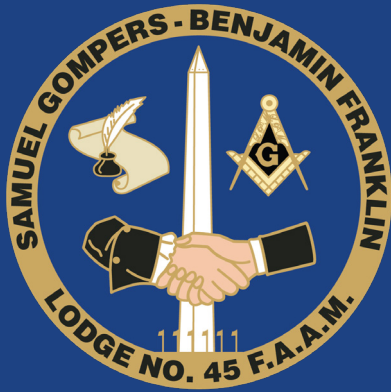




Samuel Gompers-Benjamin Franklin
Lodge No. 45 F.A.A.M

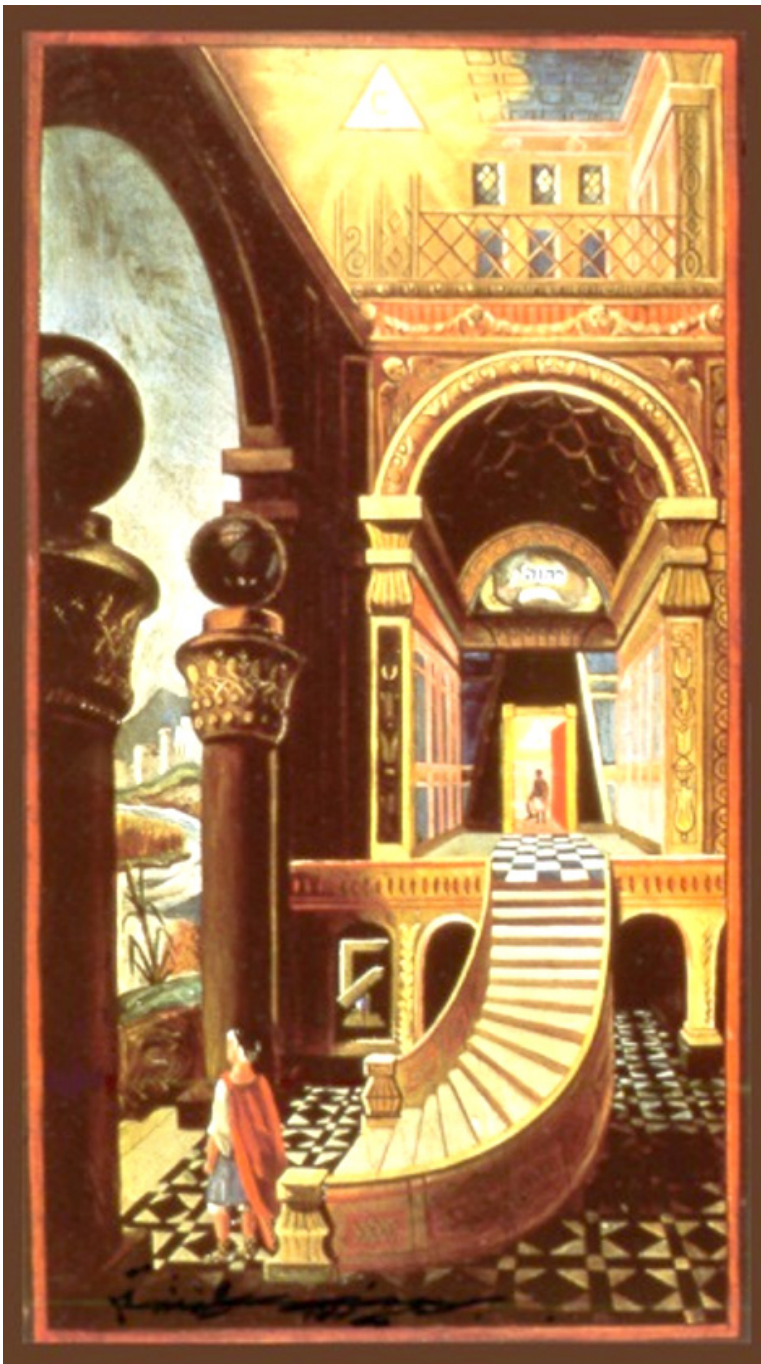
bulletin

Takoma Masonic Center
115 Carroll Street, N.W., Washington, D.C. 20012

Volume XCIX • Number 3
August/September/October 2025

Meets Third Sunday of February, May, August, November
and December - Gavel at 3PM.

