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**GENERAL GRAND CHAPTER**  
Order of the Eastern Star  
Established November 1876

**TO BE SHARED WITH OES MEMBERSHIP**

July 27, 2020

My Sisters and Brothers,

I am disappointed, and I bet you are too, to know that for the most part the coronavirus has increased across the land. It was my hope to greet you with the exciting news of safer conditions for the return of Eastern Star closer to what we would like it to be, but the health and safety guidelines specified by the health experts and national and local governments have not been lifted (with some exceptions).

We all are more than ready to have our Star return to "normal," but the virus doesn't care! The risk to the health and lives of our members—our older members in particular because most of them are high risk—is still there. I urge you to refrain from placing our members in the difficult position of doing what is right for their health or doing what they feel obligated to do, which is to attend scheduled OES meetings, functions or activities. Please consider these circumstances could possibly endanger the well-being of all members. Every manner of precaution and effort to safeguard the health and lives of all of our cherished members is necessary until the pandemic is under control—a timeline that is impossible to know. Please wear a face mask, maintain social distancing and wash your hands often no matter what!

There is concern that Eastern Star will struggle to return when we can safely gather together once again. I do not share in this concern because I know that Eastern Star will return. I believe we will return even better and stronger than before, especially if we view this time as an opportunity to improve! I am proud of the successful efforts of keeping our members virtually connected together socially. I realize virtual connections are not like seeing each other in person and getting a warm hug, but it is the safe and right thing for us to continue to do at this time.

We're hanging in there tough and we need to remain vigilant for as long as it takes. We're not an organization that crumbles at the first sign of challenge or we would have been gone a long time ago! "What the caterpillar calls the end of the world, the Master calls a butterfly."  
-- Richard Bach.

In friendship and love,  
*Marianne Shenefelt*  
Marianne R. Shenefelt  
Most Worthy Grand Matron

copy: Henry S. Martin, MWGP  
Alma Bane, RWGS