

Taking a closer look. . .

At the world-wide Baha'i conferences as we create gatherings of:


- Prayer
- Inspiration
- Consultation
- Music
- Artistic expression
- Joyful fellowship

Slide show created by J. Sheridan with resources from
4CRBC and SERBC (www.rbcseoutheast.org)

What is the Aim of the Conferences?



- **“...to carry “the spiritual energy released by the gatherings in the Holy Land” as preparation for “a dynamic thrust forward with the launch of the Nine Year Plan**
- **“...give the participants an opportunity to gain greater insight into the nature of the spiritual enterprise in which they are engaged**



- **Gain “a sense of the distance traversed thus far, and a deeper understanding of the exigencies of the current stage in the unfoldment of the Divine Plan.**

- **“...enhance appreciation of the privilege of being part of a community that has set its gaze upon the spiritual and material transformation of society”**

- **“and of the bounty of being connected by bonds of love and camaraderie with brothers and sisters in a global effort, each one labouring within the same framework for action, all united under the sheltering shadow of the Covenant.”**

*September 15, 2021 Message from the
Universal House of Justice*

Received via email February 22, 2022

To All Local Spiritual Assemblies in the Four Corners Region

Dear Friends,

The Regional Council is pleased to hear the excitement building in preparation for the series of conferences called for by the Universal House of Justice to be held throughout the world. Over the past few weeks, Auxiliary Board members and Council members serving the Four Corners have been consulting with members of the International Teaching Center, Continental Board of Counselors, and the National Spiritual Assembly. After study and consultation, the vision for the world wide conferences in the Four Corners region has expanded. Rather than limiting the activities to 23 conferences, the hope is to have many more conferences at the nucleus, neighborhood, and locality level to include not only Baha'is but all friends engaged in conversation about community building.

The Universal House of Justice shared in its 15 September 2021 message, *“The conferences will aim at carrying to the friends in every land the spiritual energy released by the gatherings in the Holy Land, as the community prepares for a dynamic thrust forward with the launch of the Nine Year Plan. These conferences, then, will give the participants an opportunity to gain greater insight into the nature of the spiritual enterprise in which they are engaged, a sense of the distance traversed thus far, and a deeper understanding of the exigencies of the current stage in the unfoldment of the Divine Plan. They will strive to enhance appreciation of the privilege of being part of a community that has set its gaze upon the spiritual and material transformation of society, and of the bounty of being connected by bonds of love and camaraderie with brothers and sisters in a global effort, each one labouring within the same framework for action, all united under the sheltering shadow of the Covenant.”*

Close collaboration with the Auxiliary Board and their Assistants, Cluster Agencies, and fellow Local Spiritual Assemblies will ensure the success of each of these conferences. Through consultations with the friends in your community at Feast or through home visits, your Assembly will determine what a conference or conferences will look like in your locality. The dates, length of the conference, and the agenda will be determined by your Assembly in consultation with the friends who will attend from your community. The hope is that the conferences across the region will take place in April, May, or June.

Materials prepared by the World Center have been attached to this email to give you an idea of the scope of the conference. Some communities will host a conference over a long weekend, others will meet on several Saturdays, and some will vary gathering spaces to include large consultation spaces on a weekend followed by smaller family consultations during the week. The possibilities are limitless and should reflect the reality of your community. To enhance these spaces, devotions, and artistic presentations that draw from the diversity of our region will be an essential part of the gatherings.

The Council is eager to assist with the preparation of these historic gatherings. Please reply to this email or reach out to your Auxiliary Board members if you have questions. Your community continues to be in the prayers of the Council.

