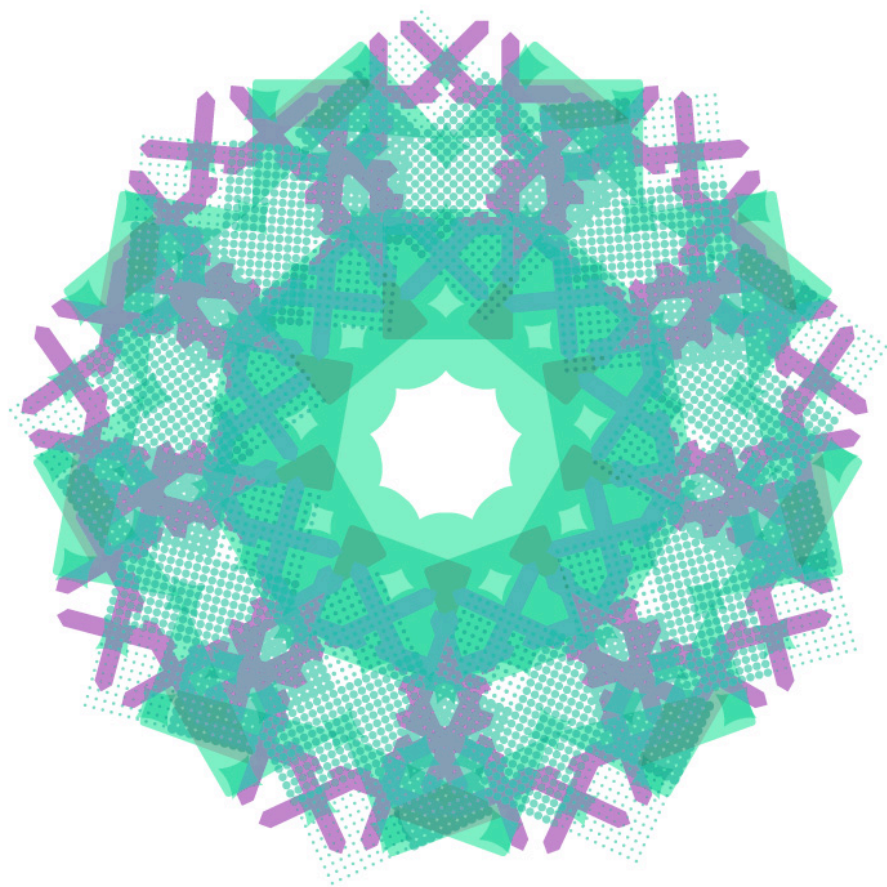


Soul Food

A Home of Peace



A Home of Peace

This month's program celebrates International Day of Families and will explore how unity and peace in the home profoundly impacts the unity and peace of wider society.

Program

01. *Bahá'í Scripture, 'Abdu'l-Bahá – Family Life*
02. *Confucius*
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05. *Buddhist Scripture, Sutta Nipata 262*
06. *Hindu Scripture, Atharva Veda*
07. *Jewish Holy Writings, Psalm 78:5-7*
08. *Bahá'í Scripture, Bahá'u'lláh*
09. *David Oman McKay*
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11. *Christian Holy Writings Ephesians 6:1-4*
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13. *Jewish Scripture, Proverbs 4: 1-10*
14. *Muslim Holy Writings, Qur'an*
15. *The Báb, Selections from the Báb*
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18. *Bahá'í Scripture, 'Abdu'l-Bahá – Promulgation of Universal Peace*

**All humanity is one undivided and indivisible family,
and each one of us is responsible for the misdeeds of all the others.
I cannot detach myself from the wickedest soul.**

– Mahatma Gandhi

01. My home is a home of peace.
My home is a home of joy and delight.
My home is the home of laughter and exultation.
Whosoever enters through the portals of this home,
Must go out with gladsome heart.
This is the home of light: whosoever enters here must become illumined.
This is the home of knowledge: the one who enters it must receive knowledge.
This is the home of love: those who come in must learn the lessons of love;
Thus may they know how to love each other.

– Bahá'í Scripture, 'Abdu'l-Bahá: Family Life

02. To put the world in order, we must first put the nation in order; to put the nation in order, we must put the family in order; to put the family in order, we must cultivate our personal life; and to cultivate our personal life, we must first set our hearts right.

– Confucius

03. **Love And Strengthen Your Family**

When you're down and out and having a bad day... Love and strengthen your family.

When you're feeling alone... Love and strengthen your family.

