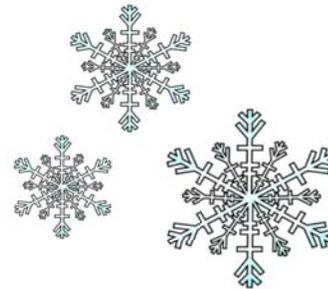


**Worthy Grand Matron's
Interpretations
and
Suggested Ceremonies
for
Subordinate Chapters**



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2016-2017



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2017-2018



Grand Chapter of Texas,
Order of the Eastern Star

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INTERPRETATIONS, INSTRUCTIONS AND SUGGESTED CEREMONIES FOR SUBORDINATE CHAPTERS 2016-2018

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 Ritual (2009) and our Constitution and Code of Laws. (2015 and Updated as necessary)

For the purpose of these Instructions, all study references to the Ritual shall be (R.), Constitution (C.), Code of Laws (C.O.L.), and the page/pages (p.).

These Instructions will be in effect for two years beginning **September 4, 2016 until August 18, 2018.**

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 (R. p. 161). The Diagram (R., 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

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.

Our **Constitution and Code of Laws** becomes our second form of guidelines and instructions. The third source of assistance would be the **Chapter By-Laws**. Then, the **Instructions, Interpretations And Suggested Ceremonies** are a further source for guidance and direction.

A Protocol Book is found in the back of our Constitution and Code of Laws. You should refer to it for guidelines for planning and conducting Eastern Star events.

These 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.

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.

Masonic Courtesies

As members of the Order of the Eastern Star we have a Masonic affiliation, and according to our Ritual, we exist for the purpose of giving practical effect to Freemasonry. Accordingly, we should always show appreciation to our Masonic Brothers. It is our duty to comply with their wishes regarding the use of their Masonic Temples and to cooperate with the Worshipful Master. Please

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others. Remember that there could be medical circumstances. Be kind.

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

It is recommended that, during the Opening and Closing Ceremonies, the Worthy Matron announce 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.

remember to secure permission to use the Lodge Room for special meetings, practices, installations, etc. Also, please 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 SAINTS JOHN DAYS are of great significance to our Masonic brothers, and they ask that no meetings be held in their lodge building 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.

Chapter Preparations

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

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

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.

Our Ritual (p. 166-167) describes the Chapter furniture and illustrates a properly prepared Chapter Room. No additional chairs or decorations are permitted to be placed within the Labyrinth.

We are given a choice for the position of the pedestals by the Star Point chairs (R. p. 166). 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. 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. (R., p. 166).

- Adah: The veil is draped over the sword starting at the hilt. For proper veil draping, see the picture (R., 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.

Quorum

A quorum consists of seven members of the Chapter, including one of the first four Officers (C.O.L., p. 173). These first four Officers are: Worthy Matron, Worthy Patron, Associate Matron and Associate Patron.

Charter

Each Grand Chapter has a Charter that has been issued by the General Grand Chapter. Our Charter for Texas Grand Chapter, Order of the Eastern Star, is printed on Page 27 of our present Constitution.

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

to a position in back of Esther's station and give the Salutation Sign. The Worthy Matron will respond and the member(s) may be seated. To leave, the member(s) goes(go) to the same position, give the same sign, receive 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. Men are conducted to the East on the South side and women on the North 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--men on the South, women on the North.

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 a warm, friendly contact with another member's hand; therefore, gloves are not worn. In the congenial warmth of the Chapter, wraps are considered not necessary; therefore, overcoats and wraps are not worn. Sisters and Brothers, use good judgment, some people can be cold when others are warm. Be tolerant of

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.”

Marshal: *(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 rap calls the Chapter to order, marks the end of each section of the order of business, or seats those who are standing. Two raps call up the Officers. Three raps call up the entire assembly.

If a member(s) is(are) late in arriving, or need to leave while the Chapter is in session, remember that no one is allowed to enter or leave during Opening or Closing Ceremonies, nor during Balloting. When entering is permitted, the Sentinel will give the alarm (raps on the door). When allowed to enter, the member(s) will advance

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 (C.O.L., p. 173).

Types of Meetings

The meetings of the Chapter are either Stated or Special (C.O.L., 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.

Pre-Opening Altar Drill

The Holy Bible will be placed in the proper position upon the Altar prior to the Opening Ceremonies. The Organist assumes her/his station in the Chapter Room. The Worthy Patron will bring in the Square and Compasses.

