

In the



Daylight

Clarence F. Smith Daylight Lodge No. 866, F.&A.M.
14750 Sherman Way, Van Nuys, CA 91405
Ed: davidikarp@karpmediation.com

January 2026

The Gifts of Freemasonry

Foreword...

This issue publishes in December for January, and the concept of gift giving has been a central part of some December festivities for a very long time.

Perhaps you received or will receive a gift in December, or at another time, with Masonic emblems on it, maybe a pin, a shirt, a hat, a mug, a piece of jewelry, or something else. Maybe something with the Square and Compasses on it. I remember once giving my father a small penknife with many embossed Masonic emblems. When I was raised a Master Mason in 1991, my mother gave me her grandfather's Masonic signet ring which I often wear.

Assuredly, there are many places, and sites on the internet, from which to obtain such trinkets. In my family we would call them *tchotchkes* in Yiddish.

There are other gifts of Freemasonry to consider. As to physical items, perhaps you received an apron from the lodge, or a trowel, or more pins than you could possibly wear on your lapel, or a Hiram Award pendant, or something else. They have special meanings in Freemasonry, as you know.

But there are other more impressive and intangible gifts that come from being a Mason. Consider this: receiving a set of values and guidelines for living a life with honor, respect, self-awareness, integrity, kindness, honesty, charity, and more, and respecting the ideals of temperance, fortitude, prudence and justice among others.

We must also recall that Freemasonry teaches us about the God-given senses of hearing, seeing, feeling, smelling, and tasting, as well as the moral advantages of Geometry from which we derive our appreciation of nature in all its splendor.

Of all the gifts of Freemasonry, perhaps the most important to me are these: true friendships, fellowship, and the respect that we give to each other within and without the Lodge, whenever we meet, act and part, and the kindness and caring that we have for one another, all of which reflect our three principal tenets of Brotherly Love, Relief and Truth.

Enjoy the read.

Fraternally,

Bro. David I. Karp

Editor



January Trestle Board is on Page 2.



Why Give Gifts?

Editor's Note: Editor's note: The following is excerpted from <https://www.activitysuperstore.com/blog/psychology-of-gift-giving>.

Why do we give gifts?

As gifting plays such an important role in our social fabric, we give gifts for many, sometimes conflicting, reasons. At times our culture requires it, for example Christmas or birthday presents. At other times, it builds and reinforces relationships with family members and potential mates, and can be done for a variety of reasons.

To build and reinforce relationships.

We often give gifts to re-confirm or establish our connection with others, which means that they're a reflection of both the giver and the receiver, as well as their unique relationship. Giving a gift to someone we care about allows us to communicate our feelings and appreciation for them. In fact, some sociologists think that we only give gifts to people we want relationships with. In his book *The Gift*, French sociologist Marcel Mauss argues that not giving a gift or rejecting it is essentially a dismissal of the relationship.

[...]

To help others

Some gifts are given with no expected return. For example, we often give presents to young children that have no way of reciprocating, or even our pets. While it could be argued that these gifts are reciprocated in other ways, altruism could also be at play. Love and appreciation are

two of the biggest motivators for altruistic gift giving.

Giving gifts to help others can include donating money or volunteering for a charity. There are several theories that attempt to explain why individuals do this. One theory claims that dopamine-using pleasure circuitry in the brain is activated by charitable giving. Effectively, we give because it makes us feel good....

January Trestle Board

(We meet in person each month on the first and third Saturday of the month at 10:00 AM at the Van Nuys Masonic Center, except as otherwise noted. Always subject to change.)

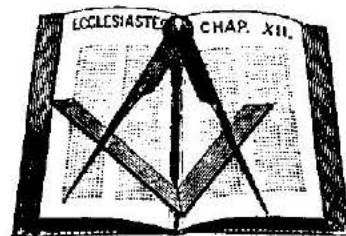
January 3, 2026 10AM, Masonic Education

January 3, 2026 11AM, Stated Meeting.
Lunch donation \$15/person.

January 17, 2026 To Be Determined

January 24, 2026 Installation of Officers,
4PM Social, 5PM Ceremony

Additional information, including any changes to the calendar, may become available subsequently. So, look to Messenger for the Master's postings or contact him directly. Ed.





