



Linked in Friendship, Connected in Service

2017-
2018

Rituals Manual

Confidential to the membership of The Links, Incorporated





Linked in Friendship, Connected in Service

“The more you praise and celebrate your life,
the more there is in life to celebrate..”

– Oprah Winfrey

The National Rituals Committee is honored to present to you an update of our rituals and ceremonies to keep in step with our evolving organization. Change is good; however the traditions we practice are what makes us distinct.

We are truly grateful to all of our predecessors who paved the way with the creation of rituals and ceremonies that encourage embracing our tenets of friendship and service. From our founders, Sarah Strickland Scott and Margaret Roselle Hawkins and all Past National Presidents up to and including our 16th national president, Glenda Newell-Harris, M.D., who is *Building A Healthy Legacy, Our Prescription for the Future*.

Please use this manual as your guide for uniformity of our prescribed practices. Our rituals are beautiful, spiritual acts that bond us to The Links, Incorporated.

Angela C. Harris
Chair, Rituals
Alameda Contra Costa (CA) Chapter

Katie Allen
Co-Chair, Rituals
Oakland Bay Area (CA) Chapter

National Rituals Committee

2015-2018

Yvonne Minor-Ragan, Buffalo (NY) Chapter, Eastern Area Chair
Susanne Matthews, Tri-County (AL) Chapter, Southern Area Chair
Regena Glenn-Caldwell, Lake Shore (IL) Chapter, Central Area Chair
Charlotte Ned, Inglewood-Pacific (CA) Chapter, Western Area Chair

This manual was revised during the administration of Glenda Newell-Harris, 16th National President



Linked in Friendship, Connected in Service

Contents

Opening Ceremony for National Assemblies.....	5
White Rose Ceremony of the General Assembly	9
Memorial Service for Link Assemblies and Area Conferences	11
Closing Ceremony and Candlelight Service	15
Opening Ceremony of the Area Conferences.....	19
Eastern Area Conference.....	19
Southern Area Conference	22
Central Area Conference	24
Western Area Conference	26
Ceremony of Friendship	28
Founders' Day Ceremony.....	32
Rededication Ceremony.....	35
Installation of Officers.....	38
Ceremony for Induction of New Members	40
Into Established Chapters.....	41
Into Newly Chartered Chapters.....	46
Ceremony to Honor a Member Requesting Alumna Status.....	53
Chapter Anniversary Ceremony	56
Induction Ceremony of Honorary Members.....	60
Memorial Services.....	65
Past National Presidents and Past Area Directors	65
Links.....	68
Connecting Links	72
Heir-o-Links.....	74

Appendices76

- A. General Information76
- B. Music Scores77
- C. The National Pledge79
- D. The Links, Incorporated Symbols80
- E. Chapter Resolution Format for Memorial Services81
- F. Rituals and Ceremonies Attendance and Attire Requirements82

Opening Ceremony for National Assemblies of The Links, Incorporated

Ceremonial Preparation

- National president stands at the Friendship Table
- Procession of chapter presidents or representatives by regions, states and chapter induction dates (e.g. first chapter, Eastern Area — Philadelphia, state (Pennsylvania) chapters in Pennsylvania will follow
- Each area director leads the region and proceeds to the ceremonial table
- Provide printed script for the national president and the four area directors

Table Arrangement

- Place a small table in front of the dais. This table should be covered with a white linen tablecloth and skirted in white. The official monogrammed tablecloth should be used.
 - Place a large circular four wicked white candle in the center of the table. Place candle at an elevated level
 - Embellish table with white roses and fern around the candle
 - Matches or a lighter
 - Candle snuffer
 - Place microphone on table
 - Gavel
-

OPENING CEREMONY

National President:

Link Sisters,

You have been called to this _____ Assembly of The Links, Incorporated.

In answer to this call, you have traveled from many parts of this country and other parts of this world to attend the business of this prestigious organization.

You have been called here to challenges, which seek your commitment and test your resolve.

You have been called to opportunities, which would propel the thrusts of our programs even further.

You have been called to fulfill your potential, and to deepen your love of and devotion to The Links, Incorporated

As Friends, work together harmoniously

As Challengers, explore the means by which we can change this world

As Children of our Mother Continent, forget not the exorbitant price so many paid for our freedom and right to assemble here today

Listen, as we now hear from the four areas that have heeded the call to Assembly and have come to light their flame on our Candle of Friendship.

National President:

Eastern Area!

Eastern Area Director:

Madame President,

Members of the Eastern Area have heard the call to Assembly, and we have come!

It is to the east that we look for signs of a new beginning.

Each day of our lives begins with light rising from the east, beaming hope and illuminating opportunity.

Because it is Philadelphia, a city in the East, where Margaret Roselle Hawkins and Sarah Strickland Scott founded this beloved organization,

Because it is in the East where we find the founding chapter of Linkdom, and

Because it is along the eastern seaboard that we had our beginnings as a group of clubs linked through friendship,

The Links of the Eastern Area are proud to light the first flame on our Candle of Friendship.

Ours is the spark igniting the vision of our founders.

Eastern Area director lights the first wick on candle

National President:

Southern Area!

Southern Area Director:

Madame President,

Between the fertile fields of the countryside, beneath tree-lined arches of small towns, and along the crowded way of our city streets, we, the Links of the Southern Area, have come!

Many Link sisters claim our area as their heritage; for it is here, in the South, where we find the deeply entrenched African roots for many family trees.

It is from the Southern Area where several lady Links of vision have been called to serve this organization at its highest level.

The South is rooted in tradition and infused with charm and hospitality; consequently, it comes as no surprise that ours is the area that established protocol procedures and advocated the need for ethical relations.

From the sunlit South, we, the Southern Area Links, have come to light our flame on our Candle of Friendship.

To this flame, we bring its warmth.

Southern Area director lights wick on candle

National President:

Central Area!

Central Area Director:

Madame President,

From the Central Area, the Heartland of Linkdom, we have come!

Ours is the Central Area where the fresh air of friendship blows gustily across the plains.

Just as mankind is kept alive by the constant working of the heart, so is it here in the heartland where we work constantly to keep alive Links friendship flame.

It is our area, the Central Area, which gave the biggest boost to the arts, transforming Freedom and the Fine Arts into The Arts, a program facet of The Links, Incorporated.

It is the Central Area that inducted our organization's first honorary member.

It was in the Central Area, July 2002 that The Links, Incorporated embarked upon a journey to a new-shared vision about the future of this organization.

Centered and committed, we, the Central Area Links, have come to light our flame on our Candle of Friendship.

To this flame, we bring its energy.

Central Area Director lights wick on candle

National President:

Western Area!

Western Area Director:

Madame President,

It is in the West where the sun comes each evening for a spectacular rest. It diffuses its glorious, golden blaze and heralds a time to pause and recover.

Ours is an area of majestic mountains and breathtaking scenery. It was here in the Western Area that the 4th National Assembly launched the first national project.

It was here in the Western Area that The Links Foundation was conceived. Yes, the sun sets in the West, but our vision for Linkdom never fades. From the Western Area, we have come! Primed with the golden blaze of a sunset, we have come to light our flame on our Candle of Friendship. To this flame, we bring its radiance.

Western Area Director lights wick on candle

National President:

Having received its spark from the Eastern Area, its warmth from the Southern Area, its energy from the Central Area, and its radiance from the Western Area, our Candle of Friendship now burns as a single flame.

Link sisters, as we behold this flame, let us, through its symbolism, be reminded that although we all have come to the flame with our own divergences, it is through the power of friendship that we are accepted into Linkdom and made whole.

National President:

Let us pray.

O God, draw us close to the flame of friendship and keep us there. Tenderly nudge us toward its glow so that softness, gentleness, and warmth reflect upon our faces and within our hearts. With hands warmed by friendship's flame, let us reach out and connect to these, our sisters. May each Link assembled around this flame gain strength for her present tasks and courage for her future responsibilities.

Amen

I declare that this _____ Assembly of The Links, Incorporated has now been duly opened.

President raps gavel

White Rose Ceremony of the General Assembly of The Links, Incorporated

Honoring Friendship and Service

This ceremony is to honor selected ones who have exhibited the essence of Linkdom — friendship — and who have served with commitment in leadership roles, thus strengthening our chain of friendship and service.

Ceremonial preparation:

- Provide a copy of the White Rose Ceremony to National President, National Vice President, and selected honoree(s).
- Seat the honoree(s) on the dais prior to the opening of the session.
- Provide one (1) long - stemmed white rose for each honoree
- Limit citation remarks to (1) one minute, with the leader stating why each individual honoree has been selected.
- Cite honoree(s) in the following order: Past National Presidents (In order of succession) Charter members of the Philadelphia (PA) Chapter, Area Director of hostess chapter * Immediate Past Area Directors* Other Links as determined by the National President **

Note:

**If past national officers or area officers are serving in another office, they shall be cited when their tenure in the latter office ends.*

***Proper protocol regarding who should be introduced first should be used in introducing these Links.*

THE WHITE ROSE CEREMONY

National President:

As we open our _____ National Assembly of The Links, Incorporated, let us pause to pay tribute to persons who played major roles in the history of our organization. The White Rose Ceremony seeks always to honor selected ones among us who have served with commitment in leadership roles, thus strengthening our chain of friendship and service.

“Friendship, indeed, is one of the greatest bonds God can bestow on man. It is a union of our finest feelings; a disinterested binding of hearts, and sympathy between two souls. It is an indefinable trust we repose in one another, a constant communication between two minds, and an unremitting anxiety for each other’s souls.”

— J. Hill

The National President begins by calling the name of the first honoree.

The first honoree will stand or take her place to the right of the leader following her citation; the second honoree will stand to the right of the first person cited, etc. with all remaining standing until the end of the ceremony.

After each honoree has been cited, the National Vice President presents her with a long-stemmed white rose.

National President: *(Following individual citations)*

To love through labor is to be intimate with life's innermost secret. We honor these members for their unselfish expressions of friendship, labor, and service. Someone has said that when you work, you are a flute through whose heart the whispering of the hours turns to music. Work is love made visible. To be idle is to become a stranger unto the seasons, and to step out of life's procession that marches in majesty and proud submission toward the infinite.

We ask that our beloved Link _____ respond on behalf of all honorees.

Selected Honoree:

It is my privilege, on behalf of the leadership of this organization, and particularly those here represented, to accept these white roses, symbolic of friendship and service.

“Blessed are they who have the gift of making friends, for it is one of God's best gifts. It involves many things, but above all, the power of going out of one's self, and appreciating whatever is noble and loving in another.”

— Thomas Hughes

In accepting these white roses, we rededicate ourselves and challenge every Link present to commit herself to the challenge which lies ahead. We ask that God will give each of us the strength to fulfill our purposes. For it is only through ever strengthening our ties of friendship and directing our efforts toward the accomplishment of our goals that each of us becomes worthy of accepting the white rose—symbolic of friendship and service.

National President:

Link sisters, this ends our White Rose Ceremony.

Memorial Service for The National Assemblies / Area Conferences of The Links, Incorporated

Ceremonial Preparation

- A soloist and organist to perform Schubert's "Ave Maria" and Malotte's "Lord's Prayer".
- All Links are to be dressed in uninterrupted white.
- Provide printed ceremonies for program participants including soloist and pianist/organist.
- At Assemblies — the national president and the national vice president have speaking roles.
- At Area Conferences — the area director and the area vice director have speaking roles.
- Prior to the beginning of this ceremony, it is announced: "Under no circumstance will names be taken from the floor."

Table Arrangement

- Place a small table in front of the dais or on the stage. This table should be covered with a white linen tablecloth and skirted in white
- Place a vase large enough to hold 16 white roses, 16 sprigs of fern, and 16 sprigs of baby's breath in the center of the table
- Place candelabra with five (5) 14 inch white cathedral candles on the right side of the vase of roses
- Matches or a lighter
- Candle snuffer
- Place microphone on each side of the table

All Table Setups Based on Audience View

TRIBUTE TO LINKS

Soloist:

Ave Maria by Schubert

National President / Area Director:

Unto Thee, O Lord, do we lift up our souls. Show us Thy ways, O Lord; teach us Thy paths, and lead us in Thy truth.

I will lift up mine eyes unto the hills from whence cometh my help.

National Vice President / Area Vice Director:

My help cometh from the Lord, who made heaven and earth.

He will not suffer Thy foot to be moved; He that keepeth Thee will not slumber. Behold, He that keepeth Israel shall neither slumber nor sleep.

National President / Area Director:

The Lord is Thy Keeper; the Lord is Thy shade upon Thy right hand.
The sun shall not smite Thee by day, nor the moon by night.
The Lord shall preserve Thee from all evil; He shall preserve Thy soul.
The Lord shall preserve Thy going out and Thy coming in from this time forth, even
forevermore.

(Psalm 121)

National President / Area Director:

There is a long and winding road along which each must go.
It leads beyond the Hills of Time into the sunset glow,
But only for a little while
Our loved ones leave our sight,
For just beyond the hills they wait
In God's Eternal Light.

Realizing that many chapters have suffered a broken link in our friendship chain during the past two years, we pause at this moment in our Assembly to pay homage and tribute to the memory of our deceased sister Links who rest in God's eternal light.

National Vice President / Area Vice Director:

In tribute and honor to our deceased sister Links, we light five candles, representing our five-pronged program symbolic of our flame of love which glows continually in our hearts.

President lights five cathedral candles

National President:

And what doth the Lord require of thee, but to do justly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God.
For as much as it has pleased Almighty God in His divine wisdom to remove from our group these beloved Link sisters, we bow to His divine will with hearts full of sorrow and gratitude; sorrow for the loss we sustained, gratitude for their lives and the contributions made to their organizations, communities and country.

“Regret is dead, but love is more
Than in the summers that have flown,
For she with these have grown
To something greater than before.
Hail to thee departed one:
Thine individuality is forever,
The soul doth breathe forever and ever.”

The Area Directors will call the names by chapters of the deceased Links in their areas.

