

Founders' Day Ceremony

Carry on the Light

Time: 15 minutes

This ceremony pays a small tribute to each of the five founders in a candlelit ceremony.

Advance preparation:

- Obtain seven electric/battery candles
- Arrange six members or alumnae to serve as speakers
 - The speaking parts should be practiced in advance

Ceremony

VPAR or president recites:

"Beloved Founders in your wisdom deep, you chose the way our straying feet shall keep; And though we slip, we turn our footsteps back To gain the wider vision on the track, Which leads our sisterhood to loyalty— 'One Heart, One Way' may this our standard be. 'One Heart, One Way'—four words forever new, We Sigmas say them all the wide world through; and if we meet, or if close home we stay, Four words repeat—'One Heart, One Way'"

-Lillian M. Perkins, *Omicron*, past national historian

"Today is the day set aside to commemorate the founding of Sigma Kappa by remembering our five founders. These five women made their own individual contribution in the formation of our Sorority, and in present day Sigma Kappa, there reflects something of them all. Let us remember, Sigma Kappa was founded at Colby College, Waterville, Maine, November 9, 1874, ____ years ago, by these five women."

Light the first candle.

Speaker one recites:

"Mary Low Carver was the first woman to graduate from Colby College and for two years was the only woman student at the college. She was the first alumna and first on Sigma Kappa's roll of membership. She ranked first scholastically in her class of 19 men. Her career included pioneering in library science, lecturing and writing. She was the only founder to give a daughter to Sigma Kappa. Mary was a gracious, talented, courageous woman who met life with joy and friendliness. I light this candle for Mary Low Carver."

Light second candle.

Speaker two recites:

"Louise Helen Coburn, the second woman to graduate from Colby College, went on to become a poet, historian, botanist and the first women trustee of Colby College. She lent her judicial skills to the creation of our constitution and bylaws and composed the ritual with which all of us are initiated. She was 93 when she died in 1946. She had lived to rejoice in the posterity she had foreseen in 1874. Her sister, two nieces, a grandniece and her nephew's wife are Sigma Kappas too. I light this candle for Louise Helen Coburn."

Light third candle.

Speaker three recites:

"Frances Mann Hall was the life of the group in its early meetings. Her sense of humor, beauty and vivacity gained her a place of distinction in the world in which she moved. She gave to Sigma Kappa its secret symbolism and was responsible for the name and the ideals behind Sigma Kappa; she founded our open motto. She was a teacher before entering college and her career in the educational field led her to Washington, D.C. where she founded a school. I light this candle for Frances Mann Hall."

Light fourth candle.

Speaker four recites:

"Ida Mae Fuller, a vigorous and vital student, was the practical and materialistic voice in the early days of Sigma Kappa. Plagued by asthma, she was forced to leave the northeast and relocated in Kansas where she founded Xi Chapter. She married there and after the death of her husband, moved to San Francisco to work with victims of the earthquakes and fires. I light this candle for Ida Fuller Pierce."

Light fifth candle.

Speaker five recites:

"Elizabeth Gorham Hoag, artistic in nature, created the sorority's first emblem. Her conversation was brilliant, her intellectual and musical talents have long been remembered though her happy life was short. She died of tuberculosis at the end of her sophomore year. She was loved by all who knew her, mourned by all her classmates. I light this candle for Elizabeth Gorham Hoag."

Light sixth candle.

Speaker one recites:

"Carry on the light, the little torch we were privileged to kindle so long ago, bravely let it shine, failing not, nor fading, in all the years to come. So shall it shine—a splendor through the years." –Mary Low Carver

Speaker four recites:

As Ida Fuller Pierce once said, "Sigma Kappa provides social and intellectual fellowship, strengthens character, broadens vision and gives us a spiritual uplift. It works for the betterment of every one of us, and gives us congenial friends for all our days."

Speaker two recites:

"That Sigma Kappa, a constantly reinforced band of trained women, with ideals and with vision, may be in its small proportion one of the carving tools in God's right hand, which He may use in fashioning the new, and we trust more harmonious, world of tomorrow, is my prayer for it and you all." –Louise Helen Coburn

Speaker three recites:

"Let me tell you that those ideals that charmed and united us, those ideals brought out from the drifting mists of the fable and the legend—these are not locked as secrets from you who pass through initiation. You will not forget them. They had a message that has uplifted the thoughts, inspired the philanthropy and thrilled the souls of young women, and through many of them has shed an influence on a future still unfolding." –Frances Mann Hall

VPAR or president recites:

"We light another candle and we remember all the Sigma Kappa sisters who have joined them—all those gone on, We hold them dear in sisterhood."

Light seventh candle.

Close with the following message:

“May the candle our founders lit shine bright and
Our widening circle spread that candlelight.
They sought for learning, shared their dreams.
That olden dream has strengthened with the years.
We share their joy, their laughter, work and play;
We know the learning they were proud to seek.
With them we say
‘One Heart, One Way’—four words forever new—
We Sigmas say them all the wide world through,
And if we meet, or if close home we stay,
Four words repeat; One Heart, One Way.”