

# Grand Commandery Knights Templar of Michigan

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## General Order No. 1

To all Knights Templar Owing Allegiance to the Grand Commandery Knights Templar of Michigan, Greetings! The following is to be read at the foot of the lines at the first Stated Conclave following receipt.

### **Grand Commandery Theme for 2023/2024:**

*“Michigan Forward, Together!”*

The Grand Commandery theme for the 2023/2024 Templar Year, *Michigan Forward, Together!* embraces the fact that Templar Masonry does not exist, nor will it thrive, completely on its own. It also admonishes us to remember that we are not in a competition with other Masonic organizations for members, that the best way for Templary to grow is to show the world who we are and what we value. We can succeed as an Order while other Masonic bodies thrive, and it is my belief that we will be a healthier, stronger, larger, and more impactful Order when we embrace opportunities to support the entire Masonic family. This includes supporting the growth and health of Lodges, Chapters and Councils, contributing to the activities of our Masonic youth groups, and partnering with the Scottish Rite, Shrine, and other groups to promote the best tenets and values of the Masonic fraternity.

Together, Michigan Masons can make a difference in the lives of every Michigander. It is my vision that the Sir Knights of Michigan will help to pave the path that leads to this reality through the work they do within, and in the name of, their Commandery and the Grand Commandery. We can do this by re-engaging Sir Knights who have previously had no reason to grace our Commanderies. Through our philanthropic efforts, civic service, community service, ritual and tactics we have numerous opportunities for Sir Knights to get involved and take ownership of the work of their Commanderies. We can also help to make Michigan Masonry a stronger fraternal family by showing up, as Templars, in support of other Masonic groups.

Every Sir Knight in this state is charged with upholding the tenets and values of our Order and those of the Masonic fraternity writ large. Let's show our communities, our state, and society the pride that being a Templar brings, and let us each serve humanity as a whole through the things we do each and every day.

### **Religious Observances:**

Pursuant to Section 739 of Michigan Templar Law regarding Special Observances, each Constituent Commandery of the Grand Commandery of Michigan shall participate in the following religious observances:

<i>Hospitaller Sunday</i>	<i>October 15, 2023</i>
<i>Christmas Observance</i>	<i>December 25, 2023</i>
<i>Easter Sunday</i>	<i>March 31, 2024</i>



*Ascension Day*

*May 9, 2024 (Thursday)*

Participation may include attending church or other service as a Commandery or as part of a Battalion. Pursuant to Michigan Templar law, participation in religious observances shall always be done in full dress Templar uniform. If the dates for these observances create logistical issues for Constituent Commanderies, alternate dates can be chosen provided they are relatively close to the original date provided.

Sir Knights are invited to join the Grand Commander and his family in Arlington, Virginia for the Grand Encampment East3er Sunrise service on Sunday, March 31<sup>st</sup>, 2024. Alternatively, Sir Knights may attend one of the Easter Sunrise services held in Michigan. Information about each of these events will be distributed in a timely manner.

***Support of Knights Templar Philanthropies:***

We will continue the challenge begun by REPGC Gary Paquet to attain 100% life sponsorship of the Knights Templar Eye Foundation for all Sir Knights of the state. We will continue to recognize Commanderies that achieve 100% sponsorship levels or above, and the state KTEF committee will update Commanderies on their progress toward 100% sponsorship at multiple points throughout the year. Let's continue to support this great charity that has led to so many people enjoying the gift of sight.

Commanderies are also encouraged to develop a year-long program to support the Knights Templar Holy Land Pilgrimage, which began in this wonderful state. Whether the Sir Knights of a Commandery decide to sponsor a Minister from their local area, or simply donate to the state's Holy Land Pilgrimage Fund, every Sir Knight is encouraged to continue to give to this program that provides ministers the opportunity to walk where Jesus walked. This we should do for the preservation and perpetuation of our Faith.

The Education Foundation, the fund was created in 1922 for the purpose of assisting worthy students to secure an education, thereby enabling them to become productive members of society. The foundation provides scholarships for vocational, technical, undergraduate, and postgraduate study. Commanderies are being asked to support the Education Foundation through nominating deserving students, participating in awards recognition events to honor scholarship recipients, and through donations in support of the Foundation. Applications can be downloaded from the Grand Commandery website.

