

Central Okanagan Cluster Newsletter

‘Alá’ / علاء / Loftiness, 172 B.E. March 1st-20th, 2016

Feast of Ala’/Loftiness – February 29th

“This is, O my God, the first of the days on which Thou hast bidden Thy loved ones to observe the Fast. I ask of Thee by Thy Self and by him who hath fasted out of love for Thee and for Thy good-pleasure—and not out of self and desire, nor out of fear of Thy wrath—and by Thy most excellent names and august attributes, to purify Thy servants from the love of aught except Thee and to draw them nigh unto the Dawning-Place of the lights of Thy countenance and the Seat of the throne of Thy oneness. Illumine their hearts, O my God, with the light of Thy knowledge and brighten their faces with the rays of the Daystar that shineth from the horizon of Thy Will.”³

Mission & Rutland @ Fereshteh Izadi-Koshkaki
3066 Springfield Rd. ph. 250-448-2575

Downtown - @ Baharieh & Heme Fehandez-Saadi, 7:30 pm
1366 Orchard Dr. ph.250-868-4955

Glenmore- @ Chen family 7 pm
621 Glenmore Rd. North, ph.250-860-1121

February 27th **Ayyam-i-Ha Celebration** - 2-5 pm
Rutland Centennial Hall, 180 Rutland Rd N.

March 20th **Naw Ruz-** 2 pm at the Lion’s Community Hall,
2466 Main St, West Kelowna

STUDY OF LETTER DEC. 29, 2015 – Universal House of Justice
EVERYONE ASKED TO PLEASE READ THE LETTER BEFORE ATTENDING STUDY
GROUP. **SOME STUDY SESSIONS STILL LEFT**

Host:	Location	Date	Time
Chen family	Chen’s res. for -all Glenmore	Sat. March 26	1:00-4:00 pm English
Cyrus Ajamzadeh	Ajamzadeh’s	Sat. March 5	1:00-4:00 - Persian
Ward/Dewitt family	Ward/Dewitt res.	Sun. Jan.24 – pot luck supper	4:00 - 8pm English
Behrouzi Family	Behrouzi’s Continental Breakfast	Sun Feb 14 th All Welcome	9:30-Noon English (with some Persian available)

Devotional Team – would you like to study a prayer or have someone visit you and say prayers with you? Please call Ninous @ 250-862-9595

LINKS: Sign up to Host or help with any of the upcoming events. <http://www.bahai-kelowna.org/holy-day-volunteers.html> or [contact your](#) or check out our community webpage for events and details @ <http://www.bahai-kelowna.org>

**Badi Calendar : <http://www.jeffreymbrown.info/NewHolyDays/NewCalendar.html>

Central Okanagan Devotional Calendar						
'Alá' / علاء / Loftiness						
Glory Jalál	Beauty Jamál	Perfection Kamál	Grace Fiḏál	Justice 'Idál	Majesty Istijlál	Independence Istiqhlál
			1	2	3	4
Sat	Sun	Mon Feb 29	Tue March 1	Wed March 2	Thur March 3	Fri March 4
<p>"It behoveth the people of Bahá, throughout these days, to provide good cheer for themselves, their kindred and, beyond them, the poor and needy, and with joy and exultation to hail and glorify their Lord, to sing His praise and magnify His Name." Bahá'u'lláh, The Kitáb-i-Aqdas p. 25</p>			<p>(WK) 2 pm Ladies Group call Sonia @250-862-3923</p> <p>Sunrise 6:37am</p>  <p>FEAST</p>	<p>(D) 11-12 pm Kelowna Hospital</p>	<p>(WK) Lakeview Lodge 11-30am Contact Felour @250-768-2048</p> <p>(D) Powell's 7:30 pm @250-860-7158</p> <p>(R) Aghdasi 7pm @ 778-478-9849</p>	<p>(R) JY Devotional 7:30 pm Carmel's @ 778-363-3760</p> <p>(WFN) @ 7pm Ata/Shahnaz 250-769-1440</p>
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
Sat March 5	Sun March 6	Mon March 7	Tue March 8	Wed March 9	Thur March 10	Fri March 11
<p>(WK) 8 am Joan Bauer's @ 778-755-0562</p> <p>(WFN) @ 7pm Ata/Shahnaz 250-769-1440</p>				<p>(D) 11-12 pm Kelowna Hospital</p>	<p>(WK) Lakeview Lodge 11-30am Contact Felour @ 250-768-2048</p> <p>(R) Aghdasi 7pm @ 778-478-9849</p>	<p>(R) JY Devotional 7:30 pm Carmel's @ 778-363-3760</p>
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
Sat March 12	Sun March 13	Mon March 14	Tue March 15	Wed March 16	Thur March 17	Fri March 18
<p>(WK) 8 am Joan Bauer's @ 778-755-0562</p> <p>(M) 10 am Azar Ashraf @ 250-762-5354</p> <p>(WFN) @ 7pm Ata/Shahnaz 250-769-1440</p> <p>Youth Dev. @ Colleen's</p>				<p>(D) 11-12 pm Kelowna Hospital</p>	<p>(WK) Lakeview Lodge 11-30am Contact Felour @ 250-768-2048</p> <p>* Aghdasi 7pm @ 778-478-9849</p>	<p>* JY Devotional 7:30 pm Carmel's @ 778-363-3760</p>
19						
Sat March 19	Sun March 20	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thur	Fri
<p>(WK) 8 am Joan Bauer's @ 778-755-0562</p> <p>(WFN) @ 7pm Ata/Shahnaz 250-769-1440</p>  <p>Sunset 7:10pm</p>	<p>(G) 9 am Vigours' @ 250-860-4378</p> <p>NAW-RUZ</p> <p>FEAST</p>					

