CANDLELIGHTING CEREMONY

We have come together to participate in a special tribute to one of the world's most influential organisations, the International Federation of Business and Professional Women, which unites women around the world. Although its members speak in many languages and live in countries with differing traditions they share the same determination of purpose.

More then 75 years ago, BPW was founded by Dr Lena Madesin Phillips from the United States of America and a few years later she conceived the idea of the Candle Lighting Ceremony. As we perform this ceremony, we will evoke historical memories, the many accomplishments and celebrate today's achievements.

The members of the United States of America made good-will tours to Europe to share their interests and their beliefs with women of Europe. Through their efforts and influence, groups were organised in several countries. In 1930, women from sixteen countries met in Geneva where a long cherished dream – the forming of the International Federation – became a reality.

The candles symbolize the ambitions and endeavours of dedicated women in every country around the world. Each WHITE candle represents a Federation. Each BLUE candle stands for a country where there is at least one Associated Club, and the PINK candles for Individual Members.

The candle in the middle represents the oldest group of BPW Affiliates of the United States of America. (Light the USA candle).

The tallest candle represents the International Federation. (Light the tallest candle). In the warmth and glow of its tolerant light, Business and Professional Women in all parts of the world come together to share memories in friendship and reflect on the founding principles envisioned by Lena Madesin Phillips, that govern the International Federation which stands out as a beacon to women everywhere.

While our primary aim is focusing on "Develop the professional and leadership potential for women at all levels", we are also commit to attain the following objectives:

- To work for high standards of service in business and the professions.
- To encourage women and girls to acquire education, occupational training and advanced education, and to use their occupational capacities and intelligence for the advantage of others as well as themselves.
- To stimulate and encourage in women, awareness and acceptance of their responsibilities to the community, locally, nationally and internationally.
- To work for equal opportunities and status for women in the economic, civil and political life in all countries, and to work for the removal of all discrimination.
- To promote world-wide friendship, co-operation and understanding between business and professional women.

Let us now light the other candles and remember our members on every continent who will be celebrating in the same manner. As we light the candles for them, they will light the candle for our country.

First we light candles for each of the FOUNDING Federations of BPW International

(Light a WHITE candle as each country is named):

AUSTRIA, CANADA, FRANCE, ITALY, UNITED KINGDOM, UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

Today, there are also Federations in (light the remaining WHITE candles as each country is named):

ARGENTINA	GERMANY	PAKISTAN
AUSTRALIA	INDONESIA	POLAND
BANGLADESH	IRELAND	SINGAPORE
BELGIUM	JAPAN	SWEDEN
BOLIVIA	JORDAN	SWITZERLAND
BRAZIL	KOREA	THAILAND
CHILE	MEXICO	URUGUAY
CYPRUS	NEPAL	UZBEKISTAN
ECUADOR	NETHERLANDS	USA / California
ESTONIA	NEW ZEALAND	USA / New York
FINLAND	NIGERIA	USA / Pacific Rim

We honour our ASSOCIATED CLUBS in the following countries (light the BLUE candles; name each country slowly and clearly):

AFGHANISTAN	ICELAND	RUSSIAN FEDERATION
BARBADOS	INDIA	SOUTH AFRICA
BENIN	ISRAEL	SPAIN
BULGARIA	JAMAICA	SRI LANKA
BURKINA FASO	LATVIA	ST KITTS
CAMEROON	MOLDOVA	SUDAN
CAYMAN ISLANDS	MONGOLIA	TAIWAN
COOK ISLANDS	MOROCCO	TOGO
CROATIA	NETHERLANDS ANTILLES	TRINIDAD & TOBAGO
CZECH REPUBLIC	PALESTINE	UKRAINE
DEM REP OF CONGO	PANAMA	USA (Paso del Norte / Chicago)
EGYPT	PAPUA NEW GUINEA	ZIMBABWE
EL SALVADOR	PHILIPPINES	
HAITI	ROMANIA	

We also honour our INDIVIDUAL MEMBERS in (light the PINK candles):

ETHIOPIA UNITED ARAB EMIRATES

BPW International is a dynamic and powerful organisation of world importance. Public opinion and legislation in many countries have been influenced by its work. It has broadened our horizons and skills. It has increased our rights and our opportunities, and it has expanded our service to one another and to the community. As our voice at the United Nations Organisation, it presents to that world body information and opinions obtained from our Affiliates worldwide. It enjoys Consultative Status with the United Nations Economic and Social Council. It also has Consultative Status with the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation, the Board of the United Nations Children's Fund, the International Labour Office, the United Nations Industrial Development Organisation and the World Health Organisation. It works closely with the Commission on Human Rights and the Commission on the Status of Women, the Food and Agriculture Organisation, the International Fund for Agricultural Development, the Council of Europe and other specialised agencies.

