

The National Spiritual Assembly warmly acknowledges the Guringai people who are the traditional custodians of this land. We pay respect to the elders of the Guringai nation, past, present and future.

The National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of Australia welcomes you to this service celebrating the sacredness of life and music. We particularly welcome the many singers from throughout Australia who have come to perform today as part of the 2017 Australian Bahá'í Choral Festival.

Honouring the sacredness of life is a common element among the religions of the world. In most traditions, music plays a special part in uplifting our souls and worshipping the Divine. Bahá'u'lláh, the Prophet-Founder of the Bahá'í Faith, wrote:

“We, verily, have made music as a ladder for your souls, a means whereby they may be lifted up unto the realm on high.”

The Bahá'í House of Worship is a place of prayer and meditation that is open to people of all beliefs. Like all services in the House of Worship, today's program comprises singing and reading of excerpts from the sacred texts of the world's religions. No musical instruments may be used: it is a space reserved for voice alone.

For Bahá'ís, living a sacred life is vital. Elevating our thoughts daily to God and His high aspirations for us is what drives us to make “each morn be better than its eve and each morrow richer than its yesterday.” Prayer and meditation, often set to music, provides spiritual nourishment for the soul. Bahá'ís are encouraged – indeed, it is considered a religious obligation – to pray and meditate every day.

We hope you enjoy this special service from the 2017 Australian Bahá'í Choral Festival.

NOTICE OF VIDEO RECORDING AND PHOTOGRAPHY

This event will be video-recorded and photographed for publication in print and electronic media, including web-based publication. The choir will be the primary focus, but audience members may be captured as well. If you have any concerns about this, please consult with an usher.

Isaiah saith: Carmel will see the glory of the Lord, the splendour of our God. Be strong, do not fear; your God will come. (Judaism)

O worshippers of God and followers of Zarathustra, we sacrifice unto the divine kingly glory that will cleave unto the victorious Benefactor, when he shall restore the world. (Zoroastrianism)

I am not the first Buddha Who came upon this earth, nor shall I be the last. Another Holy Buddha will arise, endowed with wisdom, who will reveal to you the same eternal truths which I have taught you. (Buddhism)

Then did Lord Krishna proclaim: Whenever virtue subsides and wickedness prevails, I manifest Myself from age to age, to establish virtue, to destroy evil, and to protect the good. (Hinduism)

And Jesus said unto them: The sun will be darkened; the moon will not give its light, and the stars will fall from heaven; then the tribes of the earth will see the Son of Man coming on the clouds of heaven with power and great glory. (Christianity)

The Imam Šádiq hath said: When our Qá'im will arise, the earth will shine with the light of her Lord. The Aválim records: Out of Bani-Háshim, a youth shall come forth, revealing a new Law. (Islam)

The time foreordained unto the peoples and kindreds of the earth is now come. The promises of God, as recorded in the Holy Scriptures, have all been fulfilled. (Bahá'í)

If ye seek God, it behooveth you to seek Him Whom God shall make manifest, and if ye cherish the desire to dwell in the Ark of Names, ye will be distinguished as the guides to Him Whom God shall make manifest, did ye but believe in Him. Verily then make your hearts the daysprings of His exalted

Names as recorded in the Book, and ye shall, even as mirrors placed before the sun, be able to receive enlightenment.

Bahá'í Scripture, Selections from the Writings of the Báb, p. 131

There will be signs in the sun, moon and stars. On the earth, nations will be in anguish and perplexity at the roaring and tossing of the sea. People will faint from terror, apprehensive of what is coming on the world, for the heavenly bodies will be shaken. At that time they will see the Son of Man coming in a cloud with power and great glory. When these things begin to take place, stand up and lift up your heads, because your redemption is drawing near.

Christian Scripture, Bible, New International Version (NIV), Luke 21: 25-28

LIFT UP YOUR HEADS

Music by Christoph Dalitz
Conducted by Sima Rowshan

Lift up your heads, O ye gates! And be ye lift up, ye everlasting doors. And the King of glory shall come in. Who shall ascend into the hill of the Lord? Or who shall stand in His holy place? He that hath clean hands and a pure heart.