When your dreams begin to fade and you've lost all hope... Love and strengthen your family.

When you don't understand the world around you... Love and strengthen your family.

When you need love and support... Love and strengthen your family.

When you just need a friend... Love and strengthen your family.

When you find yourself near the end of your rope... Love and strengthen your family.

Find strength in your faith to journey each day to take small steps everyday to love and strengthen your family and you will be blessed with many good fortunes.

– *J. Charest*

04. **The Family**

We were a strange little band of characters trudging through life sharing diseases and toothpaste, coveting one another's desserts, hiding shampoo, borrowing money, locking each other out of our rooms, inflicting pain and kissing to heal it in the same instant, loving, laughing, defending, and trying to figure out the common thread that bound us all together.

– *Erma Bombeck*

05. Not to consort with fools, rather with the wise, consorting and honouring the honourable; this is the highest blessing. Living in befitting places, having previously done meritorious actions and rightly guiding oneself; this is the highest blessing. Ample learning and a craft, being well-trained in discipline and that speech which is well spoken; this is the highest blessing. Support of mother and father, cherishing of wife and children, ways of work without conflict; this is the highest blessing.

– *Buddhist Scripture, Sutta Nipata 262*

**You don't choose your family.
They are God's gift to you, as you are to them.**

– Desmond Tutu

06. Sweet be glances we exchange,
Our faces showing true concord.
Enshrine me in your heart and let one spirit dwell within us.
I wrap around you this my robe
Which came to me from Manu,
So that you may be wholly mine
And never seek another.
I am He, you are She:
I am Song, you are Verse
I am Heaven, you are Earth.
We two shall here together dwell,
Becoming parents of children.

– Hindu Scripture, Atharva Veda

07. He established a testimony in Jacob, and appointed a law in Israel, which he commanded for fathers to teach to their children; that the next generation might know them, the children yet unborn, and arise and tell them to their children, so that they should set their hope in God, and not forget the works of God, but keep His commandments.

– Jewish Holy Writings, Psalm 78:5-7

08. Unto every father hath been enjoined the instruction of his son and daughter in the art of reading and writing. 'Abdu'l-Bahá, in His Tablets, not only calls attention to the responsibility of parents to educate all their children, but He also clearly specifies that the "training and culture of daughters is more necessary than that of sons", for girls will one day be mothers, and mothers are the first educators of the new generation. If it is not possible, therefore, for a family to educate all the children, preference is to be accorded to daughters since, through educated mothers, the benefits of knowledge can be most effectively and rapidly diffused throughout society.

– Bahá'í Scripture, Bahá'u'lláh, Aqdas: Notes

09. The noblest calling in the world is that of mother. True motherhood is the most beautiful of all arts, the greatest of all professions. She who can paint a masterpiece or who can write a book that will influence millions deserves the plaudits and admiration of mankind; but she who rears successfully a family of healthy, beautiful sons and daughters whose immortal souls will be exerting an influence throughout the ages long after painting shall have faded, and books and statues shall have been destroyed, deserves the highest honor that man can give.

– *David Oman McKay*

10. A baby asked God, "They tell me you are sending me to earth tomorrow, but how am I going to live there being so small and helpless?"

God said, "Your angel will be waiting for you and will take care of you."

The child further inquired, "But tell me, here in heaven I don't have to do anything but sing and smile to be happy."

God said, "Your angel will sing for you and will also smile for you. And you will feel your angel's love and be very happy."

Again the small child asked, "And how am I going to be able to understand when people talk to me if I don't know the language?"

God said, "Your angel will tell you the most beautiful and sweet words you will ever hear, and with much patience and care, your angel will teach you how to speak."

"And what am I going to do when I want to talk to you?"

God said, "Your angel will place your hands together and will teach you how to pray."

"Who will protect me?"

God said, "Your angel will defend you even if it means risking its life."

At that moment voices from Earth could be heard and the child hurriedly asked, "God, if I am to leave now, please tell me my angel's name."

God said, You will simply call her, "Mom."

**Say, O My People! Show honour to your parents
and pay homage to them. This will cause blessings
to descend upon you from the clouds of the bounty
of your Lord, the Exalted, the Great.**

– Bahá'u'lláh, Family Life

11. Children, obey your parents in the Lord, for this is right. Honour thy father and mother, which is the first commandment with promise: that it may be well with thee, and thou mayest live long on the earth. And you, fathers, do not provoke your children to wrath, but bring them up in the training and admonition of the Lord.