With warmest love,

REGIONAL BAHÁ'Í COUNCIL OF THE FOUR CORNERS STATES

Main Themes of the Conferences

Bahá'u'lláh's Vision for Humanity

- *Exploring the work of the Bahá'í community and friends in contributing to the betterment of the world and building unity among all people.*

The Distance Traversed / Reflecting on a History of Endeavors

- *Reflecting on the endeavors of the Bahá'í community and their collaborators over the last one hundred years.*

Main Themes of the Conferences

Building Vibrant Communities

- *Building capacity for service and contributing to the spiritual and social transformation of our communities.*

Promoting Educational Endeavors

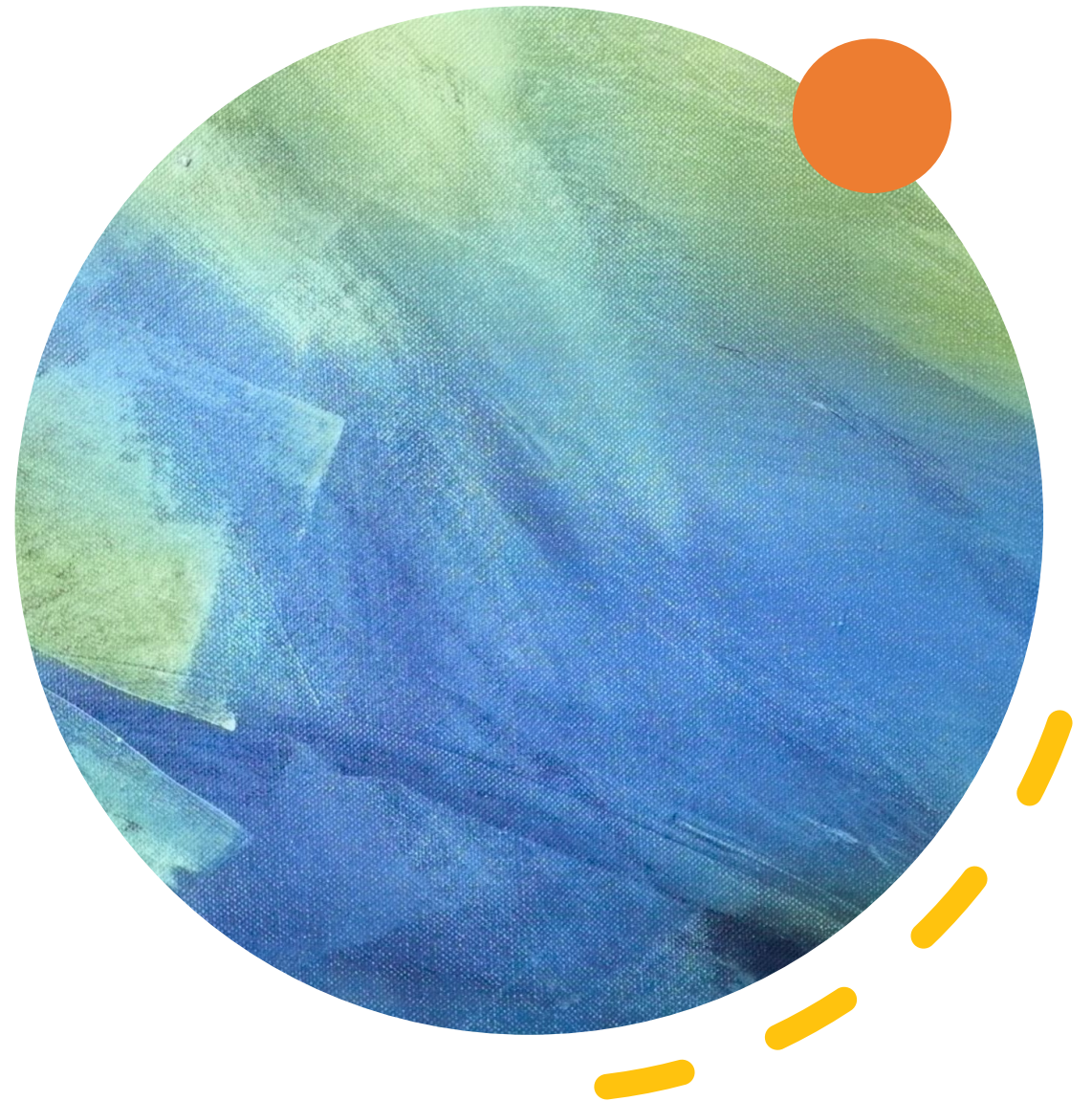
- *Reflecting on the endeavors of the Bahá'í community and their collaborators over the last one hundred years.*

