

Soul Food

A Sense of Time



December 2016

A Sense of Time

This program will reflect on rejuvenation and transformation and how these two principles affect our material and spiritual development.

December 2016

Program



Matthew Dames – Vocal/Guitar

01. *Prayer*
02. *Lao Tzu*
03. *Jerome K. Jerome*
04. *Christian writings*
05. *Muslim Writings*
06. *Ralph Waldo Emerson.*
07. *Bahá'í Writings*
08. *Bill Bryson*



Erica and Nigel Davidson Violin/Piano

09. *Frances De Sales*
10. *Pema Chodron*
11. *Dalai Lama*
12. *Leunig*
13. *Sanskrit Proverb*
14. *Robert Hastings*

Matthew Dames – Vocal/Guitar

15. *John Keats*
16. *Old English*
17. *Robert Louis Stevenson*
18. *Bahá'í Writings*
19. *Christian writings*
20. *Leunig*
21. *Bahá'í Writings*



Matthew Dames – Vocal/Guitar

*Each second you can be reborn.
Each second there can be a new beginning.
It is choice.
It is your choice.
Clearwater*



She Loves Me - Dougie Maclean
Matthew Dames – Vocal/Guitar

1. I have wakened in Thy shelter, O my God, and it becometh him that seeketh that shelter to abide within the Sanctuary of Thy protection and the Stronghold of Thy defence. Illumine my inner being, O my Lord, with the splendors of the Dayspring of Thy Revelation, even as Thou didst illumine my outer being with the morning light of Thy favor.
- Bahá'í Writings

2. Each moment is fragile and fleeting.
The moment of the past cannot be kept, however beautiful.
The moment of the present cannot be held, however enjoyable.
The moment of the future cannot be caught, however desirable.
But the mind is desperate to fix the river in place:
Possessed by ideas of the past, preoccupied with images of the future, it overlooks the plain truth of the moment.
The one who can dissolve her mind will suddenly have the Desert of the Tao at her feet, and clarity at hand.
~Lao Tzu, Hua Hu Ching

***What we are today comes from our thoughts of yesterday,
and our present thoughts build our life of tomorrow.
Our life is the creation of the mind.
The Buddha***

3. A new life begins for us with every second.
Let us go forward joyously to meet it.
We must press on, whether we will or no,
and we shall walk better with our eyes before us
than with them cast behind.
~ Jerome K. Jerome
4. To everything there is a season, and a time to every purpose under
the heaven.
A time to be born, and a time to die; a time to plant, and a time to
pluck up that which is planted;
A time to kill, and a time to heal; a time to break down, and a time
to build up;
A time to weep, and a time to laugh; a time to mourn, and a time to
dance;
A time to cast away stones, and a time to gather stones together;
A time to embrace, and a time to refrain from embracing;
A time to get, and a time to lose; a time to keep, and a time to cast
away;
A time to rend, and a time to sew; a time to keep silence, and a time
to speak;
A time to love, and a time to hate;
A time of war, and a time of peace.
~ Christian Writings

***So do not worry about tomorrow,
for tomorrow will bring worries of its own.
Today's trouble is enough for today.
Matthew 6:14***

5. It is He Who made the sun a shining light and the moon a derived light and determined for it phases — that you may know the number of years and account (of time). Allah has not created this except in truth. He details the signs for those with knowledge.
~Muslim Writings

6. To finish the moment,
To find the journey's end in every step of the road.
To live the greatest number of good hours, is wisdom.
~Ralph Waldo Emerson

Indeed, the patient will be given their reward without account.

Quran

7. These are the days of seed sowing. These are the days of tree planting. The bountiful bestowals of God are successive. He who sows a seed in this day will behold his reward in the fruits and harvest of the heavenly Kingdom. This timely seed, when planted in the hearts of the beloved of God, will be watered by showers of divine mercy and warmed by the sunshine of divine love. Its fruitage and flower shall be the solidarity of mankind, the perfection of justice and the praiseworthy attributes of heaven manifest in humanity.
~Bahá'í Writings

8. If you imagine the 4,500-billion-odd years of Earth's history compressed into a normal earthly day, then life begins very early, about 4 a.m., with the rise of the first simple, single-celled organisms, but then advances no further for the next sixteen hours. Not until almost 8:30 in the evening, with the day five-sixths over, has Earth anything to show the universe but a restless skin of microbes. Then, finally, the first sea plants appear, followed twenty minutes later by the first jellyfish and the enigmatic Ediacaran fauna first seen by Reginald Sprigg in Australia. At 9:04 p.m. trilobites swim onto the scene, followed more or less immediately by the shapely creatures of the Burgess Shale. Just before 10 p.m. plants begin to pop up on the land. Soon after, with less than two hours left in the day, the first land creatures follow.

