

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

bulletin

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

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

Volume XCIX • Number 2
May/June/July 2025



Samuel Gompers - Benjamin Franklin Lodge #45 Announces **August Meeting and Burgers, Brats, Beer and Bingo**

The next stated meeting of **Samuel Gompers - Benjamin Franklin Lodge #45** will take place on **Sunday, August 17th at 3:00 pm**. Members are encouraged to arrive promptly for a short business meeting, which will open on the First Degree.

However, the Grand Master has granted a dispensation for a related BBQ Dress Code (shirts and footwear required). Apparently pants and socks are optional.

Note that for the meeting, the Grand Master has made one caveat that the Officers should wear blazers/sport coats over their BBQ attire while sitting in their Stations and Places in the tiled Lodge. He called it the spirit of Bermuda formal.

Following the meeting, all are invited to join for a **Family Meal** featuring classic summer fare: **Burgers, Brats, Beer and Bingo**. This portion of the afternoon is open to **family members and prospective candidates**, offering a wonderful opportunity to enjoy fellowship, good food, and fun activities together.

- **Date:** Sunday, August 17, 2025
- **Time:** 3:00 pm (business meeting), Family Meal to follow by 3:30 pm
- **Location:** Takoma Masonic Center

Whether you're a longtime member or new to the Lodge, we look forward to seeing you and your loved ones there. Please extend this invitation to prospective members interested in learning more about our Masonic community.

For questions or to RSVP, please contact the Lodge Secretary.



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

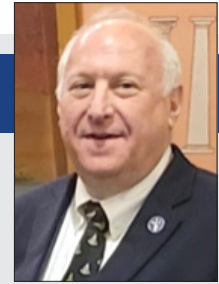
To learn more about Masonry:
We meet the second Tuesday night
at Takoma Masonic Center

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

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View From the East

W.B. Jerry Kielsohn, P.M.



As I sat down to write this, I realized it has been quite a while since I did this. A byproduct of the Lodge moving from 10 meetings a year to five. And here it is July, and we have had a total of two Stated meetings, and to my surprise two special meetings. The specials to make or advance new Masons. More on that in a minute.

The May Stated ended up better than I expected. The original plan for May was a short Lodge meeting followed by a Festive Board, complete with the traditional seven toasts and the associated rituals. It is also a tradition to have a speaker. Back in October, I was having a discussion with the Deputy Grand Master RWB Eric Kushner about the future of the Lodge. In a random through, I asked him if he would be the speaker at one of our meetings. To my surprise he said yes, and to my astonishment I was able to pin him down to a date.

Fast (maybe slow) forward a few months, and the Grand Lodge reached out about a date for Grand Visitation. I realized that I already had the now Grand Master committed to a date to visit our Lodge. That became the date for Grand visitation. The Grand Master is doing Grand visitations differently this year. All who attended the May Stated, saw the Grand Master being received instead of the traditional parade in of the entire Grand Line, associated officers, and supporting Brethren. This was much different than in the past.

The Grand Master was the speaker at the Festive board, and talked about his favorite topic, servant leadership. Dinner went off better than I expected. And we managed to get through all seven of the toasts. Samuel Gompers-Benjamin Franklin Lodge #45 had the honor of hosting the very first Grand Visitation with Most Worshipful Brother Eric Kushner, Grandmaster of Masons of Washington, DC (yes we are now The Grand Lodge, Free and Accepted Masons of Washington, DC. And no longer the Grand Lodge F.A.A.M. of the District of Columbia – ask somebody else

to explain this one, as I am still not sure why we changed names.

I had a new Masonic first this past week. In the last six days, I attended and participated in three different Entered Apprentice degrees. Initiating a total of seven new brethren. One where all the parts not filled by members of that lodge were performed by current sitting Masters. I had participated in a Fellowcraft degree for that same lodge, where all the cast members were current sitting masters, about a month previous. The sitting Masters this year have been actively supporting each other. I attended a regular lodge meeting where there were 14 of us present. About 1/3 of all the sitting Masters in the entire jurisdiction this year.