At the completion of the roll call, the Area Vice Directors will place the white roses in a vase in memory of these members.

Members from each chapter who have lost a Link may stand when the name of the deceased Link is called.

National President / Area Director:

We offer white roses in memory of deceased members, symbolizing the everlasting esteem in which lost members are held by all.

TRIBUTE TO CONNECTING LINKS

National President / Area Director:

The Quest

“There is a quest that calls me In the night when I’m alone-

The need to ride where the ways divide The unknown from the known.

I mount what thought is near me

And soon I reach the place-

The tenuous rim where the scene grows dim

And sightless hides its face. I have ridden the wind I have ridden the sun, I have ridden the moon and stars I have set my feet in the stirrup seat of a comet coursing Mars.

And everywhere through earth and air that

My thought speeds, lightning shod It comes to a place, where checking pace It cries,

“Beyond Lies God.”

The Area Directors will call the names by chapters of the Connecting Links in their areas.

Members from each chapter who have lost a Connecting Link may stand when the name of the deceased is called. After the completion of the roll call, the Area Vice Directors will place the sprigs of fern in the same vase as the roses in memory of deceased Connecting Links.

TRIBUTE TO HEIR-O-LINKS

National President / Area Director:

When a leaf falls from the tree, it is the family that suffers. The Link family pauses in love and memory of our fallen leaves.

The Area Director will call the names and chapter relationship of the deceased Heir-O-Links in their areas. Members from each chapter who have lost an Heir-O-Link may stand when the name of the deceased is called. After the completion of the roll call, each Area Vice Director will place the sprigs of baby’s breath in the same vase of roses and fern in memory of the Heir-O-Links.

National President / Area Director:

She who plants a tree, she plants youth;

Vigor won for centuries in sooth;

Life of time that hints eternity.

Boughs their strength uprear;

New shoots every year, on old growths appear;

Thou shalt teach the ages, sturdy tree,

Youth of soul is immortality.

Soloist:

The Lord's Prayer, by Malotte

The National President/Area Directors, using the snuffer, extinguishes all candles.

National President / Area Director:

Please leave the room quietly.

Closing Ceremony and Candlelight Service Of The Links, Incorporated

Ceremonial Preparation:

- Provide soloist and organist to perform:
- “The Candlelight Song”
- The National Song of The Links, Incorporated
- Provide printed programs for the participants, the organist, and the soloist.
- At the National Assembly, the National President selects speaking roles, at the Area Conferences, the Area Director selects speaking roles.

Table Arrangement:

- Place ceremonial table in front of the dais or on the stage. This table should be covered with a white linen tablecloth and skirted in white.
- Place in the center of the table a four - pronged candelabra with four (4) fourteen inch white cathedral candles.
- Place lighter/matches on table.
- Place candlesnuffer on table to extinguish candles at close of ceremony.
- Provide two (2) hand-held microphones (one on each side of ceremonial table).
- Provide for each Link a penlight and the lyrics to the “Candlelight Song.”
- Gavel

CLOSING CEREMONY AND CANDLELIGHT SERVICE

Leader:

We stand here, O Lord of life,
Heirs of all the ages of Thy creative effort,
Fruit of all the conflict, the hard-won progress,
The sacrifice, the agony of the past.
We stand erect - for one brief moment
On the crest of Thy history;
Unto us, O Father, without whom the past has no meaning,
Unto us, sister Links of Thy world today, Reveal Thyself, and make us worthy
Of the life entrusted to us.

Voice 1:

In the belief that by working together toward common goals, we might contribute more toward universal unity, we join our sister Links around the world in fulfilling our threefold purpose:

- To help women better understand and assume their civic responsibilities locally and nationally;
- To encourage cultural appreciation through the arts and to develop enriched intergroup relationships;
- To provide opportunities and develop techniques for the enrichment of personal friendship.

Voice 2:

As Links in friendship's golden chain, we believe that we are obligated to live graciously, fully and altruistically so that the world in which we live will surely be better through our concerted and consecrated efforts.

We believe, as Links that mankind will not find security until all people have adequate access to the world's national resources. We believe that all mankind will be free to enjoy living—a closer-knit home, individual creativeness and harmonious community life.

Voice 3:

We believe that in our community we must plan for the education of the young and the old. Education can be one of the strongest channels for the expression of friendship, understanding, liberty and truth. Our education must include international thinking, cooperation, and citizenship.

Voice 4:

We believe that mutual appreciation and understanding among people may be strengthened by the sharing of the world's great literature, art and music.

Filled with, love, justice, friendship and beauty, we are united in our desire to work toward a full and creative life for all people.

Leader:

Believing in all that we have shared together during these hours and days of our National Assembly/ Area Conference, we now come to the Closing Candle lighting Service to renew and rededicate ourselves as sister Links.

“God, placed a candle in His hand
That to our earthly night
There might be brought a beam of hope
Forever burning bright;
Each one also a candle bears,
That when touched by His flame
Becomes another glowing torch
To glorify His name.”

Leader lights a 14-inch candle.

Leader:

I light this candle representing The Links, Incorporated. As its flame ascends, it expresses our gratitude and appreciation for the founders of our great organization, Sarah Strickland Scott and Margaret Roselle Hawkins, whose keen sense of the strategic effected the welding of The Links, Incorporated into a chain of friendship of measureless scope strengthened and enriched through love, unselfish service and intergroup experiences. Certainly, their inspiration and faith must have come from Him above and has become our spirit of light.

Candle Lighter 1:

I light this candle representing the spirit of true friendship. May its flame ever burn brightly.

Friendship is one of the main elements always present in the continuously growing chain of Links.

“And let there be no purpose in friendship save the deepening of spirit ...
And let your best be for your friend.
If she must know the ebb of your tide,
Let her know its flood, also. For what is your friend that you
Should seek her with hours to kill?
Seek her always with hours to live. For it is hers to fill your need,
But not your emptiness. And in the sweetness of friendship,
Let there be laughter and sharing of pleasures.
For in the dew of little things
The heart finds its morning and is refreshed.”

Candle Lighter 2:

The candle I now light is for the spirit of unselfish service, the motivating light in the hearts of all Links.

“Service is our watchword. Service, fruitful service
daily ours to bring. Service for the needy,
Service for the lost, service in the homeland,
wherever sounds the call,
Sacrificial service, reaching unto all,
Service pure, exalted, loyal and unpriced; Living, loving channels bearing forth the Christ.
Unselfishly serving, not for gain,
Meeting every duty be it toil or pain.”

Candle Lighter 3:

Nothing is sweeter than love, nothing higher, nothing fuller nor better in Heaven and on earth, so I light this candle representing the spirit of love. From I Corinthians, Verse 13, I quote:

“Though I speak with the tongues of men and angels and have not love, I am become as sounding brass or a tinkling cymbal.
And though I have the gift of prophecy and understanding all mysteries and all knowledge; and though I have all faith, so that I could remove mountains and have not love, I am nothing... And now abide faith, hope, love, these three; but the greatest of these is love.”

Leader:

And now may each Link stand, turn on penlight and sing the Candlelight Song.

Candlelight Song

Sung to the melody of Brahms' Lullaby. The music continues during the lighting of all Links candles/penlights

Candlelight –candlelight,
In the soft hour of gloaming All the cares and all the blame
You have purged them in your flame.

With a prayer in our hearts
that has grown with this day,
We will walk in your glow and will find our lost way.
In thy spell-candlelight
As the day nears its end,
We remember we have come
In the name of Links and friend.
As the day dawns tomorrow,
May we pledge once again
To gather our blessings and share them with friends.

Leader:

What gift of power has candlelight?
That reaches deep and makes things right-
And glorifies upon their shelves-
The good we've stored within ourselves!

We, Links, have assembled as a part of a fellowship and a chain of friendship of sister Links throughout the world.

We will strive to keep high our purpose and our ideals. We have lighted our candles as a symbol of our desire to rededicate ourselves. We will now say our Pledge followed by The National Song of The Links, Incorporated.

The Links Pledge

I do solemnly pledge myself to all the ideals, purposes and true meaning of the word friendship as embodied in the name Links.

I shall earnestly endeavor to uphold these standards and do my share toward serving my community and my chapter to the best of my ability. And this I promise.

~Sarah Strickland Scott

The National Song of The Links, Incorporated

Led by Soloist

We strive to do some good each year
for those who need our aid;
It binds us close and brings us joy.
And so we feel repaid.

We're each a Link in friendship's chain,
and loyal to our creed
Of doing good through work and play;
Together we'll succeed.

Lyrics: Frances Atkinson

Music: Marietta Hall Cephas

*The National President/ Area Director announces the closing of the National Assembly/
Area Conference and strikes the gavel once.*

Opening Ceremony of the Area Conferences of The Links, Incorporated

Ceremonial Preparation:

- Area director stands at the Ceremonial Table.
- Procession of chapter presidents or representatives by states and induction dates (e.g. first chapter in Central Area) – St. Louis, State – Missouri) chapters in Central Area will follow.
- Provide printed script for area director and first chapter representative.
- Provide candles or pen lights for each chapter president or representative.

Table Arrangement:

- Place ceremonial table in front of the dais. This table should be covered with a white linen tablecloth and skirted in white.
- Place a large single white pillar candle (friendship candle) in the center of the table. Candle should be raised so as to be higher than other objects.
- Embellish the table with roses and fern (greenery may be used) around the candle.
- Place lighter/matches on table.
- Place candle snuffer on table to extinguish candles at close of ceremony.
- Provide hand-held microphones on ceremonial table.
- Gavel

EASTERN AREA CONFERENCE

Connecticut, Delaware, Maryland, Massachusetts, New Jersey, New York, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, Virginia and Washington, D.C.

Area Director:

Link Sisters,

You have been called to this ___ Eastern Area Conference of The Links, Incorporated. In answer to this call, you have traveled from Connecticut, Delaware, Maryland, Massachusetts, New Jersey, New York, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, Virginia and Washington, D.C., to attend the business of our distinguished area.

You have been called here to challenges, which seek your commitment and test your resolve.

You have been called to opportunities, which would propel the thrusts of our programs even further.

You have been called to fulfill your potential, and to deepen your love of, and devotion to The Links, Incorporated.

As Friends, work together harmoniously.

As Challengers, explore the means by which we can change this world.

As Children of our Mother Continent, forget not the exorbitant price so many paid for our freedom and right to assemble here today.

Listen, as we now hear from the chapters that have heeded the call to conference.

The delegate of the Philadelphia Chapter, first chapter of The Links, Incorporated turns on penlight/votive and speaks:

Philadelphia Chapter Delegate:

Madam Area Director,

It was on November 9, 1946 in the City of Philadelphia where seven friends proudly gathered for the first organizational meeting of The Links, Incorporated. It is with that same pride that I announce that the Philadelphia Chapter, the Mother Chapter of The Links, Incorporated, has once again heeded the call to friendship and service, and we have come.

Area Director:

Thank you Philadelphia. Are there other chapters that have heeded the call to this Area Conference?

In alpha order, the delegate from each chapter stands, turns on her penlight/votive, and states her chapter's name. The delegates remain standing until all chapters in the area have responded to the call to conference.

After the last delegate states her chapter's name, the area director speaks.

Area Director:

I remind all of you that there is nothing more important in our beloved Linkdom than friendship and service.

All Delegates (in unison):

Madam Area Director, we stand together linked in friendship and in service.

Area Director:

Link sisters, it is to the East that we look for signs of a new beginning. Each day of our lives begins with light rising from the East, beaming hope and illuminating opportunity. Because it is here in the Eastern Area where Margaret Roselle Hawkins and Sarah Strickland Scott founded this beloved organization and where the National Song of The Links, Incorporated and The Links Pledge were penned.

Note: The area director may also choose to add other contributions of her area.

We, The Links of the Eastern Area, now light the Candle of Friendship. Always remember that ours was the area where the vision of our Founders was ignited.

Area director lights the friendship candle.

Area Director:

As we behold this flame, let us, through its symbolism, be reminded that although we all come to the flame with our own divergences, it is through the power of friendship that we are accepted into Linkdom and made whole.

Area Director:

Let us pray...

O God, draw us close to the flame of friendship and keep us there. Tenderly nudge us toward its glow so that softness, gentleness, and warmth reflect upon our faces and within our hearts. With hands warmed by friendship's flame, let us reach out and connect to these, our sisters. May each Link assembled around this flame gain strength for her present tasks and courage for her future responsibilities.

~Amen

Area Director:

I declare now that this Eastern Area Conference of The Links, Incorporated has been duly opened.

Raps gavel.

Area Director extinguishes candle with snuffer.

Philadelphia Chapter Delegate (Leads by example from her place in the front.) turns her penlight off which signals all delegates to lower their hands and turn their penlights off. She returns to her designated seat after which all delegates quietly take their seats.

SOUTHERN AREA CONFERENCE

North Carolina, South Carolina, Georgia, Mississippi, Alabama, Louisiana, Nassau, Bahamas, and Florida

Area Director:

Link Sisters,

You have been called to this__Southern Area Conference of The Links, Incorporated.

In answer to this call, you have traveled from North Carolina, South Carolina, Georgia, Mississippi, Alabama, Louisiana, Nassau, Bahamas, and Florida to attend the business of our distinguished area.

You have been called here to challenges, which seek your commitment and test your resolve.

You have been called to opportunities, which would propel the thrusts of our programs even further.

You have been called to fulfill your potential, and to deepen your love of, and devotion to The Links, Incorporated.

As Friends, work together harmoniously.

As Challengers, explore the means by which we can change this world.

As Children of our Mother Continent, forget not the exorbitant price so many paid for our freedom and right to assemble here today.

Listen, as we now hear from the chapters that have heeded the call to conference.

The delegate of the Wilson– Rocky Mount– Tarboro Chapter, the first chapter to be established in the Southern Area of The Links, Incorporated, turns on her penlight/votive and speaks.