Thanks to ten minutes or so of balmy weather, by 10:24 the Earth is covered in the great carboniferous forests whose residues give us all our coal, and the first winged insects are evident. Dinosaurs plod onto the scene just before 11 p.m. and hold sway for about three-quarters of an hour. At twenty-one minutes to midnight they vanish and the age of mammals begins. Humans emerge one minute and seventeen seconds before midnight. The whole of our recorded history, on this scale, would be no more than a few seconds, a single human lifetime barely an instant.

~Bill Bryson

***The timeless in you is aware of life's timelessness
and knows that yesterday is but today's memory and
tomorrow is today's dream.***

Kahlil Gibran



***Meditation – Massenet
Nigel Davidson - Violin
Erica Davidson - Piano***

9. **Be at peace.**

Don't fear the changes that are coming in your life.

Instead look forward to them with hope.

God whose very own you are, will lead you safely through all things.

And when it's more than you can bear, God will bear you in his arms.

Don't fear, either, what may happen tomorrow.

The same understanding Father who cares for you today, will care for you tomorrow, and every day.

He will shield you from suffering

or He will give you the depth of strength to bear it.

Be at peace.

Put aside all anxieties. Calm your thinking.

Be at peace.

~adapted from a prayer attributed to Frances De Sales

10. **Tigers above, tigers below.**

There is a story of a woman running away from tigers. She runs and runs, and the tigers are getting closer and closer. When she comes to the edge of a cliff, she sees some vines there, so she climbs down and holds onto the vines. Looking down, she sees that there are tigers below her as well. Then she notices that a mouse is gnawing away at the vine to which she is clinging. She also sees a beautiful little bunch of strawberries close to her, growing out of a clump of grass. She looks up and she looks down. She looks at the mouse. Then she just takes a strawberry, puts it in her mouth, and enjoys it thoroughly.

This is actually the predicament we are always in, in terms of our birth and death. Each moment is just what it is. It might be the only moment of our life, it might be the only strawberry we'll ever eat. We could get depressed about it, or we could finally appreciate it and delight in the preciousness of every single moment of our life.

~Pema Chodron

*Our lives are like the course of the sun.
At the darkest moment there is the promise of daylight.
London Times Editorial*

11. Sometimes when I meet old friends, it reminds me how quickly time passes. And it makes me wonder if we've utilized our time properly or not. Proper utilization of time is so important. While we have this body, and especially this amazing human brain, I think every minute is something precious. Our day-to-day existence is very much alive with hope, although there is no guarantee of our future. There is no guarantee that tomorrow at this time we will be here. But we are working for that purely on the basis of hope. So, we need to make the best use of our time. I believe that the proper utilization of time is this: if you can, serve other people, other sentient beings. If not, at least refrain from harming them. I think that is the whole basis of my philosophy.

So, let us reflect what is truly of value in life, what gives meaning to our lives, and set our priorities on the basis of that. The purpose of our life needs to be positive. We weren't born with the purpose of causing trouble, harming others. For our life to be of value, I think we must develop basic good human qualities—warmth, kindness, compassion. Then our life becomes meaningful and more peaceful—happier.

~Dalai Lama XIV

12. **Summer**

We welcome summer and the glorious blessing of light.

We are rich with light; we are loved by the sun.

Let us empty our hearts into its brilliance.

Let us pour our darkness into the glorious, forgiving light.

For this loving abundance let us give thanks and offer our joy.

~Leunig

***In the depth of winter,
I finally learned that within me there lay an invincible summer.***
Albert Camus

13. Look to this day.
for it is life.
The very life of life.
In its brief course lie all
the realities and truths of existence.
The bliss of growth.
The splendor of action.
The glory of power.
For yesterday is now a dream.
Tomorrow is just a vision.
But today, when lived well,
makes every yesterday a
dream of happiness.
And every tomorrow,
a vision of hope.
-Salutation to the sun, Sanskrit proverb

14. The Station.

Tucked away in our subconscious is an idyllic vision. We see ourselves on a long trip that spans the continent. We are travelling by train. Out the windows, we drink in the passing scene of cars on nearby highways, of children waving at a crossing, of cattle grazing on the distant hillside, of smoke pouring from a power plant, of row upon row of corn on rolling hillsides, of city skylines and village halls.

But uppermost in our minds is the final destination. On a certain day at a certain hour, we will pull into the station. Bands will be playing and flags waving. Once we get there, so many wonderful dreams will come true and the pieces of our lives will fit together like a completed jigsaw puzzle. How restlessly we pace the aisles, damning the minutes for loitering – waiting, waiting, waiting for the station.

