad spot. Good things are happening, bad things are happening. But we focus so much on the bad, and hardly ever notice the good. Where is the good happening in your life you simply can't see? What are those miracles that are happening every second of every day that you're not noticing? Where are those tiny blessings in the world that flutter by so gently they go unnoticed while you notice the swift and darting movements of your troubles?

In the Filipino culture of my family, there is a term: Bahala na. It refers to the immediacy or finality of having charge over something or responsibility. Really, it translates more colloquially to "Come what may." Even more culturally, it's a rally cry to party. You may have problems today, tomorrow, next week, next month, but have you stopped to appreciate what you do have right now, and the people you have in your life this very instant? Perhaps the rhythm of life isn't so different from the rhythm of seasons. Just because it's cold doesn't mean life isn't happening. Just because you're in a dark spot doesn't mean there aren't things to celebrate. Perhaps those dark times are exactly the moments where you can see what shines in your life the most; and maybe, just maybe, in the midst of the sea of darkness, you might behold the dazzling beauty of a shooting star upon your gaze.

All you have to do is look up.

From the Brightest Seat in the House,

Brother Justin C. G. Garrett

Parrhesia

by Seth Roderick, WM

Freemasonry is an institution of many things, including the spoken word. We open and close our Lodge with them. We instruct candidates through them. We commit ritual to memory and then work to give it voice. However, we must look to the ancient Greeks for a deeper understanding of speech and all its weight. They possessed a word that asks us to consider what exists beneath speech, and what connects the words of a man to his conscience.

The word is *parrhesia*.

It is translated as frank, bold, or courageous speech. In ancient Athens, parrhesia was associated with citizenship. The citizen was not only permitted to speak openly about public affairs, he was obliged to do so. In doing so he might have to say what was unpopular, or confront the judgment of the majority, or offer an unwelcome truth to someone more powerful than himself. Parrhesia was more than mere freedom of speech. The speaker chose to speak because his conscience persuaded him that something needed to be said and it needed to be said with precision and sincerity.

Parrhesia is not a license for indiscretion. It does not mean openly declaring every conceived thought as a revelation, or disguising cruelty as honesty. Ancient and modern philosophers associate parrhesia to both truth and good, while excluding defamation and disinformation. Paradoxically, it is both courageous and cautious.

This difference is worth considering in an age when boldness can be performative or when shouting at others is considered virtuous when it is excused as speaking truth to power. A man may speak loudly when he wishes to be noticed, or provocatively when it gives him an audience. He may even persuade himself that the grief he causes others proves the truth of what he says. When self-righteous speech becomes mere theater in the first act, truth and sincerity are rarely found in the second act.

Parrhesia is much quieter, with an openness of mind, heart, and conscience. Before a man can speak frankly to others, he must be willing to hear something superfluous within himself. What motives are at work in me? What facts have I avoided? What portion of the fault is mine? Am I preparing to speak because it is useful, or because I want the satisfaction of having spoken?

The first person to whom a Mason owes frankness is himself. Our Craft intentionally directs attention inward. Knowing thyself is not always easy. In fact, a man may find it easier to correct a Brother than to confront his own ambition, or vanity, or resentment, or indifference. Parrhesia is useful because it complicates the tendency to speak in judgement of others before judging oneself. It asks whether our speech and our conscience agree.

Parrhesia is an important concept to master in Masonry because it makes it possible to speak beautifully about humility, and to recite lessons of harmony instead of encouraging division. It makes it possible to hold an office while being accountable. Parrhesia is what makes an awakened mind more visible than a title.

Let us consider parrhesia in ritual. Without it, ritual can be treated as decoration and performance; impressive language arranged only for effect. Without it ritual becomes a stage upon which accuracy, memory, and delivery are displayed, but not understood. Ritual performance should not be the destination, instead ritual should constantly question us. After the meeting has ended, does a familiar passage remain in the mind? Does it follow us into our homes, our occupations, and our encounters with those who will never enter a Lodge room? Do we yearn to understand what we recite beyond the boundaries of the Fraternity, or are we satisfied once the words have been correctly delivered? Good ritual requires discipline, through narratives thoughtfully spoken and confidently received with understanding.

