

May Masonic Minutes – Meeting One

“...harmony being the strength and beauty of every institution, especially this of ours.”

The opening of every lodge includes the Senior Warden’s recitation of his duty to see that the brethren are properly paid for their efforts. This judicious act affords fair compensation for every effort. When that compensation is provided with equity then there is a sense of trust and assurance enriching the experience when the craft is gathered together. It is at the end of his recitation that the Senior Warden announces his ultimate goal—to achieve the harmony that provides strength to the order and ultimately adorns it with beauty. His statement illustrates the importance of what we are to be striving to achieve as Freemasons—to fairly recognize the efforts of all who are engaged in this life and thereby strive to achieve harmony through mutual respect.

This Masonic call to develop harmony is then accentuated by the Master who states *“...I hereby strictly forbid all irregular or unMasonic conduct whereby its peace and harmony might be broken or disturbed...”* followed by a consequence of Masonic charges if this rule is not obeyed. The Master then supports the importance of this rule by quoting a Biblical verse emphasizing how Divine Providence promises an eternal blessing upon those that work in unison of heart and mind for a benevolent cause. Again, harmony is a foundational Masonic theme, why?

In the music world, unison is the melodic form where all are singing the same notes in a uniform rhythm. By contrast harmony allows for each person to sing a unique tune, but it compels the singer to blends his efforts so that the sound issuing from the gathering may be pleasant to the one who is listening. Who is the One who is listening to our gathering of Masons? Is it not the one living and true God in whose name we open and close our meetings? Are the words we are speaking in harmony with the Book of Light that is the center of our lodge? Are our actions a reflection of the virtues we hold in high esteem?

Aside from the musical aspects of the word Webster defines harmony as “A pleasing or congruent arrangement of parts.” So for the Masonic builder we understand that each aspect of the structure has a unique form; floors are level, pillars and walls are vertical and perpendicular from the floor. To enjoy a solid edifice it is not reasonable that we expect every Mason to be exactly like the next. All the adjoining parts that support the overall structure must be properly placed and interwoven into the mathematical equation, thereby providing a strong and efficient edifice that can survive the tempests that nature will ultimately bring as a test to its integrity. In like manner every Mason brings a unique function that will enhance the strength of the structure when the craft engages him in a manner that is properly aligned with the complimentary structures within the lodge.

Honoring the unique opinions and perspectives of our fellow Masons will do more to develop beautiful adornments than will the perception that every Mason must fit within the mold of a fixed expectation. A lack of respect for any brother can be the very weakness that begins to degrade the integrity of the lodge and cause the edifice to lose its luster. The strength of our structure has always been that we set our expectations in accordance with Divine Light, and that we quietly disseminate that light to younger or errant brethren. Remember the important admonition that if you cannot speak well of a brother then you should at least keep silent. Perspectives and opinions will always provide the opportunity for clashes to occur, but it is possible to disagree with those who see things differently without diminishing their integrity and self-esteem. The unique perspective that each Mason brings to the lodge provides a function that enhances the whole and when that unique function is honored for its service then structural harmony is achieved and well-formed beauty is the by-product. It is when we consistently function in harmony that the overall structure of Masonry is noticed for its unique ability to build relationships that honor each man and our God. So mote it be.

Our email is moed4u@momason.org; we look forward to receiving your feedback.