



# Friendship Lodge No. 210

## Trestleboard

2500 Masonic Drive – San Jose, CA 95125  
Stated Meeting – First Thursday of Every Month

### MAY – 2025

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
		1	2	1	2	3
				<i>FRIENDSHIP Stated Meeting Dinner 6:30 PM Suit or coat and tie</i>		
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
	<i>Stated Meetings Golden Rule 479 San Jose 10 Los Altos 712 Dinner 6:30 PM Cinco de Mayo</i>	<i>Stated Meetings Mt View DeAnza 194 Palo Alto 346 Dinner 6:30 PM</i>	<i>Stated Meeting Willow Glen Fraternity 399 Dinner 6:30 PM</i>	<i>FRIENDSHIP 2nd Degree Practice 7:00 PM</i>		
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
				<i>FRIENDSHIP 2nd Degree Practice 7:00 PM</i>		
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
			<i>SCVMOA 6:30 PM Willow Glen Fraternity 399 Officers Mandatory</i>	<i>FRIENDSHIP 3rd Degree Practice 7:00 PM</i>		
25	26	27	28	29	30	31
				<i>FRIENDSHIP 3rd Degree Practice 7:00 PM</i>		

## From the East



Greetings Brethren!

It's May, the Cinco de Mayo month. Interesting thing I learned using AI: Cinco de Mayo celebrates the Mexican army's victory over the French Second Empire at the Battle of Puebla on May 5, 1862.

While Cinco de Mayo is a smaller celebration in Mexico, especially in Puebla, it has become a popular day for celebrating Mexican culture and heritage in the United States, particularly in areas with large Mexican-American populations. So, let's get out and enjoy the day.

Just to reiterate some important points for new and tenured Masons:

- Before voting on an applicant to join the Lodge, a Master Mason need not object because he doesn't know or recognize the applicant. In his application, the applicant is required to cite the names of two Master Masons of the Lodge in good standing, who recommended him for membership.
- It's the candidate's choice to do a long or short form proficiency. His candidate coach does not make that decision, nor can the coach impose any other requirements, such as writing an essay or undergoing a Chamber of Reflection, without prior approval of the Lodge.

Some concepts that I learned during the recent Leadership Retreat which I like to implement for our May Stated Meeting and Lodge practices:

- Stated Meetings focus on Lodge business. I will ask our Secretary to send everyone the copy of the minutes of the previous meeting. If you find any errors or omissions, then you should inform the Secretary a couple of days before the next Stated Meeting.

- Any business that a brother wishes to discuss shall be forwarded to the Master and copy our Secretary, Treasurer, Senior and Junior Wardens. It will then be added to the meeting agenda.
- Any Masonic education shall be shared after the meeting is closed and the Lodge has been cleaned up. If that is not possible, the education can be carried over to the following Thursday at the Meet and Greet.
- During our Lodge Officers practice, please inform me and our Officers coaches if you cannot attend. Progressive line Officers should have completed their Master Mason proficiency as well as the Lodge Management Certification Program.
- Any additional assignments should be completed before the next degree conferral.

If there is ever a time when you will need any type of healthcare for your family, Masonic Outreach Services is there to help. Please contact them at 888-466-3642. This is a benefit for every Mason (EA, FC, and Master Masons):

- Care Management
- Financial Assistance
- Referral Services
- Masonic Homes Application

Please add into your calendar August 30, 2025, Friendship Lodge will be hosting the Masonic Outreach Meeting. I would appreciate it if more of our members would join us in this meeting and learn more of the benefits offered to all California Masons.

The Santa Clara Valley Officers Association Meeting will be hosted by Willow Glen Fraternity Lodge No. 399 at the San Jose Masonic Center, on Wednesday, May 21, 2025. Dinner starts by 6:30 followed by the School of Instruction. The topic is Third Degree, first section. All Officers should attend. Please inform me and our District Inspector Dinesh Chhabra 908-247-9288 or [dchhabra9@gmail.com](mailto:dchhabra9@gmail.com) if you're not able to attend.

Gilbert Cruz, PM, Master

## From the West



Fraternal Greetings from the West,  
Me ipsum ad defatigationem laboro. Videbo te in  
casa Massonica.

Andrew Litfin, Senior Warden

## From the South



Dear Brethren,  
Tot mihi agenda sunt, hoc mense nullum articulum  
scribere potui.

Sean Michael O'Hara, Junior Warden

## Training Camp



During first half of the month, we will finish up practicing the Second Degree. JW O'Hara will complete his work on the Master's Lecture, while SD Ramón Manlapaz will give his proficiency in the Middle Chamber Lecture.

Looking forward to next year, we will begin training Senior Deacon candidates on the Middle Chamber Lecture. The goal is for the incoming officer to be proficient in time for Installation in December.