Wilson - Rocky Mount - Tarboro Delegate:

Madam Area Director,

The Southern Area of The Links, Incorporated came into existence on April 19, 1948 when the Wilson– Rocky Mount– Tarboro Chapter was organized. It is with pride that I announce that the Wilson-Rocky Mount-Tarboro Chapter, Southern Area's first chapter, has heeded the call to conference and has come.

Area Director:

Thank you, Wilson– Rocky Mount– Tarboro. Are there other chapters that have heeded the call to this Area Conference?

In alpha order, the delegate from each chapter stands, turns on her penlight, and states her chapter's name. The delegates remain standing until all chapters in the area have responded to the call to conference.

After the last delegate states her chapter's name, the area director speaks.

Area Director:

I remind all of you that there is nothing more important in our beloved Linkdom than friendship and service.

Area Director:

Link Sisters,

Between the fertile fields of the countryside, beneath tree lined arches of small towns, and along the crowded way of our city roads, we, the Links of the Southern Area, have come!

Many Link sisters claim our area as their heritage; for it is here, in the South, where we find the deeply entrenched African roots for many family trees.

It is from the Southern Area where several lady Links of vision have been called to serve this organization at its highest level.

The South is rooted in tradition and infused with charm and hospitality; consequently, it comes as no surprise that ours is the area that established protocol procedures and advocated the need for ethical relations.

(Optional: Area director may add other things about her area here.)

From the sunlit South, we Links of the Southern Area, have come to light our flame on our Candle of Friendship.

To this flame, we bring our warmth and our renewed commitment to live as friends who serve and to serve as friends who care.

After area director lights the friendship candle.

Area Director:

Link sisters, as we behold this flame, let us through its symbolism, be reminded that although we all come to the flame with our own divergences, it is through the power of friendship that we are accepted into Linkdom and made whole.

Area Director:

Let us pray..

O God, draw us close to the flame of friendship and keep us there. Tenderly nudge us toward its glow so that softness, gentleness, and warmth reflect upon our faces and within our hearts. With hands warmed by friendship's flame, let us reach out and connect to these, our sisters. May each Link assembled around this flame gain strength for her present tasks and courage for her future responsibilities.

~Amen

Area Director:

Link sisters, I now declare that this _____ Southern Area Conference of The Links, Incorporated has been duly opened.

Raps gavel.

CENTRAL AREA CONFERENCE

Missouri, Ohio, Illinois, Nebraska, West Virginia, Michigan, Indiana, Kentucky, Arkansas, Iowa, Oklahoma, Kansas, Wisconsin, Minnesota, and Tennessee

Area Director:

Link Sisters,

You have been called to this _____ Central Area Conference of The Links, Incorporated.

In answer to this call, you have traveled from Arkansas, Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Kansas, Kentucky, Michigan, Minnesota, Missouri, Nebraska, Ohio, Oklahoma, Tennessee, West Virginia, and Wisconsin to attend the business of our distinguished area.

You have been called here to challenges, which seek your commitment and test your resolve.

You have been called to opportunities, which would propel the thrusts of our programs even further.

You have been called to fulfill your potential, and to deepen your love of, and devotion to The Links, Incorporated.

As Friends, work together harmoniously.

As Challengers, explore the means by which we can change this world.

As Children of our Mother Continent, forget not the exorbitant price so many paid for our freedom and right to assemble here today.

Listen, as we now hear from the chapters that have heeded the call to conference.

The delegate of the St. Louis Chapter, the first chapter to be established in the Central Area of The Links, Incorporated, stands, turns on her penlight, and speaks

St. Louis Delegate:

Madam Area Director, It was on April 10, 1948 in the City of St. Louis where friends proudly gathered for the first organizational meeting for the first chapter of the Central Area of The Links, Incorporated. It is with that same pride that I announce the St. Louis Chapter, first in the Central Area, has once again heeded the call to friendship and service, and we have come.

Area Director:

Thank you, St. Louis. Are there other chapters that have heeded the call to this Area Conference?

In alpha order, the delegate from each chapter stands, turns on her penlight, and states her chapter's name. The delegates remain standing until all chapters in the area have responded to the call to conference.

After the last delegate states her chapter's name, the area director speaks.

Area Director:

I remind all of you that there is nothing more important in our beloved Linkdom than friendship and service.

All Delegates (in unison):

Madam Area Director, We stand together linked in friendship and in service.

Area Director:

Link Sisters,

Ours is the Central Area where the fresh air of friendship blows gustily across the plains.

Just as mankind is kept alive by the constant working of the heart, so is it here in the heartland where we work constantly to keep alive Links friendship flame.

It is our area, the Central Area, which gave the biggest boost to the arts, transforming Freedom and the Fine Arts into The Arts, a program facet of The Links, Incorporated.

It is the Central Area that inducted our organization's first Honorary Member.

It was in the Central Area, July 2002 that The Links, Incorporated embarked upon a journey to a new-shared vision about the future of this organization.

(Optional: Area director may add other things about her area here.)

Centered and committed, we, the Central Area Links, have come to light our flame on our Candle of Friendship.

To this flame, we bring its energy.

Area director lights the friendship candle.

Area Director:

Link sisters, please light your friendship candle of leadership on behalf of your chapter members and others who partner with us in sharing our vision of serving those who need our aid.

St. Louis Chapter delegate raises her lit penlight which is the signal for all delegates to immediately raise their right hands and turn on penlights.

Area Director:

Link sisters, as we behold this flame, let us be reminded through its symbolism, that although we all come to the flame with our own divergences, it is through the power of friendship that we are accepted into Linkdom and made whole.

Area Director:

Let us pray...

O God, draw us close to the flame of friendship and keep us there. Tenderly nudge us toward its glow so that softness, gentleness, and warmth reflect upon our faces and within our hearts. With hands warmed by friendship's flame, let us reach out and connect to these, our sisters. May each Link assembled around this flame gain strength for her present tasks and courage for her future responsibilities.

~Amen

Area Director:

Link Sisters,

I now declare that this _____ Central Area Conference of The Links, Incorporated has been duly opened.

Raps gavel.

WESTERN AREA CONFERENCE

California, Texas, Arizona, Colorado, Washington, Oregon, Nevada, Hawaii, New Mexico, and Alaska

Area Director:

Link Sisters,

You have been called to this ___ Western Area Conference of The Links, Incorporated. In answer to this call, you have traveled from Alaska, Arizona, California, Colorado, Hawaii, Nevada, New Mexico, Oregon, Texas and Washington to attend the business of our distinguished area.

You have been called here to challenges, which seek your commitment and test your resolve.

You have been called to opportunities, which would propel the thrusts of our programs even further.

You have been called to fulfill your potential, and to deepen your love of, and devotion to The Links, Incorporated.

As Friends, work together harmoniously.

As Challengers, explore the means by which we can change this world.

As Children of our Mother Continent, forget not the exorbitant price so many paid for our freedom and right to assemble here today.

Listen, as we now hear from the chapters that have heeded the call to Conference.

The delegate of the Los Angeles Chapter, first chapter to be established in The Western Area of The Links, Incorporated stands turns on her penlight and speaks.

Los Angeles Chapter Delegate:

Madam Area Director,

It was on September 16, 1950 in the City of Los Angeles where friends proudly gathered for the first organizational meeting for the first chapter of the Western Area of The Links, Incorporated. It is with that same pride that I announce that the Los Angeles Chapter, first in the West, has once again heeded the call to friendship and service, and we have come.

Area Director:

Thank you Los Angeles. Are there other chapters that have heeded the call to this conference?

In alpha order, the delegate from each chapter stands, turns on her penlight, and states her chapter's name. The delegates remain standing until all chapters in the area have responded to the call to conference.

After the last delegate states her chapter's name, the area director speaks.

Area Director:

I remind all of you that there is nothing more important in our beloved Linkdom than friendship and service.

All Delegates (in unison):

Madam Area Director,

We stand together linked in friendship and in service.

Area Director:

Link Sisters,

It is in the West where the sun comes each evening for a spectacular rest.

It diffuses its glorious, golden blaze and heralds a time to pause and recover.

Ours is an area of majestic mountains and breathtaking scenery.

It was here in the Western Area that the fourth National Assembly launched the first national project.

It was here in the Western Area that The Links Foundation, Incorporated was conceived.

(Optional: Area director may add other things about her area here.)

Yes, the sun sets in the West, but our vision for Linkdom never fades.

Western Area, we have come!

Primed with the golden blaze of a sunset, we have come to light our flame on our Candle of Friendship.

To this flame, we bring its radiance.

Western Area director lights the friendship candle.

Area Director:

Link sisters, please light your friendship candle of leadership on behalf of your chapter members and others who partner with us in sharing our vision of serving those who need our aid.

Los Angeles Chapter delegate raises her lit penlight which is the signal for all delegates to immediately raise their right hands and turn on penlights.

Area Director:

Link sisters, as we behold this flame, let us through its symbolism, be reminded that although we all come to the flame with our own divergences, it is through the power of friendship that we are accepted into Linkdom and made whole.

Area Director:

Let us pray.

O God, draw us close to the flame of friendship and keep us there. Tenderly nudge us toward its glow so that softness, gentleness, and warmth reflect upon our faces and within our hearts. With hands warmed by friendship's flame, let us reach out and connect to these, our sisters. May each Link assembled around this flame gain strength for her present tasks and courage for her future responsibilities.

~Amen

Area Director:

I now declare that this _____ Western Area Conference of The Links, Incorporated has been duly opened.

Raps gavel.

Area Director extinguishes candle with snuffer.

Los Angeles Chapter Delegate (leads by example from her place in the front.) turns her penlight off which signals all delegates to lower their hands and turn their penlights off. She returns to her designated seat after which all delegates quietly take their seats.

A Ceremony of Friendship of The Links, Incorporated

Ceremonial Preparation

- Have printed programs.

Table Arrangement

- Place a table in the center of the room, dais or on the stage. This table should be covered with a white linen tablecloth and skirted in white.
- Place in the center of the table a vase of white roses, clustered with fern.
- On the right side of the vase of roses place a candelabra that will hold five (5) white fourteen - inch cathedral candles.
- Toward the front of the table, place an open white Bible to the right side of the candle and vase of roses. Lay a single white rose across the open pages.
- Toward the front of the table, place three large links to the left side of the candle and vase of roses. The links, symbolizing the threefold purpose of The Links, Incorporated, may be made of metal, silver or foil.
- Provide each member with a six-inch white candle and a candleholder. Penlights may be substituted for candles.
- Matches or lighter.
- Candle snuffer to extinguish candles at the close of the ceremony.
- Dim lights.
- A candle lighter will light each member's candle.
- Soft music should be played at the beginning of candle lighting portion of the ceremony. (*Suggestion: The Candlelight Song*).
- All Links except Leader and candle lighter remain seated until the last candle is lit.

CEREMONY OF FRIENDSHIP

Leader:

What is a Link, the cynic asks?
What marks her from the rest?
How would you know her in a crowd?
Is there someone, perfect test?
As a Link in friendship's chain,
Review the standards we have set
Do we live by friendship's creed
And give what we would get?

Leader:

The voiceless hands whose gentle touch speaks of faith and willingness to serve us in a moment's stress.

Group:

For these we search in friendship's quest.

Leader:

Or the silent gaze of kindly eyes that praise us when a job's well done.

Group:

By this we know the friendly one.

Leader:

Deaf ears turn from unproved blame, criticism and disdain.

Group:

This Link is might in friendship's chain.

Leader:

To warm the soul – a cordial smile like stolen radiance from the sun.

Group:

A sign this is – a friend we've won.

Leader:

The repressed tear that eases sorrow when life for us seems burdened down.

Group:

By this we feel a friend is found.

Leader:

And the leavening presence of one who cares and checks – least we ourselves condemn.

Group:

This is friendship's crowning gem.

Soft music should be played throughout candle lighting.

Candle Lighter (after lighting the first candle):

This candle burns in memory of Margaret Roselle Hawkins and Sarah Strickland Scott, co-founders of The Links, Incorporated.

Leader:

There's always something about candlelight that moves the heart and makes things right because within its soft warm glow Bitter thoughts can't live and grow.

The first Candle Lighter begins lighting the group's candles by igniting the one closest to her. That member passes the light along. Penlights may be used.

Candle Lighter (after lighting the second candle):

For Sarah Strickland Scott this flame is spent – co-founder and our first national president.

Leader:

Within its shadows one can't see
The critic's stare nor the cynic's glee.
And ugly pride is forced to cringe
Along the path of its golden fringe.

Candle Lighter (after lighting the third candle):

This Flame is to remind us we have a civic trust.

Leader:

Then hidden deep in its yellow flame
Are the scars of words that sting and blame,
While values false and pretenses shallow
Smolder and die in its melting tallow.

Candle Lighter (after lighting the fourth candle):

Such soft illumination is for cultural appreciation.

Leader:

Warmed in the blaze of candle gleam
Are frozen hearts with forgotten dreams,
And the hands of those who can't understand
That kindly mercy is part of the plan.

Candle Lighter (After lighting the last candle):

For our social phase, I set that tiny blaze.

Leader:

What gift of power has Candlelight
That reaches deep and makes things right—And glorifies upon their shelves,
The good we've stored within ourselves!

All Links stand with lights shining.

The entire group joins in singing the Candlelight Song.

Candlelight Song

Candlelight –candlelight,
In the soft hour of gloaming All the cares and all the blame
You have purged them in your flame.
With a prayer in our hearts
That has grown with this day,
We will walk in your glow And will find our lost way.
In thy spell-candlelight
As the day nears its end,
We remember we have come
In the name of Links and friend.
As the day dawns tomorrow,
May we pledge once again
To gather our blessings And share them with friends.

The music of the Candlelight Song continues.

THE ENTREATY

Leader:

God, who is the Guardian of the universe, the secret of Thy humble spirit, share with us today so that in this business of being friends, we, too, can employ Thy gentle way. Teach us to have and yet not bulge with the knowledge of our possession and to use it wisely for all as our first and greatest lesson. Make us think of wisdom as a rare and precious trust to guide us in our leadership of those who turn to us. And let us wear the prestige and position that we get as a symbol of the downy stuff so often spun in sweat — by those who could not feel its fluff with hands from toil grown rough.

