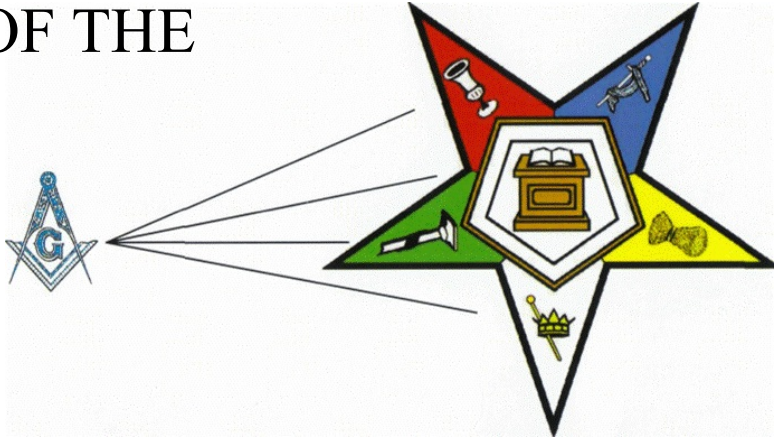


# THE ORDER OF THE



# EASTERN STAR

## GRAND CHAPTER OF ONTARIO

This booklet has been prepared to assist a new or prospective member in gaining an understanding of the Order of the Eastern Star under the Grand Chapter of Ontario.

Website:  
[www.easternstar.on.ca](http://www.easternstar.on.ca)



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## **The Order of the Eastern Star**

### ***What is it?***

The Order of the Eastern Star is the world's largest fraternal organization for both men and women and is comprised of people of deep spiritual convictions. It is not a religion, but it does require a belief in the existence of a Supreme Being. Although it is related in origin to the Masonic Fraternity, and only men who are Master Masons and women with specific Masonic affiliation are eligible to be members, it is not part of that organization. Worldwide, there are approximately 500,000\* members, working together in harmony for the good of humanity.

### ***What is its Purpose?***

As a fraternal order, the Order of the Eastern Star provides an opportunity for members to meet and enjoy social companionship. The Order encourages its members to incorporate into their lives the values of fidelity, constancy, loyalty, faith, love and charity. We strive to build an Order dedicated to Charity, Truth and Loving Kindness. These principles are expressed as allegories through beautiful and inspiring Biblical examples of heroic conduct and moral values. As we try to live by the teachings of the Order, we become better members of our respective faiths and communities.

## ***Who Can Join?***

To become a member, one must meet the following qualifications:

- Believe in the existence of a Supreme Being
- Be 18 years of age or over
- Reside for the past 12 months within the jurisdiction in which one is applying
- Meet one of the following affiliations:
  - An affiliated Master Mason in good standing
  - A female relative of a Master Mason in good standing (or who was in good standing at the time of his death) these relatives include:
    - wives
    - daughters
    - legally adopted daughters
    - mothers
    - widows
    - sisters, half-sisters
    - granddaughters
    - stepmothers
    - stepdaughters
    - stepsisters
    - daughters-in-law
    - grandmothers
    - great granddaughters
    - nieces
    - great nieces
    - mothers-in-law
    - sisters-in-law
    - aunts
    - first and second female cousins
- Members of Job's Daughters International or Members of the International Order of Rainbow for Girls – either active for three years or with a certificate of majority membership in their organization and have attained the age of eighteen (18) years

## ***Why should I join the Order?***

Here is what our members say that they enjoy about belonging:

- *“I’ve made lifelong friends through the Order of the Eastern Star.”*
- *“It’s a great feeling to be personally involved in community projects—doing good for others.”*
- *“I know I can count on the other members in time of distress or need.”*
- *“The projects and structure of the Order have provided me with opportunities for personal growth and leadership.”*
- *“I like belonging to an organization created for both men and women—husbands and wives can participate together.”*
- *It’s nice to have social enjoyment with other members of the Masonic family—we have common values and interests.”*

## ***How do I join?***

To inquire about membership, talk to a current member, or contact a local Chapter. To find Chapters in your area, contact the Membership Committee for Ontario. (send an e-mail to: [membership.oes.on@gmail.com](mailto:membership.oes.on@gmail.com)) or review the list of Ontario Chapters on the Grand Chapter of Ontario’s website: <http://www.easternstar.on.ca/membership>

You will be required to complete an application for membership (called a Petition for Degrees) and be recommended by two members of the Chapter to which you are applying. Petitions are carefully read, eligibility verified and election to membership must be by a vote of the Chapter to which you are applying.

