



**Welcome New Member
To Your Chapter
#Number
Order of the Eastern Star**

Welcome to our New Member(s)

We are so happy to have you in this organization. Each Chapter's meetings are interesting and fun. In order to get the most out of your membership, we encourage you to attend meetings, enjoy the social events and assist with projects. Get to know your Sisters and Brothers and stay involved. If you give to the order your best, it will come back to you ten fold!

Our meetings are held on the **Days & day** of each month at **Time**. We hope that this orientation booklet will help you to understand what is going on and what is being discussed at these meetings.

Star love,

Members of **Your Chapter #**Number****

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**WHAT IS THE
ORDER OF THE EASTERN STAR?**

Someone may ask no matter who you are
What is the Order of the Eastern Star?

If you've been a member for a while or so,
There are just a few facts you may want to know.

We belong to an Order, the largest of its kind,
A fraternity in which men and women you will find

Its members are found in every corner of the globe,
And each is part of the great Masonic fold.

Our purpose is to inspire good; it's that simple and plain;
The tenets of truth, charity, loyalty and kindness we train.

Charitable and benevolent projects are the things we do
To help friends in need and to see their troubles through.

Our principles are based on Biblical days
But in no way conflict with our religious ways.

We have lots of fun, too, as everyone should,
Meeting and traveling and working for good.

And because of our goals, we develop a bond
For each member, one to another, we become very fond.

This is an Order like no other you will find,
A chance to do good for your fellow mankind.

--Author Unknown--

Star Point Info & Scriptures

Adah – Judges 11.30-31, 34-35

Color is blue and symbolizes Fidelity
Emblem: Sword and Veil united
Flower: Violet * Open Bible

Ruth – Ruth 2:16-17; 2:1-2.5

Color is yellow and symbolizes Constancy
Emblem: Sheaf
Flower: yellow Jessamine * Lily of the Valley

Esther – Esther 2:17, 20; 5:1-3

Color is white and symbolizes Light, Purity, and Joy
Emblem: Crown and Scepter united
Flower: White Lily * the Sun

Martha – St John 1.3-4, 20,22-26

Color is green and symbolizes Hope & Immortality
Emblem: the Broken Column
Flower: Fern * the Lamb

**Electa – I John 4:7-8, 17-21
II John 1:1-5**

Color is red and symbolizes Fervency
Emblem: The Cup
Flower: Red Rose * the Lion

**GIVE TO THE ORDER THE BEST YOU HAVE,
AND THE BEST WILL COME BACK TO YOU!**

Welcome Sisters and Brothers to the Wonderful World of Eastern Star

You have been initiated into your Chapter with the beautiful stories of the heroines of our order. A friend in whom you trusted walked beside you to let you know that in this Chapter you will have friends to stand by you in your journey of life.

What is the Order of the Eastern Star?

You are now a member of the largest fraternal organization in the world for both women and men. Its members are comprised of men who are Master Masons and women with specific Masonic relationships. It encircles the earth with over 10,000 chapters in the United States, Canada and 18 other countries. Several chapters form a district and these districts join to form a state organization –a Grand Chapter. Most Grand Chapters are under the jurisdiction of the General Grand Chapter.

A deep fraternal bond exists between the members. It brought about through high principles exemplified in our daily lives, which make us near and dear to each other.

Eastern Star is a social Order comprised of persons with religious convictions and spiritual values, but it is NOT a religion and is neither secret nor political. Our spiritual symbol is the “Star of Bethlehem.” Thus, the five-pointed Star is our accepted emblem. Our initiation is symbolic of the road of life. You have heard the words of our teachings, Obligation, and laws. However, it will be beneficial to you to hear them again, with explanation, in order to thoroughly understand our ritualistic work.

While this is an Order composed of people of spiritual convictions, it is open to all faiths. The personal welfare of our members is vital to all our Stars and it is considered a privilege to

The circling of the Star Points during initiation symbolizes the maze the life in which one can become helpless and lost, without the guidance of The Divine Architect of the Universe. By passing the Altar each time we pass the Bible, the source of wisdom and light, the friend who walks beside the candidate symbolizes the Divine Friend who walks beside us, and teaches us that each Sister and Brother is ready at all times to comfort and sustain those who need them.

