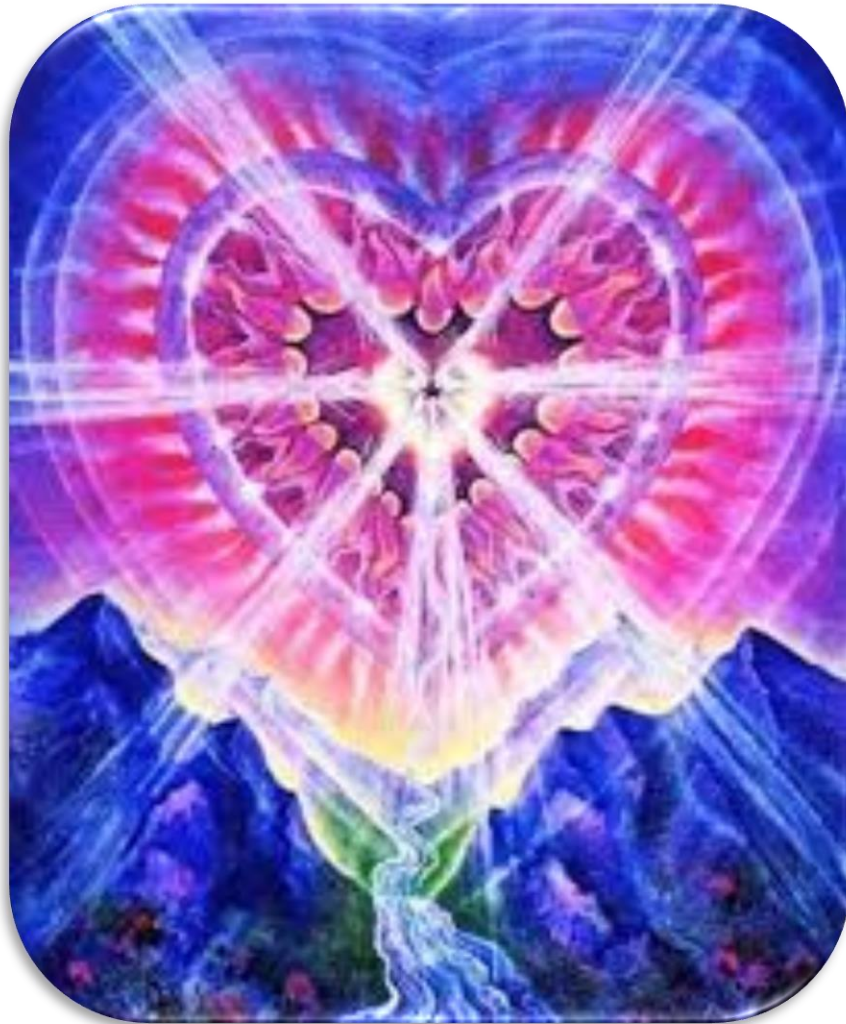


# Soul Food

A Kindly and Radiant Heart



**July 2020**

## A Kind and Radiant Heart

July 2020

This month's program will reflect on the spiritual significance of kindness for the well-being of the individual and society.

### Program



01. *Prayer*

02. *Bahá'í Writings*

03. *Christian Writings*

04. *Islamic Writings*

05. *Buddhist Writings*

06. *Dalai Lama XIV*

07. *Hindu Writings*

08. *Bahá'í Writings*



09. *Sis Sabrina*

10. *The Virtues Project*

11. *Bahá'í Writings*

12. *Thich Nhat Hanh*

13. *Sharon Salzberg*

14. *Paramahansa Yogananda*



15. *Bahá'í Writings*

16. *Mary Hanford Ford*

17. *Mother Teresa*

18. *The Prajnaparamita*

19. *Bahá'í Writings*

20. *Stephanie Dowrick*

21. *Leunig*

22. *Bahá'í Writings*



*He is God! O God, my God! Bestow upon me a pure heart,  
like unto a pearl.*

*'Abdu'l-Bahá*



1. Create in me a pure heart, O my God, and renew a tranquil conscience within me, O my Hope! Through the spirit of power confirm Thou me in Thy Cause, O my Best-Beloved, and by the light of Thy glory reveal unto me Thy path, O Thou the Goal of my desire! Through the power of Thy transcendent might lift me up unto the heaven of Thy holiness, O Source of my being, and by the breezes of Thine eternity gladden me, O Thou Who art my God! Let Thine everlasting melodies breathe tranquillity on me, O my Companion, and let the riches of Thine ancient countenance deliver me from all except Thee, O my Master, and let the tidings of the revelation of Thine incorruptible Essence bring me joy, O Thou Who art the most manifest of the manifest and the most hidden of the hidden!

