

**Worthy Grand Matron's
Interpretations
And
Suggested Ceremonies
For Subordinate Chapters**



Grand Chapter of Texas
Order of the Eastern Star
2024 ~ 2025



GLEND A R. MURPHY

**WORTHY GRAND MATRON
2024 ~ 2025**



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**WORTHY GRAND PATRON
2024 ~ 2025**

*We look forward to our year of
service to our Order.
The membership is always in our
hearts as We Serve.*

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INTRODUCTION

The Interpretations, Instructions, and Suggested Ceremonies for Subordinate Chapters have been prepared to aid in the uniformity of the Ritualistic Work as set forth in the Current Ritual and our Constitution and Code of Laws. (Updated as necessary)

For the purpose of these Instructions, all study references to the Ritual shall be (RIT), Constitution (CON), Code of Laws (COL), and the page/pages (p.).

These Instructions will be in effect for three years beginning August 10, 2024, through August 15, 2026.

One copy of the Instructions will be distributed to each Chapter Secretary by the Grand Chapter Office for use by the Worthy Matron as it is the responsibility of the Worthy Matron to see that these Instructions become effective following Installation at Grand Chapter.

These Interpretations may be reproduced, and they are offered to be of assistance to the membership of the Grand Jurisdiction of Texas, Order of the Eastern Star.

GOVERNMENT

We are governed by three bodies (RIT p. 161). The Diagram (RIT p. 3) illustrates the General Grand Chapter as the Supreme body; it is represented by the outer circle. Our Grand Chapter is represented by the middle circle. The Subordinate Chapters are represented by the inner circle.

PRELIMINARY INSTRUCTIONS, SOURCES, AND GUIDELINES FOR INSTRUCTION:

THE RITUAL

The RITUAL is our primary source for instruction., the Ritual is Supreme. Always remember the Ritual gives us our direction, the

“fine print” tells us how to accomplish our work, and the “large print” tells us what to say. Remember, there is a penalty for reproducing any or all portions of our Ritual and Secret Work.

THE CONSTITUTION AND CODE OF LAWS

Our Constitution and Code of Laws becomes our second form of guidelines and instructions. It includes:

- The Charter from General Grand Chapter
- The Grand Chapter of Texas Corporate Charters
- The Constitution and Code of Laws governing our Grand Jurisdiction
- Forms and Ceremonies
- The Legal Code of The Grand Chapter of Texas for charges, trials, and discipline.
- A Protocol Book follows the Index. You should refer to it for guidelines for planning and conducting Eastern Star events.

CHAPTER BY-LAWS

The third source of assistance is the Chapter’s Bylaws.

INSTRUCTIONS, INTERPRETATIONS, AND SUGGESTED CEREMONIES

The Worthy Grand Matron’s Instructions, Interpretations and Suggested Ceremonies have been written to impress upon the membership the fact that uniformity, dignity and beauty are essential in the exemplification of our Ritualistic work and we are hopeful that the traditions of our great Fraternity will continue to be a powerful influence in our lives.

THE SECRET WORK

Our Law allows each Chapter to have four (4) written-out copies of the Secret Work. These are issued by the Chapter Secretary to: Worthy Patron, Associate Patron, Conductress, and Associate Conductress. It is suggested that the Secretary keep a sign-out sheet to maintain a record of who has the copies. Members should

be allowed to have access to the Secret Work for study purposes. The Secretary should maintain a record of who has possession of the copies of the Secret Work.

MASONIC COURTESIES

As members of the Order of the Eastern Star, we have a Masonic affiliation, and according to our Ritual, we exist to give practical effect to Freemasonry. Accordingly, we should always show appreciation to our Masonic Brothers. It is our duty to comply with their wishes regarding using their Masonic Lodges and cooperate with the Worshipful Master. Please remember to secure permission to use the Lodge Room for special meetings, practices, installations, etc., followed by a written letter confirming the request. Also, remember to replace any Masonic paraphernalia that is moved for your meetings and to store all OES paraphernalia when not in use.

To show appreciation to our Masonic Brothers, it is suggested that your Chapter have a special honor night. An open meeting where the wives and family members of Masons could be invited to participate would be one way to encourage possible membership.

The two (2) SAINT JOHN DAYS (June 24th and December 27th) are of great significance to our Masonic brothers, and they ask that no meetings be held in their lodge buildings on those two days.

TEXAS PUBLIC SCHOOL WEEK is also important and we should be careful to respect their wishes on that week. We should always show respect to our Masons by respecting their wishes on these special dates.

RAPS

Raps are given either by the Warder or the Sentinel. They are given for members who wish to leave or enter the Chapter Room (RIT p. 16). During the Ceremony of Initiation, the Associate Conductress and the Conductress give raps at the door of the Preparation Room.

REVERENT ATTITUDE AND ATTITUDE OF PRAYER

Per the Ritual, (p. 16-17), the Reverent Attitude is assumed during the Altar Service for the Opening and Closing Ceremonies. The Reverent Attitude should also be assumed during all Obligations, the Prayer Circle and Memorials held at the Altar. ***This includes the prayer and the Obligation taken by the Officers during both an Open or Closed Installation.*** The Reverent Attitude is assumed when the Conductress or Chaplain enters the Labyrinth and will hold until the Chaplain or Conductress steps back into the Circle of Officers. The Attitude of Prayer is assumed for all prayers given at the Altar.

SALUTATION SIGN

The Salutation sign is part of the Order of the Eastern Star Secret Work. It is given by members when entering or retiring from the Chapter while in session. The Presiding Officer gives the response to the sign, which gives the member permission to retire or be seated. The response to the Sign is given from a standing position.

Other times the Salutation Sign is given are:

- By the Conductress during the Altar Service when opening and closing the Bible
- By members when balloting at the Altar. Per the Code of Laws, (Article 252(f)), the Sign is not complete until the response is given.

The Sign is never given during Open Installations or other open meetings of the Chapter.

The Salutation Sign, as well as the Star Point signs and passes, are not given during ceremonies of Grand Chapter. (C. Article X, Section 1 (a))

GRAND HONORS

Per the Ritual (pg. 17-18) Grand Honors are given to Worthy Grand Matrons, Worthy Grand Patrons, Past Grand Matrons and Past Grand Patrons, and to Grand representatives at Grand Chapter Sessions; to the Worthy Matron and Worthy Patron at Installation; to the Associate Grand Matron and/or the Associate Grand Patron when performing the official duties of the Worthy Grand Matron and/or Worthy Grand Patron. Recipients of 50 year or longer pins, may be presented West of the Altar, escorted to the East presented their 50 year or more pin, and given Grand Honors only at the time of the presentation of their pin. Only those who are entitled to be presented West of the Altar and escorted through the Labyrinth to the East are to be given Grand Honors.

OFFICERS

EACH OFFICE IN A CHAPTER IS IMPORTANT. Officers are charged with specific duties at the time of installation. Each Officer should strive to perform these duties in a manner becoming the solemnity of our Order.

To make our Ritualistic work as impressive as possible, ALL Officers should MEMORIZE their work. The Worthy Matron should instruct and call practice sessions as often as necessary to comply with their charges.

Pro-tem Officers can only be appointed to fill an office for one meeting, and members sitting on the sidelines of the Chapter holding the meeting should be asked to Pro-tem before visiting members are asked. If the Worthy Matron appoints an Officer to fill another station, the minutes will also record the Officer present in his or her own station. An Officer also serving Pro-tem in another station will go to that station, and wearing the badge of that office, give the charge (and sign, if a Star Point), then return to her/his elected or appointed station. ***As a reminder, the Warder and Sentinel stations shall not be left vacant at any time.***

The badge must be suspended with a five-colored cord or ribbon with the exception of the Star Point badges, which may have the color of their station (RIT p. 18). All Officers should enter wearing the badge of their office. Our Ritual further instructs that all Officers and members are to observe square corners in any movement about the Chapter Room, unless directed otherwise (RIT p. 54).

Officers should stand at their stations in the following manner: Adah, Ruth and Esther to the right; Martha and Electa to the left; Chaplain to the right and Marshal to the left. Warder to the right. It is helpful to remember that elected Officers stand in front of their stations while appointed Officers stand to the side of their station.

It is the duty of the Worthy Matron to see the Constitution and Laws and the By-Laws of the Chapter are strictly obeyed (COL, Art. 230a., p. 168).

WORTHY PATRON

It is the duty of the Worthy Patron to see that the Officers perform the duties of their office as prescribed in the Ritual and shall have oversight over the affairs of the Chapter; therefore, he should prompt from the East during all Ritualistic work. The Worthy Patron should remember to speak loud and clear enough for the member to hear the prompt so it will not be necessary for the prompt to be repeated several times. However, he may request that the Associate Patron or another member to assist him with this duty.

ASSOCIATE MATRON

The Associate Matron is to assist the Worthy Matron and, in case of her absence, will assume her duties. Therefore, it is most important that she be thoroughly proficient in the Ritualistic work and the Rules and Regulations of the Order.

ASSOCIATE PATRON

The Associate Patron is to assist the Worthy Patron and to assume his duties if he is not present. He should study the Laws, Rules, and

Regulations of the Order, as well as study to be proficient in the Ritualistic work.

CONDUCTRESS

The Conductress has the duty of opening our Holy Bible and performing our Altar work in order to create an atmosphere of reverence as well as reminding the membership to conduct themselves in a peaceful manner.

She also is responsible for presenting and introducing those special members who have come to share the meeting. The Conductress and Associate Conductress should make themselves available to meet and greet members and visitors as they arrive for the Chapter meeting. This will assist the Conductress in:

- Identifying members to be introduced
- Meet first-time visitors that will need to be vouched for

In conducting candidates through their initiation, she should perform in a courteous and dignified manner.

ASSOCIATE CONDUCTRESS

The Associate Conductress is responsible for the ballot box as well as preparing candidates for the ceremony of initiation. She should always remember that this is the first impression for our new member.

Assist the Conductress in greeting members and visitors as they arrive for the Chapter meeting.

With the Conductress, in performing her duties about the Chapter Room, she should remember that the Conductress and Associate Conductress should work together in their movements about the Chapter Room.

SECRETARY

The Secretary has a responsible charge in seeing that the good deeds of our members and Officers are recorded.

- Her/his duties are outlined in the Ritual (p. 111-112) and the Code of Laws (p. 169-170).
- She/he orders all supplies from the Grand Chapter Office with payment attached. (Checks and money orders are made payable to the Grand Chapter of Texas, O.E.S.).
- She/he collects all money due the Chapter; it is paid to the Treasurer, who in turn pays the Chapter's bills (RIT p. 112-113). All bills are paid by the vote of the Chapter or as provided for in the Chapter's By-Laws or by approved budget.
- The Secretary writes on prescribed forms (COL, p. 193-222b) as ordered by the Chapter, with the necessary fees attached. The Secretary is in charge of the Chapter Seal which should be affixed to all official documents and correspondence. The Secretary shall send a Notice of Dues on the appropriate form (COL, p. 181 and 206). She/he shall read the list of delinquent members at the last Stated Meeting before May 31st. If names of delinquent members are omitted from such list, then the Chapter shall continue to carry such members on the roll and pay per capita fees for that year.

All correspondence directed to the Chapter must be read at the next Stated Meeting after being received. The Secretary, in reading correspondence, should first tell who sent the letter and proceed to read the letter. The time consumed in reading invitations should be shortened by reading the name of the Chapter issuing the invitation, time and place of the event, and who is being honored. After reading these portions of the invitation, the Secretary may state that all invitations are on the desk for interested members to read in their entirety after the meeting.

In order for our meetings to be in accordance with the Chapter Bylaws, the Secretary and Worthy Matron should communicate prior to the meeting and review old business, petitions, and other items requiring action at that meeting. As a reminder, all business should be conducted in an orderly but timely manner and recorded for our permanent record.

TREASURER

The Treasurer is responsible for having our funds ready for charitable purposes as well as the expenses of the Chapter. She/he works closely with the Secretary so that both the receipts and warrant books are in balance and ready at all times for inspection by the Deputy Grand Matron or an appointed Audit Committee (COL, Art. 235, p. 170).

STAR POINT OFFICERS

The Star Point Officers exemplify the teachings of our beautiful Order and they should strive to present their work with beauty and dignity. To make their work more impressive, the Star Point's lectures should be memorized. Each one should hold her sign and remain silent until after the membership gives the response (RIT p. 34-38).

CHAPLAIN, MARSHAL, AND ORGANIST

The duties of the Chaplain, Marshal and Organist add much to our ceremonies. We depend upon them to create an atmosphere of beauty and solemnity through their prayers, assistance in our ceremonies, and music. During all Altar Services, quiet times, and movements about the Chapter Room, the Organist should provide appropriate music.

WARDER

The Warder and Sentinel are, respectively, our inner and outer guards. They have the great responsibility of protecting us from any

intrusion and it is most important that they work together as a team.

The Warder should not respond to any raps given by the Sentinel until the Order of Business or Ceremony is complete. The Warder shall notify the Worthy Matron of all alarms from the Sentinel and does not admit anyone into the Chapter Room without permission of the Presiding Officer.

The Warder **NEVER** leaves her/his station, and ***the doors are opened and closed ONLY by the Warder.*** The Worthy Matron, Warder and Sentinel should have a complete understanding of duties to preclude unnecessary interruptions.

SENTINEL

The Sentinel will not allow anyone to enter the Chapter Room that she/he cannot vouch for since the Chapter Room has already been proven. If the person is allowed to enter, the Presiding Officer presumes that the person is known by the Sentinel and is in good standing.

Members are not admitted during the following:

- Opening and Closing Ceremonies (including the Flag Ceremonies),
- While a ballot is being taken (except as provided in the Ritual for the balloting by the Sentinel),
- During an initiation lecture,
- Draping of the Charter or Altar, or
- During any portion of the Secret Work.

It is the suggestion of the Worthy Grand Matron that a new member should not be appointed Sentinel unless absolutely necessary. The new member needs to be inside the Chapter Room so that she/he may learn the work of our Order. The Sentinel should be invited to sit in the doorway of the Chapter Room during the

business portion of the meeting if security can be provided, but NEVER during the Ritualistic work.

TYPES OF MEETINGS

The meetings of the Chapter are either Stated or Special (COL, p. 170-171).

- **Stated Meetings** are those held at the time prescribed by the Chapter By-Laws, and any business of the Chapter may be transacted.
- **Special Meetings** are those “Called” for a specific purpose. NO business shall be transacted at a called meeting, except that specified in the “call.” “Due Notice” is defined in the Code of Laws (p. 171).

Chapters may want to call a Special Meeting if they are aware of specific business that requires immediate attention or for the opportunity of having programs, such as Honor, Obligation, Initiation, Friendship Nights, etc. so that the meeting will not be rushed and the members will be able to enjoy them.

- **Joint Fraternal Visits of the Worthy Grand Matron** may be held at either a Stated or Special meeting with more than one Chapter participating. The Chapters shall request a Special Dispensation to hold the Joint Fraternal Visit.

CHAPTER PREPARATIONS

REQUIREMENTS

We are given six (6) requirements for opening a Chapter and for the transaction of business (COL, p. 173).

1. A Charter or a valid Dispensation for such Chapter must be present.
2. Quorum (Definition found on next page).

3. Bible on the Altar opened at the Second Chapter of Saint Matthew.
4. Square and Compasses.
5. Flag placed at the right of the Presiding Officer.
6. A Brother when balloting or when conferring the degrees.

CHAPTER REGISTER

The Chapter Register should be in the Anteroom and must be signed in ink as it is the official record of those in attendance.

CHAPTER ROOM SET UP

If necessary, the Worthy Matron may appoint a committee to prepare the Chapter Room for a meeting; remember, however, the final responsibility rests upon the Worthy Matron.

CHAPTER FURNITURE

Our Ritual (p. 168-169) describes the Chapter furniture and illustrates a properly prepared Chapter Room. No additional chairs or decorations are permitted to be placed within the Labyrinth.

STAR POINT CHAIRS AND PEDESTALS

We are given a choice for the position of the pedestals by the Star Point chairs (RIT p. 168). This is at the discretion of the Worthy Matron, depending on the size of her Chapter Room.

- The chairs of Adah and Electa are not as far North and South as Ruth and Martha. Per our Ritual, if a Star rug is used, Esther's chair shall be placed directly in back of the white point. The other four chairs will be placed where the inside front leg is in line with the corresponding point.
- A line from the East pedestal to the West pedestal will pass over the center of the Holy Bible on the Altar and the center of Esther's station.

EMBLEMS

The Star Point emblems are placed on the pedestals (RIT p. 168).

ADAH: The veil is draped over the sword starting at the hilt. For proper veil draping, see the picture (RIT p. 3). The Sword is pointed toward the Altar with the drape to the Southwest.

RUTH: The sheaf should be in the center of the pedestal.

