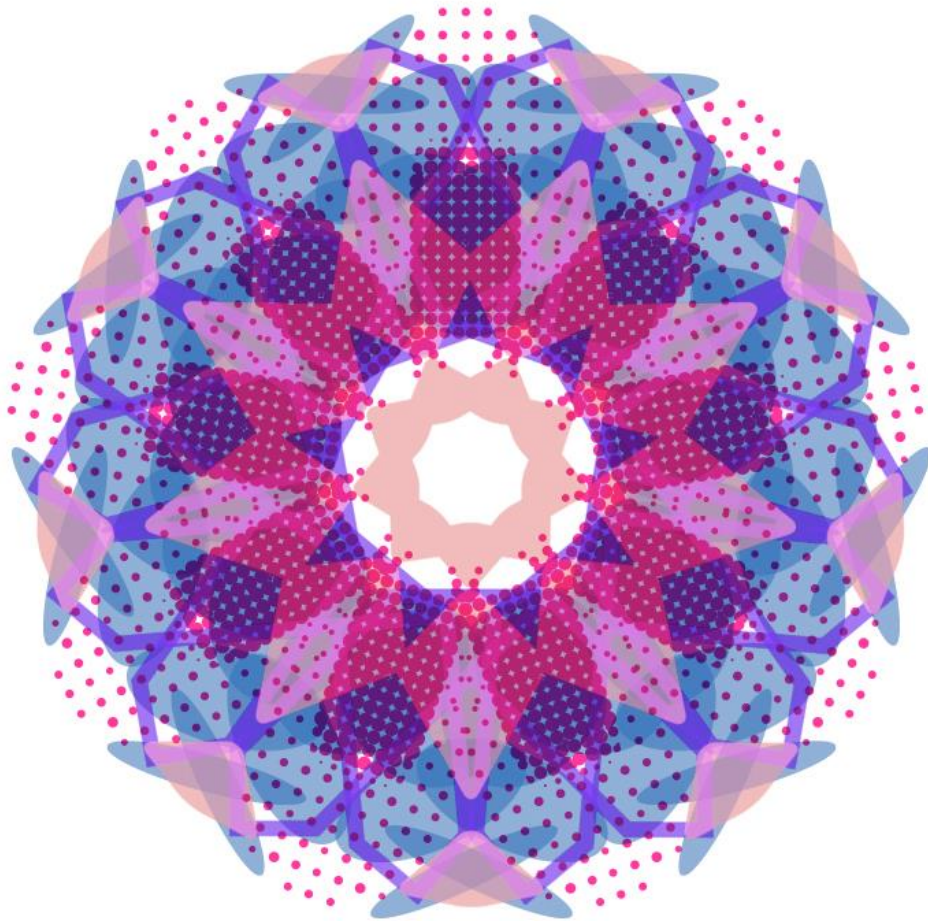


Soul Food

Blessings Shared



October 2016


Blessings Shared

This month's program will explore the profound impact that the acts of giving and receiving can have on us.


Program

 **Mamba – (Guitar / percussion)**

01. *Prayer*
02. *Bahá'í Writings*
03. *Islamic Writings*
04. *Ravi Ravindra*
05. *Christian Writings*
06. *Kahlil Gibran*
07. *Lao Tzu, Tao Te Ching*

 **Mamba– (Guitar/percussion)**

08. *The Virtues Program*
09. *Bahá'í Writings*
10. *Chrétien de Troyes*
11. *J.A. Perez*
12. *Unknown Author*
13. *Joyce Sequiche Hifler*
14. *Diane Rayner*

 **Alan Welch - Guitar**

15. *The Dhammapada*
16. *George Eliot*
17. *Christian Writings*
18. *William Penn*
19. *Leunig*
20. *Bahá'í Writings*

 **Alan Welch - Guitar**

***To give and be generous are attributes of Mine.
Well it is with him that adorneth himself with My virtues.
Bahá'í Writings***



*African Infusion
'Mamba'
Alan Welch - guitar,
Mwase Makalani -percussion*

1. Prayer

Lord! Pitiful are we, grant us Thy favour; poor, bestow upon us a share from the ocean of Thy wealth; needy, do Thou satisfy us; abased, give us Thy glory. The fowls of the air and the beasts of the field receive their meat each day from Thee, and all beings partake of Thy care and loving-kindness.

