

DAYSPRING

issue 115

Bahá'í Inspiration For Young Hearts & Minds

UK

**WE MUST
BE LIKE THE
FOUNTAIN...**

**CONTINUALLY
EMPTYING
ITSELF OF
ALL THAT
IT HAS...**

**SHOGHI
EFFENDI**

A Fountain of Generosity

Dayspring is a children's magazine that's produced four times a year on an educational, non-profit basis. It seeks to nurture a love for God and humankind in the hearts of all children, inspired by the beautiful teachings of the Bahá'í Faith.

Dayspring is created by a small team of dedicated volunteers and contributors.

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Printer-friendly versions of most activities (available from issue 110 onwards) are also

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Submissions:

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Please note that under the terms of the Child Protection Act regarding publishing images of children, permission to do so is required from a parent or guardian.

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The magazine editors reserve the right to include or not include any submissions for any reason.

For more information about the Bahá'í Faith, its teachings and how you might get involved visit: www.bahai.org.uk

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WELCOME FRIENDS!

Hello generous ones! We're going to jump into a world of generosity in this issue of Dayspring. What is generosity, how do we use it and why does it matter? Well, we're going to have a generous look at these questions and together we'll hopefully uncover the answers. We'll look at some examples of generosity from 'Abdu'l-Bahá, stories of early Bahá'ís who gave generously even when they had little to give, we'll share quotes and generous facts, and explore this charitable virtue in generous articles... not forgetting of course a generous dose of fun and puzzles. We'll also look at being generous with our service and our time and most importantly with our love!

GENEROSITY

is the gift anyone can give!

So what are you waiting for!? Read on and don't forget to be bounteous, big hearted and benevolent because generous hearts change the world.

The Dayspring Team



How many generous hearts can you find hidden in this magazine?



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Download print-friendly colouring & activities at www.dayspring.bahai.org.uk



A FOUNTAIN OF GENEROSITY

The virtue that's continually giving

Have you ever shared your favourite toy with a friend? Or helped someone even when you didn't have to? These are some simple ways we show generosity—a very important quality! But generosity is not just about giving things; it's also about giving love, time, and kindness to others, and our generosity shines even brighter when we give these things plentifully and with no thought of reward (sometimes not even a thank you!) Shoghi Effendi tells us how generous we should try to be:

To be continually giving out for the good of our fellows undeterred by fear of poverty and reliant on the unfailing bounty of the Source of all wealth and all good...

Who is the *Source of all wealth and all good*? Shoghi Effendi is talking about God. As you may already have seen, many Bahá'í prayers and writings call God the *Most Bountiful*, the *Munificent*, the *Ever-Giving* and the *Most Generous*. Think about the sun—it shines on everyone, whether they are rich or poor, happy or sad. The rain falls on all of us, helping plants to grow and giving us water to drink. These are all gifts from God, freely given, without asking for anything in return. All our possessions, the people in our lives, the things we love to do all exist because of God. Every single atom in the universe exists because of God! Bahá'u'lláh tells us in a prayer:

Thou art He Who from everlasting hath been the Source of all generosity and the Fountain of infinite munificence.

From this we learn that God's generosity is endless and overflowing. When we strive to be generous, we not only reflect this selfless quality of God, we also bring happiness to others.

If we take a little time to look at the natural world we can see that nature is also giving and generous.

We receive so many gifts from nature. The trees give us oxygen to breathe, fruits to eat, blossoms in the spring and shade in the summer. The flowers share their beauty and scent with everyone and some give us oils and medicine. The earth provides space for all creatures to live, grow and flourish. Can you think of any others?

When we turn to God's creation we can see and appreciate its bounty and even learn from it. Just as the sun shines on us all, we too can practise shining generosity on others and giving out friendship, light and warmth—without expecting anything in return.

But if God's generosity is endless, why do so many people seemingly miss out on this generosity? Today in the world there are many people in need of the very basics of life such as food, clean water and a roof over their heads. You might ask: "Where is God's generosity?" 'Abdu'l-Bahá tells us:

The wrong in the world continues to exist just because people talk only of their ideals, and do not strive to put them into practice. If actions took the place of words, the world's misery would very soon be changed into comfort.

So if we think about it, it isn't God's generosity that is lacking, but rather people's lack of generosity towards one another.

You might wonder: "Are people born generous?" The answer is yes! Inside each of us is a natural kindness. However, like a seed, our generosity grows stronger when we water it with lots of thoughtful intention and goodly actions.

For God's generosity to truly belong to all (humans, animals and all the creatures and plants), we need to grow strong, generous roses of love in our hearts and do good and generous things for our families and communities. Generously helping friend and stranger alike. Learning what it means to live a generous life and showing others, by loving example, how generous hearts can, and indeed will, change the world for the better!

To understand generosity more deeply it can be helpful to understand its opposite, in other words, what it looks like when that virtue is missing.

To help us do this we're going to make an acrostic poem. The first letter of every line spells out another keyword or phrase associated with that word. We've given you

an example using the keyword 'GENEROSITY' using lots of lovely, positive words.

Can you complete its opposite using the keyword 'UNGENEROUS' and complete it using words or phrases that are the opposite of generosity?

GIVING

U

ENDLESSLY

N

NURTURING

G

EVERYONE

E

RADIENT

N

OPEN HEARTS

E

SHARING

R

INCLUDING

O

THANKFUL

U

YOU & ME!

S

If you get stuck you can look at some examples in the puzzle answers on page 27.

A GENEROUS HEART

One sunny day, long ago in Persia, a young 'Abdu'l-Bahá was riding His pony through the lush green fields and hills of His Father's lands. At that time Bahá'u'lláh and His family were very wealthy and owned a lot of land. Bahá'u'lláh cared deeply for the people who lived there. The houses, fields, and sheep all belonged to Him, and the people who lived there worked the land and cared for

the animals. Bahá'u'lláh made sure everyone had what they needed. When people were sick, He gave them medicine; when they were hungry, He shared His food. He was grateful that the people who lived on His land took good care of it and He thanked them for it. Because of

Inspiring stories from the life of 'Abdu'l-Bahá

His generosity and kindness, everyone in the village loved Bahá'u'lláh very much.

