

# THE YORK RITE'R

## The Ark of the Covenant



By Companion W.N. Nash.

What was the Ark of the Covenant — What was its history — What was its origin — and what was its purpose?

We first read of it in the Book of Exodus. Three months after escaping from Egypt, the Israelites arrived at the foot of Mount Sinai and set up camp. During the months that followed, Moses climbed the slopes of Mount Sinai many times to commune with god. It was here that God revealed to Moses the tenets of the faith which Moses wrote down in a Book of the Covenant, and the Ten Commandments engraved on two tablets of stone. In

The Ark of the Covenant, the Ten Commandments, a Pot of Manna and Aaron's Rod

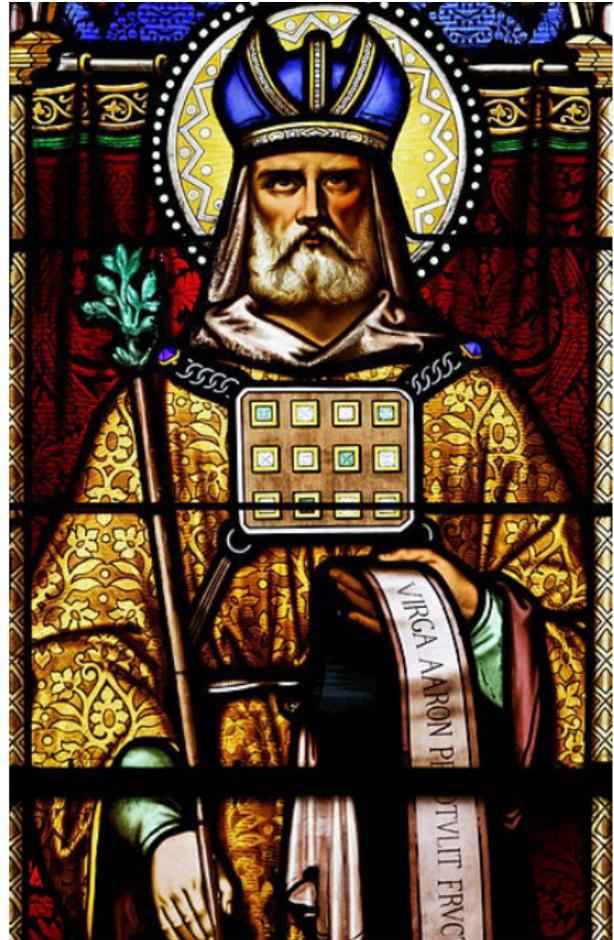
addition, Jehovah gave to Moses full instructions for the construction and furnishing of a Tabernacle — a place of worship. This was the first Church in the world.

Within the tent sanctuary, in the uttermost sacred part of it, a large Ark box or coffer called the Ark of the Covenant was to be placed. The Ark was made of wood and overlaid with pure gold to precise instructions received by Moses, and when completed was to contain the tablets of stone on which the Ten Commandments were engraved and the writings of the Book of the Covenant. In addition, a Pot of Manna, to remind the Israelites of God's goodness in providing food for them during their wandering in the desert, and Aaron's Rod from Egypt, was to be placed in the Ark.

A few words concerning Aaron's Rod. Aaron was the High Priest but from time to time he took to worshipping false idols. Aaron helped the Israelites to make a golden calf to worship, when Moses saw it, he destroyed it in a rage. Aaron continued as High Priest and the people rebelled saying Aaron had no right to remain in that position.

When four ring leaders, Koran, Dothan, Abiram and On confronted Moses with their dissatisfaction, Moses told them the Lord would decide the matter on the morrow. The following day as they gathered at the Tabernacle, the earth opened up and swallowed the four conspirators and their families, while the 250 men who had joined them were instantly consumed with fire.

To settle the dispute about Aaron as the High Priest, the Voice told Moses to bring twelve Princes or leaders of the Tribe and in their sight lay a rod on the altar. The lord said, "The man's rod whom I shall choose, shall blossom," and before the eyes of the twelve, the rod of Aaron bloomed like a bough in spring, and also turned into almonds. The Voice then delegated the responsibility for worship in the Tabernacle to Aaron and his descendants.



Aaron the High Priest  
with his Rod.