Help us to understand that most women hold their dreams of finding each a better place somewhere in life's great scheme — and our job — if we're really fair — within our circle's band is to make a little room so that these can also have a share.

Then give us God, with boundaries wide — a gracious, tender soul. Plant it well with friendship's seed and tend it as it grows, so that we can simply tackle life and take it in our stride, and meet and solve each changing need because there's love inside.

~Amen.

Leader:

Sister Links, let us recite The Links, Incorporated pledge and sing the National Song of The Links, Incorporated

The Leader extinguishes candles.

Founders' Day Ceremony of The Links, Incorporated

Ceremonial Preparation:

- Copies of ceremony for each Link.

Table Arrangement:

- Place ceremonial table in front of the dais or on the stage. This table should be covered with a white linen tablecloth and skirted in white.
 - Place in the center of the table one 14 inch white candle, in candle holder.
 - A vase containing two white long-stemmed roses placed on either side of candle. (additional roses may be added to the vase after ceremony)
 - One long stemmed white rose for each Link present.
 - Place lighter/matches on table.
 - Place candlesnuffer on table to extinguish candles at close of ceremony.
 - Chapter officers who participate will stand behind the table.
 - Soft background music to be played during speaking. *Suggestion: Hold Close the Rose*
 - All Links dressed in uninterrupted white (optional).
-

FOUNDERS' DAY CEREMONY

Leader:

On November 9, 1946, Links Margaret Roselle Hawkins and Sarah Strickland Scott organized a new type of inter-city club. The two women envisioned an organization composed of friends who would work together serving their friends and community. This date has been designated as Founders Day. It is with humility, pride and love that we honor our founders at this time each year.

All Links:

The heavens are telling the glory of God. And the sky shows forth the work of His hands. Day pours forth speech, and night unto night declares knowledge. There is no speech, nor are there words; their voices are not heard; yet their voices go forth through all the earth and their words to the end of the world.

Leader:

O thou Eternal God in whose mystery we live, subdue our minds and soften our hearts as we bow together in the fellowship of prayer. Create in us that purity of heart that discerns Thy truth, your will, and that love which admits us into communion with you and harmony with each other. Help us to realize that beyond the near things that distract lie the eternal things that endure, and by that vision we may be renewed and uplifted. Grant us your revealing grace, that we may be crowned with strength to serve you and Thy cause of goodwill in the world.

~Amen

Brief Words About The Links, Incorporated

The Links, Incorporated is an organization of women with _____ chapters located throughout the United States, the Bahamas and the United Kingdom. It was founded by the late Sara Strickland Scott and the late Margaret Roselle Hawkins in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania on November 9, 1946. The organization has been incorporated since March 28, 1951.

Born in the immediate aftermath of World War II, and facing new concerns and mid-century imperatives in human rights, social and racial justice; the organization was, of necessity, compelled to respond to its national environment and to its high sense of purpose. For _____ years, The Links, Incorporated has gathered momentum, continuously redefining its purposes, sharpening its focus, and expanding program dimensions in order to make “Links” not only a chain of friendship, but also a chain of purpose.

LITANY OF SERVICE

Leader:

Almighty God, whose Son did devote His life to others, we, your children, give thanks to you for founders, who created for us a legacy of service.

Response:

Thanks be to you, O God.

Leader:

We give thanks for the vision of more productive and more fulfilling lives of others.

Response:

Thanks be to you, O God.

Leader:

We give thanks for the talents which empowered us so that we may serve.

Response:

Thanks be to you, O God.

Leader:

We pray for deepened insight into the needs of others.

Response:

With open minds and enduring strength, we serve.

Leader:

We pray for increased compassion for those who suffer.

Response:

With loving works and valiant deeds, we serve.

Leader:

We pray for humility of spirit that lets us share with others as equals.

Response:

With helping and willing hands, we serve.

All (in unison):

With charity and hope and unshakeable faith in you, O God, we pray for the concerns of the world, its people, and its leaders, and we pray for the strengthened dedication to the service of all.

LIGHTING OF THE CANDLE

Leader:

I light this candle representing Links. As its flame ascends, it expresses our gratitude for the Founders of our great organization, Sarah Strickland Scott and Margaret Roselle Hawkins, whose keen sense of the strategic effected the welding of Links into a chain of friendship of measureless scope strengthened and enriched through love, unselfish service and inter group experiences. Certainly their inspiration and faith must have come from Him above and has become our spirit and light.

Leader:

Almighty and most merciful Father, who has given us a new destiny, an unfinished task, a glorious challenge and the Commandment that we should love one another, give us also the grace and the strength to fulfill your purposes each to the good of the other in word and deed. Please bless all the peoples of the world, including this body assembled. May we accomplish those things we have set for our goals. For His sake who loved us and gave Himself for us, we pray.

Amen

The National Song of The Links, Incorporated

We strive to do some good each year
for those who need our aid;
It binds us close and brings us joy.
And so we feel repaid.

We're each a Link in friendship's chain,
And loyal to our creed
Of doing good through work and play;
Together we'll succeed.

Lyrics: Frances Atkinson
Music: Marietta Hall Cephas

THE PASSING OF THE FLOWERS

Roses used in this ceremony may be passed on to Links whom the chapter might wish to honor.

Rededication Ceremony of The Links, Incorporated

This rededication ceremony should include, but not be limited to presenting a brief history of the national organization, a summary of the past and present national projects and programs, and the history of the chapter with special emphasis on the chapter's implementation of the facets. This Rededication Ceremony is designed to remind Link members of their obligation to service and friendship. It is recommended that this ceremony be performed at the beginning of the program year or when inducting new members.

Ceremonial Preparation:

- Print Rededication Ceremony for each Link.
 - Provide copies of the printed ceremony to the President, Vice President, and committee chairs of Services to Youth, The Arts, National Trends and Services, International Trends and Services, and Health and Human Services.
-

REDEDICATION CEREMONY

Leader:

Welcome, my Link sisters, to this Rededication Ceremony. Sarah Strickland Scott and Margaret Roselle Hawkins founded this great organization on Nov. 9, 1946. From a small beginning, we have grown to a sisterhood of more than _____ women linked in a chain of friendship and service in _____ Chapters, established in the United States, the Bahamas and the United Kingdom.

The organization is committed to enriching, sustaining and ensuring the identities, cultures and economic survival of all people of African origin through cultural, education and civic programs. The chair of each program will describe their purpose. The five facets are: Services to Youth, National Trends and Services, The Arts, International Trends and Services and Health and Human Services.

Services to Youth Chair:

The Services to Youth program facet is involved in efforts to eliminate the problems of youth of African descent and their families, especially problems of drugs, crime and other social ills. Our goal is to provide opportunities through which self-esteem and a feeling of hope for the future can be nurtured and reinforced.

All:

Our youth will help to shape the progress of this country. We diligently work for this country's youth.

Leader:

As we rededicate ourselves to service to others, let us be reminded:

There is a destiny that makes the world our sister ... none goes her way alone,

All we send into the lives of others comes back into our own. The importance and true significance of the National Trends and Services program facet should be foremost in our minds.

National Trends and Services Chair:

The main goal of the National Trends and Services program facet is to keep Links knowledgeable of current national trends. We identify those issues and areas in our communities where our talents and skills can make a difference, and have an impact on the economic, political and social issues that affect the quality of life.

All:

We rededicate our services to improving the quality of life for citizens in our communities and ultimately throughout the country.

Leader:

Our Educational Linkages, Health and Wellness Linkages, and our Legislative Linkages all lend themselves to services to our communities. These expansions of service are all designed to improve the programmatic thrust and emphases for contributions to humanity throughout the country. In addition, the Endowment Linkages Committee will guide us in funding ongoing and new programs. It is time that we provide our own resources for the betterment and benefit of mankind.

The Arts chair will give us the purpose of The Arts program facet.

The Arts Chair:

The Arts program facet promotes the recognition of creative artists, especially those of African descent. The Links, Incorporated has a strong and rich record of support for the performing, visual and creative arts. We continue our dedication to this facet.

All:

We pledge our support and enthusiasm to The Arts.

Leader:

The International Trends and Services program facet shows our global concerns.

International Trends and Services Chair:

The major goal of the International Trends and Services program facet is to ensure that each Link and each community have greater awareness of international events, affairs and issues through personal involvement, commitment, enrichment and services.

All:

We dedicate ourselves to projects of international scope and trends.

It takes only one smile to offer welcome, and blessed be the Link who will share it.

It takes only one moment to be helpful, and blessed be the Link who will spare it.

It takes only one word to lend real comfort, and blessed be the Link who will speak it.

It takes only one truth to light the darkness, and blessed be the Link who will seek it.

It takes only one joy to lift a spirit, and blessed be the Link who will give it.

It takes only one life to make a difference, and blessed be the Link who will live it.

Leader:

The Health and Human Services program facet was established in response to the chronic health disparities that persist in black communities and result in decreased life expectancy. Let us hear more about our commitment to our community's health.

Health and Human Services Chair:

The goal of the Health and Human Services facet is to promote and facilitate programs that support the maintenance of good health through education, health advocacy, and optimal utilization of health resources.

All:

We pledge to take care of our own health as well as promote health education in our communities through our outstanding initiatives.

Program Chair:

Our goals, objectives and actions are interrelated among service, friendship, and resources. Each affects the other and each one will progress when emphasized.

Let us review our reasons for our membership in The Links, Incorporated; let us strengthen our dedication to serve others; let us rekindle our friendship and love for one another. Let us promise:

All:

To think only the best, to work only for the best, and to expect only the best.

To be just as enthusiastic about the success of others as we are about our own.

To forget the mistakes of the past and press on to the greater achievements of the future.

To give so much time to the improvement of ourselves that we have no time to criticize others.

To be too large for worry, too noble for anger, too strong for fear, and too happy to permit the presence of trouble.

Leader:

We remember our Pledge as we move forward with determination.

The Links Pledge

I do solemnly pledge myself to all the ideals, purposes and true meaning of the word friendship as embodied in the name Links.

I shall earnestly endeavor to uphold these standards and do my share toward serving my community and my chapter to the best of my ability. And this I promise.

~Sarah Strickland Scott

Installation of Officers and Committee Chairman of The Links, Incorporated

Ceremonial Preparation:

Provide a copy of the ceremony for the installing officer.

- The newly elected officers form a line in front of the room facing the audience.
- At the area level, the national president installs the elected officers.
- At the national level, the immediate past national president installs the elected officers.
- At the chapter level, the highest ranking officer or past president.

In ranking order at the national level:

1. National President
2. National Vice President
3. National Recording Secretary
4. National Treasurer
5. National Nominating Committee Chair

In ranking order at the area level:

1. Area Director
2. Vice Area Director
3. Area Recording Secretary
4. Area Treasurer

In ranking order at the chapter level:

1. Chapter President
2. Chapter Vice President
3. Chapter Recording Secretary
4. Chapter Treasurer
5. Chapter Financial Secretary (if applicable)

INSTALLATION OF OFFICERS CEREMONY

Installing Officer:

Members of The Links, Incorporated, you have elected these women as officers of this organization. You have demonstrated your confidence in their ability to perform the duties of their respective offices.

Do you, Link sisters, pledge your loyalty to them by promising to support them and to work with them for the best interests of the organization? If so, say "I do."

Members:

I do.

Installing Officer:

The officers and members of The Links, Incorporated are given a great responsibility to further the purposes of our organization:

Those responsibilities are to help women better understand and assume their civic, educational, and intercultural responsibilities, and to enrich the lives of our membership and the larger community by working to achieve common goals.

Installing Officer:

Turns facing the officers

Please link your arms.

To these elected officers: calls each name and office

You have been chosen for a place of leadership in The Links, Incorporated. It is the duty of each of you, to work together with other chapter officers, area officers, national officers and other sister Links throughout Linkdom for the good of our beloved organization.

As you stand linked with each other, you symbolize - that you are united to serve in the office to which you have been chosen.

Do you solemnly pledge to discharge the duties of your office to the best of your ability. If so, say "I do."

Officers:

I do.

Installing Officer:

Please repeat after me:

I do promise to perform faithfully
All duties of the office
To which I have been elected.

Installing Officer:

I, now declare that you are duly installed as officers of The Links, Incorporated. Linked in friendship and service, you now stand with other officers of our organization in carrying out the purposes and programs of The Links, Incorporated.

To audience

Sister Links, you may now congratulate these newly installed officers of The Links, Incorporated.

Ceremony for Induction of New Members of The Links, Incorporated

Properties Needed for Induction Ceremony:

- Ceremonial table
- White linen table cloth
- White skirting
- Vase
- Fresh white rose corsages for the pinning of candidates
- Floral pins
- Fresh long stemmed white roses for vase [see item 2, table arrangement]
- Fresh long stemmed white rose for Bible [see item 5, table arrangement]
- White Bible
- Fern
- One fourteen inch white candle: one ten-inch white candle
- A six-inch white candle for each candidate
- Candleholders
- Three (3) large links made of silver
- Music: piano or taped
- Candle snuffer
- Matches or lighter

Preparation for Ceremony:

- Candidate(s) are required to memorize The Links Pledge and the National Song of The Links, Incorporated before the Induction Ceremony.
- Candidates are to remain outside the room until they are ceremonially summoned into the room for induction
- Candidate(s) and all Links are to be dressed in uninterrupted white.
- The chapter president or her designee assigns the reading part of the Leader and Voices. If a ranking officer(s) in The Links, Incorporated is present at the ceremony, the role of Leader is automatically assigned to the Link of the highest rank.
- Soft music should be played during the entire Induction Ceremony. (*Suggestion: Candlelight Song*)
- Links assigned the reading parts of the Voices are seated randomly in the audience. At the point in the ceremony where a Voice speaks, the Link assigned to that particular speaking part stands, reads her voice part and sits. The voice participants are not to be positioned at the ceremonial table.

Induction Ceremony Programs are distributed prior to the ceremony

Table Arrangement:

Note: All references made in regards to right side and left side are to be interpreted as audience right and audience left.