Deprive not this feeble one of Thy wondrous grace and vouchsafe by Thy might unto this helpless soul Thy bounty.

Give us our daily bread, and grant Thine increase in the necessities of life that we may be dependent on none other but Thee, may commune wholly with Thee, may walk in Thy ways and declare Thy mysteries.

Thou art the Almighty and the Loving and the Provider of all mankind.

~Bahá'í Writings

2. Be generous in prosperity and thankful in adversity.
Be worthy of the trust of thy neighbour and look upon him with a bright and friendly face.
Be a treasure to the poor, an admonisher to the rich, an answerer of the cry of the needy, a preserver of the sanctity of thy pledge.
Be fair in thy judgment and guarded in thy speech.
Be unjust to no man and show all meekness to all men.
Be as a lamp unto them that walk in darkness, a joy to the sorrowful, a sea for the thirsty, a haven for the distressed, an upholder and defender of the victim of oppression.
Let integrity and uprightness distinguish all thine acts.
Be a home for the stranger, a balm to the suffering, a tower of strength for the fugitive.
~ Bahá'í Writings

***Give, and it will be given to you.
They will pour into your lap a good measure, pressed down,
shaken together, and running over.
For by your standard of measure it will be
measured to you in return.
Christian Writings***

3. Do good deeds which is within your capacity without being overtaxed, as Allah does not get tired of giving rewards, but surely you will get tired, and the best deed (act of worship) in the sight of Allah is that which is done regularly.
~Islamic Writings

4. As spiritual searchers we need to become freer and freer of the attachment to our own smallness in which we get occupied with me-me-me. Pondering on large ideas or standing in front of things which remind us of a vast scale can free us from acquisitiveness and competitiveness and from our likes and dislikes. If we sit with an increasing stillness of the body and attune our mind to the sky or to the ocean or to the myriad stars at night, or any other indicators of vastness, the mind gradually stills and the heart is filled with quiet joy. Also recalling our own experiences in which we acted generously or with compassion for the simple delight of it without expectation of any gain can give us more confidence in the existence of a deeper goodness from which we may deviate.

~ Ravi Ravindra

If instead of a gem, or even a flower, we should cast the gift of a loving thought into the heart of a friend, that would be giving as the angels give.

George MacDonald

5. 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

6. Then said a rich man: Speak to us of Giving.

And he answered:

You give but little when you give of your possessions.

It is when you give of yourself that you truly give.

For what are your possessions but things you keep and guard for fear you may need them tomorrow?

And tomorrow, what shall tomorrow bring to the over-prudent dog burying bones in the trackless sand as he follows the pilgrims to the holy city?

And what is fear of need but need itself?

Is not dread of thirst when your well is full, the thirst that is unquenchable?

There are those who give little of the much which they have – and they give it for recognition and their hidden desire makes their gifts unwholesome.

And there are those who have little and give it all.

These are the believers in life and the bounty of life, and their coffer is never empty.

There are those who give with joy, and that joy is their reward.

And there are those who give with pain, and that pain is their baptism.

And there are those who give and know not pain in giving, nor do they seek joy, nor give with mindfulness of virtue;

They give as in yonder valley the myrtle breathes its fragrance into space. Through the hands of such as these God speaks, and from behind their eyes He smiles upon the earth.

It is well to give when asked, but it is better to give unasked, through understanding; and to the open-handed the search for one who shall receive is joy greater than giving.

And is there aught you would withhold?

All you have shall some day be given;

Therefore give now, that the season of giving may be yours and not your inheritors.