ESTHER: The scepter is placed through the crown with the head of the scepter pointing toward the Northeast. The crown faces the East.

MARTHA: The broken column stands upright in the center of the pedestal, with the broken side facing the Altar.

ELECTA: The cup should be upright in the center of the pedestal.

Nothing except the emblem and pedestal covers should be placed on the Star Point pedestals, with the exception of Ribbons for Initiation. No personal items should be on the pedestal or around the chair. Again, the chair is the station, not the pedestal.

CHARTER

Each Grand Chapter has a Charter (RIT p. 165) that has been issued by the General Grand Chapter. Our Charter for Texas Grand Chapter, Order of the Eastern Star, is printed on Page 8 of our present Constitution.

Every subordinate Chapter is required to have a Charter or a valid Dispensation at each Chapter meeting (COL, p. 173).

In the event of a Joint Fraternal Visit (if held at another location from your regular meeting place), the Chapter's Charter Certificate shall be used in lieu of the original Charter (COL, p. 173). If the Charter is draped, then the Charter Certificate shall be draped as well.

QUORUM

A quorum consists of seven members of the Chapter, including one of the first four Officers (RIT p. 166; COL, p. 173).

- These first four (4) Officers are Worthy Matron, Worthy Patron, Associate Matron, and Associate Patron.
- Offices required to be filled for the transaction of business are Worthy Matron, Associate Matron, Secretary, Conductress, Chaplain, Warder, and Sentinel.
- A Brother must fill the Office of Worthy Patron if there is to be Balloting on a petition or the Initiation Ceremony.

OPENING OUR CHAPTER

PRE-OPENING ALTAR CEREMONY

As we prepare for our Chapter meeting, it is important that an air of solemnity be assumed as we begin the Ritualistic opening. This Pre-Opening Altar Drill is adapted from the opening instructed in the “Last Will and Testament of the Rob Morris Digest of Symbolism”. Based upon our founder’s original writings and instructions, it was compiled and published by Beulah H. Malone, Past Grand Matron of Oklahoma.

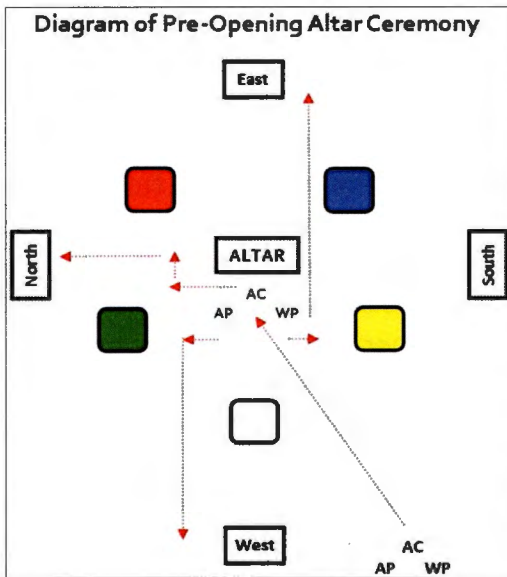
OVERVIEW

At the appointed time, the Worthy Patron, Associate Patron, and Associate Conductress will line up just inside the door of the Chapter room.

- The three (3) Officers will form a Triangle with the Associate Conductress as the Apex. The base of the Triangle will be formed with the Worthy Patron on the right, Southside, and the Associate Patron on the left, Northside.
- The Worthy Patron holds the Square and Compasses.
- The Associate Conductress holds the closed Bible with both hands at the waistline on a level with the elbows.
- Walking together in the Triangle formation, they will turn at the Southwest corner and march at an angle toward the center of the Altar, entering the Labyrinth between Ruth and Esther.
- The Triangle stops at the West side of the Altar.
- The Associate Conductress steps to the center of the Altar holding the closed Bible and reverently places the Bible upon the Altar with its back toward the North (a sign of Darkness).
- The Associate Conductress steps back. At the same time, she is stepping back, both the Worthy Patron and the Associate Patron will step forward, the Worthy Patron to the South

corner of the Altar and the Associate Patron to the North corner of the Altar. Thus, reversing the Triangle. The Worthy Patron places the Square and Compasses up on the Altar.

- The three Officers leave the Altar in the following manner:
 1. The Worthy Patron turns to the right, squaring corners he turns and goes directly to the East where he pauses and observes the other Officers. After they are in their places, he will ascend the dais.
 2. The Associate Patron turns left and then turns again to go directly to his Station in the West.
 3. The Associate Conductress turns to the left, and, squaring corners, goes directly to her Station in the North. The Associate Conductress and the Associate Patron are seated simultaneously.



The Worthy Patron gives one (1) blow of the gavel, gives the directive as stated in the Ritual and addresses the Associate Conductress, who retires (meaning she leaves the Chapter Room) and invites the Worthy Matron and Officers to enter the Chapter Room by standing just outside the entrance to the Chapter Room

door. As has been the tradition, an Officer or member should not walk and talk at the same time. The Associate Conductress then assumes her place at the head of the North line, and the Officers enter (wearing their badges) in two lines led by the Conductress and Associate Conductress.

ENTRANCE OF OFFICERS

The Officers will enter as prescribed by our Ritual. Some Chapters have allowed the Officers to simply take their stations. This practice goes against our Ritual and shall NOT be permitted!!!

The Worthy Matron may use the entrance drill of her choice but note that the Ritual (p. 24) provides for the final position of the Officers at the close of the drill.

In forming the lines OUTSIDE the Chairs:

- The Conductress and Associate Conductress should be one step in front of Adah's and Electa's stations.
- The Warder, the Worthy Matron, the Associate Matron, and Esther are in a straight line along the West marching line.

In forming the lines INSIDE the Chairs

- The Conductress and Associate Conductress stop one step **in back of** Adah's and Electa's stations.
- The Warder, the Worthy Matron, the Associate Matron and Esther are in a straight line, one step in front of Esther's station.

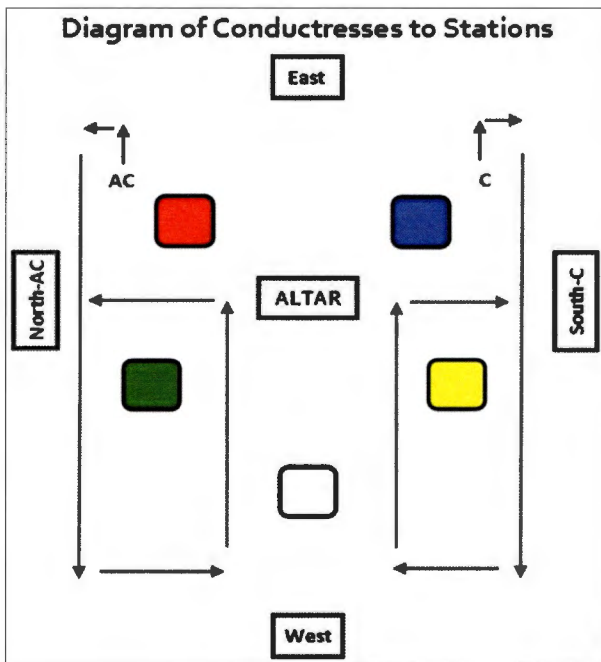
In order to create uniformity in our floor work, whether the lines are formed inside or outside the Labyrinth, the following is suggested:

- The Conductress and Associate Conductress advance to the East marching line.

- Turn toward the North and South marching lines and proceed to the West marching line.
- Walking toward each other, they will turn East at a point even with the South and North sides of the Altar, turn East to the Altar, and then turn toward each of their stations.

As the North line moves toward the East, the Associate Matron will step North, then face East, making a square corner, and be in direct line to follow the other Officers.

Whether the lines are formed **inside** or **outside** the Labyrinth, the Officers (**Except the Conductress and Associate Conductress**) will be seated immediately upon arrival at their stations as the Worthy Matron has sounded the gavel. The Conductress and Associate Conductress will remain standing until all the other Officers has been seated at their Stations. **They will then be seated simultaneously.**



MARCHING LINES

For clarification,

- The East marching line is halfway between the East and the stations of Adah and Electa.
- The South marching line is halfway between the stations of the Conductress and Ruth.
- The West marching line is halfway between the stations of the Associate Matron and Esther.
- The North marching line is halfway between the stations of the Associate Conductress and Martha.

CONDUCTING THE WORTHY MATRON TO THE EAST

Regardless of the lines being formed inside or outside the Labyrinth:

- The Conductress turns right and proceeds on the South marching line to the West marching line and turns North, observing square corners.
- As the Conductress approaches, the Worthy Matron turns toward the West to meet her. The Conductress bows to the Worthy Matron (RIT p. 24).
- She offers her right arm to the Worthy Matron. If the Officers are outside the Labyrinth, the Conductress escorts the Worthy Matron through the Labyrinth. If the Officers are inside the Labyrinth, the Worthy Matron should take steps toward the West far enough to meet the Conductress. The Conductress escorts the Worthy Matron along the West and North marching lines.
- Upon reaching the East marching line, they face each other (North and South) and after mutual bows, without hesitation, the Conductress marches directly to her position at the head of her line by proceeding along the East marching

line toward the South, observing SQUARE CORNERS (RIT p. 24).

The Worthy Patron assists the Worthy Matron to the dais and presents her with the gavel (RIT p. 24). The Worthy Matron directs the Officers to assume their stations and immediately seats the Chapter with one blow of the gavel.

EXAMINATION OF VISITORS

Examination of visitors should be prior to the meeting if possible. An Examining Committee should be composed of two (2) Sisters and one (1) Brother (RIT p. 17).

If this cannot be accomplished prior to the meeting, then it is the duty of the Worthy Matron to appoint an Examining Committee, and the duty of the Marshal to escort the visitor(s) to meet the Committee at the Preparation Room door.

A small Holy Bible is placed on the pedestal in the West for the use of this Committee. The Salutation Sign need NOT be given when leaving through the Preparation Room door.

Visitors should be examined separately, and one after being examined, may vouch for the other. The Committee and visitor(s) may not re-enter until after the Opening Ceremony is completed, the Pledge to the Flag is given and a Patriotic Ode, if used, sung.

IN EXAMINING A VISITOR:

- They will be asked to show a current dues card or demit. Dues cards or demits must be countersigned. A dues card shall not be more than one (1) year old (COL, Art. 267g, p. 182), and a demit shall not be more than one (1) year old unless it is being used for the purpose of affiliation (COL, Art. 252b, p. 174).
- Take the Test Oath (RIT p. 17), and give the Signs and Passes of each degree.

Certainly, it would be at the discretion of the Examining Committee to satisfy themselves that a person is a member of the Order of the Eastern Star.

Attention should be given to members belonging to a Chapter other than those under the Jurisdiction of General Grand Chapter (New York and New Jersey) to ensure that a man has been regularly initiated into our Order.

PROVING THE CHAPTER

Proving the Chapter is performed under the direction of the Associate Matron, who remains standing during the entire procedure. Care should be taken to verify the status of the membership present. Should the Associate Matron be able to vouch for all present, she will report to the Worthy Matron at once. If she cannot vouch for all present, she would request the Conductress and Associate Conductress to assist her. ***The Worthy Matron will be seated during the Proving of the Chapter because the Associate Matron is in charge of this activity as instructed by the Worthy Matron (RIT p. 26).***

Dues cards or demits must be countersigned; therefore, it is necessary that the Conductress and Associate Conductress each carry a pen.

1. The Conductress and Associate Conductress leave their stations on the East side of their pedestals and march directly to the East to prove their respective sides.
2. If either the Conductress or Associate Conductress finds a visitor for whom she cannot vouch, she will report to the Associate Matron, who will proceed with the instructions given in the Ritual (p. 26 and 27).
3. When the Conductress and Associate Conductress have completed proving the Chapter, they will meet in back of Esther's station.

4. The Associate Conductress reports to the Conductress. The Conductress and Associate Conductress then face West where the Conductress reports to the Associate Matron (RIT p. 26-27) after which they turn to face the East. The Worthy Matron stands when the Associate Matron addresses her.
5. After the Associate Matron reports and the Worthy Matron responds, the Conductress and Associate Conductress immediately return to their respective stations for the continuation of the Opening Ceremony (*they do not bow to each other*).

After the Opening Ceremony has been completed, the Examining Committee and visitor(s) enter through the Chapter Room door as previously noted. After giving the Salutation Sign, which is responded to by the Worthy Matron (COL, Art. 252f, p. 175), the Chairman introduces the visitor(s) to the Worthy Matron who extends a warm welcome. They are then seated in the Chapter Room.

VISITORS ARRIVING AFTER THE CHAPTER HAS BEEN PROVEN

It is the Sentinel's duty to allow no one to enter the Chapter Room that she/he cannot vouch for.

- The Sentinel will sound the alarm at the door to notify the Warder of a visitor who wishes to be admitted. She/he shall notify the Warder if she/he can vouch for the visitor and give their name.
- The Warder will answer the alarm and report the visitor in waiting to be admitted to the Chapter Room. If the visitor cannot be vouched for the Warder will report such to the Worthy Matron.
- A properly vouched for visitor will be admitted on permission of the Worthy Matron.

- If the Sentinel and Warder cannot vouch for the visitor, then the Worthy Matron will ask the officers, members and visitors present if they can vouch for the visitor. If no one can vouch for the visitor, then the Worthy Matron will appoint an Examining Committee who will retire to perform the Examination of the visitor.

OPENING CEREMONY

The portions of our Opening Ceremony within brackets (RIT p. 28) may be omitted at the discretion of the Worthy Matron. However, the Opening Ceremony is more impressive if the members and visitors hear it in its entirety. The Worthy Grand Matron prefers that the Chapter be opened using the Long Form as our Ritual states that the Short Form is not to be habitually misused.

ALTAR SERVICE

When the Conductress is directed to attend at the Altar during the Opening and Closing Ceremonies, she leaves her station on the East side of the pedestal. She marches to the southwest corner, makes an acute angle and, using Electa as her guide, enters the Labyrinth and proceeds according to the Ritual (p. 41).

The Holy Bible is the Word of God and should be handled with reverence. Each Conductress should recognize the sacred meaning of attending at the Altar and perform her duties in a beautiful and graceful manner. It is recommended that the Conductress practice so she will know how the Bible will handle when opened.

TO OPEN THE HOLY BIBLE PROPERLY

1. The Conductress first gives a slight bow to the Worthy Matron as acknowledgement then places her right hand firmly in the center of the front edge with her left hand firmly on the back edge, opposite her right hand.
2. Then, with her right hand, she raises the front edge of the Holy Bible to the center of the Altar, slowly moving her left

hand up the front side until it meets the right hand, leaving the Bible firmly on the Altar.

3. She opens the Holy Bible with both hands, very slowly, lowering both sides at the same time.
4. If a marker is used, she removes it and places it in on the west side of the Holy Bible on the Altar. The Worthy Grand Matron prefers that the Bible marker be lifted slightly and **do not drag it across the pages of the Holy Bible**.
5. First, the Square and then the Compass are gently placed upon the scripture of the opened Holy Bible.
6. She then draws both hands away to form the Salutation Sign to the Bible.
7. Facing the Altar, using Electa as a guide, the Conductress then steps back into the circle of Officers midway between Ruth and Esther and assumes the Reverent Attitude.

The Conductress should practice so she may perform this in a graceful and reverent manner.

Our Code of Laws (Art, 250a.(3), p. 149) requires the Holy Bible to be opened at the Second Chapter of Saint Matthew; and also, that the Square and Compasses **MUST BE** placed upon the opened Holy Bible. It does not specify they be placed on any particular scripture; however, they must be placed on scripture.

The Worthy Grand Matron deems it an honor to have the great privilege of placing the Square and Compasses upon our Bible, therefore, we should give these Masonic emblems our deepest respect by always placing them **PROPERLY** upon our Holy Bible.

Prior to the ceremony when the Square and Compasses are placed on the Altar, they should not touch and the compasses should remain open. In the case of not having a Square and Compasses, a Brother's Masonic ring or other item bearing the Square and Compasses, placed upon the open Holy Bible is permissible. (*NOTE: the word **Compasses** is always used in plural form.*)

The Conductress and Chaplain do not assume the Reverent Attitude during the march to and from the Altar Ceremonies. They will walk at a reverent pace, enter the Labyrinth without pausing at the edge of the Labyrinth, and proceed to the center of the Altar.

The Chaplain, when entering the Labyrinth for all ceremonies, marches to the Northwest corner, makes an acute angle and, using Adah as a guide, enters the Labyrinth between Esther and Martha.

The Chaplain never carries anything except the evergreen during the Memorial Ceremony. Upon reaching the Altar, the Chaplain stands until the music ceases, and then **kneels to offer the prayer** (*If this is a hardship, then it is permissible to stand while giving the prayer*).

