

# St. John's Lodge No. 9, F. & A. M.

## Trestleboard



Serving Seattle since 1860

January 2024

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## FROM THE EAST

[Eric Koteles](#), Master



Eric Koteles  
Master

Brethren,

This January marks not just the beginning of another year but a continuation of our enduring legacy. The work we have undertaken to enhance the Masonic experience reflects our commitment to the principles that have guided us for over a century and a half – brotherly love, relief, and truth.

Our efforts to improve the Lodge experience have not gone unnoticed. Improving in our ritual work, educational programs, and the strengthening of our community outreach initiatives are commendable. These

endeavors not only honor our past but also ensure that our values and teachings remain relevant and impactful in today's world.

The dedication each of you has shown in upholding our traditions while embracing change is a testament to the strength and unity of our brotherhood. Your unwavering commitment helps in forging a path that future generations of Masons will proudly follow.

As we move forward, let us remember the words of our Masonic forefathers, who believed in building a better world through personal development, community service, and mutual respect. Let us continue to support each other, our community, and the timeless values that Masonry represents.

In closing, I encourage each of you to participate actively in our upcoming events and to extend a hand of fellowship to our newer members, guiding them in their Masonic journey. Together, let us make this year a shining example of what we can achieve through unity, dedication, and a shared vision.

Fraternally,  
WM. Eric Koteles

## CALENDAR



- January 6 (6pm): Master Mason degree rehearsal
- January 8 (7:30pm): Eureka Lodge 20
- January 11 (6pm): Officers meeting Zoom
- January 15: Martin Luther King Day
- January 17 (6:15pm) 7:30pm: St. John's 9 (dinner) Stated
- January 20 (10am): Daylight Lodge 232
- January 23: Esoterika 316
- January 26 (6pm): Master Mason Degree followed by dinner
- February 1 (7:30pm): Greenwood Lodge 253
- February 6 (7pm): Education & Fellowship Night Zoom
- February 8 (7:30pm): Queen Anne Lodge 242
- February 11: Super Bowl LVIII
- February 14: St. Valentine's Day
- February 14 (6pm): Board of Trustees
- February 15 (6pm): Officers meeting Zoom
- February 21 (6:15pm) 7:30pm: St. John's 9 (dinner) Stated
- February 22 (7:30pm): Walter F. Meier Lodge 281
- February 24 (10am): Quarterly Meeting Masonic Service Bureau



# MOVING TO A NEW YEAR . . . IDEAL OF A FREEMASON

If you see a man who quietly and modestly moves in the sphere of his life; who, without blemish, fulfils his duty as a man, a husband and a father; who is pious without hypocrisy, benevolent without ostentation, and aids his fellowman without self-interest; whose heart beats warm for friendship, whose serene mind is open for licensed pleasures, who in vicissitudes does not despair, nor in fortune will be presumptuous, and who will be resolute in the hour of danger;

The man who is free from superstition and free from infidelity; who in nature sees the finger of the Eternal Master; who feels and adores the higher destination of man; to whom faith, hope and charity are not mere words without any meaning; to whom property, nay even life, is not too dear for the protection of innocence and virtue, and for the defense of truth;

The man who towards himself is a severe judge, but who is tolerant with the debilities of his neighbor; who endeavors to oppose errors without arrogance, and to promote intelligence without impatience; who properly understands how to estimate and employ his means; who honors virtue though it may be in the most humble garment, and who does not favor vice though it be clad in purple; and who administers justice to merit whether dwelling in palaces or cottages.

The man who, without courting applause, is loved by all noble-minded men, respected by his superiors and revered by his subordinates; the man who never proclaims what he has done, can do, or will do, but where need is, will lay hold with dispassionate courage, circumspect resolution, indefatigable exertion and a rare power of mind, and who will not cease until he has accomplished his work, and then, without pretension, will retire into the multitude because he did the good act, not for himself, but for the cause of good!

If you, my Brethren meet such a man, you will see the personification of brotherly love, relief, and truth; and you will have found the ideal of a Freemason.

