

Educational Committee Projects 2024-2027

WGM/WGP/WM/WP

The General Grand Chapter Educational Committee has come up with these 2 projects we would like you to try during this triennium. We recognize many members are traveling some distance to attend an Eastern Star meeting. We must provide value to our members to keep them coming. The first project is to provide 30 minutes total per year of continuing education to our members on the 5 heroines of our Order for 6 minutes each. You can read the following script below for the appropriate Star Point, then have the ladies that have served that Star Point stand and be escorted to the West where they will be recognized and thanked for their service.

The second project is to provide an additional educational reading time to an elementary school or youth group one time per month. This will consist of reading a story consistent with the age group to the designated group in the city where your Eastern Star Chapter meets. The intent is to find a group within your Eastern Star chapter area and provide a service to your community and be flexible.

I would like to thank the members of the General Grand Chapter Educational Committee for their assistance: Gay Chambers PGM-New Mexico, Pat Morris PGM-Arizona, Carol Ann Roberson PGM-Arkansas, Peggy Scott PGM-New Hampshire, and Beverly Wade PGM-California. We will be presenting this information during the coming years. Thank you in advance for your participation and cooperation in these projects. We hope this will bear fruit in the coming years. We look forward to hearing your comments and feedback in the years ahead. If you have any questions, please contact any committee member or myself.

Sincerely,

Ron Kammerer, PGP

General Grand Chapter Educational Chairman
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ADAH

Our beautiful star is composed of five Biblical heroines, vibrant colors, flowers, and symbols. The first point of our Star is Adah. Reference to this heroine can be found in the Book of Judges Chapter 11. She is the daughter of Jephtha, the Governor of Israel, a military leader, and a man who held the tenets of Freemasonry. Adah was his only child and the joy of his life.

One day he was commanding a military mission. Before he gave the signal to move forward in battle, he prayed for a successful victory. In his petition to God, he said he would promise to sacrifice the first thing that he encountered upon returning to his home if the battle was successful. The battle was successful.

When he returned home, he was greeted by his daughter, Adah. When he saw her appear he was wrought with remorse for his promise of a sacrifice. As she met him with joyful singing and dancing, he met her with sadness and tears saying "Alas, my daughter, you have brought me very low, for I have spoken to God and cannot take back my words". Jephtha was filled with overwhelming emotions for the vow he had spoken.

Adah, not understanding her father's words, inquired about his sadness, and he informed her about his fateful promise. She resolutely received the details of her father's promise and realized the ramifications of his words. In order not to dishonor her father's vow, she immediately understood what she must do. In order to prepare herself for the fulfillment of her father's words, she requested to retreat to the mountains for two months. This would allow her time to come to terms with the reality of her father's promise. Her request was granted to spend two months among the mountains.

Adah went to the mountains with friends to prepare herself for the terrible fate before her. During this time, she with her friends mourned daily her impending death.

At the close of the two months, Adah found her way back down from the mountains. She was followed by her sorrowing friends. Many others gathered along the way to witness her fate.

Adah approached her father with love and affection and said her goodbyes to him. She wore a veil of mourning which her father threw over her face to hide his view. Adah quickly removed the veil and said she did not need to have her face covered. Her father told her he could not strike the fatal blow while she looked at him. So, he again threw the veil over her. Adah cast off the veil a second time saying she would look up to the heavens so that he would not be unnerved. She stated she did not want to die in the dark. Jephtha threw the veil over her a third time and she in turn cast it off again this time holding firmly to the ends of the veil. She told her father that only criminals and murderers had their heads covered when facing death and that she was not a criminal. She vowed to cast her eyes upward. It was in this position she invited the fatal blow. Jephtha's vow and deed were completed. Adah died in the Light which has rendered her name famous in the scriptures and in Masonry.

Adah is represented by the color blue, the emblem of the Sword and Veil united and the violet flower.

The sword represents the instrument by which she was slain. The veil united with the sword represents her desire to die in the Light.

The lesson of Adah teaches fidelity, to be faithful to our obligations, to live in the Light and to accept our fate with complete trust and courage.

