



DEVOTIONAL PROGRAMME

CENTENARY OF THE ARRIVAL OF THE
BAHA'I FAITH IN AUSTRALIA



AUSTRALIAN BAHÁ'Í HOUSE OF WORSHIP



The Founders of the Australian Bahá'í Community

The founders of the Australian Bahá'í community were John Henry Hyde Dunn (1855-1941) and Clara Dunn (1869-1960), who arrived in Sydney on steamship S.S. Sonoma from the United States on 10 April 1920.

Hyde Dunn was an Englishman who had emigrated to the United States. Clara Dunn was born in London to Irish parents and raised in Canada. They married in 1917, late in life, after their first partners had passed away. Both Hyde and Clara Dunn had embraced the Bahá'í Faith in the United States in the early years of the twentieth century. They both met 'Abdu'l-Bahá, then head of the Bahá'í Faith, in San Francisco during his historic visit to the US and Canada in 1912. He made an impact on them that lasted for the rest of their lives.

The Dunns were inspired by 'Abdu'l-Bahá to travel across the world to found a new religious community based on the teachings of Baha'u'llah. He supported their decision to move to Australia, writing to them in December 1920: "This journey is pregnant with greater prosperity, because great results will issue therefrom. At present it is full of hardship, but later on favour, comfort and happiness will be bestowed."

At the time of their arrival, Hyde was aged 65 and Clara 51. They were not wealthy, and knew no-one in Australia. The qualities of courage, faith, persistence and audacity sustained them.

Hyde Dunn found employment as a travelling salesman for the Bacchus Marsh Milk Company, soon acquired by Nestle. His work took him across the country, travelling mainly by train, and by 1923 he had visited 225 towns. He worked for Nestle for nearly 12 years, travelling to every state and major city and town in Australia.

An engaging speaker who never lost his English accent, he spoke about the Bahá'í teachings wherever he went: in churches, at events organised



by social and philosophical movements, and in private homes. He had a friendly disposition and a distinguished, upright appearance. He was described by Shoghi Effendi, who had been appointed the Guardian and head of the Bahá'í Faith following the passing of 'Abdu'l-Bahá in 1921, as "great-hearted and heroic".

Clara Dunn often accompanied her husband in his travels, hosting guests and giving public talks herself. She also engaged in charity work. In 1932 she travelled to the Holy Land on pilgrimage, where she met Shoghi Effendi, with whom she and her husband had corresponded regularly for a decade. On her return, Shoghi Effendi wrote: "The services which both of you have rendered, and are still rendering, to the Faith, are engraved upon the tablet of my heart. Nothing can efface their trace or dim their memory."

Following the passing of Hyde Dunn in 1941, Clara continued to serve the growing Bahá'í community with great vigour, travelling frequently to visit and encourage Bahá'ís across the country until she was well into her 80s.

In 1952, both Clara and Hyde Dunn were designated as Hands of the Cause, the highest honour that could be bestowed on an individual Bahá'í. Clara Dunn made her final visit to the Holy Land in 1957, in her late eighties, to attend the Conclave of the Hands of the Cause following the passing of Shoghi Effendi. She passed away in 1960 at the age of 91. She was buried alongside her husband at Woronora Memorial Park in Sutherland, Sydney.

To the community they founded, they will always be remembered as "Mother and Father Dunn".

We hope you enjoy the service



SPECIAL SERVICE MARKING THE CENTENARY
OF THE BAHÁ'Í FAITH IN AUSTRALIA



MUSICAL INTERLUDE



Bahá'í Scripture

Buddhist Scripture

Hindu Scripture

MUSICAL INTERLUDE



Jewish Scripture

Christian Scripture

Bahá'í Scripture

MUSICAL INTERLUDE



Islamic Scripture

Bahá'í Scripture

Bahá'í Scripture

MUSICAL INTERLUDE



*Please turn off all mobile phones and electronic devices
to “silent” while inside the House of Worship*





MUSICAL INTERLUDE

Lord, my God and my Haven in my distress! My Shield and my Shelter in my woes! My Asylum and Refuge in time of need and in my loneliness my Companion! In my anguish my Solace, and in my solitude a loving Friend! The Remover of the pangs of my sorrows and the Pardoner of my sins!

Wholly unto Thee do I turn, fervently imploring Thee with all my heart, my mind and my tongue, to shield me from all that runs counter to Thy will in this, the cycle of Thy divine unity, and to cleanse me of all defilement that will hinder me from seeking, stainless and unsullied, the shade of the tree of Thy grace.

Have mercy, O Lord, on the feeble, make whole the sick, and quench the burning thirst.

