

# *Grand Commandery Knights Templar of Tennessee*



## **Tennessee Knight Templar News**

Sir Knight Robert B. Beam, KCT, Right Eminent Grand Commander

September A.D. 2023 / A.O. 905



The Most Worshipful Grand Master and the Right Eminent Grand Commander

# A Message from the Grand Commander

Sir Knights,

Inspections for this year have begun. During the month of September, we will be inspecting the Commanderies of Middle and West Tennessee. Some of you have noticed that the times are different this year; this allows our grand officers who live in East Tennessee time to travel home after the last inspection of the day, and it allows our Knights to spend Saturday evening with their families. I, along with my grand officers, appreciate the hospitality that has been shown to us so far, and I look forward to meeting each of you at your respective Commandery's inspection.



One new facet of the inspections is the presentation of the "Order of the Spur," a concept that I began this year. The Order of the Spur recognizes those Knights who work diligently in our Commanderies, simply because there is work to be done. The presentation consists of a certificate and lapel pin that may be worn on the sport coat; only a limited number will be presented. A list of the recipients will be published at a later date.

Also, during the inspections we are showcasing the new membership guidons that will be presented at the annual conclave. These guidons were discussed earlier by the membership committee, and I appreciate the hard work they put into this new program. We hope that the receiving Commanderies will proudly display these guidons in their asylum and that this will inspire other Commanderies to work hard in regard to membership.

In addition to the inspections, I am pleased to learn of so many individual knightings and conferrals of the Orders of Templary. Sir Knights, when we do our work on candidates individually, this strengthens the Commandery and helps make each new Knight feel more a part of the group. While we enjoy the camaraderie of being together during festivals, if that is the only time that we confer the orders, then we do our candidates a disservice. I, along with some of my officers, have been pleased to attend a few of these conferrals, and in talking to the new Knights afterward, I know how much they appreciate that opportunity.

Finally, please remember the resources available as a part of the Templar revitalization effort. The knight school program is well under way. Commanderies may hold educational, religious, civic and patriotic, or family programs in lieu of business meetings, provided they are properly documented. New Knights may take advantage of the provisional uniform until they are fully outfitted. Commanderies and groups of Knights may appear publicly in uniform for patriotic, civic, or religious activities. Commanderies are encouraged to hold fundraisers for our philanthropies of the Knights Templar Eye Foundation and Holy Land Pilgrimage. The goal is to strengthen Templary by making it more than just a monthly business meeting or "memorization club." Those Commanderies who have incorporated these ideas have found the results to be positive. As always, should you need anything, do not hesitate to reach out to me.

Robert B. Beam  
RE Grand Commander

# ***The Partially Neglected Doctrine***

Part 3 of 3

By

**Sir Knight Jesse Harper, KYCH**

Continued from the August 2023 issue.

My plea for every brother out there is to be intentional in the time you spend with your brothers. I know a number of us are busy outside the lodge, but we have to set aside time to connect with each other. Whether we arrive early or stay late after our meetings or even both, we have to spend quality leisure time together. What may seem like a trivial cup of coffee in the fellowship hall may be what distracts another brother from the stresses of the world. What may seem like common knowledge to you may be the tidbit of knowledge another brother has been searching to find. What may seem like nothing to you, may be everything to another brother. We are obligated to help, aid, and assist each other, and how that is achieved is different for every brother and for every situation. One thing is for certain though, if we do not reach each other on a deeper level, then our numbers will continue to dwindle away. We have to show each other that we sincerely and wholeheartedly care for one another.

This can be achieved in a number of different ways. If there is a Brother, Companion, or Sir Knight in your body you have not seen in some time, then reach out to him and see how he is doing. If you have a special event, service, or meal coming up, then invite these brothers to come. If you have members who are unable to get upstairs for your meeting, then at least invite them to come fellowship during the meal or service before the meeting starts. You never know what impact you are making by simply reaching out to your brothers. It is easy to skip meetings and become inactive when you think no one notices you aren't attending.

I would suggest contacting as many members every single month that you can. We have officers and membership committees for a reason. Utilize your leadership teams and committees. Divide your membership lists up and reach out to everyone. This could be a call, an email, or a text. I can also assure you that there are brothers out there who can't leave home but would cherish the opportunity for another brother to come visit them. Tell these brothers that you have been thinking about them, tell them that they are missed, tell them that you love them. Make it an intentional habit to tell your brothers you love them. I know that men do not commonly tell other men they love them, but one of the foundations of our fraternity is brotherly love, and it is time to get back to basics by embracing this doctrine.

