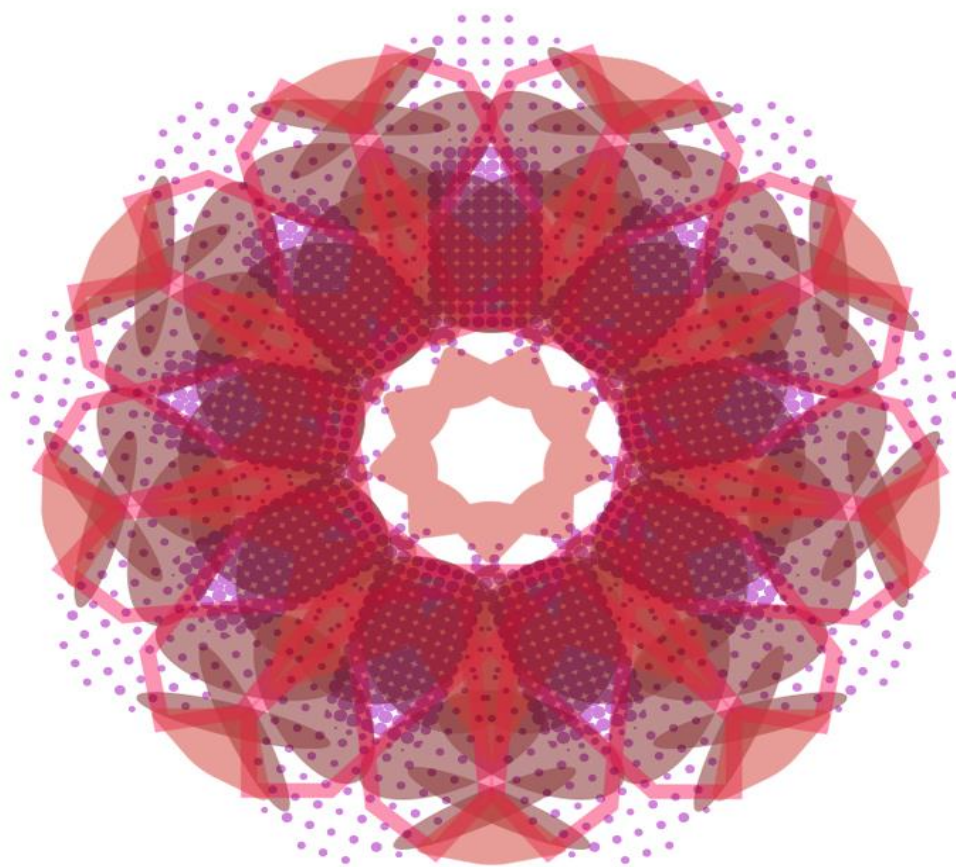


# Soul Food

Sweet Scents of Friendship



July 2015

## Sweet Scents of Friendship

This program aims to develop the theme of friendship as a foundation for the unity of humankind.

### Program



#### **Fortéfied**

01. *Prayer*
02. *'Ábdu'l-Bahá*
03. *Muhammad*
04. *Robert Frost*
05. *Rosemary Plummer*
06. *A Luncheon Party for 'Abdu'l-Bahá*



#### **Fortéfied**

07. *Christian Writings*
08. *Rumi*
09. *Bahá'í Writings*
10. *John O'Donohue*
11. *Kahlil Gibran*
12. *Wisdom of Sirac*
13. *Ralph Waldo Emerson*



14. **Fortéfied**
15. *Author Unknown*
16. *William Shakespeare*
17. *Henri J.M. Nouwen*
18. *Saadi (Persian poet)*



19. *Bahá'í Writings*

#### **Fortéfied**

*Of all the gifts that a wise providence grants us  
to make life full and happy,  
friendship is the most beautiful.  
Epicurus*

 "Lady When I Behold Roses" – J Wilby

**Fortéfied Choir  
Director John Allason**

01. O Divine Providence! This assemblage is composed of Thy friends who are attracted to Thy beauty and are set ablaze by the fire of Thy love. Turn these souls into heavenly angels, resuscitate them through the breath of Thy Holy Spirit, grant them eloquent tongues and resolute hearts, bestow upon them heavenly power and merciful susceptibilities, cause them to become the promulgators of the oneness of mankind and the cause of love and concord in the world of humanity, so that the perilous darkness of ignorant prejudice may vanish through the light of the Sun of Truth, this dreary world may become illumined, this material realm may absorb the rays of the world of spirit, these different colors may merge into one color and the melody of praise may rise to the kingdom of Thy sanctity.

