

In the Daylight



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

February 2026

Truth and Trust

Foreword...

A key component in my practice as a mediator is developing trust, not only trust in the process but also trust in me as a mediator. People need to trust that I will be neutral and impartial, that I will keep things secret if given to me in confidence, that I will be empathetic and listen carefully, and that I will allow people the time and space to make their own voluntary informed decisions about what is best for them in their particular circumstance. There are many tools we mediators use to build such trust, but that is not for discussion here. Suffice it to say that without such trust, we cannot really help the disputants help themselves through the mediation process to achieve a satisfactory outcome.

Among many other issues for mediators, not being biased in favor or against any party or participant is essential. But what if I were to find out that one of the participants is a Brother Mason? To avoid any appearance of impropriety or bias, I would have to disclose our mutual connection to the Craft. Such a disclosure would likely do two things: (1) it would likely enhance my credibility with everyone involved by my being truthful and candid about this mutual connection; and (2) it would likely immediately step up our mutual trust as we work together toward the possibility of settlement.

As to the latter, we might thank our brotherhood in Freemasonry for the instant trust in one another. Trust and Truth are key components in the life of a Mason. "Truth is a

divine attribute and the foundation of every virtue. To be good and true is the first lesson we are taught in Masonry." Furthermore, we are to "[b]e faithful to the trust committed to [our] care" and to "manifest [our] fidelity to [Masonic] principles" that derive from our ideals and teachings.

It is a great benefit in our lives being Masons who value Trust and Truth so highly. Enjoy the read.

Fraternally,
Bro. David I. Karp
Editor

February 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.)

February 7, 2026 10AM, Masonic Education

February 7, 2026 11AM, Stated Meeting.
Lunch donation \$15/person.

February 21, 2026 To Be Determined

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



Masonic Trust

The following article, originally entitled “My Brother, You Can Remove Your Armor,” is quoted verbatim from a web page of Illinois Freemasonry at <https://ilmason.org/our-blog/masonic-trust>. It was originally written in 2022 by RW Brother Wayne Spooner. It is long but well written.

In this Digital Age, we have technological tools that provide the ability to connect and communicate with people across the globe. On social media platforms, we connect with hundreds or more, like thousands of people, and consume information posted from a variety of sources. The ability for each of us to reach massive numbers of people is vast. The potential influence that individuals provide using these tools extends beyond their ability to do similarly in the real or physical world. Yet, a key question arises: Who can you trust?

In Freemasonry, we can all look back to that moment on our journey into the fraternity in which we were asked a momentous question, “In whom do you put your trust?” The exact moment in which the answer was given established the ability for each of us to be taken by the right hand as a Brother. It confirmed that we all have a common humility, reverence, and ability to make the promises that transformed us from “Mister” to “Brother.”

The active acknowledgment and demonstration of that timeless foundation of our Brotherhood, which communicates to every Brother that you are trustworthy, is not to be understated. That act gave gravity to the promises taken, which summarily professed that “my Word is my currency amongst these honorable men.” When this theme is understood,

the symbolic meaning of the penalty for not upholding those promises becomes clearer.

Knowing that every Brother has made the same promises to keep what is private to the fraternity, private to himself, provides the foundation (if not the cornerstone) on which to build the unique trust that can exist amongst Freemasons. Literally, we are taught the “person or persons” to whom we can share what is not only private to the fraternity, but private to ourselves. We also learn that our personal thoughts, aspirations, and challenges in life can be communicated to a Brother and that information will be kept private “when communicated to and received by me as such.” Said simply, through our shared history as Brethren, we are told the subset of the men around the world to whom we can extend the priceless gift of Masonic Trust.

The value that Masonic Trust offers to the lives of good men is immeasurable. These good men live by a moral code and set of guiding values like honor, integrity, freedom, equality, tolerance, brotherly love, learning, and service to mankind. Overall, they embrace their status as imperfect human beings and strive to fulfill a lifelong mission to “invest in self-improvement and being useful to others.” These good men, like prior generations of them, seek to advance the important work to help positively build themselves and the world around them. A key question is, how many places or circumstances exist these days for these good men to feel comfortable, affirmed, and safe to just be themselves and ask for the valuable help, support, and guidance needed as they navigate through life?

By embracing the timeless foundation of Masonic Trust amongst our Brethren, we can collectively shout that “My Brother, you can remove your armor” when we gather to talk, speculate, learn, develop, and work together as good men and Brothers. In the sanctuaries that

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we provide during the various formal and informal events and activities of our Lodges, Districts, Areas, and Statewide Fraternal Operations, we provide a place for the Brethren to feel safe and answer that insightful question stated above. We endeavor to create supportive environments and experiences in which to make real and enduring friends (Masonic Beauty / Brotherly Love) genuine friends who broadly touch our lives and walk beside us during life’s joys, wonders, and challenges.