## ***The Organization of the Order***

### **General Grand Chapter**

<http://www.easternstar.org/>

The international body governing the Order of the Eastern Star is the General Grand Chapter, Order of the Eastern Star. The office of the General Grand Chapter is located in our International Headquarters (previously known as the International Temple) in Washington DC.

The General Grand Chapter (G.G.C.) serves as the hub for the Grand Jurisdictions, of which the Grand Chapter of Ontario is one. Where there are not sufficient Chapters to form a Grand Jurisdiction, some Chapters report directly to the G.G.C. (for example, Alaska and Hawaii).

The General Grand Chapter meets every three years in a Grand Jurisdiction which is chosen by the Most Worthy Grand Matron, the chief officer of the organization. All members of the Order may attend this convention but only the delegates of the Grand Jurisdictions may vote.

### **Grand Chapter of Ontario**

<http://www.easternstar.on.ca/>

Canada has 8\* Grand Jurisdictions under the General Grand Chapter. Ontario is the largest with 88\* Chapters and a membership of 6,821\*. The government of Grand Chapter is headed by the Worthy Grand Matron who is elected to serve as the chief officer for one year. The Grand Chapter of Ontario meets annually during the month of August. This meeting is open to all members of the Order, and each member of an Ontario Chapter attending has a vote at this Session.

The Grand Chapter of Ontario is divided into Districts and Regions, each with an elected District Deputy Grand Matron who represents the Worthy Grand Matron and serves a term of one year. Each District or Region has an annual meeting in May at which the members of that District or Region elect their District Deputy Grand Matron for the ensuing year.

## **Local Chapters ("Subordinate Chapters")**

There are 88\* local Chapters in communities across Ontario. At their regular monthly meetings, members plan activities for fun, fellowship and for raising funds for many local charities; there is always time for pleasant social interaction as well.

Each local Chapter operates under a Charter issued by the Grand Chapter of Ontario. Any member of the Order of the Eastern Star is entitled to visit any Chapter in the Jurisdiction or any other Chapter throughout the world. If a member is not known in the Chapter they are visiting, they will be required to prove membership before being admitted.

Each local Chapter has the same structure as the Grand Chapter; the Chief Officer is the Worthy Matron. Each Chapter is governed by a set of Bylaws pertaining to its own internal business, and is unique in how its committees work. However, all Chapters are bound by the same Ritual (a book of ceremonies under the control of the General Grand Chapter) and the Constitution for their Grand Jurisdiction. This may be why members feel at home wherever they meet and yet experience the variety that each Chapter offers.

## ***What Do We Do?***

### **Social Activities**

A variety of events and occasions are undertaken to get to know each other better, and to have fun. Examples include pot luck dinners, dances, banquets, informal friendship meetings, bus trips and tours, crafts, quilting, bingo, card games, and social trivia.

### **Charitable Activities**

We also use various fundraising activities to generate funds in support of both O.E.S. and community charities, including bazaars, brunches, teas, box socials, raffles, barbecues, garage sales and catering food to special events.



### *Fraternal Activities*

In our meetings, we learn more about the principles of the Order through special ceremonies, and strive to put them into daily action.

The personal welfare of our members is vital to all members of the Order, and it is considered a privilege to help one another whenever we can. Most Chapters have a Fraternal Visiting Committee, to visit and keep in touch with members who may be in need of assistance, or unable to attend meetings due to age or illness.

## ***The Charities & Projects of the Order***

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

Concrete evidence of the charitable nature of the Order worldwide is millions of dollars which have been raised by our members to support a wide variety of Eastern Star and other charities. Examples of the Masonic-related charities supported by the Order are the Knights Templar Eye Foundation, Shriner's Hospitals for Children, Service Dogs, homes for senior members of the Order and orphanages.