“When we reach the station, that will be it!” we cry.
“When I’m 18.” “When I buy a new Mercedes Benz!”
“When I put the last kid through college.” “When I have paid
off the mortgage!” “When I get a promotion.” “When I
reach the age of retirement, I shall live happily ever after!”

Sooner or later we must realize there is no station, no
one place to arrive at once and for all. The true joy of life
is the trip. The station is only a dream. It constantly
out-distances us.

“Relish the moment” is a good motto, especially when
coupled with Psalm 118.24: “This is the day which the
Lord hath made; we will rejoice and be glad in it.” It isn’t
the burdens of today that drive men mad. It is the regrets
over yesterday and the fear of tomorrow. Regret and fear are
twin thieves who rob us of today.

So stop pacing the aisles and counting the miles.
Instead, climb more mountains, eat more ice cream, go barefoot
more often, swim more rivers, watch more sunsets, laugh more,
cry less.

Life must be lived as we go along. The station will come soon
enough.

~Robert J. Hastings

***Life is short and we have not too much time
for gladdening the hearts of those who are
travelling the dark way with us.***

***Oh, be swift to love!
Make haste to be kind.
Henri Frederic Amiel***



**Never Any Good - Martin Simpson
Matthew Dames – Vocal/Guitar**

15. **The Human Seasons**

Four seasons fill the measure of the year;
There are four seasons in the mind of man:
He has his lusty Spring, when fancy clear
Takes in all beauty with an easy span:
He has his Summer, when luxuriously
Spring's honied cud of youthful thought he loves
To ruminatè, and by such dreaming high
Is nearest unto heaven: quiet coves
His soul has in its Autumn, when his wings
He furlèth close; contented so to look
On mists in idleness--to let fair things
Pass by unheeded as a threshold brook.
He has his Winter too of pale misfeature,
Or else he would forego his mortal nature.
~John Keats

16. Take time to be friendly – It is the road to happiness.
Take time to dream – It is hitching your wagon to a star.
Take time to love and be loved – It is the privilege of the Gods.
Take time to look around – It is too short a day to be selfish.
Take time to laugh – it is the music of the soul.
~ Old English

***Time has no dominion over love.
Love is the one thing that transcends time.
Jeaniene Frost***

17. **Autumn Fires**

In the other gardens
And all up the vale,
From the autumn bonfires
See the smoke trail!

Pleasant summer over
And all the summer flowers,
The red fire blazes,
The grey smoke towers.

Sing a song of seasons!
Something bright in all!
Flowers in the summer,
Fires in the fall!

~Robert Louis Stevenson

18. Briefly, we say a universal cycle in the world of existence signifies a long duration of time, and innumerable and incalculable periods and epochs. In such a cycle the Manifestations appear with splendour in the realm of the visible until a great and supreme Manifestation makes the world the centre of His radiance. His appearance causes the world to attain to maturity, and the extension of His cycle is very great. Afterward, other Manifestations will arise under His shadow, who according to the needs of the time will renew certain commandments relating to material possessions and affairs, while remaining under His shadow.

~ Bahá'í Writings

***So teach us to number our days
that we may apply our hearts unto wisdom.
Christian Writings***

19. The steadfast love of the Lord never ceases,
his mercies never come to an end;
they are new every morning;
great is your faithfulness.
“The Lord is my portion,” says my soul,
“therefore I will hope in him.”
The Lord is good to those who wait for him,
to the soul that seeks him.
It is good that one should wait quietly
for the salvation of the Lord.
~Christian writings

20. **Christmas**

Dear God!

It is timely that we give thanks for the lives of all prophets,
teachers, healers and revolutionaries, living and dead, acclaimed
or obscure, who have rebelled, worked and suffered for the cause
of love and joy.

We also celebrate that part of us, that part within ourselves,
which has rebelled, worked and suffered for the cause of love
and joy.

We give thanks and celebrate. Amen.

~Leunig

*Yesterday's the past,
tomorrow's the future,
but today is a gift.
That's why it's called the present.
Bill Keane*

21. Soon the whole world, as in springtime, will change its garb. The turning and falling of the autumn leaves is past; the bleakness of the winter time is over. The new year hath appeared and the spiritual springtime is at hand. The black earth is becoming a verdant garden; the deserts and mountains are teeming with red flowers; from the borders of the wilderness the tall grasses are standing like advance guards before the cypress and jessamine trees; while the birds are singing among the rose branches like the angels in the highest heavens, announcing the glad-tidings of the approach of that spiritual spring, and the sweet music of their voices is causing the real essence of all things to move and quiver.

O my spiritual friend! Dost thou know from what airs emanate the notes sung by those birds? They are from the melodies of peace and reconciliation, of love and unity, of justice and security, of concord and harmony. In a short time this heavenly singing will intoxicate all humanity; the foundations of enmity shall be destroyed; unity and affection shall be witnessed in every assembly; and the lovers of the love of God at these great festivals shall behold their splendor.

