

THE TEXAS TEMPLAR

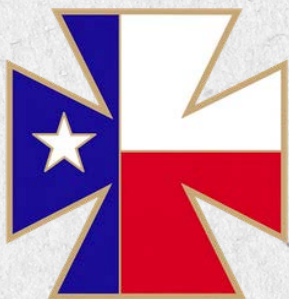
A monthly publication of the Grand Commandery of Texas



Sir Knight
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Sir Knights and Ladies,

It is difficult to believe that one month has already passed since the beginning of this Commandery year. The journey has begun on a truly inspiring note, and I am grateful for every opportunity to serve alongside such devoted Sir Knights.

Ascension Observed at St. Matthew's Cathedral

On May 17th, we gathered at the historic St. Matthew's Cathedral in Dallas to observe the Feast of the Ascension and what a gathering it was. Twenty-eight Sir Knights, along with our ladies, came together in fellowship and worship in that magnificent and storied house of God. The turnout exceeded expectations, and the spirit in that sanctuary was palpable. We were warmly welcomed by Reverend Tom Smith, who has newly taken on pastoral duties at St. Matthew's. Reverend Smith was both surprised and genuinely delighted to have the Templars present, and he was eager to learn about the cathedral's deep historical connections to our Order. It was a joy to share a piece of that legacy with him, and we look forward to cultivating that relationship in the months ahead.

Remembering Memorial Day

As May drew to a close, we paused to observe Memorial Day and it is right and fitting that we do so with more than a moment of passing reflection. As Knights Templar, we are an Order born of the warrior spirit, bound by oath to defend the faith and protect the innocent. Memorial Day calls us to remember those who carried that same spirit into the uniform of our nation and did not return home. These were sons, daughters, husbands, wives, fathers, and mothers. Men and women who gave not merely their time or their comfort, but the full measure of their lives so that the rest of us might live freely. There are no words adequate to repay that debt. There is only gratitude, remembrance, and the solemn resolve to be worthy of their sacrifice.

As Sir Knights, many of whom have worn or continue to wear the uniform of our armed forces, we understand what it means to answer a call greater than oneself. Let us never allow the gravity of Memorial Day to be lost in the noise of barbecues and long weekends. Let us speak their names, honor their families, and carry their memory forward with the dignity it deserves. To every Gold Star family, to every veteran who lost a brother or sister in arms we see you, we honor you, and we are forever grateful.

GRAND COMMANDER'S MESSAGE CONT.

A Call to Support the Knight Templar Eye Foundation

As we move through this Commandery year, I want to encourage every Sir Knight to prayerfully consider supporting the Grand Master's Club, our primary fundraiser for 2026. The Grand Master's Club directly supports the Knight Templar Eye Foundation, a charity close to the heart of our Order. The Eye Foundation provides critical assistance to those suffering from vision impairment and blindness a cause that reflects the very spirit of Christian charity we are called to uphold as Templars. Your participation, at whatever level you are able, makes a meaningful difference in the lives of those we serve. I urge each of you to take part and help make 2026 a banner year for this worthy cause.

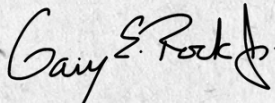
Looking Ahead to June

June promises to be a full and rewarding month. Please mark your calendars for the following:

- June 6: I will travel to El Paso to visit with the wonderful Sir Knights there. The bonds of our brotherhood stretch across this great state, and it is a privilege to strengthen them in person.
- June 19: Kimberley and I will head to Waco to bring greetings at the Texas Rainbow Grand Assembly. The Order of the Rainbow for Girls holds a special place in our Masonic family, and we are honored to extend our congratulations and support to those young women.
- June 20: A landmark day for York Rite brethren. The York Rite Conference will be held at the Texas Masonic Retirement Community in Arlington. That same evening, the festivities continue with the Grand Master's Gala at the Dallas Scottish Rite, beginning at 6:00 PM. I encourage all Sir Knights who are able to attend and make it a truly memorable evening of fellowship.

May God continue to guide and bless each of you, your families, and our beloved Order.