As it is the duty of the Marshal to superintend and marshal all processions, the Marshal, Worthy Patron, Associate Conductress and Associate Patron will enter the Chapter Room, forming a line in the Southwest corner making a direct line to the **center** of the West side of the Altar where they will proceed around the Altar, observing square corners. As the Worthy Patron approaches the Altar, he will place the Square and Compasses on the Altar to the right side of the Bible being careful to place the Compasses above the Square, NOT touching each other. This will position the Marshal on the South side, the Worthy Patron on the East side, the Associate Conductress on the North side, and the Associate Patron on the West side of the Altar. They bow to each other on command of the Worthy Patron.

The **Worthy Patron** turns to the left 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. The **Associate Conductress** turns to the left and goes directly to her Station in the North and **is seated**. The **Associate Patron** turns left and goes directly to his Station in the West where he **is seated**. The **Associate Conductress is seated, all three at the same time**. The **Marshal** turns to the right, goes to the South marching line, turns right and returns to the Anteroom to take her/his place in the line of Officers.

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 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.

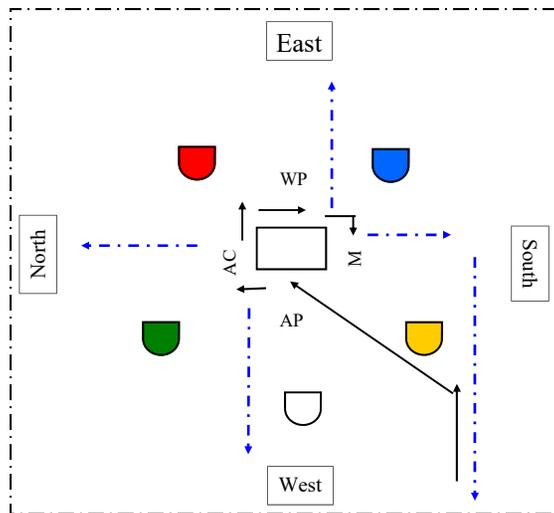


Diagram of Pre-Opening Ceremony

M
WP
AC
AP

Suggested Presentation of Ribbons at Initiation

(This presentation should be done from memory by the Marshal)

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

Traveling Plaque

The Traveling Plaque will travel with the Deputy Grand Matron to each of her Official Visits.

Rules:

Plural Members will count. When the Traveling Plaque is in the parent or plural Chapter, the plural Member may count for the Chapter NOT holding the meeting; otherwise the member will count for all of their chapters.

The Chapter with the most members present will sign the attendance log.

At the conclusion of the last Official Visit, the Chapter with the most members present signs the log and takes the Plaque with them beginning the Visitation.

In case of a tie, the Chapter traveling the farthest will be the winner unless there is another tie. In that case, the Chapter that has the next Stated meeting will take the Plaque with them after both have signed the log.

This will end July 1, 2017 and July 1, 2018, respectively. The Deputy Grand Matron will present the Traveling Plaque at the winning Chapter's Stated Meeting during the month of July.

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 just **in back of** Esther's station. In forming the lines **INSIDE** the Chairs, the Conductress and Associate Conductress stop one step **in back of** Adah's and Electa's stations, with the Warder, Worthy Matron, Associate Matron and Esther, in 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, it is suggested that 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, 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.

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.

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 will be seated immediately upon arrival at their stations as the Worthy Matron has sounded the gavel. To create uniformity, Officers who are aligned

opposite each other should be seated simultaneously as soon as they reach their stations. These pairs should watch each other and sit at the same time: **a)** Secretary and Treasurer; **b)** Chaplain and Marshal; **c)** Adah and Electa; **d)** Ruth, Martha and Esther; **e)** Associate Matron, Associate Patron and Warder; **f)** Conductress and Associate Conductress.

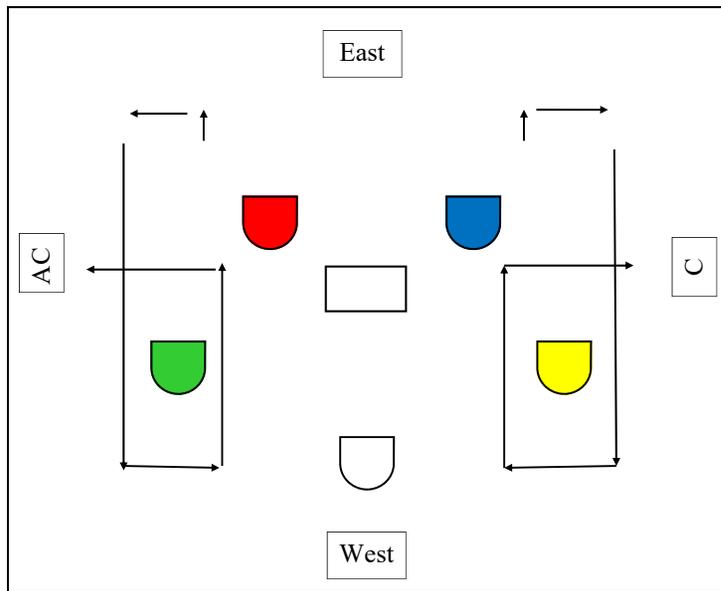


Diagram of Conductresses to Stations

Conducting the Worthy Matron to the East

Regardless of the lines being formed inside or outside the Labyrinth, the Conductress simply turns right and proceeds on the South marching line to the West marching line and turns North, observing square corners. As she approaches, the Worthy Matron turns toward the West to face the Conductress. She bows and the Worthy Matron returns the bow (R., 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