~Kahlil Gibran

***Kindness is given so softly, so gently, falling like tiny seeds
along our paths - and brightening them with flowers.***

Pam Brown

7. The sage accumulates nothing
but the more he does for others
the greater his existence;
the more he gives to others,
the greater his abundance.
- Lao Tzu, Tao Te Ching

***Kindness in words creates confidence.
Kindness in thinking creates profoundness.
Kindness in giving creates love.***
Lao - Tzu

 **Malawi Song**
Mamba
Alan Welch – Guitar
Mwase Makalani -percussion

8. Generosity is giving to others something that is of value to us. Generosity is a quality of spirit that calls us to share what we have. We also allow others to give to us. Every gift is doubly blessed, bringing joy to the giver and the receiver. Generosity helps us to give time and attention to the feelings, needs and views of those around us. It springs from the sense of abundance and gratitude for the limitless richness of life. We give cheerfully without expecting anything in return. We are receptive to blessings. Generosity encourages us to share the bounty.
~The Virtues Project

***The gift which is given without thought of recompense,
in the belief that it ought to be made,
in a fit place, at an opportune time, and to a
deserving person—such a gift is Pure.
~ Hinduism, Bhagavad Gita***

9. Son of My Handmaid!

Be not troubled in poverty nor confident in riches, for poverty is followed by riches, and riches are followed by poverty. Yet to be poor in all save God is a wondrous gift, belittle not the value thereof, for in the end it will make thee rich in God, and thus thou shalt know the meaning of the utterance, "In truth ye are the poor," and the holy words, "God is the all-possessing," shall, even as the true morn, break forth gloriously resplendent upon the horizon of the lover's heart, and abide secure on the throne of wealth.

~ Bahá'í Writings

10. Generosity... is the mistress and queen that gives lustre to every virtue, as it is not hard to prove. Where could one find a man, however powerful and rich, who isn't blamed if he is mean? And who, though not appreciated for his many other qualities, doesn't earn praise by his generosity? Liberality on its own makes a worthy man; and that can't be achieved by high birth, courtliness, wisdom, nobility, wealth, strength, chivalry, boldness, authority, beauty, or anything else. But just as the rose is more lovely than any other flower when it opens fresh and new, so where liberality appears it surpasses all other virtues and increases five hundred times the qualities it finds in a worthy, upright man.

~Chrétien de Troyes

Generosity opens the windows of heavenly blessings.

Lailah Gifty Akita

11. There is a mystery about generosity. If you see it with your human eyes you might think that you lose—position, recognition, resources—when you give away what you have to others... but God that is wise; always rewards the giver in ways we cannot explain.

~J.A. Perez

12. The Wise Woman's Stone

A wise woman who was travelling in the mountains found a precious stone in a stream. The next day she met another traveller who was hungry, and the wise woman opened her bag to share her food. The hungry traveller saw the precious stone and asked the woman to give it to him. She did so without hesitation. The traveller left, rejoicing in his good fortune. He knew the stone was worth enough to give him security for a lifetime. But a few days later he came back to return the stone to the wise woman.

"I've been thinking," he said, "I know how valuable the stone is, but I give it back in the hope that you can give me something even more precious. Give me what you have within you that enabled you to give me the stone."

~Author Unknown

***Kindness is the language which the deaf can hear
and the blind can see.***

Mark Twain

13. Giving is so often thought of in terms of the things we give, but our greatest giving is of our time, and kindness, and even comfort for those who need it. We look on these gifts as unimportant – until we need them.

~ Joyce Sequiche Hifler

To practice five things under all circumstances constitutes perfect virtue; these five are gravity, generosity of soul sincerity, earnestness, and kindness.

Confucius

14. Two Families

One family, which had emigrated from Japan and settled at the turn of the twentieth century near San Francisco, had established a business in which they grew roses and trucked them into San Francisco three mornings a week.

The other family was a naturalized family from Switzerland who also marketed roses, and both families became modestly successful, as their roses were known in the markets of San Francisco for their long vase-life.

For almost four decades the two families were neighbors, and the sons took over the farms, but then on December 7, 1941, Japan attacked Pearl Harbor. Although the rest of the family members were Americans, the father of the Japanese family had never been naturalized. In the turmoil and the questions about internment camps, his neighbor made it clear, that, if necessary, he would look after his friend's nursery. It was something each family had learned in church: Love thy neighbor as thyself. "You would do the same for us," he told his Japanese friend.