The Origins of Masonic Rings

Editor's Note: This is a reprise of an entry from the June 2023 edition of this newsletter. Also, the following text is quoted from.

https://www.joyjewelers.com/jewelry-guide/history_of_masonic_rings.php.

“Ever since the first modern masonic lodge was founded in the 1700s, masons have worn aprons, jewels and rings to signify their commitment to the craft. While there is no definitive ‘first masonic ring,’ it is well known that precious metals such as gold and silver have always been used in the manufacture of rings for freemasons. A masonic ring is typically worn by master masons. When a mason first begins his journey, there are three initial rankings within the organization. The three levels are entered apprentice, journeyman, and master. As a brother completes certain tasks and rituals, [he] will advance to the next level. The masonic ring is a symbol of where each member stands in their journey as a Freemason. While some masons choose to wear rings before they earn their 3rd degrees, we recommend that you wait until AFTER you have been raised to master mason. Wearing a mason ring is a great way to express your pride in belonging to such a heralded tradition.

“The rings are rooted in an old custom. Centuries ago, men wore personalized rings to be used as a seal on official documents. A notary would pour melted wax and the wearer would impress their ring face into the wax for an official signature to the document. The history of

this ritual dates all the way back to the times of Pompey and Caesar. While the rings in masonic traditions are no longer used for creating seals, they are still a unique representation of the lodge, the member's rank and affiliations....”

CFS Daylight's Officers for 2025 (Until 2026 Installation)

Worshipful Master Bro. Gerald J. Alvarez
Senior Warden Bro. Joseph (“Joe”) R. Chavez
Junior Warden Bro. Roland (“Letroc”) Cortel
Treasurer Bro. Ely Ayao
Secretary Bro. Akram Al-Awar
Asst. Secretary
Bro. Thomas (“Tom”) K. Sheehan
(Deceased in late 2025)
Chaplain
WB Archimedes (“Kim”) S. Cabanig, PM
Senior Deacon Bro. Lloyd Donasco, Sr.
Junior Deacon Bro. Elvis L. Alvarez
Senior Steward Bro. Ibrahem Hannoun
Junior Steward Bro. Marvin De Guzman
Marshal Bro. Mkhitar (“Mike”) Mkrtchyan
Organist Bro. Earl Austria
Tiler WB Fernando (“Jhonny”) Lebrilla PM
Officers' Coach
WB Archimedes (“Kim”) S. Cabanig, PM
Candidates' Coach Bro. Aldrin Perez
Inspector WB Leland H. Celestre, PM

Contact information:

Master:
Worshipful Gerald J. Alvarez

Secretary:
Brother Akram Al-Awar

Gifts from Freemasonry to Live By: Brotherly Love, Relief, Truth

“Brotherly Love: It’s not enough to just be kind to your Brothers. It’s providing them a helping hand, a listening ear, and good council. It’s building bonds. It’s taking care of each other in times of need. It’s being the Brother to them, as they’re the Brother to you. This applies to your community as well. Even if you’re not a Mason, you can still become involved with those around you.

“Relief: The second core principle calls on Brothers to be there for others when in need. Whether it is emotional, physical, financial, mentally, or whatever other reasons. This includes Masons, and non-Masons. Aiding others, in times of need as you wish to be aided in your times of need.

“Truth: To always seek truth. Within yourself, and the world around you. This mean you should always be striving to be the best version of you, possible. Always be honest with yourself, those around you, and seek the truth in everything you learn. Always seeking knowledge and understanding, we should all be active in Masonry. Whether it’s studying the craft, reading Masonic books, attending Lodge, or something else.”

Source: Facebook post by “Light & Truth Freemasonry,” April 21, 2024.



Masonic Recognition

Past Masters of Clarence F. Smith Daylight Lodge No. 866, F. & A.M.

