



JUSTICE-COLUMBIA LODGE NO. 3 F.A.A.M. WASHINGTON D.C.

VISION STATEMENT

The Order of Free and Ancient Accepted Masons is an ancient brotherhood that has instilled generations with the timeless principles of fraternity, industry and strict moral conduct. These immortal tenets have allowed the brotherhood to endure a constantly changing world, as their application transcends changing societies, technologies and geopolitical boundaries. But it is not only the universality of the philosophy of freemasonry that has carried it through the generations, but the wisdom of our forefathers in putting forth a framework in which the craft can adapt with changes while maintaining its fundamental principles. This vision exercise is a quintessential example of the quest for constant adaptation in the face of principles that remain as relevant today as they were centuries ago.

VISION FOR JUSTICE COLUMBIA LODGE #3

The vision for the Justice Columbia Lodge #3 is one where brethren will represent the model life espoused by the ancient principles of freemasonry, whereby embedded in the regular events of the lodge are the fundamental principles of the craft carried into the 21st century, that is, adapting to the new world while maintaining the ancient principles and practices of this rite.

We will through this vision strengthen the capacity of the lodge to undertake its core function of representing this noble craft by its daily actions and those of its members. We will foster brethren who, each in his capacity, will contribute to the craft. in and out of the lodge, by emulating the principle of freemasonry in his acts towards his brethren and mankind. In turn, we will together contribute to the creation of a lodge that measures its success by the development of each and every member to his full potential.

THE WHOLE IS GREATER THAN THE SUM OF THE PARTS

The order of Free and Accepted Ancient Masons is a society bound, in its travels through cultures, geography and time, by the enduring principles of brotherly love and loyalty, steadfastly abiding by the ancient conduct of honor, thirst for knowledge and industry. This bond through distances and time derives its strength by the craft's ability to reach the human mind and heart through an ethos that transcends generations and changing dynamics of society. This ethos is one where man can, through his dedication and efforts, will embark on a journey that is both under his power of choice but greater than him. Through the craft, and its representation in the lodge, brethren are united into a bond that owes its existence and endurance to their efforts, but is in itself of greater value to the craft and mankind than the brother working alone. This vision draws upon the quest to:

- **Adapt** to a continuously changing world;
- Acquire intellectual and spiritual strength through *diversity*; and
- Disseminate and instill the principles and spirit of freemasonry through our *actions and practices* in addition to our words.

ADAPTATION

Freemasonry, like all principles and ways of life, derives its strength through its universal truths that apply in every society, and in every generation. However, a great part of this strength also comes from the wisdom embedded in its framework that allows the craft to fit into these changes by adapting in an ever-changing world. These adaptations apply to new ways of sharing with new candidates and existing brethren the foundations of freemasonry in a manner that they are best able to associate with and adopt given their backgrounds. Some ways to achieve this include:

- Identifying ways in which the functioning of the lodge, and the activities of the brethren, can benefit from new technologies, including IT infrastructure, pedagogical systems and tools, charity work and other methodologies that enhance the efficiency of our tasks.
- Utilizing new ways of reaching out to brethren, and potential candidates, in a way that exploits the tremendous advances in technology, including the internet, chat rooms, etc.
- Developing ways of involving non-Masons in various events (charity, dissemination, workshops, socials) that allow for greater public awareness of the noble principles of the craft, without compromising those rites which we hold secret and sacred.

DIVERSITY

Freemasonry, like a priceless tapestry of truths and beliefs, draws its beauty from varying shades, tints and patterns that come together under the hands of an ever-caring Architect. Its beauty comes from the diversity of the brethren, as is the strength of the individual mason who grows through contact with brethren of other countries, religions, professions and backgrounds. Only through exposure to others can one grow. Similarly, only through the brotherly fray of different views can a spontaneous order of ideas emerge in an optimal way.

We in our very nature as travelers must explore these lands of varying thoughts and ideas with open hearts and minds, only through which our travels make us better masons. Some policies in line with this view include:

- Not only exploring ways of diversifying the content of and inputs to the lodge, but strengthening collaboration with other lodges through regular and special communications, builder's club meetings, special events and workshops, and other forums.
- Encouragement of brethren's participation in lodges outside of the jurisdiction, with subsequent reporting of events taking place across the country, and other regions.
- Development of a 'pilot program' of sister-lodges; the identification of and agreement with a lodge in another country whereby exchanges of information, discussions and discourses, and mutual events, are done in collaboration for the mutual benefit of both lodges, and freemasonry in general. After a certain period, the program is assessed, whereby if regarded as a success it is replicated in other lodges.