Sweet and fragrant violets
Portraying Adah's color of blue.
Their pure, un-shadowed beauty,
Reflects Heaven's azure hue.
They speak of faith and courage,
Fidelity, steadfast and true and the
theme of unswerving duty.
Now rests in the heart of you *

RUTH

Ref: King James Version of the Bible; Revised Standard Version of the Bible;
Women of the Bible by Ann Spangler & Jean E. Syswerda.

The story of Ruth as presented in our Ritual is a very good synopsis of the story of Ruth but there is much more to the story that is not mentioned in our Ritual.

Naomi twice charged Ruth to return to her people with Orpah and twice Ruth declined with the famous charge of "Entreat me not to leave thee..." Orpah returned to her own people and Ruth went with Naomi to Bethlehem

It was the harvest and due to Naomi's age, Ruth went to the fields as a gleaner. These were the people, usually women, who followed the harvest to pick up what was left by the reapers.

Boaz was inspecting his fields and saw Ruth, inquired about her and was told of her history and devotion to Naomi, who was a kinswoman of Boaz. He went and greeted her and offered her refreshment. He also told her to stay with the women who were gleaning for her own safety. Gleaning in another field could have led to her being assaulted. She followed this pattern until the harvest was over and again faced the difficult task of providing for herself and Naomi.

Naomi, knowing the ways of Israel, told her to go threshing floor where they were winnowing barley. She was to bathe and wear her best clothes not letting her

presence be known to anyone. When Boaz finished and was resting, she was to go to him in a specific manner and when he acknowledged her as a kinswoman, he would know what needed to be done.

Boaz recognized her as a kinswoman and honoring her devotion to Naomi, took it upon himself to clear the way that they could be married. What this required was to secure ownership of a field that had belonged to Elimelech and thus had passed to his nearest kin.

Boaz went to this kinsman and presented the case and asked to purchase the field. This kinsman wanted the field for himself but when Boaz pointed out that it would mean he had to marry Ruth he relinquished the field to Boaz thus clearing the way for Boaz and Ruth to marry.

Boaz and Ruth had one son Obed who sired Jesse who sired David the King.

The name Ruth means “Friendship”. The character of Ruth was one of being generous, loyal and loving. She is strong and serene, able to take unusual risks, dealing actively with life circumstances.

All that Ruth did was done out of love for her Mother-in-law and love of God. She had made a promise on the road to Bethlehem that she was determined to keep. Though it was a promise made by one woman to another it is an eloquent expression of love.

Ruth blessed Naomi with her love but had no way of knowing that those acts would, in turn, lead to her being blessed in her own life. She never asked for anything in return. Her love was unconditional as ours should be for our Sisters and Brothers.

The story of Ruth is an excellent example of that part of our obligation that speaks of honor and how we should act toward our Sisters and Brothers and indeed toward all people.

Ruth was obedient to this honor and duty.

The Book of Ruth, in the Bible, is an easy read and presents a much more complete story. The story of Ruth sets forth a path for our own behavior.

ESTHER

References: 1867 Ritual by Rob Morris, Revised Standard Version and King James Version of the Bible; Esther

Esther was reared up in obscurity, among the exiled people of Israel, then dwelling in the land of Persia. Her beauty and virtue and still more, her intellectual endowments attracted the attention of the king. The mighty Ahasuerus, who made her his wife and queen, presented her with a splendid palace and honored her above all the women of the land.

In time he made her his confidant in all the affairs of the Kingdom and in the consideration of every question she proved herself a true descendant of the wise King Solomon. All the traditions of that period prove that Esther was one of the most remarkable women who ever graced the pages of history.

From the history of Freemasonry, we learn that king Ahasuerus was a Freemason. He was a man who chiefly valued himself upon keeping his word. The almighty power and importance of truth was to him an object of frequent contemplation.

The enemies of the Jews, who were very numerous and powerful had brought the most bitter and false accusations before the king and had induced him to pass an edict that on a certain day the entire nation should be exterminated. Every man, woman and child of these unfortunate exiles was to be put to death and thus the chosen people of God totally blotted out from the earth. But God appointed Queen Esther an instrument to prevent so great a calamity.