PLEASE REMEMBER that we only give the Ritualistic response to those prayers found in the Ritual and the one in the Constitution. All other prayers are ended with "Amen."

After completing the prayer, the Chaplain steps back into the Circle of Officers, midway between Esther and Martha. Care should be taken to perfect the CIRCULAR pattern with the Star Point Officers (RIT p. 42 and 46).

Should the Conductress or the Chaplain feel unsteady and not comfortable backing out of the labyrinth, they may take one step back from the altar, turn and walk back to their place in the circle of officers.

The Chaplain and Conductress remain in these positions in the Opening until the Warder reports back to the Worthy Matron, and in the Closing until the Warder informs the Sentinel. They return to their stations after the Warder has reported to the Worthy Matron in the Opening and after the Warder has reported to the Sentinel that the Chapter is closed.

Appropriate music may be played during the march to the Altar, during the opening and closing of the Holy Bible, but not during prayer.

PRESENTATION OF THE FLAG

W.M. or W.P.: “Sister/Brother Marshal, you will present the Flag of our Country.” The Chapter will be called up at this time.

When presented, the Marshal marches West, then North to the Associate Patron’s station where the Flag is placed.

The Associate Patron will have the Flag in readiness for the Marshal (COL, p. 223). The Marshal will salute the Flag.

After the Marshal receives the Flag, she/he marches East by entering the Labyrinth between Esther and Martha, pauses only a moment with the Flag centered at the Altar, then continues through the Labyrinth directly to the East, and places the Flag in the standard at the right of the Worthy Matron (RIT p. 43; COL, p. 223). The Worthy Grand Matron prefers that the Worthy Patron assist the Marshal by receiving the Flag and placing it into the standard. The Marshal then salutes the Flag and steps back to the East marching line to give the Pledge.

The Worthy Patron returns to his station to lead the Chapter in the Pledge of Allegiance.

After the Pledge is given, one stanza of a Patriotic song may be sung. Then the Marshal will turn and return to her/his station. The Chapter is seated as the Marshal reaches the Northwest corner of the Chapter room.

RETIRING OF THE FLAG

Just preceding the Closing Ceremony, the Presiding Officer will give the directive to the Marshal to retire the flag.

W.M. or W. P.: “Sister/Brother Marshal, you will retire the flag of our country.”

In retiring the Flag, the Marshal marches outside the Labyrinth, west, north and east, to the position of the Flag. As the Marshal approaches the northwest corner, the Presiding Officer will call up the Chapter. The Worthy Patron will assist by removing the Flag from the standard in readiness for the Marshal. The Marshal salutes the Flag then takes it from the Worthy Patron and returns it along the north marching line to the west.

The Associate Patron accepts the Flag from the Marshal and returns it to the standard. The Marshal will salute the Flag and return to her/his station, always observing square corners. The Chapter is seated as the Marshal reaches the Southwest corner of the Chapter room.

INTRODUCTIONS

One of the best opportunities that we have to recognize members and to make a long and lasting impression is through our introductions. **PRACTICE** is the key word to make this a successful experience. If the Worthy Matron, Conductress and Associate Conductress practice together, they will be confident, their work will be proficient and they will enjoy their duties.

The next key word is **P-I-E**. Commit to your memory these instructions:

- **P-PRESENT** the member
- **I-INTRODUCE** the member
- **E-ESCORT** the member

Our Code of Laws describes the order of introductions for our distinguished members. A Worthy Matron may prepare a checklist and introduction format and use it at all meetings to assist her with her introductions.

Please note the following as the distinguished members shall be presented and introduced in the prescribed manner (COL, ART. 256; p. 151-152.).

1. The Worthy Matron **INVITES** the Grand Officer(s) to stand.
2. The Worthy Matron **DIRECTS** the Conductress and Associate Conductress to **PRESENT** the Grand Officer(s) at the Altar or in back of Esther's station.
 - When instructed to present Grand Officers for introductions, the Conductress and Associate Conductress leave their stations on the east side of their pedestals, meet in back of Esther's station, and bow to each other. Except when escorting members, the Conductress and Associate Conductress will walk

together, the Associate Conductress always on the left of the Conductress.

- As a rule, Grand Officers will be seated in the Southeast. However, they may be seated in various areas of the Chapter Room. The Conductress and Associate Conductress should note their location to determine how they will proceed to escort the distinguished member for introduction.
- When there is ONLY ONE Grand Officer, the Conductress and Associate Conductress will proceed to the distinguished member, stop and turn to face her/him. They will bow to the Officer and conduct her/him single file to the Altar or in back of Esther's station for introduction. When there is more than one Grand Officer, the Conductress and Associate Conductress will proceed to the East marching line, turn toward each other and bow to the Officers. The Officers will be conducted single file to the Altar or back of Esther's station for introduction. It is a courteous gesture if the Conductress will quietly ask the Officers, "Will you please follow me?".
- If the Grand Officers are to be taken to the Altar, they enter from the Southwest corner between Ruth and Esther, and should be centered on the west side of the Altar. After being introduced, they are escorted through the Labyrinth, with the Sisters following the Conductress and the Brothers following the Associate Conductress.
- When a group of Grand Officers are to be introduced in back of Esther's station, the Conductress leads her line north across the west marching line closest to the Altar,

and the Associate Conductress leads her line south, centering the Grand Officers in back of Esther's station.

3. The Conductress **INTRODUCES** the Grand Officer(s).
 - “Worthy Matron, I have the pleasure of introducing Sister/Brother _____ (title), Grand Chapter Of Texas, Order Of The Eastern Star.”
 - If Officers are asked to give their name and titles, the Conductress will say, “I have the pleasure of presenting.....”
4. The Worthy Matron extends a short cordial welcome.
5. The Worthy Matron **DIRECTS** the Conductress and Associate Conductress to **ESCORT** the Grand Officer(s) to the East or to their places in the Chapter Room, whichever is appropriate.
 - If Officers are to be escorted to the East, the Conductress will lead the Sisters and the Associate Conductress leads the Brothers
6. The Grand Officer(s) presented at the Altar and escorted to the East will be **SALUTED** with the Grand Honors (Complete instructions are found in RIT p. 17). There is one exception. The Most Worshipful Grand Master of the Grand Lodge of Texas, A.F. & A.M. is not given Grand Honors unless he is also a Past Grand Patron.)
7. With the Grand Officers in the East, the Worthy Matron **PRESENTS** the Grand Officers as a group. She does not call their names again.
 - After each group of distinguished members is introduced and presented in the East, the Conductress and Associate Conductress will await further orders from the Worthy Matron concerning the distinguished

members remaining in the East or being returned to their places in the Chapter Room. As the Worthy Matron is presenting the Officers, the Associate Conductress will step behind and to the left of, the Conductress. They are then in proper position to escort Officers or to return to a place back of Esther's station.

8. The Worthy Matron INSTRUCTS the Conductress and Associate Conductress concerning the Grand Officers remaining in the East or being returned to their places in the Chapter Room. Whether the first group remains in the East or is seated in the Chapter Room sets precedent for the remaining groups.

- When the distinguished members are to be seated in the Chapter Room, the distinguished members step down from the dais, bow to the Conductress and Associate Conductress who return the bow and the members are returned to their place in the Chapter Room in the same fashion they were presented. If a group of distinguished members is to be seated on the same side, the Conductress will lead the line and the Associate Conductress will follow the last distinguished member. .

If the Grand Officers presented in the East are Sisters and Brothers, they will be returned to their seats in the following manner: The Sisters will step down from the dais, bow to the Conductress. She will lead the Officers back to their seats in the same fashion they were presented. At the same time, the Brothers will step down from the dais, bow to the Associate Conductress. She will turn toward the South marching line, then turn and proceed toward the West. The Brothers will follow and drop off at their seats. The Associate Conductress

will continue to the Southwest corner of the Chapter Room and wait for the Conductress.

As the Conductress passes leading the Officers to their seats the Associate Conductress will step in behind the last Officer. To seat the distinguished members, they will walk to the East marching line, turn toward each other and facing west, bow to the distinguished members.

Upon seating the distinguished members, they will return arm in arm, to their places in back of Esther's station for further instructions. Remember, the Conductress and Associate Conductress should always stand side by side, either north and south, or east and west, and never at an angle when bowing to distinguished members. Also, they will be careful not to stand between the Holy Bible and the East.

- To return a group of distinguished members to their places on both sides of the Chapter Room and in order to create uniformity, the Conductress and Associate Conductress will go all the way to the Southeast and Northeast marching lines of the Chapter Room, face west, bow to the distinguished members, and then return to their places in back of Esther's station.
9. When all Grand Officers have been introduced, the Worthy Matron dismisses the Conductress and Associate Conductress with a nod. They turn to face each other, bow, and return to their stations. *(AS A REMINDER, the Conductress and Associate Conductress bow to each other only twice, once before beginning and once upon completion of their duties.)*

ADDITIONAL NOTES:

For Grand Officers introduced in back of Esther’s station (Ex. Deputy Grand Matrons) that require a countermarch to present them in the West or to be escorted to the East, the Conductress should always march to the appropriate North or South marching line to complete the countermarch.

The Grand Chapter Committees (COL p. 37; p. 152) and Special Committees of the Worthy Grand Matron may be introduced separately or together. It is the preference of the Worthy Grand Matron that the Grand Chapter Committees and Special Committees of the Worthy Grand Matron be introduced separately. However, if a small group is present, they should be introduced together, with the Fraternal Correspondent first, followed by the Grand Chapter Committees and then the Special Committees of the Worthy Grand Matron.

To introduce distinguished members when there is a large number in attendance, it is permissible to form an arc in order to keep only one line.

When the groups are very large such as might be found in the Committees of Grand Chapter or Special Committees of the Worthy Grand Matron, they will be escorted in back of Esther’s station, and if necessary to keep straight lines, they may form two or more lines allowing the Associate Conductress to remain at the end of the last line.

- Then the Conductress may say: “Worthy Matron, it is my pleasure to present these (*state which category*) who will assist by giving their names and titles.”
- After the first line has been introduced, these distinguished members will return to their places in the Chapter Room and be seated. The Conductress will step back to the beginning of the second line and the second line will introduce

themselves and then, they, too, would be seated and the same process repeated until all have been introduced.

- The Conductress will move, not the lines.
- After all have been introduced, the Conductress would add “Grand Chapter of Texas, Order of the Eastern Star.” All who have been introduced and seated will stand, the Worthy Matron will give her welcome to the group and ask the membership to join in a hearty welcome.

If there is a large group of Committees and the Chapter Room is small, it is permissible to introduce them from the sidelines. The Worthy Matron would ask them to stand, give their names and titles. Introductions from the sideline would begin in the Southeast and continue all around the Chapter Room until all have been introduced. The Worthy Matron would then say: **“Grand Chapter of Texas, Order of the Eastern Star.”** The Worthy Matron would give a poem or gracious welcome and ask the membership to join in a hearty welcome.

Introductions continue and these groups are recognized from places in the Chapter Room as a group:

- Worthy Matrons and Worthy Patrons.
- Past Matrons and Past Patrons.
- Members not previously introduced.

The Worthy Matron should then recognize the Worshipful Master of the home Lodge by name. Then the Worthy Matron would ask each of these groups to stand and have the Worthy Patron introduce them with their titles: Past Grand Masters, Grand Lodge Officers. Then the Worthy Matron may ask the rest of the masons to stand and recognize them as a group. Never use the term “Distinguished Masons” in introductions. ALL Masons are distinguished. In introductions, always ask for the office or name of the group to be introduced/presented.

ORDER OF INTRODUCTIONS

Distinguished members shall be presented and introduced in the following order:

INTRODUCTIONS AT THE ALTAR AND ESCORTED TO THE EAST (Membership WILL BE called up) Saluted with the Grand Honors:

1. Worthy Grand Matron and Worthy Grand Patron.
2. Most Worthy Grand Matron and Most Worthy Grand Patron.
3. Past Most Worthy Grand Matrons and Past Most Worthy Grand Patrons.
4. General Grand Chapter Elected Officers.
5. General Grand Chapter Appointed Officers.
6. General Grand Chapter Ambassadors and Committee Members (in alphabetical order by Committee, beginning with Ambassadors).
7. Deputies of the MWGM/MWGP (*IF a Past Grand Matron/ Patron*).
8. Worthy Grand Matrons and Worthy Grand Patrons of other Grand Jurisdictions.
9. All Past Grand Matrons and Past Grand Patrons of other Grand Jurisdictions.
10. Past Grand Matrons and Past Grand Patrons of Texas.
11. The Deputy Grand Matron, **ONLY** when visiting a Chapter officially, shall **be introduced back of Esther's Station**, escorted to the East (Hearty welcome and invited to remain in the East). **NO Grand Honors.**
12. The Grand Master of the Most Worshipful Grand Lodge of Texas, A.F. & A.M. (Hearty welcome) **No Grand Honors.**

Introductions In Back Of Esther's Station And Escorted To The East
(Membership Will Not Be Called Up):

13. Installed Grand Officers and Elected Board Members

- a. Visiting from other Grand Jurisdictions.
- b. Texas.

If the Grand Officers are not taken to the East, the Conductress will lead the line to the north marching line, counter marching in front of the Grand Officers, remaining closest to the altar, as she walks toward the south marching line.

14. General Grand Chapter Special Appointments of the Most Worthy Grand Matron and Most Worthy Grand Patron:

- a. Triennial Assembly Committee.
- b. Deputies of the Most Worthy Grand Matron and Most Worthy Grand Patron.
- c. Special Appointment of the Most Worthy Grand Matron and Most Worthy Grand Patron (ex: Campfire Friends and Tophat Pride—these titles change with each MWGM/MWGP).

15. Grand Representatives:

- a. Texas in Other Grand Jurisdictions.
- b. Other Grand Jurisdictions in Other Grand Jurisdictions.
- c. Other Grand Jurisdictions in Texas.

Introduced In Back Of Esther's Station (Optional: May Be Escorted To The East)

16. Deputies of Grand Chapter:

- a. District Deputy Grand Matrons by District.
- b. Deputy Grand Matrons by District, by Section.

(On the Deputy Grand Matron's Official Visit, she is introduced immediately after the Past Grand Matrons and Past Grand Patrons of Texas - see #11).

Introduced in back of Esther's station or from place:

17. All Committees of Grand Chapter (Those listed in the Constitution and Code of Laws):

- a. Fraternal Correspondent (always first in this group).
- b. Other Committees of Grand Chapter (no rank in remaining committees).

18. All Special Committees of the Worthy Grand Matron.

It is the Worthy Matron's prerogative to continue with these additional categories and they may be introduced as a group with a warm welcome.

19. Worthy Matrons and Worthy Patrons.

20. Past Matrons and Past Patrons not previously introduced.

22. The Worshipful Master of the home Lodge.

Helpful Hints For Introductions For 2024-2025

WM: "I invite the Worthy Grand Matron and Worthy Grand Patron to stand." "Sisters Conductress and Associate Conductress, you will present the Worthy Grand Matron and Worthy Grand Patron at the Altar."

Conductress: "Worthy Matron, it is my pleasure to introduce Sister _____, Worthy Grand Matron, and Brother _____, Worthy Grand Patron, Grand Chapter of Texas, Order of the Eastern Star."

WM: “Sisters Conductress and Associate Conductress, you will escort the Worthy Grand Matron and Worthy Grand Patron to the East.”

“Sisters and Brothers, it is my pleasure to present the Worthy Grand Matron and Worthy Grand Patron. You will join me in saluting them with the Grand Honors.” Note: The Worthy Matron does not repeat “Grand Chapter of Texas, Order of the Eastern Star” (After the Grand Honors are completed, the Worthy Matron will direct the Conductresses. No applause after Grand Honors.)

“Sisters Conductress and Associate Conductress, the Worthy Grand Matron and Worthy Grand Patron will remain in the East.” (The Worthy Grand Matron and Worthy Grand Patron will ALWAYS remain in the East.)

When introducing Grand Representatives, the **Conductress** would say:

“Worthy Matron, I have the pleasure of introducing these Grand Representatives Of Other Grand Jurisdictions In Texas: Sister _____, (State/Country), and Brother _____, (State/Country), Order of the Eastern Star.”

We **do not say** “Grand Chapter of Texas” when introducing Grand Representatives because each is representing another Grand Jurisdiction in Texas.

If there is only one Grand Representative, the **Conductress** may say:

“I have the pleasure of introducing Sister/Brother _____, Grand Representative of (State/Country) in Texas, Order Of The Eastern Star.”

On her Official Visit, the Deputy Grand Matron shall be introduced in back of Esther’s station, after the Past Grand Matrons and Past Grand Patrons of Texas. The members will be called up and she will be escorted to the East and invited to remain in the East.

On the Official Visit **OR** if there is only one DGM in attendance, the **Conductress** will say:

“Worthy Matron, I have the pleasure of introducing Sister _____, Deputy Grand Matron, District __, Section __, Grand Chapter of Texas, Order of the Eastern Star.”

