

Concordant Bodies of Masonry by Chronicle Herald

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The fraternity of Freemasons is an organization made up of a number of branches to which its members can belong. The various branches operate as Lodges, Chapters, Councils, Preceptories, Conclaves, Priories, Colleges, Tabernacles or Consistories.

Freemasonry is open to men of all religions, one prerequisite being only that one must believe in the existence of a 'Supreme Being'. This being said however some of the Concordant Bodies are Christian in nature and require adherence to the Christian faith for admission.

The various branches or levels of the fraternity are administered by Grand bodies, for instance all Craft Lodges in Nova Scotia come under the Grand Lodge of Nova Scotia, all Chapters of Royal Arch Masons under the Grand Chapter of Royal Arch Masons of Nova Scotia and so on. Some Grand bodies cover individual provinces (or States in the USA), while others are national or international in structure. Generally speaking the fraternity is referred to as being a branch of either the York Rite or Scottish Rite.

All Masons enter the Freemasonry through a Craft Lodge where they go through the three symbolic degrees of Entered Apprentice, Fellowcraft and Master Mason to become a full fledged member of the fraternity. Many are content to practice their Masonry at this level and do not seek admission to any of the concordant or related, bodies. However, once a man becomes a Master Mason he becomes eligible for membership in other branches of the fraternity after meeting certain requirements. A member can apply to join some of these branches while in other cases admission is by invitation only.

Nomenclature ...

In most bodies of the fraternity members are addressed as Brothers while in some they are addressed as Companions, Fraters, Sir Knights, Knights, Knights Companion or Knight Priests. Male members of the Order of the Eastern Star are called Brothers while female members are addressed as Sisters. Members who have served as the presiding officer in a local unit and those who serve in positions of the overseeing Grand Bodies are permitted to add different prefixes before the term of address such as Worshipful Brother, Very Worshipful Brother, Right Worshipful Brother or Most Worshipful Brother, depending on the position they held.

The accompanying chart illustrates the various branches and the accompanying articles give some background on them and the names of individuals who presently preside over them.



Original URL: http://www.footstepsofthemasters.ca/cncdt_bodies.html

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