Grand Conductress Attends at the Altar.

NARRATION OF "MIRACLE OF THE RAINDROP" MEMORIAL SERVICE

Mrs. Virginia Burdette, Grand Chaplain

SONG: "How Great Thou Art" - Mr. Jim Polter

In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth. And the earth was without form and void, and darkness was upon the face of the deep. And the spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters.

From nothing there suddenly appeared at the command of God a shapeless mass which He called earth and heavens surrounding it. “Let there be light” resounded through the corridors of all that was and illuminated God’s production. And God was pleased. The division of light and darkness quickly followed.

Then a sky separating heaven and earth, and dry land dividing the seas appeared and God said, “This is good.” With infinite wisdom and perfection He continued to unfold the panorama of His grand design. Grass, plants, trees, and flowers capable of reproducing themselves began springing up to beautify the land prepared for them.

Bright lights in the sky to identify day and night and to bring the seasons and chart times and space were added to provide order for His handiwork. Then, at the command of God, fish were swimming, birds were flying, and cattle grazed and God’s creation was filled with movement and life.

SOLO: “I Believe In Miracles” - Mr. Fred Campbell

But God’s longing for a friend was still unmet. So, God made man in His own image to be the master of all that was made.

And the Lord God formed man from the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and man became a living soul. And God blessed them.

And God said unto them, “Be fruitful and multiply and replenish the earth and subdue it; and have dominion over the fish of the seas, and over the fowl of the air, and over every living thing that moveth upon the earth.”

But then, man, God’s perfect creation sinned.

And God said, “In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread, till thou return unto the ground; for out of it was thou taken; for dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return.”

Yes, God created man in His own image and told him to go forth and multiply and yet He told him; for dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return.

This is basically a cycle of human life; for we know that death is inevitable, but we have been promised an eternal life.

So, like life, is the cycle of the raindrop...
Brother LaVerne was elected in the line of the Grand Chapter of Michigan in the year of 1948. He presided at the "Four-Leaf Clover Session" in 1951 as Worthy Grand Patron. He was appointed a member of the Credential Committee of the General Grand Chapter in 1964 and was elected Right Worthy Grand Sentinel in 1967. He progressed in the General Grand Chapter Line until he served as Most Worthy Grand Patron in the years of 1973-1976.

Brother LaVerne is survived by his devoted wife, Isabelle; a daughter, Barbara Allen; two sons, Dr. Richard and David; a sister; two brothers; and seven grandchildren.

The Grand Chapter of Georgia extends loving sympathy to Sister Isabelle, his bereaved family and sorrowing friends.

We do not lose the ones we love,
They only go before
Where there is everlasting life
And sorrow is no more.
For there the soul will always live
And peace is everywhere.
We do not lose the ones we love,
God takes them in his care.

MEMORIAL TRIBUTE TO DECEASED MEMBERS OF OTHER GRAND JURISDICTIONS
Mr. David J. Roberts, P.G.P.

Sisters and Brothers, in the stillness of this sacred hour, we pause with loving hearts to pay tribute to the deceased members of other Grand Jurisdictions. We extend fraternal love and sincere sympathy to the members of our Sister Grand Jurisdictions who have lost loved ones this past year. Death is not one fraternal jurisdiction. With sorrowing hearts, we recognize their loss of those whose contribution helped to strengthen the foundation of the Order of the Eastern Star in their respective Grand Jurisdictions. They are not dead who live in hearts they leave behind, in those whom they blessed they live life again.

MEMORIAL TRIBUTE TO DECEASED MEMBERS OF SUBORDINATE CHAPTERS OF GEORGIA
Mrs. Helen Miller, P.G.M.

We pause to honor the memory of our Sisters and Brothers whom our Heavenly Father has deemed to take to Him. It is our trustful faith in God’s promise of everlasting and eternal life that consoles us in the Hour of Sorrow. We have the memories of their years of service and the everlasting influence for good they have endowed us with. How grateful we are that Jesus prepared the way for them to go and for us to follow, and for the hope that sustains us when we must be separated from those we love. To those who mourn, our Lord gives solace in the faith that death is nothing more than a returning unto Him, saith the Lord: “I am the Resurrection and the Life, he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live.”

Near a shady wall a red rose once grew, budded and blossomed in God’s free light, watered and fed by morning raindrops, shedding its sweetness day and night. As it grew and blossomed fair, it came to a crevice in the wall through which shone a beam of Light. Onward it crept with added strength and never a thought of fear or pride it followed the light through the crevice length, and unfolded itself on the other side and there it thrived in beauties new. The rose grows beyond the wall, scattering fragrance far and wide just as it did in days of your, just as it did on the other side, just as it will for evermore.