Engaging in Social Transformation

- *Creating opportunities to participate in the discourses of society, through Bahá'í principles and experiences.*

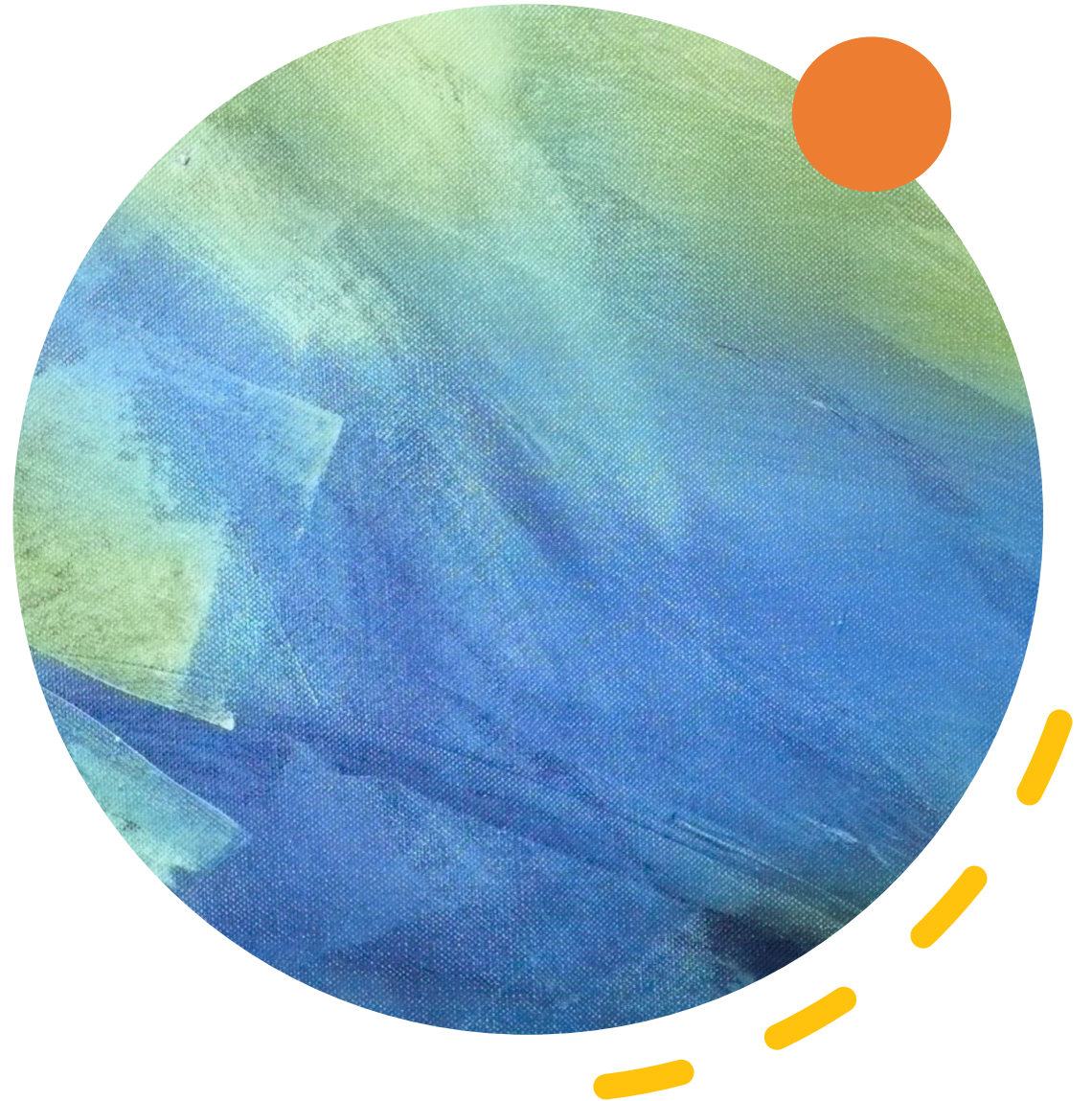
Theme 1—Bahá'u'lláh's vision for humanity