"Wilderness wandering" refers to the plight of the Israelites due to their disobedience and unbelief. Nearly 3,500 years ago, the Lord delivered His people from Egyptian bondage as described in Exodus, chapters 1–12. They were to take possession of the land God had promised their forefathers, a land "flowing with milk and honey" (*Exodus 3:8*). Prior to entry, however, they became convinced they could not oust the current inhabitants of the land, even though God told them they could. Their *lack of belief* in God's word and promises brought forth the wrath of God. He cursed them with forty years of wilderness wandering until the unbelieving generation died off, never stepping foot in the Promised Land. The actual trip should have taken 11 days.

the Twelve Tribes were settled in the Promised Land and Shiloh was appointed the center of worship. There the Tabernacle was erected and consecrated as the soul of Israel and the Ark of the Covenant placed there in.

The years rolled by, not without wars and tribulations. The Israelites were attacked and defeated by the Philistines. The Israelites were desperate and turning again to god brought the Ark into battle. But the Ark, raised by hypocritical hands, only inspired the Philistines with more fury and they massacred thirty thousand soldiers. Even the sacred ark was captured by the enemy.

The Israelites wandered in the wilderness for forty years, taking the Tabernacle and Ark of the Covenant with them. The Ark being carried on the shoulders of the High Priests in front. The Israelites were on the shores of the Dead Sea on the edge of the Promised Land to which Moses had been forbidden to enter, and as god had instructed him, Moses spent his spare time with Joshua instructing him until the captain had absorbed all the teachings. When this was completed, Moses climbed to the top of the mountains overlooking Jericho and closed his eyes forever. With Moses dead, the faithful Voice spoke to Joshua and told him to cross the Jordan into the Promised Land.

The Ark of the Covenant was born by the Levites at a fixed distance of Holiness in advance of the others and reached the flooded Jordan at nightfall. At sunrise the next day, the rushing waters seemed to cease and flow no more, backing up until dry land appeared and allowed the Children of Israel to cross safely.

At the fortified city of Jericho, Joshua received instructions from the Lord to march around the city once a day for six days bearing the Ark; and on the seventh day, after seven times round, the walls of Jericho came tumbling down. After much fighting,

To the Philistines, the Ark was a curse and two plagues swept through them. They had to get rid of it and they loaded it into a cart with wooden wheels pulled by two cows and turned loose to wander. The wandering cows, without a driver, dragged the sacred chest across the empty fields, in a straight line, directly towards the town of Beth—Shemesh. The Israelites again resumed possession of the Ark and as the years passed by and David became King of Israel, the Philistines again plotted against Israel. David smashed the might of the Philistines.

The Ark of the Covenant was then brought to the new capital, Jerusalem, and eventually placed in a new Tabernacle erected by David for it on Mount Zion. The Holy Ark of so many vicissitudes and wandering had at last come to Jerusalem.

When David died, his son Solomon, erected the Temple on Mount Moriah and the Ark of the Covenant was placed in the Holy of Holies of this new Temple. The Temple of Solomon was burned to the ground by the Babylonians, but there is no Biblical reference to the fate of the Ark. Tradition is also silent after the legend of its transfer to the Temple built by King Solomon. There is no record of it being captured by the Babylonians and returned to Jerusalem by Zerubbabel.

It is thought that Moses led the Israelites out of Egypt about 1290 B.C. and the Ark was built in about the first year of the wandering. The Temple was destroyed in 587 B.C. so that 700 years is a goodly age for a wooden coffer.

## Education Series

The April education series features two exceptional educational's!!!

THE GRAND YORK RITE OF UTAH  
PRESENTS

A Special Educational by Guest Speaker  
Brother Jason M. Richards

Diluvian Origins: The Influence of the Noahide Flood  
Myth on the Masonic Third Degree

April 26, 2021  
7:00 PM MST



W. Bro. Jason M. Richards is a Past Master of Acacia Lodge No. 16 in Clifton VA and a member of The Colonial Lodge No. 1821 in Washington, DC. Bro. Jason is a founding member of The Masonic Roundtable podcast, and has written articles for and edited publications including the Midnight Freemasons Blog, The Fraternal Review, The Voice of Freemasonry in the District of Columbia, and It's Business Time: Adapting a Corporate Path for Freemasonry. Bro. Jason resides in Chantilly, VA with his wife, son, cats, and ever-expanding collection of bow ties.