Although 'Abdu'l-Bahá was only seven years old His father Bahá'u'lláh had entrusted Him

with a very special task. He was to visit the shepherds who lived high in the hills and watched over the sheep. He was to visit with them and thank them for all their care and hard work feeding and protecting His Father's flock.

Since 'Abdu'l-Bahá was still young, the head shepherd

accompanied Him on the journey to keep Him safe and help Him carry out His duty. As they neared the shepherds, surrounded by their flocks of woolly sheep, the head shepherd whispered to 'Abdu'l-Bahá, "When the owner, or his son, visits the shepherds, it's a

tradition to thank them with a gift for taking such good care of the sheep."

The young 'Abdu'l-Bahá thought carefully about this. He wanted to thank the shepherds, but He didn't have any money or food to give them. Then, He had a wonderful idea. Smiling at the

shepherds, He called out, "I'll give each shepherd all the sheep in his flock!"

The shepherds were astonished. They couldn't believe that the young boy was offering them every single sheep they had been caring for. It was the most

generous gift they could ever have imagined.

Later, when Bahá'u'lláh heard what His Son had done, He wasn't angry that His sheep had been given away, He was pleased. He smiled and said, "We will have to protect 'Abdu'l-Bahá

from Himself -- some day he will give himself away."

And that's exactly what 'Abdu'l-Bahá did! He spent His whole life helping and serving others with a heart as full of love and generosity as it had been the day He thanked the shepherds.

The Beloved Master, 'Abdu'l-Bahá, was a selfless, generous and kind man who lived a simple life. His life was so full of the spirit of the love of God that He didn't want material things. He enjoyed simple food and wore simple, inexpensive clothing. If someone gave Him something fancy or costly, He would often give it away to someone in need.

One day, 'Abdu'l-Bahá's wife, Munírih Khánum, was preparing for a journey. She knew her Husband's generous heart well and worried that while she was

gone, He might give away His only warm cloak. So she came up with a plan! She handed a second cloak to their daughter and asked her to keep it safe for 'Abdu'l-Bahá, just in case.

After Munírih Khánum left, 'Abdu'l-Bahá asked His daughter, "Do I have another cloak?"

His daughter nodded. "Yes, you do."

'Abdu'l-Bahá thought for a moment and then said, "How could I be happy having two cloaks, knowing that there are others who have none?"

And, true to His generous nature, He gave the second cloak away to someone in need.

This was how 'Abdu'l-Bahá lived—always thinking of others, even when it meant giving away what little He had. His kindness and caring spirit inspired everyone around Him.

How has 'Abdu'l-Bahá's example inspired you? Write a story or draw a picture that shows what generosity means to you.



Make a woolly sheep... and give it away!

What you will need:

- Black card
- Cardboard
- Wool
- Glue



Head



Instructions:

1. Using the images on this page as a guide, cut out a body from cardboard and a head and two legs from black card.
2. Draw a face on your sheep head.
3. Wrap the wool around and around the cardboard body until it's fully covered and nice and woolly.
4. Stick the head on the front and the legs on the back of your sheep.
5. Give your sheep a fun name like Woolly, Baabara or Fluffy McBleat-Feet.
6. The final step is to follow the example of 'Abdu'l-Bahá and give your sheep to someone as a thank you gift.



Legs



A GALAXY OF WONDERS

Create a colourful galaxy bursting with stars



A4 Black Card



Washi Tape



Soft Chalk Pastels



White/Bright Acrylic Paint



Paint Brush



Carefully stick a rectangle of washi tape to the centre of your card (you will need to peel it off later).



Swirl thick chalk lines in different colours on the page covering most of the black with chalk.



Rub your fingers on the chalky lines, following the swirls, to blend the colours together.



Use the white paint to dot your swirling galaxy with lots and lots of stars.



Carefully peel off the washi tape to reveal a clear rectangle in the middle of your picture.







Decipher the quote on the page opposite and then write it in the rectangle to finish.

PICTURE PUZZLE

Use the picture clues below each word to help decode the quotation.

_____ as _____, brilliant _____
  
 e t-d

_____ in _____ loftiness
 +  +  + 
 k-l i-h

of their _____
 
 y-enly

- 'Abdu'l-Bahá

SUPER SPACE FACTS

★ Did you know that there are more stars in the universe than all the grains of sand on all the beaches on Earth - that's at least a billion trillion!

★ Despite the Sun being considered an average sized star, one million Earths could fit inside it.

★ We can thank the Moon for our tides. Their gravitational pull moves billions of tonnes of ocean water each day.

★ The observable universe is approx. 93 billion light-years in diameter.



WHAT OTHER AMAZING FACTS CAN YOU FIND ABOUT OUR UNIVERSE?



YOU COULD ADD SPARKLING STARS TO YOUR PICTURE WITH GEL PENS, GLITTER OR STARS MADE OF FOIL OR GOLD CARD.

KALIMÁT KORNOR

Let's have fun with words & pictures



I love to hear from Dayspring readers! Send me a puzzle, poem or joke & we may feature it in our next magazine! Email dayspring@bahai.org.uk.

SNOW BIRDS

It's great to have fun in the snow and there's a lot on this page. Can you draw some happy, little snow birds on top of the snow drift? You could get really silly and draw banana beaks, cookie eyes and cupcake hats! Where does your imagination take you?



WRAP UP WARM

Kalimat's friends are wrapping up to keep warm. Follow the lines to see what woolly attire each bird has chosen to keep themselves cosy in the snow.

What's your favourite cosy clothing? Write your answer below.

