



It's all about Morality...



John Reid

At a recent meeting I attended my attention was drawn to the answers to two of the questions asked of a candidate for the Second Degree. The first question is one that is asked so frequently and in so many different venues that it is perhaps the most well-known as well as being one of the most poorly answered - it is "What is Freemasonry?" - to which we would all reply "A peculiar system of morality veiled in allegory and illustrated by symbols" - so far so good. The second question, albeit number nine in the sequence was "Who are fit and proper persons to be made Masons?" - Again the answer was given confidently and clearly, "Just, upright, and free men, of mature age, sound judgement, and strict morals." So, what was it that got my attention? It was the words morality and morals. The reason was quite straightforward. For a number of days these words have been used extensively in matters that have captivated elements of society and the media. I need not go into specifics, but just to say that the term 'moral obligation or duty' has been used extensively to describe a duty owed to society.

Have you ever considered what if any differences exist between the law of the land and what Freemasons and others refer to as the moral law? That there is a distinction it must be acknowledged to be so as we make particular reference to both in our ceremonies. In its most basic form moral law or the law of human nature depends on an acceptance that we can determine right from wrong from what we know and refer to as conscience. In the first degree we are reminded that "the common gavel denotes the force of conscience that should keep down all unbecoming thoughts" - in other words as Jiminy Cricket said, "Take the straight and narrow path, and if you start to slide give a little whistle and always let your conscience be your guide."

Great philosophers have written about the moral law; Aristotle recognised two kinds of law - particular law and the universal law. The first is that which each community lays down and applies to its members, the law, or the rules by which we are required to live our lives and is, or should be a codifying of the moral law, Aristotle's universal law.

In Mark Twain's - Adventures of Huckleberry Finn the boy Huck is torn between following civil law and moral law. Civil law tells Huck that slavery is good and it is wrong to help Jim escape from slavery. But the moral law is always there stopping Huck from turning Jim in to the authorities. Ultimately, Huck rejects the civil law of the South and chooses to follow the dictates of his heart and commits himself to helping Jim escape slavery.

The writer CS Lewis suggested that the way we quarrel is evidence for the moral law. Lewis maintained that the participants in these conversations have an awareness of some kind of law of "fair play" or "decent behaviour" that they agree on; and, of course, they do. Lewis argues that nearly all human civilisations in history have known about the moral law, readily acknowledge that it exists, but for the most part regularly fail to follow it.

In Freemasonry we have three guides to the way we live our lives - the By Laws of the Lodge, the Constitutions of Masonry, but above all the Volume of the Sacred Law that should act as a rule and guide to our faith. Little wonder that when all is said and done Freemasonry is simply 'a system of morality'.

Society may change in its attitude to various moral concepts, which it should as all society evolves, but a Freemason's guide to morality lies in the symbolism of the three great though emblematical lights and the moral symbolism of each part of the Lodge furniture and working tools.