~Bahá'í Writings

2. **O SON OF SPIRIT!**

My first counsel is this: Possess a pure, kindly and radiant heart, that thine may be a sovereignty ancient, imperishable and everlasting.

O SON OF BEING!

Thy heart is My home; sanctify it for My descent.

Thy spirit is My place of revelation; cleanse it for My manifestation.

O SON OF MAN!

Rejoice in the gladness of thine heart, that thou mayest be worthy to meet Me and to mirror forth My beauty.

~Bahá'u'lláh, Hidden Words Arabic no 1, 36 and 59

***Be kind to one another, tender-hearted, forgiving one another, as  
God in Christ forgave you.***

***Ephesians 4:32***

3. If there be among you a poor man of one of thy brethren within any of thy gates in thy land which the Lord thy God giveth thee, thou shalt not harden thine heart, nor shut thine hand from thy poor brother: but thou shalt open thine hand wide unto him, and shalt surely lend him sufficient for his need, in that which he wanteth. Thou shalt surely give him, and thine heart shall not be grieved when thou givest unto him: because that for this thing the Lord thy God shall bless thee in all thy works, and in all that thou puttest thine hand unto.

For the poor shall never cease out of the land: therefore I command thee, saying, Thou shalt open thine hand wide unto thy brother, to thy poor, and to thy needy, in thy land.

~ Christian Writings

4. The people entitled to the Abode of Bliss are three;  
The first, a just king, a doer of good to his people endowed with virtue;  
The second, an affectionate man, of a tender heart to relations and others; The third, a virtuous man.

~ the Sayings of Muhammad, p.85-6

***What actions are most excellent?***

***To gladden the heart of a human being, to feed the hungry,  
to help the afflicted, to lighten the sorrow of the sorrowful,  
and to remove the wrongs of the injured.***

***The Sayings of Muhammad***

5. Undisturbed shall our mind remain, no evil words shall escape our lips; friendly and full of sympathy shall we remain, with heart full of love, and free from any hidden malice, and that person shall we penetrate with loving thoughts, wide, deep, boundless, freed from anger and hatred.

~Buddha

6. Just as compassion is the wish that all sentient beings be free of suffering, loving-kindness is the wish that all may enjoy happiness. As with compassion, when cultivating loving-kindness it is important to start by taking a specific individual as a focus of our meditation, and we then extend the scope of our concern further and further, to eventually encompass and embrace all sentient beings. Again, we begin by taking a neutral person, a person who inspires no strong feelings in us, as our object of meditation. We then extend this meditation to individual friends and family members and, ultimately, our particular enemies. We must use a real individual as the focus of our meditation, and then enhance our compassion and loving-kindness toward that person so that we can really experience compassion and loving-kindness toward others.

~ Dalai Lama XIV

***As rain falls equally on the just and the unjust, do not burden your heart with judgments but rain your kindness equally on all.***

***Gautama Buddha***

7. He who has let go of hatred, who treats all beings with kindness and compassion, who is always serene, unmoved by pain or pleasure, free of the “I” and “mine”, self-controlled, firm and patient, his whole mind focused on me –that is the man I love best.  
~Bhagavad-Gita