1. Center the ceremonial table at the front of the room, in front of the dais, or on the stage. This table should be covered with a white linen tablecloth and skirted in white linen.

2. Place a vase of white roses, clustered with fern, in the center of the table. The number of white roses should correspond with the number of candidates; however, if there are only one or two candidates, more roses may be placed in the vase.
3. Place a 14 inch candle (taper) in a candleholder on the right side of the vase of roses.
4. Place a 10 inch white candle in a candleholder directly in front of the cathedral candle.
5. Toward the front of the table, place an open white Bible to the right side of the candle and vase of roses. Lay a single white rose across the open pages.
6. Toward the front of the table, to the left side of the candle and vase of roses, place three (3) large links, symbolizing the threefold purpose of The Links, Incorporated. The links may be made of metal, silver, gold.
7. Place on the table a six (6) inch white candle and candle holder for each candidate.
8. Candle Snuffer
9. Matches/lighter

INTO ESTABLISHED CHAPTERS

Meditation Leader:

Link sisters, we are about to embark upon one of the most serious occasions in Linkdom, the expansion of our chain of friendship. Not only is this a joyous time for welcoming this/these new members into our beloved organization, The Links, Incorporated, but it is also a time that we, the membership, can enter into a re-discovery of ourselves. This rediscovery should reveal to us why we too connected and committed ourselves to the golden chain of friendship. It is also at this time that we experience a union of our finest feelings, a binding of hearts, and a renewed commitment to our organization and to our community. Above all, however, we get the opportunity to rediscover a purposeful relationship with each other, for there is nothing stronger than friendship. It is a magnet that draws kindred souls with irresistible force and electrifies them with the magnetism of its own resolve.

*The Leader lights the ten-inch candle and calls the Membership chair to the ceremonial table.
The Leader hands the membership chair the lighted candle.*

Leader (Addressing membership chair):

Please seat those whose desire it is to be bonded with us in friendship and in service.

The membership chair, holding the lighted candle, exits the room to bring in the candidate(s). They are properly seated adjacent to the ceremonial table and facing the audience. She places her candle on the ceremonial table and returns to her seat/position.

Leader:

As candidates for membership, you have consented to connect to our chain of friendship. It is a chain that stretches beyond the confines of this room to reach sister Links nationally and internationally. Yes, our chain is global, thus making The Links, Incorporated solicitous for the welfare of others as well as our own. We believe, therefore, that it would be highly improper of us to induct you into this organization without reminding you of the duties, responsibilities, conduct, and expectations of being a Link.

We believe that a real friend
Helps us to think our noblest thoughts,
Assists us to put forth our best efforts,
And encourages us to be our best selves.

Leader:

Hear now the Voices of Friendship as they counsel you into becoming a Link.

Voice 1:

A Link has a warm, friendly feeling toward all other Links. She spreads sunshine!

Voice 2:

She sees the aura of gracefulness and loveliness that adorns Link sisters.

Voice 3:

She feels and assumes a personal responsibility for all programs and activities sponsored on the local, area and national levels.

Voice 4:

A Link readily and graciously recognizes the achievements of other Links.

Leader:

It is within our chapters that our strongest and more personal relationships are formed. These personal relationships bind us and hold us together as a chapter of distinguished women. You must always remember that the strength of our chain is determined by the strength of our connection—one with the other one. Voices of Friendship, continue now to counsel our candidates.

Voice 5:

She encourages her Link sisters in their pursuit of worthwhile endeavors.

Voice 6:

She puts forth every effort to attend all meetings promptly.

Voice 7:

She always conducts herself with dignity and poise.

Voice 8:

A Link lives up to the solemn oath that she makes to The Links, Incorporated as set forth in the Pledge.

Leader:

Candidates, having heard the Voices of Friendship, we ask that you heed these voices and promise yourself here and now that you will become the strong Link. We ask also that you remember:

The value of time, The success of perseverance, The dignity of simplicity, The power of kindness, The influence of example, The virtue of patience, The obligation of duty, The improvement of talent And the joy of originating.

~The Bulletin

Leader:

Let us pray:

God, bless these candidates. Special are they who have come to us. Open their eyes to the beauty all about them. Open their minds to truth everywhere. Open their hands to service abundantly. Open their hearts to friendship, which is to your enfolding love.

—Amen

Leader:

We now proceed with the induction of these/this candidate(s).

Chapter president, using the snuffer, extinguishes the flame from candle used by membership chair and lights the second candle.

Chapter President:

I light this candle symbolic of the true spirit of Links: Friendship, Service, Commitment, and Dedication. As its flame ascends, it expresses our gratitude, appreciation and reverence for the founders of our great organization, Sarah Strickland Scott and Margaret Roselle Hawkins whose keen sense of the strategic effected the welding of The Links, Incorporated into a chain of friendship of measureless scope. In addition, our founders projected an idea of giving self in limitless service so that our relationships with others might be nurtured, strengthened and enriched.

And let there be no purpose in friendship save the
Deepening of the spirit ... And let your best be for your friend. If she must know the ebb of
your tide, Let her know your flood, also. For what is your friend that you should Seek her
always with hours to live? For it is hers to fill your need, but not your emptiness.

And in the sweetness of friendship,
Let there be laughter and sharing of pleasures.

For in the dew of little things
The heart finds its morning and is refreshed.”

— Kahlil Gibran

Chapter President:

It is when you give of yourself that you truly give. One of the vital motivating forces for The Links, Incorporated is unselfish service. Do you still entertain the desire to accept the principles, objectives and responsibilities that membership in the _____ Chapter of The Links, Incorporated requires?

Candidate[s]:

I do

Membership Chair:

Having met the requirements established by The Links, Incorporated and having fulfilled all qualifications of our chapter for induction into The Links, Incorporated, I present you to our president, Link _____ for induction.

Each candidate, in turn, approaches the table, takes the unlighted candle in her left hand and has a rose pinned above her heart by the Leader. The candidate, touching the rose with her right hand, repeats after the Leader:

Candidate:

I reverently touch this white rose symbol of unity and friendship.

The candidate then lights her candle from the candle on the table, places her right hand on the Bible and repeats after the Leader:

Candidate:

“As a Link, I will abide by all the rules and regulations as defined in the organization’s Constitution, Bylaws and Manual of Procedures. I will respect the peaceable nature inherent in friendship. I will always conduct myself with dignity; thereby, bringing honor and pride to this organization.”

Hand remains on the Bible. Each candidate recites The Links Pledge individually.

The Links Pledge

I do solemnly pledge myself to all the ideals, purposes and true meaning of the word friendship as embodied in the name Links.

I shall earnestly endeavor to uphold these standards and to do my share toward serving my community and my chapter to the best of my ability. And this I promise.

~Sarah Strickland Scott

Each candidate returns to her place after reciting the pledge. After all have been inducted and said the pledge, the chapter president gives a charge:

Chapter President:

I now officially declare you (a) member(s) of the _____ Chapter of The Links, Incorporated and The Links Foundation, Incorporated.

To you, we extend our hands in friendship; clasp them and let us travel together the path of Linkdom in love and in joy.

We ask of you your best, and that your best be used in unselfish service to your chapter and your community.

Our chapter is happy and proud to accept you into its sisterhood. We welcome you into an organization of women organized on November 9, 1946, in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania to promote civic, intercultural and social enrichment for humanity.

Our record of service is filled with outstanding accomplishments: special services to youth, educational and cultural development, civic and civil rights enterprises and movements.

Our chapter points with pride during the _____ years of its existence.

(Add highlights of chapter’s history if desired.)

The president, using the snuffer, extinguishes all new members’ candles, then large candles.

Chapter President:

May the Lord grant us strength and courage to carry out our commitments made this day.

May He bless and keep thee, and give thee peace.

~Amen.

Chapter president asks all Links to stand and sing the National Song of The Links, Incorporated.

The National Song of The Links, Incorporated

We strive to do some good each year
For those who need our aid;
It binds us close and brings us joy.
And so we feel repaid.

We're each a Link in friendship's chain,
And loyal to our creed
Of doing good through work and play;
Together we'll succeed.

Lyrics: Frances Atkinson

Music: Marietta Hall Cephas

INTO NEWLY CHARTERED CHAPTERS

Properties Needed for Induction Ceremony:

- Ceremonial Table
- White Linen Tablecloth
- White Skirting (See Item #1, Table Arrangement.)
- Vase
- Fresh, white rose (
- 6 inch stem) for the pinning of each candidates
- Floral pins
- Fresh, long-stemmed white roses for vase. (See Item #2, Table Arrangement.)
- Fresh, long-stemmed white rose for Bible (See Item # 5, Table Arrangement.)
- White Bible
- Fern
- White Candles:
 - One fourteen- inch
 - One ten- inch
- Six-inch candles for each candidate
- Candleholders
- Three (3) large links made of silver
- Music: piano or taped
- Candle Snuffer
- Matches/Lighter

Preparation for Ceremony:

- National President will be the chartering officer.
- Participants: National chapter establishment officer, area director
- Candidate(s) are required to memorize The Links Pledge and the National Song of The Links, Incorporated before the Induction Ceremony.
- Candidate(s) and all Links are to be dressed in uninterrupted white.
- The National President or her designee assigns the reading parts of the Voices.
- Soft music should be played during the entire Induction Ceremony. Selection: The Candlelight Song
- Links who are assigned the reading parts of the Voices are seated randomly in the audience. At the point in the ceremony where a Voice speaks, the Link assigned to that particular speaking part stands, reads her voice part and sits. The voice participants are not to be positioned at the ceremonial table.
- Induction Ceremony programs are distributed prior the ceremony.
- Candidate(s) are to remain outside the room until they are ceremonially summoned into the room for induction.

Table Arrangement:

Note: All references made in regards to right side and left side are to be interpreted as audience right and audience left.

1. Center the ceremonial table at the front of the room, in front of the dais, or on the stage. This table should be covered with a white linen tablecloth and skirted in white linen.

2. Place a vase of white roses, clustered with fern, in the center of the table. The number of white roses should correspond with the number of candidates.
3. Place a 14 inch candle (taper) in a candle-holder on the right side of the vase of roses.
4. Place a 10 inch white candle in a candleholder directly in front of the cathedral candle.
5. Toward the front of the table, place an open white Bible to the right side of the candle and vase of roses. Lay a single white rose across the open pages.
6. Toward the front of the table, to the left side of the candle and vase of roses, place three (3) large links, symbolizing the threefold purpose of The Links, Incorporated. The links may be made of metal, silver, gold, or foil.
7. Place on the table a six (6) inch white candle and candle holder for each candidate.
8. Candle Snuffer
9. Matches or lighter

INDUCTION OF NEW MEMBERS INTO NEWLY CHARTERED CHAPTERS CEREMONY

National Chapter Establishment Chair:

Let us pray:

God, let each of us be givers to mankind, but givers in love and not for our own personal gain or recognition. Let us give so that not just our own, but others' lives may be richer. Let us be willing to give out whatever we may hold that is bountiful, but greater than fleeting treasures, dear Father, let us give our faith to those who have lost their confidence; let us give hope to those who are feeling despair, and let us give happiness to those who are experiencing sadness. Let us feel the lives of children with dreams and let us be willing to touch lives in such a way that they leave us knowing that all things are possible. For as one of your talented poets has said so eloquently:

“It is when you give of yourself that you truly give. There are those who give with joy ... and that joy is their reward. And there are those who give with pain and that pain is their baptism. And there are those who give and know not pain in giving, nor do they seek joy, nor give with mindfulness of virtue.”

Dear God, help all of us Links, and especially these women who are presenting themselves for induction. Demonstrate your love in all we do.

~Amen

National President:

Link Sisters, we are about to embark upon one of the most serious occasions in Linkdom, the expansion of our chain of friendship. Not only is this a joyous time for welcoming these new members into our beloved organization, The Links, Incorporated, but it is also a time that we, the membership, can enter into a rediscovery of ourselves. This rediscovery should reveal to us why we too connected and committed ourselves to the golden chain of friendship. It is also at this time that we experience a union of our finest feelings, a binding of hearts, and a renewed commitment to our organization and to our community. Above all, however, we get the opportunity to rediscover a purposeful relationship with each other, for there is nothing stronger than friendship. It is a magnet that draws kindred souls with irresistible force and electrifies them with the magnetism of its own resolve.

National President lights the ten-inch candle, and calls Chapter Establishment Officer to the ceremonial table. President hands Chapter Establishment Chair the lighted candle. Chapter Establishment Chair hands the lighted candle to the Area Director.

National President (addressing Area Director):

Please seat those whose desire it is to be bonded with us in friendship and in service.

Area Director, holding the lighted candle, exits the room to bring in candidate(s). After leading the candidate(s) into the room and seeing that the candidate(s) are properly seated, she places her candle on the ceremonial table and returns to her seat/position.

National Chapter Establishment Chair:

Madame President, having met the requirements for chapter chartering into The Links, Incorporated, the _____ Group comes for chartering as the _____ Chapter of The Links, Incorporated. I, therefore, present to you, this group. Ladies, please stand.

National President:

As a chapter, you have consented to connect to our chain of friendship. It is a chain that stretches beyond the confines of this room to reach sister Links nationally and internationally. Yes, our chain is global, thus making The Links, Incorporated solicitous for the welfare of others as well as our own. This is a trust we honor and a responsibility we accept. As a chapter in The Links, Incorporated, will you honor this trust? If so, please say, "We do."

Group:

We do.

National President:

As a chapter in The Links, Incorporated, will you accept the responsibility of friendship and service? If so, please say, "We will."

Group:

We will.

National President:

I declare that the _____ Interest Group is now the _____ Chapter of The Links, Incorporated. Serve with honor!

National Chapter Establishment Chair:

Madame President, I now present the members of the _____ Chapter of The Links, Incorporated for induction.

National President:

It is at this time that we experience a union of our finest feelings, a binding of hearts, and a commitment to our organization and to our community. Above all, however, we get the opportunity to discover—and for some of us, re-discover—a purposeful relationship with each other, for there is nothing stronger than friendship.