As things can change Please contact Hosts to confirm devotional info

WK–West Kelowna; WFN–Westbank 1st Nations; G–Glenmore; D–Downtown; R–Rutland; M–Mission; L–Lake Country

(R) – JY/Parents Devotional –Carmel@778-363-3760/ (WK) – CC Family Devotional- Caroline@250-768-0930

Core activities which have been identified by the House of Justice are:

- D** Devotional Meetings
- S** Study Circles
- Y** Activities for Youth (10-14)
- C** Classes for Children

*Co-Ordinator:

Jr Youth : Camel Mehrabkhani, ph. Ph 778-930-1844 Cmehrabkhani@gmail.com
Study Circles –Colleen Bryant, ph. 778-930-1844, colleen.s.bryant@gmail.com
Children’s Classes : Caroline Mackay, ph 250-768-0930 theharplady@shaw.ca

Area Teaching Committee: Weihang Chen, Cindy Snedden and Dawn Powell @ c.ok.cgc@gmail.com

Note: A number of Ruhi books are starting during this Cycle... please contact Colleen@778-930-1844 to let her know which book you’d like to join.

Fasting

Fasting has been a significant practice of religion throughout human history. Many of the Manifestations of God Themselves went through a period of meditation and fasting at some point in Their lives during which, in intense communion with God, They contemplated the mysteries of the universe and the nature of Their mission.

Fasting, said ‘Abdu’l-Bahá *“is the cause of awakening man. The heart becomes tender and the spirituality of man increases. This is produced by the fact that man’s thoughts will be confined to the commemoration of God, and through this awakening and stimulation surely ideal advancements follow”*.¹

However, it is important to note that fasting should not be viewed as a practice of asceticism, nor is it to be used as a means of penance: *“[T]his material fast is an outer token of the spiritual fast; it is a symbol of self-restraint, the withholding of oneself from all appetites of the self, taking on the characteristics of the spirit, being carried away by the breathings of heaven and catching fire from the love of God.”*²

Bahá’u’lláh designated a nineteen-day period each year during which adult Bahá’ís fast from sunrise to sunset each day. This period coincides with the Bahá’í month of Alá which immediately precedes the Bahá’í new year. It is a time of prayer, meditation, and spiritual rejuvenation.



Consultation at the recent feast resulted in plans for the below service project



Collection of items for Kelowna Food Bank

On Feb 28th teams will be visiting Baha'i homes to collect items for the local food bank. Please see the below list and link on what the current needs are. Cash can be donated instead of food and is always appreciated.

REGULAR ITEMS NEEDED:

- Canned meat
- Canned fruit
- Good Start baby formula
- Whole wheat crackers
- Pasta
- Natural Peanut Butter

Link of full list of items needed:

<https://cofoodbank.com/donate/most-needed-items/>

If you will not be home on collection day or for more information please contact Paymaan @250-300-5156



MR. WILLIAM ATIYAMA

SPREADS THE FAITH THROUGH STORIES

Bahá'u'lláh says in the *Kitáb-i-Aqdas* that for every end there is a means. One of the means for teaching the Faith, for highlighting the truths it reveals, is through stories. Another verse from the *Kitáb-i-Aqdas* is that the edification of the hearts of men depends upon the tongue. The following is an account of Mr. Kaizer Barnes about him:

One of the great teachers of the Faith in Nigeria was Mr. William Atiyama. You may have heard me speak about him. He was a very dignified man, noble in his bearing, big and tall. He was a farmer and a small trader. It was a pleasure to collaborate with him in teaching and consolidating the Faith in many villages. Much was learned about service and the dignity of humanity from him. It's one of the crimes of our age that a person with such potential, who might have succeeded in any professional career, was uneducated. Because his parents hadn't had enough money to pay his school fees, he was illiterate. He was a great teacher of the Faith. He taught new believers by the dozens. The sincerity of his speech, the illumination of his countenance, and the purity of his heart attracted souls. He consciously made many sacrifices for the advancement of the Cause. On all his teaching activities, he carried what he called his "Bahá'í Bible". It was his copy of *Gleanings from the Writings of Bahá'u'lláh*. He couldn't read or write. But he knew the power of holy verses, and the importance of showing that the Faith has holy books. He also knew the importance of relying on divine assistance.