Say: O people! We have commanded you in Our Tablets to strive, at the time of the promised Revelation, to sanctify your souls from all names, and to purify them from all that hath been created in the heavens or on the earth, that therein may appear the splendours of the Sun of Truth which shineth forth above the horizon of the Will of your Lord, the Almighty, the Most Great. We have, moreover, commanded you to cleanse your hearts from every trace of the love or hate of the peoples of the world, lest aught should divert you from one course or impel you towards another. This, verily, is among the weightiest counsels I have vouchsafed unto you in the perspicuous Book, for whoso attacheth himself to either of these shall be prevented from attaining a proper understanding of Our Cause. To this beareth witness every just and discerning soul.

Bahá'í Scripture, Summons of the Lord of Hosts, p. 49

munnug ra mina tacken er wietena loo weena kulla minna erry nina. poy ko arra tolo nara humme nara moinee poy kok arra noka nina.

Bahá'í Scripture, Kitáb-i-Íqán, p. 1

*(Palawa, language of the aboriginal people of south-eastern Troweena/Tasmania)
Sanctify your souls, O peoples of the earth, that haply ye may attain that station
which God hath destined for you.*

SANCTIFY YOUR SOULS

Music by Lorraine Manifold
Conducted by Lorraine Manifold

*Sanctify your souls, O peoples of the earth, that haply ye may attain that
station which God hath destined for you.*

O GOD, MY GOD

Music by Pierre Weber
Conducted by Lorraine Manifold

O God, my God, my Beloved, my heart's Desire!

He Who is the Desired One is come in His transcendent majesty. Say, Lo! The Father is come, and that which ye were promised in the Kingdom is fulfilled!

Bahá'í Scripture, Tablets of Bahá'u'lláh, p. 11

I am the One Whom the tongue of Isaiah hath extolled, the One with Whose name both the Torah and the Evangel were adorned.

Bahá'í Scripture, Summons of the Lord of Hosts, Súriy-i-Haykal, p. 86

Arise, and proclaim unto the entire creation the tidings that He Who is the All-Merciful hath directed His steps towards the Ridván and entered it. Guide, then, the people unto the garden of delight which God hath made the Throne

of His Paradise. We have chosen thee to be our most mighty Trumpet, whose blast is to signalise the resurrection of all mankind.

Bahá'í Scripture, Gleanings from the Writings of Bahá'u'lláh, p. 31

HE IS THE GLORY OF GLORIES

Music by Angela Salvaggione
Conducted by Pierre Weber

He is the Glory of Glories! Blessed Beauty, Promised One, Counsellor, Comforter, Incomparable Friend, Hand of Mercy, Help in Peril, Eternal Truth, One True God, Impenetrable Mystery, The Sealed Book, The Hidden Secret, The Unseen Treasure, The Most Ancient Name. He is the Glory of Glories!

Say: This is the Paradise on whose foliage the wine of utterance hath imprinted the testimony: "He that was hidden from the eyes of men is revealed, girded with sovereignty and power!" This is the Paradise, the rustling of whose leaves proclaims: "O ye that inhabit the heavens and the earth! There hath appeared what hath never previously appeared. He Who, from everlasting, had concealed His Face from the sight of creation is now come." From the whispering breeze that wafteth amidst its branches there cometh the cry: "He Who is the sovereign Lord of all is made manifest. The Kingdom is God's," while from its streaming waters can be heard the murmur: "All eyes are gladdened, for He Whom none hath beheld, Whose secret no one hath discovered, hath lifted the veil of glory, and uncovered the countenance of Beauty."

Bahá'í Scripture, Gleanings from the Writings of Bahá'u'lláh, p. 32

REJOICE

Music by Yrjö Mikkonen
Conducted by Ava Bargi

Rejoice, ye dwellers of the realms above, for the fingers of Him Who is the Ancient of Days are ringing, in the name of the All-Glorious, the Most Great Bell, in the midmost heart of the heavens.

BLESSED BE THE ONE

Music by Pierre Weber
Conducted by Pierre Weber

Blessed be the one who hath recognized Him and apprehended that which was promised in the Books of God, the Almighty, the All-Praised.

I was but a man like others, asleep upon My couch, when lo, the breezes of the All-Glorious were wafted over Me, and taught Me the knowledge of all that hath been. This thing is not from Me, but from One Who is Almighty and All-Knowing. And He bade Me lift up My voice between earth and heaven, and for this there befell Me what hath caused the tears of every man of understanding to flow.

Bahá'í Scripture, Epistle to the Son of the Wolf, p. 11

In Ṭíhrán We were twice imprisoned as a result of Our having risen to defend the cause of the innocent against a ruthless oppressor.

