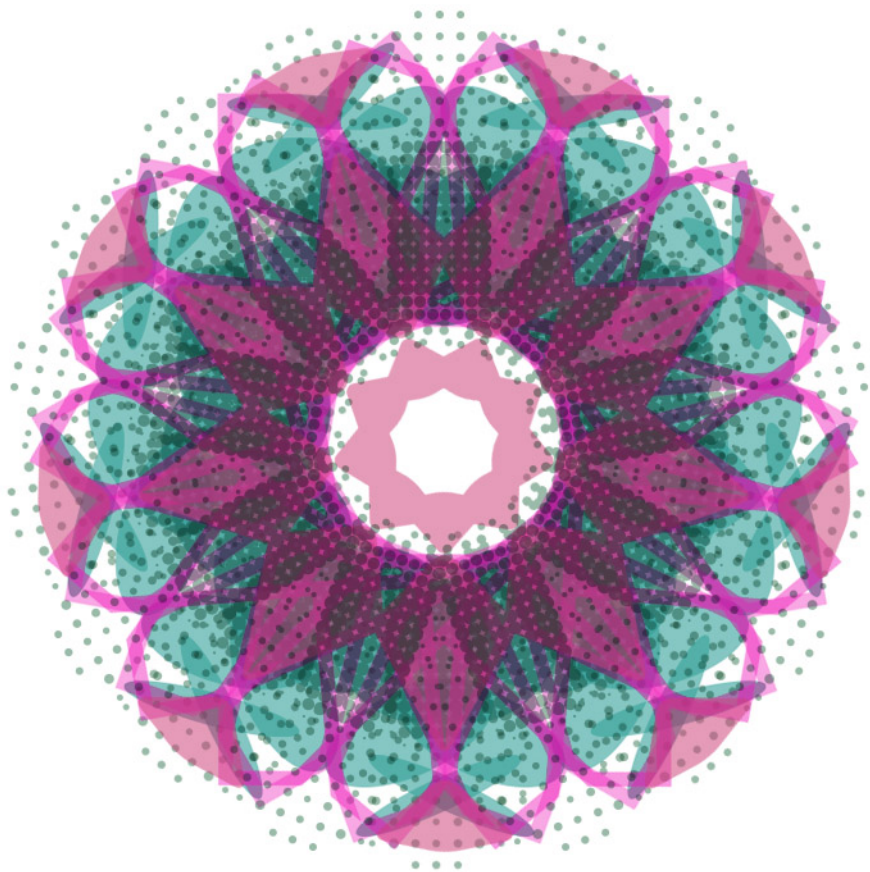


Soul Food

Visions of Oneness



Visions of Oneness

Exploring the meaning of oneness, in all its forms – between humankind and nature, between us and our creator, and between one another.

Program

01. *Brian J Brock*
02. *Buddhist Scripture, Dhammapada, Sayings of the Buddha*
03. *Langston Hughes, Dream Variations*
04. *From the New Testament*
05. *Rosemary Plummer, Aboriginal poem from Central Australia*
06. *Buddhism*
07. *Bahá'í Writings*
08. *Joseph Morrell Dodge*
09. *Jenny Regan*
10. *Eulalie Zarb, The Rainbow Serpent*
11. *A Luncheon Party for 'Abdu'l-Bahá*
12. *Wilfred Gibson*
13. *Bahá'u'lláh, from the Baha'í Writings*
14. *Words by Clear Water*
15. *Michael Paul*
16. *Lao Tzu Hua Hu Ching*
17. *A Song of Hope*
18. *Mohandas Gandhi*
19. *'Abdu'l-Bahá, "The Promulgation of Universal Peace"*

**Cherish your vision and your dreams as they are the children
of your soul; the blueprints of your ultimate achievements.**

– Napoleon Hill

01. Kurna people

Kurna people
this was your land now concrete roads and cars
Kurna people
this was your land now drifting dunes where once the mallee grew
Kurna people
these were your living hills where now the streams are still or rage in flood
Kurna people
these were your open spaces where now the fence confines
Kurna people
these were your swamps and waterways where now our garbage lies
Kurna people
best your spirits dream than see all this and die again as this your land has done.

– Brian J Brock

02. Let no one deceive another,
Let no one despise another in any situation,
Let no one, from antipathy or hatred, wish evil to anyone,
Just as a mother, with her own life, protects her only son from hurt,
So within yourself foster a limitless concern for every living creature.
Display a heart of boundless love for all the world
In all its height and depth and broad extent,
Love unrestrained, without hate or enmity.
Then as you stand or walk, sit or lie, until overcome by drowsiness,
Devote your mind entirely to this; it is known as living here life divine.

– Buddhist Enlightenment

**Grandfather, Great Spirit, all over the world the faces of living ones
are alike... Teach us to walk the soft earth as relatives to all that live.**

– Native American, Sioux prayer

03. Dream Variations

To fling my arms wide
In some place of the sun,
To whirl and to dance
Till the white day is done.
Then rest at cool evening
Beneath a tall tree
While night comes on gently,
Dark like me –
That is my dream!
To fling my arms wide
In the face of the sun,
Dance! Whirl! Whirl!
Till the quick day is done.
Rest at pale evening ...
A tall, slim tree ...
Night coming tenderly
Black like me.