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 (R. p. 153-160) (C.O.L. 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 (C.O.L, 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 (C.O.L., 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.

approaches the Altar with her eyes upon the Holy Bible. 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), and removes the Square and Compasses slowly and respectfully from the Holy Bible. If the Bible marker is placed horizontally, the Holy Bible will be easier to open the next time. The Conductress places both hands in the center of the edges of the Holy Bible, and slowly raises each side 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. 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.

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.

In closing, the Conductress and the Chaplain return to their stations when the Sentinel has been informed that the Chapter is closed (R., p. 47).

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

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, and facing each other (North and South) and after mutual bows, without hesitation, the Conductress marches directly to her position at the head of her line, observing SQUARE CORNERS. (R., p. 24)

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

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. (R., p. 26)**

Dues cards or demits must be countersigned, therefore it is necessary that the Conductress and Associate Conductress each carry a pen. A dues card shall not be more than one (1) year old (C.O.L., 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 (C.O.L., Art. 252b, p. 174).

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. 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, fine print).

When the Conductress and Associate Conductress have completed proving the Chapter, they will meet in back of Esther's station. The Associate Conductress reports to the Conductress. The Conductress and Associate Conductress then face West where the Conductress reports to the Associate Matron (R., p. 26-27) after which they turn to face the East. The Worthy Matron stands when the Associate Matron addresses her. 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**).

Examination of visitors should be prior to the meeting if possible. An Examining Committee should be composed of two (2) Sisters and one Brother (R., 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 sung.

In examining a visitor, they will be asked to show a current dues card or demit, which has been countersigned, take the Test Oath (R., 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 assure that a man has been regularly initiated into our Order.

After the Opening Ceremony has been completed, the Examining Committee and visitor(s) enter through the Chapter Room door as

prayer as we remember _____ with affection.

The Chaplain would give a prayer from the heart and members would respond with AMEN.

Worthy Matron:

No one hears the door open
When they pass beyond our call,
Soft as the dropping petals of a rose,
One by One our loved ones fall.
But the memory of each loved one,
Like the fragrance of a rose,
God sends to linger with us,
Till our own life's door shall close

The Chaplain, Conductress and Associate Conductress back to the edge of the Labyrinth and return to their stations (see instructions). The Worthy Matron seats the Chapter as they step out of the Labyrinth.

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. With hands at her side, the Conductress reverently

the edge of the Labyrinth until the Chaplain passes behind the Associate Conductress. The Conductress nods to the Associate Conductress signifying to her that the Chaplain has passed by, and then both Conductresses turn and go to their stations.

* The Worthy Matron seats the Chapter.

SUGGESTED CEREMONY FOR DRAPING THE ALTAR

Worthy Matron: At this hour, we pause and pay loving tribute to the memory of _____ Past Grand Matron/Patron or Installed Grand Officer, who has passed into the life of complete understanding. Our hearts are grateful for our many blessings, believing that God doeth all things well. We thank him for every link in our golden chain, and if He in His great wisdom has seen fit to sever one by one these links to death, we know the parting is temporary and the meeting eternal, always remembering Jesus saith "I am the resurrection and the life, he that believeth in Me, tho he were dead, yet shall he live."

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

Worthy Matron: Sisters Conductress, Associate Conductress and Sister/Brother Chaplain, you will assume your positions for Draping of the Altar.

Worthy Matron: Life is only the prelude to Eternity as we all move toward this Higher Chapter above, we pause in loving remembrance of our Sister/Brother who has gone before us to dwell in the House of the Lord forever. Sister Conductresses and Sister/Brother Chaplain you will place the Drape upon the Altar.

When the draping is complete, all three officers assume the reverent attitude.

Worthy Matron: Reverently, we pay tribute of love and respect to our departed one who has followed the silent messenger to their mansion in the sky. Sister/Brother Chaplain, please lead us in

previously noted. After giving the Salutation Sign, which is responded to by the Worthy Matron (C.O.L., 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.

Opening Ceremony

The portions of our Opening Ceremony within brackets (R., 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 Short Form Opening not be used and if used, not more than four (4) times in a Chapter year.