During second half of the month, we begin work on the Third Degree. SW Andrew Litfin will take on the opening and obligation. WM Cruz will work on the Master's Lecture. SD Manlapaz, SS Dorje, and JS Jack Caceras will begin learning their second section work.

The next Officer Association Meeting / School of Instruction is scheduled for Wednesday, May 21. Willow Glen Fraternity Lodge No. 399 is hosting. They meet at the San Jose Masonic Center. The topic will be the Third Degree, first section. Dinner at 6:30 PM. School of instruction at 7:30. All lodge officers are expected to attend.

We practice every Thursday, except for Stated Meetings, degree conferrals, OAM/SOIs, and holidays.

We start at 7:00 PM and go to 9:00 PM. if you cannot attend, please inform me and WM Gilbert Cruz, so we don't wait around for you to arrive.

And come prepared to work by knowing which degree we are learning and what your part is.

Speaking of degree conferrals, we may have a Second- or Third-Degree conferral this month. Witnessing a conferral is an excellent way of perfecting the ritual work of your current office and learning the work of your next one.

Helmuth Litfin, PM and Daniel Doornbos, PM;  
Officers Coaches

## The Reverend's Corner



Greetings Brethren, (Imagination/Awareness)

I want to cover the subjects of Imagination and Awareness this month.

Albert Einstein once said, "The true sign of intelligence is not knowledge but imagination."

Imagination is the action of forming new ideas or images or concepts of external objects that are not present to the senses.

The belief is that humans, created in God's image passes a capability for imagination that mirrors God's own creative power.

Remember God created us with imagination so that we have ways to visualize, think about, and discuss the invisible mysterious realities that are part of every moment of our lives.

So, with these thoughts in mind, we know there are times we look at our lives as it is and feel resigned to accept troubling conditions and unwelcome circumstances. When we feel this way don't we realize that we have forgotten our creative power as the spiritual beings we are? God gave us a divine gift of imagination and the means to claim the power of divine ideas. In prayer we can shape and form divine ideas. Our imagination is the gateway to the realization of our dreams.

When we are in the stillness of a quiet moment, we feel fully aware of God within and all around us. We are filled with love and peace. We feel our oneness with God. We relax and give thanks for our many blessings.

With this feeling we are able to create. We don't want to misuse our imagination to engage in worry or envision what could go wrong. Instead, we picture ourselves living the life of our highest imaging. We use our power of faith to believe that

all we can imagine can truly come into manifestation.

Through prayer we can deepen our awareness of God and through imagination carry that with us always.

With awareness we become aware of stressful situations and thoughts. We pause, breath, and focus on peace and the sacredness at the center of our being.

Let's become the being that God created to the fullest. Be awake and aware of love and His Divine presence. Be aware and create with imagination all we were meant to be.

### AFFIRMATIONS:

I use the power of imagination to create a joy-filled life.

My awareness of my oneness with God blesses me.

### FROM SACRED WRITINGS:

Genesis 1:26 – Let us make mankind in our image according to our likeness.

1 Corinthians 12:6 – And there are varieties of activities, but it is the same God who activated all of them in everyone.

God bless,

Reverend Gene

## The Secretary's Table



I've been working on three projects.

### 1. Master Mason Trowels

First is the trowel project. Starting with Covid-19 lockdown in 2020 and 2021, we stopped giving customized trowels to our new Master Masons. To correct this shortcoming, we compiled a list of the neglected candidates, ordered trowels, found a

capable engraver, and voted money to fund the project. Now I have 14 trowels waiting to meet their owners.



## 2. Child ID

Second is the Child ID project. Decades ago, the Grand Lodge of California began a project of taking a picture and recording the thumbprints of children. They gave parents an information form with a place to save a DNA sample (hair or fingernail) and to record information they would need in an emergency.



*Wor. Helmuth Litfin at our Child ID table.*

The program initially received generous support from the Brothers and was a big success. Unfortunately, the technology we have did not keep up with the times. There were no upgrades

available, and the Grand Lodge of California eventually dropped the project.

Friendship Lodge is one of the few in California that continued to support Child ID and provide services when asked.

Recently, we got in touch with the National Center for Missing & Exploited Children (NCMEC), Child Find of America, and the US Department of Justice to learn what they are doing and how best to work with local law enforcement.

It turns out that our Child ID system has become totally obsolete. The photos and thumbprints we take do not meet current standards and would be of little use in searching for a lost child. Furthermore, a parent whose child we IDed would return home with a false sense of security. Even if we do nothing else, we owe it to the parents and kids to retire our current Child ID system.

Right now, we are looking at our resources, measuring the level of interest, and seeking reasonable ways to update and continue our Child ID program.

There is plenty of literature, in print and online, to explain, prevent, and find missing children. Should we gather and distribute the printed literature? Or synthesize our own handouts?

