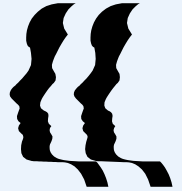


Interfaith Unity Feast

1556 Bell Road - Nashville, TN

We are drops of one ocean, leaves of one tree.



Parents and Children

- **Welcome**
- **Opening Prayers**

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-Be-loved. — *The Báb: Selections from the Báb, page 94*

Thou seest, O Lord, our suppliant hands lifted up towards the heaven of Thy favor and bounty. Grant that they may be filled with the treasures of Thy munificence and bountiful favor. Forgive us, and our fathers, and our mothers, and fulfil whatsoever we have desired from the ocean of Thy grace and Divine generosity. Accept, O Beloved of our hearts, all our works in Thy path. Thou art, verily, the Most Powerful, the Most Exalted, the Incomparable, the One, the Forgiving, the Gracious. — *Bahá'u'lláh: Gleanings, pages 301-302*

Our Father which art in heaven
Hallowed be Thy name.
Thy kingdom come.
Thy will be done
On earth as it is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread.
And forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors.
And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.
For Thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever.
Amen — *"The Lord's Prayer" — Matt: 6:9-13*

- **Holy Writings**

From the Jewish Holy Writings

Train up a child in the way he should go, and when he is old he will not depart from it.
— *Proverbs 22:6*

From the Buddhist Holy Writings

Those who wish to be born in [the Pure Land] of Buddha...should act filially towards their parents and support them, and should serve and respect their teachers and elders.
— *Meditations on Buddha Amitayus 27*

From the Muslim Holy Writings

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. — *Qur'an 46:15-16*

- **Music**

- **Holy Writings**

From the Jewish Holy Writings

He established a testimony in Jacob, and appointed a law in Israel, which he commanded our 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. — **Psalm 78:5-7**

From the Bahá'í Holy Writings

If thou wouldst show kindness and consideration to thy parents so that they may feel generally pleased, this would also please Me, for parents must be highly respected and it is essential that they should feel contented, provided they deter thee not from gaining access to the Threshold of the Almighty, nor keep thee back from walking in the way of the Kingdom. Indeed it behoveth them to encourage and spur thee on in this direction.

— **'Abdu'l-Bahá, Family Life, p. 392**

...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'u'lláh, Aqdas: Notes, Pages 199-200**

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, p. 386**

From the Jewish Holy Writings

Honor your father and your mother, that your days may be long in the land which the Lord your God gives you. — **Exodus 20:12**

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

— **Kiddushin 30b**

From the Bahá'í Holy Writings

It is the bounden duty of parents to rear their children to be staunch in faith, the reason being that a child who removeth himself from the religion of God will not act in such a way as to win the good pleasure of his parents and his Lord. For every praiseworthy deed is born out of the light of religion, and lacking this supreme bestowal the child will not turn away from any evil, nor will he draw nigh unto any good. That which is of paramount importance for the children, that which must precede all else, is to teach them the oneness of God and the laws of God. For lacking this, the fear of God cannot be inculcated, and lacking the fear of God an infinity of odious and abominable actions will spring up, and sentiments will be uttered that transgress all bounds.... — **Bahá'u'lláh, Bahá'í Education, p. 248**

From the Hindu Holy Writings

Do not neglect the [sacrificial] works due to the gods and the fathers! Let your mother be to you like unto a god! Let your father be to you like unto a god! Let your teacher be to you like unto a god! — **Taittiriya Upanishad 1.11.2**

- **Music**

- **Holy Writings**

From the Christian Holy Writings

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.— **Ephesians 6:1-4**

From the Bahá'í Holy Writings

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.

— 'Abdu'l-Bahá, *Promulgation of Universal Peace*, pages 91-92

Talk delivered May 5, 1912 at a Children's Meeting in Chicago.

...A father and mother endure the greatest troubles and hardships for their children; and often when the children have reached the age of maturity, the parents pass on to the other world. Rarely does it happen that a father and mother in this world see the reward of the care and trouble they have undergone for their children. Therefore, children, in return for this care and trouble, must show forth charity and beneficence, and must implore pardon and forgiveness for their parents. So you ought, in return for the love and kindness shown you by your father, to give to the poor for his sake, with greatest submission and humility implore pardon and remission of sins, and ask for the supreme mercy. — 'Abdu'l-Bahá, *Some Answered Questions*, pages 231-232

- Music
- Closing Remarks
- Closing Prayer ("O God, Educate These Children" - please sing in unison)

O God! Educate these children.

These children are the plants of Thine orchard,
the flowers of Thy meadow, the roses of Thy garden.

Let Thy rain fall upon them;

let the Sun of Reality shine upon them with Thy love.

Let Thy breeze refresh them in order that they may be trained,

grow and develop, and appear in the utmost beauty.

Thou art the Giver. Thou art the Compassionate.

— 'Abdu'l-Bahá, *Promulgation of Universal Peace*, page 194



The Unity Feast is sponsored by the Greater Nashville Bahá'í Community

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