Deputies of Grand Chapter will be introduced together: District Deputy Grand Matrons by District, then the Deputy Grand Matrons, District, Name, and then Section as needed for each of the five Districts. The **Conductress** will say:

“Worthy Matron, I have the pleasure of introducing these Deputies of Grand Chapter: District Deputy Grand Matrons, Sister _____, District One, Sister _____, District Two, Sister _____, District Three, Sister _____, District Four, Sister _____, District Five; and Deputy Grand Matrons: Sisters _____, District One, Section 1, Sisters _____, District One, Section 2 (*and so on*); Sister _____, District Two, Section 1; Sister _____, District Two, Section 2; (*and so on*); Grand Chapter of Texas, Order of the Eastern Star.”

ORDER OF BUSINESS

The Order of Business is described in the Chapter By-Laws (COL, p. 177). After the reading of the minutes, such order may be suspended by unanimous consent or a two-thirds vote of the members present (COL, p. 177, Art. 258).

Meetings must begin at the time designated in the Chapter By-Laws. Meetings officially begin when the Worthy Patron strikes the first blow of the gavel (RIT p. 23).

In the Opening and Closing Ceremonies, the Worthy Matron gives one blow of the gavel ON the words “**business**” and “**closed**” (RIT p. 43 and 47). The Worthy Matron should always use the gavel with courtesy and consideration. She should close each order of business with one blow of the gavel and see that the business of the Chapter is conducted in an orderly and proper manner.

Officers and members, when desiring to speak, should stand, address the Worthy Matron or Presiding Officer, then wait for recognition before speaking. This is not only good parliamentary procedure, but is a courtesy which should be shown to the Presiding Officer.

PETITIONS

Petitions must be received at a Stated Meeting of the Chapter with the required fee attached. (COL, p. 141) All petitions must be signed by the applicant and recommended by two members of the petitioned Chapter (Ritual p. 167).

All petitions must be disposed of by ballot, unless the petitioner is ineligible or refuses to be personally interviewed by the Investigation Committee. After report of such statement to the Chapter, the initiation fee shall be returned to the petitioner, and the statements filed with the petition in the Chapter’s permanent records (COL, Art. 202f(2), p. 142).

INVESTIGATING COMMITTEE

The Worthy Matron appoints an Investigating Committee, consisting of two Sisters and one Brother, whose duty is to see that the petitioner is eligible. Members who signed the petition are not to be appointed to the Committee.

DUTIES OF THE INVESTIGATING COMMITTEE

The duties of the Committee are outlined in the Code of Laws, (Art. 201 - 202, p. 141-142) and the Ritual (p. 167). At least two members of the Committee shall visit the applicant preferably in his or her home and make a careful investigation as to the eligibility, character, residence, physical qualifications and fitness of the applicant to become a member of the Order.

The Brother assigned to the Investigation Committee has an important part to play other than visiting the petitioner. He is responsible for checking the Masonic relationship and Masonic standing of the Petitioner's relationship. Great care must be exercised in the performance of this duty. The Secretary of the Lodge of the Masonic relationship should be contacted directly, if possible, or you should contact the Grand Secretary of the Grand Lodge of Texas and ask for his assistance. Again, be thorough in your investigations. Please note that a Brother is required to sign the report of the Investigating Committee prior to balloting on the petition for membership.

The assignment of a Sister or Brother to an Investigating Committee is a great honor. Please inform the Candidate of the preferred Eastern Star dress code and to wear comfortable shoes for the Ceremony of Initiation. The physical requirements per Article 192 of our Code of Laws for the Initiation should be explained to the Candidate. This will allow time for a Special Dispensation before balloting on the petition should it be needed for the Candidate.

Always let the Candidate know how delighted we are to have her/him as a member. The Worthy Matron has expressed the utmost

faith in your ability to see that our Order only allows admission to those who are qualified.

PLURAL MEMBERSHIP

Plural Membership is recognized in the Grand Chapter of Texas (COL, p. 146-148). Study carefully all sections of Article 204 in the Code of Laws. Members of Texas Chapters and members of other Grand Jurisdictions within General Grand Chapter who recognize Plural Memberships and whom are in good standing and reside in Texas or other jurisdictions (state) are eligible for Plural memberships and may join as many chapters as they choose.

A petition for plural membership follows the same procedure as any other petition. It must be in writing, on the proper form, with the fee stated in the Chapter By-Laws, but never less than the per capita tax.

A duplicate current receipt for dues from a Texas Chapter or a Certificate of Good Standing from other Grand Jurisdictions must be attached to the petition.

Plural members have the same membership rights with the following exceptions:

1. Plural members may serve multiple Chapters simultaneously in ELECTIVE OFFICES but may not serve as Worthy Matron in more than one (1) Chapter simultaneously or Secretary in more than one (1) Chapter simultaneously or Treasurer in more than one (1) Chapter simultaneously. (COL, p.166, c). Plural members are allowed to serve as Worthy Matron in one Chapter while serving as Secretary or Treasurer in another Chapter.
2. A Plural member cannot sign as a Charter member on a Petition for a new Chapter.
3. Plural members cannot be given a demit from their plural Chapters. If they are not an elected Officer, they may

petition for Withdrawal of Membership. A Petition for Withdrawal may be presented at a stated meeting and, if no objection is raised, shall be granted as of that date, and the dues will be refunded on a pro-rated basis. The Secretary of the petitioned Chapter shall notify the parent Chapter and other plural Chapters of the action taken.

4. A Plural member suspended or expelled after trial in one of the Chapters would have the same effect in all Chapters (*Parent and Plural*). The Secretary of the Chapter from which the member was suspended or expelled would notify the other Chapters under the seal of the Chapter.

A plural member suspended for non-payment of dues in the parent Chapter would have the same effect in the plural Chapters. The Secretary of the parent Chapter would notify the plural Chapters under the seal of the Parent chapter. If suspended from a plural Chapter for non-payment of dues, then the suspension would not affect the parent Chapter. The Secretary of the plural Chapter would notify the parent Chapter of such suspension under the seal of the plural Chapter.

PLURAL CHAPTER DESIGNATION AS PARENT CHAPTER

Should a Plural member wish to change their designated Parent Chapter, she/he should complete the Designation of Parent Chapter Form and submit it along with the \$10 fee to the Grand Chapter of Texas. The Parent Chapter designation will be changed in the Membership Database and notifications will be sent to the appropriate Chapters. The required form may be found on the Grand Chapter Website. (COL, p 148).

BALLOTING

We should never allow personal reasons to interfere with our Obligation when balloting. ALWAYS place moral character and qualifications first. The Worthy Grand Matron believes that if we stand before an open Holy Bible when balloting, we would be reminded of our obligation and cast our ballot for the good of the Order. For this reason, the Worthy Grand Matron requests that all balloting be at the Altar.

Instructions for balloting are found in the Code of Laws (p. 157-164), and the Ritual (p. 13-15). The Worthy Matron should read through all instructions thoroughly to be well prepared when the Chapter will be balloting upon a petition.

1. All petitions must lie over four weeks before a ballot can be acted upon.
2. The Investigating Committee must report before a ballot can be taken.
3. Balloting must be done at a Stated Meeting.
4. A Brother must be present and serving as Worthy Patron.
5. A petition cannot be withdrawn after it has been read in Chapter.
6. No member is to enter during balloting, and members may only leave with the permission of the Presiding Officer.
7. Collective balloting allows the Chapter to ballot on more than one petitioner at a time if they are of the same class, such as two petitioners for the degrees. Petitions for affiliation and for transfer shall be considered as belonging to the same class (COL, p. 159).
8. The Worthy Matron declares the ballot clear if no more than two black cubes appear. In the event three black cubes

appear on the first ballot, a second and final ballot shall be taken.

9. The contents of the ballot are to be known only by the WM, WP, AM, and AP who examine the ballot, and it must be kept secret.
10. The Secretary, and only the Secretary, is to notify a petitioner of the results of the ballot.

Only members of the Chapter in which the ballot is being taken are entitled to vote.

The discussion of the ballot is an absolute violation of our laws, and the penalty for discussion is reprimand, suspension or expulsion from the Order (COL, Art. 218g, p. 159).

After the Secretary has read the Report of the Investigating Committee, the Worthy Matron will call for the ballot.

The Associate Conductress is directed by the Worthy Matron to prepare the ballot box. Even though she has already determined prior to the meeting that it is properly prepared, she again checks the ballot box in the presence of the membership. A properly prepared ballot box contains as many white balls as there are members of the Chapter present and at least ten (10) black cubes (COL, Art. 214, p. 157).

Some Altars in our Chapter rooms are small and may not have enough room for the ballot box without moving the Bible to allow extra space. Should this be the case, the Conductress may informally enter the Labyrinth between Ruth and Esther and reverently move the Bible slight over to allow room for the ballot box. She should then take one step back, turn and return to her station. This should be done while the Associate Conductress is taking the ballot box to the East to prepare for taking the ballot.

BALLOTING AT THE ALTAR

1. When the Worthy Matron instructs the Associate Conductress to prepare the ballot box, she will inspect the ballot box and then takes it to the East. She places the ballot box where the Worthy Matron and Worthy Patron can examine it then steps to the side and faces West.
2. After the Worthy Matron and Worthy Patron examine the ballot box, the Worthy Matron declares the ballot open with one blow of the gavel.
3. The Associate Conductress presents the ballot box to the Worthy Matron and Worthy Patron for them to ballot. To ensure the secrecy of the ballot, the WP should be seated while the WM ballots, and then the WM is seated while the WP ballots.
4. The Associate Conductress shall bear the ballot box to the Organist and the Warder for their ballots. If there are members on the North side and/or the South side with a physical impairment that would prevent them from walking to the Altar, the Associate Conductress may bear the ballot box to them individually. They should stand to cast their ballot, if possible.
5. The Associate Conductress enters the Labyrinth from the Southwest corner between Esther and Ruth, places the ballot box on the Altar, at the left of the Holy Bible, and gives the Salutation Sign to the open Holy Bible. After she receives the response from the East, she casts her ballot. She takes one step back, turns to the left, and leaves the Labyrinth between Esther and Martha, squaring her corners, goes across the West marching line toward the Southwest corner. At a point even with Ruth's station, she turns left and marches directly to the back of Ruth's station taking her position facing the Altar and observes the balloting.

6. The Officers are called up with two blows of the gavel and ballot in the following order: Associate Matron, Associate Patron, Conductress, Secretary, Marshal, Adah, Ruth, Esther, Martha, Electa, Treasurer and Chaplain.

The Worthy Grand Matron prefers that the Worthy Matron does not call the order in which the Officers ballot.

The Officers remain standing until they are seated by the Worthy Matron.

If Pro-tem Officers are not members of the Chapter, they will stand at their stations while the Officers ballot.

7. The Worthy Matron seats the Officers with one blow of the gavel.
8. The Worthy Matron will then ask the members on the South to stand and cast their ballots, beginning in the Southeast. The members in the North will then be asked to cast their ballots, beginning in the Northeast. Since the members are not called up by the gavel, they are seated when they return to their places in the Chapter Room.
9. The Worthy Matron will ask a member, other than the Warder, to take the place of the Sentinel so that she/he may ballot.

The Sentinel enters wearing her/his badge, and gives the Salutation Sign.

The Worthy Matron states the information on the petition. The Sentinel enters the Labyrinth, gives the Salutation Sign to the Holy Bible, and casts her/his ballot. She/he takes one step back, turns to the left, returns to the West marching line, gives the Salutation Sign and returns to her/his station outside the door.

10. When the Ballot is declared closed and the Worthy Matron instructs the Associate Conductress to bear the Ballot to the West.
11. The Associate Conductress turns to her left and marches to the West marching line. She then enters the Labyrinth, picks up the ballot box and backs out of the Labyrinth. (Reminder, if necessary, the Associate Conductress may take one step back, turn and walk out of the Labyrinth). She then marches to the Northwest corner turns and marches South along the West marching line. The Associate Conductress places the ballot box on the pedestal in the West and stands to the right of and in front of the Associate Matron facing East.

DECLARING THE BALLOT

In declaring the ballot, if there are one or two black cubes in the ballot box, the Associate Matron, when asked how she finds the ballot, will say "Clear," as will the Worthy Patron when he is asked. If the ballot is NOT CLEAR (*three black cubes*) the Worthy Matron declares that a second and final ballot will be taken.

If it is a collective ballot, the Petitions would be separated and each balloted on individually.

If there are more than three black cubes, the Worthy Matron will declare the petition rejected. After she destroys the ballot, she must follow with the admonition to the members that they are not to discuss the outcome of the ballot (COL, p. 162). By doing this, no member can plead ignorance of this law. The declaration of ballots is found in the Code of Laws (p. 162-164).

ADDITIONAL NOTES:

The Response will be given each time by the Presiding Officer. REMEMBER: The Salutation Sign is not complete until the Response is given and the Response to the sign should always be given from a standing position.

The Worthy Matron should always inform the Sentinel when there is to be balloting so that she/he may be prepared to enter the Chapter Room and perform her/his duties without any embarrassment to her/him. Should the Sentinel be a new member, the Worthy Matron should give instructions on the proper manner of entering the Chapter Room and for balloting. The Sentinel will wear the badge of office when entering to ballot.

SUGGESTED WORDING FOR BALLOTING AT THE ALTAR

WM: "Sisters and Brothers, we are about to ballot on the Petition for:

- A. The degrees of _____**
- B. Affiliation by Transfer/Demit of _____**
- C. Reinstatement of _____**
- D. Plural Membership of _____**

WM: The report of the Committee is favorable. Remember the white balls elect, the black cubes reject. Be careful how you ballot. Remember your Obligation and vote for the good of the Order. Only members of this Chapter may ballot upon this petition, and all members of this Chapter who are present are entitled to ballot."

WM: "Sister Associate Conductress, you will prepare the ballot box."

(The Associate Conductress inspects the ballot box and takes it to the East where it is examined by the Worthy Matron and Worthy Patron.)

WM: “We will ballot at the Altar. I now declare the ballot open.”
*(On the word open, give one blow of the gavel.) **

The Worthy Matron and Worthy Patron each cast their ballot. The Associate Conductress takes the ballot box to the Organist, Warder and any physically limited member to cast their ballots.

The Associate Conductress enters the Labyrinth by making an acute angle between Ruth’s and Esther’s stations. She places the ballot box on the Altar *(at the left of the open Holy Bible)*, gives the Salutation Sign to the Holy Bible *(not to the Worthy Matron)* and casts her ballot, takes one step back, turns left toward Martha and leaves the Labyrinth between Esther’s and Martha’s stations; turns to her left, crosses the West marching line toward the Southwest corner. At a point even with Ruth’s station, she turns left and marches directly to the back of Ruth’s station taking her position facing the Altar and observes the balloting.

WM: “The officers will approach the altar and cast their ballots.”
*(Officers are called up.) ***

When Adah leaves her station, it is a cue for the Officers on the North side to leave their stations.

All members approach the Altar from the West between Ruth and Esther. There must be at least one member balloting, one at the edge of the Labyrinth and one at the Southwest corner. If room allows, there may be additional members between the edge of the Labyrinth and the Southwest corner. The remaining members line up across the West marching line. Each member will approach the Altar and give the Salutation Sign to the Holy Bible. The WM responds. The member deposits the ballot; takes one step back, turns toward Martha and walks out of the Labyrinth between Esther and Martha, returns to her or his station and remains standing until the WM seats all Officers.

*(WM seats the Officers with one blow of the gavel.) **

WM: “Members on the South side of the room will stand, form a line beginning in the Southeast and ballot.”

(When they reach their places, they will be seated; the Worthy Matron did not call them up.)

WM: “Members on the North side of the room will stand, form a line beginning in the Northeast and ballot.” (Again, these members will be seated.)

The Worthy Matron then appoints a member to take the place of the Sentinel. The Sentinel enters wearing her/his badge, goes to a position in back of Esther’s station, and gives the Salutation Sign.

The Worthy Matron instructs the Sentinel from pages 13 and 14 of the Ritual.

WM: “Sister/Brother Sentinel...” (RIT P. 14)

The Sentinel approaches the Altar and gives the Salutation Sign to the open Holy Bible, casts her/his ballot takes one step back, turns left toward Martha’s station and leaves the Labyrinth. The Sentinel will give the Salutation Sign to leave the Chapter Room. The Warder will give the appropriate raps for the Sentinel to enter and leave the Chapter Room.

WM: “Sister Associate Conductress...” (RIT p. 14)

Having ascertained from the Associate Conductress that all have balloted who are entitled, the WM declares the ballot closed.