No sooner did she learn of this cruel edict than she resolved to use her influence with the king to save her nation and if she failed, to perish with them. The king had often promised her that whenever she came before him robed and adorned as a queen, and made any request of him whatever, he would grant it, "even to the half of the kingdom." She devoted herself to prayer and fasting for three days and nights casing herself to be attired in the silken robes and with the crown of her royal state she went boldly through the streets of the city to the palace of the king.

The scene, as this heroic woman entered the audience chamber, was magnificent. All that could render such an occasion brilliant was there. The king on his throne, radiant with jewels to the gorgeous equipage of the officers and decorations of the apartment. In contrast with all their splendid array, stood Queen Esther. Pale with long fasting and emotion, who strove to catch the eye of the King.

As she did so, he rose, confused and angry that the law of the palace had been violated. At that instant Esther placed her hand upon the crown she wore and upon the robe and thus tacitly reminded him of his solemn promise. He remembered his pledge and calling her to him, at the foot of the throne, held

out his golden scepter that by placing her hand upon it, an evident sign of pardon and acceptance seen by all present.

Then he said "What Wilt Thou Queen Esther? What is thy request? It shall be given thee, even to the half of the kingdom."

The Masonic history of Esther ends here but the scriptural account goes on to say that at a proper time she made known her request, which was granted by the king, and the whole nation of the Jews was thereby saved. Not one life was sacrificed and to this day in each year as a festival to commemorate the boldness, intelligence and fidelity of Queen Esther.

The emblems are the Crown and Scepter, the being emblems of royalty.

The color white is appropriate to Esther to betoken the queenly robe she wore when she entered the presence of the king.

MARTHA

References: 1867 Ritual by Rob Morris, Revised Standard Version and King James Version of the Bible; Luke 10:38; John 11:1-12:3 and Women of the Bible by Ann Spangler and Jean E. Syswerda.

The name Martha is the feminine form of "Lord" and means "Lady". Martha's character was that of an active and pragmatic woman.

Martha, her sister Mary and brother Lazarus were residents of Bethany which is a small village just two miles from Jerusalem on the eastern slope of the Mount of Olives. They were devoted to, and close friends of Jesus, who would dwell with them on his visits to Bethany.

On one such visit he was accompanied by his disciples and Martha was burdened with feeding and caring for their needs. She was angered that her sister Mary was spending her time sitting at the feet of Jesus and demanded of him that he order her sister to help her with the chores. Jesus wouldn't oblige and instead he chided her saying "Martha, Martha you are worried and upset about many things, but only one thing is needed. Mary has chosen what is better, and it will not be taken from her."

This tender rebuke was calculated to break the grip of her self-pity and reveal what was really taking place under her own roof and in her heart. This competent woman realized for the first time just how much she was missing. Distracted by the need to serve she had not taken the time to listen and learn from him. Perhaps her anger at Mary stemmed from envy. She seemed to think that her ceaseless activity would

produce something of lasting importance. Martha seemed to be herself in his presence where she learned to take to Jesus her frustration and anger. Martha worked out her faith directly and actively, questioning, challenging and asking Jesus to help her rectify whatever was wrong.

On the occasion, of one of Jesus' absences from Bethany, Lazarus became ill, the sisters dispatched a messenger asking him to return immediately and save their brother. The messenger returned but Jesus did not. Lazarus died and was entombed in his sepulcher.

After four days a messenger came to the women to tell them that Jesus was returning. Martha ran to meet him with a greeting that was tinged with complaint: "Lord, if you had been here my brother would not have died." But her complaint was joined with faith on her statement "I know that even now God will give you whatever you ask."

Jesus assured her that Lazarus would rise again and they proceeded to the tomb of Lazarus. The stone was removed from the tomb and here Martha's practical side returns when she points out that after four days there will be a terrible smell, at which point Lazarus emerged from the tomb.