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, give the charge (and sign if a Star Point), then return to her/his elected or appointed station.

The badge must be suspended with a five-colored ribbon with the exception of the Star Point badges, which may have the color of their station (R., 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 (R., p. 54).

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

Worthy Patron

It is the duty of the Worthy Patron to see that the Officers are proficient in their Work and to have a general supervision 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 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.

Associate Patron

The Associate Patron is to assist the Worthy Patron and to assume his duties if he is not present.

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. 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. 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.

- * The Worthy Matron calls up the Chapter as these three officers enter the Labyrinth **AT THE SAME TIME... TOGETHER**. They should slow their pace so they each reach the Altar at the same time. **NOTE: The Attitude of Prayer is assumed by those present when the Chaplain and Conductresses enter the labyrinth.**
- * The Conductress carries the folded drape (or ribbons) over her left arm.
- * The Chaplain places the evergreen **on the kneeling bench**, then he/she removes the Bible marker and any small Bible (s) and places it/them **on the kneeling bench**. Reverently, the Chaplain slides both hands under the Bible and lifts it from the Altar and takes one step back. **NOTE: The Chaplain does NOT put anything on top of the open Bible.**
- * The Conductress hands the end of the folded drape across to the Associate Conductress. The drape/ribbon is centered upon the Altar and, with hands moving together, the drape is unfolded in a slow and reverent manner, after which, the Conductresses assume the reverent attitude.
- The Chaplain will then replace the Bible, Bible marker, and sprig of evergreen upon the Altar. The evergreen will go on the left side of the Altar. **NOTE: Should the Square and Compasses become disarranged while the Chaplain is holding the Bible; the Conductress will step to the West and rearrange them in the proper manner (it is permissible for the Chaplain to move to the side allowing room for the Conductress).**
- * The Chaplain then kneels (if possible) and offers a prayer from the heart (calling the name of the deceased in the prayer). **The response to the prayer is AMEN.**
- * At the conclusion of the ceremony, all three officers back slowly out of the Labyrinth, the Conductresses pausing at

1. Unfold to the East
2. Unfold to the West
3. Unfold to the East
4. Unfold to the West
5. Unfold to the East

Be sure to have a sprig of evergreen 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. It is suggested that the Chapter use a six (6) inch wide ribbon for the second draping within a thirty (30) day period, and if necessary, for another draping, a four (4) inch wide ribbon could be placed upon the Altar. At the end of each thirty (30) day period, the four (4) or six (6) inch ribbon would come off first, leaving the original drape on the Altar. If a Chapter does not have the appropriate ribbon streamers, 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 it on the Altar together.

- * The actual Draping Ceremony begins with the reading of the Memoriam from the Grand Chapter Office by the Secretary. The Memoriam must be read in its' entirety as the Scripture and Poetry will have meaning to the deceased Past Grand Matron/Patron or Grand Officer.
- * After the reading of the Memoriam, the Worthy Matron directs the Conductress, Associate Conductress and Chaplain to assume their places for the draping of the Altar.
- * The Chaplain walks first and leaves their station along the north marching line to the West marching line, makes an acute angle, and enters the labyrinth between Esther and Martha.
- As the Chaplain passes in front of the Associate Conductress, the Conductress and Associate Conductress (leaving from the East side of their pedestal) move slowly in a direct line toward the Altar.

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 (R., 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 (C.O.L., 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.

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.

The Secretary shall send Notice of Dues on the appropriate form (C.O.L., 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.

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 (C.O.L., 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, **their lectures should be memorized**. Each one should hold her sign and remain silent until after the membership gives the response (R., p. 34-38).

Chaplain, Marshal & 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 and Sentinel

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. Members are **not** admitted during the 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, or during any portion of the Secret Work. The Warder should **not** respond to any raps given by the Sentinel until the Order of Business or Ceremony is complete. 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 complete understanding of duties to preclude unnecessary interruptions.

The Sentinel will not allow anyone to enter the Chapter Room that she/he cannot vouch for, since the Chapter Room has already been

Somewhere our hands shall clasp their hands once more;
And those with whom we walked on earth before;
Will meet us in that bright and glorious land,
And then, we will understand.

(The Worthy Matron seats the chapter and the Chaplain and Marshal return to their stations).

DRAPING OF THE ALTAR INSTRUCTIONS

The Ceremony of Draping the Altar takes place 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 is serving as such at the time of his/her death AND for a deceased Past Grand Matron or Past Grand Patron (Code of Laws, Article 274b (1). Page 185).

