

William O. Ware Lodge of Research

Walton, Kentucky

Voices of Freemasonry Vol. VIII

Name: **Praveen Anumolu**
Years in Masonry: **20**
Lodge Name and Number: **Alcyone Lodge No. 695 (NY);
Smithtown Lodge No. 1127 (NY);
The American Lodge of Research
(NY)**

1. What influenced you to seek membership in Freemasonry?

I was curious about symbolism and was interested in esoteric topics.

2. How would you assess the current state of Freemasonry?

Fleeting. Large periods of frustration punctuated by moments of brilliance.

3. Carl Claudy, a noted Masonic author and a Past Grand Master of the Grand Lodge of the District of Columbia (1943) wrote the following:

"The genius of Freemasonry is not our Masonic buildings and temples or the trappings of our organizations. It is not our great charities or community activities. It is not our beautiful rituals or their teachings! It is the 'practice of Freemasonry' by the Freemasons. Yet we cannot practice that which we do not know or understand. Thus, Masonic education is the foundation for our Fraternity."

Do you agree with Brother Claudy's statement? Why, or why not?

To a level, yes. I do think it is too vague regarding what is considered "Masonic." For example, education could be just being very basic, plain, and secularly oriented to educate merely being good citizens. Freemasonry is much, much more than that and encompasses a great amount of symbols and teachings. Furthermore, I think ritualistically, it is fundamentally an initiatory society.

4. How frequently do you read about Freemasonry? When you do read about Freemasonry, what factors influence your choice as to what to read?

I read a lot about Freemasonry. Usually the choice is based on certain courses, groups, or orders being involved in at the time. Additionally there are recommendations of trusted Masonic friends.

5. What would your Lodge need to do to make you likely to become more actively engaged in Freemasonry?

The lodge would need to be a valuable use of time and be an added value compared to other things needed in life. Furthermore, despite potentially having good programs, it would need to make good use of a members' time.

6. Have you viewed any of the Masonic education videos posted by The Rubicon Masonic Society on their YouTube channel? To what extent do you find such video presentations beneficial?

Yes. I do find it beneficial in that it is education that can be at one's pace.

7. Do you subscribe to any Masonic publications? X Yes No.

If not, why?

If so, mark which ones from the below list or add those to which you subscribe.

- The Journal of the Masonic Society
- Philalethes: The Journal of Masonic Research
- Fraternal Review
- Phylaxis
- The Square
- The Scottish Rite Journal
- Research Lodge Publications
- Freemasonry Today
- Grand Lodge Publications
- Other : _____

8. If you could do two things that would constructively change American Freemasonry and better ensure its longevity, what would those two things be?

A. Having better individuals in positions of leadership.

B. Increasing the standard for membership. Masonry has a minimum criteria for membership but it doesn't mean it is for everyone

9. If you could eliminate two things from American Freemasonry, and by the elimination of those things better endure its longevity, what would those two things be?

A. Eliminating ranks and titles as a motivator to service.

B. Eliminating struggling lodges with no pathway to success

10. What would you say to men who are interested in becoming a Freemason?

Find out what he thinks masonry is and why he wants to be a member. Potentially it may be a fit for him or not.

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Name: **Ryan Balash**
Years in Masonry: **14**
Lodge Name and Number: **Joppa Wenona Lodge No. 315 (MI)**

1. What influenced you to seek membership in Freemasonry?

When I first came to Freemasonry, I had recently stopped consuming alcohol. I am a recovering alcoholic and that led me to the need of something to take up some of my time. Since some of the things that I was reading about Freemasonry lead me to believe that Freemasonry was made up of a higher caliber of men, I thought the association, with such a group of men, would assist me on my new journey of sobriety, and becoming a better person myself. I was also interested in the mystery surrounding Freemasonry. I could've joined many organizations, but it was my curiosities about the mysteries of Freemasonry that helped make my decision.

2. How would you assess the current state of Freemasonry?

I am extremely lucky to belong to a fantastic Lodge. I'm not sure if this is the correct word, but we are very progressive Lodge, probably the only one in the state like ours. We have been diligently working on refining our regular communications to make each of them high-level events. With music, meditation, incense, and most importantly, education. Our Lodge focuses diligently on strong fraternal bonds to help ensure that we are truly brothers. In Michigan, under the Grand Lodge constitutions, we have the ability to form lodges of research. A group of my area lodges are currently operating a lodge of research under special dispensation from the Grand Lodge of Michigan and

are hoping in the coming months to get our permanent charter. The main goal of this lodge of research is to provide education and information to the lodges of Michigan and or brothers that are hungry for this type of information. Our lofty ideal is just strengthen the fraternity as a whole. To succinctly address the question, I would say that Freemasonry is at a powerful moment in time. What we are seeing at a ground level in our lodge is many men coming, looking for greater meaning in life, and as a lodge, we are making sure that we're prepared to give some of what they're looking for. I believe Freemasonry is hitting a plateau of a drop in membership and it will be at this plateau that we build strength in our lodges. Not necessarily larger membership, but a stronger membership from a Masonic and brotherly love perspective.

3. Carl Claudy, a noted Masonic author and a Past Grand Master of the Grand Lodge of the District of Columbia (1943) wrote the following:

"The genius of Freemasonry is not our Masonic buildings and temples or the trappings of our organizations. It is not our great charities or community activities. It is not our beautiful rituals or their teachings! It is the 'practice of Freemasonry' by the Freemasons. Yet we cannot practice that which we do not know or understand. Thus, Masonic education is the foundation for our Fraternity."

Do you agree with Brother Claudy's statement? Why, or why not?

I absolutely agree with Brother Claudy.

4. How frequently do you read about Freemasonry? When you do read about Freemasonry, what factors influence your choice as to what to read?

I would say I read something about Freemasonry daily. That's not to say that I read an entire book, although sometimes I do. I enjoy studying and reading up on the mysteries of Freemasonry, and some of the esoteric symbology to gain a greater understanding. The things that influence my choice of reading I could best describe by what is interesting me in that moment. Overall, Freemasonry represents to me a freeing of the mind, and it is in the seeking of knowledge

and a greater understanding of our existence. That is the key to achieving communion with God.

5. What would your Lodge need to do to make you likely to become more actively engaged in Freemasonry?

As I stated in one of the previous questions, I am extremely lucky to belong to a highly active, and progressive Lodge. I'm not sure if I could be more engaged than I am now in Freemasonry.

6. Have you viewed any of the Masonic education videos posted by The Rubicon Masonic Society on their YouTube channel? To what extent do you find such video presentations beneficial?

Yes, I have, and have also attempted to be on some of the live stream education pieces by The Rubicon Masonic Society. I may request for attendance to those through the website, and I am granted permission, but unfortunately, my Masonic Temple Association meets on that particular evening, so I am unable to attend many of the live events. I am, however, trying to get that Masonic Temple Association meeting evening switched so that I can make more of The Rubicon Masonic Society live stream events.

7. Do you subscribe to any Masonic publications? Yes No.

If not, why?

If so, mark which ones from the below list or add those to which you subscribe.

The Journal of the Masonic Society

Philaethes: The Journal of Masonic Research

Fraternal Review

Phylaxis

The Square

The Scottish Rite Journal

Research Lodge Publications

Freemasonry Today

Grand Lodge Publications

Other : _____

8. If you could do two things that would constructively change American Freemasonry and better ensure its longevity, what would those two things be?

A) Bring education into every Lodge in the United States.

B) Remove the “Lodge Boss” from every Lodge in the United States. This would allow the brethren that have a hunger for practicing true free Masonry the ability to do so. It would also allow them to build the lodge that they collectively can admire and enjoy.

9. If you could eliminate two things from American Freemasonry, and by the elimination of those things better endure its longevity, what would those two things be?

A) Grand Lodge system as we know it today.

B) Appendant and concordant bodies.

10. What would you say to men who are interested in becoming a Freemason?

I tell them that Freemasonry is one of the greatest things in my life and then I invite them to non-tiled functions of the lodge so that the brethren can get to know the interested person, and he may get to know us.

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Walton, Kentucky

Voices of Freemasonry Vol. VIII

Name:	Jordan Baker
Years in Masonry:	11
Lodge Name and Number:	Hood Lodge No. 839 (KY)

1. What influenced you to seek membership in Freemasonry?

Generations.

2. How would you assess the current state of Freemasonry?

Several ways to answer this question depending on the role/roles you play. Looking from just the 4 walls of my lodge, it's great. We are a thriving young lodge that has about 1/5 of its membership in regular attendance. Average age being mid 40's.

Looking at it from a Grand Lodge perspective, I'd say we are struggling with attendance across the state and even so with the average age somewhere in the 60's.

Just a shot in the dark with all my numbers.

3. Carl Claudy, a noted Masonic author and a Past Grand Master of the Grand Lodge of the District of Columbia (1943) wrote the following:

"The genius of Freemasonry is not our Masonic buildings and temples or the trappings of our organizations. It is not our great charities or community activities. It is not our beautiful rituals or their teachings! It is the 'practice of Freemasonry' by the Freemasons. Yet we cannot practice that which we do not know or understand. Thus, Masonic education is the foundation for our Fraternity."

Do you agree with Brother Claudy's statement? Why, or why not?

I think all the things mentioned IS the practice of Freemasonry. Masons wouldn't be what they are without all the above mentioned. How could you make a good man better without them? So yes, Masonic education is the foundation. Without the education you wouldn't have these great practices.

4. How frequently do you read about Freemasonry? When you do read about Freemasonry, what factors influence your choice as to what to read?

Not so much anymore. When I did, it was that of mystery. We fear what we don't know. Morals and Dogma, Seven Honor Men and Practice and procedures of the Scottish Rite.

5. What would your Lodge need to do to make you likely to become more actively engaged in Freemasonry?

Haha, if I were any more involved I would have a bed there.

6. Have you viewed any of the Masonic education videos posted by The Rubicon Masonic Society on their YouTube channel? To what extent do you find such video presentations beneficial?

I have not watched any but thanks, now I shall.

7. Do you subscribe to any Masonic publications? X Yes No.

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Name: **John Blevins**
Years in Masonry: **11**
Lodge Name and Number: **Clay Lodge No. 798 (KY);
Hugh Harris Lodge No. 938 (KY)**

1. What influenced you to seek membership in Freemasonry?

Develop a good relationship with my Father-in-law.

2. How would you assess the current state of Freemasonry?

Complete mess; we teach a set of principles and don't hold our brothers accountable to those teachings/principles.

3. Carl Claudy, a noted Masonic author and a Past Grand Master of the Grand Lodge of the District of Columbia (1943) wrote the following:

"The genius of Freemasonry is not our Masonic buildings and temples or the trappings of our organizations. It is not our great charities or community activities. It is not our beautiful rituals or

their teachings! It is the 'practice of Freemasonry' by the Freemasons. Yet we cannot practice that which we do not know or understand. Thus, Masonic education is the foundation for our Fraternity."

Do you agree with Brother Claudy's statement? Why, or why not?

Yes, but if you don't hold brothers to what they are taught it's a waste of time. Unfortunately, over the last 4-5 years that's been my experience.

4. How frequently do you read about Freemasonry? When you do read about Freemasonry, what factors influence your choice as to what to read?

Monthly. Factors are usually something that catches my interest.

5. What would your Lodge need to do to make you likely to become more actively engaged in Freemasonry?

Require brothers to truly act like brothers. Hold people accountable when there are disagreements, brothers showing their ability to move past differences.

6. Have you viewed any of the Masonic education videos posted by The Rubicon Masonic Society on their YouTube channel? To what extent do you find such video presentations beneficial?

No.

7. Do you subscribe to any Masonic publications? _____ Yes ___X___ No.

If not, why? **Not aware of any.**

If so, mark which ones from the below list or add those to which you subscribe.

___ The Journal of the Masonic Society

___ Philalethes: The Journal of Masonic Research

- Fraternal Review
- Phylaxis
- The Square
- The Scottish Rite Journal
- Research Lodge Publications
- Freemasonry Today
- Grand Lodge Publications
- Other : _____

8. If you could do two things that would constructively change American Freemasonry and better ensure its longevity, what would those two things be?

Ask brothers to leave a lodge when they are bringing disharmony and making a lodge unwelcoming to other brothers.

9. If you could eliminate two things from American Freemasonry, and by the elimination of those things better endure its longevity, what would those two things be?

Nothing.

10. What would you say to men who are interested in becoming a Freemason?

It's only as good as its members so know who the members are of the lodge you are joining.

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Name: **Patrick Bowling**
Years in Masonry: **30**
Lodge Name and Number: **Trimble Lodge No. 145 (KY)**

1. What influenced you to seek membership in Freemasonry?

My neighbor and his best friend used to work on their Shrine Harleys and they would let me "work" with them when I was a kid. I didn't know anything but they let me get the tools & help clean them up. They both made me feel like I was so important, I always told them I'm gonna be like you guys one day. When I was raised, my neighbor had already passed away, but Bill Buck told me "Norm is here watching and he is proud of you son." I have never forgotten that moment.

2. How would you assess the current state of Freemasonry?

I think it is better than we all think it is underneath. We notice the negatives but never look at [or] for the positives, just take them for granted most times.

3. Carl Claudy, a noted Masonic author and a Past Grand Master of the Grand Lodge of the District of Columbia (1943) wrote the following:

"The genius of Freemasonry is not our Masonic buildings and temples or the trappings of our organizations. It is not our great charities or community activities. It is not our beautiful rituals or their teachings! It is the 'practice of Freemasonry' by the Freemasons. Yet we cannot practice that which we do not know or understand. Thus, Masonic education is the foundation for our Fraternity."