– Christian Holy Writings Ephesians 6:1-4

12. Beware lest ye commit that which would sadden the hearts of your fathers and mothers. Follow ye the path of Truth which indeed is a straight path. Should anyone give you a choice between the opportunity to render a service to Me and a service to them, choose ye to serve them, and let such service be a path leading you to Me. This is My exhortation and command unto thee. Observe therefore that which thy Lord, the Mighty, the Gracious, hath prescribed unto thee.

– Bahá'í Scripture, Bahá'u'lláh: Family Life, Jan 1982

13. Hear, ye children, the instructions of a father, and attend to know understanding. For I give you good doctrine, forsake ye not my law. For I was my father's son, tender and only beloved in the sight of my mother. He taught me also, and said unto me, Let thine heart retain my words: keep my commandments, and live. Get wisdom, get understanding; forget it not; neither decline from the words of my mouth. Forsake her not, and she shall preserve thee: love her, and she shall keep thee. Wisdom is the principal thing; therefore get wisdom: and with all thy getting get understanding. Exalt her, and she shall promote thee: she shall bring thee to honour, when thou dost embrace her. She shall give to thine head an ornament of grace: a crown of glory shall she deliver to thee. Hear, O my son, and receive my sayings; and the years of thy life shall be many.
- *Jewish Scripture, Proverbs 4: 1-10*

There are three partners in man, God, father, and mother. When a man honours his father and mother, God says, "I regard it as though I had dwelt among them and they had honoured me."

– *Kiddushin 30b*

14. We have enjoined on man's kindness to his parents: In pain did his mother bear him, and in pain did she give him birth. The carrying of the child to his weaning is thirty months. At length, when he reaches the age of full strength and attains forty years, he says, "O my Lord! Grant me that I may be grateful for your favor which you have bestowed upon me, and upon both my parents, and that I may work righteousness such as You may approve; and be gracious to me in my issue. Truly have I turned to you and truly do I bow to you in Islam." Such are they from whom We shall accept the best of their deeds and pass by their ill deeds; they shall be among the Companions of the Garden: a promise of truth, which was made to them.
- *Muslim Holy Writings, Qur'an 46:15-16*

15. It is seemly that the servant should, after each prayer, supplicate God to bestow mercy and forgiveness upon his parents. Thereupon God's call will be raised: 'Thousand upon thousand of what thou hast asked for thy parents shall be thy recompense!' Blessed is he who remembereth his parents when communing with God. There is, verily, no God but Him, the Mighty, the Well-Beloved.

– *The Báb, Selections from the Báb*

**What greater thing is there for human souls than to feel
that they are joined for life – to be with each other in silent
unspeakable memories.**

– *George Eliot*

16. The Great Being saith: The heavens of divine wisdom is illumined with the two luminaries of consultation and compassion. Take ye counsel together in all matters, inasmuch as consultation is the lamp of guidance which leadeth the way, and is the bestower of understanding.

... Consultation bestoweth greater awareness and transmuteth conjecture into certitude. It is a shining light which, in a dark world, leadeth the way and guideth. For everything there is and will continue to be a station of perfection and maturity. The maturity of the gift of understanding is made manifest through consultation.

... Say: no man can attain his true station except through his justice. No power can exist except through unity. No welfare and no well-being can be attained except through consultation.

– *Bahá'í Scripture, Bahá'u'lláh, Tablets of Bahá'u'lláh*

A happy family is but an earlier heaven.

– *George Bernard Shaw*

17. I have sent you my invitation, the note inscribed on the palm of my hand by the fire of living. Don't jump up and shout, "Yes, this is what I want! Let's do it!" Just stand up quietly and dance with me.

Show me how you follow your deepest desires, spiraling down into the ache within the ache. And I will show you how I reach inward and open outward to feel the kiss of the Mystery, sweet lips on my own, everyday.

Don't tell me you want to hold the whole world in your heart. Show me how you turn away from making another wrong without abandoning yourself when you are hurt and afraid of being unloved.

Tell me a story of who you are, and see who I am in the stories I am living. And together we will remember that each of us always has a choice.

Don't tell me how wonderful things will be... some day. Show me you can risk being completely at peace, truly OK with the way things are right now in this moment, and again in the next and the next and the next...

I have heard enough warrior stories of heroic daring. Tell me how you crumble when you hit the wall, the place you cannot go beyond by the strength of your own will. What carries you to the other side of that wall, to the fragile beauty of your own humanness?

And after we have shown each other how we have set and kept the clear, healthy boundaries that help us live side by side with each other, let us risk remembering that we never stop silently loving those we once loved out loud.