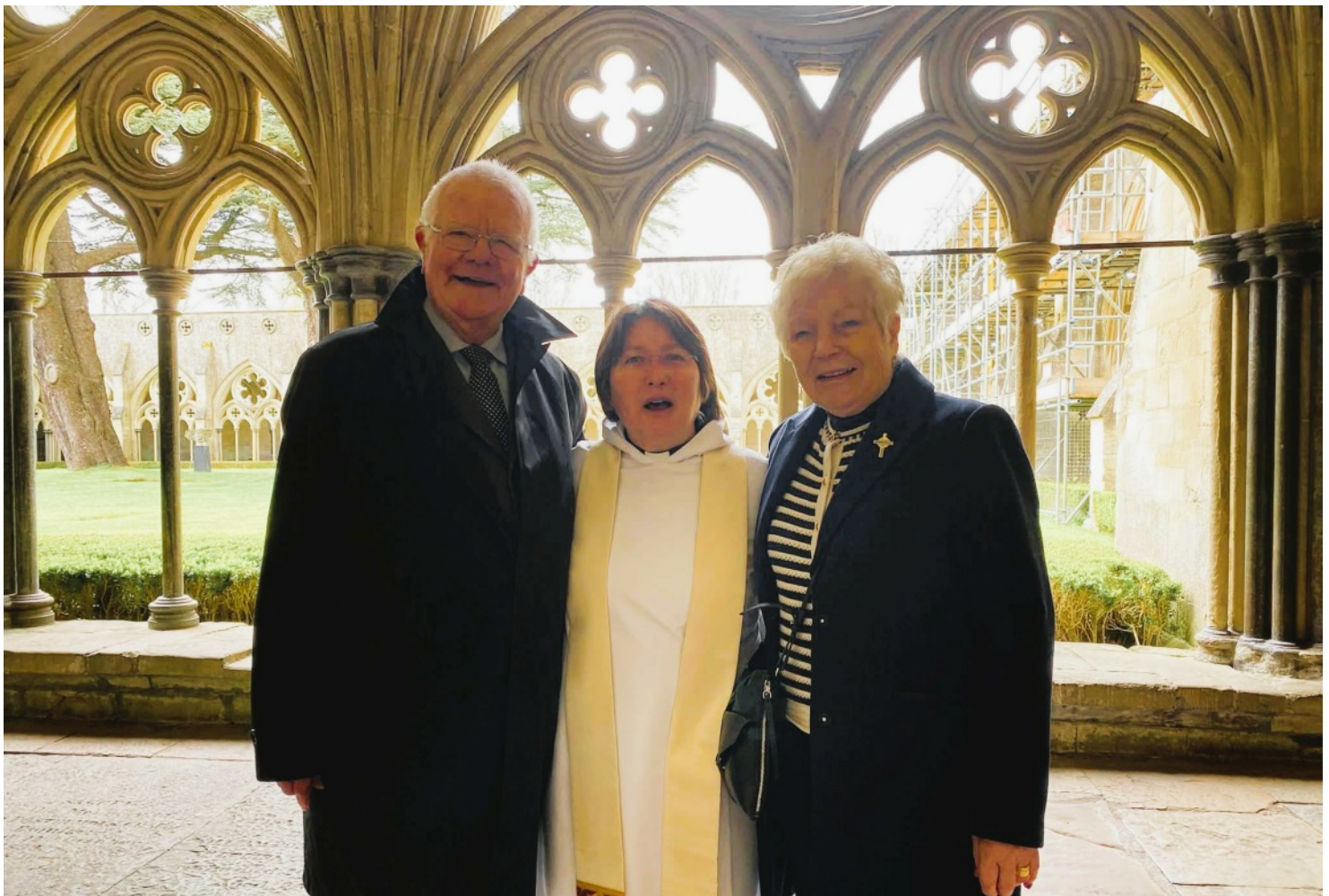


Serving the Community...

The fourth principle of 21st century Speculative Freemasonry has been established as 'SERVICE' a nod to the increasing desire to differentiate between donating money and the giving of yourself or volunteering. We are reminded that part of the twenty four hours of the day should be spent in serving a friend or Brother in time of need and while we might claim we have little time to fulfil such an obligation the reality is that we all make time to do the things we want to do.

For some of our members, helping others in diverse ways is something they do without having to be asked, it really is second nature to them and they find the exercise to be extremely self fulfilling. Whether that be shopping for a neighbour, accompanying a friend to an appointment, collecting a prescription, or volunteering in a charity shop or cafe, and 'rattling' a charity bucket for the Royal British Legion, all are examples of how we can 'SERVE' our local communities, and yes there are many other ways that you could enumerate.

Tony and Marlene Haffenden (Tony's a Freemason from Bradford-on-Avon) have for many years been active members of their local church, Holy Trinity, just a stone's throw from the Masonic Hall; recently they have both renewed their commitment to the church as commissioned Lay Pastoral Assistants (LPA), a trained volunteer authorised to support clergy by visiting the sick, bereaved, and housebound, offering prayer, and aiding in community outreach. They are part of the lay ministry, operating under local church leadership to provide pastoral care. In all cases the ministry calls for a loving and compassionate heart, and a willingness to listen and support those in need. We congratulate Tony and Marlene for their work and wish them well.