My opinion is that the best of the three first degrees was the #45 one, but my opinion is probably biased. Full disclosure–The first person to fumble a line in the #45 degree, was me.

Finally, some personal news. I have officially retired. Well sort of. I still am working one day a week, Tuesday. I have one and one half projects I promised my boss back in February that I would complete. We have scheduled it several times, but world events prevent us from completing it. The world is an ugly place, and that trickles down into the customers I support. Maybe someday in the future, the world we will treat each other the way we treat our fellow Masons.

What have I been doing with all the extra time? I painted our front door. And have been to maybe too many Lodge meetings.

A final thought. The scene is me stating in the East closing the lodge. [Holding my top hat]

*"Hey, Rocky, watch me pull a rabbit outta my hat." –
Bullwinkle J Moose*

Jerry



Grand Master's Annual Visitation and Festive Board

A Memorable Stated Communication

Samuel Gompers-Benjamin Franklin Lodge #45 recently hosted a landmark Stated Communication on May 18th, 2025, marked by the Grand Visitation of the Grand Master of Masons for the District of Columbia, Most Worshipful Brother Eric B. Kushner. The event was a resounding success, showcasing both the traditions of Masonic protocol and the fraternal spirit that binds our Lodge together.

A Grand Arrival

At 3:30 PM, Worshipful Brother Jeremy Barnes, Grand Marshal of the Grand Lodge of Washington, DC, entered the Lodge to announce the imminent arrival of the Grand Master. By 3:40 PM, the Grand Master, accompanied by his distinguished officers and visitors, was admitted through the Tiler's door. Among those in the Grand Master's retinue were Deputy Grand Master RWB Chetin Durak, Junior Grand Warden RWB Michael K. Greenwald, Assistant Grand Chaplain RWB Burton S. Levy, Grand Lecturer Emeritus RWB Sheldon I. Rappeport, and Grand Marshal RWB Jeremy Barnes.

Ritual and Respect

The Brethren of Samuel Gompers-Benjamin Franklin Lodge #45 demonstrated their respect and unity by rendering Grand Honors to the Grand Master. The Worshipful Master formally greeted and welcomed the Grand Master, who was then escorted to the East, where he assumed the station for his Grand Visitation. The Grand Master requested the

Grand Marshal to introduce the accompanying brethren, a gesture that underscored the importance of fellowship and recognition within our Craft.

A Unique Protocol

A notable departure from previous Grand Visitations was the decision for Grand Lodge officers not to assume the stations of the Lodge officers. This change allowed the Lodge's own officers to remain in their places, highlighting the unique character of this visit. The Worshipful Master introduced his officers, delivered a concise report to the Grand Master, and recognized all Past Masters of SG-BF #45 present.

Engaging the Brethren

Following the formalities, the Grand Master instructed the Worshipful Master to call the Lodge to Recess until the sound of the gavel. During this interval, Most Worshipful Brother Kushner led an open and engaging discussion about the future of Masonry in the District of Columbia. He invited input from the Brethren on how the Grand Lodge could better support our Lodge and address the ongoing challenge of attracting new members. This dialogue was both lively and constructive, reflecting the shared commitment to the growth and vitality of our fraternity.

Return to Labor and Festive Board

After this productive exchange, the Lodge was returned to

A Memorable Stated Communication

Labor, concluding the official proceedings. The Brethren then gathered in the refectory for a formal festive board held in honor of the Grand Master. The evening was filled with camaraderie, toasts, and reflections on the enduring values of Masonry.

A Celebration of Brotherhood

The May 18th, 2025 Stated Communication will be remembered as a day of tradition, fellowship, and forward-thinking dialogue. Samuel Gompers-Benjamin Franklin Lodge #45 extends its gratitude to the Grand Master and his officers for their visit and leadership, and looks forward to continuing the work of strengthening Masonry in the District of Columbia.





