THE 2012 ALLOCUTION
FROM THE OFFICE OF
THE GRAND WORTHY PATRON

Jerusalem Grand Chapter
Order of the Eastern Star

Prince Hall Affiliated
Jurisdiction of Florida; Belize, Central America;
and Saint John, United States Virgin Islands

Sister Patricia A. Stafford
GRAND WORTHY MATRON

Brother Elvin J. Parker III, 33°
GRAND WORTHY PATRON

Working Under the Protection of
The Most Worshipful Union Grand Lodge
The Most Ancient and Honorable Fraternity
Free and Accepted Masons
Prince Hall Affiliated
Jurisdiction of Florida; Belize, Central America;
and Saint John, United States Virgin Islands, Inc.

The Honorable Anthony T. Stafford, Sr., 33°, KYCH
Most Worshipful Grand Master
Absolute GRATITUDE is the single word that best encompasses and describes the reason for our praise to the Supreme Grand Patron of the Universe for His beneficence, love, and grace in allowing Jerusalem Grand Chapter, Order of the Eastern Star, Prince Hall Affiliated to assemble in its Fourth Annual Grand Chapter Session.

To the Lovely Sister Patricia Ann Stafford, Grand Worthy Matron of the Jerusalem Grand Chapter, Order of the Eastern Star, Prince Hall Affiliated, Jurisdiction of Florida: Belize, Central America; and Saint John, United States Virgin Islands. To the Honorable Anthony T. Stafford, Sr., 33°, KYCH, Most Worshipful Grand Master of the Most Worshipful Union Grand Lodge, Free and Accepted Masons, Prince Hall Affiliated, Jurisdiction of Florida; Belize, Central America; and Saint John, US VI, Inc.


To the 2011-2012 Grand Cabinet of Jerusalem Grand Chapter, Order of the Eastern Star;

To all Worthy Matrons, Worthy Patrons, Past Worthy Matrons, and Past Worthy Patrons, Sisters and Brothers All, In the name of He Whose Star we have seen and do follow,

GREETINGS!

I find it to be a singular honor and privilege to come before this most august body to deliver my first Grand Allocution as your Grand Worthy Patron. I must say that I am grateful to so many for their support and prayers this administrative year. I am particularly thankful to the Sisters and Brothers of Pride of Hollywood Chapter #56, my home Chapter, and my Worthy Matron Sister Jocelyn Gordon for their kind words and unceasing prayers lifted on behalf of their brother. I would be remiss if I did not say how much I am indebted to our Grand
Associate Patron, Brother Dwight Reynolds, who did not mutter, complain, nor grimace at me when I would call upon him with ideas and who has, without fail or exception, supported the Office of the Grand Worthy Patron with distinguished service and humility. Sometimes it is no easy thing to walk in the shadows while another receives all the limelight, plaudits, honors and glory for a successful work. I cannot in any measure assume absolute responsibility for any success that I may enjoy without lifting the name of this brother who has proven himself to be a Christian, a Fraternal Brother, and a genuine friend. I am also grateful to Brother Leanders Harvey, Jerusalem Grand Chapters FIRST Grand Worthy Patron for the wisdom of his experience and his advice in the acclamation to my role as a Grand Worthy Patron. I am also appreciative to the Most Worshipful Grand Master, Brother Anthony T. Stafford for assigning, at our request an additional brother to assist in seeing that the membership of this Grand Chapter is well served in all of its Zones, Deputy Grand Associate Patron Brothers Theodous Baker.

Finally, but certainly not least, it has been my good fortune to have had the opportunity to work in tandem with Sister Patricia Stafford. She is a person whom I have discovered to be as beautiful on the inside as she is on the outside. When you shall have the pleasure of meeting Sister Stafford, you meet the genuine article. She does not send her representative personality to greet you. She shows up herself!

She has approached her responsibilities as Grand Worthy Matron with dignified deportment and a keen business savvy. You can rest assured that Jerusalem Grand Chapter is in good hands with this Sister at the helm.

Now, to the meat of the matter . . .
State of the Country

We are blessed to be living in the United States of American and to have a national leader who looks like you and like me. He has come to the leadership of this country at one of the most difficult times in its history.

It has not been a shock to any of us who live in this country with our eyes and ears open to have discovered that what some people had declared was a dead issue, RACISM IN AMERICA, is alive and functioning at phenomenal levels.

We wait with patience for the judicial process to run its course in hopes that the death of a young African American teen hunted down, literally stalked and murdered, will be vindicated and that the scales and blindfold of Lady Justice will render a fair and accurate recompense for an atrocity that would not have been tolerated for a single moment had the youngster been Caucasian and the assailant been an African American.