– Langston Hughes from Dream Variations

04. Keep on loving each other as brothers. Do not forget to entertain strangers, for by so doing, some people have entertained angels without knowing it. Remember those in prison as if you were their fellow prisoners, and those who are mistreated as if you yourselves were suffering.

– New Testament, Hebrews Chap. 13

**Let us consider how we may spur one another
toward love and good deeds**

- Hebrews 10:24, Bible

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 become not a melting pot but a beautiful mosaic.
Different people, different beliefs, different yearnings,
different hopes, different dreams.**

– *Jimmy Carter*

06. But the gentle mind of the Buddha was offended at the unnecessary cruelty performed on the altars of the gods. He said: 'Ignorance only can make these men prepare festivals and hold vast meetings for sacrifices. Far better to revere the truth than try to appease the gods by shedding blood. What love can a man possess who believes that the destruction of life will atone for evil deeds? Can a new wrong expiate old wrongs? And can the slaughter of an innocent victim blot out the evil deeds of mankind? This is practicing religion by neglect of moral conduct. Purify your hearts and cease to kill; that is true religion.

– *The Teachings of Buddha*

**Vision looks inwards and becomes duty. Vision looks
outwards and becomes aspiration. Vision looks
upwards and becomes faith.**

– *Stephen Samuel Wise*

07. Leaders of the nations of the world must make the Cause of Peace the object of general consultation, and seek by every means in their power to establish a Union of the nations of the world. They must conclude a binding treaty and establish a covenant, the provisions of which shall be sound, inviolable and definite. They must proclaim it to all the world and obtain for it the sanction of all the human race. This supreme and noble undertaking – the real source of the peace and well-being of all the world – should be regarded as sacred by all that dwell on earth... In this all-embracing Pact the limits and frontiers of each and every nation should be clearly fixed, the principles underlying the relations of governments towards one another definitely laid down, and all international agreements and obligations ascertained... Should this greatest of all remedies be applied to the sick body of the world, it will assuredly recover from its ills and will remain eternally safe and secure.

A few, unaware of the power latent in human endeavour, consider this matter as highly impracticable, nay even beyond the scope of man's utmost efforts. Such is not the case, however. On the contrary, thanks to the unfailing grace of God, the lovingkindness of His favoured ones, the unrivalled endeavours of wise and capable souls, and the thoughts and ideas of the peerless leaders of this age, nothing whatsoever can be regarded as unattainable. Endeavour, ceaseless endeavour, is required.

Nothing short of an indomitable determination can possibly achieve it. Many a cause which past ages have regarded as purely visionary, yet in this day has become most easy and practicable... Surely the day will come when its beautiful light shall shed illumination upon the assemblage of man.

– Shoghi Effendi, from the Bahá'í Writings

08. What every man needs, regardless of his job or the kind of work he is doing, is a vision of what his place is and may be. He needs an objective and a purpose. He needs a feeling and a belief that he has some worthwhile thing to do. What this is no one can tell him. It must be his own creation. Its success will be measured by the nature of his vision, what he has done to equip himself, and how well he has performed along the line of its development.

– *Joseph Morrell Dodge*

09. **Walking Together**

I see an image of Central Australia and the great Rainbow Serpent... This Serpent spirals up and up, reaching towards the Heavens... And there spiralling downwards is the Feathered Serpent, Qetzacoatl – Lord of the Dawn... They merge in an oscillating ball of Light in the Heart... I hear “This is not transformation but transmutation”... I ask “What is needed for healing of separation? ...I hear “Reconciliation and, surprisingly enough, fun”... I see Antarctica as white, pure and innocent.

– *Jenny Regan*

**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 (1967)*

10. **A Mythic Dreaming**

Plumed serpent
Sending forth a clarion call To Peace
Leaping the mountain tops
Swooping low into teeming vales
Calling 'Peace'
Circling the boundaries of the earth
Taking in the shapes, the patterns, the colours
Designs
Lace work of the ages
Songs, rhythms, beats, harmonies,
Drawing them deeply within the feathered plumes
Each clan, each tribe, each heartbeat and hope
Each primal rhythm and nuance of colour
Woven now in the plumes of Love and Peace
Every life-giving element woven now into
Rainbow Feathers
Love in Diversity
Peacing the Globe in new dancing
New weavings and blendings,
New stories
New songs
Out of the ancient towards tomorrow now!
The Rainbow Serpent.

– *Eulalie Zarb, The Rainbow Serpent*

11. 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.

12. When the cooling tyre contracts
Round the fellowe of the wheel,
Do not spokes that once where boughs
In close knitting fibres feel
A glow in being ironbound
In unity secure and round
For conquest of untraveled ground?

