

OPEN TABLE COUNCIL PROGRAM

Suggested by
The Grand Council of Royal and Select Master Masons of Pennsylvania

Rewritten by
James M. Stevenson, Illustrious Master, Triangle Council No. 3
Anno Depositionis 3005 Anno Domini 2005

For use by
The Grand Council of Cryptic Masons of the District of Columbia

An Open Table Council may be convened prior to or following a Stated Assembly, but may not take the place of a Stated Assembly. No restricted Cryptic or Masonic topics may be discussed, nor may modes of recognition be used, including duegarads, signs, tokens, grips or words.

If the Open Table Council is not held at the regular meeting hall, a dispensation is required.

After the Table Council has been opened, the refreshments or meal should be served prior to the toasts. After the refreshments are concluded, the pitchers of wine are filled for the toasts. Glasses are filled for the Companions and guests, but are not to be refilled during the toasting. The IM should remind the Companions and guests that the glasses will not be refilled. Alcoholic or non-alcoholic wine may be used, but the Table Council may not be held in the Council Chamber if alcohol is served.

Toasts are given by the officer designated, with the Companions repeating the toast. The response to a toast is a formal or ad-lib commentary referring to the toast. The comments should be brief and one response may be given by the featured speaker of the evening. If the MIGM or other Grand Council Officer is present, he should respond to the toast to the Grand Council. The IM should be seated during the responses.

Raps should be given with a gavel on the banquet table. The presiding officer should explain the raps to the guests.

NOTE: A ceremony to honor the PIMs may be held in conjunction with a Table Council and prior to the closing of the Table Council. This is a separate ritual not included in this document.

When all Companions and guests are seated, the presiding officer should make brief comments on the procedures of a Table Council and purpose for holding such an affair.

Procedures of Table Council

IM: "I am about to open a Table Council, if any of the Companions wish to retire they may do so at this time."

IM: "I hereby declare this Table Council Open. Companion Chaplain, offer the invocation."

(*** Raps)

CHAP: "Most Holy and Glorious Lord God. Giver of all good gifts and graces, bless, we humbly pray, this Table Council, both that of which we partake and all who participate this evening. May the wine of good fellowship, friendship and brotherly love sustain us in this our present undertaking. To the Glory of thy Holy Name we pray. Amen."

Response: (So mote it be.)

IM: (* Rap)

Note: Presiding officer should explain how the tables are to be served.
Always start with head table.

(Meal is served and wine is served per instructions on page 1)

After the meal the IM arises and following dialog:

IM: "Companions and guest, the time has arrived for the solemn proposal of toasts."

(DM and PCW arise.)

IM: (Raises pitcher) "The wine is passing in the East"

DM: (Raises pitcher) "The wine is passing in the West."

PCW: (Raises pitcher) "The wine is passing in the South."

IM: (Fills glass) "The wine is home in the East."

DM: (Fills glass) "The wine is home in the West."

PCW: (Fills glass) "The wine is home in the South."

IM: (***) Raps) (Raises glass) "I now propose the first toast of the evening: To the Grand Council of Cryptic Masons of the District of Columbia."

Companions: "To the Grand Council of Cryptic Masons of the District of Columbia."

IM: "Partake" (All drink)

IM: (* Rap) "The response to the first toast will be made by _____"

(After response, the IM, DM and PCW arise)

IM: (Raises pitcher) "The wine is passing in the East."

DM: (Raises pitcher) "The wine is passing in the West."

PCW: (Raises pitcher) "The wine is passing in the South."

IM: (Fills glass) "The wine is home in the East."

DM: (Fills glass) "The wine is home in the West."

PCW: (Fills glass) "The wine is home in the South."

IM: "Companion DM, you will offer the second toast of the evening."

IM: (***) Raps)

DM: (Raises glass) "To the memory of our Ancient and Operative Grand Masters: Solomon, King of Israel, Hiram, King of Tyre, and Hiram Abif."

Companions: "To the memory of our Ancient and Operative Grand Masters."

DM: "Partake." (All drink)

IM: (* Rap) "The response to the second toast will be made by _____"

(After response, the IM, DM and PCW arise.)

IM: (Raises pitcher) "The wine is passing in the East."

DM: (Raises pitcher) "The wine is passing in the West."

PCW: (Raises pitcher) "The wine is passing in the South."

IM: (Fills glass) "The wine is home in the East."

DM: (Fills glass) "The wine is home in the West."

PCW: (Fills glass) "The wine is home in the South."

IM: "Companion PCW, you will offer the third toast of the evening."

IM: (***) Raps)

PCW: (Raises glass) "To Freemasonry around the globe, more especially Cryptic Masonry."

Companions: "To Freemasonry around the globe."

PCW: "Partake" (All drink)

IM: (* Rap) "The response to the third toast will be made by _____"

(After the response the IM, DM and PCW arise.)

IM: (Raises pitcher) "The wine is passing in the East."

DM: (Raises pitcher) "The wine is passing in the West."

PCW: (Raises pitcher) "The wine is passing in the South."

