

# The Trestleboard

Acalanes Fellowship Lodge #480 ☉ January, 2018

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**From the East** - *Worshipful Michael Roberts. PM, Master* [master@acalanesfellowship.com](mailto:master@acalanesfellowship.com)

I would like to take this opportunity to thank my fellow Brethren for giving me the honor and privilege of serving again as Master of Acalanes Fellowship Lodge #480 in 2018! The theme of my year will be "Why we Gather."

I want to emphasise this theme so that my fellow brethren and their loved ones will better understand why it is so important that we as men devote so much of our time to our gentle craft. To begin with, we as Masons share a common bond in the experience we received in our initiation into the Fraternity.

During our first degree, we are taught about the three great lights of Masonry which are the holy writings, the compass and the square. These tools are constant daily reminders to all Masons. The holy writings are given to us by God as the rule and guide of our faith. The square and compass are Masonic tools that remind us to keep our actions and behaviors in check toward all mankind.

Each Mason is then presented with a lambskin apron which is an emblem of innocence and the badge of a Mason. The Lambskin apron is more ancient than the Golden Fleece or the Roman Eagle and more honorable than anything of value or distinction we ever will receive in life.

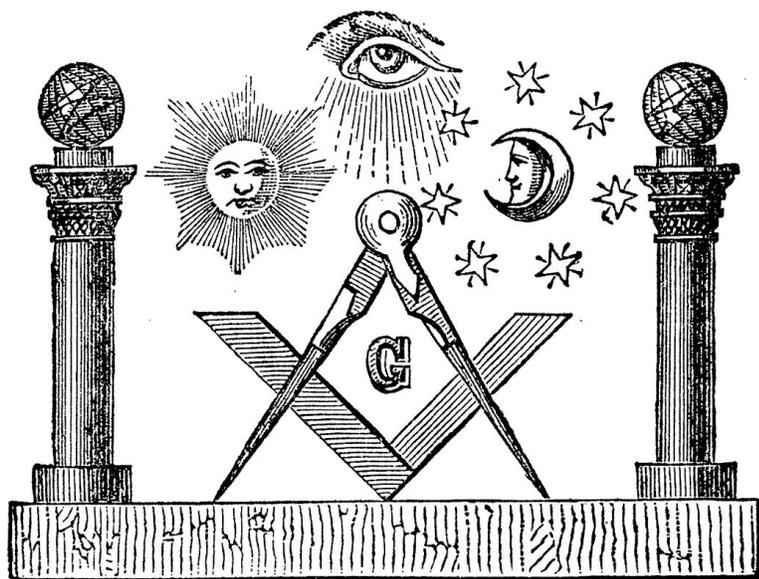
We then receive instruction on the importance of time management using a twenty-four- inch gauge as a guide. Masonry teaches us that to keep a healthy balance in life, we must divide our time



into three parts. One part for service to God and a distressed worthy brother, a part for work and a part for rest and our families.

The next teaching is about the importance of the Common Gavel. In society, the Common Gavel is seen more as a form of authority. But we as Masons are taught that the Common Gavel is used for breaking apart our old ways and continually building a new and better self internally.

Masons gather together not to be seen by the outside world as a secret society whose only mission is to gain wealth and political power. Nothing could be further from the truth! We gather together to focus on our Brothers internal heart and soul. To take good men and make them better through a series of three ritual degrees and ongoing mentoring and fellowship. We gather because our Masonic Community gives us the armor we need as we travel through life's times of joy and times of sorrow. That someday we will join God in his celestial lodge above (forever). We are a support network of friends and brothers who strive to live out the three principal tenets of Masonry which are Brotherly Love, Relief and Truth.



To live as Mason, one must have a strong support network in place that can whisper words of encouragement and council whether we want to hear it or not. Knowledge of temperance, fortitude, prudence and justice are key elements of our teachings. The reason this is so important is that what we do as Masons in our daily lives at work, at home and at refreshment are a reflection on our lodge and Fraternity so we must continually strive to improve ourselves.