The ceremony would be performed just prior to the Ritualistic Closing, under "Good of the Order". An appropriate drape, that has been properly folded, would be at the Conductress' station. In folding the drape, it should be folded lengthwise, by folding the side to the middle, then the other side to the middle, then the first side again to the middle, then the other side to the middle, and finally folded together. An easy way to remember this 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, the five steps are once again repeated, East, West, East, West, East. **BE SURE TO HAVE THE OPEN SIDE OF THE FOLD FACING THE WEST SO THE FIRST UNFOLD WOULD BE TO THE EAST.**

East to its ultimate source.

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

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).**

(The Organist may play soft music while the Chaplain, who carries a piece of evergreen in one hand, and the Marshal, who carries the drape, walk in UNISON, until the Chaplain reaches a point where an acute angle can be made allowing straight entry to the Altar, advances to the EDGE of the Labyrinth and awaits further instruction and the Marshal continues and takes a position on either side of the Charter and awaits further instruction).

Worthy Matron: The years during which we were privileged to associate with Sister/Brother _____ are an important part of our cherished memories. The absence of our beloved member will be greatly missed. However, we know that as we too, follow the light from the East we shall find our lives richer and fuller for having walked a part of the way with him/her.

Sister/Brother Marshal, you will arrange the drape on the Charter. **(Soft music may be played as the Marshal gently drapes the Charter. The Marshal places the drape over the frame of the Charter making sure it is not over the Charter itself.)**

Worthy Matron: As a token of love to our departed Sister/Brother, Sister/Brother Chaplain please lead us in prayer.

(The Chaplain proceeds to the Altar, places the evergreen on the left of the Altar, kneels and offers a prayer (calling the name of the deceased member) from the heart, to which the membership REPONDS AMEN).

Worthy Matron:

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.

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.

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 (R., p. 16).

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, the Conductress 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. 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. She opens the Holy Bible with both hands, very slowly, lowering both sides at the same time. If a marker is used,

she removes it and places it in on the west side 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. First the Square, and then the Compasses, are placed upon the scripture of the opened Holy Bible, being careful that the points of the Compasses and the point of the Square are aligned evenly across the bottom. She then draws both hands away to form the Salutation Sign and gives a slight bow. The Conductress should practice so she may perform this in a graceful and reverent manner. 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.

Our Code of Laws (p. 173) 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 sacred 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 should keep their hands by their sides 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**

The Draping of the Charter ceremony would be held after ALL Chapter business has been conducted and just prior to the Ritualistic Closing (Code of Laws, Article 274b.(2), Page 186). Should the Charter and the Altar be draped at the same meeting, the Charter would be draped first.

The Resolution of Respect would be read by the Secretary preceding the ceremony. A Resolution of Respect Certificate may be purchased from the Grand Chapter Office, downloaded from the Grand Chapter website, or a Resolution may be written by a member. A Resolution of Respect is not an order of business and does not require a Chapter vote. The Resolution is furnished to the family as condolences from the Chapter.

Should it be necessary to drape the Charter again before the thirty days has expired, the Charter would remain draped and the Marshal would pin a flower or greenery on the drape as a tribute to the second deceased member. Another flower would be pinned on the draped Charter for each additional deceased member. If it is necessary to move the Charter off the wall to another meeting place, the Charter would remain draped.

If in one night the need arises to drape for more than one member, there would only be one draping ceremony. A resolution of respect would be read for each member. The Charter would be draped with the drape for the first member and a flower would be pinned to the drape for each additional member. In offering the prayer, only one prayer would be said at the end of the draping and the name of each member would be called by the Chaplain.

SUGGESTED CEREMONY FOR DRAPING THE CHARTER

Worthy Matron: Tonight we pause from our labors to pay tribute to the memory of Sister/Brother _____ who has answered the call to the ultimate chapter on high. She/he is gone from our sight, but their presence among us will live on. With grateful hearts we honor the memory of one who has followed the light from the

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. The retiring Officers will open the meeting of the Chapter in Ritualistic form, conduct routine business, and introduce the Installing Officer. When the recess is called **ONLY** the retiring Officers, Officers to be installed and the Installing Marshal are allowed to leave the Chapter Room. 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 Installing Marshal would call her/his name and the office which she/he will hold, then escort the Officer(s) to the Altar for the Obligation. She/he would then present the Officer(s) to the Installing Officer, who would give the charge and have the Marshal invest her/him with her/his badge and conduct her/him to her/his station. The 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 shall be draped for a period of thirty (30) days for a deceased chapter member. The charter would be placed in the West at the right of the Associate Matron’s station before the meeting begins. The drape for the charter would be at the Marshal’s station and a sprig of evergreen would be placed at the Chaplain’s station.

The Charter would be draped at the **FIRST STATED** meeting following notification.

