



A Ceremony for the Celebration of the Anniversary of the Birth of Brother George Washington

FEBRUARY 22, 1732

INTRODUCTION

This ceremony is written for the purpose of honoring Brother George Washington, and is suitable for performance – with adjustments as needed – in a tiled lodge of any degree. This ceremony may also be performed, with minor adaptations, at a dinner or open event.

Washington's Birthday is a Federal holiday in the United States, celebrated on the third Monday of February. His actual date of birth is February 22, 1732. This observance should be performed as close as possible to those times.

PREPARATION

If the lodge room includes a painting or bust of Washington, it is appropriate for it to be highlighted in some way prior to the opening of the lodge. For example, a wreath could be added to it for the occasion, or a table placed before it to display flowers, a candelabra or an electric lamp. Contact the George Washington Masonic National Memorial gift store to obtain an appropriate image of Washington for lodge display, if needed.

Note: Regulations and lodge practices vary. This ceremony is a template, which should be adapted to the procedures of your jurisdiction prior to any performance. Please contact your appropriate Grand Lodge representative with questions.

CEREMONY

The Worshipful Master may begin by having the lodge called from labor to refreshment according to ritual specified by his jurisdiction.

WM (rising): Brethren, the time has come for us to honor the memory of Worshipful Brother George Washington, the first President of the United States. As we reverently celebrate the anniversary of his birth, I call upon each brother present to mark well his many virtues as a man and a Mason.

WM: Brother Secretary.

Sec. (rising): Worshipful Master.

WM: It is my will and pleasure that you read the Masonic roll of George Washington.

Sec.: Born, February 22, 1732.
Entered, Fredericksburg Lodge, at Fredericksburg, Virginia,
November 4, 1752.
Passed to the Degree of Fellow Craft, March 3, 1753.
Raised to the Sublime Degree of Master Mason,
August 4, 1753.
Elected to serve as Charter Master of Alexandria
Lodge N^o 22, December 27, 1788.
Called to the Celestial Grand Lodge, December 14, 1799,
Age 67, and for 47 years a Brother of the Craft.

(Secretary is seated.)

WM: Brother Senior Warden.

sw (rising): Worshipful Master.

WM: You will please that East that you now rehearse Brother Washington's record of achievement.

SW: Appointed Commander-in-Chief of the Continental Army,
1775.
With final victory of the War of Independence, resigned
his commission, 1783.
President of the Constitutional Convention, 1786.
Unanimously elected first President of the United States, 1788.
Unanimously reelected to his second term as President of the
United States, 1792.
Retired from the Presidency and returned Mt. Vernon, 1797.

(Senior Warden is seated.)

WM: Brother Junior Warden.

JW (rising): Worshipful Master.

WM: It is my will and pleasure that you speak to Brother
Washington's undying legacy.

JW: Our illustrious Brother Washington was a man of unparalleled
character, as exemplary in private as he was in the public eye. In
the language of Freemasonry, he was a just and upright Mason,
ever walking and acting according to the noblest principles of
our Craft. It is only natural that many have regarded his life
as a "perfect ashlar," a true exemplification of all of the moral
attributes of a sincere and authentic Master Mason.

As one of our forebears in the Craft so fittingly expressed:
Washington "was indeed a paragon in Freemasonry, an
exemplar of its virtues and its graces. There is no degree of
moral improvement suggested by Masonic teachings to which
he did not aspire, and few to which he had not attained."

Brother Washington was indeed, as we all aspire to be, a "living
stone," and to the glory of the Great Architect of the Universe,
he remains the cornerstone of the American civilization . . . and
not only so for our society, but also for those of other nations

who have followed us into the manifold blessings of freedom, liberty and equality.

So is he now and so shall he ever remain American Freemasonry's "grand exemplar," whom countless Freemasons seek to emulate in their own lodges and their own communities. In the mystic tie, his exalted merits live on, met with our inalienable regard! So we honor Brother Washington, exalt his memory, and with heart and tongue celebrate his inestimable legacy to all humanity.

(Junior Warden is seated.)

WM: General Henry Lee's eulogy to George Washington, the friend of Masonry, of his Country and of Man:

"First in war — first in peace — and first in the hearts of his countrymen, he was second to none in the humble and enduring scenes of private life; pious, just, humane, temperate, and sincere; uniform, dignified, and commanding, his example was as edifying to all around him as were the effects of that example lasting. To his equals he was condescending, to his inferiors kind, and to the dear object of his affections exemplarily tender; correct throughout, vice shuddered in his presence, and virtue always felt his fostering hand; the purity of his private character gave effulgence to his public virtues."

As we culminate our celebration of the birth of our Brother George Washington, let us ever bear in mind his great works, and above all give thanks to the Supreme Architect of the Universe for his life.

• • • (all rise)

Brother Chaplain.

Chaplain: Worshipful Master.

WM: Let us pray.

Chaplain: Most holy and glorious Lord God, thou Great Architect of heaven and earth, we ask Thy blessing and we give our thanks for your servant George Washington. We are thankful all that he did as a man, as a Freemason and as the father of our nation. May we always be worthy and grateful for his legacy and may remain free to celebration the birth of such a good man. Amen.

Resp. So mote it be.

* These words are a traditional toast to Washington and King Solomon, and may be omitted here to be performed later at the festive board as an actual toast at the lodge's discretion.

WM: To Solomon, the luminary of the East,
and to Washington, the glory of the West –
May the rays of their virtues strike LIGHT
to the soul of every Freemason.” *

(appropriate pause)

- (all are seated)

If the brethren are at refreshment, the Worshipful Master now restores the lodge to labor according to normal procedure.

ABOUT THIS CEREMONY

This ceremonial template is provided by the George Washington Masonic National Memorial for the use and adaptation of lodges around the world that wish to join us in our work to inspire humanity by promoting the virtues, character and vision of George Washington, the man, the Mason and the father of our country.

This ceremony may be updated from time to time. To request the latest version, contact Shawn Eyer at seyer@gwmemorial.org.



ABOUT THE MEMORIAL

The George Washington Masonic National Memorial is a memorial and museum built and funded by the Freemasons of the United States. Situated in Alexandria, Virginia, the nine-story neoclassical structure stands foremost as a memorial to the life and character of George Washington. The Memorial is also an active Masonic temple, research library, cultural space, community and performing arts center, and tourist attraction. In 2015, the Memorial was designated a National Historic Landmark.

Facilities are available for visiting Craft lodges and other Masonic bodies to hold meetings, including out of state groups. Public guided tours are available daily, excluding major holidays.

For the latest information, visit <http://gwmemorial.org>.