WM: “I now...” (RIT p. 14)

*(Worthy Matron strikes one blow of the gavel.)**

WM: “Sister Associate Conductress...”(R.P.14)

The Associate Conductress turns to her left and marches to the West marching line. She then enters the Labyrinth between

Ruth and Esther, picks up the ballot box and backs out of the Labyrinth.

(REMINDER, if necessary, the Associate Conductress may take one step back, turn and walk out of the Labyrinth).

She then marches to the Northwest corner turns and marches South on the West marching line to a point in front of the Associate Matron's station. The Associate Matron or Associate Patron would clear the pedestal so there would be room for the Associate Conductress to place the ballot box securely on the pedestal. The Associate Conductress places ballot box on pedestal in the West and stands to the right of Associate Matron facing the East. The Associate Matron and Associate Patron stand and examine the ballot box, reporting findings to the Worthy Matron (RIT p. 14 and 15).

WM: "Sister Associate Matron" (RIT p. 14 & 15).

(If the ballot contains one or two black cubes, the response is "clear", if three or more, the response is "not clear".)

WM: "Sister Associate Conductress,..." (RIT P. 14)

(The WM & WP examine the ballot box as stated in the Ritual on page 14 & 15).

WM: "Worthy Patron, how do " (RIT P. 15)

If the ballot is clear, the Worthy Matron declares the ballot (RIT p. 15).

WM: "The ballot being " (RIT p. 15)

If three black cubes are present, the WM does not declare the ballot. She destroys it and calls for a second and final ballot, which is done in same manner. If the result of a collective ballot is "not clear", the petitions are separated and balloted on individually.

If there are four or more black cubes, there will be no second ballot; the WM declares it.

WM: “The ballot not being...” (RIT p. 15) and destroys the ballot.

WM: “Any member who shall report to non-members the name of a rejected petitioner or the names of the members present, shall be subject to reprimand by the Worthy Matron or the Worthy Patron in open Chapter, or to trial; and if convicted shall be subject to reprimand, suspension or expulsion from the Order.” (COL, Article 220)

PASSING THE BALLOT

1. After the Worthy Matron has declared the ballot open, the Associate Conductress presents the ballot box to the Worthy Matron and Worthy Patron to cast their ballots.
2. The Worthy Matron will direct the Associate Conductress to pass the ballot box (COL, Art. 219B, p. 160). The Associate Conductress casts her ballot while the ballot box is on the podium in the East.
3. The Associate Conductress then bears the ballot box to all members along the North, West and South sides of the room, passing it to all members and Officers as she reaches them. Each member should rise to cast her/his ballot, if physically possible.
4. She then returns to a position in the West in front of the Associate Matron to wait for further direction from the Worthy Matron.
5. The Worthy Matron will appoint a member to take the place of the Sentinel and the Sentinel is invited in to ballot. The

Sentinel enters the Chapter Room in the prescribed manner, wearing the badge of office and is informed of the information on the petition. The Associate Conductress would hold the ballot box, face the Sentinel and allow her/him to cast her/his ballot. Whichever manner of balloting is used, if the Sentinel is to ballot, that Officer will be invited in to ballot after all others have balloted.

Regardless of the method of balloting, after the Sentinel has balloted and retired, the Worthy Matron would ascertain if all members have balloted, declare the ballot closed and direct the Associate Conductress to place the ballot box on the pedestal in the West which has been cleared to allow for placement of the ballot box. The Associate Conductress then assumes her position as instructed in our Ritual (p 14).

SUGGESTED WORDING FOR PASSING THE BALLOT

WM: “We will pass the ballot. I now declare the ballot open.”

*(On the word “open”, the Worthy Matron will give a blow of the gavel.) **

The Worthy Matron, Worthy Patron, and Associate Conductress cast their ballots while the ballot box is in the East. Then the Associate Conductress will pass the ballot box to all members along the North, West and South sides of the room, passing it to all members and Officers as she reaches them. The member will stand to cast their ballot, if they are able to stand.

When all members in the Chapter Room have balloted, the Associate Conductress stands back of Esther’s station facing East.

After all have cast their ballots, the Worthy Matron then appoints a member to take the place of the Sentinel. The Sentinel is invited into the Chapter Room to cast her/his ballot

back of Esther's station in the same manner as if balloting at the Altar.

The Worthy Matron instructs the Sentinel from pages 13 and 14 of the Ritual.

WM: "Sister/Brother Sentinel..." (RIT p. 14)

The Sentinel will give the Salutation Sign to leave the Chapter Room. The Warder will give the appropriate raps for the Sentinel to enter and leave the Chapter Room. When the Sentinel has returned to her/his station, the Worthy Matron will continue as stated on pages 14 of the Ritual.

WM: "Sister Associate Conductress..." (RIT p. 14)

Having ascertained from the Associate Conductress that all have balloted who are entitled, the WM declares the ballot closed.

WM: "I now..." (RIT p. 14)

(Worthy Matron strikes one blow of the gavel.)*

WM: "Sister Associate Conductress..." (RIT p. 14)

She then marches to the Northwest corner turns and marches South on the West marching line to a point in front of the Associate Matron's station. The Associate Matron or Associate Patron would clear the pedestal so there would be room for the Associate Conductress to place the ballot box securely on the pedestal. The Associate Conductress places ballot box on pedestal in the West and stands to the right of Associate Matron facing the East. The Associate Matron and Associate Patron stand and examine the ballot box, reporting findings to the Worthy Matron (RIT p. 14-15).

WM: "Sister Associate Matron..." (RIT p. 14-15).

(If the ballot contains one or two black cubes, the response is "clear", if three or more, the response is "not clear".)

WM: “Sister Associate Conductress,...” (RIT p. 14)

The WM & WP examine the ballot box (RIT p. 14-15).

WM: “Worthy Patron, how do...” (RIT p. 15)

If the ballot is clear, the Worthy Matron declares the ballot. (RIT p. 15).

WM: “The ballot being...” (RIT p. 15)

If three (3) black cubes are present, the WM does not declare the ballot. She destroys it and calls for a second and final ballot, which is done in same manner. If the result of a collective ballot is “not clear”, the petitions are separated and balloted on individually.

If there are four (4) or more black cubes, there will be no second ballot; the WM declares it.

WM: “The ballot not being...” (RIT p. 15) and destroys the ballot.

WM: “Any member who shall report to non-members the name of a rejected petitioner or the names of the members present, shall be subject to reprimand by the Worthy Matron or the Worthy Patron in open Chapter, or to trial; and if convicted shall be subject to reprimand, suspension or expulsion from the Order.” (COL. Article 220)

INITIATION

The Ceremony of Initiation is one of the most beautiful parts of our Ritualistic work, and in order for the candidate(s) to receive favorable impressions from this work, it is important that all the Officers strive to perform their work with courtesy, dignity, and by memory.

CHAPTER ROOM PREPARED

The Chapter Room should be prepared for the initiatory ceremony prior to the Opening.

- There should be a small Holy Bible for each Candidate placed on the Altar.
- It is at the discretion of the Worthy Matron as to whether or not flowers or ribbons are to be used. If she so chooses, they are placed at the Marshal's station to be distributed at the proper time. As a suggestion, this could be done while the Associate Conductress is preparing the candidate or placed on the Star Point pedestals prior to the meeting. *(See suggested Flower or Ribbon Presentation on page 96 of these Instructions.)*
- The lighted Signet should be prepared.

WORTHY PATRON

Since the Worthy Patron is charged with the duty of seeing that the Ritualistic work is properly rendered, it is suggested that only he prompt from his position in the East. However, he may request that the Associate Patron prompt from the West.

LIGHTING

The Warder or Officer who controls the lighting should be instructed as to the proper time to turn down the lights and when the lights should be turned up (RIT p. 59).

- Lights may be turned down when the candidate is to be admitted to the Chapter Room.
- Lights are turned back on after the Obligation and the Worthy Patron extends his hand to the new member.

ASSOCIATE CONDUCTRESS

The Associate Conductress has the responsibility of preparing the candidate(s) for the Ceremony of Initiation. She would inform the candidate(s) that hats and gloves are not worn in the Chapter Room while the Chapter is in session with the exception of religious or medical reasons. (RIT p. 50).

Once in the Preparation Room the lecture given by the Associate Conductress is part of the Candidate's first impression of her/his Ceremony of Initiation. Great care should be taken to ensure that the lecture is given by memory.

When the Conductress leads the Candidate into the Chapter Room the Associate Conductress follows until the Conductress and the Candidate are in place and facing North. The Associate Conductress then returns to close the door to the Preparation Room.

CONDUCTRESS

The Conductress should thoroughly study her lectures and the Diagram of the Labyrinth prior to the Ceremony of Initiation. Practicing the weaving of the Labyrinth will help the Conductress to lead the Candidate through the Initiation with beauty and dignity.

STAR POINTS

- While the Associate Conductress is preparing the candidate(s), Adah will arrange her veil and Esther her crown. This is the appropriate time for the Ribbon Presentation mentioned above.
- The Star Point Officers may use gestures when giving their lectures if the Worthy Matron so chooses; however, if one

uses the gestures, all of the Star Point Officers would use them. The Worthy Grand Matron prefers the gestures to be given as they are very effective and impressive.

- When approached by the Conductress and new member, the Star Point should wait until she is addressed by the Conductress.
- The lectures should be delivered in a solemn and sincere manner as this is the member's first impression of our Order and should be for good.
- Since the pedestals may be placed at the side, in front or in back of the Star Point chairs, these Officers will be governed accordingly in handling their emblems. If the pedestals are at the side of or in back of the chairs, the Star Point Officer goes back of her pedestal, picks up her emblem, returns to her former position and then explains the significance of the emblem. If the pedestal is in front of the Star Point Officer, she may simply lift the emblem without further movement. The emblem is lifted with the right hand and rested on the palm of the left hand while the Star Point Officer explains the significance of the emblem.

NOTE: Do not walk and talk at the same time. The Star Point Officer remains in position, holding her emblem, until the Conductress, Associate Conductress and the candidate(s) have passed her station. Then, she would place the emblem on the pedestal and be seated.

LEADING THE CANDIDATE(S) IN THE CHAPTER ROOM

The only time the Conductress offers her left arm to the candidate(s) is when they enter the Chapter Room. If there are two (2) candidates, the Associate Conductress offers her right arm to the second candidate.

The candidate(s) will be led inside the door and caused to face the North. The Associate Conductress then closes the Preparation Room door and returns to the line.

Immediately after her lecture, the Conductress extends her right arm to the candidate and proceeds along the North marching line. (The Associate Conductress would be seated when she reaches her station in the North if there is only one candidate.) The Associate Conductress offers her left arm to the second candidate, and follows behind the Conductress and the first candidate.

If there are three (3) or more candidates, the Conductress will organize them in pairs, with the Associate Conductress following behind. When presenting the candidate(s) to the Associate Matron the Conductress will countermarch to the North and South marching lines.

PREPARING FOR THE OBLIGATION

If there is more than one candidate, the Associate Conductress will assist the Conductress in demonstrating the position of the hands when holding the Holy Bible at the Altar. The Conductress and Associate Conductress take the Holy Bibles in their hands as the Conductress gives the instructions audibly. As the instructions are being given, they demonstrate the proper manner of holding the Holy Bible. After the instruction is completed, the Holy Bibles are placed in the hands of the candidates in readiness for the Obligation given by the Worthy Patron.

AFTER THE OBLIGATION

The Worthy Patron should avoid reaching across the open Holy Bible in assisting the member(s) to their feet following the Obligation. He addresses each one individually, calling them "Sister" or "Brother". This is the first time the title of "Sister" or "Brother" is conferred upon them.

The Conductress and Associate Conductress, with the member(s), remain standing at the Altar until the Worthy Patron has seated the Chapter. The Worthy Patron, Associate Patron or a Brother may recite the verses of Scripture (RIT p. 60).

In presenting the member(s) to the various Star Points, the Conductress, Associate Conductress and the member(s) should form a straight line, centering the line on the Officer addressed so that a perfect triangle is formed.

PRAYER CIRCLE

The Diagram of the Labyrinth should be studied carefully for the proper position of the Officers in the Prayer Circle (RIT p. 181). We need to remember that our Associate Patron is part of the Prayer Circle. Only with practice can this particular ceremony be performed effectively (RIT p. 78-79).

It is impressive for the new member to walk into the Prayer Circle of her/his Sisters and Brothers holding hands and waiting for her/him to join them. The Officers should remain in the circle until the Conductress and new member have returned to their place in the East. Thus they do not see the Prayer Circle dissolve. Their memory will be of the completed circle.

When the Worthy Patron calls up the Chapter for the Prayer, all officers shall immediately begin moving to their places in the Prayer Circle.

1. All Star Point Officers go around the back of their stations to assume their positions.
2. The Officers join hands as soon as the Chaplain reaches the Altar, and the members assume the Reverent Attitude.
3. As the Officers assume their positions in the Prayer Circle, the Conductress will offer her right arm to the new member as they countermarch to form a straight line in the East, facing West.

4. With all Officers in their places in the circle, and having joined hands, the Conductress and the new member advance to join the circle between Adah and the Worthy Matron (RIT p. 181, Diagram #11).

If there is more than one new member, the Conductress, Associate Conductress and all new members countermarch single file to form a straight line in the East, facing West. Again, when all Officers are in their places in the circle, and having joined hands, the Conductresses guide the new members to march abreast to join the circle (RIT p. 182, Diagram #12).

It is important to remember that the Circle of joined hands is not complete until the Chaplain says the words "golden chain thus lengthened". If there is one member, the Worthy Matron will take her/his hand and the Conductress joins hand with the new member and thus, closes the Circle. If there is more than one member, then the Associate Conductress will take the hand of the new member making sure that she/he takes the hand of the other new member.

After the ode has been sung, the Conductress, Associate Conductress and new members countermarch single file within the Labyrinth and then march abreast to their former position in the East as the remaining Officers return to their stations in the same manner in which their positions were assumed.

The Worthy Patron (as he is presiding over the initiation) seats the Chapter after all Officers are in their stations.

SECRET WORK, SIGNS AND PASSES

When assisting the Worthy Patron by demonstrating the Signs and Passes, the Conductress would hold the Sign until the Pass is given. The Secret Work (17) is dialogue between the Worthy Patron and the Conductress. When the Cabalistic Word and Motto are given, the Conductress should address the new member(s). The Conductress gives the Grip of the Order to each new member and returns to her former position by going behind the new members.

REMINDER: Members should not enter or leave the Chapter Room during the Ceremony of Initiation unless an extreme emergency, especially during the lectures. This causes much distraction to both the candidate and the Officers.

BIG SISTER OR BIG BROTHER TRADITION

To stimulate interest and prevent embarrassment, the Worthy Matron should appoint a member (*Big Sister or Big Brother*) to instruct the new members on Chapter Courtesies and basic requirements such as the following:

1. How to enter and retire from a Chapter while in session
2. How to obey the gavel
3. How to give Grand Honors and to whom
4. How to ballot
5. The Secret Work
6. What is required in visiting a Chapter
7. Chapter courtesies
8. To sign the receipt for dues card
9. How to obtain a Ritual and Constitution and Code of Law

ELECTION OF OFFICERS

The first eight Officers shall be elected annually at a Stated Meeting during April, or at a later date under a Special Dispensation from the Worthy Grand Matron (COL, Art. 226, p. 166). Election is held under the Order of New Business. The election shall be by ballot and a majority of all votes cast shall be necessary for a decision. Each Officer will be elected separately. It is illegal to appoint a Nominating Committee and elect a Slate of Officers.

The Worthy Matron may request that the Worthy Patron preside during election of Officers. The Presiding Officer should first appoint three (3) tellers, and name one as Chairman. The Chairman of the Tellers gives the Presiding Officer the result of an election, and the Presiding Officer declares the election. There must be paper and pencils at the Secretary's desk prior to the election. It does not matter who provides these items. However, as noted in previous instructions, it is ALWAYS the Worthy Matron's final responsibility to have all items necessary in readiness for a Chapter meeting.

Before proceeding with the Election, the Presiding Officer will ask the members to stand and count off, beginning with the Worthy Matron and the Worthy Patron, and including the Sentinel if she/he is a member of the Chapter. Each member is seated after calling out their number. If members enter during an election, the Warder should report the same to the Presiding Officer.

The following instructions should be read to the members prior to the election:

- In nominating a candidate only the name of the person and the office for which that person is nominated may be given.
- Nominations need not be seconded.

- Any member desiring to make a nomination will stand, address the Presiding Officer and wait for recognition before placing the nomination.
- The Presiding Officer may declare nominations closed after she/he has allowed sufficient time for any other nominations.
- It is not necessary to move the nominations cease.
- If there is only one nominee, election is by acclamation, which means “by voice.”