There is also a fraternal dimension to parrhesia. A Lodge cannot thrive on panegyrics alone, nor can it flourish under constant complaint. Frank speech offered without affection becomes harshness and affection without frankness becomes avoidance. Somewhere between them lies a form of Brotherly conversation in which truth is neither weaponized nor withheld. Within a Lodge, do we make room for candid speech when it is offered carefully and in good faith? Can a Brother raise a concern without being dismissed as troublesome? Can one in authority listen without immediately defending his position?

Parrhesia is more than speaking boldly for the sake of being bold, it is a deliberate way of approaching speech. In Masonry let us strive to speak boldly by allowing ourselves the discomfort of being frank with ourselves first.

Do I speak because the truth may serve the good, or because speaking serves me?

Have I listened long enough to distinguish conviction from certainty?

Would I say the same thing if no one knew I had said it?

When I recite ritual, am I merely remembering its words or permitting those words to awaken something?

And when a Brother speaks to me with sincerity, am I prepared not only to hear his voice, but to consider what it may reveal?

Do good unto all,

Seth Roderick, WM

Bethel #16 Job's Daughters International
November 2026

Time sure has been flying this term. The daughters have been active with participating in the Grand Visitation (pretty much the same as the District Deputy's visit for lodges) which was held on September 27, 2026. This meeting was a joint meeting with 4 other Virginia Bethels. There was a very special event as Mrs. Virginia Lee Dodge was honored for her 85 active years working with Job's Daughters. Mom Dodge is STILL active serving on the council for Bethel #1, Arlington. She is a Past Grand Guardian in Job's Daughters, a Past Grand Matron for Eastern Star and is probably one of the most loved adult in our area.

The Miss Job's Daughters Pageant is being held on November 28th in Northern Virginia. Kathryn N, Guide and Past Honored Queen for Bethel #16 is our representative for this yearly event. She has been studying very hard as the daughters must do an oral ritual part, a test which covers our rituals (regular and music) and the regulations and by-laws for Job's Daughters. On the night of the pageant, the daughters will be given a question to respond but will not know the question until asked. We are very excited for her and hope to attend and support Kathryn on the 29th. On Sunday, November 29th, the Supreme Visitation will be held. This meeting is like our Grand Visitations but it honors our Supreme Officers. This year is very special as Miss International Job's Daughter Natalia is from Bethel #1, Arlington.

As always, the Bethel welcomes visitors for our regular meetings and love to have sideliners! We are always looking for young ladies who would love to join us. For information about Job's Daughters, please contact Mary St. John, Bethel Guardian or Amie Nester, Bethel Secretary at **Bethel16@jdiva.org**.

Grand Lodge – Small World

The Grand Annual Communication was a pleasant time for Brethren to dwell together in unity. This year I had the good fortune to attend the Grand Lodge banquet where I was seated next to RW Steve McGowan from Berkley Lodge No. 167 in Chesapeake, Virginia.

We had never met before, but he made the Fredericksburg connection through the Trestle Board. Our readership is far reaching! Most importantly though, we shared a connection through this great Fraternity, a connection which would probably have never happened had it not been for attending Grand Lodge. RW McGown is a decent and pleasant Brother, and it was so good to make his acquaintance.

I encourage everyone, if its within your ability to do so, attend at least a day at Grand Annual Communication next year. You'll visit Brothers you know but not see often, as well as make new connections with Brothers from across the Commonwealth. "Through these doors there are no strangers, only friends you have yet to meet."

Fraternally,

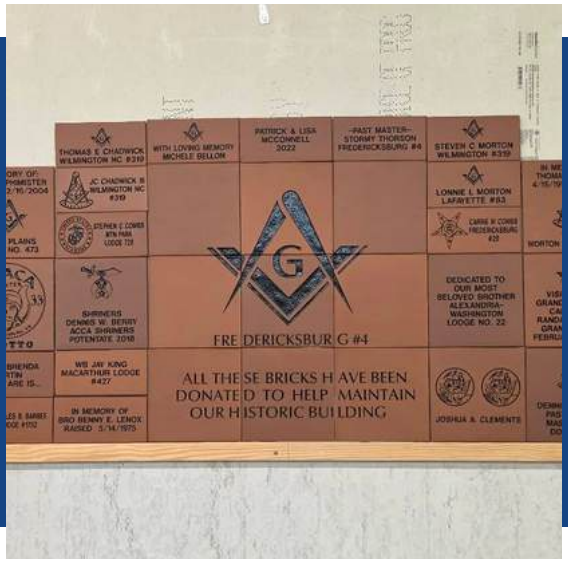
Seth Roderick, WM



Support the Preservation of Our Historic 1816 Lodge Building

Just one gift can contribute toward another 200 years of Freemasonry in Fredericksburg, and earn you a brick on the Baker Room wall!

