

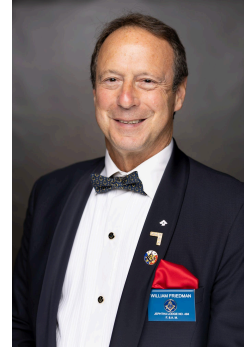
Jephtha Lodge No. 494, F. & A. M.

2025-2026 Fall/Winter Newsletter

A Message from the Worshipful Master – W.: Bill Friedman

We Brothers are very proud of the countless hours, effort and thought that went into making this first half of the Masonic year a resounding success.

Jephtha's goals this Masonic year were Education, Benevolence, Fraternity and Reflection. Towards those goals we accomplished much but still have work ahead of us.



We started our Masonic year by not “going dark” during the summer months. We began a program we called Summer Casual Nights which were choreographed by Brothers for themselves and also to invite “interested Gentlemen” to meet and greet each other, play pool, watch a game or just hang out.

Our newly formed Shepherding Committee goals are to interview and engage the interested Gentlemen, aka Candidates, and guide them from their “knock on the door” through the various opportunities we are providing up to and including being presented with a Petition for Membership, then through the Brothers first full year of being a Master Mason. The Committee has been very successful in taking the time and effort to permit Brothers to meet and engage with Candidates so if and when a Petition is read in Lodge, many of the Brothers have had an opportunity to place a face with a name and can ballot according to their own feelings and interactions with a Candidate. The Committee has also slowed down the process of presenting Candidates with Petitions, seeking to engage with Candidates who seem to truly seek more light through Masonry and who will become part of the fabric of the Lodge for the future by wishing to involve themselves in our many activities and community outreach.

We currently have 13 Candidates in various stages of engagement with Brothers as well as several EAs and a FC from many years ago who the Committee has been able to reengage in Lodge activities.



Jephtha joined the Town of Huntington Chamber of Commerce this year to begin our reintroduction to the Community.

October was a very busy month. Jephtha erected a booth in Heckscher Park at the Annual Fall Festival in October. The GAOTU granted us only 1 day of no rain but we were successful in making ourselves known to the Community by promoting Jephtha, Masonry and our Triangle Girls. The single day gave us 9 new Candidates who scanned a barcode and uploaded a questionnaire about themselves and their interest in Masonry. Almost to a man the respondents wrote that they had a family member who was a Mason and/or they were not aware that there was a Masonic Lodge in Huntington. Many of these men are now Candidates.

We have been tying our Brother Bring a Friend nights to Lodge activities the next day or the next week to give men an opportunity to join us and to see us in action while we get to know them better.

The Jephtha Fall Festival booth created an awareness in the Community of Masonry which we tied together with the classic film written by Brother Rudyard Kipling, starring Sean Connery and Michael Caine, The Man Who Would Be King. W.: Ron Seifried D.S.A. was able to obtain the film and the Lodge rented a theater at the Cinema Arts Theater in Huntington where the film was shown a few days after the Fall Festival. Candidates and many Brothers attended as well as the Grand Master and the Grand Marshall.

Fall Festival Booth



The Man Who Would Be King Attendees



Concurrent with the day of the showing of the film, Jephtha was also proud to be able to gift a bench from The Battle Within program, a 501(c)3 organization whose goal is to provide assistance to Veterans suffering from PTSD, a 24 hour help line is manned by trained volunteers partially funded by our Grand Lodge donations.

The dedication of the Bench at the Flanagan Senior and Veterans Center, adjacent to the Cinema Arts Center, was attended by our DD VW Robert Licatta, the Masonic War Veterans and many local dignitaries as well as being covered by local media.



November continued our community outreach efforts.

Our SW Brother Drew MacCallum, organized a well attended bourbon tasting at the Lodge on a Friday night which was followed by a Food Drive at the local ShopRite supermarket the following morning.

ShopRite Food Drive

The Battle Within Bench Dedication and Proclamation to Jephtha from the Town of Huntington honoring our gift

The Food Drive was tremendously successful and many car loads of food were donated to the Helping Hand Mission in Huntington. The Mission was very appreciative of the donations and the Brothers were told this was the most food they have ever seen donated by Jephtha.



We continued the Jephtha tradition of hosting a pot luck afternoon meal during the viewing of the Huntington Thanksgiving Parade which always passes directly under our windows. Brothers Paul Vermyllen III and Brother Chris Tomassino also were able to use the timing of this event to create an opportunity to collect funds for a Brother in need. Over \$1250 dollars was collected and given to the Brother which we will hope to have matched by the District and the Grand Lodge.

Finally, our Ritual Director, W:. Rob Provito, D.S.A. conducted several very good practices for our First Degree and we raised 3 new Brothers as EAs in November. We are proud to have Brother Erik Westfahl, Brother Clive Holmes and Brother William Rogers as new members of our Fraternity.

