

THE BAHÁ'Í FAITH *an Introduction*



HOPE *in a chaotic world*

Bahá'ís believe it is time for humanity to come together as one family. The spiritual teachings of the Bahá'í Faith inspire us to form deep and diverse relationships and build communities that nurture the well-being of all people.

The optimistic teachings of the Bahá'í Faith answer essential questions about the human condition and the relationships that bind us together. We welcome you to learn about the Bahá'í teachings, and to connect and participate.

Together, we can shape a bright future. You have a unique part to play.

ONE LOVING CREATOR

We believe there is one God, a loving Creator. Out of love for humanity, God reveals Himself and His Will through Divine Educators, the Founders of the world's religions. We can know God through studying the lives, scriptures, and guidance of these Holy Messengers.

ONE HUMAN FAMILY

We believe every person comes into the world as a noble and beautiful creation of God. Our purpose in life is to draw closer to God by offering selfless service to others. Together, we are all citizens and caretakers of one planet.

This core belief in oneness calls us to actively root out our prejudices and the systemic inequalities that divide people of different ethnic backgrounds, national origins, genders and social classes.



FOUNDERS

The Bahá'í Faith is based on the teachings of two Divine Educators, the Báb and Bahá'u'lláh. Both lived during the mid-1800s in Persia and shared revolutionary concepts about the oneness of humanity.

The Báb (meaning "the Gate") encouraged everyone to seek spiritual truth with independent hearts and let go of superstition and dependence on clergy.

Bahá'u'lláh (meaning "the Glory of God") envisioned a future where all of humanity operates as one loving family. His teachings help us create harmonious relationships between women and men, black and white, rich and poor, friend and stranger.

SCRIPTURE

Bahá'ís believe God revealed His latest guidance for humanity through Bahá'u'lláh. In more than one hundred volumes, Bahá'u'lláh shared social and ethical teachings, laws and ordinances, mystical passages and prayers and meditations.



Building Community LOVE IN ACTION



We believe lasting social change starts in the family and at the neighborhood level when we build relationships based on love and mutual respect. We start small by gathering in homes and community centers, offering opportunities for all age groups to worship, learn and serve their communities together.

Simple, yet profound and revolutionary, this community building process:

- links personal growth with social transformation
- rekindles the soul's connection to its Creator
- fosters friendship and intimacy beyond barriers of race and class
- weakens prejudice
- inspires neighbors to think about each other's needs and earnestly search for solutions to shared problems



DAILY PRACTICES

The Bahá'í Faith is organized without priests or clergy. Each person is responsible for his or her own search for truth and relationship with God. Bahá'ís are encouraged to take time every day to pray, read from scripture, meditate, and reflect on how to translate the Bahá'í teachings into action. The Bahá'í Faith also elevates work done in the spirit of service to the act of worship.



The Organization OF COMMUNITY LIFE

Each year, the Bahá'í community elects local and national councils, known as Spiritual Assemblies. All Bahá'ís 21 and older are eligible to both vote and be elected. Diverse membership, non-partisan elections and collective decision-making are basic features of the Bahá'í model of leadership. The Bahá'í community also receives guidance from its international elected governing council, the Universal House of Justice.



Anyone can participate in, and even host, core community building activities, which include:

- 1 Classes that help children discover and strengthen their inherent spiritual qualities like kindness, patience and generosity through stories, songs, prayers and art
- 2 Groups where pre-teens and teens develop wisdom, compassion, decision-making skills and a mindset of service to others
- 3 Study circles where adults learn together about the spiritual nature of life and initiate service projects relevant to their communities
- 4 Prayer gatherings to nourish souls and inspire meaningful friendships among neighbors



We welcome you to find an activity near you by visiting www.bahai.us or calling 800-22-UNITE (800-228-6483).

Bahá'ís come from virtually every ethnic, religious, national, and tribal background.

Join us in bringing together the whole human family!

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