Steven A. Wolvek (2017-2018)
Rogelio (“Roger”) L. Soriano (2019)
Celso V. Cardano, Jr. (2020-2021)
Edgar O. Yeghiazaryan (2022)
Fernando (“Jhonny”) O. Lebrilla, Jr. (2023)
Spartak (“Spo”) Khachatryan (2024)

Past Masters by Affiliation

Archimedes (“Kim”) S. Cabanig, (2021)
Celso V. Cardano, Jr. (2012)
Omar Cervantes (2021)
Emmanuel D. Espiritu (2014)
Bruce L. Ewald (2004-2006)
Bruce L. Hawley (1984)*
Luc Paul, Jr. (2018)

Past Masters who are “Honorary Members”

Jovito (“Jovi”) R. Rivera (2017)
Timoteo (“Tim”) Zuniga (2020)

Hiram Award (for dedicated Service)

Akram Al-Awar (2024)
Archimedes (“Kim”) S. Cabanig, PM (2022)
Celso V. Cardano, Jr., PM (2022)
Keith S. Cotton (2017)
Bruce L. Ewald, PM (2011)
Bruce L. Hawley, PM (2000)*
David I. Karp (2020)
Fernando (“Jhonny”) O. Lebrilla, Jr., PM (2025)
Barry Mann (2021)
John T. Seletos (2017)
Thomas K. Sheehan (2014)*
Rogelio L. Soriano, PM (2018)
Steven A. Wolvek, PM (2019)

Sciots’ Cornerstone Award

Ely D. Ayao (2025)

Daniel Carter Beard Masonic Scouter Award

Steven W. Engstrom (2022)
David I. Karp (2007)

* Deceased.

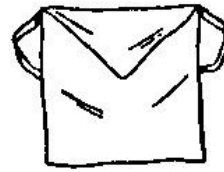
More Gifts from Freemasonry: Treasuring the Five Senses

Editor's Note: The following is excerpted from an online article entitled "What do the five senses mean in a Masonic context?" by kirkasthemeld, March 22, 2018, at <https://thepointofasharpinstrument.wordpress.com/2018/03/22/what-do-the-five-senses-mean-in-a-masonic-context/>

"In the Fellowcraft degree of Freemasonry, there is a lecture that follows that includes discussion of the five senses. They are so described as to their pertinence to Masonry and Masonic recognition, but have a much deeper meaning.

"The five senses are seeing, hearing, smelling, touching, and tasting. These faculties assist the person in experiencing and understanding the world around them. They frame our experience of the world in a way that our brains can interpret our surroundings and make sense of all that we experience. These five senses, along with the reasoning of our minds helps us to receive data and produce feedback to our surroundings.

"The five senses is only one point of many made during the lecture, but it may be the most important. As the student of the Craft learns, as they move along, the Three Degrees are a progressive science. It is this point in the Masonic education that the student becomes aware of the importance of letting go of the strong grasp of the material world and embracing the importance of the spiritual world. Our five senses are the bridge between the known of the material world, and the unknown of the spiritual world."



Fellowship is a Gift of Freemasonry

Editor's Note: The following is excerpted from an online article entitled "The Vital Role of Fellowship in Freemasonry" by Brother K. Bray III, PM, at the website of Lodge No. 43, F. & A.M. (GL PA) at <https://lodge43.org/the-vital-role-of-fellowship-in-freemasonry/>

"In the realm of Freemasonry, fellowship serves as a cornerstone, binding its members together in a strong bond of camaraderie and mutual support. Through the active participation in fellowship, Freemasons cultivate an environment of unity, fostering personal growth, and enriching the overall experience within the fraternity. Plus, a benefit of being a Master Mason is having the ability to travel, which in non-mason speak [equals] visiting other lodges.

"Fellowship lies at the heart of Freemasonry, promoting an atmosphere of inclusion and friendship. It creates a platform for members to come together, share experiences, and strengthen the ties that bind them. By engaging in meaningful interactions, Freemasons learn from one another, gaining valuable insights and perspectives that contribute to their personal development. Last night, Worshipful Master Doug Scheid may have not traveled very far but traveled none the less to join in the fellowship with Mt. Horeb Lodge #14 of the Prince Hall Masons (who also meet at the Lancaster Masonic Center).

[Continues on next page, see "Fellowship"]

[“Fellowship, “Continued from page 5]

“The importance of fellowship within Freemasonry extends beyond social connections. It is through fellowship that Freemasons are encouraged to practice the principles of brotherly love, relief, and truth. By supporting and assisting one another, they exemplify the core values of Freemasonry in action, leaving a lasting impact on both the fraternity and the wider community.