*Excerpted from "The History of Freemasonry" by Otto Klotz, The Canadian Craftsman, March 15, 1868. M.W. Bro. Otto Klotz was an honorary Past Grand Master of the Grand Lodge of Canada in the Province of Ontario.*

**Please make your dinner reservations with the secretary at 206 623-0261 by Friday, January 12,** prior to the meeting. If you



need a ride, the secretary will be happy to find one for you. Do you know of a brother who has not attended Lodge in a while? Call him and ask if you can pick him up and bring him to Lodge.



A Freemason strives to move from a rough ashlar toward a more perfect ashlar

## Master Mason Degree re-Scheduled for January

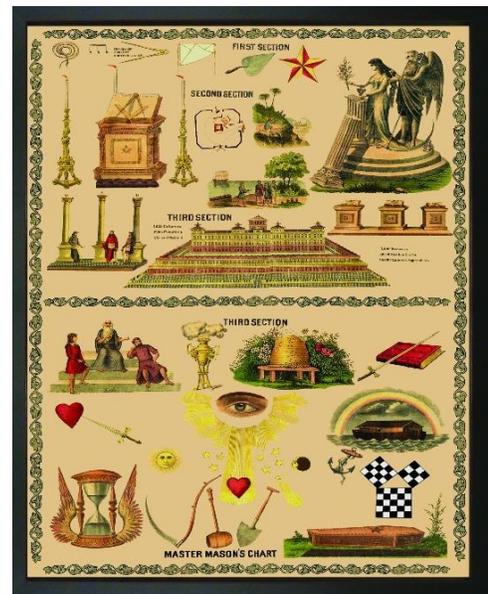
Fellowcraft Bro. Louis Turner will be Raised a Master Mason next month, at the Greenwood Masonic Center. Initially scheduled for early December, it has tentatively been re-scheduled for Friday, January 26.

Every active member of St. John's is expected to take a role in performance of this degree. All speaking roles have been assigned, but those who have not yet volunteered for a part in the degree should contact [WBro. Russ Johnson](#), Master of Ceremonies.

Bro. Louis Turner has dedicated a substantial effort to his Masonic studies, and it's only fitting that we put forth the same level of commitment to make his degree ceremony truly special.

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## FROM THE WEST

[WBro. John Murray Louderback](#)



The Grand Lodge Military and Veterans Service Committee, of which I am a member, with the assistance and approval of Grand Master Steve Martin and Deputy Grand Master Jimmy Norton, have designed and developed a Washington State Masonic Pin honoring Washington State military veterans that have answered the call of duty and service to our country. The Washington State Masonic veterans pin with certificate will be awarded to all honorably discharged veterans.

If you are a veteran, please indicate that on the Grand View Website and also inform your Lodge Secretary.

## Freemason's Chess

Freemason's Chess or Masonic Lodge Chess is a chess variant inspired by the symbols and themes of Freemasonry, a fraternal organization that traces its origins to the local fraternities of stonemasons during the 14th century. The game uses a standard chessboard and chess pieces but incorporates Masonic symbolism in the design of the pieces and the rules of the game. In Masonic Chess, the pieces are often designed to resemble various Masonic symbols, such as the compass, square, trowel, level, and plumb rule, among others. This not only adds a unique aesthetic to the game but also serves to foster a greater



understanding and appreciation of Freemasonry among its players.

The rules of Masonic Chess are generally the same as those of traditional chess, but some variations may introduce specific Masonic themes or

principles. For example, some versions may include a "master builder" piece that moves differently from other pieces or has special abilities, reflecting the importance of the master builder within the Masonic tradition.

It is important to note that Masonic Chess is not an official or universally recognized variant within Freemasonry itself; rather, it is a creative adaptation of the game of chess that incorporates Masonic themes and symbolism.

It is enjoyed by both Freemasons and non-Freemasons alike, as it combines the strategic and intellectual challenges of chess with the rich history and symbolism of Freemasonry.

## FROM THE SOUTH

[WBro. David Flood](#)



## RISING

The entered apprentice degree shares with us the hope and the dream of rising to live a strong and balanced life. It challenges us to set our intention to climb Jacob's ladder. The degree provides us with the working tools and ideas to do so. Each of the symbols revealed to us contains a potential, a power. It is up to us with the support of our brothers to shape that potential into a rung on our ladder. So doing we shall rise.