I ask again, why do we gather?

Masons gather because we as human beings have an internal need for community. The bond we share in Masonry makes us not only friends but Fraternal brothers. Have you not seen or experienced two complete strangers meet and then find that they share the Masonic bond of Masonry and become instant friends? A man that can trusted to be on the level and share similar values and ethics. I personally experience this in my daily life and it's a wonderful thing to know that no matter where I go I will ALWAYS have a friend and brother who will be there for me when I need him.

Another reason why we gather is that God who is all seeing and all- knowing desires it to be so. I have been placed in this lodge for a reason and have been called to do so. While Masonry is not a religion, and should never be used as a replacement for one, we as Masons are implored to supplement the teachings of the holy writings with the Masonic ritual we teach and implement the

lessons through life. I cannot express how many times I have been sitting in a church and heard a sermon on portions of our Masonic ritual and had that revelation moment. It is a beautiful thing when a Mason receives new light supported by biblical scripture written well over 2,000 years ago.

Finally, why we gather is because Masonry is as relevant to us today as it was to our three founding Grand Masters Solomon, King of Israel, Hiram, King of Tyre and Hiram Abiff, the Widow's son from the tribe of Naphtali.

In conclusion, Acalanes Fellowship Lodge will continue to be known as "The Friendly Lodge". Our home away from home. During this Masonic year our home continues to be your home as well. In 2018, we will continue to strive for degree excellence but will create more opportunities for all Masons and their families to better understand our gentle craft through social and Masonic education events, fundraisers and community service projects. I look forward to working with you all and wish you a very happy and prosperous 2018!

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## From the West *Robert Strohmeier, Senior Warden [srwarden@acalanesfellowship.com](mailto:srwarden@acalanesfellowship.com)*



*Masonry is often described as a journey from darkness to light. In this series of short commentaries over the coming months, I will explore the concept of darkness and light, and its relevance to Masonry and life.*

All men are all born of darkness. Freemasonry is designed to support those who would seek light. Whatever other reasons a man may have to pursue participation in the mysteries of Masonry, every Mason finds himself – at the outset of his journey – confronted with the literal and figurative state of darkness in which all humanity labors.

As these commentaries unfold through February and March, I will explore the meaning and value of light in Masonry, as well as the symbolic and literal journey from darkness to light. In this installment, however, I will briefly explore the darkness and its meaning, because to understand and appreciate the light, we must first know the dark from which we hope to ascend.

The darkness of our shared Masonic experience is both literal and figurative. Literal, in that our vision is obscured through a lack of ambient light. Figurative, in that the mysteries revealed to us through our rituals and teachings emerge from a dim and indistinct understanding at first, gradually to be illuminated through progressive learning and experience.

So darkness, in one sense, is ignorance. But it is something more.

Our traditions remind us of the creative fiat issued by the Great Architect of the Universe: Let there be Light! In this context, darkness is not merely ignorance, but something primordial. As candidates approaching the Craft from without, we acknowledge within ourselves a rough and

unformed condition, and we begin to discover the potential for a more perfect state of being toward which we are charged to strive.

In *The Craft and Its Symbols*, a text which all new Masons are encouraged to read and contemplate, Allen E. Roberts concisely frames our initiation into the Craft as a rebirth, wherein we re-enter a symbolically prenatal darkness to emerge anew into the light by which Masons work.

In his treatise on the Blue Lodge degrees of Masonry, *Esoterika*, the inimitable Albert Pike introduces his commentaries by noting that “The highest claim of Freemasonry to consideration is that it is a philosophical truth, concealed from the masses and taught to the adepts by symbols.”

