

NU Candle Lighting Ritual, Revised 1938

(Daily Northwestern, May 3, 1938)

The Revised Ritual

OFFICIANT—Sons and Daughters of Northwestern, I bid you stand and join with other Northwestern men and women throughout the world to keep a sacred trust; I bid you pledge anew your loyalty to our Alma Mater; I bid you join in singing (the first verse of) "Go U Northwestern."

OFFICIANT—From out the fast-receding years, steadily there shines a light which lighted those who went before us. In its beams we see the old familiar faces and the scenes of long ago. Let us listen to the voice of the Past.

(Lights having been dimmed, a designated person approaches with a taper and lights the first candle. He represents the voice of the past as the candle represents the light of the past.)

THE PAST—I light this little candle of the Past, and in its beams we see the founding of Northwestern University—a small school built in a wilderness along the shores of Lake Michigan, one of the first institutions of higher learning to be established in the great Northwest. Its history reflects the spirit of its founders, and the passing years have kept alive the ideals of those early days.

We see great scholars and teachers—men whose achievements have lighted us on our way.

We see the halls of Alma Mater thrice emptied that the ranks of our country's armies might be filled.

We behold her inspiring progress and see her take a place of leadership in every field of research and academic thought with standards of character and of scholarship which

country's armies might be filled.

We behold her inspiring progress and see her take a place of leadership in every field of research and academic thought, with standards of character and of scholarship which never falter, but still reflect the high ideals of those brave pioneers who founded our institution upon sincerity and truth.

OFFICIANT—So was it then! Still shines the light from the torch handed down by those who have gone before us. Its flame is undimmed, its glory undiminished; with the passing years it burns more brightly. Let us now listen to the voice of the Present.

(A designated person here lights his taper at the candle of the past and with it lights the second candle, saying:)

THE PRESENT—I light this candle of the Present and in its beams we see the greater Northwestern of today. We see new buildings rising; we see a great staff of teachers, men and women whose names are known in halls of learning throughout the world; we see a student body whose numbers are in the thousands, inquiring and earnest, our leaders of tomorrow. We behold our Alma Mater moving forward upon every front of educational and social need, unveiling truth, developing citizenship, a creative force in the great commonwealth of mind and spirit.

OFFICIANT—So it is now! The future is aglow with the hopes and enthusiasms of Northwestern men and women. We know that when we are gone, the light of Alma Mater will still be as a beacon upon a hill. Let us now listen to the voice of the Future.

(A designated person here lights his taper at the candle of the present and lights the third candle, saying:)

THE FUTURE—I light the large candle of the Future, and in its beams we behold the Northwestern that is to be. We see even greater fields of service, new buildings enshrining the old ideals, new teachers carrying forward the torch of learning. We see new students pushing back still farther the frontiers of learning and research.

OFFICIANT—So may it be! And so will it be, for Northwestern alumni keep their loyalty to "whatsoever things are true."

(Optional: All rise and sing:)

Quaecumque sunt vera, Proba, justa, mera, Omnia haec dona praebes nobis bona, Alma Mater cara, Benedicta, clara, celsa in honore nostro et amore!

OFFICIANT—Sons and Daughters of Northwestern, I bid you join with me in renewing the pledge made on Commencement Day by every Northwestern man and woman.

ALL—"With a solemn sense of my responsibility, I pledge myself to hold my relation to my Alma Mater as a sacred trust; as a witness of my pledge to serve; to hold it with untarnished honor to myself; in generous loyalty to my Alma Mater, and with fidelity to my country and to my fellow men."

OFFICIANT—Thus closes the Candle Lighting ceremony of Northwestern University.

—Alumni News.