The ladder is made up of steps. In Jacob's dream they are already there but that can be misleading. Our personal ladder doesn't have any rungs. We have to create and shape them first. You can begin by putting your foot upon whichever step you need the most.

The founders of Freemasonry took the "theological ladder" of medieval and renaissance thinkers and combined it with the powerful image of Jacob's ladder. So as an entered apprentice you are given - as food for thought and tools to work with - the four cardinal virtues of Plato and Aristotle: temperance, justice, prudence, and fortitude, and the three virtues of the New Testament: faith, hope and charity

So, our task is to develop fortitude, to master the art of prudence, to work at opening our hearts to give and receive love thus tempering our drives and emotions, and to practice justice. Such a life will embody love, faith, and hope. Your brothers are there to guide and support you, but only you can fashion each rung and then rise upon the ladder.

It is not for nothing that the act of making a new Master Mason is called Raising. It raises us not to some perfection but to a new starting point. In front of us stands a ladder. Will you choose to rise and climb that ladder?

## MASTER MASONS RAISED IN JANUARY

### *Date Raised:*

1/17/1984 Aaron D. Holt  
1/25/1984 Ian S. Webb  
1/11/1989 James R. Maher  
1/27/1996 Mark W. Shropshire  
1/25/1997 Terry A. Grove  
1/29/2000 Bernard G. Yperman  
1/11/2007 David G. Long  
1/8/2009 Jonathan D. Munday  
1/8/2009 Aren Hakobyan



IT'S TIME TO RENEW  
YOUR MEMBERSHIP!

## ABOUT CATHOLICISM, FREEMASONRY, THE POPE AND HOW THINGS REALLY ARE

Under the headline “Vatican Confirms Ban on Catholics Becoming Freemasons,” an undated article in MASONICFIND.com devotes five (5) short paragraphs to its topic of there being a ban. It is followed by many pages of trivia and one-sentence statements which have nothing to do with it. No authorship is claimed. Several Masonic Lodges and publications may have re-printed this article. Here is one reply.

At issue is the Vatican document “Note for the Audience With the Holy Father 13 November 2023.” It is marked “*Ex Audientia*” of even date and is counter-signed by Franciscus, i.e., the Pope. The “Nota” is the minutes of a meeting with the Holy Father and an official of the “Dicastery for the Faith,” a Vatican department. On Nov. 15, translations of this “Nota”, also in English, were available on the website [vaticanews.va](http://vaticanews.va). Readers can see there what the Note looks like and reads.

Specifically, the Dicastery states: “To address this issue appropriately, it was decided that the Dicastery would respond by involving the Catholic Bishops’ Conference of the Philippines itself, notifying the Conference that it would be necessary to put in place a coordinated strategy among the individual Bishops that envisions two approaches: (a) on the doctrinal level, ... the “Declaration on Masonic Associations” [1983] ...” is mentioned. Subsequently Church Law has been changed radically. Since Nov. 27, 1983, i.e. For 40 years now, Catholics may become Freemasons without religious sanction.

Among other things, MASONICFIND.com stated that “the Dicastery ... issued its opinion, ...”

No. this was not the case. No opinion or order issued. The Pope did not ban anybody or anything anywhere

Voluminous verbiage does not cover up MASONICFIND’s glaring lack of evidence. There is no substantive, legal or other value to be found in its article.

Brothers interested in the topic should read the comprehensive and fact-filled “Loge und Altar” (Lodge and Altar) by Michael H. Weninger and fill gaps in their knowledge.

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## JANUARY BIRTHDAY CELEBRANTS

Day

- 1 Mark A. Lentz
- 2 Scott A. Pence
- 4 Egil J. Pedersen
- 5 Stephen F. Weiss
- 8 Charles R. Brockway
- 11 James F. Russell
- 11 Richard ‘Ric’ Delarose
- 14 Storrs L. “Skip” Albertson
- 18 Alex A. Skistimas
- 28 Craig R. Messett
- 29 Bernard B. Gordon



## 2024 Annual Membership Fees Due

Notices for 2024 annual dues were sent to all dues-owing members of St. John’s in October and December. Don’t forget that we no longer issue plastic cards. The new electronic dues cards will not work unless you have paid your dues for the current year. Unless I slipped up, those whose dues payments were received have also received acknowledgement and a copy of their 2024 dues “card.” You can access your own dues card on Grand View to print or use electronically on your phone. A quick scan by the Tyler of your printed QR Code will show whether or not you are current for the year.