IM: (Fills glass) "The wine is home in the East."

DM: (Fills glass) "The wine is home in the West."

PCW: (Fills glass) "The wine is home in the South."

IM: "Illustrious Companion _____ PIM, you will offer the fourth toast of the evening."

IM: (***) Raps)

Senior PIM: "To the memory of our deceased PIMs."

Companions: "To the memory of our deceased PIMs."

Senior PIM: "Partake" (All drink)

IM: (* Rap) "The response to the fourth toast will be made by _____"

(After response the IM, DM and PCW arise)

IM: (Raises pitcher) "The wine is passing in the East."

DM: (Raises pitcher) "The wine is passing in the West."

PCW: (Raises pitcher) "The wine is passing in the South."

IM: (Fills glass) "The wine is home in the East."

DM: (Fills glass) "The wine is home in the West."

PCW: (Fills glass) "The wine is home in the South."

IM: "Most Illustrious Companion _____ Grand Master of
Cryptic Masons of the District of Columbia, you will give the fifth toast of the
evening."

IM: (***) Raps)

MIGM: "To all living PIMs."

Companions: "To all living PIMs."

MIGM: "Partake." (All drink)

IM: (* Rap) "The response to the fifth toast will be made by _____"

IM: (***) Raps) "Companions, I would now like to introduce the speaker for this evening, Companion _____, who will be speaking on the topic of _____."

If speaker is a PIM or higher, announce Grand Honors and offer the Gavel/Trowel to allow speaker to seat the Table Council with one rap (*).

Before closing Table Council, IM should ask the Most Illustrious Grand Master if he would like to address the companions. Similar recognition will performed as with speaker, with Grand Honors. No one may speak after the MIGM speaks.

IM: (***) Raps) "The Companions and guest will join hands, Companion Chaplain, offer the Closing prayer."

CHAP: "May the blessings of heaven rest on us and all regular Cryptic Masons. As we have shared the wine of fellowship and brotherly love and affection, may we practice out of the Council the principles of Cryptic Masonry and Morality exemplified here this evening. Hear us in this prayer to the glory of Thy Holy name O Blessed Lord God, who liveth and reignest in indescribable glory and happiness now and forever more. Amen."

IM: "Companion DM, it is my will and pleasure that this Table Council be now closed and stand closed, announce it to the PCW that he may announce it to the Companions, that they may govern themselves accordingly."

DM: "Companion PCW, it is the IMs will and pleasure that this Table Council be now closed and stand closed, announce it to the Companions that they may govern themselves accordingly."

PCW: "Companions and guest, it is the IMs will and pleasure that this Table Council be now closed and stand closed, govern yourselves accordingly."

DM: "Accordingly, so be it done."

IM: "It is my will and pleasure." (* Rap)

(Optional response to the first toast.)

**THE GRAND COUNCIL OF CRYPTIC MASONS
OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA**

The Grand Council of Cryptic Masons of the District of Columbia was constituted on April 5, 1919. At that time, 3 constituent Councils of the District included:

- Washington Council No. 1 (August 14, 1888)
- Adoniram Council No. 2 (November 9, 1909)
- Columbia Council No. 3 (October 1, 1918)

Following the formation of the Grand Council, two additional Councils were chartered:

- Zabud Council No. 4 (February 5, 1921)
- Mount Pleasant Council No. 5 (February 2, 1924)
- Brightwood Council No. 6 (February 6, 1926)

Of those councils, Columbia, Mount Pleasant and Brightwood eventually merged on January 1, 1964 to form Triangle Council No. 3. Adoniram-Zabud Council No. 2 was subsequently merged from its two namesakes in 1994 and, most recently, Sojourner Kilwinning Council No. 7 was chartered in 2004, being the only Council in the District of Columbia to practice Scottish Emulation Cryptic Masonry.

Currently, the "Grand Council of Cryptic Masons of the District of Columbia and Masonic Jurisdiction Thereunto Belonging" is composed of 4 councils, along with one Council of Thrice Illustrious Masters.

(Optional response to the second toast.)

OUR ANCIENT AND OPERATIVE GRAND MASTERS

Solomon, King of Israel; Hiram, King of Tyre and Hiram Abif, the Widow's Son, our ancient and operative Grand Masters whose deeds are more fully described in the books of first Kings and second Chronicles.

We know full well the story of David's dream to build a house to act as a resting place for the Ark of the Covenant and how his dream was passed to his son Solomon. Solomon well knew that the resources of his own country were insufficient to complete so lavish a project and he turned to Hiram, King of Tyre for assistance. The King of Tyre had been a friend and ally of David and rendered every assistance to Solomon. He arranged for the hewing and transportation of the magnificent cedars of Lebanon and provided a skilled workman, Hiram Abif, to oversee the work and complete the many artifacts for the Temple.

It is Hiram, the son of a widow of the daughters of Dan of the tribe of Naphtali, that we meet and hear in the Royal Master Mason's degree, the only place we see him in the York Rite degrees. Such was the foresight and planning of Hiram Abif that 470 years after the Word was lost was it re-discovered during the rebuilding of the Temple after the return of the Jews from Babylonish captivity.