Bahá'í Scripture, Bahá'u'lláh, quoted in The Dawn Breakers, p. 584-5

Nevertheless, they apprehended Us, and ... conducted Us, on foot and in chains, with bared head and bare feet, to the dungeon of Ṭíhrán.

Bahá'í Scripture, Epistle to the Son of the Wolf, p. 20

Upon our arrival We were first conducted along a pitch-black corridor, from whence We descended three steep flights of stairs to the place of confinement

assigned to Us. The dungeon was wrapped in thick darkness, and Our fellow-prisoners numbered nearly a hundred and fifty souls: thieves, assassins and highwaymen. Though crowded, it had no other outlet than the passage by which We entered. No pen can depict that place, nor any tongue describe its loathsome smell. Most of these men had neither clothes nor bedding to lie on. God alone knoweth what befell Us in that most foul-smelling and gloomy place!

Bahá'í Scripture, Epistle to the Son of the Wolf, pp. 20-21

We were all huddled together in one cell, our feet in stocks, and around our necks fastened the most galling of chains. The air we breathed was laden with the foulest impurities, while the floor on which we sat was covered with filth and infested with vermin. No ray of light was allowed to penetrate that pestilential dungeon or to warm its icy-coldness. We were placed in two rows, each facing the other. We had taught them to repeat certain verses which, every night, they chanted with extreme fervour. "God is sufficient unto me; He verily is the All-sufficing!" one row would intone, while the other would reply: "In Him let the trusting trust." The chorus of these gladsome voices would continue to peal out until the early hours of the morning.

Bahá'í Scripture, Bahá'u'lláh, quoted in The Dawn Breakers, p. 631

GOD IS SUFFICIENT UNTO ME

Music by Tom Price
Conducted by Ava Bargi

God is sufficient unto me, He is the All-Sufficing. Let the trusting trust in Him.

During the days I lay in the prison of Tíhrán, though the galling weight of the chains and the stench-filled air allowed Me but little sleep, still in those infrequent moments of slumber I felt as if something flowed from the crown of My head over My breast, even as a mighty torrent that precipitateth itself upon the earth from the summit of a lofty mountain. Every limb of My body would, as a result, be set afire. At such moments My tongue recited what no man could

bear to hear.

Bahá'í Scripture, Epistle to the Son of the Wolf, p. 22

While engulfed in tribulations I heard a most wondrous, a most sweet voice, calling above My head. Turning My face, I beheld a Maiden—the embodiment of the remembrance of the name of My Lord—suspended in the air before Me. So rejoiced was she in her very soul that her countenance shone with the ornament of the good-pleasure of God, and her cheeks glowed with the brightness of the All-Merciful. Betwixt earth and heaven she was raising a call which captivated the hearts and minds of men. She was imparting to both My inward and outer being tidings which rejoiced My soul, and the souls of God's honoured servants. Pointing with her finger unto My head, she addressed all who are in heaven and all who are on earth, saying: By God! This is the Best-Beloved of the worlds, and yet ye comprehend not. This is the Beauty of God amongst you, and the power of His sovereignty within you, could ye but understand. This is the Mystery of God and His Treasure, the Cause of God and His glory unto all who are in the kingdoms of Revelation and of creation, if ye be of them that perceive.

Bahá'í Scripture, Summons of the Lord of Hosts, Súriy-i-Haykal, p. 5-6

MYSTERY OF GOD

Music by Lorraine Manifold
Conducted by Lorraine Manifold

This is the Beauty of God amongst you, and the power of His sovereignty within you, could ye but understand. This is the Mystery of God and His Treasure, the Cause of God and His glory unto all who are in the kingdoms of Revelation and of creation, if ye be of them that perceive.

○ BAHÁ'U'LLÁH

Music by Tom Price
Conducted by Lorraine Manifold

O Bahá'u'lláh! What hast Thou done? May my life be sacrificed for Thee!

O Bahá'u'lláh! May my soul be offered up for Thy sake! How full were Thy days with trials and tribulations! How severe the ordeals Thou didst endure! How solid the foundation Thou hast finally laid, and how glorious the banner Thou didst hoist!

The Ancient Beauty hath consented to be bound with chains that mankind may be released from its bondage, and hath accepted to be made a prisoner within this most mighty Stronghold that the whole world may attain unto true liberty. He hath drained to its dregs the cup of sorrow, that all the peoples of the earth may attain unto abiding joy, and be filled with gladness.