Take me to the places on the earth that teach you how to dance, the places where you can risk letting the world break your heart. And I will take you to the places where the earth beneath my feet and the stars overhead make my heart whole again and again.

Show me how you take care of business without letting business determine who you are. When the children are fed but still the voices within and around us shout that soul's desires have too high a price, let us remind each other that it is never about the money.

Show me how you offer to your people and the world the stories and the songs you want our children's children to remember, and I will show you how I struggle not to change the world, but to love it.

Sit beside me in long moments of shared solitude, knowing both our absolute aloneness and our undeniable belonging. Dance with me in the silence and in the sound of small daily words, holding neither against me at the end of the day.

And when the sound of all the declarations of our sincerest intentions has died away on the wind, dance with me in the infinite pause before the next great

inhale of the breath that is breathing us all into being, not filling the emptiness from the outside or from within.

Don't say, "Yes!" Just take my hand and dance with me.

– *Oriah Mountain Dreame*

18. You are the children of whom Christ has said, “Of such is the kingdom of God”; and according to the words of Bahá’u’lláh you are the very lamps or candles of the world of humanity, for your hearts are exceedingly pure and your spirits most sensitive. You are near the source; you have not yet become contaminated. You are the lambs of the heavenly Shepherd. You are as polished mirrors reflecting pure light. My hope is that your parents may educate you spiritually and give you thorough moral training. May you develop so that each one of you shall become imbued with all the virtues of the human world. May you advance in all material and spiritual degrees. May you become learned in sciences, acquire the arts and crafts, prove to be useful members of human society and assist the progress of human civilization. May you be a cause of the manifestation of divine bestowals—each one of you a shining star radiating the light of the oneness of humanity toward the horizons of the East and West. May you be devoted to the love and unity of mankind, and through your efforts may the reality deposited in the human heart find its divine expression. I pray for you, asking the assistance and confirmation of God in your behalf.

– *Bahá’í Scripture, ‘Abdu’l-Bahá, Promulgation of Universal Peace, pages 91-92*

**The happiest moments of my life have been the few
which I have passed at home in the bosom of my family.**

– *Thomas Jefferson*



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

About Soul Food

Soul Food is a monthly event held at the State Library of Victoria, providing an opportunity to relax in a tranquil environment and reflect on inspiring themes.

It features music, audio-visual pieces and readings from various Faiths; indigenous, ancient and modern, from all over the world. Soul Food's purpose is to inspire us to transform our lives, our neighbourhoods and communities, with actions that promote the unity and betterment of society.

Soul Food is a free community event open to all.

Venue

State Library of Victoria,
Village Roadshow Theatre
Corner Swanston St & La Trobe St
(Enter via La Trobe Street)

Time

11.00am – 12.00pm

Dates for 2015

May 3rd
June 7th
July 5th
August 2nd
September 6th
October 4th
November 1st
December 6th

Further Information

For further information about Soul Food events in Victoria, South Australia, Tasmania or Western Australia please visit www.soulfood.com.au.

Facebook & Meetup

Join us on Facebook: www.facebook.com/soulfoodvic

Join us on Meetup: www.meetup.com/Soul-Food-Melbourne/

Study Circles

The Bahá'í community offers a series of regular 'Study Circles' – as an opportunity to further explore subjects related to spiritual development. Study Circles are small, informal groups, and provide an environment in which to discuss meaningful topics with like-minded people. The first Study Circle is titled "Reflections on the Life of the Spirit", from the Ruhi Study Circle series. It is a three unit study on; Understanding the Bahá'í Writings, Prayer & Meditation, and Life & Death.

If you enjoy Soul Food then a Study Circle may also appeal to you. For more information please contact 03 9415 6007 or email soulfoodvic@gmail.com.

Virtues Parenting Workshops

We are very excited to announce an initiative supported by Soul Food. Based on the Virtues Project, which is honoured by the United Nations and endorsed by the Dalai Lama, the *Virtues Parenting Workshops* introduce a practical and effective approach to speaking the language of the virtues in the home – to develop confidence, self-esteem, excellence and courage in your children. Presented by Mojgan Tosif (BA Ed) a Master Facilitator for the Virtues Project.

The first sessions of workshops have commenced, but if you are interested in future sessions in the new year, please contact us to express your interest.

The Bahá'í Community of Victoria

Soul Food is an initiative of the Bahá'í Community of Victoria. For further information about the Bahá'í Faith please visit www.bahai.org.au.

Supporters

Soul Food is proudly supported by the Baha'i Council of South-Eastern Australia.