

## **BETHEL MEETINGS**

1. The BG, a female BGC member, the mother or grandmother of a Bethel member, or a MM over the age of 20 shall be present at all times when the members are in the Bethel and at all other Bethel activities. (MC-BETHEL 5, Art XII, Sect 1)
2. The official JD Ritual shall be used without alteration for all Bethel meetings and ceremonies. There is no short form allowed. (C-BETHEL 7, Art XII, Sect 1(i))
3. The BG opens the meeting with the assistance of the ABG. If the BG is not present, the ABG assumes her duties. If neither the BG nor ABG is present, the Guardian Secretary shall open the meeting. (MB-BGC 3)
4. If the HQ is not able to attend the Bethel meeting, the position of HQ may be filled by an active PHQ. If no active PHQ is available, the succession of officers shall be SP, JP, Gde and Mar, in that order. (C-BETHEL 7, Art XII, Sect 1(h)) Such substitute officers should be referred to as "Presiding Officer" during the meeting, but this is often difficult for the Daughters since they learn the Ritual work using the term, "Honored Queen."
5. If the Bethel wishes to exemplify the ritual work for an adult Masonic body, the Bethel must secure a Special Dispensation from the GG. At this exemplification, Escort, Honors and Introduction and all business may be omitted with the permission of the executive members of the BGC (ExBGC). In this case, only the Opening Ceremony (Ritual, 23-62), Ceremony of Initiation (Ritual, 105-143) or Majority Ceremony or other appropriate ceremony, and Closing Ceremony (Ritual, 81-105) would be given. (C-BETHEL 7, Art XII, Sect 3(a))
6. Once a Bethel meeting is in progress, anyone who wishes to enter the Bethel Room does so only with the permission of the HQ. Entrance is made only through the Anteroom door. (The Preparation Room door is used only for ritualistic work. No one uses it to enter or leave during a meeting unless in an emergency.) Adults, unless they are Majority Members wishing to do so, do not enter the semi-circle (give the salutation sign) when entering or leaving the Bethel room. Adults wishing to leave quietly approach the Anteroom door and leave per ritual. Adults wishing to enter the Bethel Room during a meeting will ask the Outer Guard to admit them in the regular manner (Ritual, 17-20).

## **Purging Ceremony**

(see Ritual, 46-52)

1. When the Gde and Mar turn east from the Altar line in going to the East Line, they should turn just before reaching the corner of the Altar. This will cause them to be an Altar's width apart when they are in position one step east of the East Line.
2. The line of Daughters purging should move slowly but continuously along the East Line, giving each Daughter time to stop, face the Marshal, give the grip, turn and walk to the guide, stop, face the Guide, give the responses, always turning square corners.
3. There should never be anyone between the Guide and Marshal. The Marshal shall hold on to the member's hand, if necessary, until the previous member leaves the Guide.
4. Instruct the Guide and Marshal that it is their duty to stop any member who does not know the grip and/or responses and refer her to the BG for proof of her membership. After consulting with the BG, the member shall return to her seat on the sidelines.
5. The HQ shall see that new members of the Bethel are taught purging after their initiation and prior to their first meeting.
6. Once they have finished purging, members should proceed immediately back to their seats and be seated immediately.
7. The Guide and Marshal do not leave the East Line following the purging until both the North and South Marching Lines are cleared.
8. When there are many members to purge, the Senior and Junior Princesses may assist the Guide and Marshal. The Guide and Marshal take 3 steps west of the East Line and the Senior and Junior Princesses descend the East Dais to a position one step east of the East Line. Members purging form two lines.

## **Escort, Introductions and Honors**

(see Ritual, 62-72)

1. Note that "escort" is always singular; do not say, "escorts."

2. Each guest is escorted or introduced only once during a meeting or installation. At that time, all titles are given, starting with the guest's highest title (Ritual, 62).
3. If both men and women guests are in the same group to be introduced, the HQ shall introduce the women before the men.
4. The Promoter of Sociability and ABG shall check the eligibility of all adult visitors. The Promoter of Sociability should also introduce guest to the HQ before the meeting, if possible, and see that the HQ is given a written list of names and titles of guests so they may be properly introduced.
5. The IG and OG shall check the eligibility of visiting Daughters. If there is no IG or OG, another Bethel member should be assigned this responsibility. The visiting Daughters should be introduced to the Promoter of Sociability, who will then pass the information on the HQ.
6. If it should happen that a guest arrives after the meeting has started, and that the guest is not personally known by the HQ, it is permissible for the BG to pass a note to the HQ via the Recorder at the time of introduction.
7. When guests are introduced from the East Dais, the officers on the East Line shall turn and face the guest when giving honors, and then turn West when the guest leaves the Dais. All Officers remain at their stations when giving Honors.
8. Encourage the HQ to give a short personal welcome to the guests following the introduction and before honors are given (Ritual, 69).
9. The BG and ABG shall be escorted, introduced and given the honors due them as per Ritual.
10. Put particular stress on proper floor work and the spoken work during Escort, Honors, and Introductions. Emphasize the importance of graciousness on the part of the officers working this part of the Ritual. Be sure you HQ and all members know the proper honors for special guests.