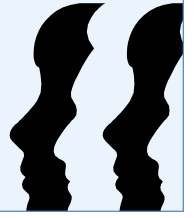




Interfaith Unity Feast

1556 Bell Road - Nashville, TN

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



Religion and Civilization

- Welcome - Carol Mansour
- Holy Writings and Prayers

From the Bahá'í Holy Writings

Material civilization is like a globe of glass. Divine civilization is the light itself, and the glass without the light is dark. Material civilization is like the body. No matter how infinitely graceful, elegant and beautiful it may be, it is dead. Divine civilization is like the spirit, and the body gets its life from the spirit, otherwise it becomes a corpse. It has thus been made evident that the world of mankind is in need of the breaths of the Holy Spirit. Without the spirit the world of mankind is lifeless, and without this light the world of mankind is in utter darkness. — ***Foundations of World Unity, 'Abdu'l-Bahá***

O Thou kind Lord! This gathering is turning to Thee. These hearts are radiant with Thy love. These minds and spirits are exhilarated by the message of Thy glad-tidings. O God! Let this American democracy become glorious in spiritual degrees even as it has aspired to material degrees, and render this just government victorious. Confirm this revered nation to upraise the standard of the oneness of humanity, to promulgate the Most Great Peace, to become thereby most glorious and praiseworthy among all the nations of the world. O God! This American nation is worthy of Thy favors and is deserving of Thy mercy. Make it precious and near to Thee through Thy bounty and bestowal. — ***Prayer for America, 'Abdu'l-Bahá***

From the Zoroastrian Holy Writings

In this world may obedience triumph over disobedience,
May peace triumph over discord, May generosity triumph over niggardliness,
May love triumph over contempt, May the true-spoken word triumph over the false-spoken word,
May truth triumph over falsehood. — ***Yasna 60.5***

From the Moslem Holy Writings

O mankind! We created you from a single (pair) of a male and a female and made you into nations and tribes that ye may know each other (not that ye may despise each other). Verily the most honored of you in the sight of Allah is (he who is) the most righteous of you. And Allah has full knowledge and is well acquainted (with all things). — ***Qur'an 49.13***

From the Bahá'í Holy Writings

All men have been created to carry forward an ever-advancing civilization. The Almighty beareth Me witness: To act like the beasts of the field is unworthy of man. Those virtues that befit his dignity are forbearance, mercy, compassion and loving-kindness towards all the peoples and kindreds of the earth. Say: O friends! Drink your fill from this crystal stream that floweth through the heavenly grace of Him Who is the Lord of Names. Let others partake of its waters in My name, that the leaders of men in every land may fully recognize the purpose for which the Eternal Truth hath been revealed, and the reason for which they themselves have been created. — ***Bahá'u'lláh, Gleanings***

From the Jewish Holy Writings

When Abram was ninety-nine years old, the Lord appeared to Abram, and said to him, "I am God Almighty;" walk before me, and be blameless. And I will make my covenant between me and you, and will make you exceedingly numerous." and God said to him, "You shall be the ancestor of a multitude of nations. No longer shall your name be Abram, but your name shall be Abraham; for I have made you the ancestor of a multitude of nations. I will make you exceedingly fruitful; and I will make nations of you, and kings shall come from you. I will establish my covenant between me and you, and your offspring after you throughout their generations, for an everlasting covenant, to be God to you and to your offspring after you. And I will give to you, and to your offspring after you, the land where you are now an alien, all the land of Canaan, for a perpetual holding; and I will be their God." — ***Genesis 17***

[NOTE: Ishmael was Abraham's son by Hagar, his wife's Egyptian slave (whom Sarai had given to Abraham to take as his wife because at that time Sarai was barren)]. From that union, Ishmael was born. Years later, after Abraham's wife Sarai conceived and bore his son, Isaac, Sarai had Ishmael and Hagar banished so her own son, Isaac, would be the only heir of Abraham. Abraham loved Ishmael and was very upset with this, and the Bible tells us that God also said to Abraham, "As for Ishmael, I have heard you; I will bless him and make him fruitful exceedingly numerous; he shall be the father of twelve princes, and I will make him a great nation." — ***Genesis 21***

[So Hagar took Ishmael into the desert and they eventually settled in Africa. Muslims believe that the Meccan Arabs are descendents of Ishmael. They also believe that Ishmael settled in Mecca where he, along with Abraham, built the Kabah and passed on the religion of the true God to his offspring.]

- **Music: Linda Joseph & Jeff Pitcher**
- **Holy Writings**

From the Buddhist Holy Writings

To many, Buddhism goes beyond religion and is more of a philosophy or 'way of life'. It is a philosophy because philosophy 'means love of wisdom' and the Buddhist path can be summed up as: (1) to lead a moral life, 2) to be mindful and aware of thoughts and actions, and (3) to develop wisdom and understanding (all benchmarks of a civilized society) - An important writing is called the **Golden Light Sutra**. Part of this consists of instruction of rightful rule by a monarch based on the teachings of the Buddha..... "Throughout your kingdom let no wrongdoing prevail. And whosoever in your kingdom is poor, to him let wealth be given. ... Religious men should be devoted to forbearance and compassion..."

"You shall slay no living thing. You shall not take what has not been given. You shall not act wrongly. You shall speak no lie. You shall drink no maddening drink. Then, brethren, all that were enemy kings became vassals to the king, the Wheel-turner."

"... When the eighty-four thousand kings of the eighty-four thousand cities of India are contented with their own territories and with their own kingly state and their own hoards of treasure, they will not attack one another or raise mutual strife. They will gain their thrones by the due accumulation of the merit of their former deeds; they will be satisfied with their own royal state, and will not destroy one another nor show their mettle by laying waste whole provinces. When all the eighty-four thousand kings of the eighty-four thousand capital cities of India think of their mutual welfare and feel mutual affection and joy... contented in their own domains... India will be prosperous, well-fed, pleasant, and populous." — **The Golden Light Sutra**

From the Christian Holy Writings

Jesus appeared to the 11 disciples after his resurrection and commanded them to "Go into all the world and preach the gospel to the whole creation." - thus began the spread of the teachings of Jesus the Christ. — **Mark 16:15**

The Sermon on the Mount, arguably the most important sermon Christ ever preached, contained the Lord's Prayer, the Beatitudes, & the Golden Rule - and from that Sermon we find:

"Blessed are the merciful, for they shall obtain mercy; blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God; blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called sons of God. ...You are the light of the world. A city set on a hill cannot be hid. Nor do men light a lamp and put it under a bushel, but on a stand, and it gives light to all in the house. Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father who is in heaven. — **Matthew 5**

From the Bahá'í Holy Writings:

Universal benefits derive from the grace of the Divine religions, for they lead their true followers to sincerity of intent, to high purpose, to purity and spotless honor, to surpassing kindness and compassion, to the keeping of their covenants when they have covenanted, to concern for the rights of others, to liberality, to justice in every aspect of life, to humanity and philanthropy, to valor and to unflagging efforts in the service of mankind. It is religion, to sum up, which produces all human virtues, and it is these virtues which are the bright candles of civilization." — **Abdu'l-Bahá: The Secret of Divine Civilization**

- **Speaker: Hillary Chapman**
- **Closing Remarks: Carol Mansour**
- **Refreshments**



The mission of the Unity Feast is to bring people from all religions and backgrounds together in a spirit of friendship and understanding in order to explore common spiritual values from all the world's major religions. Our goal is to focus on those things we have in common, so that we can do our part to bring unity to humanity ... one person at a time.

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

Visit us online at www.unityfeast.org