Reflections on Attending a Fellowcraft Degree



The WM declared that on Sunday, October 19th, at 3:00 pm, in the Takoma Masonic Center, there will be a Special Communication for the purpose of conferring the Fellowcraft Degree on our Candidate.

The Fellowcraft Degree marks an important milestone in the Masonic journey, signifying the Brother's progression from the stage of initiation toward a greater understanding of knowledge, duty, and self-improvement. To attend such a degree as a participant is to witness both the beauty of Masonic ritual and the transformative nature of its lessons. It is in this degree that the symbolism of labor and learning come more clearly into focus, reminding us that the pursuit of wisdom is an essential part of our growth as Masons and as men.

The Fellowcraft Degree emphasizes the importance of education, moral reflection, and the steady application of one's faculties toward virtuous living. As participants, we are reminded that the tools of the Craft are not merely ceremonial, but emblematic of the values we should apply to daily life. In watching a Brother advance through this stage of his journey, we are encouraged to renew our own commitment to these teachings, strengthening both the individual Mason and the Lodge as a whole.

Equally profound is the sense of fraternity experienced during such a degree. Each moment serves as a reminder that we travel this path together, offering one another guidance, encouragement, and the light of fellowship. The Fellowcraft Degree is not only a step of advancement for the candidate — it is also a time of reflection and reaffirmation for all present. In attending, we are united in the shared endeavor of building character, honoring tradition, and striving ever closer toward the principles of truth, brotherly love, and self-knowledge.

Please read our WM Jerry Keilsohn's "Light from the East," and let him know that you are able to assist in the cast for this important Degree. RSVP's for attending should be made to the Secretary. Following the Degree, the Brethren will retire across the street to Bus Boys & Poets.

Compliments of
**SAMUEL GOMPERS-BENJAMIN FRANKLIN
LODGE NO. 45, F.A.A.M.**



Your father or uncle
may have been a Mason

Your grandfather probably was a Mason

To learn more about Masonry:
We meet the second Tuesday night
at Takoma Masonic Center

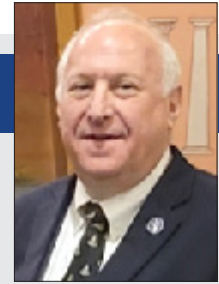
Aaron Kamerer, Worshipful Master, wm@sgbf45.org
Derek Gould, Senior Warden
Jeffrey R. Greenwald, Junior Warden

2B1  ASK1

View From the East

W.B. Jerry Kielsohn, P.M.

August 2025



One of the commitments a Worshipful Master makes is to provide Light to his Lodge. That Light can take several forms. Education is a common method.

For this article, I am going to call it hard facts. Some good news and some bad news.

Good News

With the August 17th Stated Communication, we have held a total of five meetings this year so far:

Three Stated Communications: February, May, and August

Two Special Communications: a Fellowcraft Degree in April and an Entered Apprentice Degree in June

At the recent August Stated Communication, there were a total of twelve Samuel Gompers-Benjamin Franklin Lodge No. 45 Brethren present, one of them being an Entered Apprentice, plus two visitors, for a total of fourteen. To open the Lodge on the First Degree, I had to ask two sideline brethren to take up positions. And, in a rather embarrassing moment for me as Master, I had to ask one of the visiting brothers to fill the last chair.

Bad News

There are 104 registered members, plus two honorary members of the Lodge. That means that 90 of the brethren of the Lodge—yes, 90 percent of the brothers of the Lodge—did NOT attend.

It is extremely frustrating to spend hours planning and coordinating a Lodge meeting, including feeding everybody, and having nobody turn up.

There are a dozen parts for a First Degree. For the Special Communication to confer the Entered Apprentice Degree in June, I had to ask five brothers from other Lodges to take roles. Thankfully, the brethren of L'Haitienne Lodge, including the Worshipful Master, came to assist, along with the Grand Lecturer.

For a Lodge that has been known to do an outstanding job with the ritual of Initiating, Passing, and Raising new Masons, it is rather embarrassing that we were not able to pull together enough of our own brethren to do a degree. We have definitely fallen in an undesirable direction.