(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 (R., p. 42 & 46).

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.

Flag Ceremony

The Worthy Grand Matron prefers that each Chapter present the Flag at all special holidays and celebrations. When it is presented, it should be done immediately following the Ritualistic Opening of the Chapter. If the Flag is presented, it is retired just prior to the Closing Ceremony. Chapters should have a Flag that can be carried comfortably. The Marshal should carry the Flag with the left hand holding the staff against the left hip, with the right arm steadying the staff, permitting the Flag to fly freely. Worthy Matrons should practice this ceremony with your Marshal.

The Pledge of Allegiance **MUST** be given at every meeting (C.O.L., p. 173). During the Pledge of Allegiance, the member will face the Flag, place her/his right hand over her/his heart. A military salute to the Flag may be given by current military personnel or veterans. If our National Anthem is used as the Patriotic Ode, members should salute the Flag during the Pledge then drop hands to the side and again assume the salute until the National Anthem is complete. This salute is not held for any other Patriotic song. The National Anthem should not be played for the presentation or retiring of the Flag or as an opening Ode. Members shall not be

admitted to the Chapter Room until after the Pledge of Allegiance and Patriotic Ode. The Warder and Sentinel will carefully observe this instruction.

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 (C.O.L., p. 236). 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 (R., p. 43 and C.O.L., p. 236). If the Marshal needs assistance to place the Flag in the standard, the Worthy Patron should assist the Marshal. The Marshal then salutes the Flag and steps back to the marching line to give the Pledge.

The Pledge of Allegiance will be led by the Worthy Patron.

After the Pledge is given, one stanza of a Patriotic song may be sung. Then the Marshal will turn and return to his/her station.

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 Marshal salutes the Flag then takes it from the

Conductresses, the Associate Conductress will follow around the Chapter Room. Each remains standing until the Installing Marshal bows (R., p. 168-191).

Notes on Installation:

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. 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 (R., p. 106-109). Immediately following the proclamation by the Installing Marshal, (C.O.L., 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. The closing of the Holy Bible, the singing of the closing Ode and the repeating of the Mizpah 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.

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 & 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

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

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. (R., p. 93). When the Chapter is called to order, the Assisting Officers assume their stations. (R., 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 retiring Officers would remove their badges and give them to the Installing Marshal. 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 and to make sure the Officers are in proper position in the Preparation Room before returning to the Chapter Room.

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.

Installing Multiple Officers:

When installing multiple Officers, (Conductress and Associate Conductress, Star Points, Warder and Sentinel), the Installing Marshal would have all Officers turn to face North at the same time. The Installing Marshall 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. As each Officer is addressed by the Installing Officer, she/he will step forward one step. 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

standard and returns it along the north marching line to the west to its original standard. The Marshal will salute the Flag and return to her/his station, always observing square corners.

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; and **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 (C.O.L., ART. 256; p. 175-177.).

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.
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.”**
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.
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 R., 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. All categories through the Grand Representatives are escorted to the east.
8. It is at the discretion of the Worthy Matron if the Deputies of Grand Chapter are presented in the East. **On the Official Visit of the Deputy Grand Matron**, she will be introduced immediately after the Past Grand Matrons and Past Grand Patrons and escorted to the East. The Chapter will be called up as she approaches the East. She will also be invited to remain in the East.
9. After the Grand Officers have been introduced in the West, they will be escorted to the East.
10. With the Grand Officers in the East, the Worthy Matron **PRESENTS** the Grand Officers as a group. She does not call their names again.
11. 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.
12. Beginning with the Installed Grand Officers and Elected Board Members, the Worthy Matron **WILL NOT CALL UP THE CHAPTER.**
13. The Grand Chapter Committees (C.O.L.. p. 56) 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 **may** be introduced together, with the Fraternal Correspondent first, followed by the Grand Chapter Committees and then the Special Committees of the Worthy Grand Matron.

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

Labyrinth in front of Ruth's station. 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 rise when introduced and be seated after all have been introduced. Be sure to use correct Titles of all Installing and Assisting Installing Officers (R., p. 94-96).

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 continue to 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 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. The Officers may enter through the Labyrinth or along the North and South marching lines, and continue to the East marching line, countermarch and assume their stations and be seated.

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

Conductress and Associate Conductress will walk together, the Associate Conductress always on the left of the Conductress.

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?".

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.

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. Upon seating 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 corners of the Chapter Room, face west, bow to the distinguished members, and then return to their places in back of Esther's station.

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.

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.)

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 line, 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 distinguished members 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,**

before approaching the chairs to seat the Officers to be installed when they enter the Chapter Room (R., p. 186). The Installing Marshal is to return to a position at the head of the line of Officers after the Installation of each Officer (R., p. 94). 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. (R., p. 94). Also, it is important to remember that our Ritual states that the badges of the Officers will be placed **ON** the Altar.