The Grand York Rite of Utah  
Presents

A Special Educational by Guest Speaker  
Brother Joe Martinez

The Vaults of Enoch and the Secret Knowledge  
Within

April 7, 2021  
7:00 PM MST

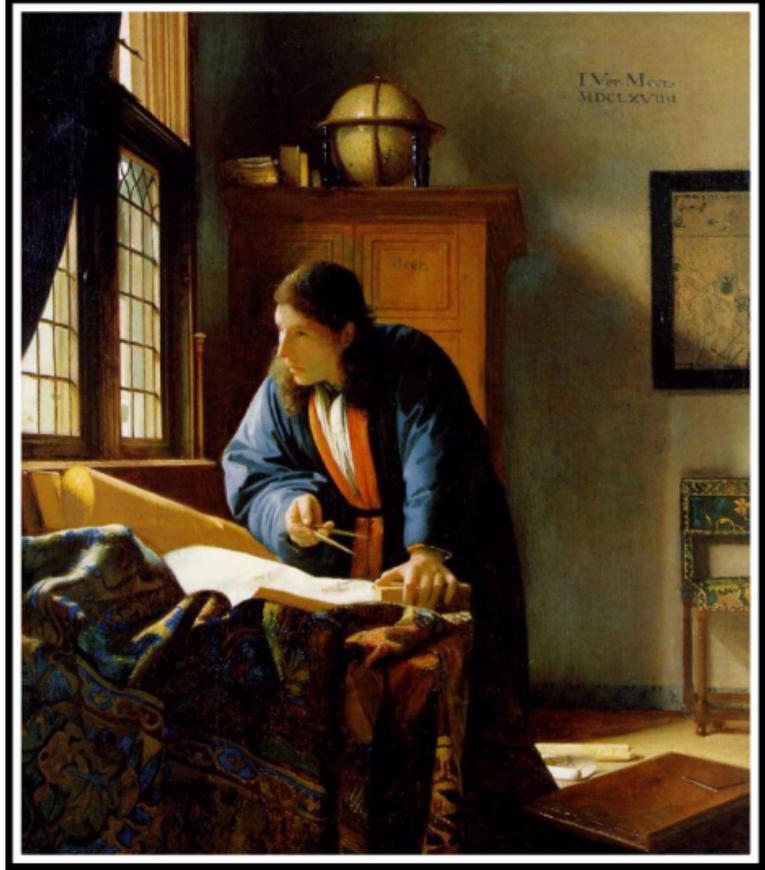


Bro. Joe Martinez is currently serving as Senior Warden of Manasseh Lodge No. 182, A.F. & A.M., of the Commonwealth of Virginia. He is also a member of the premier Esoteric Lodge in DC, Benjamin B. French Lodge, No. 15 FAAM. He is also a Master Mason in Massachusetts and the UGLE. He is a member of Royal Arch, Cryptic Council, Commandery, the Allied Masonic Degrees, AASR SJ, Knight Masons, YRSC, and the Operatives. Bro. Joe enjoys focusing on and researching the Initiatic Experience, Rituals of Initiation, and the Mysteries of Ancient Civilizations, as well as the relation between modern science and Gnostic teachings.

## Ask Adoniram

This Month we received a question in regards to the uniforms of the Grand York Rite of Utah.

The uniforms of the Grand York Rite of Utah are specified in the Constitutions of the Grand Chapter, Grand Council and the Grand Commandery of Utah. While the adopted uniform of the Grand Chapter Royal Arch Masons of Utah and the Grand Council Royal & Select Masons of Utah are fairly simple. The adopted uniforms of the Grand Commandery Knights Templar of Utah are more involved and varied.



Grand Chapter of Utah

Grand Constitution of Utah, Title 2, Section 2-23 Uniform

**The uniform of this Grand Chapter shall be black trousers no cuff, white shirt, black tie, black shoes, and a dress coat of red with a triple tau insignia over the left pocket.**

Grand Council of Utah

Grand Constitution of Utah, Title 2, Section 2-23 Uniform

**The Uniform of the Grand Council shall be the black trousers with no cuff, white shirt, black tie, black shoes/boots, and purple dress coat with the broken triangle insignia over the left pocket.**

Both the Grand Chapter and the Grand Council adopted the current version of the uniform at the Grand Sessions in May of 2005. The uniform for both bodies was changed to closely resemble each other, as previously the uniform of the Council had gray trousers. And many of the functions attended by York Rite members required them to change uniforms in between meetings. And so the body's voted to change the uniforms to more closely match.

