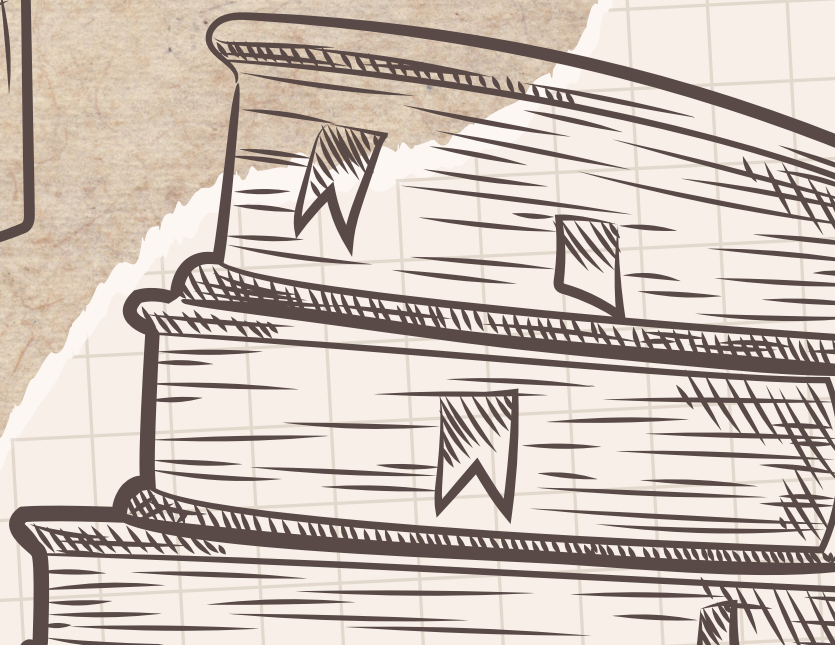


HONORING THE HANDS THAT BUILT US

LODGE TOOLKIT



PROCLAMATION

TO ALL SUBORDINATE LODGES AND BROTHERS OF THE GRAND LODGE OF FREE AND ACCEPTED MASONS OF THE STATE OF MICHIGAN

WHEREAS, The Grand Lodge of Free and Accepted Masons of Michigan proudly marks two centuries of fraternal unity, community service, and unwavering dedication to the tenets of Freemasonry; and

WHEREAS, The enduring strength of our fraternity rests upon the foundation laid by our departed Brothers, who devoted their hands, hearts, and lives to building our lodges and strengthening communities; and

WHEREAS, It is our solemn duty and privilege to honor, preserve, and cherish the legacies, stories, and mentorship of the men who came before us and shaped us into the Masons we are today; and

WHEREAS, The widows of our departed Brothers hold a sacred place within our Masonic family, and their personal stories, photographs, and reflections are vital to preserving our shared history;

NOW, THEREFORE, I, MIKE ROBERTS, Grand Master of Michigan Masons F. & A.M., by virtue of the authority vested in me, do hereby officially proclaim October 2026 as: “HONORING THE HANDS THAT BUILT US” MONTH

FURTHERMORE, I encourage all subordinate lodges within this Grand Jurisdiction to observe this meaningful commemoration by hosting an event specifically engaging the widows of our departed Brothers, providing them a welcoming space to share their memories; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That all Brothers are called upon to actively share and celebrate the memories of the mentors who guided their Masonic journeys; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That to assist in this jurisdiction-wide observance, the Michigan Masonic Charitable Foundation shall provide an event toolkit to ensure each commemoration is both memorable and heartfelt; and

FINALLY, TAKE NOTICE, That lodges hosting qualifying widow-based events, such as a dinner, are eligible for a partial expense reimbursement of up to 50% by submitting receipts and the Sweethearts Reimbursement Form via michiganmasons.org/resources.

Given under my hand and the Seal of the Grand Lodge this 28th day of May, 2026.

Mike Roberts

Grand Master, Michigan Masons F. & A.M.

THREE SIMPLE STEPS

Host a Widows Celebration Event: Organize a gathering dedicated to celebrating and honoring widows within your community. Consider including activities such as shared meals, music, or storytelling sessions to create a warm and welcoming atmosphere.

Share Memories: During the event, invite attendees to share written memories of brothers who have passed away. Provide submission forms included in your event packet and also available on our website michiganmasons.org/foundation ensuring everyone can easily participate in this meaningful reflection.

