

Grand Architect of the Universe, we reverently invoke Thy blessing at this time. Wilt thou be pleased to show us how to take our lives in their rude and natural state and dress, square, and polish them so that we may emulate our brother, Andres Bonifacio, who courageously fought for our independence. Teach us that the obligations we have taken upon ourselves cannot be forgotten or overlooked. Show us that the only way to honor our obligations is to live in harmony with them on a daily basis. Keep us faithful in living with, living in awareness of, and living up to our Masonic Obligations.

Grant that all men may again plant in their hearts the Cardinal Virtues of Brotherly Love, Relief and Truth. May men everywhere follow the precepts of Freemasonry and have the strength, the courage and the strength to do Thy Divine Will; to meet upon the Level of equality, to live by the Plumb-line of virtue, and act always on the square. Enable us to uncover the Perfect Ashlar within us by removing the superfluous material which encrusts our lives and let the wisdom of our sublime Institution so subdue every discordant passion within us, so harmonize and enrich our hearts with a portion of thine own love and goodness, at this time, and at every time, may be a sincere though humble copy of that Order, Beauty, and Unity which reign forever before Thy throne.

Enlighten, we beseech Thee, the dark corners of the earth with the rays of our benevolent Institution, that all the ends of the world may know Thee, and every human being be taught to love his fellow man.

Let Thy protection be over all the members of the mystic family, wheresoever dispersed, and bless their lawful labors. Graciously accept these, our supplications and prayers, for the sake of Thy most holy and glorious name. Amen.

Almighty Father, Thou who understandest our thoughts afar off, knowest that individual Freemasons belong to various creeds, yet each and every one believes in Thee; that all believe in the Fatherhood of God and the Brotherhood of Man; that Holy Script is the rule and guide of their conduct; that though Masons hold various political beliefs, yet they believe in equal treatment for all before the law, and Thou knowest that these fundamental beliefs make for complete Harmony.

Inspire us, therefore, Gracious Father, to instill these gentle precepts of Freemasonry in the hearts of all men, so that Brotherly Love may prevail throughout the World. Cast Thou the Light of Thy Wisdom on our labors in the quarries of the Craft, that we may the better shape the stones of Faith, Hope and Charity for the erection of that house not made with hands, Eternal in the Heavens. Amen.

Father of Light, keep us diligent in the quest for Masonic knowledge and faithful in the spreading and sharing of the same. We thank You, O God, as we gather for food and fellowship, for the heritage we share in Masonry, of meeting at this festive occasion. As brethren of old all throughout the world have found their spirits refreshed and their strength renewed during occasions such as this, so may we be sustained in health and strength from this fare. May our lives overflow in gratitude to you. Amen.

Holy and merciful God, who answerest prayer and dost not scorn the petition of the humblest of Thy children, bestow upon us in our parting that spirit of affection which can resist the selfishness of the world and cause us to remember our obligations to each other and to Thee. Grant that we may be permitted with loving hearts to assemble here again for Thine honor, for our instruction, and for the good of our fellow man. All of which we ask for Thy name's sake. Amen

Blessed be the Lord that hath given rest unto His people. The Lord our God be with us, as He was with our fathers; let Him not leave us, nor forsake us; that He may incline our hearts unto Him, to walk in all His ways, and to keep His commandments, His statutes and His judgments, which he has commanded. Amen.

Great Architect of the Universe, we thank You for Your presence with us at this hour. We ask Your special comforting presence for the surviving family members of our brother. In pain may they find comfort; may their sorrow give way to hope. Be their strength, shield, and stay, O God. Deliver them from their distresses. Be with us as we seek to carry on with the efforts of living in the midst of the loss of our brother. Remind us Father, that You who have never abandoned us in life, will not abandon us in death. Keep us mindful of ways we can be of service to these family members. Help us to rejoice in the life he lived among us even as we entrust his immortal soul into Your keeping. In Your Name and for Your sake, we pray. Amen.

Supreme Architect of the Universe, accept our humble thanks for the many mercies and blessings which thy bounty has conferred on us, and especially for this friendly and social intercourse. Pardon, we beseech thee, whatever thou has seen amiss in us since we have been together; and continue to us thy presence, protection and blessing. Make us sensible of the renewed obligations we are under to love thee, and as we are about to separate, and return to our respected places of abode, wilt thou be pleased so to influence our hearts and minds, that we may each one of us practice, out of the Lodge, those great moral duties which are inculcated in it, and with reverence study and obey the laws which thou hast given us in thy Holy Word. Amen.