As candidates for membership you have consented to impact the quality of life for human kind through community service. You have committed to contribute to a positive, productive, and culturally diverse society. You have committed to exhibit the highest moral and ethical standards as you uphold the positive image of The Links, Incorporated. We believe, therefore, that it would be highly improper of us to induct you without reminding you of the duties, responsibilities, conduct, and expectations of being a Link.

We believe that a real friend
Helps us to think our noblest thoughts,
Assists us to put forth our best efforts,
And encourages us to be our best selves.

Hear now the Voices of Friendship as they counsel you into becoming a Link.

Voice 1:

A Link has a warm, friendly feeling towards all other Links. She spreads sunshine!

Voice 2:

She sees the aura of gracefulness and loveliness that adorns Link Sisters.

Voice 3

She feels and assumes a personal responsibility for all programs and activities sponsored on the local, area and national levels.

Voice 4:

A Link readily and graciously recognizes the achievements of other Links.

National President:

It is within our chapters that our strongest and more personal relationships are formed. These personal relationships bind us and hold us together as a chapter of distinguished women. You must always remember that the strength of our chain is determined by the strength of our connection—one with the other one. Voices of Friendship, continue now to counsel our candidates.

Voice 5:

She encourages her Link sisters in their pursuit of worthwhile endeavors.

Voice 6:

She puts forth every effort to attend all meetings promptly.

Voice 7:

She always conducts herself with dignity and poise.

Voice 8:

A Link lives up to the solemn oath that she makes to The Links, Incorporated as set forth in the Pledge.

National President:

Candidates, having heard the Voices of Friendship, we ask that you heed these voices and promise yourself here and now that you will become the strong Link.

Area Director:

We ask also that you remember:

The value of time, The success of perseverance, The dignity of simplicity, The power of kindness, The influence of example, The virtue of patience, The obligation of duty, The improvement of talent And the joy of originating.

National Vice President:

Let us pray:

God, bless these candidates.
Special are they who have come to us.
Open their eyes to the beauty all about them.
Open their minds to truth everywhere.
Open their hands to service abundantly.
Open their hearts to friendship,
Which is to your enfolding love.

~Amen

National President:

We now proceed with the induction of these candidate(s).

National President, using the snuffer, extinguishes the flame from candle used by the Chapter Establishment Chair and lights the second candle.

National President:

I light this candle symbolic of the true spirit of Links: Friendship, Service, Commitment, and Dedication. As its flame ascends, it expresses our gratitude, appreciation and reverence for the founders of our great organization, Sarah Strickland Scott and Margaret Roselle Hawkins whose keen sense of the strategic effected the welding of The Links into a chain of friendship of measureless scope. In addition, our founders projected an idea of giving self in limitless service so that our relationships with others might be nurtured, strengthened and enriched.

Chapter Establishment Chair:

And let there be no purpose in friendship save the
Deepening of the spirit....

And let your best be for your friend.

If she must know the ebb of your tide,
Let her know your flood, also.

For what is your friend that you should
Seek her always with hours to live?

For it is hers to fill your need, but not your emptiness.

And in the sweetness of friendship, Let there be laughter and sharing of pleasures.

For in the dew of little things
The heart finds its morning and is refreshed.”

~Kahlil Gibran

National President:

It is when you give of yourself that you truly give. One of the vital motivating forces for The Links, Incorporated is unselfish service. Do you still entertain the desire to accept the principles, objectives and responsibilities that membership in the _____ Chapter of The Links, Incorporated requires? If so, please say, “I do.”

Candidates:

I do

Chapter candidates, please come to the table as your name is called.

Each candidate, in turn, approaches the table, takes the unlighted candle in her left hand and has a rose pinned above her heart by their specially selected Link. The candidate, touching the rose with her right hand, repeats after the National President.

Candidate (touching pinned rose):

I reverently touch this white rose symbol of unity and friendship.

The candidate then lights her candle from the candle on the table, places her right hand on the Bible and repeats after National President:

Candidate:

As a Link, I will abide by all the rules and regulations as defined in the organization’s Constitution, Bylaws and Manual of Procedures. I will respect the peaceable nature inherent in friendship. I will always conduct myself with dignity; thereby, bringing honor and pride to this organization.

Hand remains on the Bible. Each candidate recites The Links Pledge individually.

The Links Pledge

I do solemnly pledge myself to all the ideals, purposes and true meaning of the word friendship as embodied in the name Links.

I shall earnestly endeavor to uphold these standards and to do my share toward serving my community and my chapter to the best of my ability. And this I promise.

~Sarah Strickland Scott

Each candidate returns to her place after reciting the pledge. After all have been inducted and said the pledge, the national president gives the charge:

National President:

I now officially declare you members of the ____ Chapter of The Links, Incorporated and The Links Foundation, Incorporated.

To you, we extend our hands in friendship; clasp them and let us travel together the path of Linkdom in love and in joy.

We ask of you your best, and that your best be used in unselfish service to your chapter and your community.

The Links, Incorporated is happy and proud to accept you into its sisterhood. We welcome you into an organization of women organized on November 9, 1946, in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania to promote civic, intercultural and social enrichment for humanity.

Our record of service is filled with outstanding accomplishments: special services to youth, educational and cultural development, civic and civil rights enterprises and movements.

Our organization points to years of proud service and friendship.

Area director and chapter establishment officer, using the snuffer, extinguish all members' candles, then large candle.

National President:

May the Lord grant us strength and courage to carry out our commitments made this day. May He bless and keep thee, and give thee peace.

~Amen.

The National Song of The Links, Incorporated

We strive to do some good each year
For those who need our aid;
It binds us close and brings us joy.
And so we feel repaid.

We're each a Link in friendship's chain,
And loyal to our creed
Of doing good through work and play;
Together we'll succeed.

Lyrics: Frances Atkinson

Music: Marietta Hall Cephas

Ceremony to Honor a Member/Members Requesting Alumna Status of The Links, Incorporated

Ceremonial Preparation

- Provide printed programs with biographical information on each Alumna.
- Soft music may be played during the ceremony.
- Provide candles/penlights for all chapter members

Table Arrangements

- Place the ceremonial table in the center of the room. This table should be covered with a white linen tablecloth and skirted in white.
- Place a vase of fresh white roses, clustered with fern in the center of the table. There should be one rose for each member requesting alumna status.
- Place a candle holder with one (1) 14 inch white candle to the right of the vase.
- Toward the front of the table, place three large links, symbolizing the threefold purpose of The Links, Incorporated.
- Matches or lighter
- Candle snuffer

Links conducting the ceremony stand in a semi-circle around the table. All other Links, including the honoree(s), remain seated during the ceremony.

CEREMONY

The ceremony calls for the two (2) reading parts of the Leader and the President.

The Leader is the highest-ranking area or national officer present. If an area or national officer is not present, then the Chapter's Vice-President (membership chair) or a Link designated by the Chapter President may serve as the Leader.

Leader:

A candle was lit when you chose to enter this chain of friendship. Today I light this candle to honor your devotion to the _____ Chapter.

You have served your community and chapter with sincere commitment, dedication, and in the true spirit of friendship for ___ years.

All:

We light our candles to honor Link(s) _____. (Calls name(s) of member(s))

The candle lighter will start lighting the member(s) candles. Light is passed from one member to the other until all candles are lit.

Leader:

We need a friend to listen to our fears and failure, to the big events in our lives, to our complaints. We need a friend to share our joy.

All:

Thank you for listening ears.

Leader:

We need a friend who can see in our struggling moments the solution to many of our problems. One who can see behind our façade. One who has a vision for our Chapter.

All:

Thank you for discerning eyes.

Leader:

We need a friend who will speak out when we are off track, and call us back to the problems at hand.

All:

Thank you for your voice of wisdom and understanding.

Leader:

We need a friend who loves and will be willing to share ideas, time and resources: one who really loves our chain of friendship.

All:

Thank you for the love you shared.

Leader:

(If a charter member)

You, Link(s) _____ are a Charter member(s) of the _____ Chapter.

Leader:

We owe you a special debt of gratitude for the sacrifices you made; the time, resources, tears and services that you have shared with this Chapter over the past ___ years.

All:

Thank you for keeping this chapter active, committed, and focused for us to enjoy. Your Link friends respect and love you and recognize your service to your community

President:

Link(s) _____ you have served this chapter in many capacities. You have: _____.

List achievements.

Our records verify that you have met the requirements for achieving Alumna Status. All that remains now is that you declare before this chapter that you still desire Alumna Status. Is this your desire?

Link(s) Desiring Alumna Status:

Yes, this is my desire.

President:

Having satisfied all requirements, I now officially declare you an Alumna Member of The Links, Incorporated, with all privileges granted by our Constitution and Bylaws.

I extinguish this flame in love and friendship.

President extinguishes candle and all members extinguish their flames.

President:

In friendship, we offer you our tributes.

At this time, Links will present roses and/or chapter gift(s) to Alumna Member(s).

Leader:

Let us now sing the National Song of The Links, Incorporated.

The National Song of The Links, Incorporated

We strive to do some good each year
For those who need our aid;
It binds us close and brings us joy.
And so we feel repaid.

We're each a Link in friendship's chain,
And loyal to our creed
Of doing good through work and play;
Together we'll succeed.

Lyrics: Frances Atkinson

Music: Marietta Hall Cephas

Chapter Anniversary Ceremony of The Links, Incorporated

Ceremonial Preparation:

- Copies of ceremony for each Link
- Ceremony participants to stand behind table (chapter president, chapter vice president (membership), archivist)
- Chapter president to appoint one chapter member to announce all names of deceased charter members; another chapter member to announce all names of living charter members and a third chapter member to present a rose to each living member present at ceremony (rose to be pulled from roses in vase)
- Charter members present will stand in front of table. Membership gathers in semi-circle around table behind charter members.

Properties Needed for Ceremony:

- Ceremonial Table
- White linen table cloth
- White skirting
- Vase
- Fresh, dethorned long stemmed roses for vase. One for each charter member (living and deceased). Charter members present will be presented a rose from vase during the ceremony
- Fresh dethorned long stemmed white rose for Bible
- White Bible
- Three pronged candelabra or three individual candleholders
- Three (3) 14-inch white cathedral candles
- Three (3) large links made of silver or metal
- Audio for music
- Candle snuffer
- Matches or lighter

Table Arrangement:

Note: All references made in regards to right side and left side are to be interpreted as audience right and audience left.

1. Center the ceremonial table at the front of the room. This table should be covered with a white linen tablecloth and skirted in white linen.
2. Place a vase clustered with roses and fern, in the center of the table.
3. Place candelabra or three candle holders to the right side of the vase.
4. Toward the front of the table, place an open white Bible to the right side of the candles and vase. Lay a single white rose across the open pages.
5. Toward the front of the table, to the left side of the candle and vase, place three (3) large links, symbolizing the threefold purpose of The Links, Incorporated. The links may be made of metal or silver.
6. Place candle snuffer and matches/lighter near the candles.

Opening Music:

Soft background music

CHAPTER ANNIVERSARY CEREMONY

Chapter President:

Link Sisters;

Let us stand together as friends, as we honor the chapter anniversary of the _____ Chapter of The Links, Incorporated.

We stand today in recognition to the first _____ members that established the charter for _____ of The Links, Incorporated. We stand today to pay tribute and respect to an extraordinary group of African-American women who came together through friendship. They stood as we stand today, United in their efforts, joining a distinctive women's organization that was established on November 9, 1946, as the Philadelphia Club and later chartered as The Links, Incorporated in 1951.

The legacy of the _____ Chapter of The Links, Incorporated, began with _____ phenomenal women from this community who assumed their role as exemplary role models that delivered sustainable service programs. Their goal was to strengthen the African-American community, overcoming obstacles and breaking down barriers.

Chapter Vice-President:

We stand today as members of the _____ Chapter of The Links, Incorporated. We took a pledge as we each joined this chapter to bond with an elite group of women of the African diaspora.

We stand on the shoulders of our charter members, who were led by the chapter's charter president, Link _____, who with commitment and vision, brought together women of purpose, fortitude and grace.

We now remember and give thanks to our chapter's charter members who began the journey of Linkdom based on friendship and service to our community. The _____ white roses that bring radiance to this place represent each charter Link sister we pay tribute to this anniversary day of the _____ Chapter of The Links, Incorporated.

Chapter President will state the name of the Charter President

A selected member will state the names of all deceased charter members. The phrase: "thankful to the spirit" is solely for deceased charter members.

A selected chapter member will state the names of all other living charter members

A selected chapter member will present living charter member(s) who are present with a single rose from vase during the ceremony when their name is called.

Chapter President:

We stand thankful for the Chapter's Charter President, Link _____ (If she is deceased, state "thankful to the spirit of").

Chapter Member # 1

We stand thankful to the spirit of Links: _____

This Link sister will state the names of all deceased charter members

Chapter Member # 2

We are thankful for Links: _____

This Link sister will state the names of all living charter members

Full Active Membership:

We stand thankful to our charter members for their enduring friendship and service to the _____ of The Links, Incorporated.

Chapter Vice-President:

We remain inspired by all the Links sisters who were dedicated to the national and ___ area programs and initiatives. We remain committed to carry on the torch from the past into the future to achieve success with The Links, Incorporated's facet programs:

- Services to Youth
- The Arts
- National Trends and Services
- Health and Human Services
- International Trends and Services

The legacy established over the last ___ years continues to grow stronger through a sisterly friendship and our promise to serve others in our community. Friendship will continue to breathe life in the _____ Chapter of The Links, Incorporated for years to come.

Chapter President:

My Link sisters of the _____ Chapter of The Links, Incorporated, let the spirit of our charter members instill in all of us a lasting friendship and pride in how our Chapter will continue to serve our community with excellence, humility, commitment, talent and grace. Let us walk into our future together guided by prayer.