# From the Grand Generalissimo

John L. Palmer, GCT

## Replacing Old Paradigms

Several years ago, I came across a new word to me, “paradigm.” A paradigm, to me, is a belief system which I use to make decisions. As an example, imagine that I am holding out in front of me a bowling ball and that I release it. My paradigm, and probably yours, is that the ball will fall to the ground. On the other hand, if my environment changed, and I was in the international space station at the time, my paradigm that the ball would fall would not serve me well. This tells us that paradigms are beliefs, but not necessarily unchangeable truths. The world is changing around us all the time. When I was young, the term “gay” described a person with a perpetual happy outlook on life, but today, the term means something radically different.

Paradigms are generally good and useful to us. They help us make day to day mundane decisions without having to spend too much time thinking about them. When things change around us though, an old reliable paradigm may no longer be true, and to rely on it might be harmful or at least not productive. Perhaps the accelerated rate of change in our world is the reason that the word paradigm has become so popular.

The paradigm I want to challenge today is the one that defines a “stated meeting” for most of us. The reason that I want to challenge this paradigm is that our younger members (and even old guys like me) are most often bored out of their minds by what we are calling and what we are doing in our monthly stated meetings, so they simply do not attend. After a while, they begin to ask themselves why they pay dues that will enable them to attend meetings and then don’t attend. Many demit from the order.

Templary is primarily about the “chivalric” experience. One who doesn’t meet with his brethren cannot really have that experience. Templary is not just entertainment. One is tempted to conclude that many of our Knights believe that the Commandery “sells” an entertaining initiatory experience for the price of the fees and that the dues are an annual charge we pay just in case we want to come back and observe that entertainment experience again.

Part of the reason that 90% of our Knights do not attend Commandery is that they have already tried the “mind numbing” experience that we currently call a stated meeting. Many of our Commanderies have tried to address this problem by minimizing the time spent at stated meetings in the following ways. First, they try to cut the stated meeting short by closing the meeting as soon as possible after opening it. Second, they meet on the same nights as the Chapter and Council in order to confine the pain of all three stated meetings to one night a month. Finally, they change their bylaws to reduce the number of stated meetings to six or fewer a year. Although these measures do mitigate the pain of attending a stated meeting, they do nothing to encourage the Knights to attend and endure this shorter but still excruciating experience of a “stated meeting.” More importantly, these solutions do nothing to enhance the chivalric experience.



Let me offer an alternative solution to the problem. Perhaps the world around us has changed and our paradigm of a “stated meeting” has not changed with it. Perhaps we should allot the time we devote to stated meetings to giving each other a true chivalric experience. In most of our Commanderies, our paradigm is that our state meeting consists of opening the Commandery ceremonially, reading the minutes of the previous meetings, receiving the reports of the Treasurer and committees, processing petitions for the orders, perhaps practicing for the upcoming inspection, and closing just as fast as we can. This is just a paradigm, not Templar Law.

The Grand Encampment requires that we have at least one tiled business meeting a quarter. I know of no Commandery who has so much business that it cannot be handled in four two hour meetings a year with time left over, provided that the Commander knows how to conduct a meeting. Assuming monthly stated meetings, this leaves us eight meetings or sixteen hours a year to provide our Knights with a worthwhile chivalric experience.

If you remove the “business” part of the stated meeting (Minutes, petitions, committee reports, etc.), then there is not a requirement that you spend the time to ceremonially open or close. So, if you don’t open and close and you don’t do the minutes etc., is it really a “stated meeting?” Yes! A stated meeting is defined as a meeting held at a time and place set forth in your bylaws. Business and ceremony are not required. It doesn’t even have to be tiled, and attendance need not be limited to Knights. What a change of paradigms! This allows us to implement all sorts of activities which our Knights might find chivalric and interesting.

So, what kind of things might we do with all this extra time to enhance our chivalric experience?

Here are a few suggestions:

1. Educational experiences
  - a. Conduct a “Knight School” and maybe even invite prospective members and everyone’s lady.
    - i. Have a meal first
    - ii. Wear uniforms
    - iii. Conduct three twenty minute sessions on Templar topics such as:
      - i. Ancient Templar history
      - ii. Uniforms
      - iii. Medals and decorations
      - iv. History of Knighthood
  - b. Invite a speaker to deliver a program on Knighthood or any other interesting topic
  - c. Show instructional videos on
    - i. Order conferrals
    - ii. Sword Handling
    - iii. Leadership
    - iv. Templar history
2. Fellowship programs
  - a. Commandery family picnics
  - b. Family movie nights
    - i. Popcorn and hot dogs
    - ii. Prizes for the kids

- iii. Show templar related movies
  - i. Indiana Jones and the Last Crusade
  - ii. Ivanhoe
  - iii. The Man who Would Be King
  - iv. National Treasure
- 3. Visit another Commandery as a group
- 4. Visit local museum exhibits which are related to the chivalric experience
- 5. Practice conferring the orders to enhance the candidate's experience

If you are currently an officer in your Commandery and you think it is time for a paradigm change on the concept of stated meetings, bring this up at your next business meeting and see if your Commandery is ready to adopt some of these changes.