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 (C.O.L., Art. 227b, p. 167).

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, this will excuse her/him from the examination.

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.

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 (R., p. 94-96).

It is the duty of the Secretary of the Chapter to furnish the Installing Marshal with a list of the Officers to be installed (R., 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 Worthy Matron-elect should ensure that all arrangements are complete. 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.

The Diagram of the Labyrinth for Installation should be followed explicitly. 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 Installing Marshal will square the room

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 Chapter Room: Worthy Matrons and Worthy Patrons, Past Matrons and Past Patrons, Members and Visiting 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, introduce themselves with their titles: Past Grand Masters, Grand Lodge Officers. Then the Worthy Matron would 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.

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):

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 Committee Members and Ambassadors (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)*
12. The Grand Master of the Most Worshipful Grand Lodge of Texas, A.F. & A.M. (Hearty welcome)

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
 - b. Texas
14. General Grand Chapter Special Appointments
 - a. Deputies of the Most Worthy Grand Matron and Most Worthy Grand Patron
 - b. International Grand Representatives Association (IGRA) President
 - c. International Headquarters Administrator
15. Grand Representatives
 - a. Texas in Other Grand Jurisdictions
 - b. Other Grand Jurisdictions in Other Grand Jurisdictions
 - c. Other Grand Jurisdictions in Texas
16. Special Appointments of the Most Worthy Grand Matron and Most Worthy Grand Patron
 - a. Hummingbirds and Eagles

Introduced in Back of Esther's Station (Optional: May be escorted to the East)

17. Deputies of Grand Chapter
 - a. District Deputy Grand Matrons by District
 - b. Deputy Grand Matrons by District, by Section

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 (C.O.L., 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

- ◆ 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 re-opened.*) **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:

(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:

18. 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)
19. All Special Committees of the Worthy Grand Matron

HELPFUL HINTS FOR INTRODUCTIONS FOR 2016-2018

Worthy Matron: **“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.**

Worthy Matron: **“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.” (*After the Grand Honors are completed, the Worthy Matron will direct the Conductresses*)

“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: Sisters _____, State: _____, State: _____ and Brothers _____, State: _____; 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)___ in Texas, Order of the Eastern Star.”

On her Official Visit, the Deputy Grand Matron shall be introduced 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, Sisters _____, District One, ___ District Two, ___ District Three, ___ District Four, ___ District Five; and Deputy Grand Matrons: District One,

Election of Officers

The first eight Officers shall be elected annually at the last Stated Meeting preceding April 30th, or at a later date under a Special Dispensation from the Worthy Grand Matron (C.O.L., 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.

Bible References

ADAH:	Judges 11:1-40
RUTH:	Ruth Chapters 1-4 and Leviticus 19:9-10
ESTHER:	Esther 5:1-3
MARTHA:	John 11:1-26
ELECTA:	Second Epistle of John 1:13

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) and instruct the Conductress and Associate Conductress 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.

Sisters____, Section 1, ____Section 2 (and so on) District Two:____Section 1, ____; Grand Chapter of Texas, Order of the Eastern Star.”

Order of Business

The Order of Business is described in the Chapter By-Laws (C.O.L., 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 (C.O.L., 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 (R., p. 23).

In the Opening and Closing Ceremonies, the Worthy Matron gives one blow of the gavel **ON** the words “business” and “closed” (R., p. 43 & 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.

Membership

Only those persons prescribed by General Grand Chapter are eligible to membership in a Subordinate Chapter within this Jurisdiction (C., p. 45). Those eligible are listed in the Ritual (p. 161).

Petitions

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

The Worthy Matron appoints an Investigating Committee, consisting of two Sisters and one Brother, whose duty is to see that the petitioner is eligible. The duties of the Committee are outlined in the Code of Laws, Art. 201 and 202 (p. 141-142). 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.

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. 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.

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 (C.O.L., Art. 202f (2), p. 142).

Plural Membership

Plural Membership is recognized in the Grand Chapter of Texas (C.O.L., 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 in an adjoining jurisdiction (state) are eligible for

countermarch to form a straight line in the East, facing West. 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 (R., p. 178, 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 (R., p. 179, Diagram #12).

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 seats the Chapter after all Officers are in their stations.

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.

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 Laws

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 (R., 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. 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.

