



**Most Illustrious Charles F. Williams
Grand Council of Royal & Select Masters
Jurisdiction of Tennessee
Prince Hall Affiliate**
P O Box 280251 Nashville TN 37228

Charles F. Williams Grand Council History

The Grand Council of Illinois under the leadership of Grand Thrice Illustrious Master Charles Jones introduced these Degrees to the Jurisdiction of Tennessee in April 27, 1996. At that time, there were over one hundred and eleven (111) Royal Arch Companions receiving the degrees, it was noted as one of the largest mass degree Greetings in history. With the guidance of Illinois Grand Council for two years, Tennessee was Chartered a Grand Council on April 3, 1998 and recognized as a concordant grand body by Grand Master William E. Blevins Sr. This acknowledgement validated the Grand Charter of “The Most Illustrious Charles F. Williams Grand Council” thereby, recognizing it as the only Prince Hall Grand Council of Royal & Select Masons to operate in the Jurisdiction of Tennessee.

Since that time the Charles F. Williams Grand Council has had the opportunity to assist in the guidance and establishment of three (3) Grand Councils, Washington State in February 1999, Mississippi April 13, 2007 and Texas September 24, 2016.

The council degrees are largely an elaboration and explanation of the Royal Arch Degree and to a lesser extent, the Master Mason degree. The degrees of the council of Royal and Select Masters are necessary to fully complete the education of Ancient Craft Masonry. The degrees of our Masonic system are not chronologically arranged and in the degrees of Royal and Select Master, which many believe, are the most beautiful and impressive of all, offers additional incidents in the building of the first temple. During these degrees the representation of the Master Builder, Hiram Abiff, we learn why the work was lost and the secret of its preservation and recovery. The first council degree, the Royal Master, develops more fully the story of recovery of the "lost" word and the Holy of Holies of the Temple of King Solomon. The Royal Master degree further explains the Master Mason degree by telling of a Fellowcraft, a workman in the quarries, who in true humility asked, “Grand Master Hiram Abiff, when do I receive the Master's Word?” After patiently listening to the explanation of why he may never receive it, he returns to his place in the quarries.



The last degree is that of Super Excellent Master, and tells the story of the Babylonian Captivity, and of Zedekiah and his deceit. Council Masonry is also referred to as “Cryptic Masonry” in allusion to the continuance of the vault, or crypt. Although the Super Excellent Master degree has no connection with Ancient Craft Masonry, rather it is a vivid dramatization of truth and fidelity that becomes impressionable to those participating.

The degrees of Royal and Select Masters were introduced into this country in approximately 1783 in Charleston, S.C and placed under control for conferring degrees by the Council of Princes of Jerusalem. In various states and at various times in their history, the two degrees have been under various authorities and those authorities were responsible for the conferring of the degrees. They have been under the jurisdiction of Grand Councils, Grand Chapters of Holy Royal Arch Masons and Supreme Councils of the Thirty Third Degree A.A.S.R., which in the early days of this degree, participants made a pledge of allegiance to the Supreme Council of A.A.S.R. was taken while conferring the degrees. However, once most states established their own Grand Councils, the pledge was dropped.

Today, the Cryptic degrees are considered to be the eighth, ninth and tenth degree of the York Rite ladder. The gathering is referred to as a Council of Royal and Select Masters, which business and two degree work are performed, and candidates are said to be greeted. On the grand level of the state the gathering is called a grand Greeting.