While we are continually grasping for justice and equity at home our militia is still engaged in wars and hot spots of threats to democracy on several international fronts. Our sons and our daughters, indeed our Sisters and Brothers many of whom leave a void in our Chapter Rooms by their conspicuous absence, have heard the call of their country and have been deployed globally. They are placing their lives on the line daily for the cause of Freedom and Democracy.

The economic outlook is bleak, dank, and dark. The job market has been in a downward spiral as we have witness private industry and even governmental entities downsize and shut down. Homes are being foreclosed upon, the price of gasoline is skyrocketing, and families and individuals are feeling the pinch and pain of the scarcity of financial
resources to sustain an appreciative lifestyle. Oh yes, the consequential attending domino effect has touched us all in some way or another.

With this Nation’s Congress sharply divided along Political Party lines and intense racism the road to fiscal recovery is a difficult one for our nation’s President to navigate us through. However, he is indeed making headway and as our Guest Preacher said on last night he just needs to “Stay the course!”

Yet, in the face of such a depressing and altogether dismal forecast I can join King David when he declared, “I once was young and now I am old man, yet in all my born days, I have never seen the righteous forsaken nor even heard a whisper of his seed begging bread.” God has and will continue to be a Providential Parent. God will not fail us, my Sisters and Brothers, because it against the very nature of God to fail! God has promised that He would be with us, even unto the end of the age. We can assuredly rest and confidently rely upon the promises of God.

The State of the Adoptive Rite

There is an unmistakable ethos and spirit of love, peace, and unity abounding within this Grand Chapter. Once again, the District Deputy Grand Matrons hosted a highly spiritual and creative Prayer Breakfast. During the Joint Worship Service on Sunday Morning at the Grand East Building I was made to feel especially proud and spiritually moved listening to our new OES Choir minister under the leadership of Sister Lillian Vereen. The new Grand Organist, Brother Leonard Hunt has added a flavor and value to our Grand Chapter Sessions that is both enjoyable and rewarding.

The marked growth of our Jurisdiction in the wake of the reimplementation of the Bloodline requirement is laudable and commendable. Retention of members, however, becomes a matter of concern that I am sure we can mend. We must do more than meet for two hours twice a month or confer our degree work in a poor and
unrepresentative manner. Charitable and Public Service activities as well as the social pleasures enjoyed by many of our growing Chapters is a clue as to how we may retain members and keep them actively involved in the Adoptive Rite.

Eastern Star Chapter and Protective Lodge Relationship

The Adoptive Rite or the Rite of Adoption in America was the creation of a Master Mason, Brother Robert Peckham who later changed his name to Robert Morris to honor the adoptive father who reared him. The final formation of the Adoptive Rite was fashioned by his protégé, Brother Robert Macoy.

The Adoptive Rite was created for two very basic reasons. First, so that the female relatives, to whom all Master Masons are inextricably tied by reason of their relationship to our brothers, might be able to make themselves known and be recognized as the daughters, widows, wives, sisters, and mothers of Master Masons. Secondly, that these ladies and brothers, might be able to enjoy cheerful companionship and social pleasures as part of a Fraternal Family.

Its design was simple. It was NOT created to be a fraternal organization for WOMEN ONLY who, by co-incidence or necessity, would have a Bloodline association with Master Masons. Rather, it was created to resemble the basic family structure. There would be a mother or Matron and a father or Patron and the rest of the family as sisters and brothers. No person, or rather, sibling in the Family takes precedence over any other sibling by reason of gender. Let me see if I can bring this a little closer to home.

Brothers it is not your place to Lord over the Sisters as if to subjugate, objectify, or relegate them to a lesser status or demeaning
role. No brother, whether he be a Worshipful Master or a newly made Mason, has the right or authority to dictate to the Order or threaten to lift a Chapter’s Charter. That power is vested solely in the Grand Chapter or its supreme authority, the Most Worshipful Union Grand Lodge and its representative, the Grand Master of this Jurisdiction.

However, as we are guests in Masonic Temples, we must deport ourselves as guests and give due respect and homage to the rules established by the Trustees of the Masonic Temples where we meet. It is vitally important that we, as members of the Order of the Eastern Star, avail ourselves of every opportunity to demonstrate to the members of our Protective Lodges that we have a mutual investment in the positive formation of a good relationship with its members. This can be best demonstrated by participating, as our traditions and opportunities will permit, with the Lodge in Public Occasions and Fraternal Social gatherings. (This does NOT mean having a Pajama Party with the brothers!)

Conversely, no female member should ever exalt herself to the unseemly practice of referring to herself as “A Star”. It is my responsibility and duty, as your Grand Worthy Patron, to instruct you and to inform you that you are NOT Eastern StarS. We are ALL “MEMBERS” of the Order of the Eastern Star. I am a member, she is a member, he is a member and she is a member. We are ALL members of the Order. This is the specific reason that the O.E.S. Examination’s FIRST QUERY is: “Are you a MEMBER of the Order of the Eastern Star?” NOT “Are you a SiStar?” (whatever that is!) or “Are you a Brother?” But quite succinctly and pointedly, “Are you a MEMBER of the Order of the Eastern Star?”