Verily, Thou art the Omnipotent, and the Almighty!  
~ 'Abdu'l-Bahá

*Sweet is the scene where genial friendship plays  
the pleasing game of interchanging praise.  
Thomas Hobbes*

02. Now is the time for the lovers of God to raise high the banners of unity, to intone in the assemblages of the world, the verses of friendship and love and to demonstrate to all that the grace of God is one. Thus will the tabernacles of holiness be upraised on the summits of the earth, gathering all peoples into the protective shadow of the Word of Oneness. This great bounty will dawn over the world when the lovers of God shall arise to carry out His Teachings, and to scatter far and wide the fresh, sweet scents of universal love.

~'Ábdu'l-Bahá

03 The best person in God's sight is the best amongst his friends; and the best of neighbours near God is the best person in his own neighbourhood.

A Muslim who mixeth with people and putteth up with their inconveniences, is better than one who doth not mix with them, and bear with patience.

Do you love your creator? Love your fellow beings first.

~Muhammad

***What is a friend?  
A single soul dwelling in two bodies.  
Aristotle***

04. A Time to Talk

When a friend calls to me from the road  
And slows his horse to a meaning walk,  
I don't stand still and look around  
On all the hills I haven't hoed,  
And shout from where I am, 'What is it?'  
No, not as there is a time to talk.  
I thrust my hoe in the mellow ground,  
Blade-end up and five feet tall,  
And plod: I go up to the stone wall  
For a friendly visit.  
~Robert Frost

05. Black mother you are beautiful your skin black like a crow in a tree.  
Black mother you've a warm gentle heart like the spirits that walked  
upon this place  
Created in the Dreamtime.  
Black mother!  
Black mother you're beautiful like the kangaroos who carry and feed  
joeys in their pouch.  
Oh! what more can I say except this—  
Is there a part which I owe you  
Or perhaps a sentimental path  
Making us lifelong friends?  
~ Rosemary Plummer, Aboriginal poem from Central Australia

***We have flown the air like birds and  
swum the sea like fishes,  
but have yet to learn the simple act of  
walking the earth as brothers.  
Dr Martin Luther King***

## o6. A Luncheon Party for 'Abdu'l-Bahá

During the visit of 'Abdu'l-Bahá to America in the early 1900's he was invited to speak to universities, churches and synagogues, numerous conferences and societies. He was a figure of interest to the press who followed his travels and quoted from his talks regularly. When he was in Washington D.C., the chargé d'affaires of the Persian Legation and his wife had arranged a luncheon in his honour. Their guest list included members of the social and political elite in the capital, as well as a number of Bahá'ís. 'Abdu'l-Bahá had invited Louis Gregory to visit him in the morning of the day of the luncheon. Louis Gregory was a black gentleman employed by the government. Gregory was surprised at the time scheduled for the visit, as although he had not been invited by the chargé d'affaires he knew of the luncheon plans. He arrived on time for his meeting with 'Abdu'l-Bahá. Their conference seemed to go on and on—as if indeed Abdu'l-Bahá might be prolonging it deliberately.

Eventually the butler announced that luncheon was being served. 'Abdu'l-Bahá led the way, the invited guests following closely behind. Mr. Gregory was perplexed: should he leave or wait for the Master to return? The guests were seated when suddenly the honoured Guest rose, looked around and then asked in English, "Where is My friend, Mr. Gregory?", adding "My friend, Mr. Gregory, must lunch with Me!" Louis Gregory, not being on the luncheon list, had naturally remained behind. Now the chargé d'affaires hastened after him.

'Abdu'l-Bahá rearranged the place setting at His right, the seat of honour, of course—ignoring utterly the delicate laws of protocol—and the luncheon started only after Mr. Gregory had been seated. Then, in a most natural manner, as if nothing at all unusual had happened in the capital that day in 1912, with tact and humour, 'Abdu'l-Bahá electrified the already startled guests by talking about the unity of mankind.