It is with this thought that I leave you, my brethren, this month. The darkness from which we would emerge as Masons is emblematic of more than one thing. It may be ignorance, sure. It may be rebirth. But it may also be the many more concepts – benign or malignant – with which the word “darkness” travels through our philosophical heritage. It may be the force of darkness within ourselves which compels our basest instincts, and which we strive to overcome in subduing our passions. It may be the calamities and pitfalls of our personal struggles in life. It may be all of these at once, and more.

This month, as we begin a new year in Masonry together, I encourage you to consider the meanings this conceptual darkness carries in our beautiful Craft, and the meaning to you personally of the quest to illuminate the darkness within your own mind.

Next month, I will explore the counterpart to darkness in our Masonic journey: Light.

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## From the Secretary's Desk *-Fred Lezak, Secretary*

[secretary@acalanesfellowship.com](mailto:secretary@acalanesfellowship.com)

January is the start of a new masonic year with a new slate of officers and a new Worshipful Master. This year we are fortunate to again have Worshipful Michael Roberts who has a very full program laid out for the lodge. Just coming off the year of Worshipful Brother Burt and the three hundredth anniversary of modern masonry, this a great time to be a mason.

You should have all received a dues letter by now. If you have not, please call me ASAP. Many of you have already paid your 2018 dues. Dues cards are being mailed as I write this column. If you have paid your dues and have not yet received your dues card, please let me know. It is very important that dues be paid on time. You are considered not in good standing until your dues are paid. This affects your rights as a mason including entrance to our lodge and other lodges as well your ability to access other masonic benefits such as Masonic Outreach and the Masonic Homes for you or your family. If

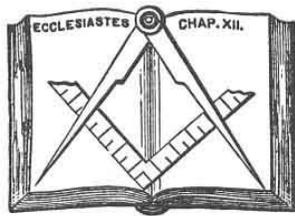


you feel that you are unable to pay promptly for any reason, please call either me at (925) 360-4328 or Worshipful Michael Roberts.

For several years now, there has been an unofficial coffee klatch at the Lafayette Peet's Coffee shop. Frank Shoffner and Don Hoskins started this little soiree and it now has four regulars. We meet every Tuesday and Friday from 9:30 to about 10:30am. All of you are invited. Sometime in January, the coffee klatch will be expanded to a lunch time at the lodge. It will be very informal ---bring your own lunch. We will be able to just hang out together as friends and brothers. Watch for more news on this.

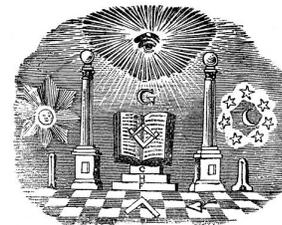
As always, you are invited to attend our stated meeting dinner and meeting on the first Tuesday of any month. The feeling of brotherly love and good fun continues to abound. Our ritual work is solid and getting better. This is the time for you to return to lodge if you haven't been for a while. Don't feel embarrassed or shy. We want you back and I can guarantee you will be welcomed. You will thank yourself for attending. If you need a ride, please call me at (925) 360-4328.

I will see you in lodge.



### 3rd Degree Anniversaries

Name	Raised	Years a MM
Otis Simonsen, PM	1/29/1963	54
Scott E. Carter	1/30/1971	46
Val Rodrigues	1/17/1984	33
Timothy L. Wilbur	1/17/2004	13
Edward A. Stack, Jr.	1/26/2011	6



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### Birthdays

Please join us in wishing our brethren very happy birthdays this month.

Serge A. Chemla	January 4
Gary D. Sparks, PM	January 5
Henry L. Hoffman	January 6
David E. Prichard	January 10
Howard L. Strause	January 12
Kevin S. Moore	January 19
Thomas P. Hogan	January 26
David L. Kreutzinger	January 30

# Musical Moment - *John Minagro, Junior Deacon*

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Throughout my life I have felt inspiration from the words of various scriptures, but I've also been profoundly moved by the words and music of songs, even Broadway songs. For the next 12 months I'd like to share with you some of these songs that have touched me deeply and let you experience their moving and spiritual effects for yourselves. While I'll include a little bit of information about the song, along with the lyrics, I'm probably not going to comment on what it has to say, but will allow the words themselves to do their magic within you as they have within me. I'll also include a link where you can go online to listen to the piece and enjoy the marriage of word and music, which always deepens its spiritual message. I would also encourage you to read, or better yet listen to each song at least 3 times – all at once, or over the month – allowing the words, music, and their effects of inspiration and joy to sift upon your mind and being.

