THE BAHAI FAITH

The teachings of the Bahá'í Faith inspire individuals and communities worldwide. Their own lives central to Bahá'i beliefs are themes such as the oneness of God and religion, the unity of humanity and freedom from prejudice, the inherent nobility of the human being, the progressive revelation of religious truth, the development of spiritual qualities, the integration of worship and service, the fundamental equality of the sexes, the harmony between religion and science, the centrality of justice, the importance of education, and the evolving relationships among individuals, communities, and institutions as humanity progresses toward collective maturity.

Interfaith representing Bahai community at the Interfaith service.

The Bahá'í Faith traces its origins to two Divine Messengers-the Báb and Bahá'u'lláh who, it is beloved, were entrusted by God a mission. The unity of the Faith is maintained through explicit instructions given by Bahá'u'lláh, to ensure a continuous line of guidance following His passing. This succession, known as the Covenant, extended from Bahá'u'lláh to His Son, 'Abdu'l-Bahá, then to His grandson, Shoghi Effendi, and ultimately to the Universal House of Justice, which Bahá'u'lláh ordained. Followers of the Bahá'í Faith recognize the divine authority of the Báb, Bahá'u'lláh, and their appointed successors.

The Bảb (1819-1850) served as the Herald of the Bahá'í Faith. In the mid-19th century. His mission was to prepare the way for a second, greater Messenger from God, who would establish an era of peace and justice.

Shonghi Effendi

Abdu'l-Bahá (1844-1921), Bahá'u'lláh's eldest son, was appointed as the authorized interpreter of His teachings and the Head of the Faith. He helped spread the faith from the east to the west.
Shoghi Effendi (1897-1957), the eldest grandson of 'Abdu'l-Bahá, was designated as the Guardian of the Bahá'í Faith and for over 36 years, he systematically nurtured its development,

Bahá'u'lláh (1817-1892), meaning the "Glory of God," was the Promised One foretold by the Báb and previous Divine Messengers. He revealed a new message from God, authoring thousands of verses, letters, and books that outlined a framework for a global civilization encompassing both spiritual and material aspects of human existence. His mission led to 40 years of imprisonment, torture, and exile.

Lotus Temple- Bahai temple in India

The Universal House of Justice, established in 1963, currently oversees the worldwide development of the Bahá'í Faith. As instructed by Bahá'u'lláh in His book of laws, this institution works to promote education, peace, global prosperity, and the dignity of humanity.

Old Jackson County Courthouse, Sylva, NC

The significance of the number nine in the Bahá'í Faith is especially notable. The Ninth Day of Ridvan, one of the three holy days within the 12-day Ridvan Festival when work is suspended, marks the moment when Bahá'u'lláh was reunited with His family in the Najibiyyih Garden (later known as the Garden of Ridvan) in Baghdad. The number nine is also reflected in Bahá'í architecture and governance, as Bahá'í Houses of Worship are designed with nine sides and nine entrances, and all Bahá'í institutions, including Local and National Spiritual Assemblies and the Universal House of Justice, consist of nine democratically elected members. Symbolically, nine is the largest single-digit number, representing completeness and unity. It signifies that all Faiths and people are welcome in every Bahá'í House of Worship (or "Temple"), which serves as a space for prayer and reflection open to all, regardless of background or belief. [To find out more about the Baha'i faith go to the website bahai.org]

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