The ONLY Star in this Fraternal Society is the Emblematic Star, which represents that bright celestial orb that hung over the benighted eastern sky in a Judean countryside that was the guiding light to the birthplace of the Manger Messiah. Indeed, that Bethlehem Star itself
represents the Savior of Sinners. It does NOT and NEVER did refer to HUMANS. There is but ONE Star that this Order acknowledges and it is the one referenced in both our General Motto and our Special Motto. It is not YOU, my dear Sister! It is Jesus Christ, the son of God.

Despite the fact that you are indeed beautiful and you possess charm and grace that men the world over readily acknowledge, He ALONE is “fairest among thousands and altogether lovely.” The Heroines of our Order, by the quality of their character each exemplifies a particular characteristic of Christ and when taken together in a composite perspective their several attributes (altogether) reflect HE who is fairest among thousands altogether lovely.

Additionally, I am encouraging the Worthy Patrons to ask the brothers of the Protective Lodge they are members of to serve as Pall Bearers at the Funeral of a Sister of the Adoptive Rite and alternately to ask our Sisters of the Protected Chapters to be willing to serve as Flower Attendants when a member of the Protective Lodge dies. I am encouraging this because we are a family.

Further, it should be the goal of each and every Chapter of this Jurisdiction to recruit, reclaim, and retain both women AND MEN in the Order of the Eastern Star. It is ludicrous for any member of the Order to suggest that they do not want certain persons to be a member of their Chapter simply based on gender and not their character.

The honest truth of the matter is, that if we do not have more brothers in our chapters, we should not complain when, in an attempt to comply with our Constitution, the Protective Lodge Worshipful Master is forced to submit to us names of Brothers who are NOT members of the Adoptive Rite.

I cannot impress upon you more directly, nor more forcibly recommend these primary tenants of the Adoptive Rite. We are at the very foundational level a FAMILY.
In any family it is expected that there will exist minor contentions and sibling rivalry, but not to the extent that we are ready and willing to remove ourselves (demit) to another family unit (Chapter) in the same city because we cannot get along with each other. Let there be no contention among us, but rather that happy contemplation and emulation of who best can work and who can best agree.

**Ritualism**

With the matter of Ritualism, I have concerns that some of our Chapters (NOT all of them) are not Opening and Closing ritualistically. As the Grand Worthy Patron the Ritualistic Work of the Order falls directly under my purview and authority. It is my hope that with the advent of a Grand Lecturer and Deputy Grand Lecturers every Chapter in the Jurisdiction will be opening ritualistically and most, if not all, will be doing so without the aid of the Ritual.

Jerusalem Grand Chapter has been in existence for almost four years now. If after over three years of existence, your Chapter does not have the required number of members to fill the basic stations, perhaps you should consider consolidating with a nearby Chapter until you have built up your membership. Or, perhaps, your Chapter Membership may be better served by surrendering your Charter back to the Grand Chapter and joining another Chapter. This is especially true in cities and areas where there are several Chapters already in existence. It does not make sense to have Chapters that do not effectively practice the traditions of the Rite and who have no possibility of sustaining themselves.

I must hasten to add, that I am particularly pleased with the ritualistic demonstrations and spirit shown by our newly chartered Chapters. It is my hope that this fervor will catch on like a wild Prairie Fire and run rampant throughout our Jurisdiction. Additionally, I must concur with our Grand Worthy Matron on the necessity of every member and Chapter being properly regaled. If you find it necessary to
sell Fish and Chicken Dinners to insure that your Chapter Room has the basic furniture and implements to make your Chapter Room and Ceremonies more complete, then by all means do have Dinner Sales or other creative Fundraising Activities!

**Eastern Star University and Adoptive Rite Education**

The Eastern Star University, the brain child of our Grand Worthy Matron, will no doubt be our primary conduit for training and scholarship development in this Jurisdiction. It is my sincerest hope that EVERY member will avail themselves of the opportunity to become more knowledgeable and gain a greater proficiency in the Adoptive Rite.

Of particular interest to me is the training of our Worthy Patrons and other interested men in the proper implementation of the Ritual and Ceremonies in their local Chapter. It is my desire to create Intensive Courses that will assist Worthy Patrons in understanding and presenting these ceremonies in an impressive manner that reflects clarity of understanding and the beauty they so richly deserve.

