



## **Christmas Message from the Provincial Grand Master for Somerset**

Brethren,

Thank you to all who attend the Christmas Carol service last Wednesday at Wells Cathedral. The nave was full and it was great to see so many of you there enjoying the service despite the bitter cold outside. Thank you to Roger Allen, Mike Greedy and all who helped organise the service and those who took part. On your behalf I was pleased to be able to welcome the Mayor and Mayoress of Wells and the Deputy Lieutenant of Somerset who all enjoyed the evening with us. It is an example of our involvement in the community, we can't exist in isolation, our communities are our source of new members.

Having emerged from the pandemic we are now faced with the double whammy of big rises in energy and food prices. This hits hardest at the less fortunate in our communities. Many of you are aware of that and I have been staggered by the number of Lodges and Chapters that are giving very generous help to food banks. It is a great example of Freemasonry at its best and your actions make me proud to be able to say that I am a Freemason.

These are exciting times for Freemasonry, last week the new Pro Grand Master, M.W.Bro Jonathan Spence, launched the new UGLE/SGC strategy for the next five years. Two major objectives are to increase the membership of the Craft by 1% a year within three years and to increase that figure to 2% within five years. The other objective is to bring the Craft and the Royal Arch closer together, so that their operation is seamless. We all have our part to play in achieving those objectives, I look forward to working with you to be able to do so.

I am pleased to announce that at the Provincial meeting in April I will be appointing Colin Martin of St Cecilia Lodge as my Senior Warden and Ian Evans of Rural Philanthropic Lodge as my Junior Warden. Both are experienced Masons and the appointments are well deserved. I look forward to working with them and I am sure you will all wish them well in their new roles and give them your full support.

Christmas Day will soon be here, time to relax and enjoy the company of family and friends. We've had Christmas Lodge meetings and the regalia is back in the case ready for a new year. As we look forward to Christmas in the comfort of our homes, let us not forget those who can't enjoy that privilege this Christmas. The millions in Ukraine without enough food or reliable heating and those closer to home who will also struggle to put food on the table and heat their homes. We think of them all and offer our hope for a better future.

Brethren and Companions I wish you and your families a Happy Christmas and I look forward to what I hope will be a Healthy New Year for us all.

Ray Guthrie  
Provincial Grand Master Grand  
Superintendent.