The first song that I'd like to explore with you is called “An American Hymn” and was written for an ABC mini-series called East of Eden in 1981, based on the book of the same name by John Steinbeck.

## **An American Hymn**

Lyrics: Molly-Ann Leikin    Music: Lee Holdridge

I have seen a summer day  
that slowly opens like a rose  
along a quiet road that wanders by  
And I have smiled and wonder'd where it goes

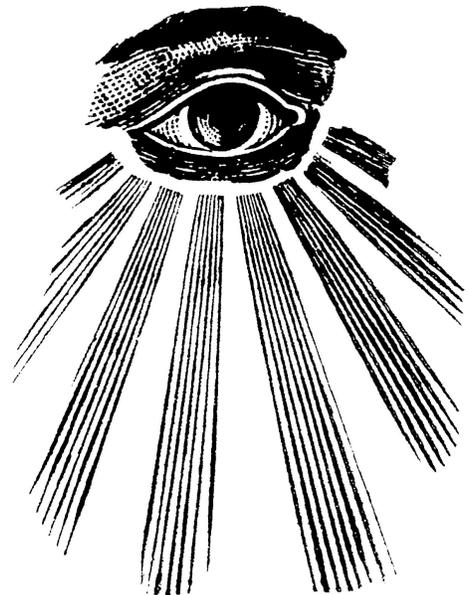
I have stumbled through the night  
Alone as any man can be  
Then found a silent canyon full of stars  
And in my heart I heard them telling me I was home

The gentle winds, the rains that fall  
The tallest trees, I'm part of it all  
I've seen the silver mountain tops  
And golden prairies on my way

Now everywhere I go across the land  
I stand so proudly in the sun and say I am home

I've dreamed of Eden all my life  
I find it more and more each day  
Now everywhere I go across the land  
I stand so proudly in the sun and say I am home!

You can listen to Placido Domingo singing it here:  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kzejJKKPsyc>



# Acalanes Fellowship 2018 Crab Feed

Saturday, January 27, 2018

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Don't miss our FANTASTIC silent auction, including art, masonic and other events, wine flights, officers' cakes, and more!

**NOTE: THERE IS NO FEE FOR PURCHASING WITH CREDIT CARD**

Meal includes all-you-can-eat Dungeness Crab, Salad, Garlic Bread and Dessert.  
**Add a New York Strip steak for just \$10!**

ADULTS: \$50  
CHILDREN (16 & under): \$25

TABLE FOR 8: \$400  
(Includes 1 free steak and a bottle of wine)

ADVANCE PURCHASE REQUIRED, SO ORDER YOUR SEATS TODAY!

When you order you'll be given the option of Steak only - or adding a steak to your order.

**ORDER BY JANUARY 15!**  
**TICKETS ARE LIMITED!**

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# The Trestleboard

Acalanes Fellowship Lodge #480 January, 2018

[AcalanesFellowshipLodge.com](http://AcalanesFellowshipLodge.com)

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## Upcoming Events at Acalanes Fellowship Lodge #480

**January 2**  
**Stated Meeting**  
Reception at 5:30 pm  
Dinner at 6:30 pm  
Meeting at 7:30 pm

**January 27**  
**2018 Crab Feed**  
Festivities begin at 5:30 pm  
Join us for all the festivities!

**February 6**  
**Stated Meeting**  
Reception at 5:30 pm  
Dinner at 6:30 pm  
Meeting at 7:30 pm