In Faith, Hope, and Charity,



Gary E. Rock, Jr.
Grand Commander

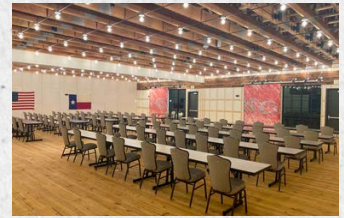


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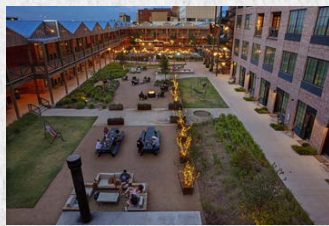
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SAVE THE DATE - 174TH GRAND ANNUAL CONCLAVE



Mark your calendars for **April 8-11, 2027** for the 174th Grand Annual Conclave which will be held at the Cotton Court Hotel in **Lubbock, TX!**
Located at **1610 Broadway St, Lubbock, TX 79401**



CLASS E DRILL TEAM INFORMATION

The Class E Drill team is already used in several Grand Jurisdictions, Class E teams consist of five Sir Knights, including a Captain, and primarily use movements in columns of two or fronts of four or five. Many of these tactics will be familiar from asylum opening and Order of the Temple work. Information and drill materials are available on the Grand Encampment website under **Members → Drill Team Information**. There you will find two downloadable PDF files:

- Class “E” Routine – outlines the competition movements
- Class “E” Instructions – provides detailed movement instructions

Commanderies interested in forming a Class E team are encouraged to review and study these materials. Questions regarding Class E or other drill teams may be directed to R.: E.: Thomas N. “Tom” Turner, PGC at sirknighttom50@yahoo.com

BULLETINS & GENERAL ORDERS

BULLETIN No. 1

Contact Info



GENERAL ORDER No. 1

Districts, Schools, & Clerical info



GENERAL ORDER No. 2

Membership Cards & Grand Officer Info



GENERAL ORDER No. 3

Texas Holding Cmdry



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PRELATE'S APARTMENT



A MESSAGE FROM THE EMINENT GRAND PRELATE SK NIKOLAUS FEHRENBACH, KTCH

As I write this article for the June edition of The Texas Templar, I decided to look for inspiration from the Gospel of Mark. I am not a professional minister, but hopefully this will read more like a message than the ramblings of a fool. The Gospel of Mark is second book of the new testament and also the shortest of the four. It is considered by many to be the oldest.

The Gospel of Mark moves at relentless pace with a sense of urgency. Through the miracles performed Mark shows Jesus exercising authority over unclean spirits, over nature and religious leaders. Yet His authority is distinctive; it is authority born of service. Mark record Jesus' compassion repeatedly. He heals the sick, restores dignity to the outcast, cast out demons from the possessed and stops for children. He notices the overlooked: the leper, the hemorrhaging woman, the blind beggar Bartimaeus. Jesus attends to not only human needs but also to human dignity.

In Mark 10:35-45 we learn that James and John ask Jesus for places of honor, one to sit on his right and the other on his left. **42 Jesus called them together and said, "You know that those who are regarded as rulers of the Gentiles lord it over them, and their high officials exercise authority over them. 43 Not so with you. Instead, whoever wants to become great among you must be your servant, 44 and whoever wants to be first must be slave of all. 45 For even the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many."**

The path to glory is the path of serving others. Our service must do more than check boxes. It must begin with seeing people, their pain, their names, their stories, and responding with loving action.

Following Jesus may call us into discomfort, rejection, or sacrifice. We are invited to participate in a service that gives up privilege for the good of others. The question becomes how can we as humble servants incorporate these teachings into our daily lives. Look for one person this week who is overlooked and offer intentional service. Measure your success not by visibility or control, but by whether your actions lift others. Teach and model servant leadership in your family, workplace, Commandery and church.

Small acts of faithful service that are consistent, humble, sacrificial, open doors for gospel conversations. The Gospel of Mark calls us to a costly, compassionate, world changing service exemplified by Jesus. Today, receive his example and invitation; lead by serving, see and honor the overlooked, accept the cost of love, and let your life bear witness to the Lord who gave his life for the remission of your sins.