Gladden the bosom wherein the fire of Thy love doth smolder, and set it aglow with the flame of Thy celestial love and spirit.

Robe the tabernacles of divine unity with the vesture of holiness, and set upon my head the crown of Thy favor.

Illumine my face with the radiance of the orb of Thy bounty, and graciously aid me in ministering at Thy holy threshold.

Make my heart overflow with love for Thy creatures and grant that I may become the sign of Thy mercy, the token of Thy grace, the promoter of concord among Thy loved ones, devoted unto Thee, uttering Thy commemoration and forgetful of self but ever mindful of what is Thine.

O God, my God! Stay not from me the gentle gales of Thy pardon and grace, and deprive me not of the wellsprings of Thine aid and favor.





'Neath the shade of Thy protecting wings let me nestle, and cast upon me the glance of Thine all-protecting eye.

Loose my tongue to laud Thy name amidst Thy people, that my voice may be raised in great assemblies and from my lips may stream the flood of Thy praise.

Thou art, in all truth, the Gracious, the Glorified, the Mighty, the Omnipotent

Bahá'í Scripture - A Selection of Prayers Revealed by Bahá'u'lláh, the Báb, and 'Abdu'l-Bahá

Lord! Make us as seas rolling with the waves of Thy great abundance, rivers flowing from the mountains of Thy glorious Kingdom, pure fruits on the tree of Thy illustrious Cause, plants refreshed and moved by the breeze of Thy gift in Thy wonderful vineyard.

O Lord! Cause our souls to depend upon the signs of Thy Oneness, our hearts to be dilated with the bounties of Thy Singleness, so that we may become united as are ripples on a waving sea; become harmonized as are the rays which shine forth from a brilliant light; so that our thoughts, opinions and feelings become as one reality from which the spirit of accord may be diffused throughout all regions.

Verily Thou art the Beneficent, the Bestower! Verily Thou art the Giver, the Mighty, the Loving, the Merciful!

Bahá'í Scripture - Tablets of 'Abdu'l-Bahá vol.1, p. 2





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, 7.36-37, 14.2.71

MUSICAL INTERLUDE

And God said: 'Let us make man in our image, after our likeness; and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth.'

And God created man in His own image, in the image of God created He him; male and female created He them.





And God blessed them; and God said unto them: 'Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth, and subdue it; and have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over every living thing that creepeth upon the earth.'

And God said: 'Behold, I have given you every herb yielding seed, which is upon the face of all the earth, and every tree, in which is the fruit of a tree yielding seed--to you it shall be for food;

And to every beast of the earth, and to every fowl of the air, and to every thing that creepeth upon the earth, wherein there is a living soul, [I have given] every green herb for food.' And it was so.

Jewish Scripture – Hebrew Bible (Tanakh) Genesis 1:26-30

And let the peace of God rule in your hearts, to the which also ye are called in one body; and be ye thankful.

16 Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom; teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord.

17 And whatsoever ye do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God and the Father by him

Christian Scripture - Colossians Chapter 3:15-17





The essence of love is for man to turn his heart to the Beloved One, and sever himself from all else but Him, and desire naught save that which is the desire of his Lord.

True remembrance is to make mention of the Lord, the All-Praised, and forget aught else beside Him.

True reliance is for the servant to pursue his profession and calling in this world, to hold fast unto the Lord, to seek naught but His grace, inasmuch as in His Hands is the destiny of all His servants.

The essence of detachment is for man to turn his face towards the courts of the Lord, to enter His Presence, behold His Countenance, and stand as witness before Him.

The essence of understanding is to testify to one's poverty, and submit to the Will of the Lord, the Sovereign, the Gracious, the All-Powerful.

The source of courage and power is the promotion of the Word of God, and steadfastness in His Love.

The essence of charity is for the servant to recount the blessings of his Lord, and to render thanks unto Him at all times and under all conditions.

The essence of faith is fewness of words and abundance of deeds; he whose words exceed his deeds, know verily his death is better than his life.

*Bahá'í Scripture - Tablets of Baháullah Words of
Wisdom 155-6 Scripture⁹*

MUSICAL INTERLUDE





In the name of God, the Compassionate, the Merciful!

Praise be to God, Lord of the worlds!

The Compassionate, the Merciful!

King on the day of reckoning!

Thee only do we worship, and to Thee do we cry for help.

Guide Thou us on the straight path,

The path of those to whom Thou hast been Gracious;- with whom thou art not angry, and who go not astray.