### ***Grand Chapter of Ontario***

The Grand Chapter of Ontario has four main areas of charitable activity each year.

- **Grand Chapter Special Project**

Each year the Worthy Grand Matron and Worthy Grand Patron choose a charity that is supported by all Chapters in the Province. The funds from previous projects have reached anywhere from \$50,000 to \$130,000 and in recent years, the Grand Chapter has supported such charities as Cancer research; Alzheimer's and related dementia; Camp Trillium for children living with cancer; the Heart and Stroke Foundation; Make A Wish Foundation; Diabetes and Scottish Rite Learning Centres for Dyslexia.

- **Florence Nightingale Home Foundation (F.N.H.F.)**

This Foundation was incorporated in 1927 as "Florence Nightingale Home" and was changed to "Florence Nightingale Home Foundation" in 1985 following the sale of its home for the aged in Agincourt which was maintained by the Order of the Eastern Star in Ontario.

The funds from the sale of the home were carefully invested and the Directors set guidelines for the use of these monies. Each year the accrued interest from the investments and all donations received from individual Chapters and members, are used to place equipment in selected hospitals across Ontario. Individual Chapters will submit requests for a donation of a piece of equipment to an accredited Hospital of their choice, along with a letter from that Hospital's Foundation asking to be considered for such a donation, to the Secretary of Florence Nightingale Home Foundation.

There have been over 240 pieces of equipment purchased and presented to Hospitals throughout Ontario. There have also been 4 donations to assist with disaster relief efforts in Ontario.

- **E.S.T.A.R.L. - Eastern Star Training Awards for Religious Leadership**

ESTARL is a scholarship fund unique to the Order of the Eastern Star, providing awards to those persons training to dedicate their lives to the spiritual betterment of mankind. Although ESTARL is worldwide throughout the Order, each Grand Jurisdiction administers its own ESTARL program. Applicants for these awards are sponsored by a local Chapter. The amount given depends on the number of applicants and the funds available for distribution. Over many years, millions of dollars have been given to students from all faiths. Annual givings in Ontario average over \$30,000 and are divided among the eligible applicants. Awards are presented at the applicant's church, at an event in their community or at a meeting of the sponsoring Chapter.

- **Grand Chapter Benevolent Fund**

This Grand Chapter charity receives its funds from donations by local Chapters and individual members, as well as interest earned from short term investments. It operates as a confidential committee to provide assistance to members in need, usually on an emergency basis. Members requiring this assistance may approach the Grand Chapter Benevolent Committee directly, or be referred by another member confidentially. Annual givings in Ontario are in the range of \$20,000 to \$30,000, depending on the needs of our clients, which are getting greater each year.

## **Local Chapters**

Each year, in addition to supporting the charities of the Grand Chapter of Ontario, individual Chapters select one or more local charities to support. Examples of such charitable donations include scholarships to schools, support to local hospitals, Seniors' residences, food banks, shelters for the homeless and a variety of treatment centres. Funds are raised from a wide variety of activities, as previously indicated (see **What do we do?**) It is estimated that throughout Ontario the annual donations to local charities may be upward of \$500,000.

## ***Frequently Asked Questions about the Order***

**Q.** Is the Order of the Eastern Star a secret society?

**A.** No. Secret societies are underground and hard to find. We are easily found within the community, but we enjoy a distinctive means of identifying each other. Only members are allowed in a closed meeting.

**Q.** Can I afford membership in the Order of the Eastern Star?

**A.** Yes. Financial position is not considered in the Order. Members come from all economic stations of life.

**Q.** Is my religious faith allowed in the Order of the Eastern Star?

**A.** Yes. Members of all religions may belong to the Order of the Eastern Star. We only require the belief in a Supreme Being.

**Q.** Is the Order of the Eastern Star time consuming?

**A.** After your initiation into our Order, you may attend meetings and involve yourself in our activities as your time permits.