Chapter Vice President:

The _____ Chapter of The Links, Incorporated, stands as a pillar of strength in this community. This chapter will build upon its legacy as we contribute to the goals and objectives of The Links, Incorporated. Let us link our hands together and re-commit ourselves by saying the Links pledge.

Full Membership:

All members recite the Links Pledge in unison

The Links Pledge

I do solemnly pledge myself to all the ideals, purposes and true meaning of the word friendship as embodied in the name Links.

I shall earnestly endeavor to uphold these standards and to do my share toward serving my community and my chapter to the best of my ability. And this I promise.

~Sarah Strickland Scott

Chapter President:

Link sisters, as we celebrate the ___ anniversary of our Chapter, let us walk together holding each other up and keeping our faith grounded in love and friendship.

Chapter Archivist:

Our Chapter's mission for service supported by a foundation of friendship will guide us towards a dynamic future as an essential link to the mission of The Links, Incorporated. We will show witness to our Chapter's continuing legacy through archival historical records, preserved for our chapter's membership and evidence to the community. Memberships' reflection on the chapter's archives and history will help promote and sustain the vibrancy of this chapter for posterity.

Chapter Vice-President:

Gracious God,
Let your will for us all be known and our resolve. Let us all be partners in shaping the future of the communities for which we serve with a faith that contends with the present for the sake of what yet might be.

Chapter President

Extinguishes candles

Full Membership

In Unison, after all candles are extinguished:

~Amen

Induction Ceremony of Honorary Members Into The Links, Incorporated

Ceremonial Preparation

- Soft music should be played during the entire Induction Ceremony.
Suggestion: Hold Close the Rose
- Printed program with biographical information on the candidate(s) should be distributed.
- Participants are national president, national vice president, area director, and immediate past national president.

Table Arrangements

- Place a table in front of the dais or on the stage. This table is to have a white linen tablecloth and be skirted in white.
- Place in the center of the table, a vase of white roses clustered with ferns.
- Place two 18-inch white cathedral candles in holders, one placed on either side of the vase of roses.
- A white Bible and three large silver links are to be placed in front of the vase of roses.
- Place a long stemmed white rose across open pages of the Bible.
- Awards, certificates and/or gifts for inductee(s) should be placed on a table.

Directions

The national president, the national vice president, the immediate past national president, and the area director from the area in which the inductee(s) reside should enter on the left side of the platform. The inductee(s) should follow.

As the line enters, all Links will rise, face the dais, and remain standing until signaled to be seated.

The officers should stand behind the table. The inductee(s) will stand at the right of the officers when the ceremony begins. As her name is called, the inductee (s) will move forward facing the national president.

When the formal ceremony has been completed, the national president or her area director designee will take the inductee(s) into an anteroom and complete the information given all members of The Links, Incorporated relative to participation.

The following information is given to the inductee after the ceremony:

You will remain an Honorary Member as long as you do not become a member of a chapter. You may attend Area Conferences and National Assemblies having all privileges of membership except voting rights, chairing committees, and holding office.

INDUCTION CEREMONY OF HONORARY MEMBERS

National President:

We welcome you into a fellowship of women founded by the late Sarah Strickland Scott and the late Margaret Roselle Hawkins in 1946 in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. Our record as a national organization from 1949 is filled with outstanding accomplishments.

Today we claim more than ___ chapters in the United States, and the Commonwealth of the Bahamas.

We are committed both individually and collectively to educational, civic and intercultural activities in Services to Youth, The Arts, National Trends and Services, International Trends and Services, and Health and Human Services. Through these program facets we are involved in efforts to eliminate the problems of African-American youth and their families, to provide cultural enrichment in communities across this nation, to address issues and concerns that impact on the quality of life, and to render assistance to global friends, especially those in African and Caribbean countries. Our quest locally, nationally, and internationally is to determine needs and to design and produce programs which address those needs effectively.

The Links Foundation, Incorporated is the philanthropic entity created by The Links, Incorporated. It is designated as a 501(c)(3) by the IRS, thereby enabling donor tax exemptions for their gifts.

For more than ___ years, we have gathered momentum, sharpened our focus and expanded our program dimension in order to make the name Links symbolic of a chain of friendship and a chain of purpose.

We, of The Links, Incorporated are [extemporaneous comments, if desired]

We salute our Honorary Members; the late Mattiwilda Dobbs, the late Constance Baker Motley, Leontyne Price, the late Marian Anderson, the late Patricia Roberts Harris, the late Elizabeth Duncan Koonts, the late Rosa Parks, Ellen Johnson Sirleaf, Condoleezza Rice and Kamala Harris for their distinctive accomplishments and extraordinary contributions to their cities, the nation and the world. They have influenced the quality of life in their communities and they have made a positive difference globally. On this occasion, we pay tribute to them and the historically unparalleled accomplishments of African-American women. To this list of distinguished women, today we proudly add the name of _____.

National President:

Let us pray..

Father of all, God, we gather to acknowledge the worth of a great and famous woman who mirrors a life of beauty, rich in art, service and sisterhood. Grant the realization that Thou hast been glorified by the sharing of her talents and ability. May we, as she, be generous and kind in spirit, happy in doing what we can where we can. May we, as she, be willing to give our time and possessions as we strive to fulfill our goals by improving the quality of life for all mankind.

~Amen

National Vice President:

And, as she, let us know that;
“Every soul that touches you –
Be it the slightest contact –
Gets there from some good;
Some little grace; one kindly thought;
One aspiration yet unfelt;
One bit of courage for the darkening sky;
One gleam of faith to brave the thickening ills of life;
One glimpse of bright skies beyond the gathering midst –
To make this life worthwhile and heaven a surer heritage.”

— George Elliot

National President:

Our Father, let us, as she, grow in life as we project the image of Links around the world.

~Amen

Area Director:

Madame President, this inductee we honor in our generation and in the glory of our times.

As the President calls her name, the inductee steps forward, accompanied by her Area Director, and stands facing the National President. The President will add why she is inducted by presenting specific facts to substantiate her achievements.

National President:

[Name of Inductee], for your contributions toward improving the lives of others, you have been selected as an honorary [president selects the appropriate category] of The Links, Incorporated.

Examples

1. Education:

[Name of Inductee], for qualities of heart and intellect, we laud you, educator, as would a gardener who planted intellectual seeds and tended them. You watched them grow and blossom. Some died in the cold onslaught of mental discipline; some were saved by their nature and constant repetition; others rose and grew under your nurturing. For those who dropped, you felt pain and sorrow. But some who appeared dead came alive with the small sign that you cared; and these you helped by pruning the old standards in order that the new could survive. You brought special “food” and invested time, patience, understanding, and love. You knew that these green and beautiful minds did not belong to you, for no one can own life, yet all should aid it. You, [name of Inductee], have shown that you are a guardian of life.

In the palms of your hands,
Where lies the fragrance of the valleys,
Strangers find ease for their yearnings.

~Kahlil Gibran

2. Cultural:

[*Name of Inductee*], your artistry brings unto the haven of dreams of the weak as they united the hopes of the strong and convey their hearts into a gentler realm. Your [talent, pictures, style], consoles the desolate, shelters poets, informs the masses, and ignites the philosophers. Your performance warms the individual heart and permeates the universe.

It knows no bounds; it reflects the spirit of The Links, Incorporated. We praise you for your sincerity, humility, dignity and grace.

Great age, here we are.
Take measure of the heart of man.

— St. John Perse

In recognition of your global contributions, confirming the position you have as an outstanding performer, and as an expression of our gratitude, The Links, Incorporated, welcomes you into its chain of friendship and service.

3. Civic:

[*Name of Inductee*], by your deeds, you have gained admiration, esteem, and the affection of your fellowmen. In recognition of your contributions confirming the position you have as an outstanding performer and as an expression of our gratitude, The Links, Incorporated welcomes you into its chain of Friendship and Service. We salute you for the success that crowned your efforts in community projects. For your efficient assistance in aiding the less fortunate, [state specifically], we look forward to working with you for the common good and for the welfare of our community. For your understanding and contributions of interracial and interfaith movements, for your sincere courtesy, gracious countenance, unselfish devotion, unfailing loyalty, and many other deeds of public service, we, The Links, Incorporated, induct you into our chain of friendship and service.

National President:

Presentation of award, certificate or gift to the inductee(s). President extinguishes candles.

National Pledge:

All Links stand

I do solemnly pledge myself to all the ideals, purposes and true meaning of the word friendship as embodied in the name Links.

I shall earnestly endeavor to uphold these standards and do my share toward serving my community and my chapter to the best of my ability. And this I promise.

~Sarah Strickland Scott

The National Song of The Links, Incorporated

We strive to do some good each year.
For those who need our aid;
It binds us close and brings us joy,
And so we feel repaid.
We're each a link in friendship's chain
And loyal to our creed
Of doing good through work and play
Together we'll succeed.

Lyrics: Frances Atkinson

Music: Marietta Hall Cephas

Memorial Service

Past National Presidents and Past Area Directors for The Links, Incorporated

Ceremony to be performed at the wake or at the service before the funeral.

Ceremonial Preparation

- National President or Area Director should contact the family.
- Printed ceremony for each Link.
- Blanket of white roses or floral arrangement of white roses adorned with green ribbon imprinted with the name, The Links, Incorporated.
- A soloist and an organist to perform "Ave Maria" by Franz Schubert, and "The Lord's Prayer" by Albert Hay Malotte.
- Soft background music played throughout the ceremony.
- All Past National Presidents, Past Area Directors should be present and have a speaking role if possible.
- The Area Director where the Past National President / Past Area Director resides should be given a speaking role in the ceremony, if possible.
- All Links, Connecting Links, and Heir-o-Links are to sit together in a designated place; chapel, church or other service location.
- All Links should stand in a circle or semi-circle if space permits.
- Links are to be dressed in uninterrupted white.
- A white rose to be placed in or on the casket at the appropriate time. If there is not a casket, place a bud vase on ceremonial table.
- Printed programs with biographical information on the deceased. (optional)
- A Chapter Resolution

Table Arrangement

- Place the ceremonial table next to the casket or in another appropriate, but conspicuous place.
- Table covered with a white linen table cloth and skirted in white.
- Place on the table, a three-pronged candelabra containing three (3) 14-inch white cathedral candles.
- Place an opened white Bible toward the front of the table; lay a white rose across the opened pages.
- Place three large links (symbolizing the three-fold purpose of The Links, Incorporated) between the Bible and the candelabra.
- Place matches or lighter and candle snuffer on table

Soft Music

CEREMONY

National President / Area Director:

Dear friends, this tribute by The Links, Incorporated is given on this ___ day of ___, ___ to the memory of our dear departed Sister, Link _____, who was called to eternal rest on _____ (Date).

National President / Area Director:

Special Tribute

Soloist:

“Ave Maria”, by Franz Schubert

Past National President / Past Area Director:

Reads appropriate scripture

National President / Area Director:

I light these candles in tribute and honor to our deceased Link Sister _____.

All:

There is no death. Her light shines forevermore. Her voice and memories of her will live within our hearts.

National President / Area Director:

These white roses symbolize friendship, service, and leadership.

Blanket of white roses to be placed on the casket by Past National Presidents/Past Area Director. If there is no casket, a white rose floral arrangement will be provided.

Past National President / Past Area Director:

Friendship – the chain of links that binds us together. Service - Link _____ gave lovingly to her family, to her endeavors, and to humanity. Leadership - Link _____ possessed the ability to direct and guide others. She was the light that led the way.

Past National President / Past Area Director:

Reads appropriate poem on friendship.

National President / Area Director:

I break this chain, symbolic of the missing Link in our chain of friendship.

All Links:

Almighty and Most Merciful Lord, we pray thy blessings on the soul of our departed Sister, Link ___. May she rest in peace, through you, the Eternal.

~Amen.

Chapter President:

Reads a resolution from the chapter, presents it to the family, and retains a copy for the National Archives.

Soloist:

“The Lord’s Prayer”, by Albert Hay Malotte

National President / Area Director:

Extinguishes the candles and announces the singing of The Links Song.

All Links:

The National Song of The Links, Incorporated

We strive to do some good each year
For those who need our aid;
It binds us close and brings us joy.
And so we feel repaid.

We're each a Link in friendship's chain,
And loyal to our creed
Of doing good through work and play;
Together we'll succeed.

Lyrics: Frances Atkinson

Music: Marietta Hall Cephas

Memorial Service for Links of The Links, Incorporated

This ceremony is performed at wakes or services before the funeral.

Ceremonial Preparation

- A soloist and organist to perform “Ave Maria” by Schubert and “The Lord’s Prayer” by Malotte.
- Links are to be dressed in uninterrupted white.
- All Links, Connecting Links, and Heir-o-Links are to sit together in a designated place in the chapel, church or other service location. At the appropriate time, Links, led by the president, go to the front and assemble at an angle at the foot of the casket. If there is not a casket, assemble around or near the memorial table.
- Floral arrangement of white roses adorned with green ribbon imprinted with the name, The Links, Incorporated. (Optional)
- A white rose to be placed in or on the casket at the appropriate time. If there is not a casket, place rose in a vase on the ceremonial table.
- Printed programs with biographical information on the deceased. (*Optional*)
- A Chapter Resolution

Table Arrangement

- Place the ceremonial table next to the casket or in another appropriate place.
- Table covered with white linen table cloth and skirted in white.
- Place a candleholder with one (1), 14-inch white cathedral candle on the table.
- Place an open white Bible toward the front of the table; lay a white rose across the open pages.
- Place three large links (symbolizing the three-fold purpose of The Links, Incorporated) between the Bible and the candelabra.
- Place matches/lighter and candle snuffer on table.

Soloist:

“Ave Maria” by Schubert

CEREMONY

President:

Dear friends, this tribute by The Links, Incorporated is given on this day of ____ (Year), to the memory of our dear departed Sister, Link _____, who was called to eternal rest on _____.

Link:

Reads selected poetry and/or Bible scripture suitable for the deceased. The length will depend upon the time available for the ceremony

Link:

I light this candle in tribute and honor to our deceased Sister, Link _____.