Do you agree with Brother Claudy's statement? Why, or why not?

Absolutely. How do you hit a target if you don't know what or how to aim?

4. How frequently do you read about Freemasonry? When you do read about Freemasonry, what factors influence your choice as to what to read?

Not nearly enough. Like most others, I was very active and then got busy raising my family and fell away. That is on me, not the Lodge!

5. What would your Lodge need to do to make you likely to become more actively engaged in Freemasonry?

Honestly, just be more active. I forget about the monthly meetings, if there was an event that needed help, I would probably remember it. Also, only one member of my Lodge makes it a point to remind me when we meet and invite me. We need to do better to reach out to catheads like me that don't come and let us know we need help, not just your dues money once a year.

6. Have you viewed any of the Masonic education videos posted by The Rubicon Masonic Society on their YouTube channel? To what extent do you find such video presentations beneficial?

No, but I will now that it is brought to my attention. I think this is fantastic, this reaches the generation that is to be Masonry and that is what we need to target!

7. Do you subscribe to any Masonic publications? Yes No.

If not, why?

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Grand Lodge Publications

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8. If you could do two things that would constructively change American Freemasonry and better ensure its longevity, what would those two things be?

1. I would stress and hammer home the part that teaches us if we have disagreements with our brother we should retire and settle it in private and if we can't one or both of us needs to excuse ourselves. Everybody says "my Lodge" when talking about it. It isn't "my Lodge" it is "our Lodge" and just because I don't think that's how we should do it doesn't mean it is wrong or I should make everyone else miserable and cause strife. We somehow have taken the view of "what can the Lodge do for me" instead of "what can I do for the Lodge."

2. We need to reach even further into technology and grab on to what is good and appreciated by the younger generation to make theirs a better Masonic experience. I am not saying change completely and tell old Brothers like it or lump it, but we need to make sure we are reaching the breadth and backbone of our membership, not just the structure that has always been. As an older Brother, I can choose to take part of what I like and not what I don't. Who knows, maybe older members like me will like new ways of doing things.
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9. If you could eliminate two things from American Freemasonry, and by the elimination of those things better endure its longevity, what would those two things be?
 1. Arguing about "inclusivity." I am not saying we shouldn't be inclusive, but why do we even bring it up? Your religion should never even be a factor in your membership in my opinion. If you believe in the Grand Architect of the Universe that should be all I need to know. What you call him isn't my concern. The color of your skin or nothing else about you should ever tell me you are a man of honor, that is inside. We should never discuss in our investigations "Oh he is a" Is he a good, honorable man? If so, that is all I need to know. Will he be a good worker and earn and deserve a Master's wages? That is all that matters.
 2. Building on #1, Masonry isn't a "good old boy club" or a popularity contest. If you want to hang out and act a fool with your buddies there are numerous organizations built on that ideology and that is great. We are here to make good men better and that is what we need to do. I have voted negative on several people over the years that I know and had conversations with on numerous occasions that were pleasant, but they weren't of Masonic character. I am not trying to sound elitist, but this should be something more. We should always wear our white apron as a sign of honor so why would you want someone with no honor being associated with you?
 10. What would you say to men who are interested in becoming a Freemason?

Do it. I have had wonderful times in my Masonic walk. I have tried to give more than I took but that is impossible when you are working with fine Brothers of honor.

William O. Ware Lodge of Research

Walton, Kentucky

Voices of Freemasonry Vol. VIII

Name:	Clyde Caudill
Years in Masonry:	49
Lodge Name and Number:	Thomas C. Cecil Lodge No. 375 (KY); Zebulon Lodge No. 273 (KY)

1. What influenced you to seek membership in Freemasonry?

Men I knew were Masons.

2. How would you assess the current state of Freemasonry?

In need of repair.

3. Carl Claudy, a noted Masonic author and a Past Grand Master of the Grand Lodge of the District of Columbia (1943) wrote the following:

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Do you agree with Brother Claudy's statement? Why, or why not?

YES (Education).

4. How frequently do you read about Freemasonry? When you do read about Freemasonry, what factors influence your choice as to what to read?

Often. History of the Masonic Order.

5. What would your Lodge need to do to make you likely to become more actively engaged in Freemasonry?

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6. Have you viewed any of the Masonic education videos posted by The Rubicon Masonic Society on their YouTube channel? To what extent do you find such video presentations beneficial?

Yes.

7. Do you subscribe to any Masonic publications? _____ Yes X No.

If not, why? **All the BS today.**

If so, mark which ones from the below list or add those to which you subscribe.

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- Fraternal Review
- Phylaxis
- The Square
- The Scottish Rite Journal
- Research Lodge Publications
- Freemasonry Today
- Grand Lodge Publications
- Other : _____

8. If you could do two things that would constructively change American Freemasonry and better ensure its longevity, what would those two things be?

Require educational classes before each Degree.

9. If you could eliminate two things from American Freemasonry, and by the elimination of those things better endure its longevity, what would those two things be?

Politics at Grand Lodge.

10. What would you say to men who are interested in becoming a Freemason?

ASK.

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Walton, Kentucky

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Name: **Logan Embry**
Years in Masonry: **3**
Lodge Name and Number: **Livermore Lodge No. 186 (KY)**

1. What influenced you to seek membership in Freemasonry?

The age of the Fraternity.

2. How would you assess the current state of Freemasonry?

Growing into a new age. As the old guard phases out, the Craft is thankfully shifting away from an organization filled with hate towards others, based only on one's appearance.

3. Carl Claudy, a noted Masonic author and a Past Grand Master of the Grand Lodge of the District of Columbia (1943) wrote the following:

"The genius of Freemasonry is not our Masonic buildings and temples or the trappings of our organizations. It is not our great charities or community activities. It is not our beautiful rituals or their teachings! It is the 'practice of Freemasonry' by the Freemasons. Yet we cannot practice that which we do not know or understand. Thus, Masonic education is the foundation for our Fraternity."

Do you agree with Brother Claudy's statement? Why, or why not?

Yes, it is more important that a candidate coming through the degrees know what the degrees are teaching, than to just memorize a Q and A section.

4. How frequently do you read about Freemasonry? When you do read about Freemasonry, what factors influence your choice as to what to read?

Not frequently enough.

5. What would your Lodge need to do to make you likely to become more actively engaged in Freemasonry?

At this time, I am one of the hard-charging members of my Lodge.

6. Have you viewed any of the Masonic education videos posted by The Rubicon Masonic Society on their YouTube channel? To what extent do you find such video presentations beneficial?

I have not.

7. Do you subscribe to any Masonic publications? Yes No.

If not, why?

If so, mark which ones from the below list or add those to which you subscribe.

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Other : _____

8. If you could do two things that would constructively change American Freemasonry and better ensure its longevity, what would those two things be?

Across the board Prince Hall Affiliates recognition and cross visitation.

Also I would allow Entered Apprentices and Fellow Crafts to attend the normal business meetings, but not yet have a vote.

9. If you could eliminate two things from American Freemasonry, and by the elimination of those things better endure its longevity, what would those two things be?

I am not sure on this one.

10. What would you say to men who are interested in becoming a Freemason?

Hello friend. Would you like to become a brother?

William O. Ware Lodge of Research
Walton, Kentucky
Voices of Freemasonry Vol. VIII

Name: **Dave Fiero**
Years in Masonry: **19**
Lodge Name and Number: **Acacia Lodge No. 42 (AZ)**

1. What influenced you to seek membership in Freemasonry?

I was searching for something as a young man but didn't know what it was that I was seeking. A dear family friend who'd taken the time since I was a child to listen, hinted that he knew of a place to find what I was looking for and it was he who inspired me to ask.

2. How would you assess the current state of Freemasonry?

Freemasonry is encountering a revival in an otherwise stagnant organization. Lodges are ill prepared to provide the instruction necessary for inquisitive men who are joining. However, the men joining today are equipped to carry the torch of Freemasonry farther than in years prior because there exists a nucleus who want to maintain a high standard of practice and ritual, and who understand that labor brings men together.

3. Carl Claudy, a noted Masonic author and a Past Grand Master of the Grand Lodge of the District of Columbia (1943) wrote the following:

"The genius of Freemasonry is not our Masonic buildings and temples or the trappings of our organizations. It is not our great charities or community activities. It is not our beautiful rituals or their teachings! It is the 'practice of Freemasonry' by the Freemasons. Yet we cannot practice that which we do not know or understand. Thus, Masonic education is the foundation for our Fraternity."

Do you agree with Brother Claudy's statement? Why, or why not?

I agree with this 100% and speaks to my last answer. It's fair to say that for years the majority of Masons have sat in the library of Freemasonry and haven't dared open any of its books or acknowledged there are any worth reading. Men who are seeking the Craft are asking what the books are and few know how to answer or where to begin.

4. How frequently do you read about Freemasonry? When you do read about Freemasonry, what factors influence your choice as to what to read?

I dive into texts and books quite frequently. I gravitate to the early formation in the 18th century as it seems that social fraternalism took over toward the end of that century and arguably before.

5. What would your Lodge need to do to make you likely to become more actively engaged in Freemasonry?

My lodge is what caused my engagement. When I walked in to affiliate in late 2018 the lodge Master said he believed the lodge would fold. Six years later, through continuous efforts our lodge has become activated and is unrecognizable. I don't know how much else I could do to be active.

6. Have you viewed any of the Masonic education videos posted by The Rubicon Masonic Society on their YouTube channel? To what extent do you find such video presentations beneficial?

I have and have found them extremely insightful. I would say that the efforts of The Rubicon Society should be mimicked in other regions and inspire other lodges.

7. Do you subscribe to any Masonic publications? Yes No.

If not, why?

If so, mark which ones from the below list or add those to which you subscribe.

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Fraternal Review

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Freemasonry Today

Grand Lodge Publications

___ Other : _____

8. If you could do two things that would constructively change American Freemasonry and better ensure its longevity, what would those two things be?

A. Slow down the “progression” to benefit the mentor and mentee. Time and patience in my experience have developed men such that they feel the growth within the Craft. It is the growth they want when they join and often times there is a push to get men through degrees which I despise.

B. Have many candid meetings on the health of brothers and the lodge. Groups often split and cliques form as a lodge grows. The more we share amongst each other and are transparent about how we feel about our lodges and each other, the greater the space becomes.

9. If you could eliminate two things from American Freemasonry, and by the elimination of those things better endure its longevity, what would those two things be?

A. Constraints on progression i.e. having terms for Masons to advance. Like Wilmshurst, I believe an Entered Apprentice ought to take several years to marinate in the craft. We have rushed men out the door.

B. Progressive lines. Keep an adequate Master in the east as long as he is willing to serve and only allow a brother to fill the chair if he brings equal or more valued knowledge to the chair.

10. What would you say to men who are interested in becoming a Freemason?

I ask them what they are looking for and if they truly believe Freemasonry is the answer. Some don't know but some are looking for fulfillment they can find elsewhere in many social and civic orders. If one is willing to work and turn over every stone in their pursuit, they have come to the right place.

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Name: **Justin Gentry**
Years in Masonry: **10**
Lodge Name and Number: **Hays Lodge No. 517 (KY)**

1. What influenced you to seek membership in Freemasonry?

My dad is a Mason.

2. How would you assess the current state of Freemasonry?

Dying out.

3. Carl Claudy, a noted Masonic author and a Past Grand Master of the Grand Lodge of the District of Columbia (1943) wrote the following:

"The genius of Freemasonry is not our Masonic buildings and temples or the trappings of our organizations. It is not our great charities or community activities. It is not our beautiful rituals or their teachings! It is the 'practice of Freemasonry' by the Freemasons. Yet we cannot practice that which we do not know or understand. Thus, Masonic education is the foundation for our Fraternity."

Do you agree with Brother Claudy's statement? Why, or why not?

I agree. I also believe the more active a Lodge is, the more the Lodge will grow.

4. How frequently do you read about Freemasonry? When you do read about Freemasonry, what factors influence your choice as to what to read?

Not as often as I should. Mainly, I read the constitution.

5. What would your Lodge need to do to make you likely to become more actively engaged in Freemasonry?

Educational speakers, and getting active in the community.

6. Have you viewed any of the Masonic education videos posted by The Rubicon Masonic Society on their YouTube channel? To what extent do you find such video presentations beneficial?

No, I have not.

7. Do you subscribe to any Masonic publications? _____ Yes ___X___ No.

If not, why? **Just haven't.**

If so, mark which ones from the below list or add those to which you subscribe.

___ The Journal of the Masonic Society

___ Philaethes: The Journal of Masonic Research

___ Fraternal Review

___ Phylaxis

___ The Square

___ The Scottish Rite Journal

___ Research Lodge Publications

___ Freemasonry Today

___ Grand Lodge Publications

___ Other : _____

8. If you could do two things that would constructively change American Freemasonry and better ensure its longevity, what would those two things be?

Get younger guys to understand the importance of learning degree work, myself included. And also "practice what you preach;" be a Mason outside the Lodge just the same as in the Lodge.

9. If you could eliminate two things from American Freemasonry, and by the elimination of those things better endure its longevity, what would those two things be?

I have no answer.

10. What would you say to men who are interested in becoming a Freemason?

It's a great thing to be a part of. You will meet some of the finest, upstanding men you'll ever meet in life. If you take what you learn and use it every day, it can make you a better person.