We could offer to take a high-resolution photo of each child. That requires a hi-res camera and hi-res printer, plus a few accessories. Should the Lodge purchase those items?

If we upgraded our Child ID system, would our members be willing to participate?

## 3. Delinquent Dues

Third is the delinquent dues project. Dues are payable on the first day of the year.

We are focusing on members who have not paid their 2024 or 2025 dues. That means they owe \$230.00. Maybe they just forgot. Maybe they were forced to choose higher priorities.

I sent out notices to the Brothers who, according to our records, are two years behind in their dues. The procedure is explained in the California Masonic Code. Now, I'm waiting to hear back from them.

- If you are behind in your dues and have the money to pay them, now is the time.

- If you are behind in your dues and short on funds at this moment, please contact WM Gilbert Cruz and confidentially discuss a dues remission.



*WM Cruz awaits your call.*

- If you are behind in your dues and choose to do nothing about it, you are subject to being suspended for non-payment of dues (SNPD).

### **What is a dues remission?**

Every Mason takes an obligation support his Lodge. But no Mason should lose his good standing because he is short on funds to pay his dues.

Remission means you are relieved of the responsibility to pay your past and current dues.

When a member requests a dues remission, the Lodge's Charity Committee considers his situation and decides whether to grant the remission. The process is confidential. Nobody's name is reported to the lodge membership.

How many Friendship Lodge members receive a dues remission each year? Like we said, it's confidential. But the number is rarely zero.

### **What is good standing?**

When your dues have been paid or are remitted, you are a member of Friendship Lodge in good standing. That means you can attend meetings, vote on motions and applicants, take part in degree conferrals, visit other lodges, attend the Grand Lodge Annual Communication, request assistance from Masonic Outreach Services and apply for admission to the Masonic Home.

If you're not in good standing, what can you do? You may attend any activity open to the public, such as the annual picnic. But that's about it.

### **How does the Lodge benefit?**

Every Lodge in California is required to pay a per capita assessment of \$63.50 for each member on its roll. The money goes to the Grand Lodge of California to cover operational costs. But a Lodge is not required to pay per capita on members whose dues have been remitted.

### **Why is asking for a dues remission so hard?**

The process for requesting a dues remission is simple and confidential. And it benefits the individual member and the Lodge. However...

We all consider ourselves as capable, responsible men on whom others can depend. We provide for our families, work for a living, serve our country, and pay our taxes, even when they are too high.

We refuse to be lazy, irresponsible, or helpless. And we don't like asking for help. Like when we are lost, don't have a map, and the car's navigation system is broken. We might think that asking for remission of our dues would indicate laziness, irresponsibility, or helplessness. So, we just don't ask.

Guess what? Not asking makes things worse for everybody! A Masonic Lodge is more than just a social club. It is a fraternity of like-minded men, who take an obligation to aid one another, our families, widows, and orphans. Those are not meaningless phrases; we take them seriously. So, when the need arises, let's put our promise into action.

### **Questions and Complaints**

Let me clear up a few questions and complaints I have received during my tenure as Secretary:

- Lodges cannot remit future dues payments. The Lodge is required to verify annually that there is still a need for dues remission. So please don't be upset when we touch base with you again next year.

For example, a Brother who has been out-of-work might eventually land a good-paying job and resolve his financial issues. Now he can afford his dues.

Or a Brother who currently faces enormous medical bills may be able to persuade the insurance company to pay the benefits owed to him. With the medical bill paid off, he has money for dues.

- If you are admitted to the Masonic Home, you may request a dues remission based on the fact that you have met the financial requirements for living there.

But you still have to ask. And believe it or not, some of the Brothers living at the Home continue to pay dues to their Lodges.

- A few members have cited the “80/120 Rule” as grounds for dues remission.

The 80/120 Rule applies to Masons who are at least 80 years old, or whose years of age and years in Masonry add up to at least 120.

But the rule actually states that a Mason meeting either of those requirements cannot be suspended for non-payment of dues without a visit from his Lodge’s Member Retention Committee.

### **Life Membership**

Can you pay dues in advance? Yes, by purchasing a life membership. You pay a fee adopted by the Lodge, usually based on your age, and the Lodge votes to grant you a life membership. Then you no longer have to pay annual dues to that Lodge.

Note however, that the life membership is a contract between you and the Lodge of which you are a member. It does not apply to any other Lodge you may join or belong to.

You can demit from (drop your membership in) a Lodge in which you have a life membership. But there is no provision for taking that life membership with you to a different Lodge. Consider that money spent.

### **Ready to pay your dues?**

You can pay dues online through your iMember account. Note that iMember uses your credit card and charges a processing fee. Or,

Make your check out to Friendship Lodge No. 210

Dues for 2025 is \$116.50. If you missed paying in 2024, you owe \$230.00 for last year and this year.