If you are one of our Knights who no longer attends Commandery stated meetings because of this old paradigm, and if you think a change would interest you in becoming active again, contact an officer in your Commandery and offer to help implement the adoption of a new paradigm.

If you need help, call or text me at (615) 504-3355 or email me at [john.pgm97@gmail.com](mailto:john.pgm97@gmail.com).

John L. Palmer, Grand Generalissimo

# Request for Submissions!

Sir Knights - We need submissions for the *Tennessee Knight Templar News*. Is your Commandery going to confer any of the orders soon? Did you have some sort of unusual or fun event?

Send us an article to share with the other Tennessee Knights and include photos if you have them.

We would also like to have your thoughts and ideas about how we can make Tennessee Templary more fun and exciting. Send us an article!

Please send news and events going on in your Commandery to:

**[KTNews.GCTN@yahoo.com](mailto:KTNews.GCTN@yahoo.com)**

# Commandery Inspections 2023

Date	Time	Commandery	Location
Friday, September 15	7pm CST	Cumberland 26	Cookeville
Saturday, September 16	10am CST	Nashville 1	Donelson
	3pm CST	Baldwin 7	Lebanon
Friday, September 22	7pm CST	Clarksville 8	Clarksville
Saturday, September 23	10am CST	Dickson 41	Dickson
	3pm CST	DePayens 11	Franklin
Friday, September 29	7pm CST	Park Ave 31 Rosemark 39	Memphis
Saturday, September 30	10am CST	Jackson 13 Union City 29 Lexington 36	Jackson
	3pm CST	Paris 16	Paris
Friday, October 13	7pm EST	Kingsport 33 St. Omer 19	Kingsport
Saturday, October 14	10am EST	Carter 37 Greeneville 43	Elizabethton
	3pm EST	Watauga 25	Johnson City
Friday, October 27	7pm EST	Cyprus 23	Maryville
Saturday, October 28	10am EST	Chevalier 21 Campbell Co. 44	Oak Ridge
	3pm EST	Coeur de Lion 9 (Homecoming)	Knoxville

\*\* All Saturday Inspections will be at 10am and 3pm, breakfast/lunch at 9am/2pm local time

## Mission

**The mission of the Grand Commandery Knights Templar of Tennessee is to provide every Christian Freemason in Tennessee the opportunity and resources to develop, be engaged in, and exemplify a Christian chivalric lifestyle.**

## A New Kind of Stated Meeting

On August 13<sup>th</sup>, DePayens Commandery in Franklin tried an experiment with a different kind of stated meeting. The Grand Commander graciously granted dispensation for them to move their monthly stated meeting to the Asylum of Baldwin Commandery in Lebanon. Baldwin was conferring an Order of the Temple that evening. Beginning with a fraternal meal at 6PM, the work proceeded, and a most enjoyable fraternal visit was had by all. The Knights of Baldwin wore their class "A" uniforms, and most of the Knights from DePayens were wearing their caps and mantles, so no assistance was asked for or given in the conduct of the ceremony.

The Knights of Baldwin did an extraordinarily good job on the conferral, and the Knights from DePayens had plenty of their Knights present to count this as their August stated meeting. Their monthly business was deferred to the September stated meeting.

The hospitality shown by Baldwin Commandery was unsurpassed, and everyone had a wonderful time visiting with their brethren. Your Commandery ought to try this sometime. We recommend it!

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## Find Us Online!

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[Grand Commandery of Tennessee, @tn\\_commandery](#)



[Grand Commandery Knights Templar of Tennessee | Facebook](#)



Submissions - [KTNews.GCTN@yahoo.com](mailto:KTNews.GCTN@yahoo.com)

**The Knights of the Grand Commandry of Tennessee are a group of men who share the Christian faith, chivalric character, selfless service, dedication to excellence, and a desire to share the chivalric experience with other Christian Freemasons. Our Knights are actively engaged with one another in accomplishing this goal and maintaining this lifestyle and behavior.**



# Inspections 2023



Athens



Lookout



Cyrene