



National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of New Zealand

Te Rūnanga Wairua Tapu o nga Bahá'í o Aotearoa

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To the Friends throughout Aotearoa New Zealand

Dearly Loved Friends

The National Spiritual Assembly heartily applauds the national community for the countless examples of initiative and courage shown in bicentenary activities this year— activities which had as their locus the local level. These efforts have far surpassed those of the bicentenary two years ago, with a doubling of the number of celebrations held and a great flowering of vibrancy, creativity and dedication. Even the number of declarants during the month of October and the first two weeks of November has been much higher than for any similar period in the recent past. Such wonderful efforts show that the community is rapidly growing in its capacity to have an uplifting impact on the society in which we live.

Drawing on the wealth of experience and energy that has been generated, we now move forward towards further nurturing the community-building activities and responding to the warm receptivity we have found in our compatriots. As the Universal House of Justice wrote in its letter to the Bahá'ís of the World on 8 November 2019, the next step is for “everyone who worked to bring about this success to hasten now and gather again to reflect and consult, and to determine how best to apply, in each unique setting, all that your experience has taught you”. We urge the friends to implement this guidance of the House of Justice, and suggest that study of the 8 November letter will help to frame your consultations.

It will also be inspirational for you to be aware of the huge variety of enterprising ways in which your co-workers have been responding to the special potency of the bicentenary period. The National Assembly is releasing a one-off newsletter, “Building on the Bicentenary”, giving glimpses of the many ways in which the friends have been reaching out in their homes, marae, community halls, universities, schools, clubs, art galleries, and workplaces; through musical performances, film showings, art and craft activities, children’s classes, adult study classes, devotional gatherings, firesides, poetry, drama, social media posts and radio broadcasts. The newsletter is presented in a manner that also allows it to be shared widely with others, either in print form or as a pdf file, particularly for those who responded to the invitation to participate in celebrations and associated community-building activities.

As the Universal House of Justice wrote in its message “To all who have come to honour the Herald of a new Dawn” in October: “Not content with simply belonging to such communities, Bahá'u'lláh’s followers are making constant effort to invite like-minded souls to join them in learning how to put His teachings into effect.” We encourage you to continue to reflect on this message of the Universal House of Justice and use it as a framework for conversations with friends, family and colleagues, as well as continuing to utilise the *Dawn of the Light* film.

Continues ...



The Supreme Institution has written that “The multitudes who recognized the Báb were summoned to heroism, and their magnificent response is recorded by history.” The House of Justice goes on to say that heroism for the present age is responding to Bahá’u’lláh’s call to selfless and steadfast service. The National Spiritual Assembly highly commends the friends for their efforts, and calls upon the whole community to press onward and upward towards more superb achievements by the end of the Five Year Plan.

Loving Bahá’í greetings,
National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá’ís of New Zealand

Suzanne Mahon
Secretary

Note: The “Building on the Bicentenary” newsletter can be downloaded from <https://bit.ly/2q570D1>

BUILDING ON THE BICENTENARY

