

New Member Welcoming Ceremony

This Ceremony should be practiced by the Grange and presented with respect when new members are being received. The new member(s) should be assigned a sponsor and should be seated between the Chaplain and the Executive Committee. Packets of material should be prepared for each new member.

Sec.: Worthy Master, we wish to welcome the following new member(s) to our Grange: *[reads list of names.]*

M.: It is indeed a pleasure to welcome you as a member of this Grange. The Grange strives to improve and enhance the lives of those living within this community, and works with others to better the community in general. It provides a unique opportunity for young and old, families and individuals to interact in the spirit of fellowship. Worthy Assistant Stewards, please escort our new members and their sponsors to the Altar. *[Master calls all to rise. New members and their sponsors are escorted to the Altar.]*

M.: *[Standing between the Graces and the Altar]* A Grange member is recognized for high character, committed to principles, concern for others and for financial responsibility. A Grange member exemplifies these characters on a daily basis. As a member of our Grange we expect that you will support the organization by contributing time and talent to the best of your ability, and will meet your financial obligations in a timely manner.

In return you can expect from this Grange fellowship, a chance to explore and develop your personal talents, and an opportunity to serve. Please place your right hand over your heart and listen to this pledge:

M.: In the presence of our Heavenly Father and these witnesses, I do hereby pledge my sacred honor that, whether in or out of the Order, I will never reveal any of the secrets of this Order, nor communicate the ritualistic work of this Order to anyone unless legally authorized to do so. I further promise to uphold the by-laws of this Grange, and the constitution and by-laws of the State and National Granges. I also promise to uphold the Constitution of the United States and to obey the laws of the land. I will never propose for membership in the Order nor sanction the admission of anyone I have reason to believe an improper person, nor will I oppose the admission of anyone solely on the grounds of a personal prejudice. I will not

knowingly wrong or defraud a Brother or Sister of the Order or allow it to be done by another if within my power to prevent it. I will endeavor to be a true and faithful Patron of Husbandry, perform the duties enjoined in this Order and aid others in the performance of the same. Should I knowingly or willfully violate this pledge, I will invoke upon myself suspension or expulsion from the Order.

With this understanding do you agree to become a member of
_____ Grange? If so please answer "I do."

Candidates respond: I do.

M.: Worthy Chaplain, please ask our Heavenly Father to be with us on this occasion.

Chap.: Almighty Father, Maker and Ruler of the Universe, and giver of every good and perfect gift, we ask you to be with us on this occasion and to bless these who become members of this Grange, and all connected with our Order. We ask all in thy Holy Name. Amen.

M.: I will now explain to you our Salutation, the Voting Sign, and the Use of the Gavel. [Gives instruction on Salutation, Voting Sign and Use of the Gavel, instructions can be found at the end of this ceremony.]

[The Pianist plays the "Welcome Song," The Grange Songbook, number 53. During the first time through, two or three members approach the piano and prepare to sing the first verse. Other members come forward and form the Friendship Circle by joining hands around those at the Altar. When the circle is formed, the Pianist again plays the "Welcome Song," and the first verse is sung by those at the piano and others who wish to join in the singing.]

M.: As we enclose you within a circle of friendship, so does the Grange pledge to you a pure friendship, enduring through life.

And now, Brothers and Sisters, let us loose hands, but ever hold fast to the principles of our Order. To help you become more acquainted with us and with the Grange, I ask each of our sponsors to serve as mentors for you for the next few months. The sponsors will act as your personal guide, helping you become familiar with the organization and its traditions. *[Present "Welcome to the Grange" or "The Grange and You" And your new member materials.]* Please accept this certificate of membership and familiarize yourself with the materials included.

Now let us all join in welcoming our newest members.

[Introductions should be made by each sponsor or the Master, and all return to their seats.]

[Master calls all down.]

Salutation:

The Salutation is made by giving the signs of the four degrees in consecutive order.

The sign of the first degree is made with the palm of the right hand turned squarely to the front and the thumb in the center of the hand fingers extended. Then the hand is raised to the front and upward to a vertical position with the back of the hand squarely to the front fingers close together and straight pointing upward the hand on a level with the face and six inches to the right.

The sign of the second degree begins where the first ends. Then the hand falls to a position on a level with the elbow squarely to the front the thumb still in the center of the hand, the fingers pointing forward.

The sign of the third degree begins where the second ends. The right hand passes toward the left the left hand rises toward the right until they meet and clasp on a level and in front of the heart.

The sign of the fourth degree begins where the third ends. Then the hands unclasp the left hand falls to its natural position by the side and the right hand open is placed over the heart.

The language of the salutation is: A good Patron places Faith in God, Nurtures Hope, Dispenses Charity and is noted for Fidelity.

Voting Sign:

The voting sign of the Order is the end of the sign of the first degree.

The Use of the Gavel:

One rap of the Gavel calls the Grange to order and seats the Grange when standing. Two raps call the officers to rise and three raps call the Grange to rise.