Visit BricksRUs.com/DonorSite/FXBG4 to donate.



Visit Our Online Store

Commemorate 250 years of American independence with this limited edition coin—a meaningful symbol of patriotism, brotherhood, and the enduring principles shared by Freemasonry and the founding of our nation. Collect your serialized one of only 250 coins minted!

Visit the **Lodge 4 Store** to order now!



Now Accepting Event Rentals

A new location for meetings, receptions, celebrations, presentations, and community events of all kinds has come to the heart of downtown Fredericksburg. We're excited to open the Main Lodge Room and the Baker Room for year-round private events!

Learn more and book here.



2026 Lodge Officers

To reach a lodge officer, please contact Secretary@MasonicLodge4.org to request their contact information.

Worshipful Master	Seth Roderick
Senior Warden	John Lapke
Junior Warden	Michael Dove, PM
Treasurer	James Snyder, PM
Secretary	Christopher Tripp, PM
Senior Deacon	Joshua Miller
Junior Deacon	George Dunlap
Chaplain	Justin Garrett
Marshal	Kenneth Carey
Tiler	Shelby Chandler, PDDGM
Senior Steward	Michael Scullin
Junior Steward	Brian Hesler
Assistant Treasurer	Thomas Baker
Assistant Secretary	Ethan Burgess

Lodge Program Officers

Lodge Blood Drive Coordinator	Jeff Adams
Lodge Instructor of Work	Christopher Tripp, PM
Lodge Education Officer	Bob Melvin
Masonic Home Ambassador	Joseph Ilk
Lodge Catechism Chair	Justin Garrett

Committee Chairs

Funeral Committee	Justin Garrett
Website & Social Media	Ethan Burgess
Buildings & Grounds	Rand Sompayrac
Finance	Robert Brammer, PDDGM
Sick & Widows	Patrick McConnell, PM
Archives	Mike Dove, PM

Trustees

R.W. Dennis Berry, PDDGM - 2026
Wor. Chris Decker, PM - 2027
Wor. Dan Goodwin, PM - 2028
Wor. Chris Tripp, PM - 2029
Wor. Pat McConnell, PM - 2030

Living Past Masters

Wor. Carter. G. Wells	1963	Wor. Anthony L Rudder	2007
Wor. Rudolph E. Griffith	1974	R.W. Jeffrey D. St. Onge	2009
Wor. Henry W. Baker	1975	Wor. Shelton S. Mackey	2010
Wor. Edward L. Donalson	1983	R.W. Shelby L. Chandler	2011
R.W. Dennis W. Berry	1986	Wor. Christopher J. Decker	2012
Wor. Thomas C Shelton	1988	Wor. Christopher R. Wilson	2013
Wor. William J. White	1989	Wor. Jeffrey L. Mitchell	2014
Wor. Michael J. McCray	1995	M.W. Jeffrey P. VanCuren	2015
Wor. Steven M. Gallahan	1996	Wor. James L. Ragsdale	2016
Wor. Charles B. Pasto	1998	Wor. Michael T. Moses	2017
Wor. J. Travis Walker	2000	Wor. Daniel T. Goodwin	2018
R.W. Daniel W. Thompson	2001	Wor. James M. Snyder	2019
R.W. W. Robert Brammer	2002	Wor. Stanley R. Kennedy	2020
Wor. Sheridan G. Harrod	2003	Wor. Christopher S. Tripp	2021
Wor. Jene G. Parrotte	2004	Wor. Joseph K. Gilkerson	2023
R.W. Steven W. Sanford	2005	Wor. Patrick F. McConnell	2024
Wor. Richard D. Dey	2006	Wor. Michael J. Dove	2025