



# NUGGET

## Regular Lodge

**Summary:** An exploration of the phrases, *'Duly constituted, regularly assembled and properly dedicated'*.

**Regular:** We use the word *regular* with a variety of meanings; regular soldier, regular bus service, regular guy being typical examples. That said, it is worth pondering over such words might have meant in the 18<sup>th</sup> century when our degrees were being written. During those years, the word *regular* possessed a legal and very precise meaning, *'Regularly assembled and properly dedicated'* says one; *'Regularly held, assembled and properly dedicated'* cautions a second; *'Duly constituted, regularly assembled, and properly dedicated'* proclaims another. All key phrases from obligations to which we have all at some time assented. However, did we really understand quite what we were repeating and why it was necessary to confirm it? Let us look at each in turn.

**Duly Constituted:** Our Book of Constitutions (Rule 97) requires that every new Lodge shall be solemnly constituted according to ancient usage by the Grand Master, or a suitable deputy; customarily our Provincial Grand Master or his representative. The Consecrating Officer concludes the Consecration ceremony with the words: *'I constitute and form you, my good Brethren, into a Lodge of Antient, Free and Accepted Masons under the name of the [...] Lodge No [...]'*. From that moment, the Lodge become a duly constituted Lodge entitled to hold funds, initiate new members and undertake appropriate Degree ceremonies, as laid down within the Book of Constitutions.

**Regularly Assembled:** A Lodge is made 'Regular' by the seal of the United Grand Lodge of England on its Warrant; which must always be displayed during a normal ceremony. A Lodge is *'regularly assembled'* when it meets both at a date and place prescribed in its By-laws and, importantly, also enjoys a quorum. The Book of Constitutions shies away from defining the number in a quorum, but in the *Procedures in Lodge* section of *Information for the Guidance of Members of the Craft*, issued by the Board of General Purposes of Grand Lodge sets out to help. In answer to the question *'How many Bretheren must be present before a Lodge can be opened or a degree worked?'*, it states:

*'Five (excluding the Tyler and the candidate for the degree in question): Two must be members of the Lodge and one an Installed Master. (see Rule 119, The Book of Constitutions)'*

*'How many Bretheren must be present before a Lodge can be opened or a degree worked?'*

*'Three (excluding the Master Elect and the Tyler).'*

**Properly Dedicated:** Returning to the Consecration Ceremony, any Lodge is dedicated, *'To God and His service ... and also to the memory of the Royal Solomon'*. Candidates and Lodge members are thereby also dedicated to the service of God, and to living according to the moral values set out within the relevant Volume of Sacred Law. While of the deepest significance to each Mason during his Obligation, they remain a commitment both to the Candidate and to his new Brethren expressed by their continuing encouragement and support.



## Recommended use of Nuggets

Nuggets offer a short, simple and readily absorbed means of progressing Masonic knowledge and an easy way to introduce learning to Lodges and Chapters. It is hoped that they will become a regular feature of Lodge and Chapter meetings as well as a source for private-study.

Nuggets can be included as an item in the summons and read at most Lodge/Chapter meetings.

They can be:

- Read by either a new or an experienced Mason with the minimum of preparation and practice; though ideally, they need to be read a few times beforehand.
- Themed with the meeting or activity.
- Used to initiate a discussion within a Lodge/Chapter, LOI/COI, or group.
- Read at home and shared as a topic for a future discussion.
- Used as a focus for an unplanned, informal discussion.

\*Note: All biblical passages are taken from the Authorized King James version unless otherwise specified.

For further papers and other learning materials visit *Solomon* at <http://solomon.ugle.org.uk>

## Acknowledgement:

UGLE gratefully acknowledges Michael Lee as the author of this document, and for his permission to publish it in this form.

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