We stand while the Officers make the entering march, and remain standing until seated by the Worth Matron, because the entrance of our Officers symbolizes the opening of our Chapter for the honor of God, for our instruction and for the good of our fellow-man.

The five flowers represent the five outstanding virtues of womanhood –

- ◆ The Violet of Adah – Modesty and Chastity
- ◆ The Yellow Jasmine of Ruth – Sweetness
- ◆ The White Lily of Esther – Humility
- ◆ The Fern of Martha – Godliness
- ◆ The Red Rose of Electa – Courage to right wrongs

**You can purchase books and literature on symbolism at
Grand Chapter**

help one another whenever we can. It is a social order of members with sincere and purposeful objectives. As a member of the Order of the Eastern Star, you will join dedicated men and women who sincerely reflect the spirit of fraternal love and desire to work together on the many projects that benefit mankind throughout the world.

Millions of dollars are raised annually within our membership for numerous projects. Many national and local charities are among the projects supported by our members. Through this fraternal service to humanity, our members strive to build a better, more fulfilling way of life for all.

The following is a guide to assist **YOU**, as a new and devoted member of our Order of the Eastern Star.

Grand Chapter and General Grand Chapter?

The state organization is referred to as Grand Chapter of Texas and they meet once a year near August. At that time all the business is reported, changes are discussed and voted upon and an election is held. Voting privileges is only granted to Worthy Matrons/Worthy Patrons or Past Matrons & Past Patrons. The incoming officers are installed on the final night in a beautiful and meaningful program.

General Grand Chapter, is the organization which represents the worldwide membership and they meet every three years.

A triangle is made⁶ between the Associate Conductress, Conductress, and the Worthy Matron.

A triangle is also made between the Conductress, Associate Conductress and the Associate Matron.

In closing the bible and removing the square and compasses, the Conductress should not close the compasses. The open compasses in Latin means "Together" and "A Way" – meaning for us a coming together to learn a better way of life.

Clasping the closed Bible during initiation is a symbol of secrecy.

It is proper when possible, for the Chapter Room to face East and West. This is a symbol from Masonry, because the Temple at Jerusalem, built by King Solomon, faced the East. East is always a symbol of light. North, from the earliest time of man, has always been considered a place of darkness, lighted only by the North Star.

The Associate Conductress corresponds to John the Baptist; she prepares the way of the Lord. Since candidates must declare their belief in a Supreme Being, and the way must be prepared for the Candidate to get the most out of the initiation. The Conductress symbolizes the Divine Friend who walks besides us through the perilous journey of life.

In opening the Bible we always open it at the second Chapter of Matthew describing the Wise

Men from the East following His Star, this is a symbol that we, too, are following His Star.

The Sign of Salutation is made to the Open Bible as a signification of the Light of the Word being spread to all Sisters and Brothers present.

The Conductress steps back between Ruth and Esther and after the prayer the Chaplain stands between Esther and Martha. The Altar, as a pivotal point makes a complete circle between the Star Points. A circle is a sign of unending life. If they did not step back into their positions the circle would be incomplete, and broken.

In Revelation 21:16, John tells of seeing “The City Four-Square” the New Jerusalem. The Chapter Room shall be “Four-square”, as a symbol of integrity and fair dealing. We turn square corners in marching as a symbol of living four square with God and man.

In Texas we have the square and compasses upon our Holy Altar. The triangle of the compasses is a symbol of the Trinity – Father, Son and Holy Ghost. The square signifies that we should square our lives and actions. Be square with God and with our fellow man.

Past Grands, Past Matrons and Past Patrons?

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Past Grand Matrons & Past Grand Patrons have held the top offices in Grand Chapter (state) and are

introduced at all meetings. Past Matrons and Past Patrons have held the top offices in local chapters. One may be a PM (Past Matron) or PP (Past Patron) more than one time.

What is OV or FV?