Also, in our work as Freemasons, we support the ability of the Brethren to say transformative words like “My Brother, I do not know; can you help me learn?” (Masonic Wisdom / Truth). As males, that type of vulnerability is not easily exhibited or implemented in many aspects of our lives; however, as Brothers who seek to help one another learn, develop, and grow into the best versions of ourselves, those words are expected and welcomed. Thus, the Brother receiving that inquiry would happily respond with “Yes, glad you asked.” That learning journey of moving from darkness to Light by simply asking for knowledge and with the assistance of a Faithful Friend and Guide is a repeatable process known quite well to all Freemasons across the globe and throughout time.

Lastly, our Masonic Trust fuels the “pride in works” generated by joining together to combine our talents, time and resources to complete successful tasks and activities for the fraternity and “relieve the suffering of others” (Masonic Strength / Relief); that life enhancing work is accomplished through the many harmonious acts done together with skill, kindness, love and charity within our Illinois Freemasonry Family and in our communities throughout the state.

Our Brotherhood provides what good men seek and value in life, which is built firmly on the bedrock of Masonic Trust. When we remove the intellectual, spiritual, and emotional armor needed to fight and survive in the outer world, we can truly embrace the beauties, wonders,

passions, and values that membership in our ancient and honorable fraternity provides in our lives. Fundamentally, “We are Builders” our Brotherhood has captured the hearts, minds, and souls of good men throughout time and around the world to inspire and help positively transform humanity. Lastly, Freemasonry is not where we go to meet, but rather who we are! Our motto, “Masons living Masonry in their daily lives,” is both an anthem to share and a reminder, as upright men and Masons, ‘to walk and act as such.’”

CFS Daylight’s Officers for 2026

Worshipful Master – Bro. Joseph R. Chavez
Senior Warden – Bro. Roland Cortel
Junior Warden – To Be Determined
Treasurer – Bro. Ely Ayao
Secretary – Bro. Akram Al-Awar
Asst. Secretary – WB Gerald Alvarez, PM
Chaplain – Bro. Aldrin Perez
Senior Deacon – Bro. Ryan Lim
Junior Deacon – Bro. Harlem Ruiz
Senior Steward – Bro. Lloyd Donasco, Sr.
Junior Steward – Bro. Earl Austria
Marshal – Bro. Jamille Paas
Organist – Bro. Cody Morrison
Tiler – Bro. Marvin De Guzman
Officers’ Coach –
WB Archimedes (“Kim”) S. Cabanig, PM
Candidates’ Coach –
Inspector – WB Leland H. Celestre, PM

Contact information:

Master:
Worshipful Joseph Chavez

Secretary:
Brother Akram Al-Awar



On Truth

The following is quoted from a web page of Eugene Masonic Lodge # 11 at <https://eugenelodge11.org/womens-pantry-breakfast/>

“Truth is the opposite of falsehood. When a person’s word is as good as his bond, he is classified as being truthful. To be good and true is one of the first lessons we are taught in Masonry. Unless a person has a reputation for being truthful, he is not normally qualified to become a member of our order. Truthfulness is one of the fundamental requirements of good citizenship. Without truth there would be no foundation for trust and fellowship.

Freemasonry’s Motto is; “Let There Be Light.” In this sense truth has a much deeper meaning. In Masonry there is a never-ending search for more truth and light. There is a great storehouse of truth for every Mason to explore. It cannot be transferred from person to person in the same manner in which we communicate our ritual, and our secrets. It must be found by personal search. To each person it presents a different interpretation. With this in mind we urge you to consider carefully the teachings of the craft as you progress in your Masonic Journey.”

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)
Gerald J. Alvarez (2025)

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.



[Image Attribution; The Grand Lodge of A.F.&A.M of Maryland at <https://mdmasons.org/about-md-masons/famous-masons/george-washington/>]

WB George Washington, An Embodiment of Trust and Fidelity

Editor's Note: The following entry was previously published in our Trestle Board of March 2022. It is reprised here because of its relevance to this month's theme.

If one thinks about it, there is no one Mason better to have our respect as the embodiment of trust and fidelity than Bro. George Washington.

By way of background: On November 4, 1752, Bro. Washington was made a Mason when he received his Entered Apprentice Degree in Fredericksburg Lodge No. 4 (named as such when the Grand Lodge of Virginia was formed in 1778). In that same Lodge, he was passed to the degree of Fellowcraft on March 3, 1753, and raised to the Sublime Degree of Master Mason on August 4, 1753. See,

<https://www.mountvernon.org/george-washington/freemasonry/masonic-associations/> .