- The purpose of humanity/creation (i.e., true religion)
- Raising vibrant communities that are contributing to spiritual and material progress
- What Bahá'ís and those labouring alongside them are doing
- Small group discussion questions



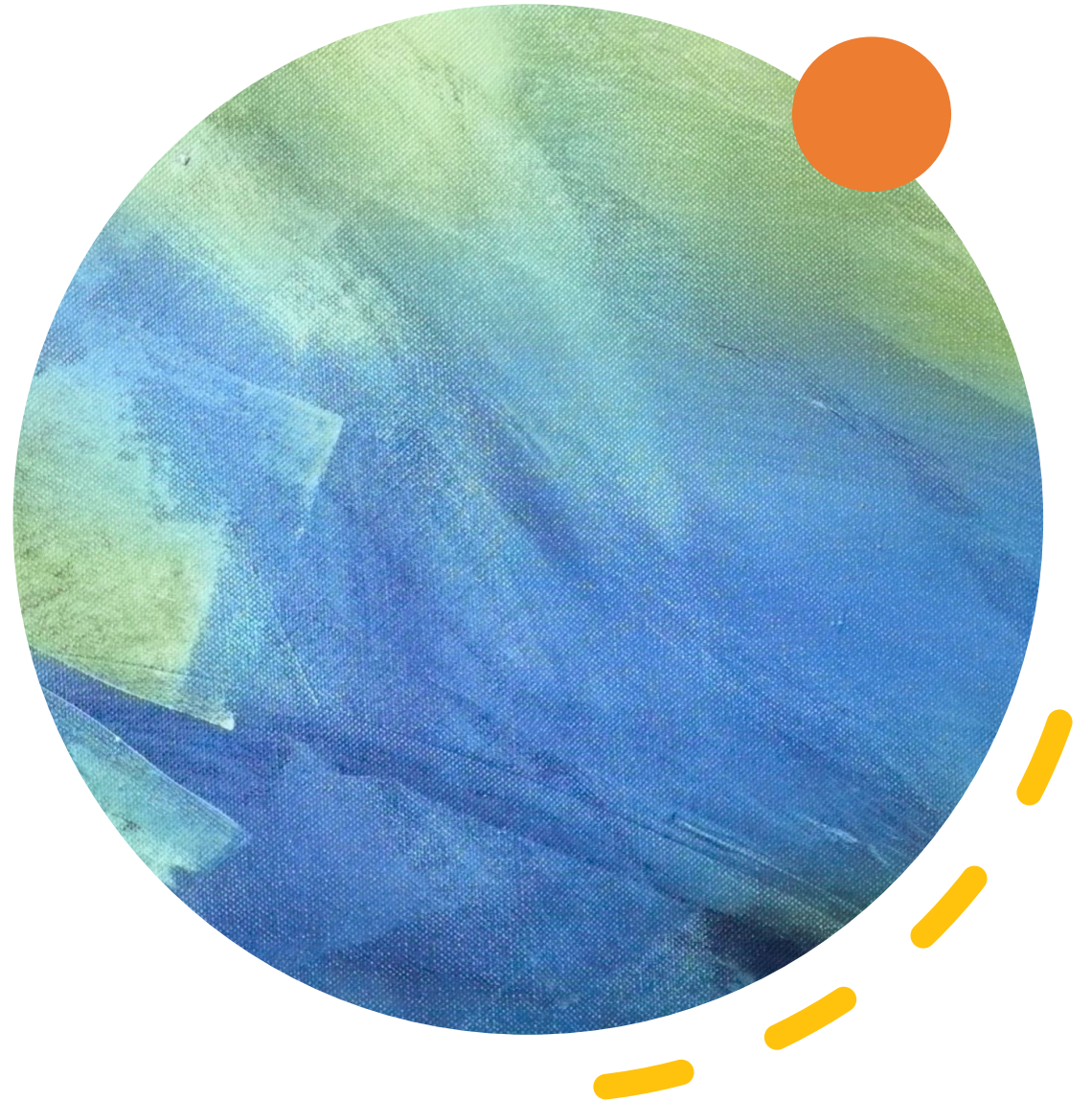
Theme 2—Distance traversed

- Film screening: Glimpses of a Hundred Years of Endeavour
- Reflect on the endeavours of the Bahá'í community over the last one hundred years
- Small group discussion questions