In the five Communications this year, we have not had

a single one where all of the elected and appointed leadership were present. The last time that happened was at the Installation of Officers back in December 2024. One of the officers has left the area, so the prospect of ever having all of the officers in their places is rather slim.

We went to five Stated Communications a year, instead of monthly, because attendance each month was horribly low. I find it un-Masonic and an affront to our fellowship, that the overall attendance is now worse.

Looking Ahead

What does the future of the Lodge look like? We (the officers) have agreed on a plan for next year, which unfortunately revolves around me staying as Master for another year. It does have a huge hole in it: no Junior Deacon.

I am challenging every brother of the Lodge to lengthen their cable-tow and attend a Lodge meeting. Remember, coming to Lodge is about making the time, not finding the time. The next Stated Communication is in November.

The Lodge needs a brother to step up NOW as Junior Deacon, and to agree to sit in that chair next year as well. And if somebody wants to really step up and be Master next year, I am more than happy to assist in making that happen.

In October, we are going to try and confer a Fellowcraft Degree. There are openings for roles. Let me know whether you are able to participate.

Centennial Year

We will be 100 years old on December 16, 2025. The current plan is to have a banquet to celebrate in January or February. It would be rather ironic if that turned into the "Turn in the Charter" party.

Good News to Finish

We have money. The Trustees report that there is a significant amount of money in our investments to sustain us for many more years—if we can find the leadership to make that happen.

"Just keep swimming." —Dory, Finding Nemo

Jerry

**ATTENTION! BRETHREN OF SAMUEL GOMPERS –
BENJAMIN FRANKLIN LODGE #45**

To all those true and worthy Masters, Fellowcrafts, and Apprentices who belong to our Noble Order. As the seasons turn and the new year dawns, the time has come to settle the modest obligations owed to our beloved Lodge.

LET IT BE KNOWN, for the continued maintenance of our Sacred Temple and the noble works of charity and fellowship, that the annual dues notices which you have all received are now due and payable for the 2026 Masonic Year.

Your timely remittance is requested, for it is upon these modest contributions that the Pillars of our Craft—Strength, Wisdom, and Beauty—are upheld.

A KIND REMINDER: The strength of our fraternity is measured by the devotion of its members. Let us not neglect our duty but rather fulfill our solemn charge with cheerful hearts and ready hands.

Thank you to the many Brethren who have already submitted their dues payments.

For further particulars, contact the Lodge Secretary or better yet, attend the next Special and the next Stated Communication.

Raymond Horn
Secretary
Past Master, 2018
secretary@sgbf45.org



Samuel Gompers-Benjamin Franklin Lodge #45
Free and Accepted Masons of the District of Columbia





WM Jerry Keilsohn holding the banner in the front of the Masons

Grand Lodge – July 4th Parade – Takoma Park

Our Grand Lodge once again participated in Washington, D.C.'s four major parades: Capitol Hill, the Palisades, Takoma Park and the National Mall. As it was the Grand Master's desire that each parade included a large number of Masonic marchers and, to reach this goal, each Lodge was asked to only participate in the Parade near their meeting place.

Of course, for our Lodge that meant focusing on the Takoma

Park Parade. Our Lodge had a good turnout, and of course each participating Mason received a new polo shirt and ball cap.

Once again, we handed out American Flags to all the people who had congregated along the route, lots of kids which always makes it a ton of fun for us.



Attending the July 4th Takoma Park Parade: Burt Levy, PM, Raymond Horn, PM, Robert H. Starr, PGM, Lee Silverman, WM Jerry Keilsohn, PM, Hal Henig, Jonathan Binstock, PM and Margo.

August Stated Communication - Burgers, Brats, Beer and Bingo

Our August meeting was a perfect late-summer event. The Grand Master granted our Lodge a dispensation for a special BBQ Dress Code (shirts and footwear required). Apparently, pants and socks were optional.

For the meeting, however, the Grand Master added one caveat: the Officers were to wear blazers or sport coats over their BBQ attire while sitting in their Stations and Places in the tiled Lodge. He described it as the spirit of Bermuda formal.