~Bahá'í Writings

***If we are not happy and joyous at this season,
for what other season shall we wait
and for what other time shall we look?
Bahá'í Writings***



Grow - Grow - Matthew Dames

Matthew Dames – Vocal/Guitar

*

Please join us for refreshments

Study Circles

The Bahá'í Community is offering a series of life-changing circles of study. The purpose of these study circles is to provide participants with the knowledge, spiritual insights and skills to enable them to contribute to the betterment of society, starting with their own neighbourhood. This is done through systematic study of a sequence of courses based on the Bahá'í Writings using the courses of the Ruhi Institute. The first in the sequence of seven books is called Reflections on the Life of the Spirit. It examines spiritual matters such as prayer, meditation, life and death and the development of the soul. Study circles are held all around Australia in an uplifting environment conducive to the spiritual empowerment of individuals, who come to see themselves as active agents of their own learning. The role of the study circle facilitator is not to impart knowledge, but to assist discussion. Study circles feature participatory learning, involving discussion with others, the use of the arts and are open to all. You are invited to take inspiration from the Bahá'í teachings, benefitting from whatever gems of wisdom and knowledge will help you to address the challenges you face. For inquiries or more information please email Sandhya Keenoo sandhya.keenoo@gmail.com

Children's Classes in the Neighbourhood

Regular children's classes are held in communities around Australia and aim to nurture the hearts and minds of children with an emphasis on helping them to reflect on, and apply, inner gifts and spiritual principles - such as love, unity and justice - to their own lives and the lives of others. Based on the teachings of Baha'u'llah, the Founder of the Baha'i Faith, the classes seek to inspire in children a love of God and His Messengers, and of humanity in all its diversity. Classes include short lessons, story-telling, art projects, games, as well as prayer and memorization of quotes from Sacred Texts to engage the whole child. Baha'i children's classes are open to all children, subject to parental approval. All teachers are certified under the Baha'i Child Protection Policy, which includes a mandatory police check. For inquiries or more information please call 6234 7654

"Children are even as a branch that is fresh and green; they will grow up in whatever way you train them. Take the utmost care to give them high ideals and goals, so that once they come of age, they will cast their beams like brilliant candles on the world..."
-- from the Writings of the Bahá'í Faith

Junior Youth Groups

The junior youth spiritual empowerment program is open to young people aged between 11 and 14 years and assists them to navigate through this crucial stage in their lives. The program helps participants to form a strong moral identity and empowers them to contribute to the well-being of their communities and the world at large. By developing their spiritual and intellectual qualities as well as their capacity to practice virtuous action and serve society, young people become agents of positive change.

Groups of young people, in the company of a facilitator or animator, engage in activities such as artistic expression discussion, drama, co-operative games, story-telling and acts of community service. Themes are explored from a Baha'i perspective, but the program is not a formal religious education program. Junior youth groups meet on a regular basis and are open to all young people subject to parental approval. All facilitators are certified under the Baha'i Child Protection Policy which includes a mandatory police check.

For more information please call James Pepperell on 0404352047 or email him james.pepperell@gmail.com.

Soul Food

Soul Food is an open community devotional event hosted at the Bahá'í Centre of Learning in Hobart on the first Sunday of each month. It provides an occasion to be inspired and reflect on uplifting themes. Our programs feature live music, audio-visual pieces, and readings from various authors, sources and Faiths - indigenous, ancient and modern- from all over the world.

Soul Food was initiated by the Bahá'í community in Adelaide and now occurs in places around Australia and as far afield as Botswana, California and Kansas. It is also proudly supported by the Victorian Multicultural Commission in Victoria, Australia. Original programs are available for free download from www.soulfood.com.au/tas/

Venue: Bahá'í Centre of Learning, Hobart

Time: 3.00pm – 4pm

join us:

for the next program:

“World Religion Day”

Sunday January 15th - 3pm

Please Note: There will be no Soul Food in January 2017.

We invite you to join us as we celebrate WORLD RELIGION DAY

Upcoming Dates for Soul Food 2017:

February 5th March 5th April 2nd May 7th June 4th July 2nd
August 6th Sept 3rd Oct. 1st Nov 5th Dec. 3rd

**May we wish you a very joyful and
peaceful Festive Season and
a Happy New Year**

from

**The Soul Food Team
Erica, Lyn and Val**

All Soul Food programs are available for free download from
www.soulfood.com.au

The Bahá'í Faith

You can find out more about the Bahá'ís and their world embracing vision at www.bahai.org.au, or feel free to call 03 6234 7654 for more information.