

From the Assembly - Feast of Perfection – Kamal (August 01, 2019)

- **Feasts:**

The Assembly has decided to decentralize our community feasts to three neighbourhood level feasts on a trial basis until the end of this year with every 3rd feast still being a centralized feast to be held at the Old Mill Boathouse. This is based on the belief that the “propitious” conditions outlined by the Universal House of Justice in their message from May 2009, in which they state:

“The decentralization of the nineteen day feast in urban centres, where a significant percentage of humanity resides, is an inevitable consequence of the growth of the Faith, marking a significant stage in the organic development of a local community.”

The 3 neighbourhoods are geographically based, consisting of: Inlet/loco; Heritage; and Glenayre/College Heights.

The fundamental purpose behind this decision, as communicated to the community at the last feast, is threefold: a) to enable for more meaningful consultation, particularly about actions underway at a neighbourhood level; b) to increase participation at the feast and in the Fund; and c) to facilitate learning in response to community recommendations.

Two lists are available for community to review and provide input on: firstly, the community membership (which includes children and junior youth) residing in each neighbourhood, including telephone numbers; and secondly, a sign-up sheet with the list of upcoming feasts for you to consider to offer to host (attached).

- **Holy Days:**

The Assembly also consulted about potential options for our community’s observance of various Holy Days in the coming year and decided to seek input from the community. One of the ways to recognize and celebrate upcoming Holy Days, other than the Twin Holy Birthdays, the planning of which is already well underway, is by establishing various task forces specifically with the goal of each task force focusing on a specific Holy Day.

With that in mind, the Assembly puts forward a sign-up sheet with some of the upcoming Holy Days and asks that you consider volunteering to serve on a 2-4 member task force for each of these Holy Days (attached).

- **Devotional Gatherings:**

Further to a meeting the Assembly had with the ABM a number of meetings ago, and in consideration of the cluster-wide goal of establishing 500 core activities by the end of the current 5-year Plan, the Assembly is calling on each one of the 3 neighbourhoods in Port Moody to establish at least two (2) additional Devotional gatherings by the end of the current cycle, that being September 15, or to put it another way over the next two (2) feasts.

With this in mind, the Assembly wishes to focus the consultation at the feast of Perfection on the topic of devotional gatherings by posing the following question for the community’s reflection and consultation:

What are some of the components that result in a successful devotional gathering?

With the following excerpt proving the guidance from the Writings:

“...the flourishing of the community, especially at the local level, demands a significant enhancement in patterns of behaviour: those patterns by which the collective expression of the virtues of the individual members and the functioning of the Spiritual Assembly are manifest in the unity and fellowship of the community and the dynamism of its activity and growth. This calls for the integration of the component elements—adults, youth and children—in spiritual, social, educational

and administrative activities; and their engagement in local plans of teaching and development. It implies a collective will and sense of purpose to perpetuate the Spiritual Assembly through annual elections. It involves the practice of collective worship of God. Hence, it is essential to the spiritual life of the community that the friends hold regular devotional meetings in local Bahá'í centres, where available, or elsewhere, including the homes of believers."

(Ridvan 1996, from the Universal House of Justice to the Bahá'ís of the World)

- **Recommendations from the last feast:**

There were two recommendations made at the last feast, with the Assembly's considered response as follows:

1. Assembly to assign "deputy" or assistant treasurers for each neighbourhood to assist with the reporting, fund education and collection of contributions and to act as liaison between community and Treasurer – In this regard the Assembly has decided to proceed with appointment of just one "assistant" treasurer to help more with the educational aspects of Baha'i Funds, with the responsibility of selecting appropriate stories from the early believers and quotations from the Writings to be then assigned to youth and junior youth in each one of the three neighbourhoods to be shared with the community during feasts. As far as the responsibility of ensuring availability of blank envelopes and boxes at each feast is concerns and the collection of the contributions, the Assembly members responsible for coordinating the feasts at the neighbourhood level will make sure these tasks are appropriately discharged.
2. Assembly to ensure smaller group consultation during the centralized feasts, rather than leave to the will of the community as if given the opportunity, majority typically vote to stay in one large group, but consultation is less free-flowing and fruitful. – In this regard the Assembly agrees and wishes to confirm its practice of continuing with smaller group discussions when we have our centralized feasts, unless there is a specific recommendation by a member of the community at the feast and then agreed upon by a majority of those present at the feast. It is important to note that this is based on past experience which has shown that such smaller group consultations are typically more meaningful and result in wider community participation.

- **Next feast and Holy Days:**

Our next feast (Feast of Names - Asma) is going to be held at the neighbourhood levels on Tuesday August 20, 2019 starting at 7:30 pm; at Etemadis' for the Heritage neighbourhood; at Parto and Sana Goldans' for the Glenayre/College Heights neighbourhood; and we are currently looking for a host for the Inlet/loco neighbourhood;