The following procedure is suggested to assist the Presiding Officer:

Presiding Officer: “Nominations are now in order for the office of _____ of this Chapter for the ensuing year.” *(Give sufficient time for all nominations.)*

Member: *(Stands and addresses Presiding Officer)* “It is with pleasure that I nominate Sister/Brother _____ for the office of _____ OF THIS CHAPTER FOR THE ENSUING YEAR.”

Presiding Officer: “Sister/Brother _____ has been nominated for the office of _____ of this Chapter for the ensuing year. Are there other nominations?”

(After waiting a reasonable length of time)

I declare, the nominations for the office of _____ closed. Sister/ Brother , if elected, are you willing to serve in this office? *(If the nomination is declined, nominations for that office will be reopened.)* We will proceed to elect by acclamation” *(by voice)*. All those in favor of electing Sister/Brother _____ to the office of _____ of this Chapter for the

ensuing year will please let it be known by saying "Aye." Those opposed by saying "No."

Presiding Officer: "Sister/Brother _____, having received a majority of the votes (or unanimous vote), I declare her/him elected _____ of this Chapter for the ensuing year."

If more than one nomination is received for any one office, after sufficient time for other nominations has been given, the **Presiding Officer** will say:

"I now declare the nominations closed, and we will proceed to elect by ballot."

The Tellers count the ballots within the Chapter Room and the Chairman addresses the Presiding Officer and reads the following report:

Number of votes cast	
Number of votes necessary, to elect	
Number of votes received by the candidate	
Number of votes received by the candidate	

If a candidate has received a majority of the votes, the Presiding Officer makes the following declaration:

"Having received a majority of all votes cast, I declare Sister/Brother _____ elected to the office of _____ of this Chapter for the ensuing year. Sister/Brother, do you accept?"

If, on one ballot, no one candidate has received a majority of the votes, the name with the lowest number of votes will be dropped and the ballot will continue until an election is declared. Should two or more candidates tie on the lowest number of votes, all tied shall be dropped, provided there is more than one candidate left.

INSTALLATION OF OFFICERS

Explicit instructions for both an Open or Closed Installation Ceremony are given in the Ritual (p. 93-126) and the Code of Laws, (Art. 227, p. 167). All Officers of Chartered Chapters shall be installed from June 1 to June 23, both days included, without a Special Dispensation, provided the Installation is held in the regular meeting place (COL, Art 227, p. 167).

If your Installation is outside your regular meeting place, you must have a Special Dispensation. Such Dispensations shall be requested by the vote of the Chapter. The request is on the prescribed form under the Seal of the Chapter and accompanied by a \$3.00 Dispensation Fee.

No Officer can be installed who has not paid Chapter dues for the year during which she/he shall serve in said office.

If the Open Installation is to be held in the Masonic Lodge, the Chapter must obtain permission from the Master of the Lodge. A letter must be written by the Chapter Secretary, under the Seal of the Chapter, as soon as possible after election requesting permission to use the Masonic Lodge on the date selected by the Worthy Matron-elect. We must always show our complete respect to our Masonic Brothers and their property. It would be an additional courtesy to invite the Worshipful Master of the Lodge and his family to attend and to be a part of the Installation program by perhaps bringing the Invocation or Benediction, a Welcome, or to bring Greetings. This would also encourage future membership into the Eastern Star.

Should the Open Installation be held on the same night as the Stated Meeting, the Chapter must be opened and closed in Ritualistic Form, and then the regular procedure for an Open Installation would be followed.

Remember that only members of the Order may participate in the Ritualistic portion of the Installation Ceremony. However, non-members may assist in the non-Ritualistic portions of the program.

It is the Worthy Matron-elect's prerogative to select those members who are to be her Installing Officers, but the Installing Officer must be a Present or Past Matron or Present or Past Patron. Our Ritual clearly states the rank of the Installing Officer determines the title of all other Assisting Officers (RIT p. 94-96). The Worthy Matron-elect should ensure that all arrangements are complete.

It is the duty of the Secretary of the Chapter to furnish the Installing Marshal with a list of the Officers to be installed (RIT p. 93), and to ensure that there is one (1) copy of the Secret Work, a current copy of the Constitution and Code of Laws, and a copy of the Chapter By-Laws on the pedestal in the East.

The Installing Secretary may write the Installation minutes or take notes so that the Chapter Secretary may write the minutes of the Installation Ceremony.

An extra chair is placed at the left of the Marshal's station for the Installing Marshal and at the right of the Chaplain's station for the Installing Chaplain. Extra chairs are also placed near the piano and the Secretary's desk. Enough chairs for the Officers to be installed should be placed close by for ease in setting up during the recess to prepare for the installation.

INSTRUCTIONS FOR AN INSTALLING OFFICER

The Installing Officer shall not install into office the Worthy Matron-elect or the Worthy Patron-elect until she/he is satisfied, by separate examination, that they know the Secret Work. If the Worthy Matron-elect or the Worthy Patron-elect shows a current Certificate of Proficiency (A or B), this will excuse her/him from the examination.

INSTRUCTIONS FOR INSTALLING MARSHAL

During the recess, it is the Installing Marshal's responsibility to:

- Have the Officers to be installed lined up properly in the Preparation Room.
- Collect the Officers badges and place them on the Altar in proper order. Also, it is important to remember that our Ritual states that the badges of the Officers will be placed on the Altar.
- In placing the Officers' badges on the Altar the Installing Marshal will:
 1. Enter through the South door along the South marching line.
 2. Turn at the West marching line and proceed to the North.
 3. Turn at the North marching line and proceed toward the East.
 4. The Installing Marshal will enter the Labyrinth in front of Martha's station.
 5. She/he reverently approaches the Altar and places the badges upon the Altar.
 6. Retracing her/his steps the Installing Marshal retires through the South door and awaits with the other Installing Officers for the Call to Order by the Installing Officer.

The Installing Marshal is also responsible for having the appropriate number of chairs placed in a semi-circle in the West for the incoming Officers. Unless the Chapter Room is extremely crowded, the Worthy Grand Matron prefers that the chairs be left in the

semi-circle until the Installation Ceremony is complete (RIT p. 94).

Please note that no one enters the Labyrinth except the Installing Marshal as she/he prepares for the Ceremony of Installation and as she/he performs her/his duties during the Installation Ceremony.

The Diagram of the Labyrinth for Installation should be followed explicitly. The Installing Marshal will square the room before approaching the chairs to seat the Officers to be installed when they enter the Chapter Room (RIT p. 189, Diagram #19). The Installing Marshal is to return to a position at the head of the line of Officers after the Installation of each Officer (RIT p. 94).

When the Marshal is instructed to declare the Officers installed, she/he shall proceed to the West side of the Altar by entering the Labyrinth in front of Ruth's station. She/he places her left hand on the open Holy Bible, and with her/his right hand uplifted, makes the proclamation. She/he returns to her station in the same manner as she/he entered the Labyrinth (COL, Art. 227b, p. 167).

SUGGESTED OUTLINE FOR OPEN INSTALLATION

The following is simply a suggested outline for the Worthy Matron-elect to follow. Please study the Ritual (p. 93-126) carefully along with the Diagram of the Labyrinth.

MASTER OF CEREMONIES

She/he would enter first for the purpose of announcing ceremonies and introducing program participants. Having someone "lead or direct" the activities creates structure and direction to an Installation.

MUSICAL PRELUDE

As music always sets the mood for any ceremony, either the Chapter Organist, or the one to be Installing Organist should provide appropriate selections. This is also a place where a non-

member (only during an Open Installation) may participate in providing special musical selections. If this is an Open Installation, be sure to remember that you are giving non-members an insight into our Order.

PRESENTATIONS

Non-members may participate in presenting the Square and Compasses, the Holy Bible, flowers, the Star Point emblems or other chosen items of the Worthy Matron-elect. If the Flag is presented, it should be presented at this time. However, when the meeting is called to order, this is the beginning of the Ritualistic Installation Ceremony and only members may participate. The Worthy Matron-elect and Worthy Patron-elect should be in the Chapter Room to witness these presentations.

CALL TO ORDER

To begin the Installation, the Worthy Patron, Associate Patron and Organist assume their stations without ceremony. The Worthy Patron ascends the dais, and gives one blow of the gavel. Nothing is said at this time by the Worthy Patron.

ENTRANCE OF OFFICERS

Immediately after the Call to Order by the Worthy Patron, the Officers enter and directly assume their stations without invitation or escort. It is suggested that the Worthy Matron and Associate Matron exchange sides in the entrance march in order for the Worthy Matron to assume her station in a convenient manner.

OPENING OF THE HOLY BIBLE

The Worthy Matron instructs the Conductress to open the Holy Bible and calls up the Chapter. The Holy Bible is opened without ceremony (*this means no bowing or Salutation Sign*). The Conductress goes directly to the Altar from her station, entering the Labyrinth in front of Ruth's station. The members will assume the Reverent Attitude. She opens the Holy Bible to the Second Chapter

of Matthew and places the Square and Compasses thereon as usual. The Conductress leaves the Labyrinth in front of Ruth's station and returns to her station.

THE LORD'S PRAYER

This is recited in unison, after which the Worthy Matron gives one blow of the gavel and declares the Chapter open for the purpose of the Ceremony of Installation of Officers. If a Special Dispensation is required, the Worthy Matron will inquire of the Secretary if same has been granted, but there is no need to read the dispensation.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The Pledge to the United States Flag must be given, and should be led by the Worthy Patron.

SINGING OF THE NATIONAL ANTHEM

Please remember that we salute the Flag while the National Anthem is being sung. The Worthy Matron then seats the audience.

WELCOME

The Worthy Matron should extend brief greetings in order to make everyone feel welcomed. Then, she should recognize Distinguished Members and may have them escorted to the East. Grand Honors may be given to those entitled to receive them, or they may be extended a warm welcome of applause. As a reminder, this is an Open Installation, and courtesies normally done at a closed meeting do not need to be done at this time.

PRESENTATION OF INSTALLING OFFICER

If the Installing Officer has not previously been escorted to the East, then the Worthy Matron would direct the Conductress and Associate Conductress or the Marshal to escort her/him to the East, and the Worthy Matron would introduce her/him.

INTRODUCTION OF ASSISTING INSTALLING OFFICERS

This is done by the Installing Officer. Those assisting would stand when introduced and be seated after all have been introduced. Be sure to use correct Titles of all Installing and Assisting Installing Officers (RIT p. 94-96).

RECESS

The Installing Officer calls a brief recess to prepare for the Ceremony of Installation. At this time, the Worthy Matron and her Officers should retire. Remember no one enters the Labyrinth during the time of preparation EXCEPT the Installing Marshal to place the badges upon the Altar (RIT p. 93). When the Chapter is called to order, the Assisting Officers assume their stations (RIT p. 97).

RETIRING OF OFFICERS

Attention is called to the fact that the Holy Bible is opened on the Altar. Therefore, the Officers would not retire through the Labyrinth or pass between the Altar and the East.

- The Worthy Matron will call up the Officers and instruct them to retire.
- With the Worthy Matron and Worthy Patron leading the North and South lines, Officers will fall in behind them and retire through the North and South doors.
- The retiring Officers would remove their badges and give them to the Installing Marshal.

CALL TO ORDER

When the Installing Marshal has completed her/his duties, the Installing Officer will call the meeting to Order. The Assisting Installing Officers enter together (the Installing Marshal and Installing Secretary through the Chapter Room door and the

Installing Organist and Installing Chaplain through the Preparation Room door) and assume their stations.

CEREMONY OF INSTALLATION

The Installing Officer sounds the gavel and proceeds with the Ritualistic Ceremony of Installation.

Immediately following the proclamation by the Installing Marshal, (COL, Art 227b, p. 167), the Worthy Matron instructs the Conductress to close the Holy Bible. The Conductress attends at the Altar in the same manner (without ceremony) as in the Opening. Members will assume the Reverent Attitude as she enters the Labyrinth.

The closing of the Holy Bible, the singing of the Closing Ode and the repeating of the Mizpeh Benediction should all be done before seating the members, thus closing the Ritualistic Installation Ceremony.

If the Flag has been presented, it can be retired at this time or just before the Benediction.

PROGRAM AND PRESENTATIONS

Following the Installation Ceremony, there is usually some form of program, and the Master of Ceremonies may introduce each item and participant.

The following is a suggestion as to the order of the program and may be varied as each Worthy Matron chooses:

- Presentation of the Chapter Traveling Jewels, if this is a tradition of the Chapter.
- Presentation of the Past Matron's and Past Patron's Jewel and/or Certificates.
- Signing of the Chapter Bible.
- Any musical selections.

- Greetings by the Worthy Patron.
- Greetings by the Worthy Matron.
- Benediction.

ADDITIONAL NOTES:

When installing multiple Officers, (Conductress and Associate Conductress, Star Points, Warder and Sentinel):

1. The Installing Marshal would have all Officers turn to face North at the same time.
2. The Installing Marshal will go in back of the Officers to invest the Officers with their badges. As each is invested with her/his badge, she/he will turn and face the East.
3. As each Officer is addressed by the Installing Officer, she/he will step forward one step.
4. The Star Point Officers will follow the Installing Marshal around the Chapter Room, with Adah stopping at her station first. The others stop at their appropriate stations and remain standing until the Installing Marshal bows. Likewise, with the Conductresses, the Associate Conductress will follow around the Chapter Room. Each remains standing until the Installing Marshal bows (RIT p. 168-191).

INSTALLATION PRAYER

The Installing Chaplain enters the Labyrinth for the Installation Prayer in front of Martha's station and retires in the same manner.

The Installing Officer calls the Chapter up as the Chaplain begins to move. Members will assume the Reverent Attitude as the Chaplain enters the Labyrinth.

PRESENTING NEWLY INSTALLED WORTHY MATRON AND WORTHY PATRON

The Installing Officer also calls up the Chapter after the Worthy Matron or the Worthy Patron has been conducted to the East and is standing in her/his station (RIT p. 106 and 109)

CLOSED INSTALLATION

The Officers of a Chapter may be installed in a Closed Installation, at either a Stated or Special Meeting called for that purpose. In either case, the Chapter is opened and closed in Ritualistic Form.

If the Installation Ceremony is a part of the Stated Meeting, it is performed under either “New Business” or “Good of the Order” and routine business shall have been conducted.

1. The retiring Officers will open the meeting of the Chapter in Ritualistic form, conduct routine business, and introduce the Installing Officer.
2. When the recess is called ONLY the retiring Officers, Officers to be installed and the Installing Marshal are allowed to leave the Chapter Room.
3. The new Officers will close the meeting.

The fine print in the Ritual (p. 97-98), clearly gives instructions for Closed Installations. Pro-tem Officers are appointed to perform the duties of the Warder and the Sentinel during a Closed Installation.

OFFICERS NOT PRESENT FOR INSTALLATION

If an Officer is to be installed at a later date, it is not necessary to go through the entire procedure for Installation.

- The Officer(s) to be installed is seated in the Southwest
- The Installing Marshal collects the badge from the Officer(s)
- The Installing Marshal calls her/his name and the office which she/he will hold

- The Installing Marshal escorts the Officer(s) to the Altar for the Obligation. It is recommended that the Installing Marshal enters the Labyrinth in front of Ruth's Station. She/he would then present the Officer(s) to the Installing Officer
- The Installing Officer gives the charge and the instructs the Installing Marshal to invest her/him with her/his badge and conduct her/him to her/his station by exiting in front of Martha's Station.
- Depending on how many Officers are to be installed, the Installing Marshal may present them one at a time or together at the Altar for installation
- The Installing Marshal would proclaim the Officer(s) installed at the Altar (C.O.L, Art 227b, p. 167).

This should not be confused with an installation held after June 23rd, which requires a Special Dispensation.

INSTRUCTIONS FOR DRAPING THE CHARTER

The Charter will be draped at the first Stated Meeting following notification.

The Charter shall be draped for a period of thirty (30) days following the death of a Chapter member. The Charter will be placed in the West at the right of the Associate Matron's station. A drape for the Charter will be placed at the Marshal's station and a sprig of evergreen will be at the station of the Chaplain.

The Draping of the Charter ceremony will be held after all Chapter business has been conducted and just prior to the Ritualistic Closing (COL Art. 274b.(2), page 186). Should the Charter and the Altar be draped at the same meeting the Charter will be draped first.

A Resolution of Respect will be read by the Chapter Secretary preceding the ceremony. A Resolution of Respect may be purchased from Grand Chapter, downloaded from the Grand Chapter website or written by a member. A Resolution of Respect is not an order of business and does not require a vote of the Chapter. The Resolution of Respect or a copy should be presented or mailed to the deceased member's family as a courtesy.

Should it be necessary to drape the Charter for more than one member at the same meeting:

- The Secretary will read the Resolution of Respect for the member who died first.
- The Marshal will arrange the drape on the Charter.
- The Secretary will read the next Resolution of Respect and the Marshal will attach a flower or piece of greenery for the next deceased member.
- The Chaplain will offer one prayer, taking care to mention all the members' names in the prayer. She/He will carry one piece of greenery and place it upon the Altar.