– *Wilfred Gibson*

13. So intensely hath the glory of Divine Unity penetrated souls and hearts that all are now bound one to another with heavenly ties, and all are even as a single heart, a single soul. Wherefore reflections of the spirit and impressions of the Divine are now mirrored clear and sharp in the deep heart's core. I beg of God to strengthen these spiritual bonds as day followeth day, and make this mystic oneness to shine ever more brightly, until at last all shall be as troops marshalled together... within the sheltering shade of the Word of God; that they may strive with all their might until universal fellowship, close and warm, and unalloyed love, and spiritual relationships, will connect all the hearts in the world.

Then will all humankind, because of this fresh and dazzling bounty, be gathered in a single homeland. Then will conflict and dissension vanish from the face of the earth, then will mankind be cradled in love for the beauty of the All-Glorious. Discord will change to accord, dissension to unison. The roots of malevolence will be torn out, the basis of aggression destroyed. The bright rays of union will obliterate the darkness of limitations, and the splendours of heaven will make the human heart to be even as a mine veined richly with the love of God.

– *Bahá'u'lláh, from the Baha'i Writings*

14. Learn from the past.
Let no one deceive another,
Learn from the sadnesses,
The disappointments,
The tears,
The successes,
The joys.
And release them all.
Do not carry them
In your mind
And in your heart
Instead
See anew.
Feel anew.
Create wonders.

– *Words by Clear Water*

**Dream lofty dreams, and as you dream, so you shall become.
Your vision is the promise of what you shall one day be; your
ideal is the prophecy of what you shall at last unveil.**

– *James Allen*

15. **Living Zen**

One day, in front of a large crowd on Vulture Peak Mountain in Northern India, the Buddha, instead of giving a discourse, simply held up a lotus flower without saying a word. All the onlookers stared at Him with incomprehension except one disciple, Kashyapa, who broke into a smile. For he alone had understood the Buddha's action: that it was a transmission of the truth, or dharma—a teaching without words, from mind to mind, from heart to heart. Transmission of truth 'beyond words' was passed down through the centuries from master to disciple and is still recognized as one of the fundamental methods of Zen teaching. However, in Zen, the word translated into English as 'transmission' literally means 'being as one' - that is, being in spiritual harmony with one another. Consequently, the term implies more of a shared experience between teacher and student than the transference of the truth. For the Buddha stressed that the truth cannot simply be handed down from person to person. Instead, we must all find the truth for ourselves, inside our hearts.

– *Michael Paul*

16. Do you wish to free yourself of mental and emotional knots and become one with the Tao?

If so, there are two paths available to you.

The first is the path of acceptance.

Affirm everyone and everything.

Freely extend your goodwill and virtue in every direction, regardless of circumstances.

Embrace all things as part of the Harmonious Oneness, and then you will begin to perceive it.

The second path is that of denial.

Recognize that everything you see and think is a falsehood, an illusion, a veil over the truth.

Peel all the veils away, and you will arrive at the Oneness.

Though these paths are entirely different, they will deliver you to the same place: spontaneous awareness of the Great Oneness.

Once you arrive there, remember: it isn't necessary to struggle to maintain unity with it.

All you have to do is participate in it.

– *Lao Tzu Hua Hu Ching*

17. Look up, my people,
The dawn is breaking,
The world is waking
To a new bright day
Where none defame us,
No restriction tame us,
No colour shame us,
No sneer dismay.

– *A Song of Hope by Oodgeroo of the tribe Noonuccal (formerly Kath Walker)*

**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*

18. God is the greatest democrat the world knows, for He leaves us “unfettered” to make our own choice between evil and good. He is the greatest tyrant ever known, for He often dashes the cup from our lips and under cover of free will leaves us a margin so wholly inadequate as to provide only mirth for Himself at our expense. Therefore it is that Hinduism calls it all His sport (Lila), or calls it all an illusion (Maya)... Let us dance to the tune of his bansi (flute), and all would be well.

I have no message to give except this: that there is no deliverance for any people on this earth or for all the people of this earth except through truth and nonviolence in every walk of life without any exceptions. Non violence is the greatest force humanity has been endowed with. Truth is the only goal humanity has. For God is none other than Truth.

I believe that the religion of non violence springs from the fact that the advancement of one promotes the advancement of all, and the fall of one implies the fall of all. We have therefore been enjoined to show compassion to every living being. The way of peace is the way of truth. Truthfulness is even more important than peacefulness. Truthful people cannot long remain violent.

– *Mohandas Gandhi*

19. God, the Almighty, has created all mankind from the dust of earth. He has fashioned them all from the same elements; they are descended from the same race and live upon the same globe. He has created them to dwell beneath the one heaven. As members of the human family and His children He has endowed them with equal susceptibilities. He maintains, protects and is kind to all. He has made no distinction in mercies and graces among His children. With impartial love and wisdom He has sent forth His Prophets and divine teachings. His teachings are the means of establishing union and fellowship among mankind and awakening love and kindness in human hearts. He proclaims the oneness of the kingdom of humanity. He rebukes those things which create differences and destroy harmony; He commends and praises every means that will conduce to the solidarity of the human race. He encourages man in every step of advancement which leads to ultimate union.

– ‘Abdu’l-Bahá, *“The Promulgation of Universal Peace”*

**Let your vision be world-embracing, rather than
confined to your own self.**

– *Baha’u’llah from the Baha’i Writings*



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

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.