*Islamic Scripture - The Qur'án (Rodwell tr.),
Sura 1:1 -7 Mecca, p28*

Were man to appreciate the greatness of his station and the loftiness of his destiny he would manifest naught save goodly character, pure deeds, and a seemly and praiseworthy conduct. If the learned and wise men of goodwill were to impart guidance unto the people, the whole earth would be regarded as one country. Verily this is the undoubted truth. This servant appealeth to every diligent and enterprising soul to exert his utmost endeavour and arise to rehabilitate the conditions in all regions and to quicken the dead with the living waters of wisdom and utterance, by virtue of the love he cherisheth for God, the One, the Peerless, the Almighty, the Beneficent.

Bahá'í Scripture - Bahá'u'lláh: Tablets of Bahá'u'lláh p172





Light and glory, greeting and praise be upon the Hands of His Cause, through whom the light of fortitude hath shone forth and the truth hath been established that the authority to choose rests with God, the Powerful, the Mighty, the Unconstrained, through whom the ocean of bounty hath surged and the fragrance of the gracious favours of God, the Lord of mankind, hath been diffused. We beseech Him—exalted is He—to shield them through the power of His hosts, to protect them through the potency of His dominion and to aid them through His indomitable strength which prevaieth over all created things. Sovereignty is God’s, the Creator of the heavens and the Lord of the Kingdom of Names.

*Bahá’í Scripture - Bahá’u’lláh - Tablets of Bahá’u’lláh, Lawh-i-Dunyá
(Tablet of the World), p. 83*

MUSICAL INTERLUDE



To the Bahá'ís of Australia

My dearest co-workers in that distant land:

How great was my joy to learn that in that far-away continent, remote from the turmoil and restlessness of a weary world, the Voice of God has been raised and proclaimed and has attracted such a promising number of ardent and faithful lovers of Bahá'u'lláh!

I offer you my heartfelt love and sympathy and the assurance of my unflinching assistance in the great work of service to mankind which is now so gloriously unfolding itself to your eyes.

I have shared fully your news with those loving pilgrims and resident friends in the Holy Land whom I meet regularly in what was in the past the audience-chamber of the Master and who thirst after the tidings of the progress of the Cause in every land. They, and myself with them, will pray most fervently for every one of you that the seeds of faith and loving fellowship that you are casting in the soil of hearts may germinate and swell the ever increasing number of the valiant hosts of Bahá and enable them to attain glorious victory.

I shall await with eager expectation the welcome news of the extension of your activities, the widening of your correspondence with the various spiritual centres throughout the world, the plans you contemplate for the spreading of the Movement and the means you will utilise for their speedy execution. On my part I shall never neglect to send you such news as will urge you to press forward your great work for the Cause and hearten you in your labours of love and devotion at His Sacred Threshold.

Your brother in His Service,
Shoghi

*First Letter sent by Shoghi Effendi, the Guardian of the Baha'i Faith,
to the Baha'is of Australia. 20 December 1922.*

O that I could travel, even though on foot and in the utmost poverty, to these regions, and, raising the call of "Yá Bahá'u'l-Abhá" in cities, villages, mountains, deserts and oceans, promote the divine teachings! This, alas, I cannot do. How intensely I deplore it! Please God, ye may achieve it.

— 'Abdu'l-Bahá

The Bahá'í House of Worship is a gift from the Bahá'ís and a demonstration of our faith in the oneness of God, the oneness of the world religions and the oneness of the human race. In the future, humanitarian, educational, social and charitable institutions will also be established in its vicinity.

Services at the House of Worship are comprised of readings and unaccompanied singing of sacred texts of the world's religions. You are welcome to sit in silence while this devotional programme takes place.

Please feel welcome to keep this programme for your own personal reflections or to share with your friends.

We hope you enjoyed your visit to the Australian
Bahá'í House of Worship.

For further information about the Bahá'í Faith visit the Bahá'í website

www.bahai.org.au

AUSTRALIAN BAHÁ'Í HOUSE OF WORSHIP

The Bahá'í House of Worship was conceived and constructed for the worship of God, independent of our notions of race, nation, class or creed. That is why its services offer selections from the various Sacred Writings and not from sectarian literature. There is no ritualism or set form.

Bahá'ís have no professional clergy. The auditorium of the House of Worship is open to all people for prayer and meditation.

There are no collections. Only Bahá'ís are allowed to contribute to the Bahá'í funds and consider it a spiritual privilege to do so. Their contributions are both voluntary and confidential.

The Sydney Bahá'í House of Worship, dedicated in 1961, is a unique architectural development: nine-sided with nine entrances, it symbolises the gathering together of all mankind, irrespective of race, religion, nation or class. The grounds are a wild flower sanctuary. The seats in the central part of the auditorium face the Holy Land. Above the head of the worshippers in the apex of the dome, in Arabic calligraphy, is an invocation depicting the Greatest Name translated as

“O Glory of the All-Glorious”

