

## 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

**Table of Contents**

What is the Order of the Eastern Star? . . . . . 3  
Chapter dues card . . . . . 4  
Dress Code . . . . . 5  
Upon arrival at your Chapter . . . . . 6  
Gavel . . . . . 6  
Signs of Star Point Officers . . . . . 6  
Respect for the Bible . . . . . 7  
The Reverent Attitude . . . . . 7  
Flag Presentation . . . . . 8  
Grand Honors . . . . . 8  
Sickness and Cheer . . . . . 8  
Business . . . . . 8  
Balloting . . . . . 9  
Farewell . . . . . 10  
Entering or leaving the Chapter . . . . . 10  
Officers in a Chapter. . . . . 11  
Chapter Courtesies . . . . . 11  
Your Mentor. . . . . 13  
Visiting Another Chapter . . . . . 13  
The Ritual . . . . . 14  
Chapter By-Laws and Standing Rules. . . . . 14  
Constitution and By-Laws (Red Book) . . . . . 15  
The Secret Work . . . . . 15  
Common Abbreviations . . . . . 15  
Grand Chapter & General Grand Chapter . . . . . 16  
Past Grand Matrons & Past Grand Patrons. . . . . 16  
What is an Official Visitation? . . . . . 16  
What is ESTARL? . . . . . 17  
What are Education Scholarships? . . . . . 17  
What are the Youth Groups? . . . . . 17  
Where to learn more? . . . . . 17  
Introduction to Symbolism in OES . . . . . 18  
Star Point Scriptures . . . . . 21

Notes

**Welcome 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 that stand by you in your journey of life.

**What is the Order of 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 many Chapters within the United States, Canada and 18 other countries. Several Chapters form a state organization known as Grand Chapter. Most Grand Chapters are under the jurisdiction of the General Grand Chapter.

A deep fraternal bond exists between the members. It is 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 sisters and brothers, and it is considered a privilege to 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.

### **Chapter Dues Card**

You were presented with a dues card at the time of 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 a special meeting or when visiting another Chapter. In Ohio, dues are payable starting June 1, and are due before the first stated meeting of the Chapter in October. Officers' dues **must** be paid prior to Installation, otherwise, they cannot be installed.

### **Star Point Info and Scriptures**

**Adah—Judges 11:30-31 and 34-35**  
**Color is blue and symbolizes Fidelity**  
**Emblem is the Sword and Veil united**  
**Flower is the Violet \*\* Open Bible**

**Ruth—Ruth 2:16-17; 2: 1-2.5**  
**Color is Yellow and symbolizes Constancy**  
**Emblem is the Sheaf**  
**Flower is the Yellow Jessamine \*\* Lily of the Valley**

**Esther—Esther 2:17, 20; 5:1-3**  
**Color is white and symbolizes Light, Purity, & Joy**  
**Emblem is Crown and Scepter united**  
**Flower is White Lily \*\*the Sun**

**Martha—St. John 1:3-4, 20, 22-26**  
**Color is green and symbolizes Hope & Immortality**  
**Emblem is the Broken Column**  
**Flower is the Fern \*\* the Lamb**

**Electa—I John 4:7-8, 17-21; II John 1:1-5**  
**Color is red and symbolizes Fervency**  
**Emblem is the Cup**  
**Flower is the Red Rose \*\* the Lion**

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

The circling of the Star Points during Initiation symbolizes the maze of 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 in need.

We stand while the officers make the entering march, and remain standing until seated by the Worthy 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 Jessamine of Ruth—Sweetness

The White Lily of Esther—Humility

The Fern of Martha—Godliness

The Red Rose of Electa—Courage to right wrongs

### Dress Code

Chapter attire for females is typically dresses or skirts of an appropriate length. Males are asked to wear dress shirts and ties. Some Chapters allow ladies to wear slacks when the weather is colder or during more casual functions (jeans are not preferred).