OV is the Official Visit made to the Chapter by the Deputy Grand Matron. She brings greetings and special instructions for the Worthy Grand Matron. FV is the Fraternal Visit made to the subordinate chapter by the Worthy Grand Matron (WGM) and sometimes the Worthy Grand Patron (WGP). The WGM & WGP are the ones elected to represent the statewide membership.

What is ESTARL?

This is the name of the scholarships given to the students seeking religious service. It means Eastern Star Training Awards for Religious Leadership.

What are Educational Scholarships?

Students who are attending college in Texas can apply for OES scholarships through the Grand Chapter Education Committee.

What are the Youth Groups?

These groups are the International Order of the Rainbow for Girls and the DeMolay for Boys.

Where to learn more:

- The Grand Chapter has a web site:
<https://oestx.org>

- The Official Bulletin is a Magazine published monthly and contains information on the Chapters and Grand Chapter happenings.
- The Eastern Star Journal is published by General Grand Chapter 4 times a year and has many interesting articles.
- We have a section in the Masonic newsletter called Star Points

The Ritual

You were presented with a ritual at your initiation. It gives information about our founder Rob Morris, and explains things like - how to ballot, what the raps mean, Grand Honors, Jewels of the Officers. Lastly, you will find instructions on opening, closing, initiations and installations.

The Constitution and By Laws Book

This is a book you may purchase from the Chapter Secretary. It contains the Constitution, Rules, Regulations, Code of Justice, miscellaneous instructions, ceremonies, diagrams and forms that pertain to the Grand Chapter and the local chapters. This book is very informative and if you do not understand something, you can usually find the answer in this book

The Secret Work

Each Chapter may have four copies of the Secret Work. The top officers have these copies and they are passed down each year to the new top officers. However any member may view and study a copy of the Secret Work. The Secret Work should be memorized and your Big Sister, Big Brother or any member can help you with the memorization work.

Introduction to Symbolism in OES
 (Excerpts from “Symbolism of the
 Order of the Eastern Star”
 Compiled by Mary Katharine Smith, PGM)

The Dove and the Olive Branch – a “Symbol” of Peace

The Lion – a “Symbol” of Courage

The Eagle – a “Symbol” of Freedom

Our American Flag – a “Symbol” of Liberty

The Cross – a “Symbol” of God’s love for mankind, in giving His only begotten Son that “Whosoever Believeth on Him Should Not Perish, But Have Everlasting Life.”

The Altar with the Open Bible is a symbol of God’s presence, and the dispensing of His Light. As the sun, our greatest source of light, rises in the East, so shall the Worthy Matron preside in the East as a dispenser of God’s light.

A Brother sits at her left, signifying the relationship between the Order of the Eastern Star and the Masonic Brotherhood, Symbolizing the fact that Masonry stands ready to protect those who are worthy of Masonic protection. We do not pass between the Altar and the East, because the light dispensed from the Holy Bible is broken in so doing, and the Worthy Matron is separated from her source of Divine Light and *guidance*.

Concerns & Celebrations

You should report any illness or distress of any member or yourself. Be sure to share your celebrations as well.

Farewell

At the close of the meeting, respond to the Worthy Matron's "Farewell" by answering "Farewell" with a slight bow.

What is Proficiency?

Each year, some Chapters have their members attend Proficiency (study) classes where you can learn more about Eastern Star and its meaning. This is also when you may learn our Secret Work. There is an Advanced Proficiency Certificate and you are required to have this if you are to advance to the elected office of Worthy Matron or Worthy Patron. This proficiency is a series of questions and answers about things you can study in the Constitution, Code of Laws and Ritual. You can purchase a study guide from Grand Chapter.

You were given a year book at your initiation. A year book will include the Worthy Matron's selections such as Theme, Colors, Flower, Scripture, etc. It will include an events calendar, the Chapter's Bylaws, and provide a roster of members. The roster lists the member's names, addresses and phone numbers.