My favourite cosy item is:

SNOW WORDS

There are lots of 4 letter words ending with 'OW', including 'SNOW' and 'GROW'. Can you think of some others and write them in the boxes?

SNOW

___OW

___OW

GROW

___OW

___OW

___OW

___OW

___OW

TONGUE TWISTER

When you choose, some new snow shoes, you should refuse the free tattoos.

WOULD YOU RATHER?

Chow down on 20 cabbage leaves or 20 Brussels sprouts?

Live in a castle made out of snow or out of sand?

Paint an elephant's toe nails or style a lion's mane with ribbons and glitter gel?

KALIMAT COUNT

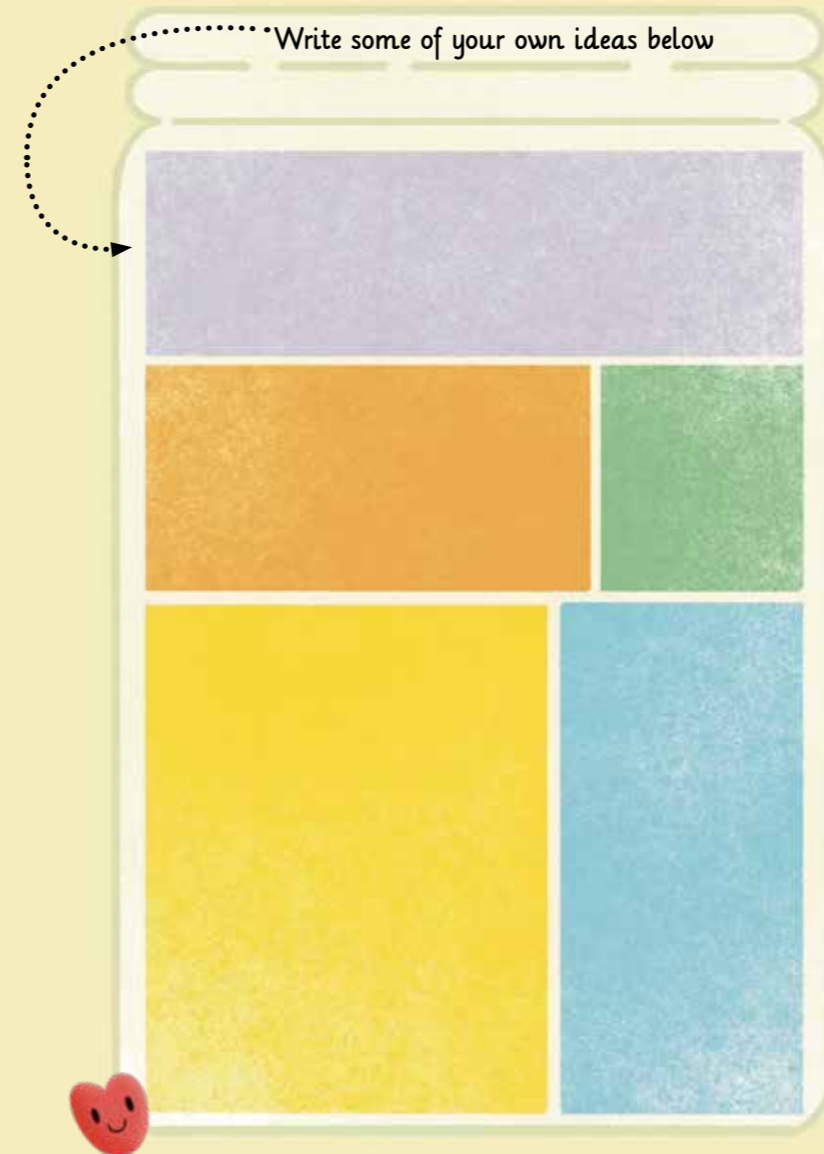
How many bird outlines can you spot in the tangled up image below?




GENEROUS JAR

Want to make a generous ideas jar?

1. First of all you need a jar and lots of scraps of paper to write on (and a pen or pencil).
2. Spend a little time thinking about things you could be generous about. These could be things you give or things you do. Think about the spirit of love you need to do each task.
3. Next, write each idea on a scrap of paper, fold it over and pop it in the jar.
4. The final step is that whenever you need a generous idea you can take one at random from the jar and do the task you'd written down.



Hi friends... it's Kalimat here! I'm going to be generous with my bird seed cakes. I often have a packet of them and always choose to share them.



**TO GIVE & TO
BE GENEROUS ARE
ATTRIBUTES OF MINE;
WELL IS IT WITH HIM THAT
ADORNETH HIMSELF WITH
MY VIRTUES.**

- BAHÁ'U'LLÁH



THE FRIENDSHIP FOREST

Is it nature's nature to share?

Deep in the heart of Friendship Forest, where sunlight dances through the leaves and a gentle breeze whispers through the branches, there was a very special group of trees. These trees had a secret—a hidden way of talking and helping each other that no one could see.

One young sapling named Sprig had just sprouted and was eager to grow big and tall. Sprig loved the sunlight and dreamed of reaching as high as the oldest trees in the forest. But being little wasn't always easy. Sometimes, the big trees would block the sunlight, and on dry days, Sprig's roots would feel thirsty, trying to reach deeper for water.

One day, a wise old tree named Grand Maple noticed little Sprig's struggles. Grand Maple had lived in Friendship Forest for over a hundred

years and knew all the forest's secrets. Grand Maple decided it was time to teach Sprig about the "Friendship Network"—a magical, invisible web deep underground that connected all the trees.

"Sprig, let me show you something special," Grand Maple said in a gentle, creaky voice.

Sprig wiggled his leaves with excitement, curious to learn more about what Grand Maple was talking about.

"Deep below the soil, we trees are connected by tiny threads of fungi," Grand Maple explained. "These fungi are like helpers. They stretch from my roots to yours, and even to those of other trees in the forest."