The Diagram of the Labyrinth should be studied carefully for the proper position of the Officers in the Prayer Circle (R., p. 178-179) We need to remember that our Associate Patron is part of the Prayer Circle. Only with practice can this particular ceremony be performed effectively (R., p. 78-79, fine print). All Star Point Officers go around the back of their stations to assume their positions. The Officers join hands as soon as the Chaplain reaches the Altar, and the members assume the Reverent Attitude. After the Officers assume their positions in the Prayer Circle, the Conductress will offer her right arm to the new member as they

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 (Form 104S) must be attached to the petition.

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

1. A plural member cannot simultaneously serve as Worthy Matron, Secretary or Treasurer in any plural Chapters. However, they may serve their plural Chapters in a combination of these offices as well as any other elective office in the Chapter. (C.O.L., p.147, 4a).
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 on Form S-142. 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.

A word of explanation: Should a member wish to leave their Parent Chapter thereby making a plural Chapter the parent Chapter, they must request a Petition for a Demit from the parent Chapter. When granted, the Demit must be given to the plural Chapter chosen as the parent Chapter. This notifies the Secretary of the plural Chapter that the member now wishes to make the plural Chapter the parent Chapter (C.O.L., 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.

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 (C.O.L., 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, the ballot shall be taken a second time.
9. The contents of the ballot are to be known only by the

Associate Conductress is preparing the candidate(s) or placed on the Star Point pedestals prior to the meeting. (See suggested Flower or Ribbon Presentation on pages 65-66 of these Instructions.)

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 (R., p. 50).

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.

The only time the Conductress offers her left arm to the candidate(s) is when they enter the Chapter Room. If there are two 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 or more candidates, the Conductress will organize them in pairs, with the Associate Conductress following behind.

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.

PASSING THE BALLOT

Worthy Matron: “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.

(The Associate Conductress then passes 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.

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. When the Sentinel has returned to her/his station, the Worthy Matron will continue as stated on pages 14-15 of the Ritual.

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.

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. 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. 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

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.

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 (C.O.L., 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 (C.O.L., Art. 214, p. 157).

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

Balloting at the Altar

After the Worthy Matron and Worthy Patron examine the ballot box, the Worthy Matron declares the ballot open with one blow of the gavel. The Associate Conductress presents the ballot box to the WM and WP 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. 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.

The Associate Conductress enters the Labyrinth from the Southwest corner, 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 s

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 to the **Southwest** corner. She turns and marches along the South marching line to a point even with the back of Ruth's station, then turns left, to stand in back of Ruth's station facing the Altar and observes the balloting.

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 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. The Worthy Matron seats the Officers with one blow of the gavel.

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.**

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. 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**.

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.

facing the East. The Associate Matron and Associate Patron stand and examine the ballot box, reporting findings to the Worthy Matron (R. p. 14 & 15).

Worthy Matron: "Sister Associate Matron" (R. 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".)

Worthy Matron: "Sister Associate Conductress, bear the ballot to the East."

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

Worthy Matron: "Worthy Patron, how do" (R. p. 15)

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

Worthy Matron: "The ballot being clear, it is my pleasure to inform you that you have elected _____ to receive the degrees of our Order. Sister Secretary you will inform her/him."

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.

Worthy Matron: "The ballot not being....." (R. p. 15) and destroys the ballot.

Worthy Matron: "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."

Worthy Matron: “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.)

Worthy Matron: “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.

Worthy Matron: “Sister/Brother Sentinel.....” (R. 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.

Worthy Matron: “Sister Associate Conductress... ‘(R. p. 14)
Having ascertained from the Associate Conductress that all have balloted who are entitled, the WM declares the ballot closed.

Worthy Matron: “I now declare the ballot closed.”
(Worthy Matron strikes one blow of the gavel.) *

Worthy Matron: Sister Associate Conductress, you will bear the ballot to the West.”

*(The Associate Conductress retraces her steps to the Altar, picks up the ballot box and **backs out** of the Labyrinth, turns and walks to Northwest corner, turns 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*

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 (C.O.L., 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).

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.

Passing the Ballot

In passing the ballot, after the Worthy Matron has declared the ballot open, the Worthy Matron and Worthy Patron each will cast their ballots and the Worthy Matron will direct the Associate Conductress to pass the ballot box (C.O.L., Art. 219B, p. 160). The Associate Conductress casts her ballot while the ballot box is on the podium in the East, and 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. She then returns to a position in the West in front of the Associate Matron to wait for further direction from the Worthy Matron. 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 Balloting

Worthy Matron: “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. D. Plural Membership of**

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.”

Worthy Matron: “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.)

BALLOTING AT THE ALTAR

Worthy Matron: “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 to the Southwest corner, turns left, proceeding on the South marching line to a point even with the back of Ruth’s station, turns left and takes her position in back of Ruth’s Station, facing the Altar).

Worthy Matron: “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 his or her station and remains standing until the WM seats all Officers.)

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