The uniform regulations of the Grand Commandery are a bit more involved and lengthy. The Uniforms of the Knights Templar of Utah, basically include a Class A uniform, summer uniform, and Cap & Mantle. But that is an extreme over simplification of the approved uniforms, and the

Constitution dictates when different uniforms may be worn. Such as the summer uniform being worn in the summer months from April 15<sup>th</sup> to October 15<sup>th</sup> in the case of most of the Commanderies in Utah. One exception in particular is Golgotha Commandery #7, which allows the summer uniform to be worn for a longer amount of time due to the longer time that it is warmer. Also, there is a number of types of headwear that are permitted to be worn with the different uniforms, depending on what has been adopted by the constituent Commandery.

The Class A uniform is the typical uniform that most of us think of for a Knight Templar, and consists of black leather shoes, black slacks, white shirt, black tie, double breasted black coat and the Chapeau. This is the official Class A uniform for the Grand Commandery and most of the constituent Commanderies in Utah. Golgotha Commandery uses a Black Pershing cap as its cover as part of its Class A uniform. And SLC Commandery typically wears the Cape & Mantle as its typical uniform.

The Grand Commandery adopted a summer uniform that consists of black leather shoes, black slacks, and a short sleeve of military style with shoulder epaulets. The cover for the Summer uniform was originally designated as a Military style Naval cap that had a white cover. Last year the Grand Commandery voted on legislation to amend the wording of the Uniform Regulations to match the Grand Encampment regulations. The cover is now designated as a Pershing style cap, to be either white or black cover depending on the uniform it is to be worn with.

The Commandery uniform in particular frequently comes up as a point of conversation, due to the jewels that are worn upon it and the location. The right side of the coat is strictly for Grand Encampment jewels, with the exception that name plates may be worn on the right side. All other awards/jewels are to be worn on the left side. The Malta jewel is to be worn to the farthest left, next would be Past Commander association jewel, then Jewel of Past Grand Commander, and last the KTCH jewel or KCT jewel. It should be observed that no more than 4 jewels may be worn on the left breast.

A state name may be worn above the pocket, centered over the pocket. As well, the Veteran bar or Masonic service bar may be worn between the State bar and the top of the pocket. Provisions for the sleeve crosses and shoulder boards are specified in the Uniform regulations of the Grand Commandery of Utah. For the Grand Commandery, it is typically the duty of the Grand Inspector General to instruct the Sir Knights upon the correct wearing of the Knight Templar uniform when he conducts inspections of the constituent Commandery. The Grand Chapter and the Grand Council do not have an officer that inspects for the uniform, as there is far less to take into account with the uniforms than there is with the Commandery uniforms. For additional questions on specific details regarding uniforms, your local York Rite bodies can give you more information.

Brian J. Hastings  
Chairman Jurisprudence Committee

## Masonic Conundrum

The January/February Conundrum was closer to home. I asked the name and number of the local AMD Council? Who it is named after and what distinction they share. For extra credit I asked for the years they held that common distinction?

Behle-Simons #544 is the name and number of the Council located here in Utah. It is named after Most Worshipful Brothers Calvin A. Behle and Blaine M. Simons these Companions and Sir Knights shared the distinction of have been the Grand Head of the four bodies that make up the KYCH. Brother Behle served as Grand Master in 1957, Grand High Priest in 1957, Illustrious Grand Master in 1966 and Grand Commander in 1969. Brother Simons served as Grand Master in 1969, Grand High Priest in 1969, Illustrious Grand Master in 1975 and Grand Commander in 1965. I would like to congratulate Companion Blake Hansen and Companion Frank Jones for their correct answers. I would also like to thank Companion Blake for pointing out to me something I overlooked and wasn't aware of, that both these Brothers served as Grand Master and Grand High Priest at the same time.



**March/April Conundrum;** Most brethren are familiar with their own Lodge's Charter, or Warrant, the date it was granted from Grand Lodge etc. some are even familiar with the interesting situation when, in an area that is about to establish its own Grand Lodge, the dates that areas Lodges received their Charters from distant Grand Lodges that very well may have determined the Lodge's sequential number in the newly established jurisdiction.

But, there's another kind of Lodge, besides a Chartered Lodge, that also can exist in a jurisdiction.

What is an "Inchoate Lodge" and what is its status in a jurisdiction? How long can a Lodge remain as an Inchoate Lodge?