Mrs. Carolyn B. Garry, Grand Secretary, read the names of the deceased members of the Subordinate Chapters of Georgia since the printing of the program.
As one drop of rain falls from heaven, tear shaped,
Sleek and shining: silver and swift.
  Obedient, perfect, and unquestioning,
  It is not noticed, but it merges
  To do the mighty services of water:
  To bring cool peace
  To make clean a place,
  To quench the thirst of growing things.
  Even so may life be -
  Small but perfect in the service of God.
  I go where I go, and I make a clean place,
  Taking unto myself some of the soil,
  Giving a taste of heaven to a blade of growth,
  Swift and silver
  Shining with love.

It has been appropriately said that raindrops are heaven's tears bringing forth new life.

One of the greatest lessons we learn in this life is that this world is a place to grow in; a place of preparation for our souls for eternity. This life is only an introduction to life eternal.

Likewise, from the earthly viewpoint, we can see the blessing of death. In our world as we know it, death is an essential requirement of life. Suppose no living thing should ever die. Suppose that in the animal kingdom, animals are born and multiply and never die. Suppose that in plant life, plants live and multiply but not one ever dies. Suppose in a human family, people live and continue to live, multiply and continue to multiply and no-one ever tastes of death. Life would soon become unbearable. Death is a pre-requisite of life. But what a friend we have in death.

... all our afflictions lose their hold. Suppose the aged could only become older and the distressed could only suffer more intensely and nobody could die. There would be an intolerable future in this. Then living would be a thousand times worse than dying; for death is loss only to those who linger behind. For those who remain on this side of the span of time, death is loss, but for those who have crossed over to the other side, it is gain.

It is only our shortsighted and temporal view of life that dims our appreciation of death. But having entered “That bourne from which no traveler returns,” it is then that ten thousand celestial glories, which defy the tongue of any orator to describe, will burst upon our enraptured vision, and we shall see them as they really are.

Despite all the blessings God has provided in death, it still turns our eyes into fountains of tears when our loved ones are called home. Staggering beneath our loss, struggling beneath a burden that seems too heavy, conscious that our shattered world must be put back together some way, without the missing part, our mournful hearts cry out for help. “Help us.” How old are the words; yet they are the anguished plea of each new generation.

/\SOLO: “I Believe” - Betty Hollon
NARRATION: “The Legend of The Raindrop”

The legend of the raindrop
  Has a lesson for us all
As it trembled in the heavens
  Questioning whether it should fall -
For the glistening raindrop argued
  To the genie of the sky,
"I am beautiful and lovely
   As I sparkle here on high,
And hanging here I will become
   Part of the rainbow’s hue
And I’ll shimmer like a diamond
   For all the world to view”...
But the genie told the raindrop,
   “Do not hesitate to go,
For you will be more beautiful
   If you fall to earth below,
For you will sink into the soil
   And be lost a while from sight,
But when you reappear on earth,
   You’ll be looked on with delight;
For you will be the raindrop
   That quenched the thirsty ground
And helped the lovely flowers
   To blossom all around,
And in your resurrection
   You’ll appear in Queenly clothes
With the beauty of the lily
   And the fragrance of the rose:
Then, when you wilt and wither,
   You’ll become part of the earth
And make the soil more fertile
   And give new flowers birth . . .
For there is nothing ever lost
   Or eternally neglected.
For everything God ever made
   Is always resurrected;
So trust God’s all-wise wisdom
   And doubt the Father never,
For in His Heavenly Kingdom
   There is nothing lost forever.

NARRATION: Virginia Burdette
Following every refreshing rain on this journey through life, we can look for a rainbow.

NARRATION: Bob Allen
“...And God said ... I do set my bow in the cloud and it shall be for a token of a covenant between me and the earth. And it shall come to pass, when I bring a cloud over the earth that a bow shall be seen in the cloud and I will remember my covenant ... and the waters shall no more become a flood to destroy all flesh.”

Thus spake God in one of His first covenants with man. Not only did He give the promise that never again would the world be destroyed by flood, but He gave a visible sign which would be a constant reminder of this covenant. And to this day the clouds do not darken and the rains do not fall without bringing the beautiful light and gorgeous colors of the rainbow . . . God’s reminder.

So it is in our lives; when we lose our loved ones in that which we call death, the days seem dark, and the way is dreary, but look upward! For, like the rainbow in the raindrops, God has given us a ray of light and promise, the sign of His last Covenant ... the Cross. The Cross stand ever as a reminder that there is no death, but eternal life.

NARRATION: Virginia Burdette
From the beautiful colors of the rainbow, we pay tribute to our beloved deceased members.
(Organ music picks up and plays softly through following tributes.)
ORDER OF THE EASTERN STAR

(Spotlight those who advance to the Cross)

(Each places flowers at the foot of the Cross and remains standing at Cross.)