8. The effect of the divine teachings is manifest in the perfect purity of their hearts. That is why Christ has addressed the world, saying, “Except ye be converted, and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven” —that is, men must become pure in heart to know God. The teachings have had great effect. Spiritual souls! Tender souls! The hearts of all children are of the utmost purity. They are mirrors upon which no dust has fallen. But this purity is on account of weakness and innocence, not on account of any strength and testing, for as this is the early period of their childhood, their hearts and minds are unsullied by the world. They cannot display any great intelligence. They have neither hypocrisy nor deceit. This is on account of the child’s weakness, whereas the man becomes pure through his strength. Through the power of intelligence he becomes simple; through the great power of reason and understanding and not through the power of weakness he becomes sincere. When he attains to the state of perfection, he will receive these qualities; his heart becomes purified, his spirit enlightened, his soul is sensitized and tender—all through his great strength.  
~Abdu’l-Baha, Promulgation of Universal Peace, Talk 24 April 1912

***O My brother! A pure heart is as a mirror; cleanse it with the  
burnish of love and severance from all save God.  
Bahá’u’lláh***



## 9. Story of a Rider and an Old Man

Let me share with you a story once read about a rider and an old man. It was a bitter, cold evening. The old man waited for a ride across the river. The wait seemed endless. His body became numb and stiff from the frigid north wind. He heard the faint, steady rhythm of approaching hooves galloping along the frozen path.

He watched as several horsemen approached and left without acknowledging his presence. Finally, the last rider neared the spot where the old man sat like a snow statue.

As this one drew near, the old man said:

“Sir, would you mind giving an old man a ride to the other side?”

There doesn’t appear to be a passageway by foot.”

Reining his horse, the rider replied:

“Certainly. Climb up.”

Seeing the old man was unable to lift his half-frozen body from the ground, the horseman dismounted and helped the old man onto the horse. The horseman took the old man all the way to his home, which was just a few miles away.

As they neared the tiny cottage, the horseman inquired:

“I noticed that you let several other riders pass by, then when I came, you immediately asked for a ride. I’m curious why, on such a bitter winter night; you would wait and ask the last rider. What if I had refused and left you there?”

The old man lowered himself from the horse, looked the rider straight in the eyes, and replied:

“I’ve been around here for some time. I reckon I know people pretty well.”

He continued:

“I looked into the eyes of the other riders and saw there was no concern for my situation. But when I looked into your eyes, kindness and compassion were evident. I knew that your gentle spirit would welcome the opportunity to give me assistance in my time of need.”  
~Sis Sabrina. About Islam. A Motivational Story About Kindness and Compassion.

10. **What is Kindness:**

Kindness is caring that springs from compassion.  
We have genuine concern for the love of others.  
We are warm, friendly and ready to help.  
We listen for the needs beneath the words.  
We give tender attention in simple ways that bring others happiness.  
Kindness is the daily bread of love.  
When we feel angry, we resist the temptation to be cruel.  
We balance honesty with tact.  
We are good stewards of the earth and all living things.  
We remember to be kind to ourselves.  
When we fill our own cup, our kindness naturally overflows to others.  
~The Virtues Project

***Do not be content with showing friendship in words alone;  
let your heart burn with loving-kindness  
for all who may cross your path.  
Bahá'í Writings***

11. First in a human being's way of life must be purity, then freshness, cleanliness, and independence of spirit. First must the stream bed be cleansed, then may the sweet river waters be led into it. Chaste eyes enjoy the beatific vision of the Lord and know what this encounter meaneth; a pure sense inhaleth the fragrances that blow from the rose gardens of His grace; a burnished heart will mirror forth the comely face of truth.  
~Bahá'í Writings



12. **Heart Like a River**

If you pour a handful of salt into a cup of water, the water becomes undrinkable. But if you pour the salt into a river, people can continue to draw the water to cook, wash and drink. The river is immense, and it has the capacity to receive, embrace and transform. When our hearts are small, our understanding and compassion are limited, and we suffer. We can't accept or tolerate others and their shortcomings, and we demand that they change. But when our hearts expand, these same things don't make us suffer anymore. We have a lot of understanding and compassion and can embrace others. We accept others as they are, and then they have chance to transform. So the big question is: how do we help our hearts to grow?