Submit to MMCF: Collect all submissions and send them to the MMCF, where they will be compiled into a digital archive. This archive will be shared via social media to celebrate and preserve these memories. Please send submissions to kthompson@mmcfonline.org. or by mail 1200 Wright Ave. Alma, MI 48801

Reminder: Lodges who host a widow-based event, such as a dinner, are eligible for a partial reimbursement up to 50% for their expenses. Simply complete the sweethearts reimbursement form located here: <https://michiganmasons.org/resources/>



HOSTING AN EVENT

1. Choose your Event type:

- a. Afternoon tea
- b. Dessert Social
- c. Luncheon
- d. Supper
- e. Cider & Donuts
- f. Multi-lodge event
- g. Restaurant

2. Create an Event Planning Team

- a. Event Host
- b. Widow liaison/greeter
- c. Food/Setup
- d. Legacy Tribute Volunteer(s) (to assist with submissions and send to MMCF)

3. Mail Invitations (4-6 weeks prior to event)

- a. Invitation sample below

4. Prepare the Venue

- a. Nice tablecloths
- b. Flowers or centerpieces
- c. Soft music or entertainment
- d. Reserved seating for the widows near the front
- e. Display board or table of departed brethren (Name, photos or lodge history)

5. Make the event personal

- a. Welcome from the WM
- b. Short reading or reflections (ideas below, feel free to use as is)
- c. Recognition of each widow by name, her deceased husband's name, anything special about her husband that is known along with his contribution to the lodge.

6. Take pictures.

- a. Document your event and send them to: kthompson@mmcfonline.org

INVITATION SAMPLE

YOU & A GUEST ARE CORDIALLY INVITED

AS ALMA LODGE #244
HONORS THE HANDS THAT BUILT US

CELEBRATING 200 YEARS OF BROTHERHOOD & DEVOTION

DINNER & PROGRAM
ON - DATE
AT LODGE ADDRESS
TIME

COMFORTABLE BUSINESS CASUAL ATTIRE

CALL OR TEXT YOUR R.S.V.P. TO NAME & PHONE NUMBER

We have included a submission form inviting you to recall a story or memory of your husband related to his involvement in Masonry. These will be compiled by the Michigan Masonic Charitable Foundation and will create a digital archive of Masons who helped make our lodge what it is today. Feel free to include pictures as well.

READING/REFLECTION SAMPLES

Option 1:

There are moments in the life of a Lodge when we pause—not to look forward, but to look back. To remember the hands that shaped our walls, our rituals, and our sense of belonging. Tonight, we honor those hands.

Hands that raised the first timbers of our Lodge. Hands that signed petitions, mentored new Brothers, and offered help long before it was asked for. Hands that comforted, guided, and served—not for recognition, but for love of the Craft.

Our departed Brothers may no longer walk among us, but their fingerprints remain on everything we do. In the way we open our meetings. In the way we greet one another. In the way we care for our widows and families. In the way we strive to be better men.

Their legacy is not measured in years, but in the lives they touched.

And so, as we gather with the widows and families of these good men, we say: Your loved one is not forgotten. His story lives on in this Lodge, in our memories, and in the Brotherhood that continues because he once stood among us.

May we honor them not only with our words, but with our actions— by building, as they built; by serving, as they served; and by loving this Fraternity as deeply as they did.

Option 2:

Two hundred years of Michigan Masonry have been shaped by countless men—men whose devotion, labor, and quiet acts of kindness built the foundation we stand upon today.

We gather this evening to honor those Brothers who have laid down their working tools, yet whose influence continues to guide us.

Each Brother brought something unique to our Lodge: A steady hand. A generous heart. A wise word. A willingness to serve.

Their contributions were not always grand, but they were always meaningful. A repaired step. A meal prepared for a widow. A ride given to a Brother in need. A ritual learned with care and passed on with pride.

These are the threads that weave together the fabric of our Lodge.

To the widows and families here tonight: Your loved one helped build something that endures. His presence is felt in our traditions, our fellowship, and our commitment to one another. We honor him by continuing the work he began.

May this month of remembrance inspire us to preserve their stories, share their memories, and carry forward the Brotherhood they cherished.

Option 3:

When a Mason leaves this world, his footsteps may fade, but the path he walked remains clear. It is found in the Lodge he helped sustain, in the Brothers he encouraged, and in the family he loved.

Tonight, we honor not only our departed Brothers, but also the women who walked beside them. You shared their time, their devotion, and their pride in this Fraternity. You supported their service, their late nights, their rehearsals, their meetings, and their desire to make the world a little better than they found it.

Your presence here reminds us that a Mason's legacy is not his alone. It is a legacy built together— in partnership, in sacrifice, and in love.

We hope you feel the gratitude of this Lodge. We hope you feel the warmth of the Brotherhood that still surrounds you. And we hope you know that your husband's memory continues to inspire us.

May we honor him by living the values he lived: Brotherly Love, Relief, and Truth. And may we honor you by ensuring you always have a place among us.

YOUR TRIBUTE CONTINUED

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

PHOTOGRAPHS:

Please include one photo of your honoree (or the two of you together).

- Email photograph: kthompson@mmcfonline.org OR
- Mail to:
Michigan Masonic Charitable Foundation
1200 Wright Ave.
Alma, Mi 48801

Any photographs mailed will be scanned and mailed back to you within 7-10 business days.

NEED ASSISTANCE?

Please let us know if you want your honoree to be included but need help writing the tribute. We are standing by to assist:

800-994-7400 M-F 8:30-4:30