Here was a woman who placed too much importance on her own activity and not enough on quiet contemplation of the word of Jesus. She pleaded for fairness without realizing that her version of fairness was itself unfair. Her commonsense approach to life made faith difficult thus the test that Jesus presented to her.

This is the story of a capable woman, strong in her beliefs and capabilities who welcomed the challenge to her faith and opened her heart to the love of Jesus. A very human woman who learned what it means to have Jesus as a friend, to allow him to stretch her faith and show her the power of what God can do.

One of the lessons we can take from this story is not to get so bogged down in things that we overlook what is important. Our faith is always tested, this is one area where we control how our faith is being tested and how we will respond to the test.

It is fine to be pragmatic and practical but don't let it blind you to the truth.

ELECTA

The color red is synonymous with the fifth point of our Star emblem. The heroine who represents this ray is Electa. Although there is no factual reference to this woman found in the Bible, she is thought to

have lived during the time of the Roman empire. It is suggested that the first epistle of John addresses her story.

According to the 1867 Grand Lodge Adoptive Masons organizational meeting Robert Morris' Manual and other systems of ritual contain some history information in a ceremony (not used in regular chapter) that refers to Electa as the "elect lady".

This history suggests that Masonic traditions are the source of our current knowledge of her. The ritual work reports that she was married to Gaius, a Grand Master of Masons.

Electa had been reared as a pagan and worshiped idols. She also raised and taught her children in this belief. By happenstance she and her family heard a discussion on the gospel from a Christian missionary. After hearing this, Electa, her husband and family relinquished their idol worship and became Christians.

This period of time was very dangerous to those who professed a belief in Christ. Many citizens were imprisoned, experienced loss of property and even death by not renouncing their Christian faith. Due to her husband's Masonic ties the family was spared from persecution for many years. Electa enjoyed her faith and sharing with all those around her. Electa was well known as the Mother of the Faithful and the Friend of the Distressed.

However, eventually an order was issued by the Roman emperor that all followers of the Christian religion must renounce their faith or be killed. His soldiers roamed the lands searching for those who professed their faith in Christ. Electa's fame was not overlooked. One band of soldiers arrived at her home. The soldiers' captain was said to be a Freemason and was arguably against the idea of confronting one whose good deeds were well known.

The captain pleaded with her that if she renounced her faith, it would only be words that she later would not need to heed.

He handed her a cross and instructed her to throw it to the ground and place her foot on it. All the while assuring her, he would leave without harming her or her family.

Electa took the cross and pressed it to her bosom. Thus, showing the soldier, she cherished the cross and its meaning. She would not renounce her faith. In doing so she sealed the fate of herself and her family. They were sent to a horrific dungeon and were kept there for a year.

They lost their home, and all their property was confiscated or destroyed. After a year of imprisonment, a judge came in person to their cell. He, being a Freemason as well, pleaded with them to deny their faith under penalty of death. Again, Electa and her family refused and testified for Christ.

They were removed from the dungeon, and each were tortured unmercifully. As a final insult to them and to show an example to others, they were taken by soldiers in a cart and nailed one by one to

crosses. Electa was the last and witnessed the deaths of her husband and children. She remained faithful to the end and prayed that the murderers be pardoned.

Throughout her life we find that she was well known for her charity, loyalty to truth, kindness, love, generous hospitality to the poor, and for being heroic even under the wrongs of persecution.

Symbolic to this heroine is the red rose, the cup and the lion. The red rose is lovely but aptly represents the blood of Electa when she died upon the cross, giving her spirit and life to honor her Christian faith. The cup symbolizes Charity. The lion symbolizes courage and power in defending Truth.

Also memorable is her sign (forming the Christian cross) that is known as the "Mother's sign" and the phrase "That we love one another".

Through her lesson we learn she cared deeply for her faith, her family, her friends and even strangers that needed help. These attributes are ones that we should strive to include in our own lives. If we model these virtues, we not only can enrich ourselves but also assist and encourage those that we encounter.

Electa's lesson teaches us to be caring, loving and charitable to everyone.