William O. Ware Lodge of Research

Walton, Kentucky

Voices of Freemasonry Vol. VIII

Name:	Josh Greene
Years in Masonry:	8
Lodge Name and Number:	Greenup Lodge No. 89 (KY)

1. What influenced you to seek membership in Freemasonry?

My Grandfather and Uncles were Masons.

2. How would you assess the current state of Freemasonry?

I am really involved with my Lodge, York Rite, and AMD council. I feel this positive energy and growth at Greenup 89. Also, after serving last year as Master I watch myself grow as man. Faced one of my biggest fears, public speaking.

3. Carl Claudy, a noted Masonic author and a Past Grand Master of the Grand Lodge of the District of Columbia (1943) wrote the following:

"The genius of Freemasonry is not our Masonic buildings and temples or the trappings of our organizations. It is not our great charities or community activities. It is not our beautiful rituals or their teachings! It is the 'practice of Freemasonry' by the Freemasons. Yet we cannot practice that which we do not know or understand. Thus, Masonic education is the foundation for our Fraternity."

Do you agree with Brother Claudy's statement? Why, or why not?

I agree. I have witnessed the lack of education year after year. Education is absolutely essential. Without [it] new members don't know what the degrees symbolizes or working tools mean or what to do and what not to do in lodge. They just belong. And I think many new members miss the point and become bored. I had no clue what do when I became Master and I went through all the chairs. After my 1st meeting as Master, education became my top priority for the year.

4. How frequently do you read about Freemasonry? When you do read about Freemasonry, what factors influence your choice as to what to read?

I read the most about Freemasonry from articles posted in different Masonic social media groups. I have bought several recommended books on

Freemasonry but have little time to relax and read them. I put a lot of ritual to memory from the Kentucky Monitor, which makes me contemplate it more I think.

5. What would your Lodge need to do to make you likely to become more actively engaged in Freemasonry?

I'm about as involved as I can be especially with Greenup 89. But really I'd like to get together to just hang out for fun with our members.

6. Have you viewed any of the Masonic education videos posted by The Rubicon Masonic Society on their YouTube channel? To what extent do you find such video presentations beneficial?

No, but I will now that I know about them.

7. Do you subscribe to any Masonic publications? Yes No.

If not, why?

If so, mark which ones from the below list or add those to which you subscribe.

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Fraternal Review

Phylaxis

The Square

The Scottish Rite Journal

Research Lodge Publications

Freemasonry Today

Grand Lodge Publications

Other : _____

8. If you could do two things that would constructively change American Freemasonry and better ensure its longevity, what would those two things be?

Make education more readily available to new members and suggested instructions for lodges to educate their members for lodges that simply don't know how.

And do business on the Entered Apprentice Degree to involve and engage our Entered Apprentices and Fellow Crafts.

9. If you could eliminate two things from American Freemasonry, and by the elimination of those things better endure its longevity, what would those two things be?

Sloppy ritual. I can't stand to watch it. It's the first impression to the Candidate.

Legislating ourselves to death through Grand Lodges.

10. What would you say to men who are interested in becoming a Freemason?

It was the best decision I ever made.

William O. Ware Lodge of Research
Walton, Kentucky
Voices of Freemasonry Vol. VIII

Name:	Eddie Hazelett
Years in Masonry:	12
Lodge Name and Number:	Paintsville Lodge No. 381 (KY)

1. What influenced you to seek membership in Freemasonry?

Historical intrigue. Historical curiosity due to family members holding membership.

2. How would you assess the current state of Freemasonry?

Detached from what the organization was designed to be.

3. Carl Claudy, a noted Masonic author and a Past Grand Master of the Grand Lodge of the District of Columbia (1943) wrote the following:

"The genius of Freemasonry is not our Masonic buildings and temples or the trappings of our organizations. It is not our great charities or community activities. It is not our beautiful rituals or their teachings! It is the 'practice of Freemasonry' by the Freemasons. Yet we cannot practice that which we do not know or understand. Thus, Masonic education is the foundation for our Fraternity."

Do you agree with Brother Claudy's statement? Why, or why not?

Agree. The inherent idea of "seeking" or "searching" for Light has fallen off track. The new norm is to create as many Master Masons as possible and as fast as possible.

4. How frequently do you read about Freemasonry? When you do read about Freemasonry, what factors influence your choice as to what to read?

Everyday. Subject matter determines it all. I am a fan of Masonic history. Assuming we made mistakes in the past, I try and find how we addressed the problems then. Did we curb the problems or enhance them?

5. What would your Lodge need to do to make you likely to become more actively engaged in Freemasonry?

I am currently at maximum capacity of activity at my Lodge.

6. Have you viewed any of the Masonic education videos posted by The Rubicon Masonic Society on their YouTube channel? To what extent do you find such video presentations beneficial?

Absolutely. Truly enjoy them being offered for viewing after the live event.

7. Do you subscribe to any Masonic publications? Yes No.

If not, why?

If so, mark which ones from the below list or add those to which you subscribe.

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Philalethes: The Journal of Masonic Research

Fraternal Review

Phylaxis

The Square

The Scottish Rite Journal

Research Lodge Publications

Freemasonry Today

Grand Lodge Publications

Other : _____

8. If you could do two things that would constructively change American Freemasonry and better ensure its longevity, what would those two things be?

Travel back in time and lock the doors at the location the Baltimore Convention was held at in 1843.

Remove the wagon wheel from the wagon that would be used to acquire William Morgan from the streets of Batavia, NY.

9. If you could eliminate two things from American Freemasonry, and by the elimination of those things better endure its longevity, what would those two things be?

Hazing; and

The choice of returning a Master Mason proficiency.

10. What would you say to men who are interested in becoming a Freemason?

I would allow them to wait until I could loan them some reading material. Rather than rush them in, allow them to make sure and understand what that specific Lodge requires and needs before engaging in the journey.

William O. Ware Lodge of Research

Walton, Kentucky

Voices of Freemasonry Vol. VIII

Name:	Jack Heide
Years in Masonry:	5
Lodge Name and Number:	Beverly Riverside Lodge No. 107 (NJ)

1. What influenced you to seek membership in Freemasonry?

I wanted to explore the esoteric in a setting that encouraged dialogue and friendship in pursuit of said esoterics.

2. How would you assess the current state of Freemasonry?

A mix of dying misogynistic culture with 1950s values and a renewal of deeper esoteric and spiritual renewal that is dividing and healing the Craft at the same time.

3. Carl Claudy, a noted Masonic author and a Past Grand Master of the Grand Lodge of the District of Columbia (1943) wrote the following:

"The genius of Freemasonry is not our Masonic buildings and temples or the trappings of our organizations. It is not our great charities or community activities. It is not our beautiful rituals or their teachings! It is the 'practice of Freemasonry' by the Freemasons. Yet we cannot practice that which we do not know or understand. Thus, Masonic education is the foundation for our Fraternity."

Do you agree with Brother Claudy's statement? Why, or why not?

Whole-heartedly agree. The acting of being a better person requires consistent action, it's the very basis of resilience across any individual or even organization. "What are we doing, not what do we have?" How are we sensing, anticipating, adapting, and learning as individuals and as an organization.

4. How frequently do you read about Freemasonry? When you do read about Freemasonry, what factors influence your choice as to what to read?

I am usually reading a book and/or several articles a week. I like to hit a lot of topics on Masonry so anything that tickle my fancy that week.

5. What would your Lodge need to do to make you likely to become more actively engaged in Freemasonry?

I am fairly active now, with the exception of our charity events, and use the word charity lightly. I wish our events were more focused, planned, and a connection to the Craft.

6. Have you viewed any of the Masonic education videos posted by The Rubicon Masonic Society on their YouTube channel? To what extent do you find such video presentations beneficial?

I have not but I have seen the documentary. They are immensely valuable as a form of learning.

7. Do you subscribe to any Masonic publications? Yes No.

If not, why?

If so, mark which ones from the below list or add those to which you subscribe.

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Freemasonry Today

Grand Lodge Publications

Other : _____

8. If you could do two things that would constructively change American Freemasonry and better ensure its longevity, what would those two things be?

Strategic Planning building on a resilience framework (sensing, anticipating, adapting, and learning). And guarding both the East and west gates.

9. If you could eliminate two things from American Freemasonry, and by the elimination of those things better endure its longevity, what would those two things be?

Obsession with fellowship being about sports and drinking. A couple of the Landmarks.

10. What would you say to men who are interested in becoming a Freemason?

Let's have a chat!

William O. Ware Lodge of Research
Walton, Kentucky
Voices of Freemasonry Vol. VIII

Name:

Steven Hessler

Years in Masonry:

14

1. What influenced you to seek membership in Freemasonry?

I was in a new area with no social connections. My mother had encouraged me to seek membership, but she believed a lot of the nonsense about Masonry having powerful influence in money and politics. I liked that it seemed more "cerebral" than the Elks or Moose, and felt it was a better fit for me than other fraternal orders.

2. How would you assess the current state of Freemasonry?

We are in a stage of great and unavoidable retraction. Membership numbers have fallen to the point that some branches and appendant bodies **MUST** go dormant to protect the fraternity as a whole. This is evident in the number of men serving leadership roles in multiple bodies, and in many cases, not doing any of them justice. It simply isn't feasible in the long term to take our limited pool of capable leaders and expect them all to serve in every Rite, Shrine, etc.

I do not believe that we are on the verge of extinction, but we will get to the point that our organizational structure will actually reflect the time and talents of our membership, then we will re-grow.

We will not approach our "heyday" numbers again, because in those times fraternal membership was akin to life insurance with its monetary benefits. We can't compete with the insurance industry and will find our niche as an eclectic group of armchair philosophers.

3. Carl Claudy, a noted Masonic author and a Past Grand Master of the Grand Lodge of the District of Columbia (1943) wrote the following:

"The genius of Freemasonry is not our Masonic buildings and temples or the trappings of our organizations. It is not our great charities or community activities. It is not our beautiful rituals or their teachings! It is the 'practice of Freemasonry' by

the Freemasons. Yet we cannot practice that which we do not know or understand. Thus, Masonic education is the foundation for our Fraternity."

Do you agree with Brother Claudy's statement? Why, or why not?

Yes, I agree. The ritual teaches a state of mind, a degree of character, that we should be reflecting in ALL our efforts, not just fraternal ones. When our actions as men and Masons better lines up with our mission statement, we will be a stronger organization for it.

4. How frequently do you read about Freemasonry? When you do read about Freemasonry, what factors influence your choice as to what to read?

Not as much as I used to. I am burned out on "this is how we fix Freemasonry" pieces. The historical pieces don't hold my attention much... I'm more concerned about where we're going than where we've been. I still enjoy reading prose along the lines of "this is what Masonry means to me" and how they apply that in their daily lives.

5. What would your Lodge need to do to make you likely to become more actively engaged in Freemasonry?

Have dues set at a level that I'm not feeling nickel-and-dimed for every social and charitable effort. I'd rather pay \$1000 in dues and never buy another tchotchke or raffle ticket. I would love to be upset because I had a schedule conflict that kept me from my fancy lodge dinner that my dues already paid for, then glad that I got out of spending another \$25 for a turkey sandwich and bag of chips.

Officers should move the nuts and bolts business meeting to a separate night. Membership is invited but not expected to attend. Membership meetings should be filled with educational, social, and charitable endeavors.

6. Have you viewed any of the Masonic education videos posted by The Rubicon Masonic Society on their YouTube channel? To what extent do you find such video presentations beneficial?

I have not.

7. Do you subscribe to any Masonic publications? Yes No.

If not, why?

I did for a while. I found the price of the publications to be more than what I was getting out of them. Articles seem to switch between "this is how to fix Masonry" and minutiae like "I analyzed the Deputy Grand Master's remarks at a 1878 table lodge."

If so, mark which ones from the below list or add those to which you subscribe.

- The Journal of the Masonic Society
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- Fraternal Review
- Phylaxis
- The Square
- The Scottish Rite Journal
- Research Lodge Publications
- Freemasonry Today
- Grand Lodge Publications
- Other : _____

8. If you could do two things that would constructively change American Freemasonry and better ensure its longevity, what would those two things be?

Dues that match the experience desired.

Membership activities that focused on Masonic tenets, not on property management or other business minutes.

9. If you could eliminate two things from American Freemasonry, and by the elimination of those things better endure its longevity, what would those two things be?

Fewer organizations...we need to focus our energy and stop spreading ourselves thin.

Stop trying to be everyone's fraternity. Decide who our membership niche is, and focus on them.

10. What would you say to men who are interested in becoming a Freemason?

It can change your life, if you let it. If becoming a Master Mason is the only meaningful experience you have in the fraternity, you're missing out.

William O. Ware Lodge of Research
Walton, Kentucky
Voices of Freemasonry Vol. VIII

Name: **Jay Hochberg**
Years in Masonry: **26**
Lodge Name and Number: **Publicity Lodge No. 1000 (NY)**

1. What influenced you to seek membership in Freemasonry?

My grandfather's involvement (1968-80) inspired me, seeing how much joy Freemasonry had brought him. Also, knowing how many giants of Western Civilization were Masons, I figured something tremendous must be behind the doors.

2. How would you assess the current state of Freemasonry?

In a word: desperate.

The preoccupation with bolstering membership numbers diminishes the experience of being a Freemason.