As we come to the end of another Candle Lighting Ceremony, let us light the last candle

– the candle of the FUTURE (light the last candle).

As we light this candle, let us reaffirm our aim to go forward with faith, with courage, and with enthusiasm, to take our place in economic, social and political fields of endeavour, helping us to bring into being a world of social justice for all, and the peace to which all humanity aspires.

Follow the ceremony with the INTERNATIONAL COLLECT

The International Collect

Keep us O Lord from pettiness; let us be large in thought, in word and deed.
Let us be done with fault finding and leave off self seeking.
May we put away all pretence and meet each other face to face,
without self pity and without prejudice.
Let us take time for all things: make us grow calm, serene and gentle.
Teach us to put into action our better impulses straightforward and unafraid.
Grant that we may realize that it is the little things that create differences;
that in the big things of life we are one.
And may we strive to touch and know the great human heart common to us all,
and O Lord God let us not forget to be kind.

La Prière Internationale

Gardez-nous, Seigneur, de toute mesquinerie; que nous soyons larges en pensée, en parole et en action.
Que nous ne trouvions pas à redire et abandonnons tout intérêt personnel. Que nous laissions de côté nos prétentions et que nous nous rencontrions face à face sans nous apitoyer sur nous-mêmes et sans préjugés.
Que nous ne fassions pas des jugements hâtifs et que nous soyons toujours généreuses dans nos jugements.
Laissez-nous prendre le temps pour toutes choses : faites que nous devenions calmes, sereines et douces.
Apprenez-nous à mettre en pratique nos meilleures initiatives, honnêtement et sans peur.
Faites que nous nous rendions compte que ce sont uniquement les petites choses de la vie qui provoquent les différences et que dans les grandes nous avançons à l'unisson.
Et puissions-nous déployer nos efforts pour toucher et connaître le grand cœur humain, commun à nous toutes ; et, Seigneur, faites que nous n'oublions pas d'être bonnes.

La Plegaria Internacional

Líbranos, Señor, de toda mezquindad, ayúdanos a ser magnánimas en pensamiento, palabra y acción.
Que no busquemos defectos en otros y que dejemos de ser egoístas.
Ayúdanos a desechar toda pretensión y a enfrentarnos cara a cara, sin ser auto compasivas y sin tener prejuicios.
A no juzgar apresuradamente y a ser siempre generosas.
Deja que nos demos tiempo para todo: haz que seamos tranquilas, serenas y amables.
Enséñanos a poner en práctica nuestras mejores iniciativas, honestamente y sin temor.
Ayúdanos a darnos cuenta de que son las pequeñas diferencias las que provocan desacuerdos; que en las grandes cosas de la vida estamos unidas.
Y esforcémonos para alcanzar y conocer el gran corazón humano común a todas; y, Señor, haz que no nos olvidemos de ser bondadosas.

La preghiera internazionale

Allontana da noi, o Signore, ogni meschinità, aiutaci ad essere magnanime nel pensare, parlare e agire.
Fa che superiamo gli interessi personali senza rilevare i difetti degli altri.
Fa che abbandoniamo le nostre pretese e ci incontriamo a viso aperto senza vittimismi e senza pregiudizi.
Fa che non giudichiamo astiosamente e siamo sempre comprensive.
Facci trovare il tempo per ogni cosa, e che possiamo essere calme, serene ed amabili.
Insegnaci a tradurre in azione i nostri propositi con lealtà e coraggio. Fa che ci rendiamo conto che sono le piccole cose a creare differenze fra noi, ma che nelle grandi cose della vita siamo unite.
E fa che possiamo arrivare a toccare e conoscere il grande cuore umano comune a tutti noi e, Signore, non farci dimenticare mai di essere generose.