Sprig was amazed. "So, we're all connected?" he asked, swaying in wonder.

"That's right," said Grand Maple. "Through this Friendship Network, we can help each other. If one of us has too much water, we can share it with

a tree that's thirsty. And if a young tree like you needs extra nutrients to grow strong, we can send some goodness your way."

Just then, Sprig felt a little tingling in his roots. It was like a gentle hug coming from the soil. Grand Maple was sharing a bit of water and nutrients with Sprig, helping him grow.

"Thank you, Grand Maple!" Sprig whispered happily, feeling his leaves stretch a bit higher.

From that day on, Sprig learned to feel the little tugs and nudges

through the Friendship Network. Sometimes, he would even send his own nutrients to smaller saplings nearby, or warn other trees when he felt strong winds blowing in.

As the years passed, Sprig grew tall and strong, just like Grand Maple. And one day, he noticed a tiny new sapling struggling to grow in a patch of shade. Sprig reached deep down into the Friendship Network and shared a little water and warmth with the young tree, just as Grand

Maple had done for him.

The Friendship Forest kept growing, strong and connected. And though no one walking through the forest could see the secret web below, all the trees knew that with the help of the Friendship Network, they would never be alone.

And so, the forest continued to flourish, with each tree lending a hand to its neighbours, sharing strength, water, and love through their generous, magical network of roots.

We can all see the trunk, branches and leaves of trees but did you know that their roots grow very deep, anywhere between two and six feet underground. Some species like the Cherry or Rowan have roots up to 11 metres, Beech trees can reach 15 metres and Oak trees can grow roots up to 40 metres long, which is equivalent to the length of 4 double decker buses. Rooty tooty that's some very long roots!

If you were a tree what would you look like? Would you be tall or short, twiggy or leafy, covered in flowers or fruit? Draw your tree-self in the space above.



Feed the Birds

Make a generous garden this winter with these crafty ideas



You are even as the bird which soareth, with the full force of its mighty wings and with complete and joyous confidence, through the immensity of the heavens...

- Bahá'u'lláh

Milk Carton Bird Feeder

You will need:

- Used Milk Carton
- Acrylic Paint (non-toxic)

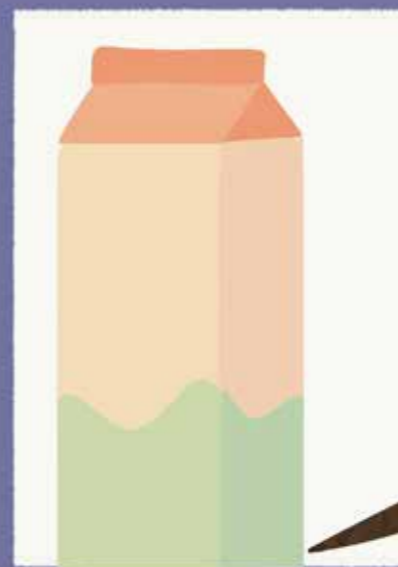
- Sharp Scissors or Knife
- Awl or Pointed Screwdriver

- Strong String
- Garden Bird Seed

Instructions:

1. Thoroughly clean a 1 or 2 pint milk carton and leave to dry before decorating it.
2. On a protected surface, paint a fun design onto your carton with acrylic paints. Wait for the paint to dry.
3. With help from an adult, carefully use some sharp scissors or a knife to cut out all four sides of the carton.
4. Next, carefully poke a hole into the top of the carton with an awl or pointed screw driver.
5. Thread approx. 15cm of strong string through the hole and knot the top.
6. Finally, sprinkle a generous amount of bird seed in your feeder, hang it from sturdy branch and get ready to see who comes to eat.

Make sure to use non-toxic paint so the birds don't get sick.



TAKE CARE WITH SCISSORS AND OTHER SHARP IMPLEMENTS!

Generosity is about giving from the heart-not just to people, but to all of God's creation. And that's exactly what you can do! Have you ever thought of your garden as a place where generosity can bloom? When we care for nature, we show kindness to the animals, birds, and insects that share our world. 'Abdu'l-Bahá loved animals and tells us:

If an animal be sick, let them try to heal it, if it be hungry, let them feed it, if thirsty, let them quench its thirst, if weary, let them see that it rests.

The natural world reminds us of the beauty, harmony and perfection of God's creation. But sometimes, especially during the cold winter months when food is scarce and water freezes over, we can be generous and give nature a little helping hand.

As many mammals, amphibians and insects are hibernating at this time of year, it's mainly our feathery friends the garden birds we can assist.

Making a generous garden

Do you have a garden? If not maybe you could help the birds in a relative's or friend's garden or there are community spaces where you can get permission to feed the birds. Winter gardens are often cold and wet so wrap up warm and wear appropriate footwear.

If you have a bird feeder you could make sure it's always topped up with food and clean water. Remember to always wash your hands after handling anything that has been in contact with animals, such as changing a bird feeder.

To make a simple bird feeder, collect and clean a large pine cone. Securely tie 20cm of strong string to the top and tie into a loop. Next, cover the pine cone in lard (or vegetarian alternative) and then roll it in bird seed. It'll be sticky but it'll also be fun! The fat helps to keep the birds warm and the seeds are an ideal winter food.

To give birds a good water source you can put some stones into a shallow dish, like a plant pot saucer, and then regularly fill with fresh water. Think about the depth of the water and where you could put it to make sure the birds are safe from cats and dogs.

If you're very patient you can watch to see what birds visit your garden. Perhaps you can identify them with a book or online?



Reflecting on generosity

How does this activity make me generous?

We practise generosity by doing good for others and giving something without expecting anything in return. Watching birds enjoy your feeder is a reminder that small acts of kindness can bring joy to others—and to yourself.

How can I grow generosity?

Share your crafts: Make more bird feeders and give them to friends, family, or neighbours.