Brethren,

Recently, the Grand Lodge made a request of every Worshipful Master in the Jurisdiction. The next issue of The Voice will be dedicated to Freemasonry Universal and the unique character of our Lodges here in Washington, D.C. As such, the Grand Master requested we respond to two Writing Prompts about Universal Freemasonry. Below, please find our Lodge's response to these question.

Fraternally and Sincerely,
WM Jerry Keilsohn, PM

Q: How does your Lodge specifically embody the principle of Universal Freemasonry?

Samuel Gompers Lodge No. 45 started as what would be now called an Affinity Lodge. One hundred years

ago, in 1925, if you were Jewish, it was impossible to be a member of a Masonic Lodge in DC. The brethren that formed Samuel Gompers and later Benjamin Franklin Lodge No 50, did so to fill this void.

Since that time Samuel Gompers-Benjamin Franklin Lodge No. 45 has become much more diverse. While the Lodge is still predominantly Jewish, a significant number of the brethren are not.

As society and Masonry in particular have risen out of the abyss of racial and religious strife that plagued us

over much of our 100-year history, the members of #45 have become more active in the overall Washington, DC jurisdiction.

There are several Past Grand Masters who are active members of the lodge. There are brethren who are currently in the Grand Line and serve in other Grand Lodge positions.

Other active brethren have and do hold offices in many of the appendant bodies (Scottish Rite, Shrine, York Rite and Eastern Star).

Many of the brethren are active member in other DC Lodges. Many have held or are currently holding positions in those lodges.

Things have changed for the better in the last 100 years.





Q: Further, how does it Masonically serve its specific community in a way that is unique?

A: One of the three Graces or Moral Virtues of Masonry, as originally introduced in the first degree, is charity. One of the things Samuel Gompers-Benjamin Franklin Lodge No. 45 takes great pride in, is our charity work.

The Lodge assists the Jewish Social Services Agency (JSSA) with the distribution of Passover food Baskets to their clients usually in April. Then in September, we help JSSA distribute over one thousand Rosh Hashanah food Baskets. Both of these are an annual event for the Lodge and it has been doing both of them with the JSSA partner for many years.

The brethren assists MAKOM (formally the Jewish Foundation for Group Homes) erect Sukkahs (symbolizing the temporary shelters

our ancestors lived in during their 40 years of wandering in the desert after the exodus from Egypt) at several of the Jewish group homes every year. This allows the residents to observe the Jewish Holiday of Sukkot. A few weeks later, once the holiday is over, we do the disassembly at each of the homes.

Samuel Gompers-Benjamin Franklin Lodge No. 45 continues to conduct the oldest continuous philanthropic event in the entire jurisdiction; our food distribution program which has come to be known as the William D. Boker Thanksgiving Basket program for W.Bro. Boker's untiring efforts over the years to maintain this program. The lodge records appear to indicate that this program started sometime in the 1960s.

On the Sunday before Thanksgiving, the Lodge assembles and with JSSA's help, distributes, full Thanksgiving meal baskets, turkey included, to those

less fortunate in our community. In the last few years, the Lodge has also distributed prepared meals along with the traditional baskets. Our Lodge had also supported for the last five years, the Thanksgiving Basket Program of The Eagle Academy, a charter school that was located in the District of Columbia. Unfortunately, this charter school was suddenly forced to close last year.

In the true spirit of Universal Brotherhood, the Lodge uses the parking lot and facilities at the Maryland Kensington-Bethesda Lodge to stage and distribute the Thanksgiving baskets. The brethren of Kensington-Bethesda Lodge have been supporting this project for so long, We originally assembled baskets in PM Hy Sandler's basement in the late 70's. We then moved to PM Morris Gevinsom's warehouse in the 80's. When the Gevinsom warehouse was no longer available, we moved to the Kensington Lodge.