“The sense of fellowship in Freemasonry is nurtured through various activities and gatherings, such as lodge meetings, social events, and charitable endeavors. These shared experiences create lasting memories, fostering lifelong friendships that extend far beyond the walls of the lodge.

“Through fellowship, Freemasons build meaningful connections, share knowledge, and strengthen the fabric of their fraternity. As they unite in brotherhood, they embrace the power of fellowship, creating a vibrant and supportive community that stands as a testament to the timeless principles of Freemasonry.”



Giving to Freemasonry: Helping the Lodge Go

In this segment I am NOT speaking of the gifts given to us by Freemasonry but rather the gifts WE GIVE to Freemasonry. This edition so far has been about the former; here let us now consider the latter.

What are the gifts we give to Freemasonry, and specifically to our Lodge, in exchange for what we derive from our Masonic experiences?

This is simple. We give to the Lodge and to the Craft in general all of the following:

We give our time, our attention, our care and concern, and our devotion; our commitment to it as an institution for its success and longevity; our active participation and our help whether as an officer or a sideline; and yes, our annual dues and monetary donations to the extent we can provide them.

At age eight when I was in Cub Scouts so long ago (1962), I was taught to follow “the Law of the Pack.” A portion of it went like this:

“The Cub Scout helps the Pack go.”

This was further explained this way:

[Continues on next page, see “Helping”]

[“Helping,” continued from page 6]

“When you become a Cub Scout, you are no longer just a boy. Now you are a member of a Den and a Pack. You can’t think only of yourself, but you must think also of your fellow Cub Scouts. [¶] Help the Pack GO [emphasis in original] by coming to all meetings, by following the leaders, and by making your Pack in every way better because you are in it.” *Wolf Cub Scout Book* (1959 rev.) Boy Scouts of America: New Brunswick NJ, at pp. 6-7.

This was good advice then, and it remains good advice now. Simply substitute the word “Lodge” in place of “Pack.”

Fraternally,

Bro. David I. Karp

December Gifts

In December, Bro. Ryan Lim set in motion this Lodge’s toy drive contributions for disadvantaged children along with another Lodge’s efforts. This represented his gift of leadership in the Lodge (thank you) and underscored the charitable ideals of Freemasonry. For those who contributed children’s gifts, certainly they will be well received. Your beneficence highlights all Masons’ aspirations to improve themselves and the lives of others. DIK.



[Stated Meeting, December 6, 2025]

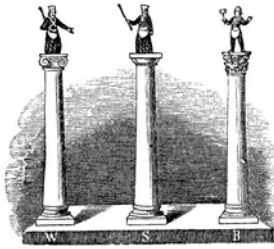


[Second Degree Quartet, December 20, 2025.
Congrats to Bros. Wynn, Rolly, Ernie, Tony]

“It is better to lavish gifts on the poor than to feast heavily or to give presents to your friends. For there is no greater joy than bringing gladness to the poor, the orphan, the widow and all those who have no kin.”

Moses Maimonides [1135-1204], *Hilchot Megilla* (2:16-17) as set forth in Kolatch, Alfred J. *Great Jewish Quotations*. New York: Jonathan David Publishers, Inc., 1996, at p. 299.

“The best thing to give to your enemy is forgiveness; to an opponent, tolerance; to a friend, your heart; to your child, a good example; to a father, deference; to your mother, conduct that will make her proud of you; to yourself, respect; to all others, charity.” ~ Benjamin Franklin [quoted at https://www.azquotes.com/author/5123-Benjamin_Franklin]



From the East

Brethren,
This is my final article for our monthly trestle board as an outgoing Worshipful Master of Clarence F. Smith DAYLIGHT Lodge 866. Thank you to all for the support I've received during my year.

"HAPPY HOLIDAYS TO ALL "

I'd like to extend warmest greetings to everyone for the holiday season. Congratulations to our newly elected and appointed officers of Clarence F Smith DAYLIGHT 866, we offer our sincerest congratulations and look forward to your leadership in the coming year. May our lodge continue to flourish in peace and harmony.

Brother Joseph Chavez, our newly elected Worshipful Master, is about to "build" on the foundation we've laid. Let's give him the same "architectural" support I received during my term as Master. With unity and cooperation, we can construct a brighter Masonic future!