~Thich Nhat Hanh

***Religion is not something outside, but in our hearts.***

***The essence of any religion is a good heart.***

***The Dalai Lama***

13. Sometimes we think that to develop an open heart, to be truly loving and compassionate, means that we need to be passive, to allow others to abuse us, to smile and let anyone do what they want with us. Yet this is not what is meant by compassion. Quite the contrary. Compassion is not at all weak. It is the strength that arises out of seeing the true nature of suffering in the world. Compassion allows us to bear witness to that suffering, whether it is in ourselves or others, without fear; it allows us to name injustice without hesitation, and to act strongly, with all the skill at our disposal. To develop this mind state of compassion...is to learn to live, as the Buddha put it, with sympathy for all living beings, without exception.

-Sharon Salzberg

14. As the vital rays of the sun nurture all, so should you spread rays of hope in the hearts of the poor and forsaken, kindle courage in the hearts of the despondent, and light a new strength in the hearts of those who think they are failures. When you realise that life is a joyous battle of duty and at the same time a passing dream, and when you become filled with the joy of making others happy by giving them kindness and peace, in God's eyes your life is a success.  
~Paramahansa Yogananda

***How easy is it for one benevolent being to diffuse pleasure around him, and how truly is a kind heart a fountain of gladness, making everything in its vicinity to freshen into smiles.***

*Washington Irving*



15. O thou handmaid of God! In this day, to thank God for His bounties consisteth in possessing a radiant heart, and a soul open to the promptings of the spirit. This is the essence of thanksgiving. As for offering thanks by speaking out or writing, although this is indeed acceptable, yet when compared with that other thanksgiving, it is only a semblance and unreal; for the essential thing is these intimations of the spirit, these emanations from the deep recess of the heart. It is my hope that thou wilt be favoured therewith  
~Bahá'í Writings

16. Often when the family of Abdu'l-Baha was about to sit down for dinner, the report would come of some unfortunate person who was starving, and who had been overlooked in the visits of the day. Then quickly the hot appetizing meal would be bundled into a basket, and rushed away to the suffering family, while Abdu'l –Baha would smile and say, "It does not matter for us, we had dinner last night, we shall have dinner tomorrow!"
- Often he sent his bed to a feverish invalid, because it required thirty-six hours at least to procure a bed from Haifa, the nearest point of supply. Abdu'l-Baha would be perfectly comfortable wrapped in a blanket, and lying upon the floor of his room, or the roof of his house, while he would not have been able to sleep at all, conscious of a bedless invalid, feverish and pain-racked. He could not endure the sight of suffering which he was able to relieve.
- ~Mary Hanford Ford

***Kind hearts are the gardens.  
Kind thoughts are the roots.  
Kind words are the blossoms.  
Kind deeds are the fruits.  
Kirpal Sing***

17. Be kind and merciful. Let no one come to you without leaving better and happier. Be the living expression of God's kindness; kindness in your face, kindness in your eyes, kindness in your smile, kindness in your warm greeting. In the slums we are the light of God's kindness to the poor. To children, to the poor, all who suffer and are lonely, give always a happy smile. Give them not only your care, but also your heart.
- ~Mother Teresa, A Gift for God, p.51-2

18. Let your generosity be spacious, free of conditions and of limits.  
Do good!  
Do good not for your own sake only but for the sake of everyone in the universe... Those who become truly wise see that the infinite variety of forms in this world are not a distraction or hindrance to spiritual understanding: they are a healing medicine in themselves.

How is this so?

It's because they are seen and perceived as interdependent. They have no separate self. They express not just the mystery but also the energy of a wholly-encompassing love. Not only the truly wise but each one of us is living in a world of infinite connections. We dwell in an unbounded infinity of love.  
~from the Prajnaparamita.

***Kindness is like a warm blanket of snow,  
softly covering and gently touching the heart.***  
*Heather Wolf*

19. O Thou the Compassionate God. Bestow upon me a heart which, like unto glass, may be illumined with the light of Thy love, and confer upon me thoughts which may change this world into a rose garden through the outpourings of heavenly grace.  
~'Abdu'l-Bahá

20. May I open to the ease and comfort of God's grace,  
May I remember the quiet times when something shifted within me,  
and I grew in grace.  
May I remember the moments of kindness when my heart opened,  
And I grew in grace.  
May I remember when I reached beyond my own worries to help  
another, and I grew in grace.  
May I remember the times of darkness when inspiration arose,  
and I grew in grace.  
May our world be filled with moments of grace.  
May we bring grace to life through our daily actions.  
May everyone live in grace, happiness and peace.  
May I live in grace, happiness and peace.  
May I embody grace.  
~Stephanie Dowrick