Learn and teach: Research ways to care for animals in your area and share your knowledge with others.



MY YEAR OF SERVICE

Stories from youth who have generously given of their time to serve the community.



Many Bahá'í youth choose to do a period of service after finishing secondary school or studies. This could be in a local neighbourhood, in another community or even internationally, and there are lots of different projects and ways to serve.

A period of service can be both extremely enriching and at times a bit challenging as for many youth this will be their first time away

from home and there's usually a lot to learn, a lot to do and a lot of new experience. For most youth, a year of service is a very rewarding time that builds confidence, capacity and a desire to serve even more!

We asked 3 youth, who have returned from their service, where they went, what it was like, what they found challenging and what they learned from the experience.

ROSHAN

15) that I wanted to do a year of service, but I didn't exactly know where I should go. Coming from Spanish parents, I wanted to go somewhere I could practise my Spanish. So, after hearing incredible things about them, my choice was between the temple in Chile or the Canary islands. My family and I decided to visit the Canary islands, specifically Gran Canaria as they have a thriving Bahá'í community, and we participated in one of their Junior Youth camps. It was easy to say that we knew that it was the right place for me to serve. After that we started the application process and after my exams were done, I set off for my YOS.

WHAT HAPPENED WHEN YOU ARRIVED?

I arrived just as the summer was ending, so it was a period of transition for a lot of the youth and the activities there, which only made it more exciting. The first barrier I encountered was a language barrier as my Spanish was not so refined. There were times I would struggle to communicate with others, but luckily I had great friends who were also offering a YOS who I could talk to in English.

WHAT WAS YOUR BIGGEST CHALLENGE?

One of the biggest challenges I faced was the schedule and intensity of the activities. I

loved that there was always something happening, but that left me sometimes with this feeling of exhaustion. However, towards the end of my time there, that was actually what I came to love the most, the fact that my calendar was constantly full with something challenging to do.

3 THINGS YOU LEARNED

I came away from the Canaries with a different perspective on what it means to devote my life to service, a clearer sense of the direction I want to go in life, and the ability to play the guitar :)

AWESOME



CARMEL

My name is Carmel, I'm a youth from North London, Barnet. I've grown up in a Bahá'í family and have been surrounded by the teachings and concepts of the Faith all my life.

WHERE DID YOU GO?

I decided to go to Haifa in Israel for my year of service, the administrative and spiritual centre of the Faith where around 800 Bahá'í staff currently serve under the Universal House of Justice. There are many different departments for staff to serve in. I was put in the Department of Security where my service was to ensure the safety of the Bahá'í World Centre and I worked with a team of 6 Bahá'ís from different parts of the world—we became

like a family.

WHY DID YOU GO?

I chose to serve in Haifa after a brief visit in 2019, I was completely in admiration of the beauty and spiritual energy of the Bahá'í World Centre and had a strong desire to spend more time there. I also wanted to spend as much time as possible learning more about the history and teachings of the Bahá'í Faith as a young youth.

WHAT WAS YOUR BIGGEST CHALLENGE?

As beautiful and uplifting as my experience was, it wasn't without its tests and it was often a struggle for me to be by myself, taking care of the gardens all by myself during the night. As I got more and more used to the gardens this

challenge went away and each sunrise that I would get to experience in the holy land made the night of darkness worth it.

3 THINGS YOU LEARNED

1. Habit of prayer—sometimes it's not always easy to sit down and pray for a while, to stay concentrated or dedicate an amount of time to your prayers; when I was on my Year of Service I found the moments where I was most at peace was when I was praying and I was able to reflect and think about many different things that were on my mind.
2. Love and appreciation for everyone—'let your heart burn with love and kindness for all who may cross your path.' The beauty of serving



alongside people from across the world is getting to learn the different cultures and experiences.

3. One of the greatest things I learnt was finding the beauty in everyone's stories, and it all came from showing love, kindness and understanding of one another.



KENDAL

Hi my name is Kendal. I'm a 19 year old Bahá'í serving in New Cross, South London. I've been in this neighbourhood since 2016 where I was part of a junior youth group run by an older friend. When I turned 15, I started my first junior youth group alongside my friend. Through rigorous weekly outreach the groups got bigger. We now have 2 junior youth groups and 2 children's classes!

WHERE DID YOU GO?

I stayed and helped out in New Cross, spending most of my time doing outreach and helping out with home visits. Deepening in the Bahá'í writings was also a major part of my year, bringing me even closer to the Faith and helping me to express it better.

WHY DID YOU STAY?

I chose to stay and serve in New Cross as it's where I felt the most comfortable to serve as I already knew everyone and what was needed to help progress the neighbourhood.

WHAT WAS YOUR BIGGEST CHALLENGE?

At the start of my Year of Service I was afraid of saying how I felt about the plan for my week and I went along with everything, even though I would be tired. I felt like I signed up for this and I had to put my all in. However I soon realised no one can do it all and we all need breaks. Just because I'm on a Year of Service doesn't mean I get no say in my life. Improving in this aspect made my year more enjoyable and

reasonable and helped the whole neighbourhood.

3 THINGS YOU LEARNED

1. The true greatness of this day. Learning about the sacrifices made by the dawn breakers (early believers) was truly inspiring. This really changed my whole perception of time and how I must use every moment to the fullest because being a youth is so short, but you have the greatest capacity to make the most impact, especially on those younger than you.
2. My short time in Northern Ireland and Spain had a huge impact on my vision of the future. I saw that these processes truly take time and effort but it is worth it seeing your tree bear fruits.

3. Love and appreciation for others. This is because you don't always see what people do for you and it's too easy to complain and act like no one is helping you. My friends in New Cross supported me to the very end! I really love them and hope they know how much they've helped me spiritually, mentally and with my personal education. LOVE YOU NX



WHERE DID YOU GO?