3. Carl Claudy, a noted Masonic author and a Past Grand Master of the Grand Lodge of the District of Columbia (1943) wrote the following:

"The genius of Freemasonry is not our Masonic buildings and temples or the trappings of our organizations. It is not our great charities or community activities. It is not our beautiful rituals or their teachings! It is the 'practice of Freemasonry' by the Freemasons. Yet we cannot practice that which we do not know or understand. Thus, Masonic education is the foundation for our Fraternity."

Do you agree with Brother Claudy's statement? Why, or why not?

Agree wholeheartedly. Education is the DNA of Freemasonry. Removing the hoodwink is education. Imparting the signs, grips, and words is education. Explaining what it all means is education.

Claudy is among my favorite twentieth century Masonic authors.

4. How frequently do you read about Freemasonry? When you do read about Freemasonry, what factors influence your choice as to what to read?

I read about Freemasonry incessantly, and almost to the exclusion of all else. Historical research, speculative writings, almost anything.

5. What would your Lodge need to do to make you likely to become more actively engaged in Freemasonry?

I cannot become more active in my lodge, as I currently serve as tiler, historian, education officer, and publisher of our monthly digital magazine. I also mentor our officers, because we lack active Past Masters.

6. Have you viewed any of the Masonic education videos posted by The Rubicon Masonic Society on their YouTube channel? To what extent do you find such video presentations beneficial?

I enjoy them.

7. Do you subscribe to any Masonic publications? Yes No.

If not, why?

If so, mark which ones from the below list or add those to which you subscribe.

The Journal of the Masonic Society

Philalethes: The Journal of Masonic Research

Fraternal Review

Phylaxis

The Square

The Scottish Rite Journal

Research Lodge Publications

Freemasonry Today

Grand Lodge Publications

Other : Collectanea, Masonic Book Clun et al.

8. If you could do two things that would constructively change American Freemasonry and better ensure its longevity, what would those two things be?

I believe membership ought to be invitational.

I would facilitate the devolution of the grand lodge system.

9. If you could eliminate two things from American Freemasonry, and by the elimination of those things better endure its longevity, what would those two things be?

Corruption (abuses of power, misuse of monies) in leadership.

Many appendant bodies that are nineteenth century constructs and serve no purpose in 2024 should be phased out quickly.

10. What would you say to men who are interested in becoming a Freemason?

I would solicit an explanation of what they think Freemasonry is. Then I would tell them what I think it is: a philosophical society for serious men who desire community among others working toward self-development.

William O. Ware Lodge of Research
Walton, Kentucky

Voices of Freemasonry Vol. VIII

Name: **Jayson King**
Years in Masonry: **8**
Lodge Name and Number: **MacArthur Lodge No. 427 (SC)**

1. What influenced you to seek membership in Freemasonry?

My grandfather was a Mason and in 1995, I found his old Masonic Bible in my grandmother's attic. She said I could have it and I told myself I'd look into it. The Bible went on my bookcase. Fast forward to 2015 and I was going through my bookcase and I found my grandfather's Bible. I went downstairs and turned on the History channel and there was a show on about Freemasonry and then my neighbor across the street called to invite my family out to dinner - he's a Mason. I saw his ring and explained the 2 other Masonic signs I had that day and I asked him what I needed to do to be one Mason. Coming into Masonry, I knew next to nothing. Since then, I have spent a lot of time researching the religious aspects of Masonry, as well as the history as it relates to the founders of our country - both fascinating topics!!

2. How would you assess the current state of Freemasonry?

I think Masonry in general is still strong regarding character building, community service, and keeping to traditions. I do believe it is declining to a certain extent as a result of the Covid lockdowns (I don't think we've fully recovered yet) and the digital age we are in that has fractured our local communities - a high percentage of younger people seem to be voluntarily self-isolating. I think the average age of our brotherhood is increasing. We need to bring in younger men to pick up where the older generation leaves off.

3. Carl Claudy, a noted Masonic author and a Past Grand Master of the Grand Lodge of the District of Columbia (1943) wrote the following:

"The genius of Freemasonry is not our Masonic buildings and temples or the trappings of our

organizations. It is not our great charities or community activities. It is not our beautiful rituals or their teachings! It is the 'practice of Freemasonry' by the Freemasons. Yet we cannot practice that which we do not know or understand. Thus, Masonic education is the foundation for our Fraternity."

Do you agree with Brother Claudy's statement? Why, or why not?

I believe Masonic education is paramount! From the simple concepts to the deep philosophical tenets of the brotherhood - these things need to be taught to our newer members and given as a refresher to those who have been around for a while. I, for one, am still not really sure what I can speak about to non-Masons. So erring on the side of caution, I generally don't speak a whole lot about Masonry to non-Masons. If asked a question, I will look to my Ahiman Rezon (SC Code & Constitution) and if it's written in there, I know I can mention it.

4. How frequently do you read about Freemasonry? When you do read about Freemasonry, what factors influence your choice as to what to read?

I don't read as much as I used to due to work challenges. I do occasionally read the QCCC from out of the UK, my monthly York Rite magazine and our annual Masonic Research Society booklet. I have several historical Masonic books on my bookcase that I plan on reading when I get some time.

Some factors that will influence my selection is: Is it historical in nature, is it a quick read, is the topic interesting, etc. Since my reading material varies from a few pages or so to hundreds of pages, the amount of time I have available often dictates what I read.

5. What would your Lodge need to do to make you likely to become more actively engaged in Freemasonry?

More Masonic education - history, as well as information from our Ahimon Rezon.

6. Have you viewed any of the Masonic education videos posted by The Rubicon Masonic Society on their YouTube channel? To what extent do you find such video presentations beneficial?

I thought I had, but I don't see that I was subscribed to the channel. I just now subscribed to the channel and plan on viewing the videos listed on the channel.

7. Do you subscribe to any Masonic publications? Yes No.

If not, why?

If so, mark which ones from the below list or add those to which you subscribe.

The Journal of the Masonic Society

Philalethes: The Journal of Masonic Research

Fraternal Review

Phylaxis

The Square

The Scottish Rite Journal

Research Lodge Publications

Freemasonry Today

Grand Lodge Publications

Other : QCCC – Quatuor Coronati Correspondence Circle

8. If you could do two things that would constructively change American Freemasonry and better ensure its longevity, what would those two things be?

1. I would "Advertise" - not in the traditional sense, but get the name of Freemasonry and the good we do in the community out there so people don't just think we are some demon cult or part of the illuminati that is trying to take over the world. I'm single now and been turned down on 3 separate occasions for dates because I'm a Freemason and they thought it was for devil

worshippers.

2. Increase the degree of education given in the lodges - maybe make it uniform across Grand jurisdictions. Create an education committee that puts our education to be delivered in all the lodges around the state.

9. If you could eliminate two things from American Freemasonry, and by the elimination of those things better endure its longevity, what would those two things be?

I'm not sure what to eliminate at this point. I understand some jurisdictions are allowing women in now - I'm against that. I think it dilutes the brotherhood - it's the same as girls being allowed to join the Boy Scouts - it's just wrong.

10. What would you say to men who are interested in becoming a Freemason?

I'd ask them what they know or have heard about Masonry. I'd then ask them what their interests are. Do they have an interest in history? Are they looking for a fraternal type organization (perhaps if they are a veteran), are they looking to improve themselves? If they answered 'yes' to some of those questions and expressed a desire to learn more, I'd invite them to one of our collations to meet the members of my lodge.

William O. Ware Lodge of Research

Walton, Kentucky

Voices of Freemasonry Vol. VIII

Name: **Christopher Kotwica**
Years in Masonry: **5**
Lodge Name and Number: **Clifton Lodge No. 203 (NJ)**

1. What influenced you to seek membership in Freemasonry?

I wanted to learn more of my spirituality and purpose within humanity. I also sought fellowship.

2. How would you assess the current state of Freemasonry?

There is a need to be progressive without abandoning tradition which is a delicate balancing act.

3. Carl Claudy, a noted Masonic author and a Past Grand Master of the Grand Lodge of the District of Columbia (1943) wrote the following:

"The genius of Freemasonry is not our Masonic buildings and temples or the trappings of our organizations. It is not our great charities or community activities. It is not our beautiful rituals or their teachings! It is the 'practice of Freemasonry' by the Freemasons. Yet we cannot practice that which we do not know or understand. Thus, Masonic education is the foundation for our Fraternity."

Do you agree with Brother Claudy's statement? Why, or why not?

I agree. You can preach but must then reach. Each Mason is a person who must act, not just exist.

4. How frequently do you read about Freemasonry? When you do read about Freemasonry, what factors influence your choice as to what to read?

I take suggestions from Brothers, blogs, and random searches.

5. What would your Lodge need to do to make you likely to become more actively engaged in Freemasonry?

Bring the fun into it.

6. Have you viewed any of the Masonic education videos posted by The Rubicon Masonic Society on their YouTube channel? To what extent do you find such video presentations beneficial?

Not yet.

7. Do you subscribe to any Masonic publications? _____ Yes _____ No.

If not, why? **Lack of knowledge in them.**

If so, mark which ones from the below list or add those to which you subscribe.

___ The Journal of the Masonic Society

___ Philaethes: The Journal of Masonic Research

___ Fraternal Review

___ Phylaxis

___ The Square

___ The Scottish Rite Journal

___ Research Lodge Publications

___ Freemasonry Today

___ Grand Lodge Publications

___ Other : _____

8. If you could do two things that would constructively change American Freemasonry and better ensure its longevity, what would those two things be?

Allow flexibility of communication nights.

Decrease membership/dues costs.

9. If you could eliminate two things from American Freemasonry, and by the elimination of those things better endure its longevity, what would those two things be?

None.

10. What would you say to men who are interested in becoming a Freemason?

Talk to a Brother, find out about the local lodge and be sure you know why you are seeking the Light.

William O. Ware Lodge of Research

Walton, Kentucky

Voices of Freemasonry Vol. VIII

Name: **James Lambert**
Years in Masonry: **31**
Lodge Name and Number: **Winyah Lodge No. 40 (SC)**

1. What influenced you to seek membership in Freemasonry?

History with the Fraternity. I grew up surrounded by Masons.

2. How would you assess the current state of Freemasonry?

Recovering from some well-intentioned missteps.

3. Carl Claudy, a noted Masonic author and a Past Grand Master of the Grand Lodge of the District of Columbia (1943) wrote the following:

"The genius of Freemasonry is not our Masonic buildings and temples or the trappings of our organizations. It is not our great charities or community activities. It is not our beautiful rituals or their teachings! It is the 'practice of Freemasonry' by the Freemasons. Yet we cannot practice that which we do not know or understand. Thus, Masonic education is the foundation for our Fraternity."

Do you agree with Brother Claudy's statement? Why, or why not?

I agree for the most part. Education is great and important, but it is one of the three legs of our Masonic foundation. The other two being ritualistic work and the other is our charity and social presence.

4. How frequently do you read about Freemasonry? When you do read about Freemasonry, what factors influence your choice as to what to read?

I read and study my ritual and work to further understand their lessons.

5. What would your Lodge need to do to make you likely to become more actively engaged in Freemasonry?

I am active.

6. Have you viewed any of the Masonic education videos posted by The Rubicon Masonic Society on their YouTube channel? To what extent do you find such video presentations beneficial?

No, I have not watched.

7. Do you subscribe to any Masonic publications? Yes No.

If not, why?

If so, mark which ones from the below list or add those to which you subscribe.

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Fraternal Review

Phylaxis

The Square

The Scottish Rite Journal

Research Lodge Publications

Freemasonry Today

Grand Lodge Publications

___Other : _____

8. If you could do two things that would constructively change American Freemasonry and better ensure its longevity, what would those two things be?

Lodges understand the things that their members and potential members desire and supply it to them.

9. If you could eliminate two things from American Freemasonry, and by the elimination of those things better endure its longevity, what would those two things be?

I would want everyone to understand that we must be flexible.

10. What would you say to men who are interested in becoming a Freemason?

I would think about their character and if they are upstanding, I would encourage them to ask without saying it.

William O. Ware Lodge of Research

Walton, Kentucky

Voices of Freemasonry Vol. VIII

Name: **Robert (Bob) Larrabee**
Years in Masonry: **12**
Lodge Name and Number: **St. Johns Providence Lodge No. 1 (RI)**

1. What influenced you to seek membership in Freemasonry?

Routinely and continually being in the presence of personal and professional colleagues, Masons, who spoke of the good work typically done by Masons and suggesting that I'd enjoy it myself if I'd take the initiative to join.

Roughly 8 years later, I did just that.

2. How would you assess the current state of Freemasonry?

Can only speak confidently of my own experiences within my Blue Lodge and that said, I categorize it as vibrant, focused, committed to excellence and well governed.

This year's Master, Joe Bernier, instilled a focus and inspired us on the tenets of Observance.

3. Carl Claudy, a noted Masonic author and a Past Grand Master of the Grand Lodge of the District of Columbia (1943) wrote the following:

"The genius of Freemasonry is not our Masonic buildings and temples or the trappings of our organizations. It is not our great charities or

community activities. It is not our beautiful rituals or their teachings! It is the 'practice of Freemasonry' by the Freemasons. Yet we cannot practice that which we do not know or understand. Thus, Masonic education is the foundation for our Fraternity."

Do you agree with Brother Claudy's statement? Why, or why not?

Absolutely agree. And as we grow intellectually as Masons, we teach (or should) and when we teach, we continue to learn. And on it goes.

4. How frequently do you read about Freemasonry? When you do read about Freemasonry, what factors influence your choice as to what to read?