***Take pride not in love for yourselves  
but in love for your fellow creatures.  
Glory not in love for your country,  
but in love for all mankind.  
Bahá'u'lláh***



**"Flower of Joy"**  
- Swedish folk ballad  
Fortéfied Choir

- o7. Ye are my friends, if ye do whatsoever I command you. Henceforth I call you not servants; for the servant knoweth not what his lord doeth: but I have called you friends; for all things that I have heard of my Father I have made known unto you. Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you, and ordained you, that ye should go and bring forth fruit, and that your fruit should remain: that whatsoever ye shall ask of the Father in my name, he may give it you.

John 15:14-16

***A friend may be waiting behind a stranger's face.***  
***Maya Angelou***

- o8. Set out now, while you're strong, on the heart's vast plain:  
You'll never discover joy on the plain of the body.  
The heart's the only house of safety, my friends:  
It has fountains, and rose gardens within rose gardens.  
Turn to the heart and go forward, travelers of the night;  
there's where you'll find trees and streams of living water.  
~Rumi

***Think where man's glory most begins and ends***  
***and say my glory was I had such friends.***  
***W.B. Yeats***

09. O servants! The springs of divine bestowal are streaming forth. Quaff ye therefrom, that by the aid of the incomparable Friend ye may be sanctified from this darksome world of dust and enter His abode.  
Renounce the world and direct your steps toward the city of the Beloved.  
Say: O well-beloved ones! The tabernacle of unity hath been raised; regard ye not one another as strangers. Ye are the fruits of one tree, and the leaves of one branch.  
~Bahá'u'lláh

10. One of the tasks of true friendship is to listen compassionately and creatively to the hidden silences. Often secrets are not revealed in words, they lie concealed in the silence between the words or in the depth of what is unsayable between two people.  
~ John O'Donohue

***Each friend represents a world in us,  
a world possibly not born until they arrive,  
and it is only by this meeting that a new world is born.  
Anaís Nin***



11. On Friendship.  
And a youth said, "Speak to us of Friendship."  
Your friend is your needs answered.  
He is your field which you sow with love and reap with thanksgiving.  
And he is your board and your fireside.  
For you come to him with your hunger, and you seek him for peace.  
When your friend speaks his mind you fear not the "nay" in your own  
mind, nor do you withhold the "ay."  
And when he is silent your heart ceases not to listen to his heart;  
For without words, in friendship, all thoughts, all desires, all  
expectations are born and shared, with joy that is unclaimed.  
When you part from your friend, you grieve not;  
For that which you love most in him may be clearer in his absence, as the  
mountain to the climber is clearer from the plain.  
And let there be no purpose in friendship save the deepening of the spirit.  
For love that seeks aught but the disclosure of its own mystery is not love  
but a net cast forth: and only the unprofitable is caught.  
And let your best be for your friend.  
If he must know the ebb of your tide, let him know its flood also.  
For what is your friend that you should seek him with hours to kill?  
Seek him always with hours to live.  
For it is his 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

***A faithful friend is the medicine of life.***  
***Ecclesiastes 6:16***

12. Faithful friends are a sturdy shelter:  
whoever finds one has found a treasure.  
Faithful friends are beyond price;  
no amount can balance their worth.  
Faithful friends are life-saving medicine;  
and those who fear the Lord will find them.  
Those who fear the Lord direct their friendship aright,  
for as they are so are their neighbours also.  
Sirach 6: 14-17

***This is my commandment:  
That ye love one another, as I have loved you.  
Greater love hath no man than this,  
that a man lay down his life for his friends.  
John 15: 12-13***

13. A friend is a person with whom I may be sincere. Before him I may think aloud. I am arrived at last in the presence of a man so real and equal, that I may drop even those undermost garments of dissimulation, courtesy, and second thought, which men never put off, and may deal with him with the simplicity and wholeness with which one chemical atom meets another.  
~Ralph Waldo Emerson

*A man that hath friends must shew himself friendly: and there is a friend who sticketh closer than a brother.*

*Proverbs 18:24*



" I Don't Know Why" – Ahlert/Turk

Fortéfied Choir

14. **Nails in the Fence**

This is an inspirational story about a little girl who had trouble controlling her temper, but she not only learned how to control it, she also learned the meaning of friendship and how, sometimes, the things we say can actually hurt the people we love:

There once was a little girl who could not control her bad temper. So, her mother gave her a bag of nails and told her that every time she lost her temper, she must hammer a nail into the back of the fence.