Our Worshipful Master, Jerry Keilsohn, challenged the Officers to find the ugliest sport coats possible, and this quickly led to several excursions to Goodwill and other thrift shops.

Immediately following the closing, the Lodge retired to the refectory, where a festive Family Meal was enjoyed. Classic summer fare of brats and beer was served, followed by an active game of Bingo, which proved popular with the many Brethren and Guests staying until the game had concluded and all the prizes were given away.

For the game, our very own RWB Sheldon Rappeport efficiently called the numbers using the Lodge's classic Bingo set from our more storied days. The meal was expertly prepared by Brother Ryan Simon, a competitive BBQ'er. A good time was had by all.



Brethren attending our August Stated Communication: Jeff Greenwald, Raymond Horn, PM, Chester Katz, Lee Silverman, WM Nathan William (The Colonial #1821), Allen Levy, PM, Robert H. Starr, PGM, WM Jerry Keilsohn, PM, Howard Politzer, Robert Greenwald, PM, Ryan Simon, RWB Sheldon Rappeport, PM, Roland Hefter. Christopher U. Burkett, PM (HTX#10) took the photograph.



RWB Sheldon Rappeport calling the numbers



Sam Chin, PM (STJ#11) and his family



Robert Greenwald, PM and Roberta, talking to Phillip Taylor



Ronald Hefter and his wife, Ryan Simon, Lee Silverman, Chester Katz, Howard Ploitzer



Vickie Starr and Marilyn Polizer



Colorful Mission BBQ USA

by Hal Henig

Meet-Up



The Brethren and guests enjoyed their good food and good company at Mission BBQ. Tiler and Meet-Up Chairman Hal Henig, Worshipful Master Jerry Keilsohn, PM, Senior Warden Jeff Greenwald, Secretary Ray Horn, PM, David Torchinsky, PM, Julien Hofberg, PM, and Brothers Charlie Meyers and Steve Deklebaum.



The photo captures the evening well, highlighting the vibrant colors of Sister Lisa Henig's outfit and WB Julien Hofberg's lively socks.

On Monday evening, June 23, Samuel Gompers-Benjamin Franklin Lodge gathered for a colorful and enjoyable meet-up at Mission BBQ. Our Lodge has held previous gatherings at Mission BBQ to honor the men and women who have served in our nation's armed forces, as well as the first responders who work tirelessly to keep our communities safe.

Eleven Brethren and guests shared a meal and fellowship that evening, just a week and a half before Independence Day. Those in attendance included:

Brethren: Tiler and Meet-Up Chairman Hal Henig, Worshipful Master Jerry Keilsohn, PM, Senior Warden Jeff Greenwald, Secretary Ray Horn, PM, David Torchinsky, PM, Julien Hofberg, PM, and Brothers Charlie Meyers and Steve Deklebaum.

Guests: Lisa Henig, Laura Torchinsky, and David Horn.

Everyone enjoyed themselves.

Samuel Gompers-Benjamin Franklin Lodge – Monthly

by Hal Henig

Meet Up



On Monday evening, July 28, the Samuel Gompers-Benjamin Franklin Lodge held its Monthly Meet-Up at the Greene Turtle Restaurant in Burtonsville, Maryland. This was the first time our Lodge had gathered at this location. The weather that day was in the high 90s, a reminder of just how hot the summer of 2025 has been.

A total of nine brethren and guests attended this late July social. The attending brethren were:

Tiler Hal Henig, Meet-Up Chairman, WM Jerry Keilsohn, PM, Junior Deacon Lee Silverman, David Torchinsky, PM, Phillip Taylor. Our guests included Lisa Henig, Laura Torchinsky, and Sharon & Stuart Zitomer.

We were provided with a private room at the restaurant, where our server offered friendly and attentive service throughout the evening. Following the main dinner, the five brethren enjoyed fellowship and conversation together at one side of the table, while our guests shared warm conversation at the other.

Photos of this memorable evening are included. This Meet-Up was a wonderful success, and we look forward to many more opportunities to gather in fellowship.