It was not long before the Japanese family was transported to a barren landscape in Granada, Colorado. The relocation centre consisted of tar-paper-roofed barracks surrounded by barbed wire and armed guards.

A full year went by. Then two. Then three. While the Japanese neighbors were in internment, their friends worked in the greenhouses, the children before school and on Saturdays; and the father's work often stretched to 16 and 17 hours a day.

And then when the war in Europe had ended, the Japanese family packed up and boarded a train. They were going home.

What would they find? The family was met at the train depot by their neighbors, and when they got to their home, the whole Japanese family stared. There was the nursery, intact, scrubbed and shining in the sunlight – neat, prosperous and healthy. So was the balance in the bank passbook handed to the Japanese father and the house was just as clean and welcoming as the nursery.

And there on the dining room was one perfect red rose bud, just waiting to unfold – the gift of one neighbor to another.
~Diane Rayner

***We should give as we would receive,
cheerfully, quickly, and without hesitation;
for there is no grace in a benefit that sticks to the fingers.***
Seneca



**Canarios -Gaspar Sanz
Alan Welch -Guitar**

15. Give up anger, give up pride, you liberate yourself from unhappiness when your emotions do not enslave you. Overcome anger with a commitment to peace, overcome wrong doings by doing right, overcome selfishness with generosity. Speak the truth, stay calm, give generously. These three steps will lead you to Nirvana.
~The Dhammapada

16. If you sit down at set of sun
And count the acts that you have done,
And, counting, find
One self-denying deed, one word
That eased the heart of him who heard,
One glance most kind
That fell like sunshine where it went -
Then you may count that day well spent.
But if, through all the livelong day,
You've cheered no heart, by yea or nay -
If, through it all
You've nothing done that you can trace
That brought the sunshine to one face -
No act most small
That helped some soul and nothing cost -
Then count that day as worse than lost.
~ George Eliot

***Blessed and happy is he that arises to promote the best interests of
the people and kindreds of the earth.
Baha'u'llah***

17. Consider this: whoever sows sparingly, will also reap sparingly,
and whoever sows bountifully will also reap bountifully.
Each must do as already determined without sadness or
compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver.
~Christian Writings

18. I expect to pass though life but once. If therefore, there be any kindness I can show, or any good thing I can do to any fellow being, let me do it now, and not defer or neglect it, as I shall not pass this way again.
~William Penn

***What do we live for, if it is not to make life
less difficult for each other?
George Eliot***

19. We give thanks for singers, all types of singers, popular, concert singers and tuneless singers in the bath.
Whistlers, hummers and those who sing while they work.
Singers of lullabies, singers of nonsense and small scraps of melody.
Singers on branches and rooftops, morning yodellers and evening warblers.
Singers in seedy night clubs and singers in the street;
Singers in cathedrals, school halls, grandstands, backyards, paddocks, bedrooms, corridors, stairwells and places of echo and resonance.
We give praise to all those who give some small voice to the everyday joy of the soul. Amen
~Leunig

***Happiness is a perfume you cannot pour on others
without getting a few drops on yourself.
Ralph Waldo Emerson***

20. 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

***In this day, the one favoured at the Threshold of the Lord
is he who handeth round the cup of faithfulness,
who bestoweth, even upon his enemies, the jewel of bounty.
Bahá'í Writings***



**Going Home - Mark Knopfler
Alan Welch - Guitar**



Please join us for refreshments.

Soul Food

Venue: Bahá'í Centre of Learning, Hobart

Time: 3.00pm – 4pm

join us

for the next program: November 6th

Children – “Shining Lamps of the Future”

Upcoming Dates

Titles

. December 6th

“A Sense of Time”

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

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

Jan 15th 3pm at the Bahá'í Centre of Learning for Tasmania (here).

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

Soul Food

Soul Food is an open community devotional event hosted at the Bahá'í Centre of Learning 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, Africa, California and Kansas.

It is also proudly supported by the Victorian Multicultural Commission.

Original programs are available for free download from

www.soulfood.com.au/tas/

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 spiritual gifts and 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. For inquiries or more information please call Solmaz's mobile 0423 656 669.

"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.

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@hotmail.com mobile 0488350744

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.

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