The Grand Thrice Illustrious Masters of Tennessee and their accomplishments

1998-2004 Willie I Tabors

- First Grand Thrice Illustrious Master
- Established nine (9) subordinate councils in TN
- Established the first Melchizedek Day celebration and banquet
- Granted Grand Charter for three (3) councils in Washington State 1999
- Granted Warrant of U D to five (5) to the state of Mississippi Councils
- Granted the Chartering of the Bernice H. Stevens Ladies of the Circle of Perfection (LOCOP) Royal Grand Perfect Matron Linda Reddick
- Began revisions to Royal and Select ritual 2004

2004-2010 Rev. Adlai Coffee

- Second Grand Thrice Illustrious Master
- Granted Grand Chartering to state of Mississippi five (5) subordinate councils in TN 2006
- Revised ritual completion 2008



- Hosted the General Conference of Grand Councils in Nashville TN May 2010

2011-2013 Raymond H. Washington

- Third Grand Thrice Illustrious Master
- Contributed first Community Toys for Tots financial support
- Constitution revision to new format 2012
- Promoted Health Awareness committee and lectures to Grand Assembly 2012
- Granted Permission for women to receive LOCOP degrees without male counterpart strength 2011
- Granted Warrant U D to Brownsville Council 2013 with 10 members
- Establish lapel pins and cuff links for fund raiser 2012

2013- 2017 Rev. Kenneth E. Brown

- Fourth Grand Thrice Illustrious Master
- Issue Warrant U D to Brownsville Council #9 May 5, 2013 11 members
- Granted Warrant U D A. M. Webb Council #10 Clarksville TN June 7, 2013 with 11 members
- Re-affiliate Julian Bell #6 council June 8, 2013 with 17 members
- Granted Warrant U D to James E. Poe #11 Sharon TN July 13, 2013 with 13 members
- Re-affiliate Alton W. Patton #3 council in Chattanooga TN July 13, 2013 with 30 members, which grew to 61 members in the following month.
- Granted Warrant U D Benjamin L. Hooks Council #13 Memphis TN December 14, 2013 with 15 members
- Establish the Ish Sodi Award August 2, 2013
- Establish the Past Grand Thrice Illustrious Master Jewel August 2, 2013
- Restructure the business financial infrastructure with voucher and fiscal annual budget report
- Establish the copyright symbol with lecture to the meaning of the Charles F. Williams Grand Council Grand emblem September 2013
- Scratch and Save fund raiser for foundation funding October 2013
- Established a non-profit Foundation with 501 (c) (3) filing February 2014
- Super Excellent ritual revision and edict to perform degree in the district and offer the purchase of SE ritual. Before this no rituals were given to recipients to study or use September 2013.
- Chartered Brownsville council #9 A. M. Webb council #10 and James E. Poe Council #11 Sharon TN April 2014



- Giblimes Foundation Contribute \$500 to MWPHGL of TN Scholarship August 2014
- Constitution amendments to include recognition of the Grand Court of the LOCOP and additional elected and appointed officers. April 2015 Revised Past Thrice Illustrious Master degree November 2015
- Revision to include recognition of the LOCOP April 2015
- Chartered seven (7) councils in the jurisdiction of Texas under Tennessee September 26, 2015
- U D Warrant Liberia October 11, 2015
- U D Warrant Perfection Council in Rosenberg TX
- U D Warrant L O Raynor El Paso TX
- Chartered L O Raynor El Paso TX 6-8-16
- Held the largest attendance at the 18th Grand Assembly with 123 present from DC, GA TX, KY and FL
- Establish the purple blazers and white pants and shoes as part of the Royal and Select attire April 12, 2016
- Giblimes Foundation gift \$3,000.00 May 26, 2016 to the Sickle Cell Foundation Summer camp for kids affected by Sickle Cell
- Passed Resolution to change workshop and grand assemble to reflect other York Rite bodies annual business session July 29, 2016.
- Acknowledged in the Tennessee Prince Hall Constitution August 2016
- Acknowledged by the Austin W. Williams Constitution July 30, 2016 whereby members who are already Knights of Templar could get the cryptic degree with no charge; and future York Rite journeymen must receive the degrees before becoming Knights of Templar
- Contributed \$500.00 to the Most Worshipful Prince Hall Grand Lodge establishing the Giblimes Scholarship August 2, 2016
- Chartered the jurisdiction of Texas as a Grand Council with 9 councils and granted to Bernice H Stevenson LOCOP Grand Court U D Warrant for four (4) Ladies Circle of Perfection Courts September 24, 2016.
- U D Warrant Payne-Scott Council in Hartsville TN December 17, 2016
- Granted to Bernice H Stevenson LOCOP Grand Court the Chartering of Seven (7) Texas LOCOP Courts March 17, 2017
- Held first workshop alignment with the Royal Arch and Knights Temple to complete the York Rite weekend March 17, 2017
- Giblimes Foundation gift \$1,500.00 March 17, 2017 to St. Jude for Sickle Cell research and development