I decided (around the age of



Have you ever thought about doing a Year of Service? Where would you like to go and what would you like to do? Do you know anyone who has taken one? Why not ask friends, family or the community about it?





October-December 2024

COMMUNITY NEWS

The latest scoops from all over the Bahá'í World.

BAHÁ'Í ELECTION

In November and December, groups of Bahá'í communities up and down the UK gathered at Unit Conventions to elect delegates who will in turn vote for the members of the National Spiritual Assembly in next year's National Convention.

Shoghi Effendi describes voting in Bahá'í elections as a sacred duty, and offered guidance on the spirit needed to vote.

They should approach this duty in a prayerful attitude, seeking divine guidance and confirmation.

Bahá'ís aged 18 years and older vote for delegates, who must be 21 years of age or older. Children and junior youth however are most welcome to attend the unit



convention, can participate in the consultations and take part in the special atmosphere of Bahá'í elections."

Delegates are chosen for their qualities such as their purity of heart, their love and service to the community, and their choice to engage with learning and teaching.

The delegates from all the units across the country attend a

National Convention, which will be held at Ridván (April) next year. This is a much bigger event with feedback and talks and where delegates can consult with the National Spiritual Assembly.

The way Bahá'ís vote for their leadership is unique. It's an opportunity for Bahá'ís to come together in unity and to shape better communities that help to meet the needs of the people around us.

A PRAYER FOR PEACE

Over 100 years ago 'Abdu'l-Bahá told a gathering in Paris:

When a thought of war comes, oppose it by a stronger thought of peace. A thought of hatred must be destroyed by a more powerful thought of love.

Let's put our thoughts towards thoughts of peace and love by memorising this prayer revealed by Bahá'u'lláh and say it every day:

O my God! O my God! Unite the hearts of Thy servants, and reveal to them Thy great purpose. May they follow Thy commandments and abide in Thy law. Help them, O God, in their endeavour, and grant them strength to serve Thee. O God! Leave them not to themselves, but guide their steps by the light of Thy knowledge, and cheer their hearts by Thy love. Verily, Thou art their Helper and their Lord.

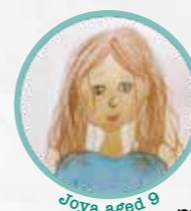
WORD OF THE WEEK

Getting to know some of the more obscure words in the Bahá'í Writings.

MAGNANIMOUS

To be magnanimous is to be courageously generous with our forgiveness, especially towards someone who has hurt us. To be magnanimous means to be free of petty resentfulness and vengeance. 'Abdu'l-Bahá uses it to remind us: *"to be generous, loyal, without malice, to have zeal and a sense of honour, to be high-minded and magnanimous, and to have regard for the rights of others."*

CREATIVITY & SERVICE IN ACTION!!!



Joya aged 9

In a children's class in London, one girl was inspired to take action and create beautiful wooden bookmarks and magnets to help raise money for the Bahá'í Fund. Joya (aged 9) the creator of the handicrafts said:

In children's class we were talking about generosity and service projects and I thought that it would be wonderful to collect money for the [Bahá'í] fund. As I know many people love reading, as well as collecting magnets, I decided to put my mind to it

and I painted bookmarks and magnets. After a while I got my pens and started writing quotes and nice phrases. Soon it all fitted together. It ended up looking so colourful! They were sold at the next feast for a suggested price of £2 each. At the end we raised £150 for the fund!!!

Later that month, the same children's class joined forces with a neighbouring class and took part in a service project to help clean up their local farm. It was a joyful afternoon of litter picking, friendship building and drinking hot chocolate - yum!



(above) Joya's handmade bookmarks and magnets.

(left) Children and their families from the Isle of Dogs and Greenwich (London) after their service project.

Have you ever taken part in a service project? Maybe you could help to organise one in your children's class, school or community?

WHAT DO YOU WANT TO LEARN ABOUT?

Do you have a question you've always wanted to know the answer to? Well, we'd love you to send us your questions so we can answer them in Community News. Email our team at dayspring@bahai.org.uk*



WE WANT TO HEAR FROM YOU!!!

DRAWINGS ★ PAINTINGS ★ PHOTOS**
STORIES ★ POEMS ★ SONGS ★ NEWS
THINGS HAPPENING IN YOUR COMMUNITY

your contributions could help to inspire someone else!

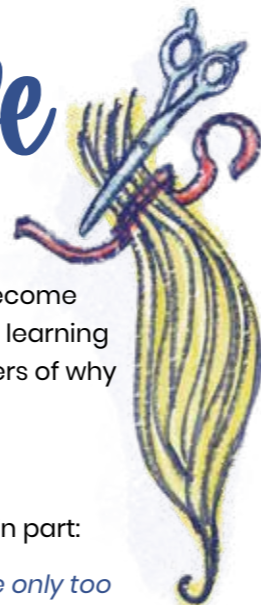
DAYSPRING@BAHAI.ORG.UK

*ALWAYS GET THE PERMISSION OF A PARENT OR CAREGIVER BEFORE SENDING US YOUR SUBMISSIONS
**USE OF PHOTOS OF MINORS REQUIRES PERMISSION FROM A PARENT OR GUARDIAN.



Living a Generous life

Some uplifting stories from some early Bahá'ís



In the early years of the Faith many ordinary people, just like me and you, were inspired to become Bahá'ís and live their lives by the Teachings of the Faith. One such teaching (that we've been learning about in this issue), is generosity. These stories of early believers are heart-warming reminders of why this precious virtue is so important and how we can all bring more of it into our own lives.

Nora Crossley was born in the late nineteenth century in one of the boroughs of Manchester, England. As a child she was admired for her beautiful, auburn hair, which was so long it almost reached her ankles. Although she was raised in a wealthy family, she went on to marry a penniless man, and so began several years of extreme tests for Nora.