Samuel Gompers - Benjamin Franklin Lodge #45

Special Communication Recap: Entered Apprentice Degree



On Sunday, June 29, 2025, Samuel Gompers - Benjamin Franklin Lodge #45 held a Special Communication under the direction of Worshipful Master Jerry Keilsohn. The meeting was called to order at 3:00 pm for the important purpose of conferring the Entered Apprentice Degree—an essential first step in the journey of Freemasonry.

The Lodge was opened on the Entered Apprentice Degree, and two worthy candidates were initiated: Ronald Heffler, who was recently voted to receive the Degrees of Freemasonry in our own Lodge and another, Nicolas Balmer who is from our brethren at Singleton Lodge #7. The degree work was conducted with great care and solemnity, reflecting the dedication and unity of our members.

Worshipful Master Jerry Keilsohn congratulated the newly made Brethren and our many guests including those from L'Haitienne Lodge #925 who assisted by filling three of our chairs, making the Degree Possible. The WM also recognized a number of our own Brethren who have not been in Lodge recently.

Following the closing of the Lodge, the brethren and guests retired to the refectory, where we enjoyed a kosher dairy meal. The meal offered an opportunity for fellowship and

reflection, as we welcomed our newest Brothers and shared in the spirit of brotherhood.

We extend our heartfelt congratulations to our new Entered Apprentices and thank all who participated and attended. Your support and presence made this a memorable and meaningful occasion for all.

Candidates:

Ronald Heffler – Samuel Gompers-Benjamin Franklin Lodge #45
RWB Sheldon Rappaport Conductor

Nicolas Balmer – Singleton Lodge #7
Bro. Angel Jones Conductor

Cast:

WM: Jeffrey Greenwald	SW: Ryan Simon
JW: Lee Silverman	SD: WB Jerry Keilsohn
JD : WB Aaron Kamerer	Sec: WB Raymond Horn
Treas: WB Chris Burkett	SS: WB Jean Marcelin
JS: Will Etienne	MC: RWB Chip Mahaney
Chap: WB Franz Stuppard	Lect: RWB Sheldon Rappaport
Charge: Ryan Simon	Music: MWB Robert H. Starr
Tiler: Hal Henig	

Hunter's Bar and Grill Memorial Day Meet-Up



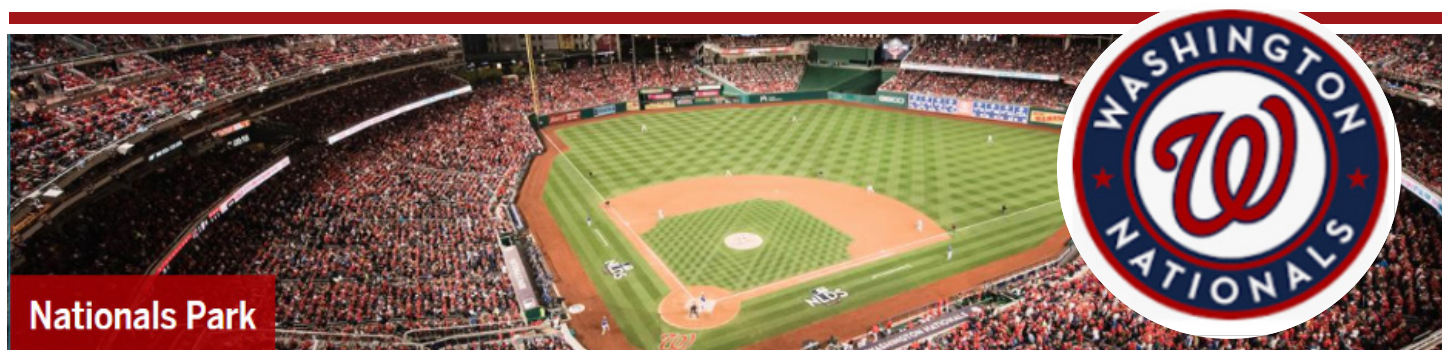
Tiler and Meet-Up Chairman Hal Henig, JD Lee Silverman, Allan Gordon, PM, Julien Hofberg, PM, and Brother Allan Karpas. Our guests included Lisa Henig, Iris Gordon, Arlene Karpas, Sharon, Stuart, Renie Zitomer, Cate and Tina.