Many Chapters have attire selected for the officers by the Worthy Matron. Male officers usually wear dark suits or tuxedos. Officers and members may dress more formally for special meeting such as official visits, initiations and installation of officers. Men should wear a dark suit when the ladies are in formals.

These are suggestions for attire. Should you not be unable to conform, **DO NOT** hesitate to attend the meetings of your Chapter. Perhaps after work, time may not permit you to go home and change. Your Chapter would prefer that you attend in your “work clothes” rather than stay away because of suggestions for attire.

Members are not permitted to wear hats or gloves. In Eastern Star, a hat is considered symbolically as something between the member and God. If a member has a medical condition requiring a head covering is necessary, this is fine. A glove is considered something preventing a warm, friendly contact with another member’s hand.

Dress code is a “sticky” subject and one that is under review by the leadership of our organization. Only the Worthy Matron should address concerns with this in your Chapter.

### **Upon arrival at your Chapter**

You should sign the guest register located just outside the Chapter room, in what we call the Anteroom. If you are carrying a cell phone or pager, please silence them before entering the Chapter room. You may sit in a chair along the sidelines in the Chapter room. As a new member, it is permissible to follow along using the Ritual while officers perform their work. However, only designated prompters will prompt officers as needed. Officers are asked to do their best to memorize their work.

### **The Gavel**

Three raps will call up the Chapter.

Two raps will call up only the officers.

One rap:

- Calls the Chapter to order
- Seats Chapter when standing
- Completes each order of business
- Completes opening and closing\*

\*Remain standing after the Chapter is declared open or closed, even though the gavel is rapped once.

### **Signs of the Star Points**

Listen closely to the Secret Work. Study it with your Mentor. Respond by giving the Pass of the Degree when requested by the Worthy Matron.

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.

A triangle is made between the Conductress, Associate Conductress and the Worthy Matron. A triangle is also made between the Conductress, Associate Conductress and the Associate Matron. Clasp 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, the way must be prepared for the Candidate to get the most out of the Initiation. The Conductress symbolizes the Divine Friend who walks beside us through the perilous journey of life. In opening the Bible, we open it to any book and chapter generally near the center of the book.

## **Introduction to Symbolism in OES**

(Excerpts from “Symbolism of the Order of Eastern Star”  
Compiled by Mary Katharine Smith PGM of California)

The Dove and Olive Branch—a symbol of Peace

The Lion—a symbol of Courage

The Eagle—a symbol of Freedom

The 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 in 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 Fraternity, 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 doing so, and the Worthy Matron is separated from her source of Divine Light and guidance.

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

## **Respect for the Bible**

Standing while the Bible is being opened on the Altar 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.

## **The Reverent Attitude (Attitude of Prayer)**

This is assumed by clasping your hands loosely, left palm up, the right palm down and holding your hands at waist level.

This position is assumed during devotionals during the opening and closing of the Chapter when the Conductress or Chaplain enter the Labyrinth, all Obligations, draping of the Charter or Altar, and other prayers. You should bow your head as the Chaplain begins to pray. Hold the Reverent Attitude during the prayer. The response following the prayer is “So may it ever be.” The Reverent Attitude is released when the Chaplain leaves the Labyrinth during the opening and when the Conductress leaves it during the closing.

### **Flag Presentation**

Salute the Flag when the Marshal has removed it from the stand and hold as long as the Flag is in motion. Hold the salute for the Pledge. If the National Anthem is sung, the salute is raised on the word "Oh". If another Patriotic Ode is sung, the salute is not held.

### **Grand Honors**

Grand Honors are extended to the Worthy Grand Matron, Worthy Grand Patron, Past Grand Matrons and Past Grand Patrons. Grand Honors are only given once the guest has been presented to the East. To give Grand Honors, you should face the East and cross your arms over the breast, the left over the right with hands open, fingers tips on the shoulders, and give a slight bow. Applause may be given as the guest is leaving the Labyrinth and after Grand Honors. Only the Worthy Matron and Worthy Patron will give Grand Honors to both women and men presented in the East at the same time. Other members only salute them once.