On a rainy Tuesday morning, Nora was riding the tram around Manchester, when she happened to see an advertisement for a lecture taking place that evening about the Holy Land. She attended the lecture, and it was there that she first learned about the person of 'Abdu'l-Bahá.

The following day and for many days after, she spent time with the Bahá'í community, learning more about the Bahá'í Faith. The year was 1920 (over a hundred years ago), and the friends were eager with anticipation for construction to begin on the first Bahá'í Temple in the West. It was going to be built in Chicago, U.S.A. and 'Abdu'l-Bahá Himself would attend the laying of the foundation stone.

At that time, a well-known Bahá'í named John Esselmont, was appealing for funds to help with the construction of this special, new Temple. But Nora was penniless and felt ashamed and embarrassed that she had nothing to offer. In her heart, she longed to be able to give something for such an important cause. She then thought of her auburn hair, and she knew that some hairdressers would pay a handsome sum for her long locks. Without hesitation, she chopped off her hair and sent it to Dr. Esselmont, accompanied

by a note that read, in part:

Hairdressers are only too anxious to obtain hair my colour, but it cost me a great deal to cut off and I feel I could not possibly sell it myself. If it only does a little good, I shall be content. It has been a sacrifice I admit, as it was the only beauty I possessed but it is nothing to what the Beloved Master has given me. He has given me a wonderful, boundless joy that no one can take from me.

Upon receipt of the package, 'Abdu'l-Bahá wrote a letter to Nora. In His letter, He wrote:

This deed of thine is... an eloquent testimony to thy noble spirit of self-sacrifice. Thou hast, verily, sacrificed thy life and great will be the spiritual results thou shalt obtain.

Nora's act of generosity and sacrifice to aid in the raising up of the Mother Temple of the West no doubt ensured, for her, "imperishable glory".

There are many stories of Bahá'ís from all over the world who generously gave their time, talents and resources to help spread the teachings and help their fellow human beings. Maybe you could find a few more and share them in a class or at a feast.

Saichiro Fujita, (or Fujita for short), became a Bahá'í in the early twentieth century. He was raised in a prominent Japanese family and had discovered the Bahá'í Faith in San Francisco. Although he was living in the U.S.A. at the time, he was one of the earliest Japanese Bahá'ís.

Fujita first encountered 'Abdu'l-Bahá during the Master's travels to Chicago. Fujita travelled a long way in order to see Him and when he finally got to the meeting place the crowds were so big poor Fujita couldn't see 'Abdu'l-Bahá. So do you know what he did? Fujita climbed up a lamp post to get a better view! And it worked because Fujita saw 'Abdu'l-Bahá... and 'Abdu'l-Bahá saw him!

After this first meeting 'Abdu'l-Bahá invited Fujita to travel with Him across the West Coast of the U.S.A. as He gave talks about the Bahá'í Teachings on many different subjects to many

different people. Fujita must have learned a great deal about the Faith from the talks and from being with 'Abdu'l-Bahá.

After this, 'Abdu'l-Bahá told Fujita to complete his education in engineering and horticulture, so that he could travel to Haifa, Israel and work for Him. Fujita did just that; he spent seven years finishing his studies and then travelled to the Holy Land.

Fujita was very generous with his time and knowledge and did many things to serve the Faith, such as looking after visitors, planting gardens, installing electrical fixtures, translating letters into Japanese and looking after the vehicles of the Holy Family. He also looked after the Master's brown cat.

The Master loved Fujita dearly and there are many accounts of the joyful times they would spend together. They would often start each day having

breakfast together, and it was noted that often they were meals filled with laughter and joyfulness. Fujita once said:

'Abdu'l-Bahá was very, very kind to me. We had many trips, many jokes...

Fujita embodied a spirit of generosity and remained in the Holy Land to be of service until he passed away in Haifa, aged 90, in 1976.



The Bahá'í friends in Persia attained such a brotherhood and love that it really became a hindrance in the conduct of material affairs. Each one into whatever house of the friends he went

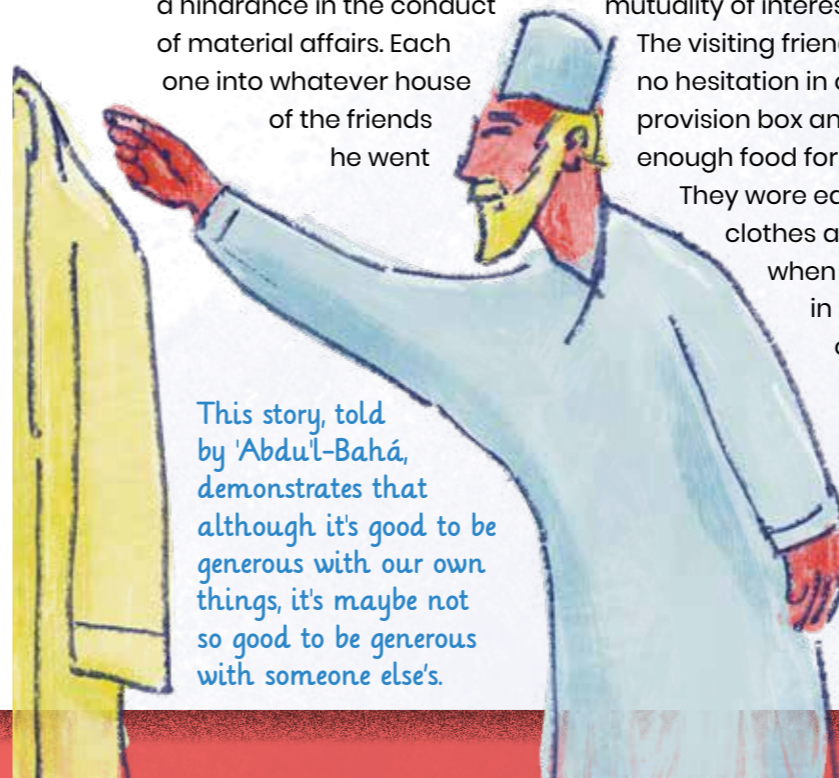
considered himself the owner of the house, so to speak. There was no duality but complete mutuality of interests and love.