- Giblymites Foundation gift \$500.00 June 12, 2017 to the Sickle Cell Foundation Summer camp for kids affected by Sickle Cell
- Giblymites Foundation gift \$325.00 June 26, 2017 to the Sports My Choice Camp of Tallahassee Florida
- Contributed \$500.00 to the Most Worshipful Prince Hall Grand Lodge for the Giblymites Scholarship July 25, 2017
- Granted permission to Bernice H Stevenson LOCOP Grand Court for the Grand Chartering of Texas LOCOP Grand Court under the authority of Texas Grand Council
- Constitution amendments to correct and/or placement of diction, spellings, Grand Assembly and to align some articles with the Tennessee code and Constitution

2017- 2018 Marlon T. Pate Sr.

- Elected as the 5th MIGTIM July 21, 2017
- Established a Joint Memorial service at the 2018 York Rite workshop weekend April 2018
- 2018 General Conference of Grand Councils Tennessee ranked second of nineteen Grand Council jurisdictions in philanthropic and community services.

2018 – 2021 Archie Fowler

- Elected as the 6th MIGTIM July 27, 2018
- July 27, 2018 Charted Payne-Scot #14 in Hartsville, TN
- July 27, 2018 CFWGC gave \$500 donation to Arvin W. Glass Foundation
- September 12th-15, 2018 Attended GA York Rite
- September 15, 2018 Attended Prince All Americanism Day in Birmingham, AL as a guest of MWGM Corey Hawkins
- September 29, 2018 attended Memphis Royal and Select District meeting and made edits while they performed Super Excellent Degree work
- January 18th-20th, 2019 attended the Southeast Conference of Grand Master in Jacksonville, FL
- February 1st and 2nd 2019 Attended Texas York Rite and given HPMIGTIM by MIGTIM Troy Cousin
- May 2nd-4th, 2019 Attended GGC of Grand Councils and Convent General in Greenville, SC
- June 25th-29th attended GEKT in Ft. Worth, TX
- July 26th- 31st attended Grand Sessions for the state of TN
- July 26, 2019 Re-elected at MIGTIM



- July 26, 2019 CFWGC gave \$500 donation to Arvin W. Glass Foundation
- July 26, 2019 increased taxes from \$3 per member per year to \$9 as voted on by the body
- July 26, 2019 granted Collierville Court permission to meet in Memphis
- September 14, 2019 attended heads of houses meeting in Memphis, TN
- January 2020 assembled committee to make updates to Super Excellent Degree Ritual
- October 2020 Authorized printing of the updated rituals
- Dues card updated to plastic cards February 2020

- Commissioned the new design of the Royal and Select purple jacket
- June 2021 Appointed Dr. Willie Agee, III as District Deputy of Middle TN
- February 2020 attended KY York Rite workshop
- April 2021 attended session for the GL of FL
- May 2021 granted UD status to Columbia to form a Council
- June 2021 Granted request to allow Clarence Crockett #8 (Murfreesboro, TN to reactivate)
- 2020 Changed Surety Bond vendor

2021 – Present Andre Kemp

Elected as the 7th MIGTIM July 30, 2021

- July 2021 Bestowed emeritus status on the 6th MIGTIM
- July 2021 Vacated Jurisdictional Deputy position and recommended 6th MIGTIM to that role to the GGCMIGTIM Frederick Joyner and the recommendation was approved
- August 2021 Commissioned acquisition of all ritualistic furnishings for the Grand Council