One day, he and I went to a nearby town to present the Faith to some friends of his. At the meeting there were five women. They had heard William had accepted a new religion. They wanted to hear about it. In his confident and moving style, he presented some principles of the Faith. It always excited me to hear him teach. His countenance shone. One could feel his soul was inflamed with the beauty and power of the Teachings. At the end of his presentations, he always invited individuals to embrace the Faith. He was confident that what he was offering – the Teachings of Bahá'u'lláh – was best for the seekers. When he finished speaking, the ladies dropped their heads. They were shy. Finally, one of them said what he had told them was good. Now, they wanted the professor, meaning me, to speak. She was indicating that they doubted that an uneducated, simple man like William Atiyama could be expressing such beautiful thoughts correctly; that I should confirm what he had said.

William leaped up from his chair. He cried, "What do you mean, hear from professor? I have presented my Faith. I have studied my Faith, just like professor." He explained, "Bahá'u'lláh says every believer must study the Writings. He has commanded that every believer should read, morning and evening, the holy verses. And this is what I do!"

I looked at him. He couldn't read. The ladies knew he couldn't read. I thought he hadn't realized he was exaggerating. Pointing to *Gleanings*, he told those astonished ladies, "This is my Bahá'í Bible. I read it each morning and evening like Bahá'u'lláh said I must." After some seconds of silence, he continued, "Yes, I read my Bahá'í Bible. Bahá'u'lláh said I must." Then he explained: "When I go to sleep at night, I put my Bahá'í Bible under my pillow. This is how I read the Words of God." Can you imagine? Such faith!

He said, "The Bahá'í Faith makes me do the best I can." He went on to say, "When I wake up in the morning, I place my Bahá'í Bible over my heart and my heart reads the Writings of Bahá'u'lláh."

This is a story of a believer's new consciousness, his new way of thinking, a new way of coping and using creative powers. Those ladies became Bahá'ís. The experience moved me greatly. Still, it does. William's story excites me to study more intensely. The account of an illiterate man propelled me forward on to a new way of learning, of thinking, of seeing, and loving the Faith.



On this date...

March 1, 1897 Shoghi Effendi was born

March 4, 1929 League of Nations Council resolution upholds the Baha'i Community's claim to Bahá'u'lláh's house in Baghdad.

March 7 1948 Shoghi Effendi decides to commence work on the Shrine of the Báb superstructure.

March 8, 1917 'Abdu'l-Bahá reveals portion of the Tablets of Divine Plans to the Bahá'ís of the United States and Canada.

March 12 1923 Shoghi Effendi calls for the establishment of Local and National Baha'i Funds.

*please send newsletter submissions to dawnpowell@ogopogo.com



The Kitáb-i-Aqdas states: “We have commanded you to pray and fast from the beginning of maturity [15 years]; this is ordained by God, your Lord and the Lord of your forefathers... The traveler, the ailing, those who are with child or giving suck, are not bound by the fast... Abstain from food and drink from sunrise to sundown, and beware lest desire deprive you of this grace that is appointed in the Book.”

DATE	SUNRISE	SUNSET
March 1	6:39 am	5:41 pm
March 2	6:37 am	5:43 pm
March 3	6:35 am	5:45 pm
March 4	6:33 am	5:46 pm
March 5	6:31 am	5:48 pm
March 6	6:29 am	5:50 pm
March 7	6:26 am	5:51 pm
March 8	6:24 am	5:53 pm
March 9	6:22 am	5:54 pm
March 10	6:20 am	5:56 pm
March 11	6:18 am	5:58 pm
March 12	6:16 am	5:59 pm
(Time Change - Clocks Ahead 1 hour - to Daylight Savings)		
March 13	7:14 am	7:01 pm
March 14	7:11 am	7:02 pm
March 15	7:09 am	7:04 pm
March 16	7:07 am	7:06 pm
March 17	7:05 am	7:07 pm
March 18	7:03 am	7:09 pm
March 19	7:01 am	7:10 pm