Bahá'í Scripture, Gleanings from the Writings of Bahá'u'lláh, p. 99-100

Say: Blessed the slumberer who is awakened by My Breeze. Blessed the lifeless one who is quickened through My reviving breaths. Blessed the eye that is solaced by gazing at My beauty. Blessed the wayfarer who directeth his steps towards the Tabernacle of My glory and majesty. Blessed the distressed one who seeketh refuge beneath the shadow of My canopy. Blessed the sore athirst who hasteneth to the soft-flowing waters of My loving-kindness.

Bahá'í Scripture, Tablets of Bahá'u'lláh, p. 16

Blessed the man whom the sweet savours of reunion with Me have stirred and caused to draw nigh unto the Dayspring of My Revelation. Blessed the ear that hath heard and the tongue that hath borne witness and the eye that hath seen and recognized the Lord Himself, in His great glory and majesty, invested with grandeur and dominion. Blessed are they that have attained His presence. Blessed the man who hath sought enlightenment from the Day-Star of My Word. Blessed he who hath attired his head with the diadem of My love.

Bahá'í Scripture, Tablets of Bahá'u'lláh, p. 16

YÁ BAHÁ'U'L-ABHÁ

Music by Narges Fani and Tom Price
Conducted by Sima Rowshan

O Thou Glory of the All-Glorious!
(Arabic)

FAAFETAI I LE TUPU O TUPU

Music by Unknown
Conducted by Lorraine Manifold

Samoa, awake! to give thanks and gratitude to the King of Kings, the All Merciful. O God! Raise aloft the banner of the oneness of mankind. Establish the Most Great Peace. May they all live together in perfect harmony, let the religions agree and make the nations one, so that they may see each other as one family and the whole earth as one home.
(Samoan)

THIS IS THE DAY

Music by Stanford Scriven
Conducted by Lorraine Manifold

This is the Day in which God's most excellent favours have been poured out upon men, the Day in which His most mighty grace hath been infused into all created things. It is incumbent upon all the peoples of the world to reconcile their differences, and, with perfect unity and peace, abide beneath the shadow of the Tree of His care and loving-kindness.

BAHÁ'U'LLÁH

Music by Russell Garcia
Conducted by Lorraine Manifold

O Bahá'u'lláh! God Is Most Glorious!
(Arabic)

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 in the House of Worship comprise readings and unaccompanied singing of sacred texts of the world's religions.

When the devotional program concludes, please remain seated, if you wish, for silent reflection, meditation or prayer.

You are welcome to keep this programme.

For further information about the Bahá'í Faith visit the Bahá'í website
www.bahai.org.au

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

Australian Bahá'í Choral Festival 2017 participants

- Sopranos -

Nasrin Adel	Elizabeth Enciondo	Eliza Mahdavi
Ulviiyya Afaridan	Katayoon Farrokhzadi	Lorraine Manifold
Sathy Allen	Fatemeh Hashemi	Ekua Mensah
Elizabeth Bagheri	Gemma Hedayati	Barbara Purcell
Ava Bargi	Laura Hedayati	Jenny Salter
Maxien Bradley	Sahar Hosseinabadi	Nadia Shoghi
Betsy Dere	Yoshie Koshikawa	Alyona Stuart
Susie Elia	Yvonne Lenders	

- Altos -

Nazila Alavimoghaddam	Farahnaz Ghardash	Hadie MacLeod
Rachel Bayliss	Marlene Harrison	Leonie Oldmeadow
Angela Bryan	Avaah Houghton	Susanne Oldmeadow
Desma Carver	Karen Humphrey	Aashi Parikh
Josephine Chang	Jinkee Khademi	Lara Payman
Giselle Cooke	Yasuko Kondo	Malak Sabeti
Erica Davidson	Katrina Lapp	Yin Sum
Cherie Georgiou	June Lincoln	Afsaneh Zurek

- Tenors -

Pash Afaridan	Mike Maxwell	Sima Rowshan
Daniel Farahbakht	Glennis McAlpine	Farshid Sanai
Navid Farahbakht	Behnam Missaghi	Kayvan Walker
Brett Keeman	Kiyan Rowshan	Kris Zemke

- Basses -

Steve Brisley	Peni Fakalata	Nabil Hashemi
Alf Capito	Bevan Freeman	Lawrence Heggie
Sean Suraj Chew	Keihan Ghanbari	Chris Langdon
Graeme Eldridge	Rex Harrison	