### **Sickness and Cheer**

You should report any illness or distress of any member or yourself if there is an emergency during a meeting. Please make your Chapter Secretary or Cheer Committee aware of prayer requests, illnesses, and celebrations so that members can support you.

### **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 have been acknowledged, then say "Worthy Matron..."

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

### **What is ESTARL?**

This is the name of the educational scholarship given to students seeking religious service. It stands for **E**astern **S**tar **T**raining **A**wards for **R**eligious **L**eadership. If you are aware of someone entering the ministry or needing financial assistance who is serving in a religious capacity, please contact your Chapter Secretary for more information.

### **What are Educational Scholarships?**

Students who are attending college in Ohio can apply for OES scholarships through the Grand Chapter's Youth Committee.

### **What are the Youth Groups?**

These groups consist of the International Order of Rainbow for Girls, Job's Daughters International (Bethel) and the Order of DeMolay for young men.

### **Where to learn more?**

The Grand Chapter of Ohio website:

[www.ohiooes.org](http://www.ohiooes.org)

### **Grand Chapter and General Grand Chapter**

The state organization is referred to as Grand Chapter of Ohio and they meet once a year in September. At that time all the business is reported, changes are discussed and voted upon and an election is held to elect, for the following year, the Worthy Grand Matron and Worthy Grand Patron, as well as a slate of other Grand Officers. All members having voting privileges. The incoming officers are installed on the final afternoon in a beautiful and meaningful ceremony.

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

### **Past Grands, Past Matrons and Past Patrons**

Past Grand Matrons and Past Grand Patrons have held the top offices in Grand Chapter (state) and are introduced at all meetings and receive Grand Honors. Past Matrons and Past Patrons have held the top office in their local Chapter. One may be a Past Matron or Past Patron more than one time.

### **What is an Official Visitation?**

An Official Visitation is made to the Chapter by the Worthy Grand Matron, Worthy Grand Patron or both at the same time. The Worthy Grand Matron and Worthy Grand Patron have been elected to represent the statewide membership. It may be for the purpose of honoring a member or celebrating a special event.

### **Balloting**

Balloting is how members are elected to membership in the Order of the Eastern Star. Before you ballot, be sure to have your mentor show you the ballot box and how it works. A prospective member should only be rejected if she/he is not of good moral character or would be a destructive force in the Chapter. If a member has such knowledge, she/he should advise the Worthy Matron when the petition is read in 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 petition. Usually, the ballot box is placed on the Altar (Altar ballot). Members on the north follow the Chaplain and on the south follow the Marshal. 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 ballot, approach the Altar and use the Salutation sign to the open Bible, drop your hands to your side, then 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 if possible; turn left toward Martha; leave between Esther and Martha, returning to your seat by the marching line.

### **Farewell**

At the close of each meeting, the Worthy Matron addresses the Chapter with a farewell. Each member's response to the Worthy Matron will be "Farewell" with a slight bow.

Members may be asked to give the Mizpah Benediction. It is recited as follows:

**"May the Lord watch between me and thee while we are absent one from the other."**

### **Entering/leaving the Chapter while 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 or Initiation. When entering is permitted, the Sentinel will give the alarm (raps on the door). When allowed to enter, you will advance to a position in front of the Associate Matron, face East and give the Salutation sign (reminder, the way the Bible was held). Please wait for the response from the Presiding Officer. If entering, take your seat. If retiring, advance to the front of the Associate Matron's station facing East and give the Salutation sign, wait for the Presiding Officer to respond, and then wait for the Warder to open the door (only the Warder is permitted to open the door). If you are ill or have an emergency, you may leave without giving the Salutation sign.