(Blue Spotlight) (Jonell Thompson, Grand Adah)

"Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God." The soft glow of the blue ray lights the way for the daughters of our Order who have passed to their eternal home. In loving remembrance of all daughters of the Order, Adah offers her emblem of Fidelity. Heaven's blue is reflected in these flowers and surely each bloom is expressive of God's wondrous powers.

(Yellow Spotlight) (Jewel Cannon, Grand Ruth)

"I will never leave thee nor forsake thee, lo, I am with you always." The golden hue of the yellow ray lights the way for the widows of our Order who have answered the call. Ruth lovingly offers the emblem of Constancy. These beautiful flowers with hearts of gold give us a promise of happiness untold.

(White Spotlight) (Lorena Agnew, Grand Esther)

"Be thou faithful until death and I will give thee a crown of life." The radiance of the white ray lights the way for the wives of our Order who have been summoned home. In loving memory, Esther offers the emblem of Purity. The flowers of pure white are expressive of the everlasting light.

(Green Spotlight) (Louise Hurnburies, Grand Martha)

"Whosoever believeth in Me shall not perish, but have everlasting life." The light, knowledge and beauty of the green ray lights the way for the sisters of our Order who have found peace and rest. Lovingly, Martha offers her emblem of Immortality. These simple flowers of green are a symbol of our faith in the unseen world.

(Red Spotlight) (Barbara Bozeman, Grand Electa)

"Let us love one another, for love is of God and he that loveth is born of God and knoweth God." The fervent glow of the red ray lights the way for the mothers of our Order who answered His call to come home. In loving memory, Electa offers her emblem of love. These bright red flowers, our symbol of love, remind us of Him who is watching over us from above.

(White Spotlight) (Bill McConnell, Grand Sentinel)

This evening, we would also pay tribute to the memory of all the brothers in our great Order who have left us. We give thanks for their abiding faith in God and their Christian service to all mankind. Although we know they have gone to a better, fuller life, still there is sorrow in our hearts because their places with us are vacant. We are grateful for their friendship through the years and have known the inspiration which their efforts in the cause of Eastern Star have brought to all of us.

NARRATION: Virginia Burdette

There is a faith that holds us close as we travel this road of life. It is faith in God and the ways of Christ that could not be finished by man's hands, nearly two thousand years ago. The Cross turned a dismal fate into an eternal victory.

(Music swells and drill formation of Cross is made on grand chapter floor. Remains during songs and narration.)

SONG: "The Old Rugged Cross" by Grand Choir

In ancient days, the cross was the common instrument of capital punishment, but the death of Christ changed all that, and the cross became the symbol of a courageous, crusading faith, and Christ's death became the clearest revelation of God's love and care.

On the night before Christ's crucifixation, when fear and despair had settled upon His disciples, "Jesus knew His hour had come, that He should depart out of this world, unto the Father, having loved His own, which were in the world. He loved them unto the end." And He said, "Let not your hearts be troubled; ye believe in God, believe also in me." SOLO: "Love Blooms Where the Blood Fell" by Jimmy Moore

It is fitting that the discovery of the Resurrection of our Lord was realized in the dawn of a new day. (Lights Dimmer)

And they came, bringing spices which they prepared for Him and found the stone rolled away and "Behold, two men stood by them in shining garments and they said unto them: Why seek ye the living among the dead? He is not here but is risen." Realizing that man's hope is in the empty grave, through the Cross, we behold the resurrection... Christ's victory over death. (Organ picks up introduction to "Because He Lives")
Christ said: "I live, ye shall live also."

SOLO: "Because He Lives" by R. J. Teasley

NARRATION: Bob Allen

As Christ died that we might live eternally, the rain falls to the earth to bring forth new life and everlasting beauty.

PRAYER: Virginia Burdette

Our Father, whose love has created us and given to us the high and solemn privilege of life; we thank Thee for the Blessed assurance that Thou hast given us in the eternal life which lies beyond death. We thank Thee for the lives of those whose memory we honor. Heavenly Father, we don’t profess that it has been easy to give up those we love. We have suffered heartaches and shed many tears in sorrow. We have known from our youth up that death is sure . . . that the Lord giveth and the Lord taketh away. But we also know that we can say as David said at the death of his son, He cannot return to me, but I can go to him. Thank you for the blessed promise that we shall be reunited with our loved ones. Give us now the wisdom to carry on your work, inspire us with patience and fortitude. May we be inspired to higher service and nobler living. May the memory of our dear departed be a blessing unto us forever. Amen

SOLO: “Amazing Grace” by Betty Hollon (Acapella)