

Excelsior Masonic Lodge No. 261

Chartered 1867

3900 Litchfield Road
Charlotte, NC 28211

www.excelsiorlodge261.org

"The Friendly Lodge"



December 2016 Trestle Board

Brethren,

I would like to thank each one of you for the honor of serving Excelsior Lodge as your Master for a third time. The last time anyone has been so honored was in 1920-1923 and no one in the history of our lodge has ever been elected Master over a greater span of years (1988, 2004 & 2016). Again, thank you.

However, electing an old horse like me at Master does not speak well for the health of the lodge. Interest and attendance are at an all-time low in spite of some excellent speakers this year from the Grand Lodge Speakers Bureau and WB Andrew Hammer, an internationally acclaimed masonic speaker and author. We have not raised a single candidate this year. Excelsior will be celebrating our 150th Anniversary next year. We have survived two world wars, the Great Depression and many other hard times in our 150 years. We must now find new ways to stimulate interest. I hope you will give the Master Elect a little bit of your time, your ideas and your support to help sustain Excelsior Lodge into the future. I urge you to make a New Year's resolution to attend some of the 150th Anniversary events during the coming year. A recent membership analysis indicates Excelsior's days are numbered unless we gain the interest of our existing members. This is especially true of our younger members.

Excelsior Lodge teamed with Temple Lodge to hold a Blood Drive during November. Man, has not learned to create artificial blood. If you missed our blood drive, please call the Community Blood Center and make an appointment. My thanks to everyone who came and donated.

We are currently conducting a raffle of a 32" LG LCD TV to benefit The Home for Children at Oxford. The tickets are \$10 each and we are selling only 200 so your chances of winning are good. If you don't want / need a new TV, you can donate it to the lodge lobby. We all have a duty to support this masonic charity. This is an easy way of doing it. If each of you buy / sell just 10 tickets, we can easily satisfy our goal and support the home at the same time. Contact any of our officers or call me at 704-364-0309 or email me (davidcarriker@gmail.com) for tickets. And, thanks for your support of The Home for Children.

Our December Stated will be Brother Charles "Hiramfixit" Blake Night in Excelsior Lodge. Brother Hiram is a very interesting person and devoted Mason. Please join us and learn a little more about Brother Hiram.

Accomplishments of the year. Although our attendance has been off, we have had some interesting events. We have had some great educational programs. We have gotten rid of an old inoperative freezer, installed some shelves in the storage room, have gotten the storage room organized, moved the file cabinets from the coat closet in the lobby into the office, cleaned and organized the kitchen, I hope we will finish a "Kitchen Users Guide" by the time you read this, we painted the meeting room and installed a black and white tile floor under the alter and as a lodge we visited some of our shut-in brothers,

Now it is time to look forward to a new year. I wish good luck to Brother Phillip Brent, Master elect for the coming year.

If I can help any of you in any way, please do not hesitate to contact me.

David Carriker



A message from our newly elected Master, Phillip Brent:

Brethren,

I want to first of all say thank you for entrusting me with the opportunity to lead the lodge, it's an honor and a pleasure that I take very seriously and look forward to serving you. It's a historic moment for the lodge as we move into celebrating our 150th anniversary.

I have been working closely with WB Tim Berly, Joshua Barnett, and Caleb Clark to make our anniversary memorable and beneficial. We have a lot of events and fundraisers planned for next year some of which I will share with you below.

But before I get to the activities and events to celebrate our anniversary, I would like to share with you my vision and part of my game plan for next year as Master. I'm theming it "The Year of Enlightenment." What exactly does that mean? I personally feel that we are in the dark in 3 key areas, the true meanings behind the signs and symbolism of Masonry, within the Brotherhood of the lodge, and the community at large.

Over the course of next year, programs, events, and campaigns will be conducted to bring light to these three areas. Below are brief explanations of how this will be accomplished:

Signs and Symbolism of Masonry

One of the reasons that I became a Mason, and this may apply to you as well, was to learn more about the deeper meanings within Masonry. Since being elected I've been asked by a few people if exploring this topic in more detail was part of my plan, if you have been wanting to learn more about that side of Masonry than you'll be excited to know that there's a plan for it. We will have introductory discussions during our Stated Communications but will have actual sessions and discussions once a month. The first quarter will be about the initiation, the second quarter about being passed, and the third quarter about being raised. Of course to attend each session you will need to be at that level or higher. All masons will be welcome and will be conducted in an open discussion format.