**Worthy Patrons**

You may expect that during this Adoptive Rite year the Office of the Grand Worthy Patron will be more visible throughout the Jurisdiction by creating opportunities to meet with the Patrons, Associate Patrons, and Sentinels in cluster groups so that a sharper sense of the needs of the Jurisdiction can be assessed. There will be a Grand Worthy Patron’s Tour of the Jurisdiction because I am interested in discovering among our ranks men apt to teach and given to a scholarly as well as a practical interest in Stardom.
Star Lights Youth Council

The Star Lights Youth Council is a wonderful opportunity for Chapters to contribute to and invest in the lives of our children. The leadership development skill exhibited by our children is a beauty to behold. I noted while attending the Star Lights Supervisors retreat this year that the Grand Supervisor of the Star Lights and her team are continually in the process of Total Quality Improvement.

I also concur with the plan to have a more unified approach to serving our youth through common ventures with the Heroines of Jericho’s Youth Palace and the Knights of Pythagoras. If we embrace this opportunity to sow into future generations, it will repay us in untold manifold rewards.

Necrology

It is the duty of the Worthy Patron to preside during the solemn ceremonies of Memorial and Burial of members of the Adoptive Rite. It is therefore, imperative that the Ceremonies be rehearsed so that a meaningful and memorable tribute may be made to those who have so faithfully served our Order.

The brevity and uncertainty of human life will now afford us subjects for contemplation. Let us for a little while turn our attention and focus upon those faithful Sisters and Brothers who have walked the mysterious path of the Sacred Labyrinth of Life with us, but now forever have passed through the veil that leads to life immortal and have acknowledged the supremacy of death, and entered a sleep that knows no waking. I now recommend these sentiments to your earnest consideration, and solicit your assistance here as we pause to remember those who have thus crossed the Great Divide this Fraternal Year to the Chapter Celestial.
To that end it is my duty to report the Eternal Demit of the following members of the Adoptive Rite from this Jurisdiction:

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<tr>
<th>Chapter</th>
<th>Member’s Name</th>
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<tr>
<td>Key of the Gulf #5</td>
<td>Myrna E. Sawyer</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Brother Edward R. Weech</td>
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<tr>
<td>Lula Davis #3</td>
<td>Sister Willie M. Davis</td>
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<td>Live Oak #83</td>
<td>Sister Louise H. Hall</td>
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<td>Curry #34</td>
<td>Sister Verna L. Troupe</td>
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<td>Star of the West #1</td>
<td>Sister Marjorie A. Lewis Gillis</td>
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<td>Seminole #10</td>
<td>Sister Albertha Webb</td>
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<tr>
<td>Everglades #23</td>
<td>Sister Christine Joseph</td>
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<td>Henrietta #66</td>
<td>Sister Dorothy Brooks Lee</td>
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<td>Progressive #8</td>
<td>Brother Willard E. Seymore</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mount Pleasant #71</td>
<td>Sister Ardesse Brown</td>
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<tr>
<td>Queen Esther Wise #89</td>
<td>Sister Estelle Martin Brown</td>
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<tr>
<td>Curry #34</td>
<td>Sister Essie Dawkins</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Henrietta #66</td>
<td>Sister Thelma L. Sneed Ford</td>
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<tr>
<td>Golden Star #49</td>
<td>Sister Hazel Meredith</td>
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The departed no longer answer our call. Once they lived and labored; but now their Star is set on this world, and they have passed into the light that is beyond the Valley of the Shadow of Death. In vain we call upon them here. We shall no more hear their voices until we also have awakened in another world. Let us, however, not mourn like those who have no hope. He who created us and surrounded us with manifold blessings in the present life, and gives us capacities for far greater things in the life to come, will not forget to be merciful to us when we shall stand before His throne, and will connect again the Chain of Friendship so painfully broken here.

It remains that we who are living should so live and by our actions, attend the coming of the day of fate, that we may neither be surprised nor leave our duties imperfect, nor our sins uncanceled, nor God unappeased; but that when our bodies, in their turn shall descend to their graves, our souls may ascend to the regions of eternal light. Whatever fate is to befall us in this world, let the motto of our lives be: For the past, Charity; for the present, Hope; and for the future, Faith.

**Conclusion**

As this Grand Chapter’s Annual Session now ebbs to a close I join the Grand Worthy Matron in wishing for each member and Chapter in our Jurisdiction a successful, harmonious, and productive year. We rely in the confidence that the District Deputy Grand Worthy Matrons and District Deputy Grand Lecturers are capable of either giving you a suitable answer or discovering the answers you need to your queries regarding the work of your Chapter.
Let us continue to “Build a House on the Foundation of Our Heroines!” While remembering always, that “They shall prosper that love thee (Jerusalem).” ~ Psalm 122:6b

Fraternally and Affectionately Submitted,

Reverend Dr. Elvin J. Parker III, 33°
Grand Worthy Patron
Jerusalem Grand Chapter
Order of the Eastern Star
Prince Hall Affiliated
Jurisdiction of Florida; Belize, Central America;
and Saint John, US VI

Grand Associate Patron
Prince Hall Conference of
Grand Worthy Matrons and
Grand Worthy Patrons