

# United Grand Lodge of England

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The Most Reverend and Rt. Hon. Archbishop of Canterbury  
Lambeth Palace  
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Dear Archbishop

I write in response to the reports in The Independent newspaper of your views on Freemasonry.

According to the reports:

- a) you have doubts on the compatibility of Freemasonry with Christianity and believe that elements of the ritual may have a Satanic basis
- b) you believe Freemasonry to be both a secret society and a self-serving network
- c) you have in the past not appointed to sensitive senior posts candidates who are Freemasons and intend to continue that practice.

For nearly 300 years Freemasonry has existed in an organised way in England and Wales. During that period hundreds of thousands of committed Christians (clergy and laity) have found no incompatibility between their Christian faith and the principles and practices of Freemasonry. Indeed many have testified that their membership of Freemasonry has strengthened their faith and, in some cases, brought them back into active church membership.

The prime and inalienable qualification for admission into Freemasonry is a belief in God. An individual's religion is a matter for his conscience, and Freemasonry will not interfere in or in any way comment on religious matters. As a result our membership encompasses Christians of all denominations, Jews, Muslims, Hindus, Sikhs, etc., who meet together in harmony, knowing that their religions differ but not allowing those differences to come between them on Masonic occasions.

The suggestion that Freemasonry is “Satanically inspired” in its rituals would be risible were it not for the fact that it questions the basis of the faiths of over 300,000 Freemasons under the United Grand Lodge of England, whatever their religion may be. Even a small amount of elementary research would have shown how nonsensical this dreadful assertion is, and would have enabled you to avoid giving deep and gratuitous offence to so many who are encouraged in every form of Freemasonry to be true to their God above all other considerations.

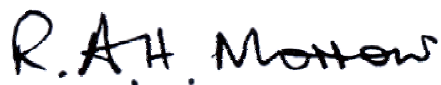
As for the claim that Freemasonry is a “secret organisation”, it must surely be a very peculiar “secret” society which makes its rules and aims available to the public; publishes annual lists of its national and local leaders together with the dates and places of meeting of all of its units; opens its national headquarters to the general public on a daily basis; maintains national and local web sites on the Internet; gives regular briefings to the media; and provides spokesmen to speak anywhere about its nature and activities. Each Freemason is at perfect liberty to tell whomsoever he pleases that he is a Freemason. Indeed Freemasonry is one of the few organisations to have been specifically declared not to be a secret society. In July 2001 the European Court of Human Rights ruled that (a) Freemasonry was neither a secret, criminal nor an illegal organisation, and (b) that in making appointments or promotions it is illegal to discriminate against a candidate simply because he is a Freemason.

Rather than being a self-serving network, the opposite is true. On at least six occasions during the process of becoming a Freemason the new member is told that it is contrary to our principles and rules to use his membership to gain any form of advantage for himself or anyone else. Any attempt to do so will result in disciplinary proceedings, with sanctions running from admonition to irrevocable expulsion.

I have enclosed two booklets and some leaflets which explain the background to Freemasonry and how it relates to society in general. The booklet "*Your Questions Answered*" deals in particular with the myths which surround Freemasonry.

I also extend to you an invitation to meet privately with some senior Freemasons to discuss at the true source any doubts you may have, in preference to simply putting your faith in secondary and unreliable information. Your three immediate predecessors each came here for lunch and found it an interesting, stimulating and enjoyable experience. I realise that you have much to consider at the present, and that it may not be convenient to accept this invitation immediately. I trust that you will permit me to write to you again after your Enthronement to reaffirm our wish to welcome you here and show that your doubts about Freemasonry have no justification in fact.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "R. A. H. Morrow". The letters are written in a cursive, slightly slanted style.

R A H Morrow  
Grand Secretary