New Masonic Code regulations require all voting in Lodge be restricted to those who are current effective January 1, 2024.

***In St. John’s, dues increase by \$5 each month for overdue payment beginning January 2024.***

Members may pay their dues by cash, check, Certificates of Masonic Labor, or a combination of these. Certificates of Labor (now valued at \$30 each) are issued at each stated or special communication (degree or officer installation).

Payment by PayPal is available. St. John’s does not have a PayPal account. If you can pay no other way, you can do so through our Treasurer’s personal account (his email is [jrmaher@comcast.net](mailto:jrmaher@comcast.net)).

## St. John’s Approves Funding for Washington Educator of the Year as a Noble Project

 A proposal that St. John’s Lodge help fund a Grand Lodge endowment and program under the auspices of Masonic Services to assure that an Educator of the Year is annually recognized in Washington State was approved at last month’s stated communication..

The Washington Masonic Services, as a successor of the Grand Lodge Scholarship Committee, awarded both scholarships for students in Washington AND recognized and awarded an outstanding teacher in Washington State the “Educator of the Year” award. However, for a number of reasons, this Award has not been granted for the past few years,

Michelle Adamson Heeb a teacher for 31+ years at Puyallup High School was awarded Educator of the Year in 2018. Michelle was a St. John’s Scholarship Winner. She impressed the Scholarship Committee with her passion for education.

The cost of endowing a \$500 annual award is \$10,000. The John Adamson and Heeb families are able to contribute \$5,000. The St. John’s contribution will help to assure the needed endowment.

# Let's LOOK AT THAT A LITTLE CLOSER

*The future of Freemasonry in the age of AI and the Metaverse will depend on its ability to adapt to technological advancements while upholding its core principles and values. By leveraging technology to create new opportunities for growth and engagement and addressing contemporary ethical challenges, Freemasonry can continue to remain relevant and influential in the digital era.*



## Freemasonry in the Age of AI and the Metaverse (Exploring Future Impact)

by Masonic Find

As technology continues to advance at a rapid pace, the emergence of artificial intelligence (AI) and the metaverse is causing many to consider the implications for various aspects of society, including the future of Freemasonry.

Freemasonry, a centuries-old fraternal organization, is known for its rituals, symbolism, and focus on self-improvement and brotherhood.

With the development of the metaverse and the increasing role of AI in our lives, Freemasonry faces new opportunities and challenges in maintaining its traditions and values in a digital age.

In this article, we delve into the fascinating topic of Freemasonry in the Age of AI and the Metaverse, exploring the potential impact of these groundbreaking technologies on the ancient fraternity.

NB: This article is not intended to provide a right-or-wrong approach to this debate. We merely aim to state the facts and the possibilities.

**The Freemasons' Community:** A first-of-its-kind online community for those looking to learn more about the mysteries of Freemasonry in the company of like-minded men.

### Freemasonry in the Age of AI

As technology advances, particularly in the realms of artificial intelligence (AI) and the metaverse, Freemasonry is also evolving to embrace these innovations.

This section explores the impact of AI on Freemasonic traditions and its influence on education and communication.

### AI Impact on Freemasonic Traditions

Artificial intelligence has the potential to significantly transform the way we conduct our ceremonies and rituals.

Rather than replace the human touch entirely, AI can be implemented to support and enhance these traditional activities.

For instance, AI-powered tools can help create immersive experiences during meetings and ceremonies, enabling us to participate more effectively and feel more connected with our brethren, even when being physically apart.

Another potential impact is the use of AI algorithms to help maintain members' adherence to the tenets of Freemasonry.

By analyzing Lodges' activities and interactions, AI technology can provide insights into areas of improvement and help keep member behavior aligned with the core values of the organization.

### AI Influence on Freemasonic Education and Communication

Freemasonry places great importance on the education of its members, and the integration of AI in this aspect could facilitate more effective learning experiences.

AI-driven personalized learning plans can help tailor educational materials to individual needs, allowing members to expand their knowledge at their own pace while also promoting continuous improvement across the fraternity.