MAY 2026

Mark Neilson - Gooch Lodge No.1295...

Wiltshire Freemason and London Marathon competitor Mark Neilson is always up for a challenge especially when the cause is something as special as Phoenix Enterprises a Swindon mental health and learning disability charity providing work experience and holistic support to vulnerable adults.

Mark is the practical embodiment of what contributing to society is about - it's not easy, in fact it can be painful but the look on Mark's face says it all - **IT'S WORTH IT.**



CONGRATULATIONS

MARK



MAY 2026



NEW TEMPLE LODGE
NO.8435

ANDY AND LISA THORNE

DINNER DANCE

SATURDAY

5th

SEPTEMBER

6.30PM UNTIL LATE
carriages at 1.00am

HILTON HOTEL | LYDIARD FIELDS
GREAT WESTERN WAY
SWINDON | SN5 8UZ

THREE COURSE DINNER
£60 PER PERSON
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courtesy of andy and lisa

TO RESERVE A TABLE CONTACT
ANDY THORNE 07909 544229
andy.thorne1@hotmail.com
EDDIE CHILD 07768055542
childeddie@yahoo.co.uk



Living and Communicating Freemasonry in the 21st Century...

At a recent meeting of senior leaders, the Pro Grand Master, MW Bro Jonathan Spence, spoke of the importance of fulfilling our strategy for living and communicating Freemasonry in the 21st Century, and set out both the opportunity before us and the responsibility we collectively share:

"There is now a real opportunity for us to re-establish the reputation of Freemasonry as an important and active contributor to our civic society and in terms which will resonate in the current era.

Freemasonry has made considerable progress over many years, yet a clear gap still remains between how we understand our organisation and how it is seen by others. Misunderstanding persists, and too often our purpose and contribution are not fully recognised. At the same time, if we take the opportunity to engage with them, there is a large and open-minded section of the public who are willing to listen and to form a more balanced view.

For us as members, this creates a clear and shared task. We must be confident in explaining what Freemasonry is, what it stands for and, equally importantly, what it is not. We must ensure that the way we describe ourselves is clear, relevant and easily understood, avoiding language that can be misinterpreted. We must also be more visible in showcasing our work and demonstrating the positive impact we make, particularly through our charitable work and our contribution to our local communities."



Lodge of Loyalty No.1533

The perfect example of linking community and Freemasonry - Bro Jim MacLeod welcomed Mayor of Marlborough Cllr Emily Trow to the Lodge when Provincial Charity Steward Ian Lever gave a short presentation of his role, and the work of the Masonic Charitable Foundation.

Freemasonry has been present in Marlborough for over 150 years (the Lodge was Consecrated in May 1876) but The Castle Inn Lodge No.429 met at the hostelry of that name in 1754. Records suggest that one of Freemasonry's most notable characters Thomas Dunkerley was Master of the Lodge.

In 1769 a meeting was held at which the general public was invited and the ladies of Marlborough were also present. Charity was dispensed to the poor of the town and Dunkerley gave a talk on 'charity'.



In Touch > On Line

The newsletter for all Wiltshire Freemasons



MAY 2026

Have you asked for your copy?

The Provincial Grand Master is also the Most Excellent Grand Superintendent which means he leads the two two principle elements of pure Antient Masonry; the Craft, and the Royal Arch. As part of the theme 'One Journey - One Organisation' John invites you to ask him for a copy of **Welcome Companion** an introduction to the Royal Arch.

The Royal Arch

Welcome Companion

A narrative for the 21st Century Freemason

"Ask me for a copy of Welcome Companion."



PROVINCIAL GRAND CHAPTER OF WILTSHIRE



Wiltshire Freemasons

One Journey • One Organisation

WILTSHIRE FREEMASONS

Special **PROMOTIONS APPOINTMENTS**

<https://tinyurl.com/solomonsattire>



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Apron and Collar
(lambskin)

£65

Buy online use code
and save 10%



Provincial undress
Apron and Collar
(lambskin)

£45

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MAY 2026

St George's Day...

