



Tennessee Knight Templar News

Grand Commandery Knights Templar of Tennessee – John Calvin Spencer, Grand Commander



GENERAL ORDER No. 3

June 16, 2022

To the Grand Commandery, Knights Templar of Tennessee, and to the Officers and Sir Knights of the subordinate Commanderies:

Your Grand Officers have been working together to assess the status and wellbeing of each of our twenty-seven Commanderies. As you know, the pandemic took its toll, but we were experiencing problems well before COVID. We believe that the time has come to revitalize Templary in Tennessee, to return the Order to the status that it once had in our society, and to restore the confidence in our members that makes them proud to be a Knight. This revitalization process will necessarily involve the implementation of new ideas. It is said that if you keep on doing what you have been doing, you will keep on getting what you have been getting, even if you try harder and harder each year. We need to take a fresh look at why the Order exists and to ensure that the activities of our Commanderies and our Sir Knights support that mission.

As the year progresses, we will be developing a plan of action that will enable every one of our Commanderies to grow and prosper as they have done in the past. We will be rolling out suggestions over the next four years that we hope will assist you to invigorate your Commandery.

At this time, we will address an issue which we feel is of the utmost importance to the wellbeing of your Commandery. First, we need to get back to basics, to start at the beginning. Have you ever thought about why our order exists? What are we here to do? We all need to get on the same page about what we are here to do and where we want to go with our Commanderies. We have developed a mission statement which defines who we are and the reason we exist. The Grand Encampment has a mission statement which is published on the back of every *Knight Templar Magazine*, but as far as we know, the Grand Commandery of Tennessee has not had one until now. We offer this new mission statement for your consideration below:

Mission

The mission of the Grand Commandery Knights Templar of Tennessee is to provide every Christian Freemason in Tennessee the opportunity and resources to develop, be engaged in, and exemplify a Christian chivalric lifestyle.

We hope that you will lend your enthusiastic support to this mission and do your best to inform every one of your members what we are here to do. To begin with, please read this mission statement at your next stated meeting and discuss it among yourselves. We recommend that this statement be read at each stated and called meeting of your Commandery after the opening ceremony and before the minutes, so that every Knight can keep it fresh on his mind. Everything we do in the Commandery should be in support of our mission.

A vision statement explains what it will be like when we are successfully accomplishing our mission. It is like a map which should take us from where we are to where we want to be. Your Grand Officers suggest that the vision statement for our Grand Commandery be adopted as follows:

The Vision of the Grand Commandery of Knights Templar of Tennessee

The Knights of the Grand Commandery of Tennessee are a group of men who share the Christian faith, exemplary character, a dedication to excellence and the service of others, and a desire to share the chivalric experience with other Christian Freemasons. Our Knights are actively engaged with one another in accomplishing this goal and in maintaining this standard of lifestyle and behavior.

Please also discuss this with the Knights at your next stated meeting. These two documents will be the foundation for the rejuvenation and restoration of Templary in Tennessee. We look forward to communicating with you over the next few months about some of the new ideas and new ways of looking at things that will be necessary to restore Templary in Tennessee to her former glory days and to working with each of you to attain this vision.

Courteously,
John C. Spencer, REGC

Grand Officers' Statement on Uniforms

In accordance with the above General Order and the Mission and Vision Statements included, the Grand Commander and Dias Officers have begun issuing decisions that we hope will assist Commanderies and Knights in implementing our Mission and Vision. One of the most commonly discussed items has been uniforms. In order to show our support and provide direction to the Commanderies, your Grand Officers have decided to make this the topic of our first statement. As always, should you have any questions, please feel free to call on any of us.

Sir Knights,

The Templar Order has been a uniformed order since its founding in the 12th century. The uniform sets us apart as Sir Knights, instills pride in our Brethren, and helps to assimilate new Knights into our fellowship.

Grand Encampment law requires that each officer in a Commandery possess a uniform. It is required that all members of a team conferring the Order of the Temple be dressed in the same uniform. It is encouraged that all Sir Knights attending a Templar meeting be in uniform, however it is not required that all Knights attending a meeting be dressed in the same uniform.

We have more choices in uniforms now than we have had before: there is the "Class A" uniform with chapeaux or battalion cap, the cap and mantle, and the summer uniform.

Just as you would wear an apron in your Lodge meeting, you should wear a uniform to your Commandery meeting. Some of your members do not own uniforms. We ask that you ask your officers to wear their uniform to each and every meeting and your members who are not officers to at least wear what we are calling a "**Provisional Uniform.**" The provisional uniform consists of black shoes and socks, black pants, a white shirt, a black tie, and Templar headgear. We ask that you urge your Knights to wear the provisional uniform, as a minimum, for attendance at stated meetings.

Additionally, your Commandery should take the time to decide which uniform you are going to use for the conferral of the Order of the Temple and move toward ensuring that each team member is equipped properly and that your candidates are asked to wear a provisional uniform without headgear to their initiation.

Please help us restore Templary in Tennessee to its former reputation and influence by urging your members to obtain and wear a uniform to all Templar functions.

Note on submitting items to the Knight Templar News

Since September of last year, the former "Knight Templar Supplement" has been replaced by this online Newsletter. This will be posted on the Grand Encampment website, the Tennessee Grand Commandery website, and via email to the individual Knights. Please make sure your email is up to date with the Grand Recorder's Office.

Items for publication should be sent to KTNews.GCTN@yahoo.com. The News will be published by the 5th of each month; items need to be received no later than the 25th of the preceding month. Please send photographs in jpeg and documents in Word format.

Thank you for your continued support of the Knight Templar News.



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Grand Commandery Officers Attend Southeastern York Rite Conference

A delegation of Knights and their ladies attended the Southeastern York Rite Conference in Melbourne, Florida this past month. Topics included continued emphasis on membership as well as reviewing the data from the various SWOT analyses that were done in local Commanderies. The information from this data will be used to direct and inform decisions that will be made over this Triennium to help strengthen and improve our Order.

