

THE GRAND LODGE

of Ancient, Free and
Accepted Masons
of North Carolina



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GRAND MASTER 2021
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Brethren,

I hope this message finds you and your families happy and healthy.

Sadly, across North Carolina and the nation COVID-19 exposures and infections continue to rise at an alarming rate. On Sunday, December 16 at a lodge meeting in New Bern, a brother in attendance at that meeting tested positive for COVID-19. Unfortunately, one of those around him, who later traveled to attend a meeting at Greenville on Monday, December 21 subsequently tested positive. Both the New Bern York Rite Building and the Greenville Masonic Temple have been ordered closed. We are now contact tracing those events and participants to see if any of them attended any other events in the region. Inasmuch, following a joint third degree sponsored by five lodges and held in Bakersville on Saturday, December 19, 2020, a candidate subsequently tested positive for COVID-19. That lodge has closed, and contact tracing protocols were followed to notify all participants. Further, as of today, two of our District Deputy Grand Masters have been exposed and/or contracted the virus. Each are now quarantining and recuperating.

First, I want to thank the brethren involved who voluntarily notified their lodges of their condition, and alerted those they contacted of possible exposure. It is obvious that our love for our brothers remains foremost in our minds as we endure this pandemic together. I also want to commend each location affected and the officers present for acting on the information they received as quickly as possible. What remains so frustrating is that, as far as it has come to my knowledge, each location took every precaution required of them—taking the temperature of the brethren as they entered the lodge, provided a health screening form for each, wore masks and gloves, and social distanced—yet still succumbed to the spread of this virus. It is apparent that vigilance is not enough.

Thus, in light of recent events, the spread of COVID-19, and upon the recommendations of our local, state, and federal governments, it is my Order that all lodge meetings, and appendant body meetings, and any other such Masonic meeting in this Grand Jurisdiction cease at high twelve on Friday, December 25, 2020 until low twelve, Friday, January 15, 2021.

It is my intent, in consideration of so many of our brethren traveling and visiting family during this holiday season, that by closing lodges we may prevent the further spread of this virus. I encourage all brothers who have or will travel and visit family and friends this Christmas and New Years to be observant of all State and Federal health guidelines and precautions, and to consider a COVID-19 test in due and timely fashion before January 15.

I encourage you to take this opportunity to remain in contact with your brothers and widows.

I also encourage all lodges and appendant bodies to use virtual meetings—either formally or informally, per the guidelines of Grand Master Bradshaw’s Opinion No. 1 issued on April 29, 2020 and upheld by the delegates at the Annual Communication this past September.

The Grand Lodge Office will continue to be closed to non-fraternally related visitors and tourists. We will be in touch with updates, plans, and notifications as the situation further develops.

Stay safe, brethren, keep healthy, remember each other.

Given under my hand and seal in the city of Oxford, this 24th day of December, 2020.

Sincerely and fraternally,



R. David Wicker, Jr.
Grand Master