***Dispensations:***

1. Michigan Commandery No. 59 K.T. U.D is continued by dispensation for the current Templar year. All provisions shall be complied with, as found in Sec. 536 (1) of Michigan Templar Law.
2. Dispensation is hereby granted to all Constituent Commanderies to visit any Masonic Organization such as a Lodge, Chapter, Council, or any other Masonically Affiliated Organization in Full Templar Uniform to form an Honor Guard for the public Installation of Officers.
3. Dispensation is hereby granted for all appointed committee members and Instruction Board members (i.e., Instructors) to wear a breast insignia designating them a committee member or instructor for the 2023/2024 year. These insignia are to be considered a meritorious jewel for the current Templar year only and may only be worn on the



uniform for the 2023/2024 Templar year. These insignia shall be worn on the left side of the uniform, above any ribbon bars and jewels. If a Sir Knight is both an appointed committee member and an instructor, only one insignia shall be worn at a time.

***Public Drill and Wearing of the Summer Uniform:***

Grand Encampment and Grand Commandery law blanket dispensation for all Constituent Commandries to perform Templar Drills upon the streets or in public places of this Grand Jurisdiction in support of patriotic or civic activities.

Summer Uniforms are permitted from this date for parades, public flag presentations and other civic activities. Wearing of the Summer Uniform in Michigan will end October 31, 2023 and may resume April 1, 2024 through August 24, 2024.

***Inspections:***

Pursuant to Section 509 (1) of the Michigan Laws of Templar Masonry, each Constituent Commandery shall be visited and inspected by the Grand Commander or his personal representative each year. Furthermore, pursuant to Section 714 (5) of the Michigan Laws of Templar Masonry, duties of the Commander; He and the officers of his Commandery shall open in Full Form not fewer than four times during a Commandery Year. One such Full Form Opening shall be during the annual inspection of his Commandery. For the 2023/2024 Templar year, Constituent Commandery inspections shall consist of the following:

- Inspection of the financial books, minutes, By-Laws, facility and equipment used for opening and closing the Commandery
- Completion of either the 10-Man or 12-Man Full Form Opening
- If conducting an Order of the Temple, inspection of the ritual work associated with the Order.

Commanderies are strongly encouraged to hold a dinner that includes their Ladies, and to host a ladies event to take place during the inspection period. The Complete Inspection schedule can be found on the Grand Commandery website ([www.kt-mi.org](http://www.kt-mi.org)).

***York Rite Festivals, All-Order Days, and Similar:***

Any Constituent Commandery considering hosting or leading any of the following shall inform the Grand Commander in writing no less than 60 days prior to the event:

- York Rite Festival where the Commandery Orders will be conferred
- All-Order Day
- Any event where multiple Orders are conferred upon multiple candidates from more than one Constituent Commandery
- The conferral of Commandery Orders by a Michigan Commandery where out-of-state candidates are scheduled to receive an Order.

***Membership:***

For the past several years the Grand Encampment has been promoting a membership plan based upon recruitment, retention and reinstatement. In line with this plan and as part of the Grand Commandery Five-Year Strategic Plan, I have tasked the Membership Committee with the following goals, which Constituent Commanderies are charged to support:



- By August 2024, develop and present to the Grand Commandery a series of membership recruitment and retention strategies that can be implemented by Constituent Commanderies, designed to achieve the following goals:
  - a. Increase 2024/2025 Knightings by 5% over 2023/2024 Knightings.
  - b. Increase 2025/2026 Knightings by 5% over 2024/2025 Knightings.
  - c. Increase 2026/2027 Knightings by 8% over 2025/2026 Knightings.
- By August 2025, create and implement a suspended/demit reinstatement plan designed to achieve the following goals:
  - a. By August 1st, 2026, reinstate at least 5% of the suspended/demitted Sir Knights who are listed as suspended/demitted as of January 1st, 2025.
  - b. By August 1st, 2027, reinstate at least 10% of the suspended/demitted Sir Knights who are listed as suspended/demitted as of January 1st, 2025.