It will come as no surprise to discover that England's patron saint is represented at the home of English (and Welsh) Freemasons. If you visit Freemasons' Hall in London's West End you will have the opportunity to view the most spectacular mosaics that adorn the Grand Temple. They really are, not to be missed.



Well done David...

John Reid was present at Lodge of Concord No.632 to present Bro David Cameron with a 70 year membership certificate. David was Initiated into Freemasonry in Scotland, moving South in 1968.





In Touch > On Line

The newsletter for all Wiltshire Freemasons



MAY 2026

Membership Attraction...

The Provincial Membership Team in conjunction with the Communication Team is always keen to support Lodge initiatives. In order to make sure that any advertisement complies with UGLE and Provincial guidelines Lodge Membership Officers, and Lodge Secretaries are asked to submit any proposals to the team before placing material on social media or commissioning printing.



**WILTSHIRE
FREEMASONS**

THESE ARE OUR PRINCIPLES

**Integrity
Respect
Friendship
Service**

IF YOU'RE INTERESTED
IN DISCOVERING MORE
ABOUT FREEMASONRY

CONTACT US
contact@wiltshirefreemasons.co.uk



**MEET THE MARLBOROUGH
FREEMASONS**

contact@wiltshirefreemasons.co.uk

<p>About the Freemasons</p> <p>Freemasons have met in Marlborough for over 150 years.</p> <p>We are a unique members' organisation which has thrived for over 300 years.</p> <p>We have no political connections, we welcome members of all ages, races, religions, cultures and backgrounds.</p>	<p>Our Principles</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Integrity <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Respect <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Friendship <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Service
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wiltshirefreemasons.co.uk

Never miss a word...



Have you had trouble following your Lodge or Chapter meeting? Help yourself and help the 2028 Festival by booking a hearing consultation with Reeds who will provide you with expert advice and guidance, while you contribute their normal fee (£85.00) to the 2028 Festival. Reeds Hearing Care cover everything to do with hearing, tinnitus, wax removal and can provide help, support and advice for all issues. Reeds is a professional, independent, family caring business based in Swindon. e.mail: reeds@reedsear.co.uk or text 07585525993.

SWINDON MASONIC ASSOCIATION

invite you to the

BIG *breakfast*

Saturday 23rd May

9.00am until 11.00am



£14

per adult

£7

children under 10

picture for illustrative purposes only

Buffet Style English Breakfast

Tea, Coffee & Orange Juice

BOOKING AND PRE-PAYMENT GUARANTEES YOUR BREAKFAST

[BOOK HERE](#)

Freemasons | Family | Friends



MAY 2026

The Lodge of Brothers in Arms No.9540,



With a membership comprised mainly of current and former members of the armed forces it will come as no surprise that the Lodge's focus in its charitable giving is directed towards service-related initiatives.

One issue in particular is that of mental health conditions suffered by serving sailors, soldiers and airmen (now referred to as aviators), and veterans.

At the start of his tenure as Master of the Lodge, Bro David Bayne, announced that during each meeting, in addition to the Lodge's normal fundraising efforts, there would also be some additional funds raised for **Veterans With Dogs**.

The Brethren of the Lodge duly supported the initiative and at the end of the year had raised £1163. Bro David accompanied by the Lodge Charity Steward Bro Neil Gordon visited **Veterans With Dogs** at their headquarters in Exeter to present them with the Cheque and to discover more about the fantastic work they do providing assistance dogs to support former service personnel with mental health challenges.

Their aim is to improve the quality of life for their clients, one wet nose at a time.



ALL PROFITS TO SWINDON MASONIC ASSOCIATION LIFT REPAIR FUND

Lodge Logo Embroidered Clothing



Represent your Lodge on and off the square!

Artwork creation fee - £20 but only with 1st order
(Baseball caps separate logo creation fee of £20)

--

all enquiries to Tim Herrington:
kipper.herrington@icloud.com