All Links:

There is no death. Her light shines forevermore. Her voice and memories of her will live within our hearts.

President:

This white rose symbolizes unity and friendship.

President places white rose in or on the casket, or in a bud vase on a ceremonial table.

Link:

Friendship is the chain of Links, which binds us together. Service is that which Link _____ gave lovingly to her family, to her endeavors, and to humanity.

Close Link Friend:

The reading of the poem printed below is optional. The Link Sister may read any other appropriate poem on friendship or offer an appropriate tribute to the deceased.

Remembrances

In the glow of dusk's soft tapers

We assemble here today

To remember a Link once with us

Who in death has passed away.

Friendship's chain, a precious legacy,

Forged in strength, will not be broken.

Song and rose, the cherished ritual,

Candles, pledge, and words unspoken;

Founders, leaders, sisters, many

Work with us to do some good

As in joy she offered service

Through our cherished Sisterhood.

Now, in that eternal kingdom

Where through faith we hope to dwell,

She awaits our coming to her

At the last toll of the bell.

Day ends. Life ends. Sweet remembrance.

Keep her with us, though unseen,

Closer in the eternal Linkdom,

now, than we have ever been.

Golden links and fragrant roses

Candlelight—the end some say;

But to us she's forever present

In the calm peace of this day.

~Link Helen Smith Cotton

President:

I break this chain, symbolic of the missing Link in our chain of friendship.

All Links:

Almighty and most merciful Father, we pray Thy blessings on the soul of our departed Sister, Link_____. May she rest in peace through Jesus Christ, our Lord,
Amen.

President:

Reads a resolution from the chapter, presents it to the family, and retains a copy for the chapter archives.

THE LITANY OF REMEMBRANCE

Leader:

Let us always remember our Link Sister_____, who has gone before.

All Links:

Whose soul is in the hands of God, where torment shall never touch her.

Leader:

In the eyes of sages, she appears in glory.

All Links:

In the memory of Links, she lingers forever.

Leader:

She is with the careworn, who are now at peace.

All Links:

She is with the fatigued, who are now at rest.

Leader:

She is with the distressed, who are now at ease.

All Links:

She is with the laborers, who are now at bliss.

Leader:

In life she fought her own mortality.

All Links:

In death she yields to immortality.

Leader:

In life she dimmed; her body tarnished.

All Links:

In death she shines; her spirits burnished.

Leader:

Like gold in a furnace, she was tried and tested.

All Links:

Like gold in a wheat field, she reached the harvest.

Leader:

Yes, let us always remember our Link Sister who has gone before, who walks now in fragrant fields of white roses. Her soul is now in the hands of God where anguish shall never touch her, and where love shall ever embrace her.

All Links:

Where service shall be rewarded and where friendship shall never end.

President:

Let us pray.

Almighty and All Wise Father, we thank you for the life of our dear Sister. As we grieve her departure, help us to understand that death is not the end, but rather the beginning stage of a glorious new life. We thank you for the wonderful hours we spent together in friendship and for the many sacred opportunities we shared in dutiful service. As we commend our loving sister to your care, we pray that we will find peace in our hearts and that our coming days will be filled with strength, love and courage.

~Amen

Soloist:

“The Lord’s Prayer” by Malotte

President, using the snuffer, extinguishes the candle.

Links exit silently.

Memorial Service for Connecting Links of The Links, Incorporated

This ceremony is performed at wakes or services before the funeral.

Ceremonial Preparation

- A soloist and organist to perform “Ave Maria” by Franz Schubert and “The Lord’s Prayer” by Albert Hay Malotte.
- Links are to be dressed in uninterrupted white.
- All Links, Connecting Links, and Heir-o-Links are to sit together in a designated place in the chapel, church or other service location. At the appropriate time, Links, led by the President, go to the front and assemble at an angle at the foot of the casket. If there is not a casket, assemble around or near the memorial table.
- Three Connecting Links, join the Links when they assemble at the memorial table
- Floral arrangement of white roses adorned with green ribbon imprinted with the name, The Links, Incorporated. (Optional)
- A white rose to be placed in or on the casket at the appropriate time. If there is not a casket, place rose in a bud vase on the ceremonial table.
- Printed programs with biographical information on the deceased. (Optional)
- A Chapter Resolution

Table Arrangement

- Place the ceremonial table next to the casket or in another appropriate place.
- Cover table with white linen table cloth and skirted in white.
- Place a candleholder with one (1), fourteen (14) inch white cathedral candle on the table.
- Place an open white Bible toward the front of the table; lay a white rose across the open pages.
- Place three large links (symbolizing the three-fold purpose of The Links, Incorporated) between the Bible and the candelabra.
- Place matches/lighter and candle snuffer on table.

Soloist:

“Ave Maria” by Schubert

CEREMONY

President:

Dear Friends, this tribute by the _____ Chapter of The Links, Incorporated is given on this day of _____ (Year), to the memory of our dear departed Brother, Connecting Link _____, who was called to eternal rest on _____.

Connecting Link 1:

Scripture: Old Testament

Scripture: New Testament

Link:

I light this candle in tribute and honor to our deceased brother, Connecting Link _____.

All Links:

There is no death. His light shines forevermore. His voice and memories of him will live within our hearts.

President:

This white rose is a symbol of friendship and service.

Take the white rose from the Bible, and place it in or on the casket. If there is not a casket, the president will hold the rose as she speaks and place it back on the memorial table afterwards.

Connecting Link 2:

Connecting Link may offer a special tribute to the deceased.

President:

Friendship is the chain of Links, which binds us together. Service is that which Connecting Link _____ gave lovingly to his family, to his country, and to humanity.

Connecting Link 3

Reads a poetic tribute (the reading of an appropriate poem)

President:

I break this chain, merciful Father, symbolic of the missing Connecting Link in our chain of friendship.

All Links:

Almighty and most merciful Father, we pray Thy blessings on the soul of this departed brother, Connecting Link _____. May he rest in peace through Jesus Christ, our Lord, Amen.

All Links:

Recitation of Psalm Twenty-three

Chapter President:

Reads a resolution from the Chapter, presents it to the family, and retains a copy for the National Archives.

Soloist:

“The Lord’s Prayer” by Malotte

President, using the snuffer, extinguishes the candle at the close of The Lord’s Prayer, and all return to their seats or leave quietly.

Memorial Service for Heir-o-Links of The Links, Incorporated

This ceremony is performed at wakes or services before the funeral.

Ceremonial Preparation

- A soloist and organist to perform “Ave Maria” by Franz Schubert. “The Lord’s Prayer” by Albert Hay Malotte
- Links are to be dressed in uninterrupted white.
- All Links, Connecting Links, and Heir-o-Links are to sit together in a designated place in the chapel or church. At the appropriate time, Links, led by the President, go to the front and assemble at an angle at the foot of the casket. If there is not a casket, assemble around or near the memorial table.
- The father of the deceased and (2) Heir-o-Links participating in the ceremony join the Links when they assemble at the foot of the casket/memorial table.
- Floral arrangement of white flowers adorned with green ribbon imprinted with the name, The Links, Incorporated. (Optional).
- A white rose to be placed in or on the casket at the appropriate time. If there is not a casket, place rose in a bud vase on the ceremonial table.
- Printed programs with biographical information on the deceased. (Optional)
- A Chapter Resolution

Table Arrangement

- Place the ceremonial table next to the casket or in another appropriate, but conspicuous place.
- Table covered with white linen table cloth and skirted in white.
- Place a bud vase containing one white rose, fern and one sprig of baby’s breath on the table.
- Place a candleholder with one (1) 14-inch white cathedral candle on the table.
- Place an open white Bible toward the front of the table; lay a white rose across the open pages.
- Place three large links (symbolizing the three-fold purpose of The Links, Incorporated) between the Bible and the candleholder,
- Place matches or lighter and candle snuffer on table.

Soloist:

“Ave Maria” by Schubert

CEREMONY

President:

Dear friends, this tribute by the _____ Chapter of The Links, Incorporated is given on this day of _____, _____ (Year) to the memory of our dearly departed Heir-o-Link _____, who was called to eternal rest on (Date) _____.

Heir-o-Link 1:

Reads a selected scripture that is suitable for the deceased. The length will depend on the time available for the ceremony.

Link:

I light this candle in tribute and honor to our deceased Heir-o-Link_____.

All Links:

There is no death. His/Her light shines forevermore. His/Her voice and memories of him/her will live within our hearts.

President:

Places the white rose lying on the white Bible in or on the casket, or in a vase if there is no casket.

Heir-o-Link 2:

Reads poem of friendship.

Link:

When a leaf falls from the tree, it is the family that suffers. The Links family pauses in loving memory of our fallen leaf.

President:

She who plants a tree, she plants youth;
Vigor won for centuries in sooth;
Life of time, that hints eternity
Boughs their strength uprear;
New shoots every year, on old growth appear;
Thou shalt teach the ages, sturdy tree,
Youth of soul is immortality.

Soloist:

“The Lord’s Prayer” by Malotte

The president, using the snuffer, extinguishes all candles. All return to seats or leave quietly.

Attachment A

General Information

1. All Links in good standing may be memorialized with the Memorial Service for The Links, Incorporated.
2. Connecting Link and Heir-o-Links of Links members may be memorialized with the Memorial Services.
3. National Assembly, Area Conferences and Chapter Memorial Services—all Links are expected to wear uninterrupted white.
4. Programs — use the official trademarked logo of The Links, Incorporated:



5. Ceremony Presenter — The role of “The Leader” is always performed by the highest ranking elected National Officer or elected Area Officer present. If a National Officer or Area Officer is not present, the Chapter’s Vice President (Membership Chair) or Charter member may serve as the Leader.

Attachment B

Music Scores

The National Song of The Links, Incorporated

We strive to do some good each year
For those who need our aid;
It binds us close and brings us joy.
And so we feel repaid.

We're each a Link in friendship's chain,
And loyal to our creed
Of doing good through work and play;
Together we'll succeed.

Lyrics: Frances Atkinson

Music: Marietta Hall Cephas

Candlelight Song

Candlelight –candlelight,
In the soft hour of gloaming All the cares and all the blame
You have purged them in your flame.
With a prayer in our hearts
That has grown with this day,
We will walk in your glow And will find our lost way.
In thy spell-candlelight
As the day nears its end,
We remember we have come
In the name of Links and friend.
As the day dawns tomorrow,
May we pledge once again
To gather our blessings And share them with friends.

Arrangement: Jacqueline Hairston

Music: Brahms

Hold Close the Rose

Oh, as we stand here linking hearts
We welcome new ones to be a part
Of the majesty revealed for the sisterhood held so dear.
Our paths are different yet the same
We come together with lighted flame to cast a heavenly glow
A pattern sparkled as we go.
We'll strive together hand in hand
Unending friendship cross the land
When vows by one like you are shared
We'll ever hold aloft – Again.

Chorus

Hold Close The Rose
On bed of green
Stand proud my sister

Embrace the dream
Hold tight my hand
Hold tight the vow

Linking in services,
Promise now.

Linking in service
Promised now
Hold close, Hold close, Hold the rose.

Lyrics and Music by Leona Morris

Attachment C

The Links, Incorporated National Pledge

I do solemnly pledge myself to all the ideals, purposes, and true meaning of the word “friendship” as embodied in the name “LINKS.”

I shall earnestly endeavor to uphold these standards and do my share toward serving my community and my chapter to the best of my ability. And this I promise.

— Sarah Strickland Scott

Attachment D

The Links, Incorporated Symbols

Name.....The Links, Incorporated

Colors.....Emerald Green and White

Flower.....White Rose

Emblem.....Insignia – A World Globe Encircled

Members.....Links

Spouses of MembersConnecting Links

Children of MembersHeir-O-Links

Attachment E

Chapter Resolutions Format

1. Written by Chapter President or designee
2. Read by Chapter President at memorial services
3. Each tribute paragraph begins with “whereas”. Paragraphs give recognition to the honoree’s chapter, family and community service.
4. Each tribute paragraph connects with a semi-colon (;) and Whereas.
5. Tribute recognitions are concluded with:

Now, Therefore Be It Resolved that the _____ Chapter of The Links, Incorporated commends on this _____ day of _____.

Given by my hand as president of _____ Chapter of The Links, Incorporated.

(Signature of Chapter President)

6. The official trademark symbol of The Links, Incorporated should be on the resolution.
7. A copy of the resolution should be given to the family and one placed in the chapter archives.

Attachment F

Rituals and Ceremonies Attendance and Attire Requirements

Ceremony	Attendance & Attire Requirements
Induction — New Members	Links Only — Uninterrupted White
Induction — New Chapter	Links Only — Uninterrupted White
Induction — Honorary Members	Links Only — Uninterrupted White
Installation of Officers	No Specific Requirements
Memorial Service — National Assembly/ Area Conference	Uninterrupted White
Memorial Service Chapter — Links Connecting Links, Heir-O-Links	Uninterrupted White
Memorial Service — National Officers Current and Past	Uninterrupted White
Ceremony of Friendship	No Specific Requirements
Closing Ceremony and Candlelight Service	Links Only
Founder's Day Ceremony	No Specific Requirements
White Rose Ceremony	No Specific Requirements
Alumna Ceremony	No Specific Requirements
Chapter Anniversary Ceremony	No Specific Requirements

Helpful Hints!

- Previewing ceremony with participants or holding a "walk thru" rehearsal will make ceremony run smoother
- The ceremony preparations and table arrangements are not to be included in the ceremony booklets
- Ceremony table arrangement: All references made in regards to right side and left side are to be interpreted as audience right and audience left
- Invest in a portable steamer to smooth tablecloths
- Always provide ceremony scripts to audio-visual staff, The Links, Incorporated IT staff, musicians and rituals committee members
- Create a plan for retrieving penlights after ceremonies
- Uninterrupted White — No embellishments that interfere with the concept of uninterrupted white
- Electronic/Battery operated candles can be used in lieu of live flames
- The "official" Links pin (Globe with chain), is the only embellishment allowed with uninterrupted white