The first day the girl had driven 37 nails into the fence. Over the next few weeks, as she learned to control her anger, the number of nails she hammered daily gradually dwindled down. She discovered it was easier to hold her temper than to drive those nails into the fence.

Finally the day came when the girl didn't lose her temper at all. She told her mother about this and her mother suggested that now she pull out one nail for each day that she was able to hold her temper. The days passed and the young girl was finally able to tell her mother that all the nails were gone. The mother then took her daughter by the hand and led her to the fence.

She said, "You have done well, my daughter, but look at the holes in the fence. The fence will never be the same. When you say things in anger, they leave a scar just like this one." You can stick a knife into a person and draw it out. It won't matter how many times you say "I'm sorry," the wound is still there. A verbal wound can be as bad as a physical one.

Your friends are rare jewels indeed. They will make you smile and laugh, and encourage you to succeed or dissuade you from doing wrong. They lend an ear, they share words of praise and they always want to open their hearts. So, cherish your friends, and beware of moments when anger or the wrong choice of words may cut deeper than a knife.

~ Author unknown

***We cannot tell the precise moment when friendship is formed.***

***As in filling a vessel drop by drop,  
there is at last a drop which makes it run over;  
so in a series of kindnesses there is at last one  
which makes the heart run over.***

***Ray Bradbury***

15. He that is thy friend indeed,  
He will help thee in thy need:  
If thou sorrow, he will weep;  
If thou wake, he cannot sleep:  
Thus of every grief in heart  
He with thee doth bear a part.  
These are certain signs to know  
Faithful friend from flattering foe.

~ William Shakespeare

16. When we honestly ask ourselves which person in our lives mean the most to us, we often find that it is those who, instead of giving advice, solutions, or cures, have chosen rather to share our pain and touch our wounds with a warm and tender hand. The friend who can be silent with us in a moment of despair or confusion, who can stay with us in an hour of grief and bereavement, who can tolerate not knowing, not curing, not healing and face with us the reality of our powerlessness, that is a friend who cares.  
~ Henri J.M. Nouwen

***Piglet sidled up to Pooh from behind.  
"Pooh?" he whispered.  
"Yes, Piglet?"  
"Nothing," said Piglet, taking Pooh's hand.  
"I just wanted to be sure of you."  
A.A. Milne***

17. How could I ever thank my Friend?  
No thanks could ever begin to be worthy.  
Every hair of my body is a gift from Him;  
How could I ever thank Him for each hair?  
Praise that lavish Lord forever  
Who from nothing conjures all living being!  
Who could ever describe His goodness?  
His infinite glory lays all praise waste.  
Look, He has graced you a robe of splendor  
From childhood's first cries to old age!  
It is horrible to die blackened by sin.  
Never let dust settle on your mirror's shining;  
Let it once grow dull and it will never polish.  
When you work in the world to earn your living

Do not for one moment, rely on your own strength.  
Self-worshiper, don't you understand anything yet?  
It is God alone that gives you your power.  
If, by striving, you achieve something good,  
Don't claim the credit all for yourself;  
It is fate that decides who wins and who loses  
and all success streams only from the Grace of God.  
In this world you never stand by your own strength;  
It is the invisible that sustains your every moment.  
~Saadi (Persian Poet)

18. Consort with all the peoples, kindreds and religions of the world with the utmost truthfulness, uprightness, faithfulness, kindness, good-will and friendliness; that all the world of being may be filled with the holy ecstasy of the grace of Bahá, that ignorance, enmity, hate and rancor may vanish from the world and the darkness of estrangement amidst the peoples and kindreds of the world may give way to the Light of Unity. Should other peoples and nations be unfaithful to you show your fidelity unto them, should they be unjust toward you show justice towards them, should they keep aloof from you attract them to yourself, should they show their enmity be friendly towards them, should they poison your lives sweeten their souls, should they inflict a wound upon you be a salve to their sores. Such are the attributes of the sincere! Such are the attributes of the truthful.  
~Ábdu'l-Bahá