We know, O God, of the metaphors for building found in the symbolism of our Craft. We know of rough and perfect ashlar, the Tabernacle of Moses, the cornerstone, the northeast corner, the oblong square, angles, parallel lines, the five orders of architecture, the working tools, and the erecting of King Solomon's Temple. Remind us, Father, as these symbols are meant to do, of the importance of the spiritual life and of character building. Show us how to use the proper materials, methods, and influences in shaping our lives in harmony with Your will and way. Guide us in our deliberations in this hour, that that which we construct may stand the test of time. For Your honor and to Your glory we pray. Amen.

God of action, enabler of all life, never let us forget that Masonry is meant to be lived. Show us that Masonry, to be true to its purpose, must be translated into life. Help us to boldly and faithfully live our Masonry. In Your Holy Name, Amen.

Great Artificer of the Universe, teach us how to use the three great lights in Masonry to guide us in discharging our duty to You, our neighbor, and to ourselves. Show us how to make use of the Holy Writ in learning and doing out duty to You, O God. Assist us in squaring our actions through virtuous living in all our relations with our fellow human beings. Enable us to use the compasses in marking out our duty to self. Guide us with the light from these three Great Lights as we conduct our business in this assembly. All this we pray for Your Name's sake. Amen.

Gracious and great maker and ruler of the universe, keep us ever conscious during the coming twelve months of the preciousness of time, how it flows rapidly like the sands in an hour glass. Enable us to use the upcoming year to do fruitful Masonic research which will benefit our fraternity and its wholesome impact upon the world. Go with us and guide us as we depart. For Your Name's sake, we pray, Amen.

Great Architect of the Universe, we thank you for the fellowship of Freemasonry. How grateful we are for the fraternal union we experience when we gather together as Masons. Guide us this day as we seek to conduct our affairs in ways which will benefit the spread of Masonic knowledge and light. For we pray for Your Name's sake, Amen.

Supreme Grand Artificer of the Universe, how thankful we are for life and all its blessings! We remember with grateful awareness that Freemasonry is a way of life. Enable us, as we journey homeward, and in the days following until we meet again, to readily seek to live by Masonic principles on a daily basis. For we pray in Your Spirit, Amen.

Remind us, Father, as we open this Lodge, of the beginning of our lives as masons -- of the Entered Apprentice Degree through which we all first experienced our fraternity. Show us again the way to live from its lessons of trust, charity, and secrecy. Never let us ignore the importance of actively trusting You, O God, on a daily basis. Always keep us faithful to our obligation to be of help to those less fortunate. And cause us to remember the secrecy we have pledged for the purpose of communicating Masonic truth through our degree system where it gets communicated best. As we begin today, remind us of our beginnings in Masonry. And as You were with us then, Father, be with us now in all our deliberations. Amen.

Gracious God, teach us the benefits of living so as to cause our lives to be as pure and spotless as was the first Masonic apron presented to us. Make us careful about our reputation as individual Masons and as a fraternity. Remind us of the blessings which flow from purity of heart and blamelessness of conduct in a world where scandal seems to be the rule rather than the exception. Guide us on our way as we journey from this place and strengthen us to make purity of life and rectitude of conduct our aim. Amen.

Father God, may the food and drink and fellowship of which we partake be for us the equivalent of the wages of the workers laboring upon King Solomon's Temple. May our food be to us like the corn of nourishment. May our drink be to us like the wine of refreshment. May the fellowship we share be to us like the oil of joy. Then we shall be able with grateful hearts to give You, O God, praise for all good gifts in life. In Your Holy Name we pray, Amen.

Great and Grand Designer of the Cosmos, remind us as we begin our meeting today of the purpose of Freemasonry. Show us that as the Fellowcraft Degree teaches us the importance of learning, knowledge, and education, that we in this lodge must be about the business of spreading Masonic knowledge that our fraternity, being better informed, may better reflect the best that is in Freemasonry. Guide us in this endeavor as we conduct all our business this day. We ask for Your name's sake, Amen.

Our Father, which art in Heaven, whose wisdom and goodness manifest themselves in all the works of creation, with reverence we invoke Thy blessing upon Thy children here assembled. May we be ever mindful that a Father's care is always over us and that Thine all-seeing eye is ever upon us. Direct our footsteps in ways of pleasantness and paths of peace and grant that all our acts may reflect honor upon Thy Holy Name. Amen.

Eternal God, the author of all good, the giver of all mercy! Pour out Thy blessings upon us and strengthen us with the ties of true brotherly love and affection. Help us to put our trust in Thee and grant that we may be conscious of Thy presence, protection and care. As we celebrate this coming together, may we be reminded of that moment when we, as Masons, first learned the great lessons of immortality. Watch over us as we journey homeward, and in the coming days until we meet again, help us to live by the Masonic principles of Brotherly Love, Relief, and Truth. For we pray in Thy name, Amen.

