



## 2023 Conference Pre-Attendance Letter

Greetings!

We are looking forward to seeing you in a few weeks at the 2023 Midwest Conference on Masonic Education at the Canton Masonic Temple in Canton, Ohio. Since 1949, the MCME has been an opportunity for Masonic Educators to gather and discuss best practices, develop individual solutions to common issues, and make those meaningful connections that enhance Masonic Education. As per tradition, you will see some things this year that you have not seen at past conferences. We are sending you this letter to help you get the most out of your conference experience.

**Location:** Canton Masonic Temple, 836 Market Avenue North, Canton Ohio

- **Parking:** The back of the Temple.
- **Registration and check-in:** First floor mezzanine, there will be signs.
- **Accessibility:** The Canton Masonic Temple is a historic building spanning multiple floors. Stairs connect all the floors, elevators are available, as well.
- **Connectivity:** Wi-Fi is available in the building.

**Theme:** Intentional Masonry-How do we enlighten and empower Brethren to create a unified Masonic experience that reflects what is unique and valued in Masonry? Our conference this year will feature discussions, tactics, techniques, and resources that address that question. You will also notice that the entire conference itself is an experiment in intentional Masonry.

**Schedule:** Part of this experiment asks that you are intentional with your conference experience. We have multiple meaningful sessions happening simultaneously throughout the day and you will need to make choices about the sessions that you attend. Will you attend as many sessions as possible? Will you and the group you are with divide and conquer? An updated schedule is attached with most of the work being done on Saturday, April 29th. There is nothing officially planned on Sunday, April 30<sup>th</sup>, in the past, there have been unofficial gatherings as people prepare to head home. Please review the schedule and plan accordingly.

**Conference Schedule Change-MCME Festive Board:** Originally, our Saturday evening event was to attend the 21<sup>st</sup> District's Grand Master's Reception, a meal with the Grand Lodge Officers, Worshipful Masters, and dignitaries of the 21<sup>st</sup> District. Due to conflicts, we are offering a festive board at the Courtyard Canton Hotel instead. If you have already registered for the Grand Master's Reception, we will automatically transfer you to the MCME Festive Board instead. If you would like to change your registration, opting into or out of the Festive Board, please [click this link](#) to send an e-mail to Joshua Thompson, MCME Secretary, who can assist you.

**Limited Attendance Sessions:** Two of our sessions have limited their attendance: Ohio Ritualist's Guide to World Religions (Limit 20) and New Hampshire's Guide to Ritual Excellence (Limit 15). These sessions will be run twice during the day: morning and afternoon. If you are interested in one of these sessions, please do the following:

1. [Click this link](#) to send an e-mail to MCME President Chad Kopenski with the subject line: MCME Session Selection.
2. In that e-mail, please indicate the session: World Religions and/or Ritual Excellence and indicate when you wish to attend: Morning or Afternoon.
3. We will fill these sessions on a first-come, first served basis and we will let you know in advance so that you can plan accordingly.

## **Be Sure to See:**

**Social Area:** The basement level of the Temple is the main ballroom and will serve as our main social and meeting area. There is a mezzanine level around the ballroom where representatives from different organizations such as the Royal Scofield Society, The Traveling Man Masonic Podcast, the Masonic Renewal Committee, the Center for Fraternal Research, WCY Media, etc. are available.

**McKinley's Sword Room/Pin Exchange:** On the 1<sup>st</sup> floor is a room that contains President McKinley's Commandery Sword. In this room, operating under standard 'take-a-penny, leave-a-penny' rules, is a space dedicated to Brethren exchanging those tokens that Masonry loves so much. Consider leaving an item or two in the room and taking something new that interests you or completes your collection.

## **What to Bring:**

**Attire:** Attire for the conference is business casual: collared shirt and pants are acceptable; polos are fine, please, no jeans. The weather for the weekend is supposed to be cloudy and around 70° F. The attire for the MCME Festive Board in the evening is suit and tie, there is time between the end of the conference to get back to the hotel to change before the festive board. Aprons are **NOT** required or needed for the sessions.

**Nametags:** You will receive a conference nametag, you are encouraged to also wear a personal nametag representing your Lodge, jurisdiction, or organization.

**How/What to Prepare:** One of the goals of the conference is to facilitate Brethren learning best practices and making those meaningful connections that enhance Masonic Education. In order to do this, some experiences will ask that participants do some work prior to the conference to get the best experience.

**Jurisdictional Reports-**On the [MCME website](#) is a link to the jurisdictional reports from our member and friendly jurisdictions. These are invaluable tools as they give you the demographics, the structure, the initiatives, the focus, and the contacts within those jurisdictions. It is highly encouraged that you read these reports before the main work of the conference on Saturday. On a personal level, you may find that a jurisdiction doing something interesting and you can talk to a representative on Saturday for more information. At the conference level, we want to identify trends, points of interest, and questions that need further exploration from a survey of those sheets. You are a vital part of this conference, please help us in this work.

