



THE FREEMASONS

Building Character, Family and Community

Although Freemasonry, as we know it today, was officially organized in England in 1717, it is founded on philosophical and moral principles which date back to Greece in the fourth century BCE. The primary goal was to provide an opportunity for like-minded people from all walks of life to come together for educational, spiritual and social sharing.

Today, Freemasonry is comprised of many thousands of lodges worldwide with several million members who are received as brothers wherever they go. However, the Order is not only for men but is very proud of its concordant bodies for women, boys and girls.

Freemasons have been thought of as a secretive society for many decades and this has been largely due to their modesty. They have not had active public relations programs, they do not recruit and they do not advertise their many charitable activities and programs. Beyond a few private words and signs of mutual recognition, they have no secrets. On the contrary, it is public knowledge that the Shriners, who are Freemasons, maintain nineteen specialty hospitals in North America which provide medical services to children without charge.

In addition to their many charitable activities, Freemasons advocate the strengthening of community through the development of individual character and support for the family.

New members participate in a three-part initiation ceremony which is drawn from ancient ritual practices designed to introduce a framework of ethics and spirituality to daily life. Through this experience most initiates begin to acquire new learning, discover new perspectives, perceive greater meaning and develop increased satisfaction with life.

Masonic lodges strive to provide fellowship, family socials and charitable programs. Opportunities are also available for personal development in the form of leadership, communication, diplomacy and motivation.

Complete information on Freemasonry is available through recent books, documentaries, video rentals and websites. To meet an Alberta Mason or enquire about Masonic speakers you may consult the telephone directory white pages under 'Masonic Order' or visit www.freemasons.ab.ca, or www.mwd.albertafreemasons.org.