Living God, remind us as we prepare to depart just who we are as Masons. We are supposed to be men who would rather yield up our lives than forfeit our integrity. We are supposed to be men who believe that selfishness must die in us if we are truly to live. We are supposed to be men who believe that the soul is immortal, and that

this has consequences for our lives on this earth right now. Keep us ever mindful of those teachings from the Sublime Degree and enable us to put them into practice in our daily living. Amen.

Lord God Almighty, another year in the life of this Lodge has passed. The sands of time flow relentlessly. We have lost to death valuable and talented Masons from our membership. We have gained some new active members into our ranks. We have disseminated Masonic knowledge to the best of our ability. Guide us in developing and practicing those virtues which should characterize good Masons. Direct us in our efforts today to select new leadership for the future of this Lodge. In Your name and for Your sake we ask, Amen.

Great Architect of the Universe, as we gather together today for this meeting, may we be guided in all that we say or do by a strong sense of Your presence with us. Grant us for our labors the wages proper for us: the corn of nourishment, the wine of refreshment, and the oil of joy. May our meeting together on this day be such that nourishes and sustains us in the work which is ours as Masons. May the friendship we share as brethren give refreshment to our spirits. May the proceedings in which we are engaged, and the friends we greet today give us a joy that encourages us, revitalizes us, and adds deep meaning to our lives together, Amen.

Gracious God, as we prepare to depart from this place, may the courtesies which have been shown us here go with us to enrich our lives further. How grateful we are, our Father, that within our Craft's great teachings is one which reminds us that death is not the end, that the actions we take now have eternal consequences. As we think of the sprig of acacia, the sprig of evergreen, may we be reminded that we are preparing our lives now for an eternity with You, O God. Grant to us as we leave this place, the resolve to live our lives so as to add truth, love, and beauty to them thus making them better habitats and temples for Your indwelling Spirit. Never let us forget that our souls are immortal as we go about our daily tasks. In Your name and for Your sake we ask, Amen.

Great Architect of the Universe, at this feast may we, as did our ancient brethren, promote social feelings, cement the bonds of brotherly love, and establish a center of union and harmony. In the warm and fruitful soil of Masonic fellowship may acquaintanceship, friendship, and affection flourish. For the food we share, we give You thanks. For the enjoyment of brotherly company, we give You thanks. For the love of Masonry represented by all assembled here, we give You thanks. Grant that we may be permitted to assemble often in this way so that warmth may be restored to the mystic tie. Amen.

Gracious God and Father of us all, make Your presence real to us as we gather today. Enable us to conduct our business this day in ways which will be in the best interest of the spread of Masonic light. Keep us from getting bogged down in trivialities while neglecting the weightier matters with which we need to deal. Grant us open minds to learn from Masonic teachings which will be presented to us today. Guide us and lead us, for ask in Your name's sake, Amen.

Grand Architect of the Universe, as we prepare to depart from this gathering, may we be thankful for the fellowship and the new knowledge we have gained this day. Strengthen us to go forth and boldly finish the tasks we have set for ourselves. Teach us the importance of duty and of faithfulness to our obligations. Keep us safe as we return to our respective homes, that we may have further opportunity to serve You, O God, and this great fraternity. Amen.

Gracious and Great God Almighty, the Masonic cornerstone lies in the northeast corner, between the north, the place of darkness, and the east, the place of light. Thus it reminds us that we are ever to be progressing from

darkness to light, from ignorance to knowledge. Help us in the next twelve months to enable those of our fraternity on whose lives the shadow of our influence may fall to know more about Freemasonry. Guide the leadership we will elect today so that nothing may interrupt the light which flows from the Great Light in Masonry upon the Holy Altar to the station of the Master in the East. We pray all of this for Your name's sake, Amen.

"Almighty Architect of the Universe, we, as Master Masons, standing in a Masonic Lodge erected to Thy glory, humbly petition that Thou look with favor upon this assembly of Thy children. Open our hearts that the eternal Masonic truth may find ready entry that we be enabled to make ourselves square stones, fitting in Thy sight for the great Temple, eternal in Thy heavens. We ask it in the name of the All-Seeing Eye, Amen."

O God, Divine Architect of the Universe,
We bow with gratitude to thy Omnipotence.
We acknowledge Thee as the Creator and Preserver of all things.
We thank Thee for Thy daily blessings conferred on us in
all our undertakings, more particularly, O God,
we crave Thy presence at this meeting.
Do Thou preside over us in the spirit of Peace, Love and Charity,
and to Thy Holy Name be power and Dominion, forever, Amen.

Note: This opening prayer is hand-written on the fly-leaf of the Bible of Fredericksburg Lodge #4 where Brother George Washington was raised and was probably the very same opening prayer used for that unique occasion.