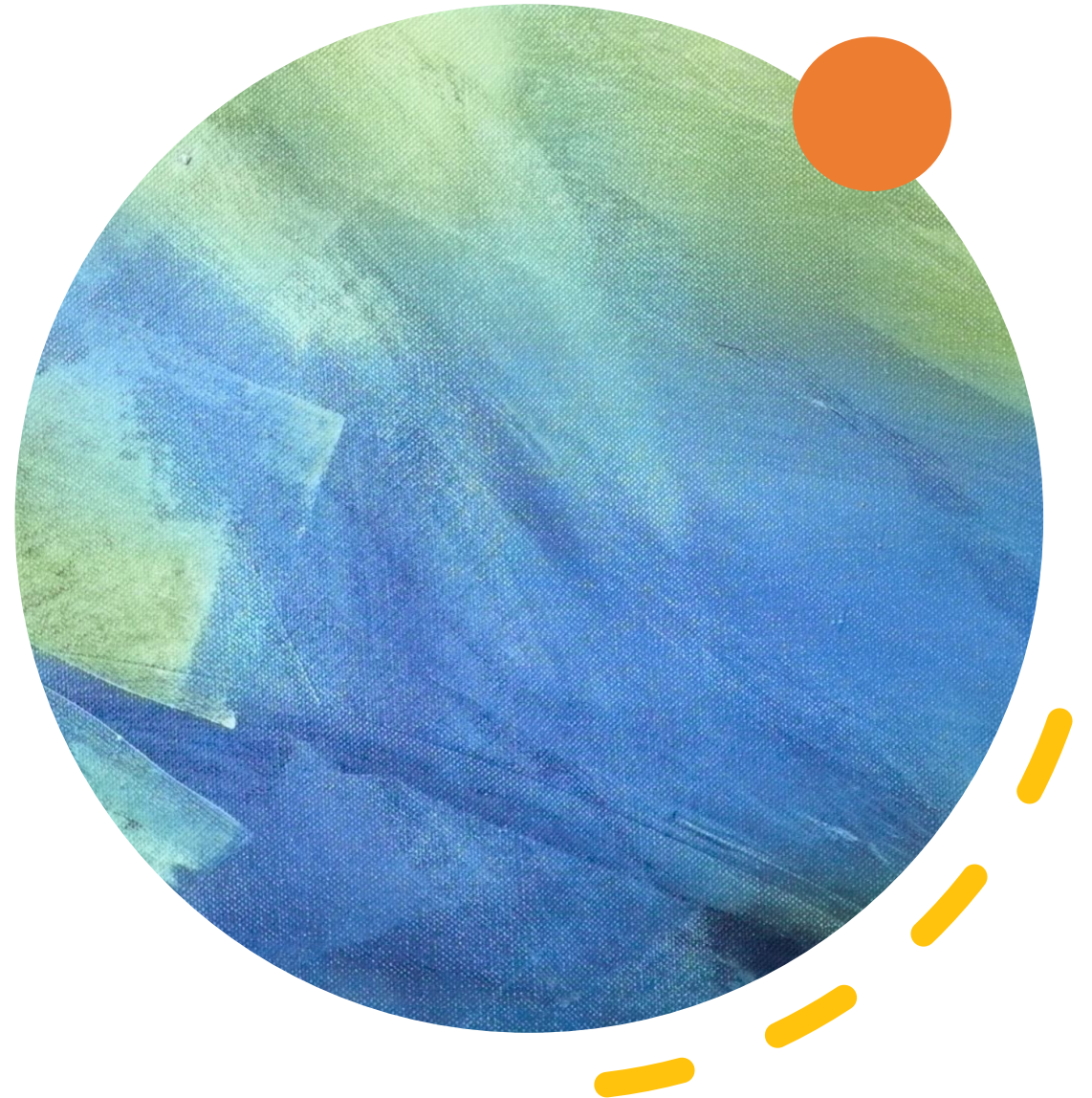
Theme 3—Building vibrant communities

- The characteristics of a vibrant community
- Importance of worship and service, and contributing to the wellbeing of everyone
- Small group discussion questions



