



Build Loyalty Through Ceremony

Transform Moments into Meaningful Member Bonds

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ASSOCIATIONS WEST
SEASONAL SPECTACULAR 2025

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What is a ceremony?



The moment a new member signs your charter or oath



A recurring toast, phrase, or gesture at events



Giving a symbolic object (coin, pin, journal) to members



Annual storytelling, milestones, or recognition ceremonies



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Do not edit
How to change the
design



What was the moment you felt like a real member?

 The Slido app must be installed on every computer you're presenting from 

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Case Study: The Masons of California



The use of initiation, tokens, and language to create lifelong connection



Material culture (e.g., aprons, Bibles, engraved trowel) reinforces values



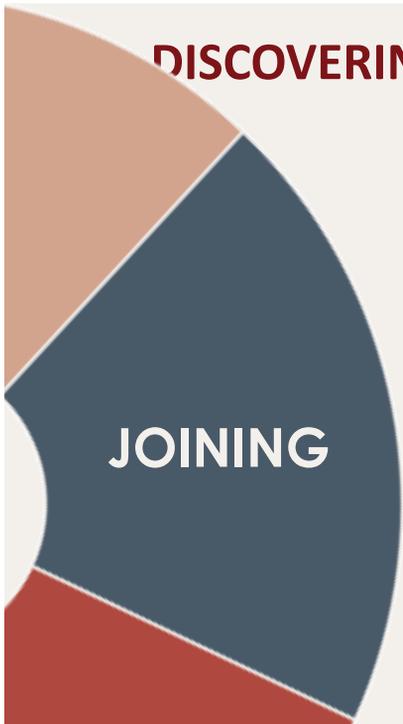
The experience of joining matters more than the benefits



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Discovering your association's hidden ceremonies

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DISCOVERING YOUR ASSOCIATION'S HIDDEN CEREMONIES

-  Orientation
-  Welcome gift
-  Oath



Masons of California

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DISCOVERING YOUR ASSOCIATION'S HIDDEN CEREMONIES

GATHERING



Annual meeting



pre-event toast



shared song



Masons
of California

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DISCOVERING YOUR ASSOCIATION'S HIDDEN CEREMONIES

RECOGNIZING



AWARDS



ANNIVERSARIES



LEADER
TRANSITIONS



Masons
of California

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DISCOVERING YOUR ASSOCIATION'S HIDDEN CEREMONIES



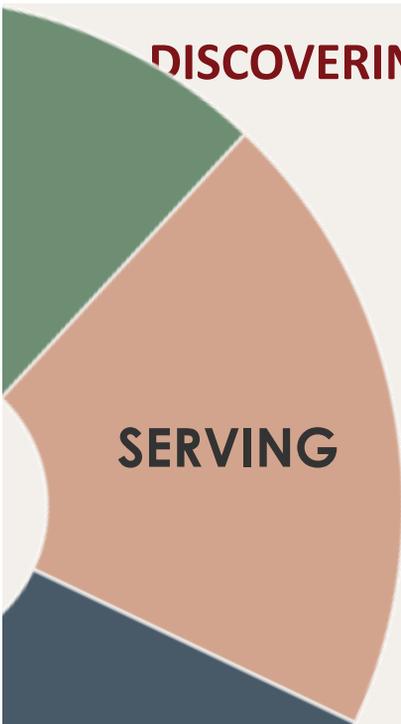
REMEMBERING

-  Memorials
-  Retirements
-  founder tributes



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DISCOVERING YOUR ASSOCIATION'S HIDDEN CEREMONIES



SERVING

-  VOLUNTEER INITIATION
-  MENTORING
-  GIVING BACK



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DISCOVERING YOUR ASSOCIATION’S HIDDEN CEREMONIES

 *Partner exercise*



Identify one existing ceremony in your association.



Ask: What emotion does it create? What story does it tell?



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DISCOVERING YOUR ASSOCIATION’S HIDDEN CEREMONIES

Purpose	Example	Why It Works
Joining	"First 100 Days" pin mailed after onboarding	Physical marker of progress and pride
Gathering	Annual "Member Toast" at conference closing	Creates shared language and tradition
Recognizing	Members sign a symbolic ledger or banner	Marks belonging in a visible way
Remembering	Members write one intention for the year ahead	Encourages reflection and continuity
Serving	Passing on a book, token, or letter	Creates legacy between generations

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Designing a new or enhanced ceremony

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The Formula

Ceremony = Symbol + Action + Story

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THE FORMULA

				
	PIN	KEY	TOKEN	CANDLE

SYMBOL

ACTION A tangible or visual object
that carries meaning

STORY

 **Masons
of California**

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THE FORMULA

SYMBOL



PIN



KEY



TOKEN



CANDLE

ACTION



PRESENTING AN OBJECT



RAISING A GLASS



LIGHTING A FLAME

STORY

A repeated behavior or gesture that marks the moment

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THE FORMULA

SYMBOL



PIN



KEY



TOKEN



CANDLE

ACTION



PRESENTING AN OBJECT



RAISING A GLASS



LIGHTING A FLAME

STORY



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THE FORMULA

SYMBOL



PIN

KEY

TOKEN

CANDLE

ACTION



PRESENTING AN OBJECT

RAISING A GLASS

LIGHTING A FLAME

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THE FORMULA

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PRESENTING AN OBJECT

RAISING A GLASS

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STORY



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Designing a new or enhanced ceremony



New member
welcome kit



annual toast



recognition
ceremony

Ceremony =

Symbol + Action + Story

The best ceremonies are **repeatable**,
simple, and **emotionally resonant**,
 not expensive or elaborate.



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Designing a new or enhanced ceremony



New member
welcome kit



annual toast



recognition
ceremony

What member moment are you designing for?

(e.g., onboarding, recognition, renewal)

What emotion do you want to evoke?

What core value does it represent?

What symbol can be used to represent that core value?

What story connects it to your mission?

What symbolic action or token could embody it?

When and how often will it occur?

Who leads or facilitates it?

How will you tell or reinforce the story afterward?

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Your Turn: Share What Works



Turn to someone near you and share:



Your new or
enhanced
ceremony



Think about how
the symbol, action
or story can be
enhanced or
reinforced



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What Did You Learn?



How was that conversation for you?



What's one thing you'll take back to your association?



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Key Takeaways



Ceremony Builds Belonging and Loyalty



Every Association Already Has Ceremonies — Hidden or Otherwise



You Can Design Ceremonies That Strengthen Culture



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Q&A

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What are you most excited to try?

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How to change the
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slido

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