It is common knowledge that Bro. Washington was a land owner and gentleman farmer, a surveyor in his youth, a military leader,

the commanding officer of the Continental Army, the President of the Constitutional Convention, our first President of the United States of America, and so much more. He was even the charter master of Alexandria Lodge No. 39 when it transferred its allegiance from the Grand Lodge of Pennsylvania to the Grand Lodge of Virginia. See, <https://www.mountvernon.org/library/digitalhistory/digital-encyclopedia/article/freemasonry/> .

Why? Because in his character and his conduct, people trusted in him and respected his fidelity to whatever it was that he was involved in.

By way of example, this was well expressed, early on, in his Commission from Robert Dinwiddie, 30 October 1753, which reads as follows (see,

<https://founders.archives.gov/documents/Washington/02-01-02-0028>):

“[Williamsburg, 30 October 1753]

“The Honble Robert Dinwiddie Esqr.

Governor & Commander in Chief of the Colony & Dominion of Virginia[.] Chancellor & Vice Admiral of the same.

“To George Washington Esqr. One of the Adjutants Genl of the Troops & Forces in the Colony of Virginia.

“I reposing especial Trust & Confidence in the Ability Conduct, & Fidelity, of You the said George Washington[,] have appointed You my express Messenger, And You are hereby authoriz'd & impower'd to proceed hence with all convenient & possible Dispatch, to that Part, or Place, on the River Ohio, where the French have lately erected a Fort, or Forts, or where the Commandant of the French Forces resides, in order to deliver my Letter & Message to Him; & after waiting not exceeding one Week for an Answer, You are to take Your Leave & return immediately back.

[continues on next page, see “Washington”]

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“To this Commission I have set my Hand, & caus’d the Great Seal of this Dominion to be affix’d, at the City of Williamsburg, the Seat of my Government. this Thirtieth Day of October in the twenty seventh Year of the Reign of His Majesty George the Second King of Great Britain &ca Annoque Domini 1753.”

The trust and fidelity of Bro. Washington was not one-way in his favor. He reciprocated by trusting in the fidelity of those Masons around him. For example, it is common knowledge that he reposed trust and confidence in many of the Masons who were in his inner circle of leaders during the Revolutionary War, including without limitation, the Marquis de Lafayette. See, <https://nymasons.org/site/apron-1813-marquis-de-lafayette/>. In fact, more than half of Bro. George Washington’s generals were Freemasons. See, <https://scottishrite.org/scottish-rite-myths-and-facts/george-washingtons-generals/>.

Today we hold George Washington in the highest regard as a Patriot and as a Mason. As to the latter, we Masons have images and paintings of him in our Masonic Lodges. And don’t forget that Masons even erected the impressive George Washington Masonic National Memorial in his honor. See, <https://gwmemorial.org/> .

Why? Because, truly, Bro. Washington was an exceptional man and Mason.

Respectfully submitted,
Bro. David I. Karp, Editor



[Stated Meeting, January 3, 2026]



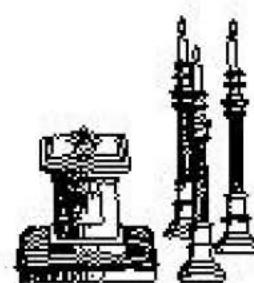
Of Importance to Masons

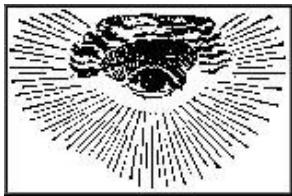
“‘Grow or die’ is a great law of all nature. Most people feel a need for continued growth as individuals. They feel they are not as honest or as charitable or as compassionate or as loving or as trusting or as well-informed as they ought to be. [¶]

Freemasonry reminds its members over and over again of the importance of these qualities and education. It lets men associate with other men of honor and integrity who believe that things like honesty, compassion, love, trust, and knowledge are important. [¶] In some ways, Freemasonry is a support group for men who are trying to make the right decisions. It’s easier to practice these virtues when you know that those around you think they are important, too, and won’t laugh at you. That’s a major reason that Masons enjoy being together.”

Source:

<https://stcloudlodge221.org/learn-about-freemasonry/>





In God We Trust

Editor's Note: The following entry is also reprinted from our March 2022 Trestle Board, for its relevance and because not everyone in Lodge now was there then..

On every bill and coin of United States currency you will find the motto, "IN GOD WE TRUST." Have you ever thought about whether or not it is constitutional for the motto to be there?

The First Amendment, for example, declares, among other things, "Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion."

And there are other laws including the "Religious Freedom Restoration Act of 1993" ("RFRA") which might have an impact on the question in that it "ensures that interests in religious freedom are protected" [fn.]. See, https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Religious_Freedom_Restoration_Act.