Theme 4—Educational endeavours and the training institute

- The centrality of education
- The importance of the institute in building both the capacity for service and the ability to contribute to the development of the local community and society
- Educational programmes of the institute
- Youth: the sacred charge of the institute
- Film screening: The Exemplar
- Small group discussion questions



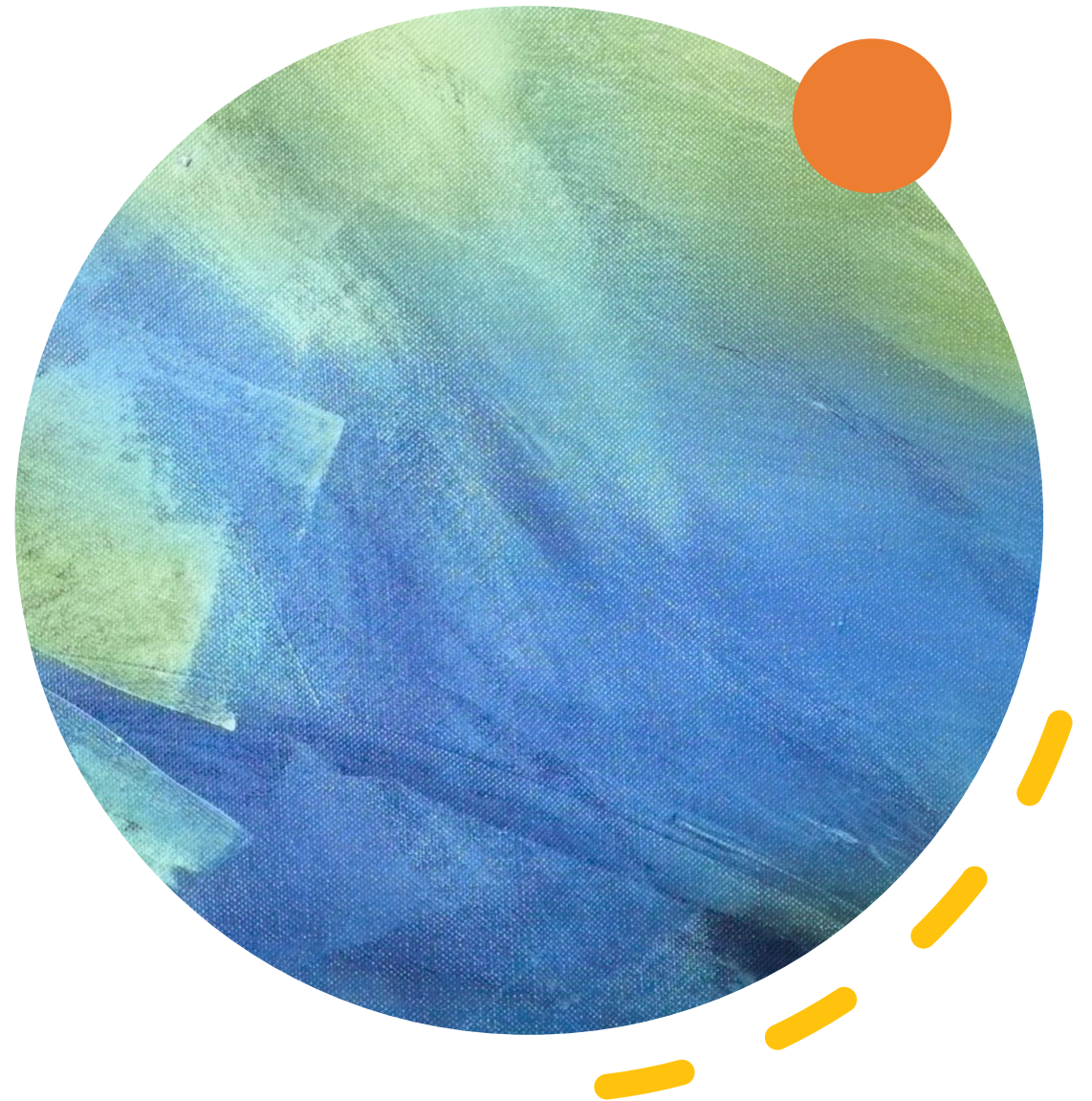
Theme 5—Contributing to social transformation