***There is a magnet in your heart that will attract true friends.  
That magnet is unselfishness,  
thinking of others first...when you learn to live for others,  
they will learn to live for you.  
Paramahansa Yogananda***



"Corcovado" – Lees/Jobin  
Fortéfied Choir

\*

Please join us for refreshments

## Soul Food

*Soul Food* is an open community event hosted on the first Sunday of each month and whose purpose is to inspire us to transform our lives, our neighbourhoods and our communities with actions that promote the unity and betterment of society. Set in the tranquil setting of the Baha'i Centre of Learning, it provides an occasion to be inspired and reflect on uplifting themes with our neighbours. 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, Africa. It is also proudly supported by the Victorian Multicultural Commission. Original programs are available for free download from [www.tasbcl.com](http://www.tasbcl.com)

**Soul Food - First Sunday of each month.**

**Venue: Bahá'í Centre of Learning, Hobart**

**Time: 3.00pm – 4pm**

### **Dates for 2015:**

- September 4<sup>th</sup> - The Light of Universal Peace
- October 4<sup>th</sup> - The Inner Balance – Spiritual Health
- November 6<sup>th</sup> - Children -Tender plants in the garden of life
- December 3<sup>rd</sup> - Reflections
- January 24<sup>th</sup> 2016 - World Religion Day*



## **Children's classes in the Neighbourhood**

Regular children's classes are held in communities around Tasmania and provide moral, spiritual and virtues-based training essential in nurturing the inner capacities of children. The classes aim to build a strong moral framework which will assist children to achieve excellence in material, intellectual, and spiritual aspects of life. For inquiries or more information please call Shohreh's mobile 0419 585 453.

***"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

Developed for youth between the ages of 12 and 15, these programs are designed to empower and equip young people with the knowledge and concepts that will encourage the expression of their personal potential, and develop the skills and attitudes necessary to become agents of change - for themselves and their communities. Through engagement in service initiatives, artistic and extracurricular activities they foster a sense of world citizenship and a lifelong commitment to serve humanity.

The junior youth spiritual empowerment program is open to young people aged between 11 and 14, and assists them to navigate through a crucial stage in their lives.

Those in their early adolescent years possess altruism, a sense of justice, eagerness to learn about the universe, and a desire to contribute to the construction of a better world.

The program helps them 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 qualities (virtues), their intellectual capabilities and their capacities for service to society, the participants come to see that they can become agents of positive change in the world.

The program adopts a participatory mode of learning where the facilitator and participants learn from each other.

Groups of participants engage in activities such as artistic expression, discussion, drama, cooperative games, study of literature, story telling and acts of community service.

The junior youth program explores themes from a Baha'i perspective, but is not a formal religious education program. It is open to all, subject to parental approval. Junior youth groups meet on a regular basis and there is no written homework.

All program facilitators are certified under the Baha'i Child Protection Policy, which includes a mandatory police check. Parents are welcome to meet with the facilitators to learn about the program.

For enquiries or more information please call James Pepperell ☎️ 0404352042 or email him [james.pepperell@gmail.com](mailto:james.pepperell@gmail.com)

## Study Circles

### Study Circles

The Bahá'í Community is offering a series of life-changing circles of study. The purpose of Bahá'í 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 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 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. Study circles are held in an uplifting environment conducive to 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 discussions with others and the use of the arts.

For inquiries or more information please email Shirin at [shirin@iinet.net.au](mailto:shirin@iinet.net.au)

*join us* for the next program –

**“Youth – Bridge to the Future”**

Sunday 2<sup>nd</sup> August, 3pm

### **The Bahá'í Faith**

You can find out more about the Bahá'ís and their world embracing vision at [www.bahai.org.au](http://www.bahai.org.au) or feel free to call 03 6234 7654 for more information.

All Soul Food programs are available for free download from  
[www.soulfood.com.au](http://www.soulfood.com.au)