Email your answer to [theyorkriter@gmail.com](mailto:theyorkriter@gmail.com) .Those with the correct answer will be listed in the next issue.

## York Rite Happenings

Grand Encampment 91st Annual Easter Service.  
April 4, 2021 starting 9:00 am Virtually. The link will be available April 1, 2021 on The Grand Encampment website.

May 8, 2021 Grand York Rite of Utah Virtual Annual Sessions.  
You can register on the Grand York Rite website.



## September 17th & 18th York Rite Festival

Due to the Covid -19 pandemic the March Festival has been moved to September. Now is a good time to start planning for the Festival. If you or your local York Rite Bodies are interested in a part or putting on one of the Degrees or Orders email us at [theyorkriter@gmail.com](mailto:theyorkriter@gmail.com) . It is also a good time to start preparing those Brothers who have shown an interest in joining the York Rite. **There will be a Super Excellent surprise!!!**



## York Rite Spotlight



The Commemorative Order of St. Thomas of Acon is an invitational fraternal and Masonic order. In the United States of America, the Order is governed by the Grand Master's Council, which warrants local Chapels of the Order. Chapels may be grouped into larger administrative units, known as Provinces, as needs require. The Grand Master's Council meets annually, generally in conjunction with the Grand Council of the Allied Masonic Degrees for the United States of America.

A candidate for admission must be a subscribing Master Mason in a Craft Lodge in amity with the United Grand Lodge of England, a subscribing Royal Arch Mason in a Royal Arch Chapter, or its equivalent in other countries, in amity with the Supreme Grand Chapter of England and a subscribing Knight Templar, or its equivalent in other countries, in amity with the United Religious, Military and Masonic Orders of the Temple and of St. John of Jerusalem, Palestine, Rhodes and Malta.

The Order of St. Thomas of Acon was established in 1974 as a result of twenty years' research in the Guildhall Library in London by John E. N. Walker, who for many years was the Secretary General of the Societas Rosicruciana in Anglia. The ancient records of the Order, written in medieval French and Latin, had been deposited in the Guildhall Library and escaped the Great Fire of 1666. The Order now operates under the official title of The Commemorative Order of St Thomas of Acon.



Guild Hall, London, England

That we have a revival of this very English Order of Chivalry is due to the untiring efforts of our first Grand Master, Sir John (Walker) of Dorking. John spent more than twenty years searching the archives of the Guild Hall Library for information about the Order of St. Thomas of Acon, intending initially to write its history. Happily, he discovered the report of the Installation of the Master in 1510, an account so unusual and so typically English, that he felt compelled to revive the Order, albeit Masonically.

Reese L. Harrison, Jr., and a group of other Freemasons, traveled to England in October 1999. There, they attended Craft Lodges and various appendant bodies around the Country. During the trip, Brother Harrison also arranged to have the group welcomed into the Commemorative Order of St. Thomas of Acon in Blackheath Chapel Time Immemorial (T.I.), on October 23, 1999.

Interest in the Order was strong and there was a desire to establish a Chapel of the Order in the United States. On February 17, 2000, Pilgrim Chapel No. 11 and Trinity Chapel No. 12 were consecrated in Washington, D.C. during the annual Masonic Week event. In line with the growth of the Order in the United States, a Province was established for the United States of America on September 11, 2005. Following several years of rapid expansion across the United States, a separate Grand Master's Council for the United States of America was established on January 29, 2015.



# Further Light



## Companion Adept of the Temple Program

How much do you know about the York Rite? The York Rite Companion Adept of the Temple program is an exciting by-mail self-study program through the Degrees and Orders of the York Rite of Freemasonry administered by the Sovereign York Rite College of North America. This program is offered to any Knight Templar by enrollment through the Sovereign College office.

The program offers a series of exams focused on the ritualistic, philosophical, and esoteric teachings of the York Rite. The exams include a combination of multiple-choice, true-false, and essay questions pertaining to information presented in the Degrees and Orders of the Rite and/or in the resource materials which are recommended for purchase with the program.

