

♠ **MAKING CONNECTIONS** ♠

Building community **unity**...Please find and greet those who **match** the following categories of people in our lives and have them sign your program (extra blessings for people who find two in each category: one who matches Susanne, and one who matches Craig). The names of those who complete the entire list correctly will be drawn for gifts. Show your program and turn in your name at the tent by **9:30 p.m.** for the drawing.

1. Any relative:
2. Current or former classmate or teacher:
3. Bahá'í choir-mate:
4. Current or former work associate:
5. Friend for less than 2 years:
6. Friend for more than 15 years:
7. Friend who is part of a Bahá'í Youth group:

BAHÁ'Í MARRIAGE CEREMONY

of

CRAIG ALLAN FARNSWORTH

and

SUSANNE MARIELLA ALEXANDER

8-28-1999 (C.E.)

9-9-156 (B.E.)

**A Family and Community Gathering
to Participate in
a Ceremony of Sacred Commitment**

*“And when He [God] desired
to manifest grace and beneficence to men,
and to set the world in order,
He revealed observances and created laws;
among them He established the law of marriage,
made it as a fortress
for well-being and salvation....”
Bahá'u'lláh*

*“Know thou that the command of marriage
is eternal.
It will never be changed nor altered.
This is divine creation
and there is not the slightest possibility
that change or alteration
affect this divine creation.”
'Abdu'l-Bahá*

*“And among the teachings of Bahá'u'lláh
is the equality of women and men.
The world of humanity has two wings—
one is women and the other men.
Not until both wings are equally developed
can the bird fly.
Should one wing remain weak,
flight is impossible.
Not until the world of women
becomes equal to the world of men
in the acquisition of virtues and perfections,
can success and prosperity
be attained as they ought to be.”
'Abdu'l-Bahá*

“Contrary to popular opinion, love is rarely a thunderbolt out of the sky. It is, rather, a hundred thousand million tiny raindrops that fill us up and sweep us out to the ocean. It is the result of small, repeating positive interactions. It is knowledge born of consistent contact. It is a flame that must be fed tiny twigs before being given sturdy sticks or large logs.”

“Falling into Grace”, by Justice St Rain

“If we have a relationship based on love, we can be open and honest with our partner without fear of being judged and knowing that support will be extended to us. We are sure that our partner is our best friend and will, whatever happens, always help us. Where there is love in our relationship, we can allow ourselves certain liberties: the liberty to get angry now and again, or even to lose control without fearing that a permanent scar will be left; the liberty to be imperfect; the liberty to make a fool of ourselves without losing the respect of our partner; the liberty to change and to grow and also to make mistakes without fearing that we will be abandoned at our moment of greatest need or that we may be subjected to a barrage of recriminations and judgements, the worst of which is undoubtedly ‘I told you so!’

“We need support particularly when the worst side of our character is exposed to our partner. It is just at this time that the acceptance and affection of our partner become the mainstays of our life. To preserve our personal dignity, we all need to feel the warmth and approval of someone we love and respect.”

“Coral and Pearls, Some Thoughts on the Art of Marriage”, by Mehri Sefidvash

Song by G. Townshend: Judy Parsley and Pat Jackson

Fill Thou, O God, our homes with harmony and happiness,
With laughter and delight,
With radiant kindness and overflowing joy.

That in the union of our hearts,
Thy love may find a lodging place
And Thou Thyself may make this home of ours Thine own.

Welcome: Susanne and Craig

Introductions and Explanations: Ed Muttart

Bahá'u'lláh has clearly stated the consent of all living parents is required for a Babá'í marriage... This great law He has laid down to strengthen the social fabric, to knit closer the ties of the home, to place a certain gratitude and respect in the hearts of the children for those who have given them life and sent their souls out on the eternal journey towards their Creator.

Shoghi Effendi

Quote by 'Abdu'l-Bahá: Nathaniel Yates

“My home is the home of peace. My home is the home of joy and delight. My home is the home of laughter and exultation. Whosoever enters through the portals of this home, must go out with gladsome heart. This is the home of light; whosoever enters here must become illumined...”

Prayer by Bahá'u'lláh: Renee Timberlake

“From the sweet-scented streams of Thine eternity give me to drink, O my God, and of the fruits of the tree of Thy being enable me to taste, O my Hope! From the crystal springs of Thy love suffer me to quaff, O my Glory, and beneath the shadow of Thine everlasting providence let me abide, O my Light! Within the meadows of Thy nearness, before Thy presence, make me able to roam, O my Beloved, and at the right hand of the throne of Thy mercy, seat me, O my Desire! From the fragrant breezes of Thy joy let a breath pass over me, O my Goal, and into the heights of the paradise of Thy reality let me gain admission, O my Adored One! To the melodies of the dove of Thy oneness suffer me to hearken, O Resplendent One, and through the spirit of Thy power and Thy might quicken me, O my Provider! In the spirit of Thy love keep me steadfast, O my Succorer, and in the path of Thy good-pleasure set firm my steps, O my Maker! Within the garden of Thine immortality, before Thy countenance, let me abide for ever, O Thou Who art merciful unto me, and upon the seat of Thy glory stablish me, O Thou Who art my Possessor! To the heaven of Thy loving-kindness lift me up, O my Quickener, and unto the Day-Star of Thy guidance lead me, O Thou my Attractor! Before the revelations of Thine invisible spirit summon me to be present, O Thou Who art my Origin and my Highest Wish, and unto the essence of the fragrance of Thy beauty, which Thou wilt manifest, cause me to return, O Thou Who art my God!

