

## Membership

Have you ever considered becoming a Freemason? Freemasonry is the oldest, largest Fraternity in the world. Its members have included Kings, Presidents, Prime Ministers, Statesmen, Generals, Admirals, Supreme Court Chief Justices, corporate CEOs, opera stars, movie stars, and probably, your next door neighbor. And Masonry is always ready to welcome good men into the Fraternity. It's ready to welcome YOU, if in your heart you can answer "yes" to a few questions. **Do you believe that there is such a thing as honor, and that a man has a responsibility to act with honor in everything he does?** Freemasonry teaches that principle. We believe that a life not founded on honor is hollow and empty - that a man who acts without honor is less than a man. **Do you believe in a Supreme Being?** No atheist can become a member of a Freemasonry Lodge. Masons do not care what your individual faith is - that is a question between you and your God - but we do require that a man believe in a Supreme Being. **Are you willing to allow others the same right to their own beliefs that you insist on yourself?** Masons insist on toleration - on the right of each person to think for himself in religious, social and political matters. **Do you believe that you have a responsibility to leave the world a better place than you found it?** Masonry teaches that each man has a duty not only to himself but to others. We must do what we can to make the world a better place. Whether that means cleaning up the environment, working on civic projects, or helping children to walk or read or see - the world should be a better place because we have passed through it. **Do you believe that it is better to give than to receive, and that it's more fun too?** Masons are involved with the problems and needs of others because we know it gives each of us a good feeling - unlike any other - to help. Much of our help is given anonymously. We're not after gratitude, we're more than rewarded by that feeling which comes from knowing we have helped another person overcome some adversity, so that their life can improve. **Are you willing to give help to your Brothers when they need it, and to accept their help when you need it?** Masonry is mutual help. Not just financial help (although that's there too) but help in the sense of being there when needed, giving support, lending a sympathetic ear. **Do you feel that there's something more to life than just financial success?** Masons know that self-development is more precious than money in the bank or social position or political power. Those things often accompany self-development, but they are no substitute for it. Masons work at building their lives and character, just as a carpenter works at building a house. **Do you believe that a person should strive to be a good citizen and that we have a moral duty to be patriotic to the country in which we live?** Masons believe that a country is strong so long as freedom, equality, and the opportunity for human development are afforded to all. A Mason is patriotic to his government and its ideals. He supports its laws and authority when both are just and equitably applied. We uphold and maintain the principles of good government, and oppose every influence that would divide it in a degrading manner. **Do you agree that man should show compassion for others, that goodness of heart is among the most important of human values?** Masons do. We believe in a certain reverence for living things, a tenderness toward people who suffer. A loving kindness for our fellow man, and a desire to do right because it is right. Masonry teaches that although all men are fallible and capable of much wrong, when they discover the goodness of heart, they have found the true essence of virtue. Masonry helps men see their potential for deep goodness and virtue. **Do you believe that men should strive to live a brotherly life?** Masons see brotherhood as a form of wisdom, a sort of bond that holds men together - a private friendship that tells us we owe it to each other to be just in our dealings and to refuse to speak evil of each other. Masons believe a man should maintain an attitude of good will, and promote unity and harmony in his relations with one another, his family, and his community. Masons call this way of life believing in the Brotherhood of Man. It really means that every Mason makes it his duty to follow the golden rule. This is why Masonry has been called one of the greatest forces for good in the world. Then consider the following:

- You must be a man, at least 18 years old.
- You must reside in the state of Pennsylvania for at least one full year. (six months for military personnel)
- You must have a belief in a Supreme Being of any faith. (No particular religion or faith is required or excluded; all are welcome.)
- You should be someone who does, or wants to learn to, enjoy the company of other men from all different social classes, faiths, backgrounds, races, countries, etc. Masonry is universal in its ideals.
- You should be coming to Masonry "of your own free will and accord", to learn to improve yourself and to enjoy the company of other good people; not because someone keeps pestering you to join or because you think it will help you "get ahead" in business.
- You must be loyal to your country, a law abiding citizen and of good character.
- You must ask to join. Many Masons whom you may come in contact with may think you'd make a good Mason, but they will NOT ask you to join, you must ASK them. Masonry considers that your family obligations come FIRST, so you must be sure that:
  - You have the time to participate. This is usually two or three evenings per month at first for meetings and instruction and thereafter, we encourage members to attend at least one meeting per month --- more often if you get involved in lodge activities.
  - You can afford the initiation fees and the annual dues without hardship to yourself or your family. There are fees, \$255 for initiation and annual dues of \$68. Consider the following:
    - No one should enter Freemasonry in the hope of some material gain or advancement. To do so will only lead to disappointment.
    - Membership is entirely voluntary. The rules require an intending member to be motivated by his own desire to join the Craft. He will be accepted if the members feel he has the qualities making for happy and successful participation in their Lodge. But I don't know any Masons, how do I get started? You would be surprised how many men you come into contact with each and every day are Masons. However, there are several ways to go about seeking membership. The easiest

would be to Contact us. You can also print and fill out a petition and mail it to us or drop by at one of our regular stated meetings which are all listed on the calendar page. What happens next?

- Your petition is presented to the lodge at the next lodge meeting (2nd Tuesday of the Month).
- A committee is appointed to visit you.
- The committee chairman will contact you to set up an appointment.

This usually takes place at your home. Family are encouraged to attend.

- The committee reports to the lodge at the following regular meeting and the lodge votes to accept or deny your petition.

- You are promptly contacted of the results and if approved, a date is set for the Entered Apprentice Degree.

- Thereafter, further instructions and scheduling take place after the completion of each degree.. Additional information can be found here on the Pennsylvania Grand Lodge Website