FREEMASONRY IN PRACTICE

The beauty and depth of freemasonry are buttressed by the living example of its principles put to practice. For these principles of fraternity, charity and industry are only able to benefit mankind through the daily actions of the brethren. These actions are: (i) a primary manner by which the individual brother betters himself; (ii) the medium by which the tenets of charity are of benefit to society; and (iii) the most effective way of raising awareness of non-Masons by example, and drawing in the right candidates to carry the craft forward and increase further the craft's potential for making a difference through its actions. Ways to carry this out include:

- Developing a yearly action plan for work outside of the lodge (including charity, dissemination, lodge work, etc.) along with a clear methodology for assigning responsibility, and measuring performance of the lodge at the end of the year.
- Developing a new methodology for the setting of this yearly action plan, possibly through a workshop or similar forum, to achieve consensus among the brethren, as well as a sense of ownership of this objective by the entire lodge. (Another possibility may be the requirement of candidates for Worshipful Master to present their 'election platform').
- Allocating a certain percentage of this work, particularly in charity, whereby outside participation (families, friends, interested candidates) collaborate in the carrying out of the tasks. (This may include such tasks as soup kitchen work, benefits, lectures, etc.)

ANNEX TO THE FUTURE VISION FOR JUSTICE COLUMBIA LODGE #3

INTRODUCTION

The importance, if not urgency, of this exercise is clear. As we enter the 21st century we are faced with the objectives of injecting new generations of men of appropriate moral conduct into the craft. And this is to take place in the face of a changing world where the principles of the craft apply as they have always been, but must be communicated in a way that is commensurate with a contemporary manner. Furthermore, the advent of new technologies and methodologies in every part of life make it possible for the spirit AND practice of Freemasonry to be delivered in more productive ways.

These aspects make the development of a vision, and its carrying it through, a duty of all brethren, and a manifestation of their allegiance to their oaths upon entering this noble craft.

It must be stressed that a very important part of the development of a Vision Statement is the process itself, whereby brethren exchange ideas and recommendations, and in the process develop a new paradigm to which they have all contributed. This is the spirit of freemasonry- *moving forward through brotherhood and commitment.*

Furthermore, it is important to note that this exercise is not an end in itself, but the beginning of a process of forming a framework for change, and a plan for implementation. **It is this latter action stage that has the power to shape the future of the Lodge, and contribute in its small but important way, to Freemasonry at large.**

WHY A VISION?

The dynamics of the 21st Century are different. The changes, technological, cultural and geopolitical, have led to a need for continual responsiveness and rapid change. Vision and Planning anticipates the challenges, which arise and highlight the strategic and policy choices for the successful relay of the tenets of Freemasonry to future generations, the solemn duty of all brethren.

The reason for developing a vision is to engage in a robust self-assessment and examination, informed by research and dialogue among all members of a lodge. For implementation it requires high-level leadership, supported by a clear strategy. The assessment process is meant to be inclusive and intense, engaging all the stakeholders in the considerations of agreeing future consensus vision and strategy in a fully transparent context.

It establishes a conducive basis for agreement, ownership and “buy in”, clearing the way for implementation through a planned and carefully crafted process.

Leadership, implementation and commitment are the determinants of future success.

VISION FOR JUSTICE COLUMBIA #3

Justice Columbia Lodge #3 will comprise brethren leading a model life espoused by the ancient principles of freemasonry, whereby embedded in the regular events of this Lodge are the fundamental principles of the craft carried into the 21st century, that is, adapting to the new world while maintaining the ancient principles and practices of this rite.

The key tenets for the Lodge as it enters the century are those of adaptation, diversity and manifestation of its principles through its actions.

ADAPTATION

The Lodge will adapt to an ever-changing world. These adaptations apply to new ways of sharing with new candidates and existing brethren the foundations of freemasonry in a manner that they are best able to associate with and adopt given their backgrounds.

DIVERSITY

The Lodge will draw upon the benefits of diversity to enhance its value to its members and the craft in general. It will enhance its exposure to other Lodges in the jurisdiction, as well as Lodges in other countries and regions.

FREEMASONRY IN PRACTICE

The Lodge will develop a new, and strategic, approach to its work, with the objective of making its projects: (i) ways by which the individual brother better himself; (ii) the medium by which the tenets of charity are of benefit to society; and (iii) a way of raising awareness of non-Masons by example, and drawing in the right candidates to carry the craft forward and increase further the craft's potential for making a difference through its actions.

SOME FINAL THOUGHTS...

- *Change is often a top down process. But sometimes its best started from the bottom, and then replicated elsewhere.*
- *Change requires the investment of resources. There should, therefore, be clear objectives and outcomes.*
- *Communicating fully the objectives and process of change of change to all is important.*
- *Change must be fully and competently planned.*
- *Change, even when agreed, will not happen automatically.*
- *Change must be supported throughout, through leadership, and communication of objectives and benefits.*
- *The process must have targets, timescales, and benchmarks, and these must be monitored.*