Masonically, I personally don't read much. Over the summer of 2023 while we were at recess, at the behest of W: Bernier, we read Hammer's Observing the Craft. For me, it was eye-opening and caused some internal conflict relative to Hammer's positions, particularly those of Concordant bodies. Overall, a great read and I'm better for it.

For me, other aspects of learning are those sage points imparted on us as candidates and reinforced upon raising: Keep your eyes and ears open.

5. What would your Lodge need to do to make you likely to become more actively engaged in Freemasonry?

I feel I'm there already, serving as JW and soon (presumptively of course) as Master. Very active in Scottish Rite and earned the MSA designation in June 2023.

6. Have you viewed any of the Masonic education videos posted by The Rubicon Masonic Society on their YouTube channel? To what extent do you find such video presentations beneficial?

To my (current) chagrin I have not. But I pledge to do so.

7. Do you subscribe to any Masonic publications? Yes No.

If not, why?

If so, mark which ones from the below list or add those to which you subscribe.

The Journal of the Masonic Society

Philalethes: The Journal of Masonic Research

Fraternal Review

Phylaxis

The Square

The Scottish Rite Journal

Research Lodge Publications

Freemasonry Today

Grand Lodge Publications

Other : _____

8. If you could do two things that would constructively change American Freemasonry and better ensure its longevity, what would those two things be?

Again, speaking locally, engage candidates, especially when raised, in Lodge duties to cement their commitment to the Craft and by extension, the community.

Make their experiences as enjoyable and fruitful as possible.

9. If you could eliminate two things from American Freemasonry, and by the elimination of those things better endure its longevity, what would those two things be?

Wean out continually ill-performing lodges, and sadly they do exist in every jurisdiction. Easier said than done for sure.

Within boundaries, dispense the notion that we can't tell the public at-large what we do and why we do it, particularly the charitable activities.

10. What would you say to men who are interested in becoming a Freemason?

Let's talk. Come on down.

William O. Ware Lodge of Research

Walton, Kentucky

Voices of Freemasonry Vol. VIII

Name: **Craig W. Logsdon**
Years in Masonry: **19**
Lodge Name and Number: **Green River Lodge No. 88 (KY)**

1. What influenced you to seek membership in Freemasonry?

My Grandfathers both were Masons and several other family members. A lot of curiosity at first as they never did divulge any information.

2. How would you assess the current state of Freemasonry?

Stable, but not growing enough to be sustainable in some areas.

3. Carl Claudy, a noted Masonic author and a Past Grand Master of the Grand Lodge of the District of Columbia (1943) wrote the following:

"The genius of Freemasonry is not our Masonic buildings and temples or the trappings of our organizations. It is not our great charities or community activities. It is not our beautiful rituals or their teachings! It is the 'practice of Freemasonry' by the Freemasons. Yet we cannot practice that which we do not know or understand. Thus, Masonic education is the foundation for our Fraternity."

Do you agree with Brother Claudy's statement? Why, or why not?

Much like the statement for Christians, "you may be the only Bible someone reads..." Being a known Mason and living by example could be all another needs to inquire about membership.

4. How frequently do you read about Freemasonry? When you do read about Freemasonry, what factors influence your choice as to what to read?

Not often enough.

5. What would your Lodge need to do to make you likely to become more actively engaged in Freemasonry?

More participants.

6. Have you viewed any of the Masonic education videos posted by The Rubicon Masonic Society on their YouTube channel? To what extent do you find such video presentations beneficial?

No.

7. Do you subscribe to any Masonic publications? _____ Yes X No.

If not, why? **Not home enough to read it.**

If so, mark which ones from the below list or add those to which you subscribe.

___ The Journal of the Masonic Society

___ Philalethes: The Journal of Masonic Research

___ Fraternal Review

___ Phylaxis

___ The Square

___ The Scottish Rite Journal

___ Research Lodge Publications

___ Freemasonry Today

___ Grand Lodge Publications

___ Other : _____

8. If you could do two things that would constructively change American Freemasonry and better ensure its longevity, what would those two things be?

More family involvement;

Start a friend to brother program on the 5th night...(5th Thursday, if your regular meeting is on Thursday).

9. If you could eliminate two things from American Freemasonry, and by the elimination of those things better endure its longevity, what would those two things be?

Nothing.

10. What would you say to men who are interested in becoming a Freemason?

In the age of information do not research what is coming next...it won't have as much meaning as it will the way it's taught you.

William O. Ware Lodge of Research

Walton, Kentucky

Voices of Freemasonry Vol. VIII

Name: **Charles Murphy, PGM**
Years in Masonry: **32**
Lodge Name and Number: **Genoa Lodge No. 433 (OH)**

1. What influenced you to seek membership in Freemasonry?

I greatly admired my Father-in-Law, who was an active Freemason and Shriner.

2. How would you assess the current state of Freemasonry?

Challenging, due to the numerous interpersonal and electronic distractions prevalent in today's society.

3. Carl Claudy, a noted Masonic author and a Past Grand Master of the Grand Lodge of the District of Columbia (1943) wrote the following:

"The genius of Freemasonry is not our Masonic buildings and temples or the trappings of our organizations. It is not our great charities or community activities. It is not our beautiful rituals or their teachings! It is the 'practice of Freemasonry' by the Freemasons. Yet we cannot practice that which we do not know or understand. Thus, Masonic education is the foundation for our Fraternity."

Do you agree with Brother Claudy's statement? Why, or why not?

Absolutely. Brotherly Love, Relief and Truth have been, still are, and will continue to be the most important attribute we have, that we share with each other, and that we share with others. Without those important foundations all the buildings and accoutrements are meaningless. It is through education that we impart this focus to our younger members, so they in turn, will pass it on to those who follow them.

4. How frequently do you read about Freemasonry? When you do read about Freemasonry, what factors influence your choice as to what to read?

I am editor of a regional Masonic publication, The Masonic Bulletin, and am caused to frequently read materials and documents for that purpose. Unfortunately, I don't have as much time as I'd like to read as much as I'd like.

5. What would your Lodge need to do to make you likely to become more actively engaged in Freemasonry?

My Lodge fostered a love for Freemasonry early on in my "Masonic Career," and I've never been more grateful. I still reap the benefits from that today. We always have to remember that it's the Lodge brothers that are the true foundations and cornerstones of our fraternity as we look toward ultimately being welcomed into that "house not made with hands, eternal in the Heavens."

6. Have you viewed any of the Masonic education videos posted by The Rubicon Masonic Society on their YouTube channel? To what extent do you find such video presentations beneficial?

I have not.

7. Do you subscribe to any Masonic publications? Yes No.

If not, why?

If so, mark which ones from the below list or add those to which you subscribe.

- The Journal of the Masonic Society
- Philalethes: The Journal of Masonic Research
- Fraternal Review
- Phylaxis
- The Square
- The Scottish Rite Journal
- Research Lodge Publications
- Freemasonry Today
- Grand Lodge Publications
- Other : Royal Arch Magazine, The Masonic Bulletin

8. If you could do two things that would constructively change American Freemasonry and better ensure its longevity, what would those two things be?

Work to actively engage our younger members. There's nothing we older members can do that will influence Freemasonry for generations, unless we engage our younger members and try to infuse the same passion and excitement for it that we share.

9. If you could eliminate two things from American Freemasonry, and by the elimination of those things better endure its longevity, what would those two things be?

If we knew what these magic bullets were, wouldn't we already have pulled the trigger? It seems to me that we're still hesitant to express our love for the organization, and that we have numerous ignorant detractors (and that number is growing). I believe the only significant changes can be made at the member level, and not a Grand Lodge, or even Lodge level. The internet has in many ways dulled the importance of personal interactions, and therefore many qualified men who would be great Freemasons don't even know what they're missing. No organization can face that on its own; it will take the membership, and indeed the individual members to make that happen. Only by expressing

ourselves to the general populace do we have any hope of making that happen.

10. What would you say to men who are interested in becoming a Freemason?

Absolutely consider it, but make sure you take the time to meet members, perhaps experience the events of several different lodges, and make decisions with no pre-conceived notions. Freemasonry is different for every man who joins; that's part of what makes it so special. Keeping in mind it's the internal and not the external features of a man that make him a good prospect for Freemasonry, one has to recognize that everyone is different with different upbringings and life experiences. No Lodge is for everyone, but I am a firm believer that every Lodge is a good fit for someone.

William O. Ware Lodge of Research

Walton, Kentucky

Voices of Freemasonry Vol. VIII

Name: **Richard Newton**
Years in Masonry: **14**
Lodge Name and Number: **Forest Lodge No. 166 (NY)**

1. What influenced you to seek membership in Freemasonry?

Family history and research. I knew my father was made a Mason when I was a teenager, and I found out that my grandfather was as well. Further research found that my great-grandfather was also a member. Joining had been mentioned to me for years by a family friend, who had been my father's signer as well, that I should join. When I was 39, it was finally my wife, who had been reading Dan Brown books, who asked why I never joined. I determined that it was probably the right time for me then, so I knocked, and the door of Masonry opened to me. Last year, I raised my 19-year-old son as a 5th direct generation Brother.

2. How would you assess the current state of Freemasonry?

I believe it is in about the same state as the rest of the country and world, that state would be "confusion". We have probably the largest generational and technological gap ever in history. This gap has led to a lot of misunderstandings amongst how to go about communicating with each other, and how information should be transmitted.

3. Carl Claudy, a noted Masonic author and a Past Grand Master of the Grand Lodge of the District of Columbia (1943) wrote the following:

"The genius of Freemasonry is not our Masonic buildings and temples or the trappings of our organizations. It is not our great charities or community activities. It is not our beautiful rituals or their teachings! It is the 'practice of Freemasonry' by the Freemasons. Yet we cannot practice that which we do not know or understand. Thus, Masonic education is the foundation for our Fraternity."

Do you agree with Brother Claudy's statement? Why, or why not?

Yes, I agree, in part. I believe the rituals are just as important as the practice outside of the Lodge. How can we have Masonic education without the ritual? Contained in the ritual are the real "secrets" to life. I often ponder and meditate on the ritual, and the meaning behind it. I think about how often non-Masons make comments about only successful people becoming Masons, and after consideration, I have discovered that it is really the ritual and education about the ritual, when studied properly, is what makes a man successful in life. This does not mean money, but it means developing confidence, developing communication skills, organizational skills and writing skills. It means developing a proper sense of boundary and unrighteousness. It means developing a sense of knowing when one should speak, and when one is better off practicing silence. All of these skills make for a successful person in Lodge and in life.

4. How frequently do you read about Freemasonry? When you do read about Freemasonry, what factors influence your choice as to what to read?

I tend to enjoy history and that aspect of Freemasonry most of all. I enjoy going through archives, and even helping people who contact the Lodge looking for genealogy help for a relative who was a member. I do enjoy an aspect of the esoteric, but with my busy schedule it is tough for me to read on

that, as I tend to start reading and end up spending more time thinking about what I read.

5. What would your Lodge need to do to make you likely to become more actively engaged in Freemasonry?

I was lucky in that my Lodge did exactly as I needed to keep me active. The biggest thing is to know your Lodge audience. Some Brothers like to be active in event planning and making dinners. Some like to come and learn and do ritual. Some are good actors and love taking part in degrees and rehearsals. Some just like to come and enjoy the comradery. Nobody wants to just come and hear minutes and pay bills. As for myself, my Lodge saw that I was energetic and had a thirst for knowledge. I picked up the ritual right away and went through the chairs fast. When I had a suggestion, which was frequent, they encouraged me to run with it. Here's the key...nobody ever once told me "that's not how we do it." I was considerably younger than most when I joined, and they embraced that instead of fighting against it.

6. Have you viewed any of the Masonic education videos posted by The Rubicon Masonic Society on their YouTube channel? To what extent do you find such video presentations beneficial?

I have not watched that series of videos. I have watched several videos that the Scottish Rite NMJ has put out, as well as the Grand Lodge of NY, and I find many of these very beneficial.

7. Do you subscribe to any Masonic publications? Yes No.

If not, why?

If so, mark which ones from the below list or add those to which you subscribe.

The Journal of the Masonic Society

Philalethes: The Journal of Masonic Research

Fraternal Review

Phylaxis

The Square

The Scottish Rite Journal

Research Lodge Publications

Freemasonry Today

Grand Lodge Publications

Other : _____

8. If you could do two things that would constructively change American Freemasonry and better ensure its longevity, what would those two things be?

That is tough to say, because as we all know, there is no "one-way" to do it in America. Every state has its own set of rules, and practices.

That being said, one thing that I would encourage for sure is the universal acceptance and tolerance of different cultures, backgrounds, and yes, even lifestyles.

Another thing that I would try, and have tried to do, is to learn and to teach better people skills, and communication skills.

9. If you could eliminate two things from American Freemasonry, and by the elimination of those things better endure its longevity, what would those two things be?

I am only going to give one, because it is what I see as one of the most important issues that I have seen in my short time.

Going back to the last question, one of the biggest things that needs eliminating is the intolerance of differences. We are supposed to be an "enlightened" society, born out of the discriminations of middle-ages, where engaging in science or something outside of a specific religion could and would result in a gruesome torture or death. These types of behaviors are 100% contrary to our very core teachings.

10. What would you say to men who are interested in becoming a Freemason?

Please seek out and visit more than one Lodge in your area. Take the time to talk with and discuss what you are hoping to get out of Masonry with the members of the Lodge, who should be interested in hearing your thoughts. Ask about things that are important to you, such as: How many men there have the same interests? What kinds of activities go on outside of the Lodge room? How many of the men have spouses or children, and are there activities that they may get involved with as well, if they wish to? Are there other spouses or significant others who yours could talk to about how they feel about the organization? Just ask questions. Don't go rushing in and then find out that it will not be for you, or your spouse doesn't like you doing it.