Moreover, new methods of communication are emerging with the rise of the metaverse and AI-driven platforms.

This could lead to new possibilities, such as virtual Lodges or immersive educational resources that help brethren better understand the symbolism and teachings associated with the craft.

Additionally, utilizing AI-powered chatbots and virtual assistants could enhance member interaction, offering reminders and assistance, or even facilitating discussions between Lodges around the world.

### Freemasonry in the Metaverse



The advent of the metaverse presents new opportunities for our longstanding organization to expand its reach, promote education, and foster global collaboration.

In this section, we will explore three key aspects of Freemasonry within the metaverse:

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St. John's and the Trestleboard editor disclaim any `endorsement of the suggestions contained in this article. It is published to stimulate thought and discussion purposes only.

### **Virtual Masonic Meetings**

Traditional in-person Masonic meetings have provided a space for members to connect, learn, and share ideas for centuries.

Now, with the rise of the metaverse, virtual Masonic meetings become not only possible but also more accessible.

These meetings can take place in immersive 3D environments, allowing members to interact and engage in meaningful ways without physical proximity limitations.

### **Digital Preservation of Masonic Heritage**

The rich history and symbolism of Freemasonry can be preserved and disseminated more effectively through the metaverse.

By digitizing important landmarks, artifacts, and texts, the organization can ensure that its heritage is accessible to future generations.

Furthermore, creating digital collections and immersive experiences can encourage greater interest in Freemasonry and its teachings, particularly among younger generations who are more familiar with this emerging technology.

### **Global Connectivity and Collaboration**

The metaverse provides a platform for Freemasons worldwide to converse, share ideas, and collaborate on projects.

Through global connectivity, the organization can foster a sense of unity among its members, transcending geographical barriers and cultural differences.

As Freemasonry evolves in the metaverse, it can leverage this increased interconnectedness to promote and spread its core values of honor and giving among a wider audience.

This is also what we're trying to achieve inside the Freemasons Community.

### **Challenges and Opportunities**

#### **Ensuring Privacy and Security**

As Freemasonry explores the possibilities of integrating AI and the Metaverse into its practices, maintaining privacy and security becomes a paramount concern.

The sensitive, quasi-secret nature of information in Freemasonry necessitates the implementation of robust data protection measures.

In the age of AI, cybersecurity threats evolve rapidly, and we must invest in state-of-the-art technology and adopt best practices to safeguard our digital assets, as well as our members' personal information.

#### **Adapting Rituals to New Technologies**

Freemasonry is steeped in ritual and tradition that we know.

Introducing AI and the Metaverse presents a unique opportunity to modernize these rituals while preserving their core values.

Virtual Lodges and ceremonies can enable members to participate in meetings and events globally.

This presents Freemasonry with the challenge of adapting its rituals to new technologies while ensuring that critical aspects and symbolism remain intact.

Digital platforms and AI can enhance member engagement, provide innovative learning experiences, and expand the reach of Freemasonry to potential new members.

AI-driven analysis can help identify areas in the rituals that may need to be revised or updated to suit the new digital landscape, and can also contribute to the ongoing research and understanding of Freemasonry's history and development.

### **Embracing Change While Maintaining Traditions**

While it is essential for Freemasonry to adapt and evolve with the advancements in AI and the Metaverse, it must do so, in my opinion, without compromising its traditions and values.

Balancing innovation with the preservation of centuries-old practices will be a challenge but also an opportunity for Freemasonry to demonstrate its resilience and adaptability.

By mindfully integrating AI and the Metaverse, Freemasonry can leverage technology to more effectively communicate key teachings, foster personal growth, and create a more immersive and interactive experience for the members.

This will ultimately strengthen the bonds of brotherhood and help to ensure Freemasonry's relevance and success in the digital age.

### **The Future of Freemasonry**



#### **Potential for Growth in the Digital Era**

As technology continues to evolve, Freemasonry has the potential to grow and adapt in the digital era.

One possibility is the integration of Freemasonry into the Metaverse, creating a more immersive and intense experience for members.

This can provide an opportunity for members to connect and engage with each other in new ways, as well as attract potential members who might have a deeper interest in virtual environments and technology.