There are five exams included in the curriculum, named as follows:

<p><b>Exam I. The Degrees of the Capitular Rite</b> Mark Master Past Master</p>	<p><b>Exam II. The Degrees of the Capitular Rite</b> Most Excellent Master Royal Arch The WORDS in Masonry</p>
<p><b>Exam III. The Degrees of the Cryptic Rite</b> The Council Degrees Royal Master Degree Select Master Degree The Secret Vault Tradition</p>	<p><b>Exam IV. The Orders of Chivalry</b> The Commandery Orders Order of the Red Cross Order of Malta Order of the Temple</p>
<p><b>Exam V. The York Rite Traditions and Freemasonry</b> The Essential Tracing Boards of the York Rite</p>	

These exams are based upon the online resource material and the rituals of the General Grand Chapter, General Grand Council and Grand Encampment of the U.S.A.

Increase or test your knowledge of the York Rite while you read the classic texts of Albert Mackey, Jackson Chase, Jeremy Cross, and George Conner. You will want to have access to your local Chapter, Council and Commandery rituals as you peruse the answers to the exams presented in the Companion Adept of the Temple program. The five quizzes are open book and you can advance at your own pace. This is an ideal course for individual study, and will sharpen your writing skills as you address in your own words the essay questions presented in the quizzes. Upon completion, you will receive a personalized certificate naming you as a Companion Adept of the Temple of the York Rite of Freemasonry! Enroll today!

**ONLINE RESOURCE MATERIAL (PDF)**

<p><b>CAPITULAR MASONRY:</b> "The Book of the Chapter" by Albert Mackey. <a href="http://books.google.com/books?id=JH9JAAAIAAJ">http://books.google.com/books?id=JH9JAAAIAAJ</a></p> <p>"Freemasons Book of the Royal Arch" by Bernard E. Jones <a href="http://www.phoenixmasonry.org/freemasons_book_of_the_royal_arch.htm">http://www.phoenixmasonry.org/freemasons_book_of_the_royal_arch.htm</a></p> <p><b>CHIVALRIC MASONRY:</b> "The Templars' chart or Hieroglyphic monitor" by Jeremy Cross. <a href="http://books.google.com/books?id=dUYuAAAAYAAJ">http://books.google.com/books?id=dUYuAAAAYAAJ</a></p> <p>"Shibboleth: A Templar Monitor" by George Cooper Connor. <a href="http://books.google.com/books?id=KK4Uz4sBH2zC">http://books.google.com/books?id=KK4Uz4sBH2zC</a> <a href="http://www.sacred-texts.com/mas/shib/index.htm">http://www.sacred-texts.com/mas/shib/index.htm</a></p>	<p><b>CRYPTIC MASONRY:</b> "Cryptic Masonry" by Albert Mackey. <a href="http://books.google.com/books?id=nikw4AAAAMAAJ">http://books.google.com/books?id=nikw4AAAAMAAJ</a></p> <p>"The Text Book of Cryptic Masonry" by Jackson Chase. <a href="http://books.google.com/books?id=2v5JAAAIAAJ">http://books.google.com/books?id=2v5JAAAIAAJ</a></p> <p><b>COMPREHENSIVE MONITORS:</b> "The Freemason's monitor" by Thomas Webb. (Contains Lodge, Chapter, Commandery, and Scottish Rite) <a href="http://books.google.com/books?id=BIBIAAAAAMAAJ">http://books.google.com/books?id=BIBIAAAAAMAAJ</a></p> <p>"The true Masonic chart or Hieroglyphic monitor" by Jeremy Cross. (Contains Lodge, Chapter, and Council) <a href="http://books.google.com/books?id=Aas2AAAAMAAJ">http://books.google.com/books?id=Aas2AAAAMAAJ</a></p>
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For more information, or to request an enrollment form, contact:

**York Rite Sovereign College**  
P. O. Box 368 Denton, NC 27239-0368  
(336) 859-YRSC (9772)  
[yrrsc1957@windstream.net](mailto:yrrsc1957@windstream.net)

## Scottish Rite Master Craftsman Program



The Scottish Rite Master Craftsman (SRMC) program is an exciting, correspondence course designed and administered by staff at the House of the Temple in Washington, DC, under the guidance and leadership of the Supreme Council, 33°, of the A&A Scottish Rite, Southern Jurisdiction, USA.

All three courses are available as mail-in courses, but new for Summer 2020, the Ritual & History Program is available online! Those three courses and a Group Studies program constitute the SRMC. While a Scottish Rite, S.J., member may use Group Studies program at any time, the three courses are meant to be taken in the following order:



A regular Masonic body, dedicated to preserving the history and rituals of defunct and inactive Masonic orders.