William O. Ware Lodge of Research

Walton, Kentucky

Voices of Freemasonry Vol. VIII

Name:	Jim Roble
Years in Masonry:	13
Lodge Name and Number:	St. Marys Lodge No. 240 (KY)

1. What influenced you to seek membership in Freemasonry?

Good men doing the right thing.

2. How would you assess the current state of Freemasonry?

Dying off with our older brothers.

3. Carl Claudy, a noted Masonic author and a Past Grand Master of the Grand Lodge of the District of Columbia (1943) wrote the following:

"The genius of Freemasonry is not our Masonic buildings and temples or the trappings of our

organizations. It is not our great charities or community activities. It is not our beautiful rituals or their teachings! It is the 'practice of Freemasonry' by the Freemasons. Yet we cannot practice that which we do not know or understand. Thus, Masonic education is the foundation for our Fraternity."

Do you agree with Brother Claudy's statement? Why, or why not?

To some extent our charity and such practices are great things we do but we should only do them for the deserving yet now we have a new population out there that has made some choices in life that they believe we owe them.

4. How frequently do you read about Freemasonry? When you do read about Freemasonry, what factors influence your choice as to what to read?

Often.

5. What would your Lodge need to do to make you likely to become more actively engaged in Freemasonry?

Have more of them be active in the work.

6. Have you viewed any of the Masonic education videos posted by The Rubicon Masonic Society on their YouTube channel? To what extent do you find such video presentations beneficial?

No.

7. Do you subscribe to any Masonic publications? X Yes No.

If not, why?

If so, mark which ones from the below list or add those to which you subscribe.

 X The Journal of the Masonic Society

___ Philalethes: The Journal of Masonic Research

___ Fraternal Review

___ Phylaxis

___ The Square

___ The Scottish Rite Journal

___ Research Lodge Publications

___ Freemasonry Today

___ Grand Lodge Publications

___ Other : _____

8. If you could do two things that would constructively change American Freemasonry and better ensure its longevity, what would those two things be?

Less lip service.

More activity.

9. If you could eliminate two things from American Freemasonry, and by the elimination of those things better endure its longevity, what would those two things be?

Divorce ourselves from the Masonic Homes these are major corporations that may or may not be there for us or our families in our time of need if they are available to us it is at a high price tag and we are donating money to them that could be going to help the truly need such as Shriners kids.

10. What would you say to men who are interested in becoming a Freemason?

That depends on the man.

William O. Ware Lodge of Research

Walton, Kentucky

Voices of Freemasonry Vol. VIII

Name: **Israel Ruiz**
Years in Masonry: **7**
Lodge Name and Number: **Alcyone Lodge No. 695 (NY);**

1. What influenced you to seek membership in Freemasonry?

From my early teens and into adulthood I was intrigued by the fraternity and the history behind it as well as how often it turned up in my esoteric studies.

2. How would you assess the current state of Freemasonry?

Unfortunately, I believe that many lodges have become more of a social club. A place to hang out with friends instead of an emphasis on education. I believe that fellowship is important, but a natural occurrence, when like-minded individuals meet.

3. Carl Claudy, a noted Masonic author and a Past Grand Master of the Grand Lodge of the District of Columbia (1943) wrote the following:

"The genius of Freemasonry is not our Masonic buildings and temples or the trappings of our organizations. It is not our great charities or community activities. It is not our beautiful rituals or their teachings! It is the 'practice of Freemasonry' by the Freemasons. Yet we cannot practice that which we do not know or understand. Thus, Masonic education is the foundation for our Fraternity."

Do you agree with Brother Claudy's statement? Why, or why not?

Absolutely. I think this is the what many lodges today are missing. I am fortunate enough to be a member of a Lodge that puts education at the forefront. I travel to many other lodges in my jurisdiction and for the most part I find this greatly lacking. I have been to too many meetings that only focus on bills, etc. Most members just want to get out of the meeting and find somewhere to hang out and drink and socialize. I can do that with anyone else. Freemasonry was always meant to be something more. Our three degrees themselves could have a lifetime of education.

4. How frequently do you read about Freemasonry? When you do read about Freemasonry, what factors influence your choice as to what to read?

I try to frequent Masonic authors or esoteric topics. Masonic authors I read:

**Walter Wilmshurst
Manly Hall
Kirk MacNulty**

and others

5. What would your Lodge need to do to make you likely to become more actively engaged in Freemasonry?

My mother lodge is extremely focused on education and esoteric topics. We are one of only a few Observant lodges in New York. I feel fortunate to have found such a lodge and I am very engaged and can't wait for our meeting nights. Even our social nights have an element of education to them.

6. Have you viewed any of the Masonic education videos posted by The Rubicon Masonic Society on their YouTube channel? To what extent do you find such video presentations beneficial?

I have not, but I will now.

7. Do you subscribe to any Masonic publications? Yes No.

If not, why?

If so, mark which ones from the below list or add those to which you subscribe.

The Journal of the Masonic Society

Philalethes: The Journal of Masonic Research

Fraternal Review

Phylaxis

The Square

The Scottish Rite Journal

Research Lodge Publications

Freemasonry Today

Grand Lodge Publications

Other : _____

8. If you could do two things that would constructively change American Freemasonry and better ensure its longevity, what would those two things be?

I believe everyone is looking for different things when it comes to Freemasonry, but I still believe we should be going back to the observant model. To me being an O.M. lodge is kind of odd. We are getting the Observant Masonry label, basically for conducting our lodge the way it was intended before Masonry lost sight of this and became more of a social club. I think we need to get back to that. O.M. lodges should not be the exception. They should be the standard. You can join Elks or another organization for just a social club.

Also, I think that we need to look at our candidates more seriously. Too often we are looking at just boosting our numbers, instead of worrying about the quality of the individual and whether or not they would be a good fit for our specific lodges. That is why there is such a high attrition rate today.

9. If you could eliminate two things from American Freemasonry, and by the elimination of those things better endure its longevity, what would those two things be?

I would take part of my previous answer and apply it here. Stop pushing individuals through to boost numbers. Most individuals will not stay. They are not getting the experience they thought. A lot of individuals feel that Masonry is a bit Mysterious and that adds to the allure, only to find out after they join, many members are fumbling through their ritual, barely able to memorize, never mind make it impactful, and after their degree they are lucky to get any kind of education. Many leave shortly after because of this. And this does nothing for our numbers or anything else constructive.

Also, these quick degrees I would get rid of. One day classes, or even degrees one after another within a couple of months I think does an injustice to the candidates. Proficiency should be more than just memorizing some lines. It should be an understanding of lessons within the first degree. A maturing of an EA to FC, and an FC to MM. I think when the candidates are ready, they should go on to the next degree. Not have all three degrees scheduled in advanced and just push people through, regardless of their true "proficiency."

10. What would you say to men who are interested in becoming a Freemason?

If possible research some lodges close to you. See if maybe you can attend some fellowship nights at different lodges to see if you relate to the other brothers there. See if they seem to be offering what you are looking for. This might be hard as new candidates often don't understand the differences between individual lodges and think all should operate similarly. Also, some lodges might take offense to a candidate who was looking at more lodges than just them. But I think if we started to see more candidates who were given this opportunity, two things would happen:

1) A candidate would be more likely to find a lodge that meets his expectations and more likely to stay and become an active member.

2) Other lodges might start to see that certain lodges were getting and retaining more quality members, and want to see what they could do to accomplish the same, maybe increasing the pool of valuable experiences across jurisdictions.

William O. Ware Lodge of Research

Walton, Kentucky

Voices of Freemasonry Vol. VIII

Name:	Donald Rutheford
Years in Masonry:	38
Lodge Name and Number:	Loving Lodge No. 323 (KY); Halfway Lodge No. 852 (KY); Marlin White Lodge of Research (KY)

1. What influenced you to seek membership in Freemasonry?

My father's Masonic actions.

2. How would you assess the current state of Freemasonry?

It's holding on, but it's also dying.

3. Carl Claudy, a noted Masonic author and a Past Grand Master of the Grand Lodge of the District of Columbia (1943) wrote the following:

"The genius of Freemasonry is not our Masonic buildings and temples or the trappings of our organizations. It is not our great charities or community activities. It is not our beautiful rituals or their teachings! It is the 'practice of Freemasonry' by the Freemasons. Yet we cannot practice that which we do not know or understand. Thus, Masonic education is the foundation for our Fraternity."

Do you agree with Brother Claudy's statement? Why, or why not?

Yes, very much so. If we don't teach our young Craft and let them watch us live it then they will never grasp the truth meaning of our fraternity.

4. How frequently do you read about Freemasonry? When you do read about Freemasonry, what factors influence your choice as to what to read?

I faithfully read the "Masonic Home Journal" and other York Rite publications I receive. I'm always reading the Grand Lodge proceedings from years past and if I deem it worthwhile some things from the internet.

5. What would your Lodge need to do to make you likely to become more actively engaged in Freemasonry?

I feel any lodge needs to have as many out of tiled lodge get together. Also to include as many family members.

6. Have you viewed any of the Masonic education videos posted by The Rubicon Masonic Society on their YouTube channel? To what extent do you find such video presentations beneficial?

No, I haven't. But I will.

7. Do you subscribe to any Masonic publications? Yes No.

If not, why?

If so, mark which ones from the below list or add those to which you subscribe.

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Philalethes: The Journal of Masonic Research

Fraternal Review

Phylaxis

The Square

The Scottish Rite Journal

Research Lodge Publications

Freemasonry Today

Grand Lodge Publications

Other : _____

8. If you could do two things that would constructively change American Freemasonry and better ensure its longevity, what would those two things be?

To rid the stigma of being a clandestine organization and better informed the public of all of the Masonic charities.

9. If you could eliminate two things from American Freemasonry, and by the elimination of those things better endure its longevity, what would those two things be?

I wish all lodges would better secure their west gate and base their membership on quality instead of quantity.

I'm also in favor of having each candidate provide his perspective lodge with a state police background check.

10. What would you say to men who are interested in becoming a Freemason?

It's something that most people will say is the best thing they have ever done and wished they had done it sooner.

William O. Ware Lodge of Research

Walton, Kentucky

Voices of Freemasonry Vol. VIII

Name:	Ruchard Schultz
Years in Masonry:	26
Lodge Name and Number:	Clifton Lodge No. 203 (NJ)

1. What influenced you to seek membership in Freemasonry?

The history of it, specifically how Masons acted whilst at war with one another (American Civil War).

2. How would you assess the current state of Freemasonry?

State of flux. I see varying groups within Freemasonry competing for control. Appendant bodies rushing to grab new members because of their depleting ranks, not caring how new to Freemasonry they are. Lodge officers struggling so they push people through and end up with presiding officers that have less than 5 yrs. Esoteric members claiming theirs is the true path or that Freemasonry is all about ritual or all about the social fraternal. No group understanding that Freemasonry [is] not just one thing.

3. Carl Claudy, a noted Masonic author and a Past Grand Master of the Grand Lodge of the District of Columbia (1943) wrote the following:

"The genius of Freemasonry is not our Masonic buildings and temples or the trappings of our organizations. It is not our great charities or community activities. It is not our beautiful rituals or their teachings! It is the 'practice of Freemasonry' by the Freemasons. Yet we cannot practice that which we do not know or understand. Thus, Masonic education is the foundation for our Fraternity."

Do you agree with Brother Claudy's statement? Why, or why not?

I agree with this caveat, it depends on the education. Who decides what is the right education or not? Who decides what the right interpretation is or not, is it the ritualist? If so, then we must teach our members how to live and practice those lessons within the ritual. We haven't gotten there yet so nothing else matters. Is it the esotericist? Then they need to make honest, solid connections and not what they fancy to be. There are universal truths and teachings Freemasonry shares, but that doesn't mean Freemasonry goes back to antiquity.

4. How frequently do you read about Freemasonry? When you do read about Freemasonry, what factors influence your choice as to what to read?

I read more than I used to. As a new Mason, my focus was on the ritual, reading it, learning it and practicing it. I would also read the monitors of other jurisdictions. Now I like to read books that connect Freemasonry to living a better life. Esotericism for me, is like philosophy, it is all up for interpretation and often it is a lot of words that say little.

5. What would your Lodge need to do to make you likely to become more actively engaged in Freemasonry?

The same any group I belong to, offer meaningful programs at each meeting. Varying programs that will interest the varying interests of the membership and not just the interest of the WM. Education comes in all forms.

6. Have you viewed any of the Masonic education videos posted by The Rubicon Masonic Society on their YouTube channel? To what extent do you find such video presentations beneficial?

I have, but will tend to listen to the occasion podcast instead.

7. Do you subscribe to any Masonic publications? Yes No.

If not, why? **Used to, like the Philaethes Society, but always forget to renew and I am not drawn into their articles; at least not now.**

If so, mark which ones from the below list or add those to which you subscribe.

- The Journal of the Masonic Society
- Philaethes: The Journal of Masonic Research
- Fraternal Review
- Phylaxis
- The Square
- The Scottish Rite Journal

___ Research Lodge Publications

___ Freemasonry Today

___ Grand Lodge Publications

___ Other : _____

8. If you could do two things that would constructively change American Freemasonry and better ensure its longevity, what would those two things be?