While several of these goals extend beyond the current Templar year and my authority as Grand Commander, each Constituent Commandery is to dedicate time and effort during the current Templar year towards the achievement of these goals, in particular to the achievement of our state-wide reinstatement goals.

#### ***Amnesty:***

By virtue of the power vested in me as Grand Commander, I hereby declare amnesty, subject to the following requirements, for all members who are two (2) or more years delinquent in their dues. Paying of their current year's dues shall bring them up to date and they shall be considered a member in "good standing." Furthermore, amnesty is granted to any Sir Knight formerly suspended from "good standing" by virtue of non-payment of dues provided he re-applies to his former Commandery and pays the current year's dues. Requirements: The Sir Knight applying for reinstatement must submit a letter requesting reinstatement, include the required fees and, at the first Conclave after receipt, the request shall be read and voted on by the Sir Knights present. A simple majority shall constitute favorability. All other laws, rules and regulations governing reinstatement shall apply. This amnesty shall continue through this Grand Commandery year ending on August 24, 2024.

#### ***Awards:***

Nominations for the Knights Templar Cross of Honor are due to the **Grand Commander** by April 1<sup>st</sup>, 2024. The nomination form is enclosed with this General Order and can be found on the Grand Commandery website, and must be properly completed in full for the nomination to be accepted and considered. The Commandery nominating the Sir Knight selected for this award will be notified in early summer 2024. Nominations must be submitted to the Grand Commander and are NOT to be sent to the Grand Encampment by the nominating Commandery.

Pursuant to the Michigan Laws of Templar Masonry, I have been informed by the Grand Recorder and am hereby providing notification to all Constituent Commanderies that the honorarium for the Grand Commandery Meritorious Service Award is \$150.00. Nomination forms can be found on the Grand Commandery website and are to be submitted to the Award Committee. Each Constituent Commandery may nominate one (1) Sir Knight each year for this award.



Commanderies are encouraged to nominate a Sir Knight for the Grand Commander's Service Award, which is a unique Michigan honor designed to recognize a member of the Commandery. Each Constituent Commandery may nominate one (1) Sir Knight per year for this award. Nomination forms can be found on the Grand Commandery website. There is no cost for this award.

Commanderies are also encouraged to consider nominating a Lady, or non-Sir Knight who has rendered valuable service to the Commandery for the Companion of the Temple Award. Information about the award can be found on the Grand Commandery website, and Commanderies should contact the Grand Recorder for information about nominations.

***69<sup>th</sup> Triennial of the Grand Encampment, Knights Templar of the USA:***

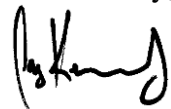
The 69<sup>th</sup> Triennial of the Grand Encampment will be held in Salt Lake City, UT at the Little America Hotel from Saturday, August 17, 2024 (drill competitions) through Wednesday, August 21<sup>st</sup>, 2024 (installation of officers). Sunday, August 18<sup>th</sup>, 2024 will be the divine service, while the Conclave sessions will take place on Monday August 19<sup>th</sup> and Tuesday, August 20<sup>th</sup>. Commanderies and Battalions wishing to participate in the drill competitions are encouraged to visit the Grand Encampment website ([www.knightstemplar.org](http://www.knightstemplar.org)) for additional information.

***168<sup>th</sup> Annual Conclave of the Grand Commandery, Knights Templar of Michigan:***

The 168<sup>th</sup> Annual Conclave will be held in the city of Bay City, Michigan on Thursday August 15<sup>th</sup>, 2024. The Headquarters will be located at the DoubleTree by Hilton Bay City – Riverside, which is located at One Wenonah Place, Bay City, MI 48708. The Annual Conclave will be held in conjunction with the Grand Council Royal and Select Masons of Michigan on August 16<sup>th</sup>, 2024, and the Grand Chapter Royal Arch Masons of Michigan on August 17<sup>th</sup>, 2024. We look forward to you joining us!

Sir Knights, I am excited about the year ahead and I look forward to seeing you throughout my term of officer. Where you need support or assistance, please be sure to reach out and ask. The Grand Commandery is here to support you and we look forward to sharing in your success this Templar year. Thank you for all that you do to support your Grand Commandery!

Courteously,



Jay P. Kennedy, Grand Commander