To all appointed officers and especially to the Wardens your presence and commitment is the key to demonstrate our solidarity and cooperation. By working together, we can build a stronger, more resilient Masonic Lodge.

Huge congratulations to Brothers Rolly Lagsa, Wynn Apao, Tony Bon, and Ernesto Reutotar, who have recently been passed to the degree of Fellowcraft. We appreciate your commitment to our Craft and your unique contributions, which set a great example for our applicants. We look forward to your continued support and dedication you showed to us.

As your outgoing Worshipful Master I want to take a moment to express my sincerest appreciation to everyone who stood by me during my term as Worshipful Master. I feel privileged to have had the chance to serve and lead this lodge, and I'm grateful for the experience that has helped me become stronger and more resilient.

To all the members and Past Masters, I would like to express my sincerest appreciation for the trust you have placed in me. It has been a privilege to serve as a leader of this lodge, and I am grateful for the opportunities I've had to grow and learn. I am committed to continuing to work towards the betterment of our lodge, and I am excited to see the positive impact we can make together. Also I'm proud of the progress and growth we've made.

It's that time of the year again! We're excited to invite you to our annual installation of officers, taking place on January 24, 2026 at Van Nuys Masonic Lodge. The event will begin with a social at 4pm, followed by the ceremony at 5pm.

Hope to see you all on my last stated meeting on January 3, 2026 at 11AM.

Respectfully and Fraternally Yours,
Wor. Gerald Alvarez, Master



From the West

Hello Brethren,
I hope this message finds you well. I would like to extend my heartfelt congratulations to Brothers Rolly, Wynn, Ernest, and Tony on receiving their Second Degree in Masonry. This is a meaningful step in your Masonic journey, and we commend you for your dedication, commitment, and continued progress in the Craft.

May you continue to study the lessons of this degree, apply them in your daily lives, and walk uprightly as you move forward toward greater light. We look forward to witnessing your continued growth among us.

Wishing you and your families a happy and safe holiday season.

Fraternally yours,

Bro. Joseph Chavez, Senior Warden

From the South

Brethren,
May this Christmas be filled with happiness in all that you do, and may this joy continue throughout the coming year. Wishing you a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year!

I would also like to extend my sincere congratulations to Bro. Ernesto Reutotar, Bro. Rolly Lagsa, Bro. Wyn Apao, and Bro. Tony Bon on being passed to the Degree of Fellowcraft. This is a significant step in Freemasonry, focusing on the liberal arts and sciences especially “Geometry” and on building character grounded in integrity, wisdom, and purpose for the benefit of humanity.

The Second Degree is an opportunity for more light. Continue learning my Brothers.

May God bless all of you and your families. Merry Christmas and Happy New Year!

Fraternally yours,

Bro. Roland Cortel, Junior Warden

My Gifts to the Brethren

My Brothers,
Please allow me on this last page personally to express my appreciation to you, the Brothers of this Lodge, who have helped make the Lodge a sanctuary of peace and harmony in an otherwise divisive and disturbing world this past year.

To give meaning to my appreciation beyond just words, I want you to know that I made certain year-end charitable donations in December which I believe may be meaningful to you, as they are to me, given the composition of our membership. I believe these donations are also a way to help repair the world, a concept in Hebrew known as *tikkun olam*.

I read a book not long ago (I don’t remember which one) in which there was a line that said, “There is more good than bad in the world.” I do believe that; consequently, it was important to me to address the bad and do some good in the process.

For this reason, I felt obliged this December to send my donations:

to the Southern Poverty Law Center to help fight against voter suppression and white supremacy; and

to the Young Center for Immigrant Children’s Rights to help assure vulnerable unaccompanied immigrant minors their rights as against, among other things, unlawful deportation flights, threats, and letters that try to coerce them into self-deporting.

These may not be your particular charitable choices, in which case I recommend that you donate, if you do, as your conscience dictates. These entities, however, satisfy my own sense of right vs wrong, or to put it another way, address the bad by doing good, as suggested above.

Please accept these gifts as a token of Masonic friendship and Brotherly Love.

Best wishes for the New Year.

Fraternally,

Bro. David I. Karp, Editor