Should an additional draping be required before the thirty (30) days have expired, the Charter will remain draped and the Marshal will attach a flower or piece of greenery on the drape as a tribute to each additional deceased member.

SUGGESTED CEREMONY FOR DRAPING THE CHARTER

(This is only a suggested outline. A Worthy Matron may prepare a ceremony using favorite scriptures, poems, songs etc as an appropriate tribute to the deceased.)

Worthy Matron: Sisters and Brothers let us pause to pay tribute to our Sister/Brother who has completed the labors of her/his earthly life and been called home by our Heavenly Father to eternal rest among the angels.

Sister/Brother Secretary you will read the Resolution of Respect in memory of our departed member.

Secretary: *(Reads the resolution of respect)*

Worthy Matron: My heart split in two. One side filled with memories the other side filled with the love we shared.

A golden heart stopped beating, Hard working hands at rest. God broke our hearts to prove he only takes the best.

Life has gone on without you but will never be the same.

Worthy Matron: Sister/Brother Chaplain and Sister/Brother Marshal, you will assume your positions for the Ceremony of Draping our Charter. *(The Worthy Matron calls up the Chapter) ****

Soft music may be played as the Chaplain holding a piece of evergreen proceeds down the North marching line to a point where an acute angle can be made to the Altar, pauses at the circle of Officers and awaits the Worthy Matron's instructions for prayer.

The Marshal carrying the drape, proceeds on the South and West marching lines to a position on either side of the Charter and awaits the Worthy Matron's instructions.

Worthy Matron: Sister/Brother Marshal, you will arrange the drape on the Charter. (The Marshal reverently places the drape over the frame of the Charter, soft music may be played.)

Worthy Matron: Sister/Brother Chaplain, please lead us in prayer in memory of our dear one.

- The Chaplain proceeds to the Altar, places the piece of evergreen on the left side of the Altar, kneels and offers a prayer from the heart. The members' response is, Amen.
- The Chaplain and Marshal will return to their stations in a quiet and respectful manner.
- The Worthy Matron will seats the Chapter as the Chaplain and Marshal reach their stations. *

Should it be necessary to drape the Charter for more than one member at the same meeting, the Secretary will read the Resolution of Respect for the member who died first. The Marshal will arrange the drape on the Charter. The Secretary will then read the Resolution of Respect the other member or members. The Marshal will then place a flower, greenery or other second drape on the Charter. The Chaplain will offer one prayer, taking care to mention all names in the prayer.

INSTRUCTIONS FOR DRAPING THE ALTAR

The Ceremony of Draping the Altar will be performed at the first stated meeting after the official notification has been received from the Grand Chapter Office. The Altar shall be draped for a period of thirty (30) days for a deceased Installed Grand Officer, who was serving as such at the time of her/his death and for a deceased Past Grand Matron or Past Grand Patron (COL. Art. 274b(1), pg 186).

The Ceremony will be performed as the final act of business, just prior to the Ritualistic Closing. An appropriate drape, that has been properly folded, will be at the Conductress' station. In folding the drape, it should be folded lengthwise, by folding each side to the middle, then again, each side to the middle, and finally folding together. An easy way to remember how to properly fold a drape would be as if one was standing on the South side of the Altar and then:

1. Fold the East end to the middle
2. Fold the West end to the middle
3. Fold the East end to the middle
4. Fold the West end to the middle
5. Finally, fold the East end over.

This makes a pattern of five (5) steps, East, West, East, West, East.

When unfolding, the drape is centered on the Altar with the open side of the fold toward the West. This will properly place the drape so that the first unfold will be to the East. The drape is unfolded in five steps; East, West, East, West, and finally toward the East.

The drape on the Altar would be removed at the close of the meeting and placed back on the Altar again when setting up the Chapter Room for the next meeting, provided the next meeting is held within thirty (30) days.

A piece of evergreen will be at the Chaplain's station.

In the event it becomes necessary to drape the Altar again within the thirty (30) day period, another Draping the Altar Ceremony would take place. The Chapter will use a scarf or ribbon approximately six to ten (6-10) inches wide for the second draping within a thirty (30) day period, and if necessary, for another draping then a scarf or ribbon approximately four to five (4-5) inches wide would be placed upon the previous drape. At the end of each thirty (30) day period, the small top drape will be removed first, leaving the original drape upon the Altar. If a Chapter does not have the appropriate scarves or ribbons, it will be permissible to use a flower. The Conductresses should make every effort not to let the drape touch the Altar until they are ready to place the drape on the Altar.

1. The Draping Ceremony begins with the Secretary reading the "In Memoriam" from the Grand Chapter Office.

The Worthy Matron then directs the Conductress, the Associate Conductress, and the Chaplain to assume their places for the Draping of the Altar.

2. The Chaplain leaves her/his station, carrying a piece of evergreen, first walking along the North marching line to the West marching line, makes an acute angle, and advances to the edge of the Labyrinth between Esther and Martha.
3. As the Chaplain passes in front of the Associate Conductress, the Conductress, carrying the folded drape, and Associate Conductress leave their stations on the East side of their pedestal, moving slowly in a direct line toward the Altar and pause at the edge of the Labyrinth until the Chaplain reaches the edge of the Labyrinth so that they all approach the Altar together.
4. The Worthy Matron calls up the Chapter as these three officers enter the Labyrinth at the same time together. Each should advance slowly to reach the Altar at the same time.

5. The Chaplain places the piece of evergreen on the kneeling bench, then removes the Bible marker and places it on the kneeling bench; then carefully lifts the Bible from the Altar and takes one step back.
6. The Conductress passes one end of the folded drape across to the Associate Conductress. The drape is centered upon the Altar and, with hands moving in unison, the drape is unfolded in a slow and reverent manner, after which the Conductresses will then assume the Reverent Attitude.
7. The Chaplain will then replace the Bible and Bible marker upon the Altar, place the piece of evergreen on the left side of the Altar.

NOTE: Should the Square and Compasses become disarranged while the Chaplain is holding the Bible; the Chaplain will take a step back to allow the Conductress to step to the West side of the Altar, rearrange the Square and Compasses then both will return to their positions.

8. The Chaplain then kneels (*if possible*) and offers a prayer from the heart (*calling the name of the deceased in the prayer*). The members' response to the prayer is Amen.
9. At the conclusion of the ceremony, all three officers back slowly out of the Labyrinth the Conductresses pausing at the edge of the Labyrinth until the Chaplain passes behind the Associate Conductress. The Conductresses will then turn, toward the East, and return to their stations.

NOTE: If stability or balance is an issue it is permissible to take one step back, turn and slowly walk out of the Labyrinth.

10. The Worthy Matron will then seat the Chapter.

Should it be necessary to drape the Altar for more than one member at the same meeting, the Secretary will read the "In Memoriam" for the member who died first. The Conductresses will arrange the drape on the Altar. The Secretary will read the next "in Memoriam" and the Conductress will return to her station for the scarf or ribbon to be placed on the Altar drape as a tribute to the next deceased member. The Chaplain will offer one prayer, taking care to mention all names in the prayer.

SUGGESTED CEREMONY FOR DRAPING THE ALTAR

(This is only a suggested outline. A Worthy Matron may prepare a ceremony using favorite scriptures, poems, songs etc., as an appropriate tribute to the deceased.)

WM: Sisters and Brothers let us pause to pay tribute to the memory of our beloved (Past Grand Matron/Past Grand Patron or Installed Grand Officer) Sister/Brother _____. When life's lessons all are learned and all duties done, She/He has answered to the Master's call that bade Her/Him "Welcome Home".

Sister/Brother Secretary you will read the "In Memoriam" from Grand Chapter.

(The Secretary reads the "In Memoriam")

WM: We pause to pay loving tribute to one who has served our Order so well. He/she will forever be enshrined within our hearts and memories.

WM: Sisters Conductress, Associate Conductress and Sister/Brother Chaplain, you will assume your positions for the Draping of the Altar. (The Worthy Matron Calls up the Chapter.) ***

WM: Sisters Conductresses you will place the drape upon the Altar.

(The Conductresses reverently place and unfold the drape, then assume the Reverent Attitude)

WM: **Sister/Brother Chaplain, please lead us in prayer as we remember with affection our _____.** (Past Grand Matron, Past Grand Patron or Installed Grand Officer)

The Chaplain places the piece of evergreen on the left side of the Altar and offers a prayer from the heart. The members will respond "AMEN"

WM: **When tomorrow starts without me, please try to understand that an angel came and called my name and took me by the hand. The angel said my place was ready. In Heaven far above and that I'd have to leave behind all those I dearly love. But when I walked through Heaven's Gates, I felt so much at home for God looked down, smiled at me and told me. "Welcome Home." So when tomorrow starts without me**

Don't think we're far apart, for every time you think of me, I'm right there in your heart.

- The Chaplain and Conductresses step back to the edge of the Labyrinth.
- The Chaplain then turns and using the North Marching line returns to her/his station.
- The Conductress and Associate Conductress remain at the edge of the Labyrinth facing the Altar until the Chaplain passes behind the Associate Conductress.
- They will both turn and time their steps to arrive at their stations at the same time as the Chaplain.
- The Worthy Matron seats the Chapter. *

CLOSING CEREMONY

Upon ascertaining that there is no further business to come before the Chapter, the Worthy Matron would direct the Warder to inform the Sentinel of the Closing Ceremony.

Then, upon instruction, the Chaplain leaves her/his station (with hands at side) and proceeds to the Altar by going to a point in the Northwest, just opposite Esther's station, or as far as necessary to make an acute angle, and enters the Labyrinth in a slow and reverent manner.

Upon arriving at the Altar, it is suggested that the Chaplain pause until the music has ceased, then kneel (*if physically able*) and offer the closing prayer.

Just as in the Opening Ceremony, all Officers and members face the Altar, assume the Reverent Attitude and/or the Attitude of Prayer.

When the Chaplain has completed the prayer, she/he will stand and back into the Circle of Officers and assume the Reverent Attitude.

The Closing of the Holy Bible is done in the same manner as the Conductress opened it, except in reverse order. This service is a most solemn time and all reverence and solemnity should be maintained.

1. With hands at her side, the Conductress reverently approaches the Altar with her eyes upon the Holy Bible.
2. When the Conductress reaches the Altar, she gives the Salutation Sign to the open Holy Bible (*this means her eyes are on the Holy Bible, and not looking at the Worthy Matron, who will give the Response to the Sign*)
3. She removes the Square and Compasses slowly and respectfully from the Holy Bible.

4. The Conductress then places the Bible marker. If the Bible marker is placed horizontally, the Holy Bible will be easier to open the next time.
5. The Conductress places both hands in the center of the edges of the Holy Bible, and slowly raises each side simultaneously for closing the Holy Bible. When the Holy Bible is closed, she then lowers her left hand slowly down the left side of the Holy Bible, and guides the Holy Bible to the center of the Altar.
6. After the Holy Bible is in position, the Conductress bows to the Worthy Matron (*acknowledging her command*) and backs into the Circle of Officers.
 - All Officers and members drop the Reverent Attitude and face East as the Conductress crosses the edge of the Labyrinth.
 - In closing, the Conductress and the Chaplain return to their stations when the Sentinel has been informed that the Chapter is closed (RIT p. 47).

NOTE: Just before closing, the Ritual allows for the Signs and Passes to be given if the Worthy Matron so desires. The Farewell Address will be given by the Worthy Matron or another SISTER and it shall be given from the East.

FUNERAL CEREMONY

The Funeral Ceremony may be given at the church, funeral home or graveside. Always respect the wishes of the family and their clergy in regard to the place and time of the Ceremony.

Great care should be given in the presentation of the Funeral Ceremony. This is for the respect of our departed one and their family, but also may be the only time that others present will have any contact with members of our Order.

The Ceremony should be solemn and conducted without any unnecessary movements or distractions.

The members providing the Ceremony should practice before the time of the service. If at all possible, our members should have their parts committed to memory. Even so, it is advisable to have a podium where each one shall give her/his part, and one Ritual should be placed upon the podium. This is because as we may know our part, we could possibly be distracted and need to be prompted. If the Ritual is there, it would be less obvious to just glance down as needed.

As each member finishes her/his part, she/he should make sure the page is open to the place where the next member begins. By using the podium, it is not necessary to carry and hold Rituals which can distract from the ceremony.

The Funeral Service must be noted in the Minutes of the Chapter and read at the next Stated Meeting (RIT p. 153-160; COL p. 172).

The Worthy Grand Matron prefers that Sunday dress be worn; however, robes and collars are permissible.

An alternate Funeral Service is in our Ritual (p. 160a) for former members who have been granted a demit or were suspended for non-payment of dues.

MEMORIAL OR CHAPTER OF SORROW

Each Chapter shall hold a Chapter of Sorrow or Memorial in memory of the deceased Sisters and Brothers of a Chapter (Chapter Members) and of Grand Chapter (Past Grand Matrons, Past Grand Patrons, and Grand Officers that may have passed away during their term of office) at some time during the year. This means that the memorial service may be held at any time chosen by the Worthy Matron.

If any members die after this service, they must be included in the next Worthy Matron's year. This observance should be made even if you have no deaths in your Chapter or Grand Chapter (COL, Art. 274b, p. 185).

ROB MORRIS ANNIVERSARY

August 31st marks the anniversary of the birth of our founder, Dr. Rob Morris. Consequently, each Chapter must observe the anniversary in such manner and form as they may deem appropriate sometime during the month of AUGUST (COL, Art. 274a, p. 185).

At the Worthy Matron's discretion, the observance does not have to be during a Chapter meeting and may be held outside the Chapter Room. However, the observance should be recorded in the Chapter minutes.

HONORING FIFTY-YEAR MEMBERS

It is our privilege to honor those who have served so very faithfully for fifty years or longer. In accordance with our Code of Laws (Art. 174, p. 128), the following ceremony is suggested for presenting a Fifty Year or longer Certificate and pin.

The honored member(s) would be escorted by the Conductress to the Altar for introduction by entering the Labyrinth between Ruth and Esther. If there are more than one to be honored, the Associate Conductress would assist. The Conductress would introduce the member(s) in her own words.

The Presiding Officer would welcome and congratulate the recipient(s). A poem or special short program should be read along with a brief Eastern Star history of the recipient(s).

The Conductress and Associate Conductress are then instructed to escort the recipient(s) to the East. The Chapter would be called up as they approach the East.

The Presiding Officer (or designated person) will present the Certificate and pin to the recipient(s) on behalf of the Chapter and ask the members to salute the honoree(s) with the Grand Honors.

The recipient(s) may be invited to bring greetings and may be invited to remain in the East or return to their place in the Chapter Room.

This ceremony is to be used ONLY when the Certificate and pin are presented.

NOTE: Grand Representatives, when awarded their commission do not receive Grand Honors. This is done only at Grand Chapter.

SUGGESTED PRESENTATION OF RIBBONS AT INITIATION

(This presentation should be done from memory by the Marshal. It is given while the Associate Conductress is outside the Chapter Room preparing the candidate for the Initiation Ceremony. Light music may be played during the presentation. At the conclusion, the Marshal will bow the Star Points to be seated. The Organist may play the music slightly louder as a signal to the Associate Conductress that the presentation is over and she may sound the alarm)

Marshal: “Sisters, we are now preparing to teach the lessons of the beautiful Star to one who has never before heard them. It is your duty to explain the meaning of your color and to deliver your message in an impressive manner and with dignity. Your explanation will long remain in the mind and heart of your listener. If you give careful thought to the message you explain, you will be able to impress upon the heart of a seeker after light the real meaning of your color and your symbolic word.”

(To Adah) “Sister Adah, your color is blue. Your word is Fidelity. Your explanation of your lecture is a sacred trust. The blue dome of Heaven, which spans above us, glows with the light of the beautiful Star because of one who was faithful unto the last. One whose fidelity to her mission never faltered. One who died to keep a vow.”

(To Ruth) “Sister Ruth, your color is yellow. Your word is Constancy. You must explain the meaning of your color and word so that the one receiving the message will desire to be constant in all good things. Ever remember that in the lowly walks of life, as well as in the courts of kings, Constancy is a virtue that all recognize and honor.”

(To Esther) “Queen Esther, your name has gone down in history as one who offered her life to save her people. Your color is white. Your word is Purity. The pure white light of unselfish service is your message.”

(to Martha) “Sister Martha, your color is green. Your word is Immortality. As the green of the spring gives evidence of another growing season, so the promise of Immortality gives hope for growth beyond the grave. Man becomes immortal in his seeking after and finding God. This is your message.”

(To Electa) “Sister Electa, your color is red. Your word is Fervency. Zeal for the right and a fervent desire to live rightly is the message you have to give. The hungry human heart is eager to accept the message of love and devotion.”