Meanwhile, Jephtha has been consistently providing education for the Brothers at every communication. We have had Lectures on Egypt and Masonry, Stations and Places in the Lodge and the Winter Equinox.

Next year we have at least 6 lectures planned including one to be held in our Collation Room the week before Passover. This lecture will be open to any Jephtha Brother and his family and will be a Symbolic Seder with a lecture on Judaism and Masonry followed by a Seder conducted for everyone present featuring the best Matzoh Ball soup (my wife's) and other foods and delicacies that are a part of the Seder. We expect over 100 people in attendance.

Thank you for all the support from our Officers and Brothers as we are reaching the mid-point of this terrific Masonic year. May all your Holidays be joyful and may the GAOTU watch over you and your families. Please let us know if you or any Brother or family of a Brother needs help.

Senior Warden- Drew MacCallum

As the WM has stated, we have been pushing "community" this year as one of our key focuses. That doesn't mean just the Huntington Community. While we are doing a significant outreach to the town, and the residents to remind them that we have been a part of this community since its beginning, we have a long row to hoe. This is not an "overnight" thing. The hope is, in a few years, that when we speak of the lodge building, people in town won't say "wait, there's a masonic lodge in Huntington?" I'm looking forward to 2026 and the events we have planned such as St Patricks day and hope we can bring more awareness of Jephtha to the area.



Junior Warden- Franckel Enelus



Lodge Communication: Band App/Website/Instagram

To all brothers, we are trying to be as communicative as possible. Each has their preferred method of receiving information, but with limited resources of a volunteer group, we just can't keep 4+ platforms for communication (email, text, mail, website, M2/Groupable etc). We will absolutely do our best to keep all up to date and we are finding ways to sync up. Until further notice, please use the BAND APP as the main source for lodge communications of events and happenings.

Don't forget to visit our website at Jephtha.com for the latest updates, event calendar, and contact information. We are currently updating the website to be more interactive and updated more often. Hopefully before the first communication, it will be back up and live.

The website is now in a "blog style" and can be updated easily. If anyone wants to write an article or even a simple post, please get in touch with JW Drew and he can help with how to get that done.

For your social media channels, you can also find us @Jephtha494 on Instagram as well as Facebook.

Jephtha Lodge No. 494, F. & A.M Trestle Board 2026.

Jan. 12, 2026: 7:00 pm – Stated Communication/Lecture Freemasonry/Enlightenment by R.W. Mike LaRocco.

Jan. 26, 2026: 7:00 pm – Special Communication/Lecture "Camino De Santiago" by R.W. Jon Maldonado.

Feb. 9, 2026: 7:00 pm – Stated Communication/Lecture: Chamber of Reflection/Lecture, by R. W. Rene Perez

Feb. 11, 2026: 7:00 pm – Rehearsal for Fellowcraft Degree.

Feb. 16, 2026: 7:00 pm – Rehearsal for Fellowcraft Degree.

Feb. 18, 2026: 7:00 pm – Rehearsal for Fellowcraft Degree.

Feb. 23, 2026: 7:00 pm – Special Communication/Fellowcraft Degree.

Mar. 2, 2026: 7:00 pm – Fellowcraft Class.

Mar. 9, 2026: 7:00 pm – Stated Communication/Lecture "Masonry in Ireland"

Mar. 23, 2026: 7:00 pm – Special Event, "Symbolic Seder" Lecture by R. W. Scholmo Bar Ayal, Jephtha Masons, Wives & children welcome.

April 13, 2026: 7:00 pm – Stated Communication/Lecture, R. W. Kofi Ose-Tutu.

April 23, 2026: 7:00 pm – Rehearsal, Master Mason Degree/First Section.

April 27, 2026: 7:00 pm – Rehearsal, Master Mason Degree/Drama only.

April 29, 2026: 7:00 pm – Rehearsal, Master Mason Degree, Full Ritual.

May 2, 2026: 8:00 am – Master Mason Degree.

May 4, 2026: 7:00 pm – Master Mason Class.

May 11, 2026: 7:00 pm – Summoned Communication/Election.

June 1, 2026: 7:00 pm – Rehearsal, Installation.

June 8, 2026: 7:00 pm – Installation of Officers.

Lecturer Schedule:

1/12/26 – “Freemasonry and the Enlightenment.” Lecturer, R. W. Mike LaRocco

1/26/26 – Special Communication, “Camino de Santiago.” Lecturer, R. W. Jon Maldonado.

2/9/26 – “The Chamber of Reflection.” Lecturer, R. W. Rene Perez

3/9/26 – “Masonry in Ireland,” Lecturer.

3/23/26 – “Symbolic Seder Judaism/Masonry,” Lecturer, R. W. Schlomo Bar Ayal

4/13/26 – “Memorization,” Lecturer, R. W. Kofi Osei-Tutu, confirmed.

Contact Information

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