(Optional response to the third toast.)

**TO FREEMASONRY AROUND THE GLOBE,
ESPECIALLY CRYPTIC RITE MASONRY**

Cryptic Rite Masonry arises from the story of the building of the Temple by King Solomon. The term Cryptic refers to a secret vault beneath the Temple. Comprising the 8th, 9th and 10th degrees in York Rite Masonry its early origins are shrouded in mystery, but furnish the keystone which binds together the symbolic Arch of Ancient Craft Masonry.

The Royal Master Mason's Degree, the Alpha, concerns the search for additional Masonic light. The Select Master Mason's Degree, the Omega, completes the education with regard to the concealed mysteries of Ancient Craft Masonry. In the degree of Master Mason the Word was lost and not regained until the rebuilding of the Temple in the Royal Arch Mason's Degree, Therefore, without the Alpha and Omega of Cryptic Masonry the story of York Rite Masonry is incomplete, The better our understanding of Freemasonry, the better we can unite Freemasonry around the world. In the Book of Psalms 133 we read, "behold, how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell in unity".

(Optional response to the fourth toast)

TO THE MEMORY OF OUR DECEASED PIMs

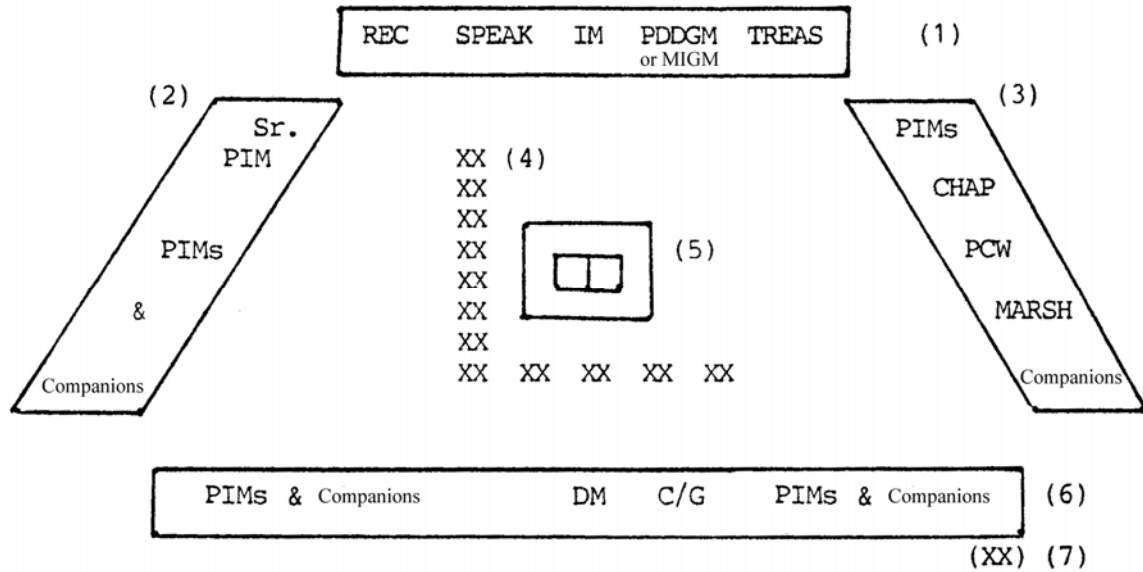
We Companions honor our Past Illustrious Masters who are no longer with us. A link in the chain of Cryptic Masonry is broken. The hand of Death has severed the link and the soul which was that link. Death has come to our departed Companions. We who remain cannot help them as they stand before the Supreme Architect of the Universe. Our deceased Companions have gone to meet their God, and may he grant them peace and comfort in his Celestial Council. Let this remind us that we too are mortal and our spirits shall someday leave this earthly abode.

(Optional response to fifth toast)

TO ALL LIVING PAST ILLUSTRIOUS MASTERS

The officers of _____ Council No. ____ are humble and proud to follow in the footsteps of those who have preceded us as Illustrious Masters. Your successful leadership and the continuity of well-informed and knowledgeable officers over the years is testimony to the success of our Council and its future longevity. We thank you for your service and hope that we may be as good an influence as you have been in Cryptic Masonry. We look forward to your valued assistance as we proceed through the line and hope to take our place with you as Past Illustrious Masters.

Suggested Seating for Table Council



NOTE

1. IM's station with officers as listed. Other distinguished guests may also be seated at the IM's pleasure. If a speaker will be presenting an address he should be seated to the IM's right.
2. Sr. PIM with other PIMs and/or Companions.
3. PCW's station and others as noted.
4. Chairs for PIMs if PIM program used.
5. Altar with Holy Bible opened to I Kings 8:65 which refers to the feast held by King Solomon at the completion of the Temple. No lights on bible.
6. DM's station and others as noted.
7. Chair draped in black as memorial to deceased Companions.