- Becoming protagonists of our own development and that of our communities

- Social action

- Participating in discourses of society

- Small group discussion questions



What insights will I gain from participating?

“The conferences ... will give the participants an opportunity to gain greater insight into:

- the nature of the spiritual enterprise in which they are engaged,
- a sense of the distance traversed thus far, and
- a deeper understanding of the exigencies of the current stage in the unfoldment of the Divine Plan.”
- strive to enhance appreciation of the privilege of being part of a community that has set its gaze upon the spiritual and material transformation of society, and of the bounty of being connected by bonds of love and camaraderie with brothers and sisters in a global effort.”

What capacities do I need to strengthen for the conferences?

Preparations for the conferences should reflect the capacities that have been developed during the prior series of Plans, particularly those cultivated in relation to the bicentenaries, including:

- the capacity for meaningful conversation with Bahá'ís and members of the wider community,
- the capacity to invite and attract Bahá'ís and friends from the wider community to participate,
- the capacity for direct sharing of the lives and teachings of the Central Figures with friends from the wider community,
- the capacity to create a devotional atmosphere

How do I communicate about the conferences with my family and friends?

In order to communicate the vision of the Universal House of Justice in language that is inviting, you may wish to study the September 15th letter as well as the letter of December 30, 2021 to the Conference of the Continental Counselors to familiarize yourself with the main themes of the conferences and consult with friends on ways to invite others.

For example, you could say that these global conferences:

- will give new spiritual energy to addressing the conditions of the world.
- will start a nine year global effort that will make advances in empowering communities around the world to address problems they currently face.
- will offer rich devotional spaces.
- are part of a continuing community development process that has been going on for decades and now includes 5,000 communities around the world.

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–will bring together the diverse cultural elements of a global community in loving fellowship.

–will bring together people of all ages to experience joyful artistic expressions of the principles that underlie our efforts

–are part of ongoing effort to create new ways for individuals, institutions and community members to work together to transform society.

–offer hope for building vibrant communities.

–offer hope and certainty that God’s Plan is unfolding for all of humanity, and that we have the privilege of being part of it.

These are just a few examples of language that individuals might use to describe the themes of the conferences. Individuals and small groups of friends are encouraged to consult on language that suits their local circumstances, based on their study of the guidance.

How do we prepare for the conferences?

- Local communities, Area Teaching Committees, and individuals—including members of the wider community—can begin consulting together about how to foster the widest possible participation.
- Individuals and groups of friends, including friends of the Faith at the grass roots level, can prepare by studying the September 15, 2021 and December 30, 2021 letters from the Universal House of Justice and by familiarizing themselves with its content.
- Individuals and groups of friends can be studying the five conference themes and the sample conference materials (available on this website under “Materials”)
- Local communities, Area Teaching Committees, and individuals—including new collaborators—can immediately begin drawing up lists of people to invite, paying special attention to the friends of the Faith as well as members of African American, Native American and immigrant populations in their community.
- Make plans about how to engage each individual
- Consider ways to engage families, children, youth, and junior youth
- Think creatively about how local artistic expressions can be included, especially those naturally arising from the community’s activities.



<https://news.bahai.org/story/1587/>

[Global Conferences: Striving for the greater good of humanity | BWNS](#)



<https://news.bahai.org/story/1586/>

[Global conferences: Fostering a culture of peace, contributing to social betterment | BWNS](#)