**To the Worshipful Master and Brethren of Temple lodge, the District Chairmen, and all the visitors, thank you for making this a special evening.**

**Home is where the heart grows fondest, where things are best known and emotions heartfelt. Home is where you can be your true self, where you are supported for all that you are, both good and bad. Home is where you know you are home and most at ease. I thank the brethren of Temple Lodge for all the support, guidance and love they have provided me over the years. I hope that I am living up to the faith they placed in me to represent them and Hamilton Masonic District ‘C’.**

**My masonic home and heart is here in this Craft Lodge, and I am learning that it also includes the Brethren of the 13 Lodges throughout the District. I have been overwhelmed with the support and encouragement received from the members and you should know that this** is an honour that is not taken lightly. One which makes me to be a worthy representative of you all.

**Our time here on earth is finite. The 24 inch Gauge enables us to compute the time and effort for all of our activities. To my compadres in arms, R.W. Bro Mike Kirk and R.W. Bro Tom Young, W.Bro. Christoff, members of Wardrope Lodge, other visitors and my Temple Lodge Brethren, thank you for spending some precious and irreplaceable time away from family and other commitments to be here with me. Your presence is greatly appreciated, and humbling.**

**Tonight is also a time for reflection…Nov 11th, Remembrance Day.**

**John Diefenbaker said that “**I am a Canadian, free to speak without fear, free to worship in my own way, free to stand for what I think right, free to oppose what I believe wrong, or free to choose those who shall govern my country. This heritage of freedom I pledge to uphold for myself and all mankind.”

I am part of a fortunate generation, in that I have never had to face an enemy demanding that I surrender these freedoms, nor feel concern about my thoughts, or faith. November 11th, a chance to pause and consider the veterans of many wars, and the people who stayed home, making sacrifices to preserve our traditions and way of life. This past month two soldiers, Corporal Nathan Cirillo and Warrant Officer Patrice Vincent were slain not for who they were, but for the uniform they wore and what it represents. Their deaths sparked a unification amongst Canadians that reflected our common beliefs. To me that unification underlined and reinforced the bond we all have as brothers in Masonry.

In November we participate in Lodge memorials of those who have served and passed along to the Grand Lodge above. Let us forever cherish them in our hearts, and continue the challenge to preserve our values and privileges within Canada. Remembrance Day presents a time for reflection on what we owe to others for our current state. But also provides an opportunity to consider how each of us can give back for the favours we have already received.

Every one of us belongs to an organization that predates Canada, our Country was shaped by the Masonic leaders prior to its founding. Our current and past members shape and define what matters within our borders, and ultimately contribute to what matters in our hearts. Each member present needs to consider those who have preceded them. Is it your time to take a turn at the wheel, leading, supporting or mentoring within your Lodge? A great line from Flanders Fields that has always resonated with me….” ***To you, from failing hands, we throw, the torch: be yours to hold it high”*** The founders of our Lodges have passed that torch to the current generation. And it is good to see the brethren in each District Lodge working together to smoothly carry on our tradition and keep the torch light alive.

I encourage every Brother to consider the challenge and take up a role, no matter how small, in the management and progression of your Lodge. Attend the meetings, be part of the planning and add your voice to the chorus of members working in harmony to create something unique and personal. It has been said and I firmly believe that the more you put into the Lodge, the more you get out of it.

As Brothers we need to show up and be present in our Lodges. To greet each other, especially the newer brethren. To take a part, maintain our ethics and integrity, volunteer for a committee, and make the personal commitment to raise the torch high; and help light the way for current and future generations.

Visit! Get Involved! and as per R.W. Frank Fordham’s comments from earlier this evening “practice outside the Lodge those excellent precepts that are taught inside the Lodge.”