You were initiated, given a few lectures, caused to learn a catechism, became proficient, and then the process was repeated. However, during all of that what did you actually learn about each degree? You were caused to do many things but understand very little, studying and putting together the program has been an "enlightening" moment for me personally and I believe it will be the same for you.

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December Trestle Board

2016 Officers

Master	David Carriker*	704-351-7653
SW	Phillip Brent	704-909-8160
JW	Jeff Peck*	704-900-9625
Treasurer	Tim Berly*	704-940-1825
Secretary	Scott Wilson	704-200-7430
SD	Dan Andrews	704-535-1511
JD	Glenn Tompkins	704-941-5301
SS	Josh Barnette	704-884-6913
JS	John Robinson	980-263-8114
Chaplain	Charles Blake	704-617-0080
Tyler	Harold Kossove*	980-253-9624
	* Past Master	

December Calendar

Monday, November 5th

Stated Communication

Charles Blake Night

Dinner at 6:00pm

Meeting at 7:00pm

Monday, December 12th

Officer Installation

Dinner at 6:30pm, Meeting at 7:30pm

*****Families and Friends Welcome*****

Monday, December 19th and 26th - **DARK**



2017 Election Results

WM- Phillip Brent

SW- Jeff Peck, PM

JW- Dan Andrews

Treasurer- Tim Berly, PM

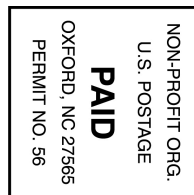
Secretary- Scott Wilson

Trustee- Charles Blake



“THE FRIENDLY LODGE”

Excelsior Masonic Lodge No. 261
3900 Litchfield Road
Charlotte, NC 28211-2012



The Brotherhood of The Lodge

There have been many talks about the participation and decline in membership of the lodge. Unfortunately it has been just that and not much done to actually address these problems. This is a declaration from me to you that these issues will be acted upon next year.

To encourage and increase the Brotherly Love within the lodge, we will have Masonic outings in addition to the events scheduled to celebrate our anniversary. These will include (preliminary ideas) bowling, attending a Knights game, watching a sporting event together at a bar, visiting the Masonic Home For Children and White Stone, etc. Simple things we can do together to fellowship and get to know each other better.

Ask One Bring One

This is something that I've mentioned in years past and am excited that it will be implemented this year. It's very simple, the membership will be broken down by zip code and a brother from each zip code will be tasked to bring another brother from the same zip code or relative area. You may already pick up a brother who is unable to drive or doesn't have a way to get to the lodge, now I would like to task us as a lodge to be more proactive with bringing another brother to lodge.

There are about 15 people who regularly attend lodge each month and if each brought just one brother with them attendance would double. It's a matter of picking up the phone and asking a brother if they would like to ride with you to the lodge.

There will be actual plans and dates of completion put into place to ensure things are accomplished. I will share some of my goals and update you regularly on their progress.

The Community At Large

One of the events scheduled for next year is a Blue Grass/Jazz music festival, we'll have it setup in our backyard, live bands will be

playing, food will be served, and other activities during this time. This will be a fundraiser as well and all profits will go to our charities. We'll invite the local community and other lodges to attend.

This will show the community that there is more to being a Mason than having "secret" meetings behind closed doors. It is also something that we can become known for as other lodges have annual barbeques and such.

Fundraising

This is an area where we have lacked in the past and I want to put an emphasis on this year. As of right now we have 3 fundraisers slated for next year, given so I am setting a goal of \$5000 to be raised for our charities. To reach this goal I have to ask that you participate in the fundraisers and help with spreading the word once they are announced. Together we can reach this goal and make a positive impact on our Masonic Charities.

Conclusion

Our lodge has lasted 150 years because the brothers past and present did not give up on the lodge. If you have stepped back from the lodge I want to ask that you come back, participate, and share your opinion with me as I'm available to listen. If you attend regularly I want to ask that you continue as your dedication hasn't gone unnoticed and I welcome your opinion and feedback as well. I have a lot of ideas and game plans to take the lodge in a positive direction next year, I will share more details during the January stated communication and hope you will come out to learn more and participate in the first discussions about the signs and symbolism of the first degree.

I am excited about celebrating our 150th anniversary with you and am looking forward to having an awesome year of enlightenment.

Fraternally,
Phillip Brent, Master-elect

Coming to the Officer Installation dinner? Please let us know how many will be joining you:

www.surveymonkey.com/r/ZRH3D2Q