Pray with me: Lord Jesus, you are King and Servant. Teach us your way. Give us eyes to see, hearts that move with compassion, and hands ready to serve. Help us to follow you even when it costs, and to let our service point others to your life, death and resurrection. Amen

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WHO WAS BISHOP ALEXANDER C. GARRETT?



The Most Reverend
Alexander Charles Garrett
14th Presiding Bishop of the
Episcopal Church



St. Matthew's Cathedral carries remarkable history, much of it inseparable from the legacy of Bishop Alexander Charles Garrett. Born in Ireland in 1832, Garrett graduated from Trinity College, Dublin, served as a missionary in British Columbia, and eventually made his way to Texas. In 1874, he was appointed Missionary Bishop of Northern Texas, and he was instrumental in the building of St. Matthew's Cathedral in Dallas.

On the very evening of his consecration December 20, 1874, Bishop Garrett and his wife Leticia arrived in Dallas, a town of roughly 7,000 souls, and settled into a room above a saloon. That same night, a pistol shot rang out below. When Leticia worried that someone might be hurt, the bishop calmly assured her, "That's just the way these Texicans have of greeting newcomers." He went downstairs to find that a man had indeed been shot and killed, and he conducted the funeral and buried him the very next day. Thus began a fifty-year ministry in North Texas.

Bishop Garrett led the building of St. Matthew's Cathedral and founded St. Mary's College for women in Dallas. He was known to say he needed clergy who could "ride like a cowboy, pray like a saint, preach like an apostle, and having food and raiment be therewith content." In 1923, at the age of 93 and totally blind, he became the Presiding Bishop of the Episcopal Church. He remained one of the most remarkable figures in the history of Texas Christianity. To worship in that cathedral is to stand in the shadow of that extraordinary legacy and it was an honor to do so as Knights Templar.

VERSE OF THE MONTH

"Not unto us, O Lord, not unto us, but unto thy name give glory."

— Psalm 115:1 —

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CONTINUED TEXAS PROGRAMS

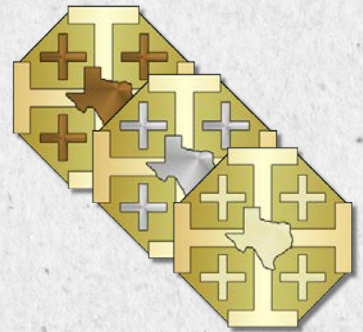
Permanent Endowment Fund

The [Permanent Endowment Fund](#) provides a long-term resource that supports the goals and efforts of the Grand Commandery Knights Templar of Texas. Your donation of \$250 for a white badge will help further the success of the Grand Commandery. For any additional \$150, a Diamond will be added to your badge. For the one-time payment of \$3,250, your badge comes adorned with red enamel and 20 diamonds. Your badge can be proudly worn on your Class A uniform above your left chest!



Texas Holy Land Pilgrimage Foundation

The [Texas Holy Land Pilgrimage Foundation](#) (THLPF) was established in 2024 to send clergy to the Holy Land. There are several ways you can contribute. Badges are awarded to donors who give \$250 (Bronze), \$500 (Silver), and \$1,000 (Gold). There are also neckties available for lower level donations. If you're interested, please reach out to a board member. Your badge can be proudly worn on your Class A uniform above your left chest!



Member Citation Cord Awards

Any Sir Knight who has been the first line signer for a total of three petitioners, who are either knighted or restored to membership since January 1, 2016, is eligible to receive the Member Citation Cord Award. There are various levels represented by different colors, to show your quantity of recruitment or restoration. The total is cumulative with no time boundaries. When [awarded](#) with a cord, it is to be worn on your left shoulder.



A.P.O.A.S. Commandery

A.P.O.A.S. Commandery is a traveling, history-focused, and educational Commandery that offers Sir Knights a unique and engaging experience rooted in Templar tradition and history. Membership is open to all Sir Knights in good standing.



