

June 2026

Introduction:

Companions, I wish to thank each one of you for your attendance here this evening. It is great to see such a turn out, and your support is greatly appreciated.

First and foremost, I want to acknowledge each and every one of you for your dedication, enthusiasm and hard work throughout the year. You are all a credit to Freemasonry in general and Royal Arch Masonry in particular. You continue to strive to improve your capabilities in Ritual, your charity contributions and workload behind the scenes and your benevolence to your fellow human beings. All fundamental attributes when being a Freemason.

Health and Wellbeing:

Companions, Health and Wellbeing remains a priority and creating a positive environment is essential. Experiencing good mental and physical health allows us to cope better with stressful situations and make more meaningful contributions. District Chapter and Provincial Grand Lodge continue to work together building on opportunities and providing appropriate support. I am pleased to inform you that the range of our collaboration has been extended to The Provincial Grand Lodge of Antrim, The District Grand Chapter of Antrim and The Grand Council of Knight Masons. All are now represented on the Health and Wellbeing committee, along with the support of PPSU and PPEU. To date this has been a tremendous success with the extended committee hosting a talk by Dr Harry Wray on the subject of "Below the Belt" on the 12 May. What a wonderful night it was, with 150 people in attendance, and may I say, not all masons. It was educational, interesting and informative. The best thanks must go to R. Ex. Comp Dr Harry Wray for the very professional, and at times witty, manner of his presentation.

The Health and Wellbeing Committee will be hosting an event before the Supreme Grand Chapter Convocation which is being held on Wednesday 16th September 2026, in the Mourne Country Hotel, Newry from 11.00hrs to 13.00hrs. This event is open to all, Masons, non-masons, family and friends. Several events including health checks, dealing with loneliness, hearing checks, skin mapping, Care NI and guidance from the Department of Finance, have been organised.

The Health and Well Being committee decided to focus on certain particular needs of the Brethren, their families and friends over the past year, and to this effect, are continuing to concentrate on Healthy eating and Nutrition. Such has been the interest that a further four have been booked (two in Down and two in Antrim) in September and October. We are indebted to Catherine Culbert for her professional insight, knowledge and suggestions for our improved health and well being. Companions, last but not least, the committee have organised an event on Ladies Health, on the 22 September 2026 in La Mon Hotel and County Club for our wives, partners, daughters, mothers and family friends. The main speaker on the evening will be Professor Kienan Savage, Queens University, a cancer specialist, and it will commence at 19.30. So please Companions, keep supporting and encouraging others to attend these events when published. Once again, I thank the Chairman, R. Ex. Comp Gerry Fleming and his Committee, for their sterling and unrelenting work in trying to improve all our lives.

Certificate of Recognition:

Supreme Grand Chapter finished writing the guidelines for the Certificate of Recognition process which will include a Companion's eligibility criteria over a year ago.

By setting eligibility criteria for all recognised certificates, (Registrar, Treasurer, Director of Ceremonies, Almoner, Chaplin), it is crucial to recognise Companions loyalty and commitment throughout the years. It is important to send a message to Companions that they are valued and recognised at the highest level within Supreme Grand Chapter. I am glad to say that we in District have been receiving and processing applications, and I am glad to say that none have been turned down. Although I would remind those filling in the applications to put as much information in them as possible. I must remind you that this Certificate is not for those who have already received honours in either Supreme Grand Chapter or District Grand Chapter.

Nomination of Officers for 2026/27:

The nomination of officers for 2026/27 has been read out by the Registrar. They will hopefully be elected in September and installed in December 2026 at La Mon Hotel. I would personally like to thank the Regional Inspection Committees for their work during the process of the nominations. This has been the first time the round robin system has been implemented within the whole of

the District Grand Chapter, and any teething problems have been successfully smoothed out.

Myself, as The District Grand King has four nominations every two years, and it is my intention to name my appointments in September also.

Next Convocation:

The next District Grand Chapter convocation will be on the Wednesday 3rd September 2026 in Newforge Country Club, Belfast at 19.30hrs. This will be hosted by Friendship RAC 447 who are celebrating their 140th Anniversary. If there is any other Chapter who are celebrating a special occasion and wish to host District Chapter please do not hesitate to contact the office.

On Sunday the 14th June, Millisle Morning Star ML 193 will be hosting a Church Service to commemorate their Bi-Centenary in Millisle and Ballycopeland Presbyterian Church at 3.00 pm. I appeal to each and every one of you, but more especially, if you are a present or past District officer, Ex King, High Priest or Chief Scribe, to make a special effort to attend.

District Grand Chapter of Down is hosting Supreme Grand Chapter on Wednesday 16th September 2026 in the Mourne Country Hotel Newry. As previously mentioned, before the convocation there will be the Health and Wellbeing event from 11.00hrs – 13.00hrs.

The December Convocation will be our bi-annual Installation meeting, which as in previous years, will be held in The La Mon Hotel on Saturday 5th December. There will be a lunch held prior to the meeting. Chapter's will be notified well in advance.

Companions, two vacancies have arose for Foreign Representation to the Grand Chapters of Belguim and Oregon. I would like to publicly thank M. Ex Comp David Hanna and M. Ex Comp Robert Cupples for carrying out their duties in an exemplary manner. It gives me the greatest of pleasure to recommend V. Ex Comp Adrian McQuillan and V. Ex. Comp Alan Woods to these posts.

It is also my intention Companions, to bestow the Rank of Honorary Past District Grand Superintendent of the Tabernacle on Ex Comp David Selby, PGM designate at our September Convocation in Newforge. I was contemplating giving him a working post, but I think you will agree, he might be a little bit busy.

Lastly, Companions, I thank you for your attendance and attention this evening and wish you and your families a pleasant and enjoyable summer.

As is now customary, I leave you with a Quote:

“The attitude you bring to the day is what the day will bring to you. Great attitude, great day.”

May the Supreme King of Heaven and Earth Bless each and every one of you.

Have a safe journey home.