Consolidate weak lodges and have fewer lodges, but stringer ones. Create a podcast for the jurisdiction that is based on other successful ones like the Rubicon Masonic, The Working Tools, the Winding Stairs, etc.

9. If you could eliminate two things from American Freemasonry, and by the elimination of those things better endure its longevity, what would those two things be?

Politics and wholesale autocracy some of our leaders seem to like practicing. Servant leadership is not autocracy, but eliminating politics could help with that too. Second, discourage lodges from accepting members because they want warm bodies, quality over quantity!

10. What would you say to men who are interested in becoming a Freemason?

Focus on the Blue Lodge, learn the ritual and its life lessons. Focus on putting them into practice to be a better version of yourself than the day before. Avoid the pressures of joining appendant groups or of becoming an officer until you are ready and have spent some time on the sidelines, watching, listening, learning.

William O. Ware Lodge of Research
Walton, Kentucky
Voices of Freemasonry Vol. VIII

Name: **Frank Sforza**
Years in Masonry: **10**
Lodge Name and Number: **South Shore Long Beach Lodge
No. 1126 (NY)**

1. What influenced you to seek membership in Freemasonry?

I was in need of positive male role models in my life both personally and professionally.

All of my male friends were dead or in jail.

2. How would you assess the current state of Freemasonry?

Honestly, poor. Too many things to do, not enough brothers to go around and the standards of quality are very low.

3. Carl Claudy, a noted Masonic author and a Past Grand Master of the Grand Lodge of the District of Columbia (1943) wrote the following:

"The genius of Freemasonry is not our Masonic buildings and temples or the trappings of our organizations. It is not our great charities or community activities. It is not our beautiful rituals or their teachings! It is the 'practice of Freemasonry' by the Freemasons. Yet we cannot practice that which we do not know or understand. Thus, Masonic education is the foundation for our Fraternity."

Do you agree with Brother Claudy's statement? Why, or why not?

I do agree.

4. How frequently do you read about Freemasonry? When you do read about Freemasonry, what factors influence your choice as to what to read?

Every day, between 4-6 hours of study, ritual, meditation, reading, etc.

5. What would your Lodge need to do to make you likely to become more actively engaged in Freemasonry?

They would have to treat me fairly and with respect.

6. Have you viewed any of the Masonic education videos posted by The Rubicon Masonic Society on their YouTube channel? To what extent do you find such video presentations beneficial?

I have not.

7. Do you subscribe to any Masonic publications? Yes No.

If not, why?

If so, mark which ones from the below list or add those to which you subscribe.

The Journal of the Masonic Society

Philalethes: The Journal of Masonic Research

Fraternal Review

Phylaxis

The Square

The Scottish Rite Journal

Research Lodge Publications

Freemasonry Today

Grand Lodge Publications

Other : Grotto Magazine

8. If you could do two things that would constructively change American Freemasonry and better ensure its longevity, what would those two things be?

- 1. Raise the dues; and**
- 2. Make smaller Lodges.**

9. If you could eliminate two things from American Freemasonry, and by the elimination of those things better endure its longevity, what would those two things be?

1. Purple circles; and
2. Ritual competitions.

10. What would you say to men who are interested in becoming a Freemason?

Don't do it till you have established yourself.

William O. Ware Lodge of Research
Walton, Kentucky
Voices of Freemasonry Vol. VIII

Name:	Jesse Sims
Years in Masonry:	17
Lodge Name and Number:	B. R. Young Lodge No. 132 (KY)

1. What influenced you to seek membership in Freemasonry?

Researching Masonry, Family and best friend became a Mason.

2. How would you assess the current state of Freemasonry?

On the verge of becoming like every other organization, polarized, political and a shell of its original tenets. Still a great organization but fear for the future of it.

3. Carl Claudy, a noted Masonic author and a Past Grand Master of the Grand Lodge of the District of Columbia (1943) wrote the following:

"The genius of Freemasonry is not our Masonic buildings and temples or the trappings of our organizations. It is not our great charities or community activities. It is not our beautiful rituals or their teachings! It is the 'practice of Freemasonry' by the Freemasons. Yet we cannot practice that which we do not know or understand. Thus, Masonic education is the foundation for our Fraternity."

Do you agree with Brother Claudy's statement? Why, or why not?

For the most part. I believe the rituals were/are intended to be part of that education. Just like the stained-glass windows and paintings in renaissance cathedrals. During that time they were not just for mere decoration but a visual aid to teach the masses, most of whom were not very well educated and illiterate. So I have always treated the ritual, including opening and closing as a means to teach the brother through repetition. Not only is it a great mental exercise but teaches the brother confidently, public speaking just to name a few.

4. How frequently do you read about Freemasonry? When you do read about Freemasonry, what factors influence your choice as to what to read?

I've read a ton. Not lately as I am still trying to build back my business and home repairs from the tornadoes of December before last.

5. What would your Lodge need to do to make you likely to become more actively engaged in Freemasonry?

I'm the secretary. I am really overwhelmed with juggling home, business and lodge. If anything I need to step away from Masonry to get back on track.

6. Have you viewed any of the Masonic education videos posted by The Rubicon Masonic Society on their YouTube channel? To what extent do you find such video presentations beneficial?

A few, not as many as I want, though.

7. Do you subscribe to any Masonic publications? Yes No.

If not, why?

I've got several books I've yet to read. Always wanted to write a paper on masonry but just haven't had the time.

If so, mark which ones from the below list or add those to which you subscribe.

The Journal of the Masonic Society

Philalethes: The Journal of Masonic Research

Fraternal Review

Phylaxis

The Square

The Scottish Rite Journal

Research Lodge Publications

Freemasonry Today

Grand Lodge Publications

___ Other : _____

8. If you could do two things that would constructively change American Freemasonry and better ensure its longevity, what would those two things be?

I don't know. I believe history [will] look back at this time as the fall of society as we know it. The cell phone and social media can be argued to be a cancer on civilization. It could have been a great tool, but people have chosen to use it to manipulate, undermine and weaponize information. My wife and I both work with youth and it's getting harder to teach and mentor youth in the digital age. I have a bad feeling that Masonry will not survive this. Masonry will have a hard time competing with the progressive mindset, instant gratification and dopamine rush social media provides.

9. If you could eliminate two things from American Freemasonry, and by the elimination of those things better endure its longevity, what would those two things be?

The lingering anti-black thing has never made sense to me, but I think it's almost home anyway. Other than that I can't think of anything else I would want to eliminate

10. What would you say to men who are interested in becoming a Freemason?

Join, but do not let it interfere with your duty to your job and family. This is part of my problem. During my year as master I was cooking every meal, chapter dad for a DeMolay chapter, Commander for my commandery, officer in the chapter and council and active in the York Rite College. I am self-employed and all that work cut into my business, so learn to balance.

William O. Ware Lodge of Research
Walton, Kentucky
Voices of Freemasonry Vol. VIII

Name: **Ernesto Hays Soto**
Years in Masonry: **2**
Lodge Name and Number: **Delta White Center Lodge No. 480
(WA)**

1. What influenced you to seek membership in Freemasonry?

The motto, "making good men better."

2. How would you assess the current state of Freemasonry?

Lodges seem to have more chairs than members.

3. Carl Claudy, a noted Masonic author and a Past Grand Master of the Grand Lodge of the District of Columbia (1943) wrote the following:

"The genius of Freemasonry is not our Masonic buildings and temples or the trappings of our organizations. It is not our great charities or community activities. It is not our beautiful rituals or their teachings! It is the 'practice of Freemasonry' by the Freemasons. Yet we cannot practice that which we do not know or understand. Thus, Masonic education is the foundation for our Fraternity."

Do you agree with Brother Claudy's statement? Why, or why not?

I believe Masonic education is a virtue, it reveals a journey. Manhood, which can be an everyday influence. Simple and complete.

4. How frequently do you read about Freemasonry? When you do read about Freemasonry, what factors influence your choice as to what to read?

Masonry is a part of my life now. I look at the reading and Masonry itself as a way of repentance.

5. What would your Lodge need to do to make you likely to become more actively engaged in Freemasonry?

We are engaged.

6. Have you viewed any of the Masonic education videos posted by The Rubicon Masonic Society on their YouTube channel? To what extent do you find such video presentations beneficial?

To Masons and non-Masons, it is productive education favorable to the institution and its future.

7. Do you subscribe to any Masonic publications? _____ Yes ___X___ No.

If not, why? **Have yet to explore that area.**

If so, mark which ones from the below list or add those to which you subscribe.

___ The Journal of the Masonic Society

___ Philalethes: The Journal of Masonic Research

___ Fraternal Review

___ Phylaxis

___ The Square

___ The Scottish Rite Journal

___ Research Lodge Publications

___ Freemasonry Today

___ Grand Lodge Publications

___ Other : _____

8. If you could do two things that would constructively change American Freemasonry and better ensure its longevity, what would those two things be?

Encourage long form proficiency consistently; and would not push degrees on brethren. Their degree, their timing.

9. If you could eliminate two things from American Freemasonry, and by the elimination of those things better endure its longevity, what would those two things be?

None come to mind.

10. What would you say to men who are interested in becoming a Freemason?

Visit various lodges and meet with the members who will become amongst your truest friends. Feel comfortable and at home.

**William O. Ware Lodge of Research
Walton, Kentucky**

Voices of Freemasonry Vol. VIII

Name: **Joseph Stilwell**
Years in Masonry: **8**
Lodge Name and Number: **Georgetown Lodge No. 480 (IN);
Beaver Lodge No. 505 (KY)**

1. What influenced you to seek membership in Freemasonry?

The mystery of the Craft, and the influence of my father-in-law.

2. How would you assess the current state of Freemasonry?

Kentucky is in a lot better shape than Indiana. One day classes are ruining our Fraternity.

3. Carl Claudy, a noted Masonic author and a Past Grand Master of the Grand Lodge of the District of Columbia (1943) wrote the following:

"The genius of Freemasonry is not our Masonic buildings and temples or the trappings of our organizations. It is not our great charities or community activities. It is not our beautiful rituals or their teachings! It is the 'practice of Freemasonry' by the Freemasons. Yet we cannot practice that which we do not know or understand. Thus, Masonic education is the foundation for our Fraternity."

Do you agree with Brother Claudy's statement? Why, or why not?

Yes, without education of Freemasonry we cannot differentiate ourselves from other organizations.

4. How frequently do you read about Freemasonry? When you do read about Freemasonry, what factors influence your choice as to what to read?

At least once a month, typically education topics.

5. What would your Lodge need to do to make you likely to become more actively engaged in Freemasonry?

I'm already very active.

6. Have you viewed any of the Masonic education videos posted by The Rubicon Masonic Society on their YouTube channel? To what extent do you find such video presentations beneficial?

No, I was not aware of it.

7. Do you subscribe to any Masonic publications? Yes No.

If not, why?

If so, mark which ones from the below list or add those to which you subscribe.

The Journal of the Masonic Society

Philalethes: The Journal of Masonic Research

Fraternal Review

Phylaxis

The Square

The Scottish Rite Journal

Research Lodge Publications

Freemasonry Today

Grand Lodge Publications

Other : _____

8. If you could do two things that would constructively change American Freemasonry and better ensure its longevity, what would those two things be?

More rigorous process to join and more education.

9. If you could eliminate two things from American Freemasonry, and by the elimination of those things better endure its longevity, what would those two things be?

**One day classes;
Abolish alcohol restrictions.**

10. What would you say to men who are interested in becoming a Freemason?

You need to understand the beauty of the world around you to understand the meaning of Masonry.

William O. Ware Lodge of Research

Walton, Kentucky

Voices of Freemasonry Vol. VIII

Name: **Matthew Taylor**
Years in Masonry: **5**
Lodge Name and Number: **Harlan Lodge No. 879 (KY)**

1. What influenced you to seek membership in Freemasonry?

Had family that were Masons.

2. How would you assess the current state of Freemasonry?

Freemasonry is a great Fraternity, but something has to change numbers keep dwindling.

3. Carl Claudy, a noted Masonic author and a Past Grand Master of the Grand Lodge of the District of Columbia (1943) wrote the following:

"The genius of Freemasonry is not our Masonic buildings and temples or the trappings of our organizations. It is not our great charities or community activities. It is not our beautiful rituals or their teachings! It is the 'practice of Freemasonry' by the Freemasons. Yet we cannot practice that which we do not know or understand. Thus, Masonic education is the foundation for our Fraternity."

Do you agree with Brother Claudy's statement? Why, or why not?

Yes. Strongly encourage Masonic education.

4. How frequently do you read about Freemasonry? When you do read about Freemasonry, what factors influence your choice as to what to read?

I find myself reading Masonic material pretty regular. I read forums online books emails and magazines.

5. What would your Lodge need to do to make you likely to become more actively engaged in Freemasonry?

I'm pretty active now rarely miss a meeting.

6. Have you viewed any of the Masonic education videos posted by The Rubicon Masonic Society on their YouTube channel? To what extent do you find such video presentations beneficial?

No. I don't think I've heard of them.

7. Do you subscribe to any Masonic publications? Yes No.

If not, why?

If so, mark which ones from the below list or add those to which you subscribe.

The Journal of the Masonic Society

Philalethes: The Journal of Masonic Research

Fraternal Review

Phylaxis

The Square

The Scottish Rite Journal

Research Lodge Publications

Freemasonry Today

Grand Lodge Publications

Other : _____

8. If you could do two things that would constructively change American Freemasonry and better ensure its longevity, what would those two things be?

