

GUIDELINES FOR AN OPEN MEETING IN THE CHAPTER ROOM

Law Section 61, pgs. 42-43

Book of Instruction: Pgs: 19, 67 – 69, 83-85

Preparation of the Chapter Room:

- The Charter must be present in the Chapter room.
- Pedestals, emblems and flower baskets may be used (optional)
- The Signet may be lighted.
- The Bible must be placed on the Altar.
- The emblematic Star in the East may be lighted.
- The officers wear their badges.

Entrance of Officers:

- The Worthy Patron, Associate Patron and Organist enter and go directly to their stations, using square corners.
- The Worthy Patron calls the Chapter to order by giving **one rap** of the gavel. **No wording is necessary. He does NOT call up the Chapter for the incoming march.**
- The Officers enter without invitation or ceremony.
- Officers may perform an incoming march, but they **DO NOT stop inside the Labyrinth** and all, including the Worthy Matron, assume their stations at the end of the march **without invitation or escort.**
- Officers watch the Worthy Matron so that all may be seated in unison. **(The gavel is NOT used to seat the officers.)**
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Opening:

- The Worthy Matron rises and says, “**Sister Conductress, you will open the Bible.**” She calls up the Chapter with **three raps** of the gavel.
- The Conductress marches west on the south marching line to a point two to four steps beyond Esther’s station, makes an acute angle and enters the Labyrinth between Ruth and Esther.
- The Star Points start turning toward the Altar as the Conductress leaves her station.
- All members assume the Reverent Attitude as the Conductress enters the Labyrinth.

- The Conductress opens the Bible without ceremony. (She does **not** nod to the Worthy Matron or give the Salutation Sign.)
- The Conductress steps back and walks to the edge of the Labyrinth immediately turns outward and retraces her steps, returning to her station.
- When the Conductress is out of the Labyrinth, the members, including the Star Points, drop the Reverent Attitude and face the East.
- As soon as the Conductress has returned to her station the Worthy Matron says, **“You will unite with me in praying the Lord’s Prayer.” Include in this sentence which form of the Lord’s Prayer you are using (debts or trespasses).**
- Following the prayer, the Worthy Matron says, **“I now declare _____ Chapter open for _____ (she states the purpose for which the meeting has been called, such as “Ceremony of Installation”, “Visitation of Grand Officers”, Presentation of 50-Year Pins”, etc.)** She gives a **slight rap** of the gavel on the word **“OPEN.”**
- The Worthy Matron says, **“You will unite with me in saluting the Flag and repeating the Pledge of Allegiance, followed by the singing of our National Anthem.”** (The salute is held during singing.)
- The Worthy Matron seats the Chapter with **one rap** of the gavel, extends a welcome and makes introductions as she desires. (Book of Instruction, pp 21-46)
- The Worthy Matron proceeds with the purpose for which the meeting was called.

Closing:

- The Worthy Matron says, **“Sister Conductress, you will close the Bible.”** She calls up the Chapter with **three raps** of the gavel.
- The Conductress proceeds to the Altar in the same manner as in the opening. Star Points turn toward the Altar and members assume the Reverent Attitude as in the opening.
- The Conductress closes the Bible without ceremony, steps back and walks to the edge of the Labyrinth and returns to her station. When she is out of the Labyrinth, all members drop the Reverent Attitude and face the East.
- The Worthy Matron says, **“You will unite with me in singing the closing ode.”**
- Following the ode, the Worthy Matron says, **“You will unite with me in repeating the Mizpah Benediction. (pause then begin) May the Lord watch between me and Thee while we are absent one from the other.”**
- The Worthy Matron says, **“I now declare _____ Chapter closed.”** She strikes **one rap** of the gavel on the word **“closed”**.
- If there is a retiring march, the Worthy Matron says, **“The Officers will retire.”**