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BROKEN LINKS - A Memorial Service
By Lola Lamoreux

The following officers are in their stations - Worthy Matron, Worthy Patron, Secretary, Musician Chaplain, Conductress, Associate Conductress, and Associate Patron. All other officers have retired.

The chairs are removed from the Star Point stations.

Worthy Matron:

From our chain some links have fallen,
In the East some Stars have set,
But engraved on Memory's tablet
Are some names we'll not forget.

Sister Secretary, you will read the names of our loved ones in whose memory this service is held.

The Secretary reads the names of the departed members.

Worthy Matron:

Sister Conductress, Associate Conductress and Chaplain, you will drape the Altar.

The officers approach the Alter, the Associate Conductress carrying the drape. The Conductress closes the Bible and gives it to the Chaplain who holds it until the Altar is draped and replaces it on the Altar. The Bible is not reopened.

While the Altar is being draped the following song is sung as a solo or duet. Tune. "Shall We Gather At the River."

Let us drape the Altar gently,
For the loved ones gone before,
They have crossed that silent river,
We shall see them here no more.
We shall see them in His likeness,
When, we too have passed beyond,
Hand in hand around God's Altar,
When our work on earth is done.

When the Altar is draped the Conductresses step back a few paces. The Chaplain remains before the Altar.

The Worthy Matron says -- Let us unite in prayer.

Chaplain:

Almighty God, our Heavenly Father in whose hands are the living and the dead, we give thanks for those servants departed from this life in Thy name. Grant mercy and the light of Thy Presence, that the good work which hast begun in them may be perfected thru Jesus Christ Thy Son and our Lord.

Amen.

At the close of the prayer the Chaplain resumes her station and the Conductresses retire from the room.
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The Worthy Patron advances to the Altar and placing on it the broken column says:

The broken column is the expressive emblem of the uncertainty of human life. "I am the resurrection and the Life" saith the Lord. "He that believeth in me, tho he were dead, yet shall he live and whatsoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die."
The Patron resumed his station.

Music -- The lights in the Chapter room are lowered.

The following officers enter thru the Chapter room door led by the Conductress who carries flowers. All are dressed in white or light colors, Conductress, Associate Conductress, Associate Matron, Marshall, Warder, Treasurer and the five star points. They march around the room once and then form a cross before the Altar in the West (cross may be formed in the East if it is more convenient). In making the cross the last four in line form the Arms, two marching past the stem of the cross and the other two waiting until the four can march together making a straight line with number three in the stem.

When the cross has been formed a chord is played as a signal to kneel. If it is not convenient to kneel officers may stand with bowed heads while the following song is sung. "Rock of Ages" two verses. At the close of the song a chord raises the officers. The sister on the right arm of the cross speaks, raising her hand as she does so.

As sure as the night comes the morning,
When the sun will shine once more,
As sure a parting, a meeting,
On some glad distant shore.

The sister on the left side of the arm speaks raising her hand as she does so:
Servants of God, well done,
Your glorious warfare is past,
The battle's fought, the race is won,
And you are crowned at last.

The Conductress speaks, placing the flowers on the Altar as she does so, (flowers may be omitted if necessary)
They never quite leave us,
Our friends who have passed,
Thru the shadows of death,
To the sunlight above,
A thousand sweet memories,
Are holding them fast.
To the places they blessed
With their presence and love.

Music—The line marches South and East forming a complete circle around the Altar. As a chord is played the "Golden Chain" is formed with raised hands. As the Matron speaks the following, one by one the links are dropped and hands folded.

Matron:
No one hears the door that opens
When they pass beyond our call,
Soft as loosened leaves of roses
One by one the loved ones fall.

From our chain these links have fallen,
In our land these stars have set,
But enshrined on Memory's tablet
Their true worth we'll not forget.

Music—One verse of "Abide With Me," is softly sung. The officers then march out of the circle and retire from the Chapter room.