

Commissioned Templar Chaplain Program

Unit 9

Ministering in and beyond the Asylum Exercise Date: April 3, 2023 Chaplain: Frederick Russell Dixon, Sr.

Faith and community in lodge project

Design a faith-based event for the Commandery or your other Body. This could be inviting in worship leaders of differing faiths representing those in lodge or those faiths not represented at all in lodge. Ask the brothers who attended how well they thought it went in adding to their masonic obligations of seeking light and extending charitable principles further to all humanity.

I invited the Rabbi from Temple Israel, Norfolk, VA to speak to my Royal Arch Chapter. His short talk explained some important activities of his synagogue and its importance to our community overall. He also explained a bit of the Jewish history which is beautifully imbued in the Royal Arch degree. The companions listened attentively. Especially the part about our Exaltation degree. We have a few Jewish companions, but the vast majority are Christians. Thus, many men learned more about Judaism and its importance to Freemasonry for the first time. That it is another monotheism represented in our gentle Craft.

Finally, I think it's good to occasionally remind ourselves that Royal Arch Masonry has the same religious requirements as Symbolic Masonry: belief in a Supreme Being. Although many of us love Chivalric Masonry, it isn't for everyone. Therefore, let us not only recruit Christian brethren, but Moslems, Jews and others approved by the Grand Lodge of Virginia. All should bask in the Light of Capitular and Cryptic Masonry.

Community involvement project

Design and implement a faith-based program for the community. This should NOT directly benefit the Commandery/Body, so not a Commandery/Body organizational fundraiser. Use your imagination to serve God in some other way, whether increasing knowledge, community, peace, justice, or some other scriptural virtue. Report on the effectiveness of the project in some way, whether participant evaluations or community data afterwards.

I'm a member of two commanderies: Grice #16 and Virginia Beach #36. We have done a good job providing Thanksgiving dinners to the needy, compliments of Virginia Beach #36. However, Grice has done nothing of the kind. At least not as a body. So I set out to inculcate that behavior in my Grice fratres. Therefore, I recently donated money to ForKids in the name of Grice Commandery #16. ForKids is a Virginia charity that provides homeless services to families hereabouts. I gave them a Virginia "Community Builders Award" years ago when I was Worshipful Master. This time I'm ministering to them from a Chivalric standpoint. I do not want to be reimbursed. nor do I want to supplant regular Masonic charities, i.e. KTEF and the Masonic Home of Virginia. My objectives were first and foremost to help a worthy cause. Next to introduce my Commandery and ForKids with

the hope that we'll see each other in a favorable light and maybe further minister to homeless people in the years ahead. All of which seems in keeping with our vow: “. . . that I will wield my sword, in defense of innocent . . .”

The foregoing has been communicated to my commandery and the response seems positive. Time will tell. ForKids sent letters of appreciation which accompany this form.

Courteously,
FRD, KTCH
Former DDGC #2
Commanderies 16 and 36