Your Big Sister and/or Big Brother

You were assigned a Big Sister (ladies) or a Big Brother (men) and this is someone you can go to at any time to learn more about the order. Many Chapters have special meetings to practice. Also, a practice is often scheduled before an Installation of Officers. We are all Sisters and Brothers. **We all make mistakes!** Please don't feel embarrassed if you make one too. Really, the sky won't fall and we'll still love you.

What do I need to know to attend a meeting?

Chapter Dues Card

You were presented with a dues card at your initiation. Dues cards are issued when a member pays dues. Please **SIGN** your dues card when you receive it. It is best if you carry it with you at all times, as you may be asked to show it at special meetings or when visiting another chapter. Dues are payable in advance and are due before May 31st of each year. If you are to be an officer, your dues must be paid before you can be installed.

Ladies wear dresses to all meetings. Officers may wear long dresses at the request of the WM. Otherwise you will wear a standard length dress. Pants are only worn at casual functions and practices.

Men should wear a dark suit when the ladies are in formals. When it isn't a formal meeting, a sport's coat and slacks are fine. In warmer weather more casual dress may be allowed. The incoming WM will advise on what she prefers.

Members are not permitted to wear hats or gloves. In Eastern Star, a hat is considered symbolically as something between the member and God. A glove is considered something preventing a warm, friendly contact with another member's hand. In the congenial warmth of the chapter, wraps are considered unnecessary; therefore, overcoats, furs, and wraps are not worn.

All of the Dress code mentioned above is a matter of custom. However should a member show up in pants or need a wrap, or headdress, it would be an act of unkindness, and therefore a violation of our obligation, to speak of this custom at such a time. ***Only the Worthy Matron should address the issue with the member.***

Upon arrival at your local Chapter

You should sign the guest register – located just outside the Chapter room, in what we call the Anteroom. You should also sign the WM guest book. If you are carrying a cellular phone or pager, you should make them silent. You may sit in a chair along the sidelines in the chapter room. As a new member, it is permissible for you to follow along in your ritual while officers perform their work. However, **only the Worthy Patron prompts** officers when needed. When you become an officer, you will want to memorize your work.

A prospective member should only be rejected if she/he is not of good moral character or would be a destructive source in the Chapter. If a member has such knowledge, he/she should tell the Worthy Matron when the petition is read in the chapter.

The Ballot is secret and inviolable. No one discusses the ballot in the presence of those who are not members of the Order. Only the Secretary discloses the results of the ballot to the new applicants for membership. Only members of the Chapter to which application is made may vote on the application.

Usually the ballot box is placed on the altar. Members on the south ballot first after the officers have balloted. Do not carry anything in your hands or have any wrap draped loosely over your shoulders. Observe how the officers form a triangle prior to entering the Labyrinth between Ruth and Esther; you will pause at those points. After the person in front of you completes the balloting, approach the Altar and make the Salutation Sign to the **open Bible**, drop your hands to your sides, then you may take one step to the left and ballot with either hand. Vote for the Good of the Order: white balls are favorable; black cubes reject. NEVER cast a black cube unless you know of some good reason the applicant would not make a good member. Using a black cube for personal dislike is not good. It is not good for the Star; it is not good Christianity. After you ballot, drop your arms to your side before taking two steps backward; turn left toward Martha; leave between Ether and Martha, returning to your seat by the marching line.

Signs of Star Point Officers

Listen to the Secret Work. Study it with your Big Sister and/or Big Brother. Respond by giving the Pass of the Degree when requested by the Worthy Matron

Flag Presentation

Salute the Flag when the Marshal takes it out of the stand and hold as long as Flag is in motion. You should follow the Flag with the body as it moves. Hold the Salute for the Pledge and the National Anthem.

Grand Honors

Is extended to the Worthy Grand Matron, Worthy Grand Patron, Past Grand Matron, and Past Grand Patron. Grand Honors are given only when the guest is standing in the East. You should face East to West or North to South (never at an angle) when the Worthy Matron says, "Sisters and Brothers..." give in one motion by crossing the arms over the breast, the left over the right, with hands open and with a slight bow. Applause may be given during the introductions and when a guest is being escorted to the East. Applause may be given as the guest is leaving the Labyrinth, but is not given following Grand Honors.

