

## Manukau/Ōtara/Mangere/Papatoetoe East

A very full programme had been set by the team of facilitators and the logistics team, with group studies, plenaries and breaks in between. The participants felt warmly welcomed to the space, many of whom are friends that have come to know of the Faith from Bahá'í believers in their neighbourhoods. The friends within the language groups shared the significant unified approach initiated by the Bahá'ís to build vibrant communities and expressed their eagerness to participate — inviting others to come along. The uniqueness of the space with time spent to share cultural performances inspired the Niuean community of interest to share a dance, conveying their appreciation of being able to join and invite all their families around Auckland to come to the conference.

Sharing the conference themes in language spaces allowed for increased participation by not only Bahá'ís but also their friends and families. The themes were felt to be understood by the friends as they shared their reflections from the passages studied. The plenaries were a success as this was a time given to friends to share back from their study groups, while children performed a drama, and junior youth presented models.

The majority of the participants were Pacific islanders — Samoan, Tongan, Tuvaluan, Niuean and a small number of Māori as well as Pākeha.

The location was convenient to the participants, and provided a very welcoming environment — with joyful loving friends at registration handing out tags and promoting the conference t-shirts to buy. Decorations were marvellous with all traditional tapa on the stage. The food cooked by the friends was indeed spectacular, the facility was spacious and allowed the facilitators to run indoor activities with the children and junior youth.

### Details

Held 4-5 June at Manurewa Bahá'í Centre

Total Participants: 171 (272 with Niuean dance group included)

Friends of the Faith participating: children 37 (not including Niuean dance group), junior youth 25, youth and adults 109

*Note: Reports received from the various conferences have been edited for clarity and conciseness.*