**Ohio Lodge of Research Resource Room (OPTIONAL)-**Members of the Ohio Lodge of Research (OLR) will be available all day in what we are calling a resource room, but has also been described as the 'Masonic Nerd-Out' Room. Please consider bringing a paper, a presentation, questions, half-formed ideas, works in progress for the members of the OLR to work with you on. They can offer feedback, direction, assistance, and/or resources on your work. This is an opportunity to take advantage of the expertise, perspective, and resources that the OLR has to offer.

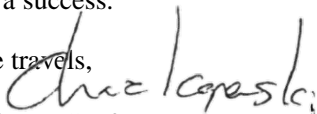
**OLR Lightning Talks (OPTIONAL)-**This is an experiment with a structured, unstructured activity. Think of this as 'Masonic Open Mic Night.' Participants will sign up for a fifteen-minute slot to give a presentation in front of members of the OLR which will be streamed to virtual participants. It can be a fully-formed presentation, a Pecha Kucha, a half-formed idea that you want to get in front of an audience for feedback. Some spots are available for participants to try their hand at a short Powerpoint Karaoke presentation. If interested in presenting during this time, please let us know by doing the following:

1. [Click this link](#) to send an e-mail to MCME president Chad Kopenski with the subject line: OLR Lightning Talks
2. Please let us know your topic or that you'd like to do a Powerpoint Karaoke and if you have a preference on sessions: Morning or Afternoon
3. Slots will be filled on a first come-first served basis.

The 2023 Midwest Conference on Masonic Education is possible because of the support from the Grand Lodge of Free and Accepted Masons of Ohio, the Ohio Lodge of Research, the Royal Scofield Society, Ohio University School of Nursing, the Andrew Torok Foundation, our member jurisdictions and partners, and Masonic educators around the world.

We look forward to gathering with you in Canton. Thank you for your help in making the 2023 Midwest Conference on Masonic Education a success.

Best wishes for safe travels,  
Chad Kopenski  
President-2023 Midwest Conference on Masonic Education



<p><b><u>SAVE THE DATE</u></b> 2024 MCME May 3-5, 2024 Minnesota Heritage Center, Bloomington, MN.</p>
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## 2023 MCME Conference Schedule

Registration Table: 1st Floor Mezzanine

Conference Office: Masonic Club Room-1st Floor Mezzanine

McKinley's Sword Pin/Coin Exchange: 1st Floor

Friday, April 28th

3:00-5:00 PM	Early Registration/Check-In at the Canton Courtyard Marriot Hotel
6:00PM	Social Hour - Soft Welcome, beverages and light refreshments
7:00PM	Search For Light at the Canton Masonic Temple – The debut of a new social and educational Masonic event. Tonight, join in a collaborative and competitive puzzle game where you and your team will vie to be the first to follow the clues, test your wits, and solve a centuries-old mystery.

Saturday, April 29th

7:00AM	Registration Opens at the Canton Masonic Temple					
8:00AM	Morning Joint Session with Welcome from Steven Grindle, Grand Master of Masons in Ohio and Grand Lodge Officers. Introductions and explanation of conference. Building Brotherhood Micropresentations. Main Ballroom					
	Ballroom	Ohio Lodge of Research Room 1st Mezzanine	McKinley Lodge Room 1st Floor	Canton York Rite Room 1st Floor	Auxiliary Lodge Room 2nd Floor	AASR Candidate Counseling Room 2nd Mezzanine
9-9:45	<b>Social Area</b>	Open Research Review	Ohio Ritualist's Guide to World Religions	New Hampshire Guide to Ritual Excellence	Development and Use of Ohio's Roadmap For Improvement (streamed)	Applied Education-'But They Can't Keep The Lights On!!!' (streamed)
10-10:45		Masonic Lightning Talks (streamed)	The Chamber of Reflection		Taking Small-town Values Statewide (streamed)	The Three Books Every _____ Mason Should Read.
11-11:45	Keynote: Preserving a Lodge History, Culture and Identity by Dr. Heather Calloway - Center for Fraternal Research at Indiana University. Cathedral Room 3rd Floor (streamed)					
N-12:45	LUNCH in the Ballroom					
12:45-1:15	The Thrilla in Vanilla' (streamed)					
1:30-2:15	<b>Social Area</b>	Masonic Lightning Talks (streamed)	Ohio Ritualist's Guide to World Religions	New Hampshire Guide to Ritual Excellence	The Principles Proficiency (streamed)	Applied Education-'But They Can't Keep The Lights On!!!'
2:30-3:15		Open Research Review	The Chamber of Reflection		Importance of Connections: The Thomas Fiveash Reddick Society	The Three Books Every _____ Mason Should Read. (streamed)
3:30-3:45	Doc Simpson's Household Panacea and Miracle Elixir-Ballroom					
4-4:45	Quo Vadimus Discussion and Conference Wrap-Up					
5-5:45	MCME Business Meeting-Ballroom (streamed)					
6:30-8:45	Festive Board including Installation of Officers					
9-11:00	Hospitality Area in Main Ballroom					

Sunday, April 30th

8:00AM	Breakfast at the Hotel. This is a casual, unstructured meeting in the hotel to generally talk, debrief, and offer well-wishes before departing. (OPTIONAL)
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## Session Descriptions

Applied Education-'But They Can't Keep The Lights On!!!'with WB Chris Greise-This is a guided discussion/interactive activity. We all run into Lodges that say they can't focus on education because they have membership retention issues, not realizing that education is the key. Using a principled and case-study approach, we will discuss, share, and develop strategies to help refocus and coach these Lodges.