The visiting friend would have no hesitation in opening the provision box and taking out enough food for his needs.

They wore each other's clothes as their own when necessary. If in need of a hat or cloak, they would take and use it. The owner of the clothing would be

thankful and grateful that the garment had gone. When he returned home, he would perhaps be told, "So and so was here and took away your coat." He would reply, "Praise be to God! I am so grateful to him. Praise be to God! I am so thankful I have been given this opportunity of showing my love for him." To such an extreme degree this love and fellowship expressed itself that Bahá'u'lláh commanded that no one should take possession of another's belongings unless presented with them. The intention is to show to what an extent unity and love prevailed among the Bahá'í friends in the East.

This story, told by 'Abdu'l-Bahá, demonstrates that although it's good to be generous with our own things, it's maybe not so good to be generous with someone else's.





GENEROUSLY BIG CROSSWORD

Can you take on the ultimate challenge, answer the questions (some of them a bit silly) and complete the puzzle?



ACROSS:

5. Cold or scared shake.
8. Silly laugh.
10. Freedom from suffering.
12. Spiky night mammal.
13. A group of bananas.
14. Sweet treat ring.
15. Artist's colour liquid.

DOWN:

1. The opposite of 'cowardly'.
2. Snowman nose.
3. Bristled hair tidier.
17. Snowman's name.
19. Small cabbage-like veg.
21. Cute, little bites.
22. Foot fingers.

ACROSS:

4. Frozen drink squares.
6. Long winter sleep.
7. Flightless, swimming bird.
9. Arm fold.
11. Neck warmer.
16. The other end of bottom.
18. A doll or Lego is a...
20. Ballet dancer's skirt.

Ooooh, this looks tricky!



FUN RIDDLES

What goes up but never comes down again?

What can you catch but never throw?

What month of the year has 28 days?

WORD LADDER

Changing just one letter per row but still making a word, can you go from 'COLD' to 'NOSE'?

C O L D

N O S E

GENEROUS FACTS

The most toys ever donated by the public in one hour is around **5,019**. This burst of generosity happened in the USA in December 2018. The toys were given to families in need and helped many children.

Josephine Michaluk won the world record for donating the most blood. She started in 1965 when she was 22 and has since given over **99 litres** of her life-saving blood.

The largest single donation of hunger relief packages was given by the Tahya Misr Fund in Egypt in September 2021. **1,000,000** food packages were distributed to over a million families.

The most hair donated in 24 hours was from the Longhairs™ charity in March 2019. **153.83 kg** (the same weight as a horse) was given to make hair pieces for children suffering from hair loss.

In December 2020, during the Covid-19 pandemic, Captain Sir Tom Moore walked 100 lengths of his 25m garden before his 100th birthday. As a result, 1.5 million people donated on his JustGiving page and he raised **£32,796,155** for the NHS!

Shhhh! No peeking at the answers until you need to! Fold over this section to keep the answers hidden.

FOLD ME OVER TO HIDE THE ANSWERS

ANSWERS

Page 3:

There are 12 generous hearts to be found on pages 3, 4, 6, 8, 11, 13, 16, 18, 21, 23, 25 & 26.

Page 5:

Here are some suggestions for words & phrases that could be seen as the opposite of 'GENEROUS':

Unkind / Unjust / Unwise / Unfair / Unfaithful / Negative / Never Shares / Never Gives / Naive / No Trust / Nothing / Greedy / Gruff / Grabbing / Ego / Empty / Envious / Excluding / Exclusive / Rude / Reckless / Rotten / Ruthless / Opposed / Obstinate / Old Fashioned / Odious / Selfish / Stubborn / Spiteful / Savage / Self-Interested.

Page 11:

The quote reads 'Be as stars, brilliant and sparkling in the loftiness of their heavenly station' - 'Abdu'l-Bahá

Page 12:

Wrap Up Warm: red bird-green socks, yellow bird-blue scarf, blue bird-red ear muffs & green bird-pink hat.

Snow Words: Other 4-letter words ending in 'OW' are AVOW, BLOW, BROW, CHOW, CROW, FLOW, GLOW, KNOW, MEOW, SHOW, SLOW & STOW.

Page 13:

Kalimat Count: There are 6 Kalimats.

Page 26:

Generously BIG Crossword: (down) 1. Brave, 2. Carrot, 3. Brush, 4. Ice Cubes, 6. Hibernation, 7. Penguin, 9. Elbow, 11. Scarf, 16. Top, 18. Toy & 20. Tutu; (across) 5. Shiver, 8. Chuckle, 10. Ease, 12. Hedgehog, 13. Bunch, 14. Donut, 15. Paint, 17. Frosty, 19. Sprout, 21. Nibbles & 22 Toes.

Page 27:

Fun Riddles: Q. What goes up but never goes down? A. Your Age. Q. What can you catch but never throw? A. A Cold. Q. What month of the year has 28 days? A. All of them!

Word Ladder: COLD-HOLD-HOLE-HOSE-NOSE.

SNOW HO HO!

How do you keep your feet from getting cold?
- Don't go around brrrrrrrfooted

What kind of maths does a snowy owl like?
- Owlgebra

What did one snowman say to the other one?
- Can you smell a carrot?

Why don't you see any penguins in the UK?
- Because they're scared of Wales

What does a snowman eat for lunch?
- An ice burger

How do you build a snow fort?
- Igloo it together

What do you call a snowman in the summer?
- A puddle

Send in your favourite jokes with your name and age to: dayspring@bahai.org.uk

FINISH THE SENTENCE

A generous heart can always give...





THE BEST
WAY TO
THANK
GOD
IS TO
LOVE ONE
ANOTHER

