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## Masonic Secrecy

One of the most frequently misunderstood perceptions regarding Freemasonry is that it is a secret organization. Freemasonry would not have existed so long and enjoyed a worldwide support by so many distinguished people of all stations in life and supported by so many renowned institutions of Church, State, Education and Civic Organizations if it were in the least harmful to society. All organizations and institutions have private information that is known only to those within its ranks who are properly qualified and duly authorized to receive it. The Masonic organization is no exception in this regard and can make no apologies for this requirement. Freemasonry makes no attempt to conceal its purposes, aims or principles from the general public. Anyone who wishes to can obtain Masonic literature in almost any book store and in the public libraries whenever they would choose to do so.

## Freemasonry and Religion

Masonry and religion may be similar in some respects having been derived from similar roots. However masonry is not a religion. Masonry seeks to teach codes of behavior and upholds certain ideals and standards of personal conduct. Evidence of faith and belief are essential to both religion and masonry. It has usually been found that men who are accepting of one are also dutiful to the other. Whenever there is some contention regarding the two, it can usually be charged to either misunderstanding or misinformation.

## The Teachings of Freemasonry (excerpts)

Inculcated within the teachings of Freemasonry are many principles which are drawn from centuries old concepts which have been tried and tested and found to be just as true today as they were then; that the conflict between the material and the spiritual is mans principle concern; that mans duty is to God, himself and community; that truth, freedom releases human potential that success or-failure in life is a product of the mind; that confidence, courage and moral rectitude can overcome great obstacles in life, that Faith, Hope and Charity are the pillars of life

and that the greatest of these is Charity.

## The Mysteries of Freemasonry, Its Symbols and a allegory

The mysteries of masonry are drawn from a myriad of ancient codes and credos, leaving aside their errors and clinging to what is good. It employs the use of allegory and symbols merely as a graphical means of conveying thoughts and information from one to another. These symbols are equally effective whether learned or unlearned, literate or illiterate. Symbols and picture writing or hieroglyphics, which are still present today in ancient structures found throughout Egypt, India, Arabia and other parts of the world have preserved much of the worlds literature and history. In the Bible allegories are spoken of as Parables, need we be reminded of their use by one Jesus of Nazareth, the Greatest Teacher of all time?

## A Way of Life

Freemasonry is kindness in the home, honesty, in business, courtesy in society, fairness in work, pity and concern for the unfortunate, resistance toward evil, help for the weak, and forgiveness for the penitent, love for one another, and above all, reverence and love of God. Freemasonry is many things, but most of all: Freemasonry is a way of life. If you feel that Freemasonry might interest you or someone of your acquaintance or if you would simply like to learn more please visit the web site:



[www.princehall-pa.org](http://www.princehall-pa.org)

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# PRINCE HALL MASONRY



## A Way of Life



*Published by the  
Most Worshipful Prince Hall Grand Lodge  
Of Free and Accepted Masons  
Of Pennsylvania and  
Masonic Jurisdictions thereunto belonging.*

## What is Freemasonry?

The Fraternity of Freemasonry is the oldest, largest and most widely recognized fraternal organization in the world. But to many people it still remains a mystery.

In general we may say that Freemasonry is an institution which teaches the basic principles of good ethical conduct among men of all races, religions and national origins.

## The History of Freemasonry

Freemasonry is a descendant of the ancient mystery schools of instruction which existed in Egypt, India and Persia. Its beginnings have also been linked to early religious and philosophical sects inhabiting the regions of Ancient Palestine and Jerusalem.

Noted historians have traced freemasonry from ancient Palestine and Jerusalem to the middle ages in Europe. There it flourished among the Guilds of Stone Masons, who traveled freely throughout Europe during the cathedral building era.

In 1717, four lodges of Freemasons meeting in London England formed the Grand Lodge on the European continent.

## Freemasonry among Africans in America

The privileges of freemasonry were first sought by Free Africans who traveled between the continents of Europe, the middle passages of the Island of the West Indies and America.

On March 6, 1775 a group of fifteen (15) Free African men led by one Prince Hall, petitioned the master of a military lodge, Lodge #441, Irish Constitution, attached to the 38th Regiment of Foot, British Army, inhabiting the city of Boston for Masonic degrees. There they received the degrees of master masons and the authority to meet and conduct themselves

as a lodge of masons under provisional dispensation. This lodge under dispensation was duly designated as African Lodge Number One. Prince Hall was installed as the Worshipful Master.

Prince Hall made several attempts to secure a regular warrant from the Grand Lodges of Boston. When this failed, he applied for and obtained a Regular warrant from the Grand Lodge of England in 1784, eight years after the establishing of African Lodge Number One. This warrant conferred upon his lodge and its members all of the rights and privileges appertaining to a regularly constituted lodge of "Free and Accepted Masons". This warranted Lodge was designated as African Lodge Number 459.

From these humble beginnings Freemasonry among African Americans or Prince Hall Masonry as it is now designated, having been renamed for its founder and first Grandmaster, has happily spread across the entire United States with a Grand Lodge in almost every state and throughout the world, in Africa, Canada and the Islands of the West Indies and beyond.

The Most Worshipful Prince Hall Grand Lodge  
Free and Accepted Masons of the Jurisdiction of  
Pennsylvania

In 1815 a charter for a Grand Lodge was granted by Prince Hall to the Freemasons of Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. Absalom Jones was installed as the First Grand Master of masons in Pennsylvania.

Many distinguished men of masonry were essential to the development of masonry in Pennsylvania. Most notable among them were Richard Allen, James Forten, Absalom Jones and Prince Hall.

It is worthy of note that they were all Ministers of the Gospel and members of the Methodist Church which was then the single largest church denomination among African Americans. Two of them were also distinguished as being the founders of the First African congregation of the African

Methodist Episcopal Church, (Richard Allen), later known as "Mother Bethel" and St. Thomas Episcopal Church, (Absalom Jones).

# Prince Hall Masonry

## A Way of Life

## The Masonic Organization

The Masonic fraternity consists of many symbolic lodges which are located throughout each state. The ruling body in all state jurisdictions is known as the "Grand Lodge". The Grand Lodge is presided over by a Grand Master who is elected by the body at regular conventions. The heads of symbolic lodges are known as Worshipful Masters and are also elected by their constituents at regular meetings annually. Anyone seeking membership into the order of Freemasons must present a petition to a symbolic lodge. Petitions are not accepted at the grand lodge however one can obtain the necessary information regarding the proper procedures.

Every effort will be made to respond to all inquiries

For more information: [www.princehall-pa.org](http://www.princehall-pa.org)

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## Masonic Membership

Membership is limited to adult males above the ages of 21. There are several female organizations affiliated with Freemasons, any inquiries concerning them will be promptly referred to their office. Membership into masonry is strictly voluntary and anyone seeking admission must do so of their own freewill and accord. They must be men of good moral character, be mentally and physically competent and profess a belief in a supreme being.