You can hand your check to me in person. Or you can mail it to me at:

Daniel Doornbos  
2165 Carobwood Lane  
San Jose CA 95132-1213

Daniel Doornbos, PM, Secretary



## **May Birthdays**

5 – Mark Erni	22 – Marlito Romero
12 – Ken Ruyle, PM	25 – Larry Müller, PM
17 – Rajit Dang	26 – Keenan Mills, PM
19 – Ian Kennedy	28 – Kyle Burch

## **May Events**

### **May 1 — Stated Meeting**

Dinner, \$10.00 person. Inspector’s official visit.  
Dress: Coat and tie.

### **May 8 — 2<sup>nd</sup> Degree Practice**

We continue work on conferring the Second degree.  
JW Sean O’Hara gives Master’s Lecture. SD  
Ramón Manlapaz gives Middle Chamber Lecture.  
Dress: Casual

### **May 15 — 2<sup>nd</sup> Degree Practice**

We continue work on conferring the Second degree.  
JW Sean O’Hara gives Master’s Lecture. SD  
candidates for 2026 give Middle Chamber Lecture.  
Dress: Casual

### **May 21 — Officers Association**

SCVMOA meeting at Willow Glen Fraternity  
Lodge No. 399. Dinner at 6:30 PM. School of  
instruction at 7:30 PM covering First Section of the  
Third Degree. All lodge officers are required to  
attend. Dress: Casual.

### **May 22 — 3<sup>rd</sup> Degree Practice**

We will begin work on conferring the Third Degree.  
SW Andrew Litfin in the East for opening and  
obligation. WM Cruz gives Master’s Lecture. SD

Manlapaz, SS Dorje, and JS Jack Caceres learn the second section. Dress: Casual

## May 29 — 3<sup>rd</sup> Degree Practice

We will begin work on conferring the Third Degree. SW Andrew Litfin in the East for opening and obligation. WM Cruz gives Master's Lecture. SD Manlapaz, SS Dorje, and JS Jack Caceres learn the second section. Dress: Casual

## Mark your calendar:

On Saturday, August 30, 2025, Friendship Lodge will host the Division III Masonic Outreach Services meeting, at the San Jose Masonic Center. Breakfast is served at 9:30 AM. Come and learn more about the assistance available to all California Masons. Dress: Casual

## First Degrees for Brothers Colombo and Mar



*Front row l to r: WM Gilbert Cruz, PM; Louie Mar, Andrew Litfin, Freddy Colombo, Helmuth Litfin, PM; and Ramón Manlapaz.*

*Second row l to r: Chito Atienza, Don Gunaratne, Al Dorji, and Daniel Reyes.*

*Back row l to r: Jonathan Clemente, Daniel Doornbos, PM; Omar Martinez, Ed Avincula, Dan Chaid, Glo Fularon, Jack Caceres, and Carlos Bogotá.*

On April 10, Friendship Lodge was pleased and honored to initiate two new brothers, Freddy Colombo and Louie Mar. We look forward to working with them in the years to come and wish them well as they begin their Masonic journey.

## 2025 Officers

<u>Officers</u>	<u>Wives/Ladies</u>	
<b>Master</b>		
Gilbert Cruz	(Monette)	408-483-1964
<b>Senior Warden</b>		
Andrew Litfin	(Lauren)	408-832-5846
<b>Junior Warden</b>		
Sean O'Hara	(Savannah)	559-862-9372
<b>Treasurer</b>		
Kendall Mills, PM	(Janet)	408-281-4084
<b>Secretary</b>		
Daniel Doornbos, PM	(Gillian)	408-802-7480
<b>Chaplain</b>		
Daniel Reyes	(Rosa)	408-401-3596
<b>Senior Deacon</b>		
Helmuth Litfin, PM	(Evonne)	408-421-9381
<b>Junior Deacon</b>		
Dan Chaid	(Theresa)	408-393-8905
<b>Marshal</b>		
Ed Advincula		510-921-7136
<b>Senior Steward</b>		
Al Dorji	(Hakimeh)	408-313-4781
<b>Junior Steward</b>		
Jack Caceres	(Sorena)	669-388-1816
<b>Tiler</b>		
Omar Martinez		669-296-7720
<b>Organist</b>		
Chito Atienza	(Shirlita)	408-561-5850
<b>Prospect Manager</b>		
Don Gunaratne		518-335-1146
<b>Inspector 345th Masonic District</b>		
Dinesh Chhabra, PM	(Meenu)	908- 247-9288
<b>Officers Coaches</b>		
Daniel Doornbos, PM	(Gillian)	408-802-7480
Helmuth Litfin, PM	(Evonne)	408-421-9381

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**Website:** <https://friendship210.org/>