Building Brotherhood: 'It is all about connections.' Examples of how three different entities are building brotherhood by developing and emphasizing connections. Presentations from Royal Scofield Society (internal and external), Amesville #278 (community), and Ohio Masonic Home Memory Care (past).

Chamber of Reflection in Blue Lodge with Brother Robert Painter, RSS - This is a presentation and interactive activity. Examples, guidelines, discussion, impact and importance of a Chamber of Reflection as a part of the candidate's Blue Lodge experience.

Doc Simpson's Household Panacea and Miracle Elixir-A tradition from Ohio's Traveling Masonic Roadshows, a quick break before the last session for hot cookies fresh from the oven and ice cold milk.

Keynote Address by Dr. Heather Calloway - Center for Fraternal Research at Indiana University.

Masonic 'Lightning Talks' Workshop with Ohio Lodge of Research: This is an experiment in structured unstructured educational activities. Think of this as Masonic Open Mic. Brethren should bring a piece on any Masonic topic to give before a small audience for feedback. It can be a spoken presentation, poem, a paper, half-finished Powerpoint, anything that you would like to give before an audience. Slots are limited to 15-minutes and space is limited.

New Hampshire Guide to Ritual Excellence with RWB Chris Busby-Development, implementation, and examples of small group workshops developed to utilize concepts from theatre to help Brethren learn the fundamentals of presenting Ritual as well as reframe the idea of Ritual practice and performance. (Space is limited to 15 people per session. This will be an active, hands-on session)

Ohio Lodge of Research Resource Room-Members of the Ohio Lodge of Research will have a room where Brethren can get assistance with Masonic Research and feedback on ideas, presentations, and papers. Brethren are invited and encouraged to bring a paper, a presentation, a half-formed idea, a wish-list of information and connect with the OLR.

Ohio Ritualist's Guide to World Religions with RWB Alexander Herbert, RSS: Development, implementation, and discussion of guide to help Brethren in making our Ritual appropriate for religious traditions that they may not be familiar with.

Quo Vadimus Discussion: Quo Vadimus means 'Where are we going?' This is a free-form discussion about the next steps in Masonic Education. What is on the horizon, what are areas of concern, what should we be aware of, where are we going? Facilitated by Thomas Hauder, PGM.

Social Area-This is an experiment in structured unstructured educational activities. This is a place for Brethren to talk, discuss and connect in an informal manner. Informational tables from different Masonic groups, vendors, and entities such as the Ohio Masonic Home, Masonic Renewal Committee and the Royal Scofield Society will be available. Masonic podcasts may be doing recordings in this room.

Taking Small-Town Values Statewide with MWB Jess N. Raines, RSS, Past Grand Master of Masons in Ohio-Masonry doesn't have a membership problem, it has a retention problem and education is the key. Thoughts, examples, and discussion of how investing in meaningful connections brings incredible dividends.

Importance of Connections: The Thomas Fiveash Reddick Society. On April 16, 2023, Missouri debuted its Thomas Fiveash Reddick Society, an educational honor society whose genesis is tied to the MCME. The genesis, development, and progress of this society will be discussed in this session.

The Principles Proficiency with RWB Steve Hessler, Chairman of the Grand Lodge of Ohio Committee on Education and Information-Development, discussion, implementation, and examples of an alternative proficiency method currently in use that emphasizes discussion, personal connections, educational exploration instead of just Ritual memorization.

The Roadmap for Improvement with RWB Mark Allred, RSS-This guided discussion/interactive activity will explore and apply the Roadmap for Improvement, a Lodge self-assessment, value identification, and priority-setting tool currently in use along with an exploration of the guidance, continuity, feedback, and resources that Leadership can provide.

The Three Books Every \_\_\_\_\_Mason Should Read with WB Josh Beasley, RSS. This guided discussion/interactive activity is sponsored by The Royal Scofield Society. Participants will be divided into 'teams' by table and given a type of Mason (Ritualist, Historical, Esoteric, Leadership, Beginning, Weekend-Only) and asked to create a crucial three-book reading list for that specific type. The lists will be presented, discussed, collected, and shared with participants.

The Thrilla in Vanilla.' Grand Master Steven Grindle held the record for completing The Kitchen Sink (six scoops of ice cream with all the trimmings) for a long time and was recently dethroned by WB Jason Short. This will be a head-to-head competition between MWB Grindle and WB Short for the championship belt This is a fun and social event with the Grand Lodge Officers, attendees, and Brethren.