### **The Constitution and By-Laws**

In Ohio, this is known as the Red Book and is available for purchase through the Chapter Secretary. It contains the Constitution, Rules and Regulations, miscellaneous instruction and forms that pertain to the Grand Chapter and the subordinate (local) Chapters. This book is very informative and if you do not understand something, you can usually find the answer in this book.

### **Secret Work**

Each Chapter will have four (4) copies of the Secret Work. These copies are held by the Worthy Patron, Associate Patron, Conductress and Associate Conductress. However, any member may view and study a copy of the Secret Work. The Secret Work should be memorized by the WP, AP, Conductress and Associate Conductress.

### **Common abbreviations used in our Order**

OES	Order of the Eastern Star
WGM	Worthy Grand Matron
WGP	Worthy Grand Patron
PGM	Past Grand Matron
PGP	Past Grand Patron
WM	Worthy Matron
WP	Worthy Patron
GGC	General Grand Chapter
PM	Past Matron
PP	Past Patron
DGM	Deputy Grand Matron
COA	Chairman of Arrangements

## **Resources**

After attending a few Chapter meetings, you may wish to explore the following resources. The Chapter Secretary should be able to make these available to you.

1. Ritual (You may have been given this during Initiation.)
2. Chapter By-Laws (You should receive this at Initiation.)
3. Grand Chapter Constitution and By-Laws  
(Secretary will be able to provide)
4. Roster of your Chapter's membership
5. Chapter program

## **The Ritual**

You may/may not have been presented with a Ritual at the time of your Initiation (Chapters are different). 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
- Opening of Chapter
- Closing of Chapter
- Initiations
- Installations

Rituals are available for purchase through the Chapter Secretary.

## **Chapter By-Laws and Standing Rules**

Each Chapter abides by a set of By-Laws and Standing Rules. They state things such as when and where you meet, exceptions to meeting, officers' gifts, and general rules and regulations. If you did not receive these, please ask the Chapter Secretary for a copy.

## **The Officers in a Chapter**

Elections are held once a year in June. The eight elected officers are Worthy Matron, Worthy Patron, Associate Patron, Associate Matron, Secretary, Treasurer, Conductress and Associate Conductress. The remaining ten officers are appointed by the incoming Worthy Matron. These officers include Chaplain, Marshal, Organist, Adah, Ruth, Esther, Martha, Electa, Warder and Sentinel. When standing at their stations, officers will step to the side of their chair closest to the sidelines.

## **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 the member has been recognized, she or he will address the Worthy Matron, Worthy Patron, etc. 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 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.

**Remember: During meetings, do not talk to one another during Ritualistic work or when other members or officers are speaking, be attentive during meetings, and turn off or put on vibrate all electronic devices. In the early days of the Order, it was considered not lady-like for women to cross their knees in Chapter. Therefore, women sitting in the front rows should leave their feet flat on the floor or crossed at the ankles. Please avoid doing anything that would be distracting to others.**

We know that during your initiation a great deal of information was presented to you in a rather bewildering hour of being escorted around the Chapter room. You vaguely remember something about having to know certain passes, but you do not have any idea of what they are. The more you attend Chapter meetings, the more firmly the passes will be embedded in your memory. Make an effort to attend as many meetings as you are able. All of us were new members and have felt as overwhelmed as you may feel now. Your mentor assigned to you and/or your Chapter's Instruction Committee is there to help. Don't hesitate to call and ask for assistance.

In order to get the most out of your membership, you will want to:

- Attend meetings
- Enjoy social events
- Assist with projects
- Get to know your Sisters and Brothers
- STAY INVOLVED!

### **Your Mentor**

You will be assigned a mentor, and this will be 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 do not feel embarrassed if you make one too! Really, the sky won't fall, and we will still love you!

### **Visiting Another Chapter**

Be prepared to show your current dues card. If you have forgotten your card, see if there is a Sister or Brother there that knows you from Chapter meetings, 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.