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KNIGHT TEMPLAR EYE FOUNDATION



Our Grand Commander is a big supporter of the Knight Templar Eye Foundation, Inc. He encourages everyone to explore the various donation programs the KTEF offer.

The Knight Templar Eye Foundation, Inc. has a number of donation programs most with associated recognition programs. One of their primary contribution programs is the [Grand Master's Club](#). These are contributions of \$1,000 which can be accumulated over time. These accumulations are known as the Grand Commander's Club (\$100 each until \$1,000 is reached). Currently Grand Master's Club donors receive a plaque and a lapel pin.

The Crusader's Cross comes in 5 levels, \$1,000, \$2,000, \$3,000, \$4,000 and \$5,000 or above. The \$1,000 level has the single, larger cross in the center. Each additional \$1,000 is identified with an additional small cross in a quadrant until at \$5,000 or above all four quadrants are occupied to complete the emblem known as the Crusader's Cross. There are 25 total variations. Recipients of The Crusader's Cross may wear it on the right side of the class "A" uniform.

RECORDER'S DESK



A MESSAGE FROM THE
EMINENT GRAND RECORDER
SK RONNIE WILSON, PGC, KCT

Hello Sir Knights,

If you have any questions or need additional guidance, please never hesitate to contact me at texasgrandrecorder@gmail.com! I will be happy to help you in any way I can!

You can also [click here](#) if you are looking for any specific kind of forms. Our Grand Commandery website has many available to you!

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FEATURED HISTORY



William B. Hubbard
Grand Commander
Knights Templar of the USA



A SUBMISSION ENTITLED: PALESTINE COMMANDERY NO. 3 AND TEXAS BY CHARLES LEE STEEN

In the first week of July 1853 the famous former General of the Texas Army, Sam Houston, arrived in Palestine carrying with him a Dispensation from William B. Hubbard the Grand Commander of Knights Templar of The United States to form a third Commandery in Texas at Palestine. Joining Houston at Palestine were other Sir Knights, some traveling by either horseback or stage two hundred miles to arrive in one of the largest towns in Texas in the early 1850s.

At that time Dallas was but a crossroads community and due to Palestine's size and importance, there was even talk of making it the Capitol of Texas. Other cities in the running were Houston and Austin but owing to its location near the center of Texas, Austin was ultimately selected.

While Houston booked a room at his favorite hotel in town, the Osceola, where he could be found frequently sitting in front whittling some new piece of art, the other visiting Sir Knights found rooms at the much larger Hunter House Hotel. This hotel served double duty as being the stagecoach depot in town with a blacksmith and lively stable at the rear. From this hotel, stages would depart daily in four directions, north to Tyler, east to Rusk, west to Austin and south to Houston.

On the morning of July 6, 1853, Sam Houston and other Sir Knights from Texas' two Commanderies chartered by The Grand Commandery of Knights Templar of The United States, San Felipe de Austin No. 1 at Galveston and Ruthven No. 2 at Houston walked from their hotels, two blocks east on the Rusk Road (now known as E. Lacy Street), to the Palestine Masonic Hall, a two-story wood frame building built in 1850 as the first boys' school in town. Among these men were two future Texas Grand Masters, William Martin Taylor in 1854 and James Madison Hall in 1858 and one Past Grand Master, William Beck Ochiltree.

Palestine Commandery No. 3 has contributed to the early history of Texas in many significant ways. Many of its members such as: William Beck Ochiltree 1851, Andrew Neill 1854, William Martin Taylor 1855, Franklin Barlow Sexton 1857, James Madison Hall 1858, John B. McMahon 1861, William Pinkney Brittain 1863, and Jim Rumsey 2026, served the Grand Lodge of Texas as Grand Master. One of its members, Charles A. Sterne, the son of Adolphus Sterne of Nacogdoches who opened his home to mason, Davey Crockett in 1835, recalled his meeting the famous frontiersman on his way to the Alamo. The "bigger than life" Crockett made such an impression on a five-year-old Sterne that lasted a lifetime.