Get the word out what Masons do.

More community involvement

9. If you could eliminate two things from American Freemasonry, and by the elimination of those things better endure its longevity, what would those two things be?

Not sure.

10. What would you say to men who are interested in becoming a Freemason?

I tell them about what a great Fraternity I am in and how it has helped to improve my and allow me to better help those in need

William O. Ware Lodge of Research

Walton, Kentucky

Voices of Freemasonry Vol. VIII

Name: **Brett Tickell**
Years in Masonry: **6**
Lodge Name and Number: **Roanoke Lodge No. 668 (TX)**

1. What influenced you to seek membership in Freemasonry?

Fraternity, education, and fellowship.

2. How would you assess the current state of Freemasonry?

Weak. We've kicked the can down the road long enough. Buildings in disrepair, lodges barely functioning, it's all very bleak. We say we want to make men better but fail to do so. Study after study is done to attract members but we can't retain [them]. We need to focus on our current members.

3. Carl Claudy, a noted Masonic author and a Past Grand Master of the Grand Lodge of the District of Columbia (1943) wrote the following:

"The genius of Freemasonry is not our Masonic buildings and temples or the trappings of our organizations. It is not our great charities or community activities. It is not our beautiful rituals or their teachings! It is the 'practice of Freemasonry' by the Freemasons. Yet we cannot practice that which we do not know or understand. Thus, Masonic education is the foundation for our Fraternity."

Do you agree with Brother Claudy's statement? Why, or why not?

Yes. We talk of the seven liberal arts and sciences in our degrees but never hear of them outside of it.

4. How frequently do you read about Freemasonry? When you do read about Freemasonry, what factors influence your choice as to what to read?

Try to start a new book once a quarter. It is either history or a book on the ritual.

5. What would your Lodge need to do to make you likely to become more actively engaged in Freemasonry?

Hold education in one of the 7 sciences and/or more fellowship events.

6. Have you viewed any of the Masonic education videos posted by The Rubicon Masonic Society on their YouTube channel? To what extent do you find such video presentations beneficial?

Yes.

7. Do you subscribe to any Masonic publications? Yes No.

If not, why?

If so, mark which ones from the below list or add those to which you subscribe.

The Journal of the Masonic Society

Philalethes: The Journal of Masonic Research

Fraternal Review

Phylaxis

The Square

The Scottish Rite Journal

Research Lodge Publications

Freemasonry Today

Grand Lodge Publications

Other : _____

8. If you could do two things that would constructively change American Freemasonry and better ensure its longevity, what would those two things be?

Require more education and require long term building maintenance plans.

9. If you could eliminate two things from American Freemasonry, and by the elimination of those things better endure its longevity, what would those two things be?

Consolidate the York Rite chapter and council under one body. Consolidate lodges and buildings.

10. What would you say to men who are interested in becoming a Freemason?

Do it, but it will require a lot of work and reduced expectations.

William O. Ware Lodge of Research

Walton, Kentucky

Voices of Freemasonry Vol. VIII

Name: **Cal VanZee**
Years in Masonry: **26**
Lodge Name and Number: **Laramie Lodge No. 3 (WY)**

1. What influenced you to seek membership in Freemasonry?

Many friends, men I respected belonged, and I was intrigued on why.

2. How would you assess the current state of Freemasonry?

We are losing older members but there is a renewed interest in the Craft. Our lodge raised 5 last year, one applied for dual membership this year, and we have three petitions to read at our next meeting. The Craft will survive, but membership numbers seen 50 years ago may never be seen again and we need to adapt to the change.

3. Carl Claudy, a noted Masonic author and a Past Grand Master of the Grand Lodge of the District of Columbia (1943) wrote the following:

"The genius of Freemasonry is not our Masonic buildings and temples or the trappings of our organizations. It is not our great charities or community activities. It is not our beautiful rituals or their teachings! It is the 'practice of Freemasonry' by the Freemasons. Yet we cannot practice that which we do not know or understand. Thus, Masonic education is the foundation for our Fraternity."

Do you agree with Brother Claudy's statement? Why, or why not?

I agree! We have been so concerned about numbers, education has not had the focus it should. We cannot progress forward without understanding where we have been and how we have arrived where are. Masonic education provides that information as well as the whys of our organization.

4. How frequently do you read about Freemasonry? When you do read about Freemasonry, what factors influence your choice as to what to read?

I read something on Freemasonry weekly. What I read is usually a question I would like answered and can be a short online article to books.

5. What would your Lodge need to do to make you likely to become more actively engaged in Freemasonry?

I am engaged enough! I am the lodge secretary, secretary and recorder for the York Rite bodies, and a member of the Grand Lodge.

6. Have you viewed any of the Masonic education videos posted by The Rubicon Masonic Society on their YouTube channel? To what extent do you find such video presentations beneficial?

No.

7. Do you subscribe to any Masonic publications? Yes No.

If not, why?

If so, mark which ones from the below list or add those to which you subscribe.

The Journal of the Masonic Society

Philalethes: The Journal of Masonic Research

Fraternal Review

Phylaxis

The Square

The Scottish Rite Journal

Research Lodge Publications

Freemasonry Today

Grand Lodge Publications

Other : Honorary organizational publications

8. If you could do two things that would constructively change American Freemasonry and better ensure its longevity, what would those two things be?

Become more visible in the eye of the public and become more willing to use current technologies.

9. If you could eliminate two things from American Freemasonry, and by the elimination of those things better endure its longevity, what would those two things be?

The perception we are a secret society and so-called rituals we supposedly do and support.

10. What would you say to men who are interested in becoming a Freemason?

Ask questions about the organization by discussing issues and questions with members and limit online information.

William O. Ware Lodge of Research

Walton, Kentucky

Voices of Freemasonry Vol. VIII

Name: **Ethan Wells**
Years in Masonry: **17**
Lodge Name and Number: **Trimble Lodge No. 145 (KY)**

1. What influenced you to seek membership in Freemasonry?

My father, and the prestige.

2. How would you assess the current state of Freemasonry?

It is good, but not great. It needs to shed the social club aspect some. There needs to be a bigger focus on education, and ritual. One way doesn't fit all lodges though.

3. Carl Claudy, a noted Masonic author and a Past Grand Master of the Grand Lodge of the District of Columbia (1943) wrote the following:

"The genius of Freemasonry is not our Masonic buildings and temples or the trappings of our organizations. It is not our great charities or community activities. It is not our beautiful rituals or their teachings! It is the 'practice of Freemasonry' by the Freemasons. Yet we cannot practice that which we do not know or understand. Thus, Masonic education is the foundation for our Fraternity."

Do you agree with Brother Claudy's statement? Why, or why not?

I very much do because without knowledge and constant seeking of more light we will wither and die.

4. How frequently do you read about Freemasonry? When you do read about Freemasonry, what factors influence your choice as to what to read?

Weekly. It depends on if I'm looking for historical reasons on a certain topic. Usually I look for a wide variety.

5. What would your Lodge need to do to make you likely to become more actively engaged in Freemasonry?

I'm pretty engaged but for others I would say make it more Masonic and less just something to do once a month.

6. Have you viewed any of the Masonic education videos posted by The Rubicon Masonic Society on their YouTube channel? To what extent do you find such video presentations beneficial?

I have several because I can rarely attend: I find them very beneficial and need to be viewed by the craft of Kentucky more.

7. Do you subscribe to any Masonic publications? Yes No.

If not, why?

If so, mark which ones from the below list or add those to which you subscribe.

The Journal of the Masonic Society

Philalethes: The Journal of Masonic Research

Fraternal Review

Phylaxis

The Square

The Scottish Rite Journal

Research Lodge Publications

Freemasonry Today

Grand Lodge Publications

Other : Royal Arch Magazine, The Masonic Bulletin

8. If you could do two things that would constructively change American Freemasonry and better ensure its longevity, what would those two things be?

More festive board type meetings, and more focus on education with short business meetings.

9. If you could eliminate two things from American Freemasonry, and by the elimination of those things better endure its longevity, what would those two things be?

Only doing business on the Master Mason degree; stomp out the bigotry.

10. What would you say to men who are interested in becoming a Freemason?

That it isn't easy, but worth the time it will take to become a better man in all ways.

William O. Ware Lodge of Research

Walton, Kentucky

Voices of Freemasonry Vol. VIII

Name: **Richard Wiatrowski**
Years in Masonry: **2**
Lodge Name and Number: **Bullitt Lodge No. 155 (KY)**

1. What influenced you to seek membership in Freemasonry?

While I was a child, there was a brief section of one of my textbooks where it was mentioned that George Washington was a Freemason. Within that story, there was an old drawing of him wearing his apron and jewels performing a ritual on a large rectangular stone block surrounded by other men. From then on, I was always curious.

2. How would you assess the current state of Freemasonry?

I see some good things on the internet which seems to be bringing Masonry into present time such as TikTok channels and podcasts. I also see that we are having conventions and activity online. All of this I love. Unfortunately, I still also see staunch resistance to such things in my own circles as well. I believe we are doing ok. Finding the balance between traditional secrecy and online awareness will be key.

3. Carl Claudy, a noted Masonic author and a Past Grand Master of the Grand Lodge of the District of Columbia (1943) wrote the following:

"The genius of Freemasonry is not our Masonic buildings and temples or the trappings of our organizations. It is not our great charities or

community activities. It is not our beautiful rituals or their teachings! It is the 'practice of Freemasonry' by the Freemasons. Yet we cannot practice that which we do not know or understand. Thus, Masonic education is the foundation for our Fraternity."

Do you agree with Brother Claudy's statement? Why, or why not?

I agree. Without our ritual we may as well be Elks or any other Fraternity. I personally still believe there are tons of esoterica to learn and tap into in Freemasonry.

4. How frequently do you read about Freemasonry? When you do read about Freemasonry, what factors influence your choice as to what to read?

Often! I love history. It adds depth to my life and my understanding. Being only 2 years in, I have an assortment of books I purchased in an effort to dig into Masonry and Blue Lodge.

5. What would your Lodge need to do to make you likely to become more actively engaged in Freemasonry?

Masonic Teaching!!! We meet 2x month so I'm hoping either when I become Master or sooner we will delegate one meeting to business and the other for education or other things.

6. Have you viewed any of the Masonic education videos posted by The Rubicon Masonic Society on their YouTube channel? To what extent do you find such video presentations beneficial?

No, not yet.

7. Do you subscribe to any Masonic publications? X Yes No.

If not, why?

If so, mark which ones from the below list or add those to which you subscribe.

The Journal of the Masonic Society

Philalethes: The Journal of Masonic Research

Fraternal Review

Phylaxis

The Square

The Scottish Rite Journal

Research Lodge Publications

Freemasonry Today

Grand Lodge Publications

Other : _____

8. If you could do two things that would constructively change American Freemasonry and better ensure its longevity, what would those two things be?

Better online presence.

Adoption of digital means of recognition such as Amity.

9. If you could eliminate two things from American Freemasonry, and by the elimination of those things better endure its longevity, what would those two things be?

I'm not entirely sure, to be honest.

10. What would you say to men who are interested in becoming a Freemason?

If you join us, take your time. There is so much to learn and plenty of time to learn it. Get the most out of every degree and every experience.

William O. Ware Lodge of Research

Walton, Kentucky

Voices of Freemasonry Vol. VIII

Name: **Patrick Wright**
Years in Masonry: **33**
Lodge Name and Number: **Clinton Lodge No. 82 (KY);
Ft. Campbell Lodge No. 946 (KY)**

1. What influenced you to seek membership in Freemasonry?

A friend.

2. How would you assess the current state of Freemasonry?

Good but.....if we could ask people I think we could get more members. I know the reasoning why we don't. But times are changing.

3. Carl Claudy, a noted Masonic author and a Past Grand Master of the Grand Lodge of the District of Columbia (1943) wrote the following:

"The genius of Freemasonry is not our Masonic buildings and temples or the trappings of our organizations. It is not our great charities or community activities. It is not our beautiful rituals or their teachings! It is the 'practice of Freemasonry' by the Freemasons. Yet we cannot practice that which we

do not know or understand. Thus, Masonic education is the foundation for our Fraternity.”

Do you agree with Brother Claudy’s statement? Why, or why not?

Yes.

4. How frequently do you read about Freemasonry? When you do read about Freemasonry, what factors influence your choice as to what to read?

History and famous people.

5. What would your Lodge need to do to make you likely to become more actively engaged in Freemasonry?

A lot. Clinton Lodge does not want to get out and be seen. I’ve been preaching that we should for years.

6. Have you viewed any of the Masonic education videos posted by The Rubicon Masonic Society on their YouTube channel? To what extent do you find such video presentations beneficial?

Don’t know anything about it.

7. Do you subscribe to any Masonic publications? Yes No.

If not, why?

If so, mark which ones from the below list or add those to which you subscribe.

The Journal of the Masonic Society

Philaethes: The Journal of Masonic Research

Fraternal Review

Phylaxis

The Square

The Scottish Rite Journal

Research Lodge Publications

Freemasonry Today

Grand Lodge Publications

Other : _____

8. If you could do two things that would constructively change American Freemasonry and better ensure its longevity, what would those two things be?

1) **Ask good men to join.**

2) **Quit this separation crap between us and Prince Hall.**

9. If you could eliminate two things from American Freemasonry, and by the elimination of those things better endure its longevity, what would those two things be?

No response.

10. What would you say to men who are interested in becoming a Freemason?

Join!!! It's a great Brotherhood.