#### **Maintaining Human Connection**

Despite the increasing reliance on technology, it is crucial for Freemasonry to maintain and prioritize human connections.

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The core values of Freemasonry, such as fellowship and mutual support, stem from cultivating strong interpersonal relationships.

Establishing a balance between embracing technology and nurturing human bonds will remain a key challenge for us in the future.

**Role of Freemasonry in AI Ethics and Responsibility**

As artificial intelligence continues to dominate various aspects of our lives, questions regarding ethics and responsibility arise.

Freemasonry, being an organization rooted in moral values and ethical principles, has the potential to contribute significantly to discussions regarding the ethical use of AI.

By promoting responsible AI development and usage, Freemasonry can uphold its timeless ideals and play a vital role in shaping our collective future.

**In conclusion**, the future of Freemasonry in the age of AI and the Metaverse will depend on its ability to adapt to technological advancements while upholding its core principles and values.

By leveraging technology to create new opportunities for growth and engagement and addressing contemporary ethical challenges, Freemasonry can continue to remain relevant and influential in the digital era.

**Invitation to visit Finland September 2024**

Our Honorary Past Master VWBro. Pekka Granroth of Finland writes: “Being a member of St. John’s 9 Lodge and having such great memories of your hospitality, and



WB Pekka Granroth, horary Past Master of St. John's Lodge No. 9

as a master of Savo14 Lodge year 2024, I invite you to visit my Lodge and at the same time participate in the 100-year festivities of the Finnish Grand Lodge

The program (described on the next page) is just an example for you to understand what your visit might include, so any changes are (and most likely will be) possible.

Helsinki – the

capital of Finland

Kuopio – my hometown some 250 miles north-east of Helsinki (middle of Lake District)

Turku – south-western Finland, ferries to Sweden

The dates are as they are based on the centenary program of Finnish Grand Lodge

**-Wednesday/Thursday September 4/5;** flight Seattle-Helsinki (price typically \$700-900, today even a direct flight operated by Finnair, price was today 730€, about the same in dollars, 1€ = \$1,1)

**-Friday September 6;** Studia Masonica Centenary Lecture (history of Finnish Freemasonry) , Sibelius ritual music presentation

**-Saturday September 7;** centenary festivities (gala dinner if wanted, otherwise drive to Savonlinna by Russian border), local Lodge officers, ancient castle, lake district

**-Sunday September 8;** drive to Kuopio, local summer cabin, sauna

**-Monday September 9,** visit Kuopio, attend Coffee Lodge

**-Tuesday/Wednesday September 10/11;** Lodge meetings, degree work, visit Kuopio

**-Thursday September 12** drive via Sompala masonic camp site to Helsinki/Turku

Two options available; leave from Helsinki OR ferry to Sweden and leave from Stockholm

**-Friday September 13** flight Helsinki - Seattle OR

**-Friday September 13** ferry daytime Turku – Stockholm (Sweden)

**-Saturday September 14** flight Stockholm - Seattle

Accommodation in Helsinki, f.ex. Hotel Crowne Plaza Helsinki-Hesperia 174€/double room

Accommodation in Kuopio, f.ex. Hotel ship Wuoksi 70-100€/double room

Possible transportation (minibus 9 people) about 1000€ / week, otherwise, train (fastest, most comfortable)

More information about the Grand Lodge events can be found [Freemasons.fi/100](https://freemasons.fi/100) (password FIN100)

WM Eric Koteles is aware of this invitation and can provide more information on how to proceed as a Lodge group if that will be an option. Otherwise, directly contact Bro. Pekka [Pekka.Granroth@gmail.com](mailto:Pekka.Granroth@gmail.com)



**LODGE OF SORROW**

**Brothers who have passed in 2023**



Joseph L. Bennett	Arthur P. Jentoft	Paul A. Smith
Born 12/31/30	Born 9/23/27	Born 10/12/38
Raised 11/18/86	Raised 4/30/49	Raised 12/30/64
Died 3/15/23	Died 3/30/23	Died 4/10/23
John Lilyengren	James C. Shields	Don G. Lyman
Born 3/5/29	Born 12/31/44	Born 12/26/40
Raised 10/3/51	Raised 6/25/66	Raised 10/28/71
Died 4/17/23	Died 4/18/23	Died 9/27/23