SAMUEL GOMPERS-BENJAMIN FRANKLIN LODGE NO. 45, F.A.A.M. LIVING PAST MASTERS

1974	Aaron S. Teitel	1995	Burt S. Levy, HPSGD	2016	Leonard Rubin
1974	Donald M. Stein	1997	Adam Forman	2017	Michael K. Greenwald, SGD
1979	Michael J. Rinis	2001	Sheldon I. Rappeport, MA DSM, GL-E	2018	Raymond E. Horn
1979	Burton Penn	2002-2003	Jeffrey Sherman	2019	Robert Greenwald
1981	Jules S. Tepper, PGM	2009	Jonathan M. Binstock	2020	Jerry P. Keilsohn
1981	Joel Shulman	2010	David B. Torchinsky	2021	Burt S. Levy, HPSGD
1983	Julien P. Hofberg	2011	Joshua L. Rubin	2022	Jerry P. Keilsohn
1989	Sheldon I. Rappeport, MA DSM, GL-E	2012-2013	Erik F. Milman	2023	Allen R. Levy
1990	Robert H. Starr, PGM	2014	Adam Forman	2024	Aaron A. Kamerer

The William D. Boker Thanksgiving Basket Program – November 24th



It's time to prepare for our Lodge's Signature Event! The Sunday before Thanksgiving – November 23rd This is a great event for family, friends and perspective Masons. Many hands make for light work, and in the last few years the activity is completed quickly, before 10:00 am!

As in previous years, volunteers from JSSA will pick up the baskets in the morning. This year, we will again deliver a growing number of pre-made meals ourselves, with assistance from the Sisterhood of Bnai Tzedek later in the day on the 23rd of November.

This event presents a valuable opportunity to witness firsthand the impact of our efforts. We need your help to make this happen! Please contact Senior Warden Jeffrey Greenwald to let him know if you can assist with either preparing the baskets or delivering the meals.

If you are unable to participate but would like to contribute, please consider making a financial donation to the Lodge to help cover costs.

The location for assembling the baskets will depend on the weather; we will either gather in the Safeway parking lot or at the Kensington Lodge. Assuming clear weather, here is the plan:

- **Basket Making:**

When: November 23rd, 7:30 am

Where: Kensington Safeway, downstairs parking area (next to the loading dock)

Address: 10541 Connecticut Ave, Kensington, MD 20895

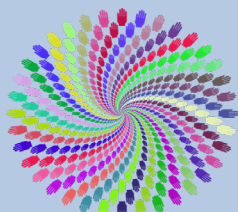
- **Basket Distribution:**

When: November 23rd, 9:00 am

Where: Kensington Masonic Lodge.

Address: 4315 Howard Ave Kensington Md.

Chairman: Jeffrey Greenwald, Cell 240-401-1261, Email: Jrg57@comcast.net* **Breakfast foods will be provided to volunteers*



**VOLUNTEER
WITH JSSA**

Giving back to your community is one of the most rewarding things you can do. At JSSA, we have many opportunities for you to help your neighbors manage life's consequential moments.

Brethren, as you know we partner with JSSA several times a year to help with Holiday Food Baskets. You may donate directly to JSSA and specify holiday baskets to support their food assistance.

<https://www.jssa.org/get-involved/donate/>

The Water Buffalo Degree

ROCKtober 25th, 2025

**DON'T MISS THE FUN!
REGISTER NOW!**

3:00 PM



This is an unofficial "Fun Degree"

Open to Cavemen and their Ladies 18 years or Older

\$100 covers your full participation in this degree

***** Limited to first 150 participants ONLY *****

SEATING IS LIMITED. REGISTER NOW TO SAVE YOUR SEAT

<https://tinyurl.com/mrsj3mfs>

LOCATION of EVENT:

**Boumi Shrine Temple
5050 King Ave
Baltimore, MD 21237**

**Free Admission to
HAUNTED HOUSE
ATTRACTION
Following the Degree**

**Presented by the
FAMOUS**



Contact: Dave Spangler Phone: 443.553.0790
email: travelingbrotherdavid@gmail.com
Contact: Bruce Mulligan Phone: 301.919.0886
email: greenfieldpointfarm@hotmail.com

Candidates Can Expect:

- **INTERACTIVE Participation Throughout The Degree**
- Authentic Water Buffalo Hat
- Commemorative T-Shirt
- Water Buffalo Degree Certificate
- Membership Card
- Full Caveman Dinner
 - Pit Beef, Pit Ham, Smoked Turkey Fresh Rolls Chips, Potato Salad, Coleslaw, Macaroni Salad, Green Salad, Bake Beans, Cookies, Cake, Dessert

**Dress Code:
Shorts & T-shirts**



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2025 OFFICERS

Worshipful Master.....	Jerry P. Keilsohn, PM
Senior Warden.....	Jeffrey R. Greenwald
Junior Warden	Ryan A. Simon
Secretary	Raymond Horn, PM, secretary@sgbf45.org 443-253-0605 6109 Lone Oak Drive, Bethesda, MD 20817
Treasurer	Robert H. Starr, PGM
Chaplain	Burt S. Levy, PM, JGD Hon.
Master-of-Ceremonies.....	Allen R. Levy, PM
Senior Deacon.....	Aaron A. Kamerer, P.M.
Junior Deacon	Lee R. Silverman
Senior Steward	Pending appointment
Junior Steward.....	Pending appointment
Trustees.....	GL-E Sheldon I. Rappeport, PM, DSM, MA, (2027), Jeffrey Greenwald, (2025), Julien P. Holberg, PM (2026)
Fidelity Medal Recipient	To be selected
Historian	Joshua L. Rubin, PM
Tiler.....	Hal Henig
Immediate PM	Aaron A. Kamerer, P.M.

2025 REPRESENTATIVES

Masonic Foundation	JGS Michael Greenwald, PM
Masonic & Eastern Star Home	Raymond Horn, PM
St. John's Mite Association.....	Burt S. Levy, PM

2025 COMMITTEE CHAIRMEN

Auditing.....	Kevin Stemp
Ambassador to Amicable-St. John's Lodge #25.....	Jonathan Binstock, PM
Baskets.....	Jeffrey Greenwald David B. Torchinsky, PM
Bulletin Committee	Raymond Horn, PM
Technology	Lee R. Silverman
By-Laws.....	Robert H. Starr, PGM
Catechism Instructors.....	Burt S. Levy, PM
Centennial Planning	Michael Greenwald, PM
Education & Degree Committee GL-E Sheldon I. Rappeport, PM, DSM, MA	
Engleberg-Korman Charitable Foundation:.....	Michael Greenwald, PM Michael J. Rinis, PM Jeffrey R. Greenwald
Funeral, Visitations, Widow Care	Burt S. Levy, PM
Investment Committee.....	Trustees, Treas. Robert H. Starr, PGM
Refreshment	J.S., S.S.
Relief	W.M., S.W., J.W.
Sunshine and Monthly Meet-Up Chairman.....	Hal Henig

2025 PROXIES

For the Worshipful Master	Robert Greenwald, PM
For the Senior Warden	Lee Silverman
For the Junior Warden.....	Alan Karpas

Samuel Gompers-Benjamin Franklin Lodge No. 45 F.A.A.M.
 Secretary
 6109 Lone Oak Drive
 Bethesda, MD 20817



Calendar for Masonic Year 2025—Samuel Gompers-Benjamin Franklin Lodge #45

For the most up-to-date information, please check the Trestleboard or www.sgbf45.org. If anyone is interested in any of these events and wishes to obtain more information, please contact WM Jerry Keilsohn, about all events (see page 2)

Date		Event	Open to
September	14	Meet-up, Andrews AFB Open House, 11:00 am	Masons and Guests
	21	Rosh Hashanah Baskets, 7:30 am meet at JSSA Rockville office or Congregation Ohr Kodesh. Meet-up with a Bagel afterwards	Masons and Guests

Date		Event	Open to
October	19	Special Communication, Fellowcraft Degree, 3:00 pm Retire following the Degree to Bus Boys & Poets	Masons only

Date		Event	Open to
November	16	November Stated Communication, 3:00 pm, with Dinner	Masons only
	27	William D. Boker Thanksgiving Baskets, logistics TBD	Masons and Guests

Date		Event	Open to
December	21	December Stated Communication, 3:00 pm, Installation of Officers	Masons and Guests