***The heart benevolent and kind most resembles God.***  
***Robert Burns***

- 21 We give thanks for the blessing of winter:  
Season to cherish the heart.  
To make warmth and quiet for the heart.  
To make soups and broths for the heart.  
To cook for the heart and read for the heart.  
To curl up softly and nestle with the heart.  
To sleep deeply and gently at one with the heart.  
To dream with the heart.  
To spend time with the heart.  
A long, long time of peace with the heart.  
We give thanks for the blessing of winter:  
Season to cherish the heart.  
Amen  
Leunig, The Prayer Tree

22. This is the hour when ye must associate with all the earth's peoples in extreme kindness and love, and be to them the signs and tokens of God's great mercy.
- Ye must become the very soul of the world, the living spirit in the body of the children of men. In this wondrous Age, at this time... the Word of God hath infused such awesome power into the inmost essence of humankind that He hath stripped men's human qualities of all effect, and hath, with His all conquering might, unified the peoples in a vast sea of oneness.
- 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.
- In every dispensation, there hath been the commandment of fellowship and love,... praised be God, the commandments of God are not delimited, not restricted to any one group of people, rather have all the friends been commanded to show forth fellowship and love, consideration and generosity and loving-kindness to every community on earth... He hath guided all the peoples of the earth to oneness... He hath lit man's world, and made this earth of dust to send forth streams of light.
- ~Bahá'í Writings

***It is your duty to be exceedingly kind to every human being, and to wish him well; to work for the upliftment of society...until ye change the world of man into the world of God.***

*'Abdu'l-Baha*



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.soulfood.com.au/tas/](http://www.soulfood.com.au/tas/)

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

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

**Time: 3.00pm – 4pm**

## 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: Sandhya Keenoo sandhya.keenoo@gmail.com ☎️ 0448507285



## 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 Jennifer's mobile 📞 0404352042

***"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, 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. Young people's spiritual capacity, the basis for their own happiness and sense of well-being, is a powerful force for social change. 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 (animator) 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. Junior youth groups meet on a regular basis, is open to all, subject to parental approval, 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 an animator to learn more about the program. For enquiries or more information, please call Niloufar Pepperell 0412899498 email [snshahzadi@gmail.com](mailto:snshahzadi@gmail.com)

*join us* for the next program

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

## “The Power of Words”

### Upcoming Dates and Titles for Soul Food 2020:

September 6th ,	Unfurling the Banners of Peace
October 4th ,	The Ornament of Justice and Fairness
November 1st ,	Polishing the Gems – the education of Children
December 6th	The Joy of Giving

*We extend our warmest appreciation to the performers who have  
Generously contributed to our program.*

**Our Artists this month:**

# **Please Note:**

Should the current government restrictions still be in place in June our programs will be sent to all email recipients and available to download on the Hobart Baha'i Centre of Learning/Soul Food Face Book .

We miss you all very much and look forward to the time when we can again enjoy a Soul Food program at the Bahá'í Centre.

**Soul Food Team:**

**Erica Davidson, Lyn Newitt, Val De Nadai**

Our other exciting program normally held every Tuesday afternoon  
12.30pm – 1.30pm in the Tranquility Room which is a short  
Devotional designed to lift up our spirits and so is called:

## “Lunchtime Lift”

That we love to share this with YOU. Is also on hold until  
further notice.



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

The Baha'i Faith is an independent world religion, the main principles of which are:

- The Oneness of God
- The oneness of humankind
- The independent investigation of truth
- The essential harmony between science and religion
- Equality of men and women
- Elimination of prejudice of all kind
- Universal compulsory education
- Spiritual solution to economic problems
- A universal auxiliary language
- Universal peace upheld by a world federation

Baha'is strive to put into practice, in their own lives and to the betterment of others, the spiritual and practical teachings of their Faith.

In the Baha'i Faith belief must be expressed in deeds – service to others is service to God.

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