On Memorial Day evening, Samuel Gompers Benjamin Franklin Lodge Number 45 held its monthly meet-up at Hunter's Bar and Grill, located in Potomac, Maryland. Our server was very helpful and organized the tables for the participating Brethren and guests.

Thirteen Brethren and guests attended this Memorial Day evening dinner social. The attending Brethren were Tiler and Meet-Up Chairman Hal Henig, JD Lee Silverman, Allan Gordon, PGM, Julien Hofberg, PM, and Brother Allan Karpas.

Our guests included Lisa Henig, Iris Gordon, Arlene Karpas, Sharon, Stuart, and Renie Zitomer. Additional guests were Cate and Tina. More guests than Brethren participated in our meet-up that Memorial Day evening making for a particularly enjoyable time.

The attached photo shows the Brethren and guests posing behind the dinner tables. Our server kindly took the photo using my smartphone. Hopefully, all the Brethren and family members had a happy Memorial Day weekend.



The Lodge is purchasing a Block of Tickets for the Sunday, August 3rd afternoon game against the Milwaukee Brewers. The Brewers are a team our Nat's should beat!

This is going to be a great game, with great seats, don't miss out on this opportunity to see your Washington Nationals in action in the heat of summer.

Sunday, August 3rd, 1:35 pm start
Nationals Park

Cost: We are working with the Group Sales for a block of face-value \$56 seats in a good section. The final cost may be less based on our discount.

Open to friends, family, prospective brethren as well as brethren from other lodges.

GO NATS!

Please reserve your seats ahead of time by contacting the secretary@sgbf45.org so we can be sure to obtain enough tickets in our block.

Meet-Up at Parkway Deli

By Hal Henig



Tiler and Meet-Up Chairman Hal Henig, WM Jerry Keilsohn, PM, JD Lee Silverman, Lodge Chaplain Burt Levy, PM Jon Binstock, PM Julien Hofberg, PM Dave Torchinsky, Alan Friedman, PM, Brothers Charlie Meyers and Chester Katz. Our guests included Lisa Henig, her out-of-town guest, Lynnette Schillo, Laura Torchinsky, Dawn Meyers, JD Silverman's friend Tina, Sharon, Stuart, and Renee Zitomer.

On Monday evening, April 28, Samuel Gompers-Benjamin Franklin Lodge held its monthly meet-up at the Parkway Deli, located in the Silver Spring-Chevy Chase area. We enjoyed our social gathering outside the main restaurant. Our Lodge has held several successful previous meetups at Parkway Deli.

A total of eighteen Brethren and guests participated in the evening social. The attending Brethren were Tiler and Meet-Up Chairman Hal Henig, WM Jerry Keilsohn, PM, JD Lee Silverman, Lodge Chaplain Burt Levy, PM, Jon Binstock, PM, Julien Hofberg, PM, Dave Torchinsky, PM, Alan Friedman, PM, and Brothers Charlie Meyers and

Chester Katz. Our guests included Lisa Henig and her out-of-town guest, Lynnette Schillo. Additional guests were Laura Torchinsky, Dawn Meyers, JD Silverman's friend Tina, and Sharon, Stuart, and Renee Zitomer.

Both Brethren and guests enjoyed the delicious deli food offered by the restaurant which does not disappoint. There is a photo of the brethren and guests in attendance at Parkway Deli.

We hope everyone enjoyed their Passover and Easter holidays during the month of April.



**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/>

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
August	3	Washington Nationals Game, 1:35 pm	Masons and Guests
August	17	August Stated Communication, 3:00 pm, Meeting Beer, Burger, Brats & BINGO	Masons, guests and family for Dinner and Games

Date		Event	Open to
September	21	Memorial Recognition Afternoon, 3:00 pm	Masons and Guests

Date		Event	Open to
November	16	November Stated Communication, 3:00 pm, with Dinner	Masons only

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