(spoken to all after advancing to the Northeast corner)

“Truly, the pathway of life has colors rare.

CHAPTER COURTESIES

The Order of the Eastern Star has definite rules and regulations that govern our Fraternity and all should be observed. Chapter courtesies add much to the solemnity and beauty of our ceremonies as well as preserve our traditions.

A member wishing to speak stands and waits to be recognized by the Worthy Matron. When this recognition is given, the member responds with a slight bow and the words: **“Worthy Matron...”** and proceeds with the desired message or question.

The gavel is used to replace many spoken orders. One blow calls the Chapter to order, marks the end of each section of the Order of Business, or seats those who are standing. Two blows call up the Officers. Three blows calls up the entire assembly. If a member is late in arriving or needs to leave while the Chapter is in session, remember that no one is allowed to enter or leave during Opening or Closing Ceremonies, Balloting, Initiation, Draping of the Charter or Altar, or during any portion of the Secret Work. When entering is permitted, the Sentinel will give the alarm (*raps on the door*).

When allowed to enter, the member will advance to a position in back of Esther’s station and give the Salutation Sign.

The Worthy Matron will respond, and the member may be seated.

To leave, the member goes to the same position, gives the same sign, receives the same response, and approaches the door. The Warder will open the door in the proper manner.

The Light of the Eastern Star originates from the Holy Bible. Symbolically, that Light should be available to the Presiding Officer at all times. Therefore, members should not pass between the Altar and the East (*Worthy Matron’s station*) except when permitted to do so by the Ritual. We are also admonished that we are not allowed to enter the Labyrinth except during those Ceremonies stated in our Ritual and Code of Laws (Art. 257, p. 177).

They are:

- Draping the Altar or Charter
- Presenting Grand Officers
- On the occasion of presenting a Fifty Year or longer Certificate and pin

And in the following programs:

- Memorial
- Obligation
- Rob Morris

Normally, no one moves around the Chapter while in session, except as conducted by the Marshal or Conductress and Associate Conductress.

Women are conducted to the East on the North side, and Men are conducted to the East on the South side.

During Good of the Order, a member may ask: **“May I be permitted to approach the East?”** and on being given permission, moves to the East without escort--women on the North, men on the South.

In Eastern Star, a hat is symbolically considered as something between the member and God; therefore, no hats are ever worn during Chapter sessions. A glove is considered something preventing warm, friendly contact with another member's hand; therefore, gloves are not worn. However, per our Ritual (Page 50) hats or gloves may be worn for medical or religious reasons.

As a reminder, we should not have anything in our hands at the following times:

- Making the Salutation Sign
- Holding the Reverent Attitude
- Holding the Attitude of Prayer
- Balloting
- Giving the Signs and Passes
- Saluting the Flag
- Reciting the Pledge of Allegiance
- Singing the National Anthem
- Saluting with the Grand Honors

During the Opening and Closing Ceremonies, the Worthy Matron recommends announcing the Opening and Closing Odes as a courtesy to the membership, especially in Chapters where the Worthy Matron has several Opening and/or Closing odes from which to choose.

TRAVELING PLAQUE

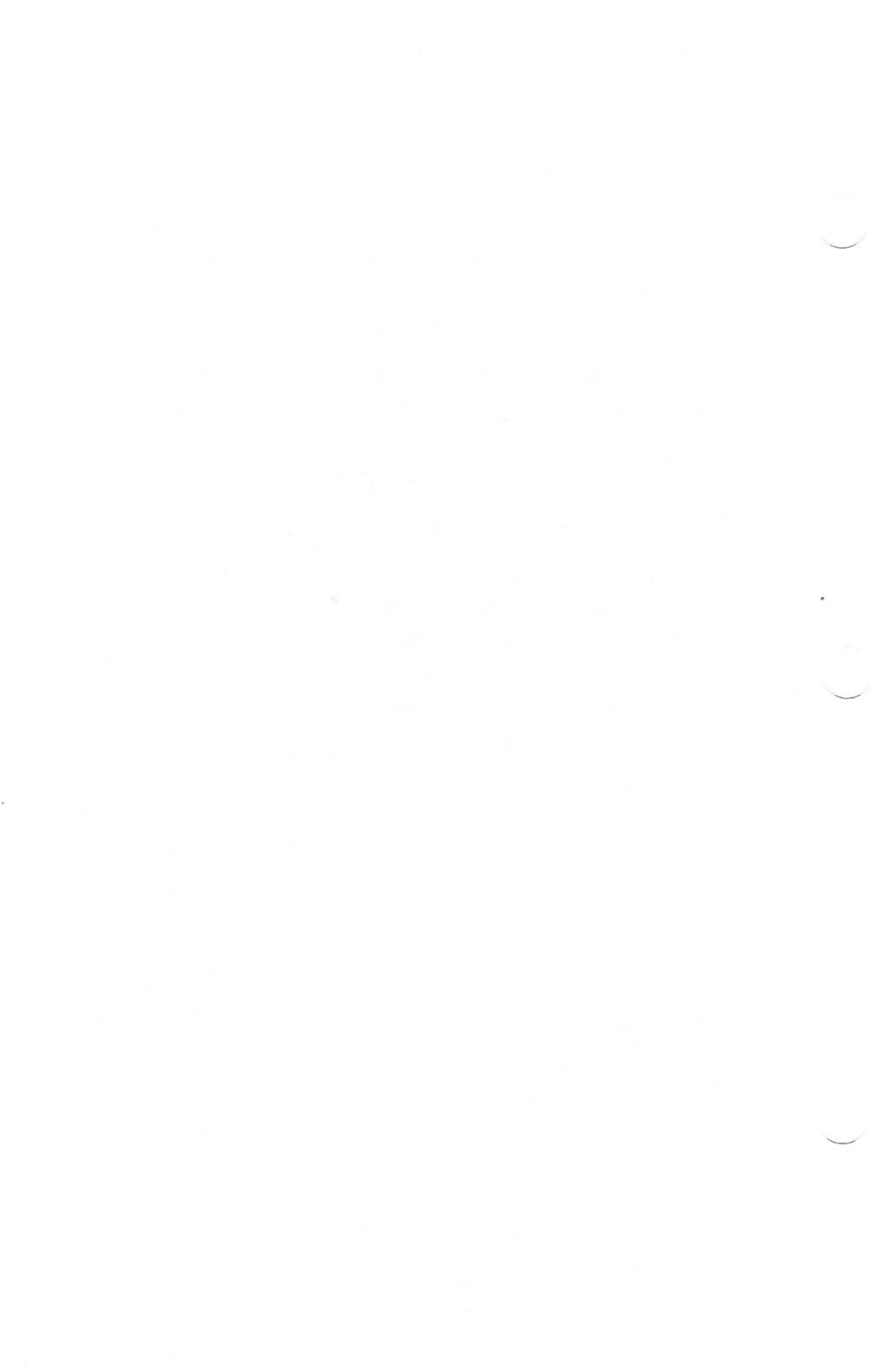
The **Traveling Plaque** will travel with the Deputy Grand Matron to each of her **Official Visits**. The winning chapter (the chapter with the most in attendance) at each visit will sign the attendance log that travels with the Plaque.

PROCEDURE

EXAMPLE: “Deputy Visit at Crockett”

You are a **Member** of Crockett Chapter and a **Plural** with Groveton Chapter.

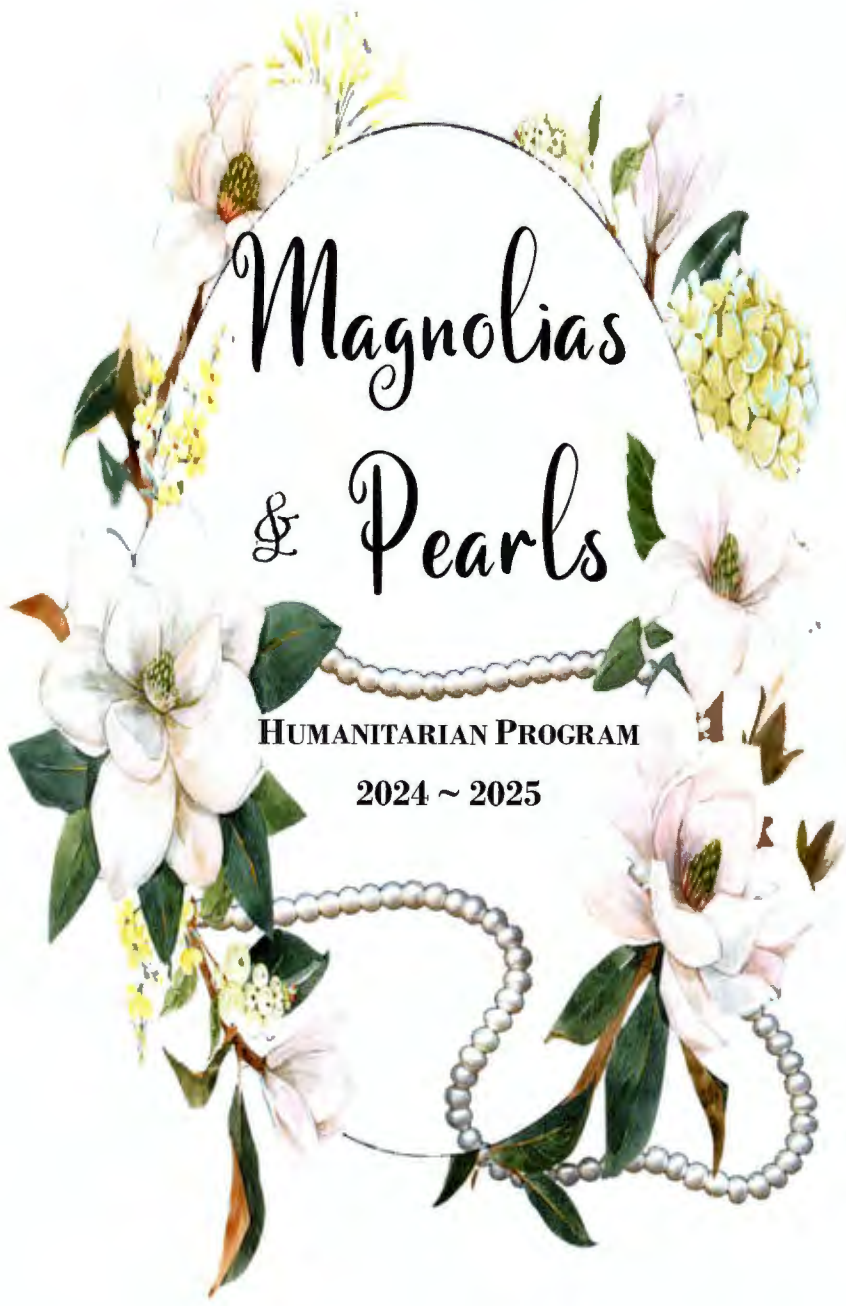
1. If Crockett has the Plaque, no member of Crockett counts for the attendance count. **However**, a Crockett Chapter member holding a **Plural** in another Chapter(s) may count for their **Plural Chapter(s)**. In this case the Crockett Chapter member would not count for Crockett Chapter but would count for Groveton Chapter.
2. This applies for all the Deputy’s visits. A member of any Chapter having the Plaque will not count, but the member **can** count for their **Plural Chapter(s)**.
3. The Chapter with the **most members present** will sign the attendance log.
4. At the conclusion of the **Last Official Visit**, the Chapter with the most members present, signs the log, and takes the Plaque with them.
5. **In case of a tie**, the Chapter traveling the farthest will be the winner. If still a tie, the Chapter that has the next Stated meeting will take the Plaque with them, after **both Chapters that tied**, have signed the log.
6. The Traveling Plaque Visitation will end July 1, 2025. The Deputy Grand Matron will present the Traveling Plaque at the “winning” Chapter’s Stated Meeting.



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Magnolias
& Pearls

HUMANITARIAN PROGRAM

2024 ~ 2025

MRS. GLENDA R. MURPHY
Worthy Grand Matron

MR. TERRY E. LITTLEPAGE
Worthy Grand Patron



P PROTECT OUR FUTURE

Our future depends on the continuance of our Order. All of us working together can ensure that our Organization has the funds necessary for our future endeavors. We can achieve a great moment for our Order's continuation by selecting the General Fund for our Humanitarian donations.



E EDUCATION IS THE KEY TO A SUCCESSFUL FUTURE

Education for the future plays a key role in our charitable umbrella. We are an organization that focuses on helping students to continue their education, for education is a key to future success. Our education scholarships assist with continuing education after high school for our members, spouses, children, and grandchildren.



A AIDING OUR MEMBERSHIP FOR A BETTER FUTURE

Aiding our membership through our Benevolent Aid fund is one of our primary concerns for assisting our sisters and brothers in their time of need and is of great importance to our Order for in life, collecting friends is like collecting precious pearls. Temporary Aid, and/or Long-Term Aid is available for our members as needed and is supported through donations to this important fund. Through donations to this fund, we show our love and support for our members who are in need. Our members are our precious pearls.



R REACHING OUT TO OUR LADY IS THE FUTURE OF OUR ORDER

Our endeavors must include our time, our friendship, our love, and our monetary donations. It is our responsibility to meet the needs of our sweet sister, who resides in the TMRC. We must remember that true beauty is assured by the number of pearls within us, not those around our necks. Our sister is our pearl and as such needs our care and our love.



L LINKS TO OUR FUTURE

The ESTARL (Eastern Star Training Award for Religious Leadership) offers assistance to those who are dedicated to perpetuating Christian principles. Those accepting this award are focusing on the ministry and all that it encompasses. By supporting our young religious leaders, we as members, are helping to promote the principles of our Christian faith.

Through the participation of our membership in the funds of our Humanitarian Program, we will endeavor to meet the challenging needs of our membership. Our Order is our greatest achievement, and through assistance to our membership, we will continue to offer help to those in need. Pearls are precious and represent the value of our membership to our Order. We can all achieve small moments of greatness.

Matthew 13:46

“Again, the kingdom of heaven is like a merchant seeking fine pearls”

Fine pearls are the friends we collect in life. Therefore, the friends in our Order must seize the moment to accomplish great things through service. Service is the rarest of all pearls.

P E A R L

“IN LIFE WE COLLECT SPECIAL MOMENTS WHICH ARE LIKE PRECIOUS PEARLS”

Life is made up of a few moments strung together like pearls. Each moment is a pearl, and it is up to us to pick the ones with the highest luster. If we do not have time to do great things, then take a few gentle moments and do small things in a great way. Small acts of kindness will accumulate into great moments of kindness. We can give our time, our money, ourselves, and our friendship to those who need it most. By doing so, we are creating moments of luster for those in need, for when we give to others, we help ourselves. It is through the simple and generous act of giving that we achieve joy. Each phase of this program is significant and meaningful. Each letter represents a particular group that needs our support and love through our generous sharing. As we visit each letter, we will be reminded of the moments that we have strung together like pearls. Mother Teresa told us, “We can all do small things in a great way. By each of us doing a small act of kindness, we will create great things in a big way.”

Each chapter is encouraged to be 100% by donating \$1.00 per member, as listed on their annual report. A colored ribbon: Blue for 100%, Yellow for 200%, White for 300%, Green for 400%, and Red for 500% will be given to the chapters. Additional donations may be made for any contributions, memorials, honorariums, etc., throughout the year and will be added to the chapter's percentage. The chapters may designate which of these projects they wish their donation to be contributed to as well as dividing their donation among all of the projects of the PEARL Humanitarian Program. Whichever is chosen, each designation will be appreciated, and will make a difference in reaching our goals. Together, we are taking moments to do small things in a big way for a better future.

“HONORING OUR PAST AND PRESERVING OUR FUTURE”

**2024-2025 "PEARL" HUMANITARIAN PROGRAM
GRAND CHAPTER OF TEXAS, O. E. S.**

"IN LIFE, WE COLLECT SPECIAL MOMENTS WHICH ARE LIKE PRECIOUS PEARLS"

Humanitarian Chair:		Date:	
Chapter Name & Number:		District:	Sec:
Chapter Secretary:			

Please make all checks payable to **GRAND CHAPTER OF TEXAS, OES** and mail to the GRAND SECRETARY'S OFFICE. Please write where you want the funds to be applied on the **memo section** of your check. You may designate more than one fund. REQUIREMENT FOR CHAPTERS TO BE 100% IS: \$1.00 per Chapter member on the Chapter Roll as of May 31, 2024 (see your 2024-2025 Directory to confirm).

Enclosed find our gift for \$ _____ to be applied as follows:

No. 1	P	General Fund	\$ _____
No. 2	E	Education	\$ _____
No. 3	A	Benevolent Aid	\$ _____
No. 4	R	TMRC	\$ _____
No. 5	L	ESTARL	\$ _____
TOTAL			\$ _____

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