**Q.** Is the Order patriotic and democratic?

**A.** Yes. Members are taught to respect, preserve and honour their country.

## ***The Masonic Family of Organizations***

### **Freemasonry**

<http://www.grandlodge.on.ca> -- Ontario website

Freemasonry is the oldest and largest world wide fraternity dedicated to the Brotherhood of Man under the Fatherhood of a Supreme Being. Although of a religious nature, Freemasonry is not a religion. It urges its members, however, to be faithful and devoted to their own religious beliefs.

In Ontario the governing body is called the Grand Lodge of Ancient Free and Accepted Masons of Canada in the Province of Ontario. It is under the leadership of the Grand Master. He presides over thousands of Masons who belong to one or more of about 500 Lodges in our jurisdiction. Each of these Lodges is under the direction of a Worshipful Master. More information can be found on their website.

### **Youth Organizations**

Eastern Star gives support to young people who are members of the International Order of the Rainbow for Girls, Job's Daughters, and the Order of DeMolay. These fine young people who are training themselves to be better citizens often become valued members of the Order of the Eastern Star or Freemasonry.

#### ***International Order of Rainbow for Girls ("Rainbow")***

<http://www.gorainbow.org> – International website

<http://www.canadaiorg.org> – Canadian website

The International Order of Rainbow for Girls is an organization for girls between the ages of 11 and 20 years. Rainbow

welcomes everyone, regardless of race, creed, colour or national origin. They do not require Masonic affiliation to become a member and can be recommended by a Rainbow Girl or by a member of one of the sponsoring Orders. Rainbow will help a young girl build friendships, confidence in public speaking, responsibility to society, learn to be of service to others and lift her goals and values of life through her actions and conduct.

Younger girls ages 7 to 11 can become Pledge sisters by the recommendation of a Rainbow Girl, Majority Member or one of the official sponsors of "Rainbow".

At this time there are 6 Assemblies in Ontario: Hamilton, Scarborough, Ottawa, Brampton, Port Hope and Windsor.

### ***Job's Daughters***

<http://www.jobsdaughtersinternational.org> –  
International website

The Job's Daughters International is an organization for girls ages 11 to 20 who are related to a Master Mason. They must have a belief in God but it is non-denominational. They learn important skills for life such as leadership, public speaking, teamwork and self-esteem.

Job's Daughters share in fun and activities as well as serve their communities in various ways and work towards becoming responsible citizens in today's world.

At this time there is 1 Bethel in Ontario: Guelph.

## ***DeMolay International***

<http://www.demolay.org> – International website

<http://www.ontariodemolay.ca> – Ontario website

DeMolay is an organization dedicated to preparing young men to lead successful, happy and productive lives. Basing its approach on timeless principles and practical, hands-on experience, DeMolay opens doors for young men aged 12 to 21 by developing the civic awareness, personal responsibility and leadership skills so vitally needed in society today. DeMolay combines this serious mission with a fun approach that builds important bonds of friendship among members in more than 1,000 Chapters worldwide.

The young men of DeMolay are given the opportunity to create, plan and execute their own programs with advice from the Advisory Council in each Chapter.

At this time there are 8 Chapters in Ontario: Ottawa, Port Hope, Ajax, Mississauga, Barrie, Guelph, London and Windsor.

## ***The Order of the Squires***

[www.demolay.org/squires](http://www.demolay.org/squires) – International website

The Order of the Squires was established in 1995 as a pledge for DeMolay International. Its mission is to allow young men from the ages of 9 through 11 to have an opportunity to participate in some of the fun activities with DeMolay, but not to be overwhelmed with the age differences and memory work that is part of DeMolay.

There are currently no Squires Manors active in Ontario.



## **MISSION STATEMENT**

The Grand Chapter of Ontario, Order of the Eastern Star is a fraternal and benevolent organization of women and men working together in love for humanity....good people, doing good things for good reasons and enjoying it immensely.

## **VISION STATEMENT**

The Grand Chapter of Ontario, Order of the Eastern Star is committed to caring for our members and raising funds for charitable purposes to benefit the communities in which we live and the greater global community of Ontario.

**Local Contact:**