Well, the motto is not unconstitutional on currency! So held the United States Court of Appeals for the Sixth District in 2018.

On appeal from a District Court's dismissal for failure to state a claim upon which relief could be granted, the United States Court of Appeals for the Sixth Circuit affirmed dismissal and rejected the unconstitutionality claims attacking the "In God We Trust" motto on United States Currency. See, *New Doe Child #1, et al. v. Congress of the United States, et al.*, 891 F.3d 578 (6th Cir. 2018), cert. denied 587 U.S. __ (2019)

(https://www.supremecourt.gov/orders/courtorders/061019zor_3dq4.pdf , opinion at <https://www.opn.ca6.uscourts.gov/opinions.pdf/18a0096p-06.pdf>).

In *New Doe Child #1*, "Plaintiffs allege that the currency statutes cause them to bear, affirm, and proselytize an objectionable message in a way that, for the Atheist and Humanist Plaintiffs, violates their core religious beliefs, and, for the Jewish Plaintiff, renders him complicit in the sins of superfluously printing God's name and destroying God's printed name. Plaintiffs claim that the statutes violate their rights under the Religious Freedom Restoration Act of 1993 (RFRA), the Free Exercise and Free Speech Clauses of the First Amendment, and the Equal Protection Clause of the Fourteenth Amendment, as incorporated by the Due Process Clause of the Fifth Amendment. *New Doe #1, supra*, opinion at p. 2.

"The district court [the trial court] dismissed the RFRA and First Amendment challenges, saying the plaintiffs did not allege a substantial burden on their religious exercise, and that 'cash-only transactions did not compel Plaintiffs to proselytize a message that violates their religious beliefs,' since they could use checks or credit cards instead of paper money. The court also dismissed the equal protection argument because 'the challenged statutes do not treat different classes of people disparately.' [¶] The court [of appeals] upheld the district court's opinion and emphasized its reasoning, saying the [currency] statutes are neutral or generally applicable, thus it is not enough that they incidentally burden religious freedom. Further, the fact that the plaintiffs may have to carry currency with a government message, does not mean that observers would associate the message with the plaintiffs' views, rather than the government."

<https://www.jurist.org/news/2018/05/federal-appels-court-rejects-atheists-argument-to-remove-in-god-we-trust-from-us-currency/> .

So, it is constitutionally permitted for our currency to say "IN GOD WE TRUST."

And, as Masons, this is the Supreme Being in whom we put our trust as well.

Respectfully submitted, Bro. David I. Karp



From the East

Hello Brethren.

Hello Brethren. It is my honor and privilege to serve as the Lodge's 2026 Worshipful Master. As I take on this important role, one of my deepest hopes is to connect/reconnect with the brethren who have laid the foundation of strength, unity, and wisdom upon which our Lodge is built. Our Lodge is enriched because of Brothers like you. Your presence, your experience, and your Masonic light are truly valuable to us. The work we do as a Lodge is only as strong as the collective hearts and hands that support it. I would sincerely appreciate your participation, your guidance, and your support as we move into a new year of labor and fellowship. With great warmth, I would like to personally invite you to begin attending the Lodge again if you have been away; and, if you regularly attend, you are invited to continue your participation. Your seat is here, and your presence would mean more than you know, to me, to the officers, and to the entire Brotherhood of CFS #866.

Thank you, Brothers, for all you have contributed and all you continue to mean to Clarence F. Smith Daylight Lodge No. 866. I look forward to seeing you again soon.

Fraternally,
Wor. Joseph Chavez
Master Elect 2026

From the West

GREETINGS!

I would like to congratulate our newly elected Masonic Officers for 2026 as they begin their term of service, promoting the principles of brotherly love, relief, and truth, and bringing direction and renewed momentum for the coming year. Fresh ideas and brotherly love strengthen our resolve during challenging times within our Brotherhood and Fraternity.

Our primary mission this year is to extend the hand of fellowship. We aim to welcome new members into our fold, sharing the Light of Masonry with worthy candidates.

Simultaneously, we are committed to reaching out to those Brothers who may have grown distant, inviting them back to the warmth of our hearth. Let us be a beacon for those who seek and a comforting light for those who have wandered.

We pledge to serve as mentors, coaches, and guides, ensuring that the brethren, new or seasoned, feel supported. Our Lodge will be a shining example of charity in action and a source of hope within our community. Our Officers stand ready to serve, to uplift, and to embody the very principles we hold dear.

Let us work together, with renewed vigor and fraternal love, to make this a year of meaningful growth, deeper connection, and profound service.

Fraternally yours,
Bro. Roland Cortel
Senior Warden Elect 2026