

Tiling Our Temple



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As the Lodge prepares to begin its proceedings, it must be properly tiled. In Masonic usage, to tile a Lodge means to guard its entrance and ensure that only those duly qualified to attend are admitted. This preserves the privacy of the meeting and creates the proper conditions for Masonic work.

The Tyler, or Outer Guard, watches outside, while the Inner Guard attends to the door from within. Their complementary duties help ensure that admission is properly conducted and that the Lodge is ready to proceed.

Beyond this practical duty, tiling invites symbolic reflection. The Tyler guards the Lodge entrance, while each Brother is reminded to examine what he brings across the threshold. In some Masonic jurisdictions, people who have not been initiated are referred to as the profane. This term describes their status in relation to the Craft; it is not a judgment of their character.

This symbolism may also lead us to examine ourselves. Though initiated, we may carry into the Lodge, often without noticing, attitudes shaped by life outside it: careless speech, vanity, prejudice, impatience, or self-interest. In this reflection, a profane attitude refers not to a person's status, but to habits of mind that remain unexamined or out of harmony with our Masonic principles. The Tyler's watchfulness can remind us to enter with discretion, humility, and respect—and to keep working on those habits beyond the Lodge as well.

The Masonic symbols, allegories, and ceremonies belong to a shared framework of teachings, conveyed through the ritual and explanations of the degrees. Personal reflection can deepen our engagement with those teachings, but should build upon their established meanings rather than replace or disregard them. Through attentive participation and study, we may develop our Masonic understanding and reflect more deeply on the spiritual ideas conveyed through material symbols.

The Temple may also be understood as a representation of our inner life. Its preparation and guarding remind us of the discernment and self-discipline required for inner growth. Although our meetings take place in privacy, our responsibility extends beyond the Lodge. We are called to let the principles we study there guide our conduct in the wider world and to use our collective wisdom in the service of humanity, in homage to the Great Architect of the Universe.

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Unity Lodge #710

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