Another member, John Henninger Reagan, contributed to Texas by serving as a representative to the convention when Texas voted to succeed from the Union. He was subsequently appointed to serve as Postmaster of the Confederacy and towards the end of the war, he became Secretary of the Treasury. When General Robert E. Lee surrendered the Army of Northern Virginia to Grant in April 1865, Reagan fled south with President Jefferson Davis. Captured and interred at the federal prison in Fort Warren, Reagan endured immense pressure to tell where the Confederacy had secreted their gold reserves. After the war he would serve Texas as a US Representative from 1875 to 1887 and as a US Senator from 1887 to 1891. Retiring from Washington he came home to Palestine where, six years later, he became the First Railroad Commissioner of Texas, serving from 1897 to 1901.

Palestine Commandery Sir Knights also made a difference in the lives of people in their communities such as George Washington Tuggle who came to Texas by covered wagon in 1842, settling at Fort Houston. Located about six miles east of the Trinity River, he moved his family outside the fort in 1846 after the hostile Cherokee Indians had signed a peace treaty with Sam Houston. As a personal friend of General Houston, he regularly enjoyed visits from Houston to come to Palestine often during the 1850s. Tuggle also was instrumental in forming the First Presbyterian Church in Palestine in 1849 and became the first schoolteacher in Cayuga in a one room schoolhouse with desks and seats made of split logs.

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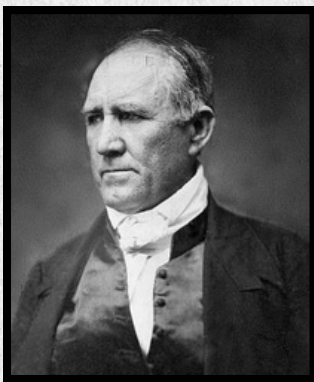
FEATURED HISTORY - CONT.

Other members of Palestine Commandery became judges such as William George Washington Jowers and John Earle Cravens. As one of the first lawyers in Palestine, Cravens had become well known outside of the community and served the Grand Lodge of Texas as Grand Junior and Senior Wardens and as Deputy Grand Master in 1857. On course to become the Grand Master in January 1858, fate stepped in on October 10, 1857, when Craven's young son, Samuel died at only ten months in age. It was a devastating blow to Cravens and his wife.

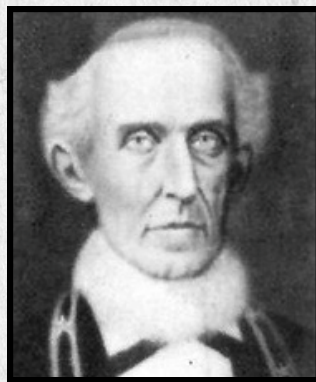
Knowing that as Grand Master he would have to continue travelling the state even more than he had done as Deputy Grand Master and with a wife and two young daughters in deep grief over Samuel's death, Cravens took himself out of consideration for Grand Master and fellow Palestine Commandery Sir Knight James Madison Hall was installed for 1858. Had Cravens not died of pneumonia on May 13, 1860, he would have in all probability, served at some time as Grand Master. He was a man and mason that was bigger than life from all accounts.

These are just some of the members of Palestine Commandery No. 3 that have made a important contribution to Texas since it was a Republic. But the contributions continue to the present day with Palestine Past Commander Jim Rumsey now serving as Texas Grand Master for 2026. The Sir Knights of Palestine Commandery No. 3 are proud of the fact that it was in Palestine, in 1853, that Texas saw its third Commandery formed which was the nucleus of the forming of the Grand Commandery of Texas.

Truly Palestine is the "birthplace of the Grand Commandery of Texas."



Sam Houston
Washington Commandery No. 1
Washington D.C.



William Martin Taylor
Ruthven Encampment No.2
Houston, TX



James Madison Hall
Ruthven Encampment No.2
Houston, TX



EDITOR'S NOTE

SK MICHAEL COTE II, EDITOR



Sir Knights,

Summertime is here! As we enter this season where some can rejuvenate and relax with family, the work of the Texas Knights Templar continues as the commitment shown by our Sir Knights across the jurisdiction. May each of you continue to utilize this platform as it strengthens our Commandaries!

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