Business

Please feel free to participate in the affairs of the chapter by asking questions or requesting clarification on any point that is not clear to you. You should stand if you wish to speak; wait until you are acknowledged, then say, "Worthy Matron...".

Voting is done "by the usual sign of the Order," which is raising the right hand. To vote by acclamation means to vote by "voice".

Visiting another chapter

Be prepared to show your dues receipt. See if there is a sister or brother there that has sat with you in a chapter meeting and ask them to vouch for you. If not, you will be examined by the examining committee. Be prepared to give the signs and passes of Star Points and required Secret Work. Sign the register under the visitor section.

Entering or leaving the chapter while the meeting is in session.

If you are late in arriving, or need to leave while the Chapter is in session, remember 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 (rap on the door). When allowed in you will need to put wraps and purses on sideline. Then advance to the west line with hands empty, in front of the Associate Matron and the Associate Patron,. Face the East (podium) and give the Salutation Sign (remember the way you held the Bible?). Please wait for the response from the presiding officer. If entering, take your seat; if retiring, wait for the Warder to open the door. (only the Warder is to allowed to open the door). If you are ill or have an emergency, you may leave without giving the Salutation Sign.

The Officers in a Chapter

Elections are held once a year in April. The eight elected officers are Worthy Matron, Worthy Patron, Associate Matron, Associate Patron, Secretary, Treasurer, Conductress, and Associate Conductress. The remaining 10 officers are appointed by the incoming Worthy Matron. These officers are Chaplain, Marshal, Organist, Adah, Ruth, Esther, Martha, Electa, Warder, and Sentinel. Officers step to the side of their chairs, closest to the sidelines. Elected officers stand in front of their chairs.

Chapter Courtesies

The chapter is headed by and is under the direction of the Worthy Matron. A member wishing to speak rises and waits to be recognized by the Worthy Matron. When this recognition is given, the member responds with a slight bow of the head and the greets – “Worthy Matron, Worthy Patron, Sisters and Brothers” and proceeds with the desired message.

The Light of the Eastern Star originates from the Holy Bible, the Great Light of all Masonic Orders. Symbolically, the light should be available to the Presiding Officer at all times. Therefore, no one passes between the altar, with the Bible open upon it, and the East (except as specifically provided in the ritual such as the initiation ceremony).

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

In the early days of the Order, it was considered unlady like for women to cross their knees in Chapter. Therefore, women should leave their feet flat on the ground or crossed at the ankles.

The Reverent Attitude

This position is assumed during devotionals in Opening and Closing, all Obligations, and when Conductress or Chaplain enters the Labyrinth. Continue holding until all leave the Labyrinth. You clasp hands loosely, one hand palm up, the other palm laid over it and hold at waist level.

Respect for the Bible

Stand, in an attitude of reverence, when the Bible bearer with Bible enters the Chapter room before opening. Face the Altar as the Bible is carried into the Labyrinth.* When the Bible is open on the Altar, it creates a Holy area between it and the East, and no one is permitted to walk between them except during the initiation ceremony. No pictures are to be taken during the ritualistic work. We do not applaud for ritualistic work.. We do not applaud when people are in the Labyrinth.*

*The Labyrinth is the pentagon shaped area around the Star Points with the Altar in the center.

Attitude of Prayer

You need to assume the Reverent Attitude and face the Altar when Chaplain enters Labyrinth. Bow your head as the Chaplain kneels. Hold the reverent attitude during prayer. Give prayer response, “so may it ever be” after ritualistic prayer. Respond with ‘Amen” when responding to a prayer given from the heart. You drop your hands to your sides when Chaplain/Conductress both leaves the Labyrinth.

Gavel

Three raps calls up the entire Chapter

Two raps calls up the officers

One rap

- ❖ Calls the Chapter to order
- ❖ Seats Chapter when standing
- ❖ Completes Opening and Closing
- ❖ Completes each order of business

Remain standing after the chapter is declared open, even though the gavel is rapped once.

Remember stand at three blows and sit down at one blow.