“Potent art Thou to do what pleasest Thee. Thou art, verily, the Most Exalted, the All-Glorious, the All-Highest.”

Bahá'í Marriage Certificate Provided by the Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of Mentor signed by Susanne and Craig and honored witnesses:

Holly Timberlake and Judy Parsley

Prayer by 'Abdu'l-Bahá: Pearl McGill

“Glory be unto Thee, O my God! Verily, this Thy servant and this Thy maidservant have gathered under the shadow of Thy mercy and they are united through Thy favor and generosity. O Lord! Assist them in this Thy world and Thy kingdom and destine for them every good through Thy bounty and grace. O Lord! Confirm them in Thy servitude and assist them in Thy service. Suffer them to become the signs of Thy Name in Thy world and protect them through Thy bestowals which are inexhaustible in this world and the world to come. O Lord! They are supplicating the kingdom of Thy mercifulness and invoking the realm of Thy singleness. Verily, they are married in obedience to Thy command. Cause them to become the signs of harmony and unity until the end of time. Verily, Thou art the Omnipotent, the Omnipresent and the Almighty!”

Music: Grow Old with Me by Mary Chapin Carpenter

Receiving Line Begins at the Front Door of Hower House

**Piano Music and Singing during the Receiving Line
courtesy of Eddie Blue (aka Beauford Williams)**

Socializing, eating, music, and dancing until 11 p.m.

Quote by 'Abdu'l-Bahá: Nik Tressler

“In this glorious Cause the life of a married couple should resemble the life of the angels in heaven - a life full of joy and spiritual delight, a life of unity and concord, a friendship both mental and physical. The home should be orderly and well-organized. Their ideas and thoughts should be like the rays of the sun of truth and the radiance of the brilliant stars in the heavens. Even as two birds they should warble melodies upon the branches of the tree of fellowship and harmony. They should always be elated with joy and gladness and be a source of happiness to the hearts of others. They should set an example to their fellow-men, manifest true and sincere love towards each other and educate their children in such a manner as to blazon the fame and glory of their family.”

Song Co-Written by Bev and Henry Adam for the Wedding:

Somebody Higher Than Me

You came to me
And taught me to look towards the sky.
My wildest dreams came true.
And I will never quite know why.

Where did this love come from?
Who is the fashioner of this?
Who is the cause, and what are the circumstances?
When I hear these questions, it's then I really know it's up to:

Somebody higher than, Somebody higher than,
Somebody higher than me.

I know there's time
But how much time is time enough?
For so many riddles and rhymes
That we can't solve when things get tough.

Like:
Why is the sky so blue?
Who is the fashioner of this?
Who made the stars, and what are they doing up there?
When I hear these questions, I know that there
Is truth in that there's...

Somebody higher than, Somebody higher than,
Somebody higher than me.

Song and Vows by Craig and Susanne:

The Song of Life, by John B. Taylor, Jr.

From my young and tender years
Through my hopes and all my fears
I've been nurtured by a wondrous, loving song.
As I've learned to deal with life
Through my joy and through my strife
I realized I've heard it singing all along.
And I've learned that all the times
I've ever yearned were the times
when I was taught of right and wrong.

I've found that the longing of my heart
has been for you right from the start
The song is life, the song is love
You are the song.

Some songs are sung only by the very young
When life was still unfettered, new and free.
But when the truth is told, some are sung when very old
And there are some that must be sung in harmony
The song of life sung by a husband and a wife
Is a song of union blessed by God above.

Come, sing with me, and we will be a family
That sings of life, and sings of joy
And sings God's love

And "We will all, verily, abide
by the Will of God." (Bahá'í Wedding Vow, Bahá'u'lláh)

Poem Written and Read by Craig and Susanne:

Reaching

Reach up, reach in, and reach out
Reaching each and every day
Up to God in prayer
In to my true essence
Out to those nearby

Reach up, reach in, and reach out
Reaching up I tap a Power
That comes from nowhere else
Reaching in that Power connects
so strongly to myself
Reaching out the circle closes
and love begins to flow

Reach up, reach in, and reach out
Without reaching up
The well runs dry
Without reaching in
I live a lie
Without reaching out
I stop my growth

Reach up, reach in, and reach out
The reaching must be part of life
Over and over every day
Reach up, reach in, and reach out

Quote by 'Abdu'l-Bahá: Brenda Maxwell

“Know thou of a certainty that Love is the secret of God's holy Dispensation, the manifestation of the All-Merciful, the fountain of spiritual outpourings. Love is heaven's kindly light, the Holy Spirit's eternal breath that vivifieth the human soul. Love is the cause of God's revelation unto man, the vital bond inherent, in accordance with the divine creation, in the realities of things. Love is the one means that ensureth true felicity both in this world and the next. Love is the light that guideth in darkness, the living link that uniteth God with man, that assureth the progress of every illumined soul. Love is the most great law that ruleth this mighty and heavenly cycle, the unique power that bindeth together the divers elements of this material world, the supreme magnetic force that directeth the movements of the spheres in the celestial realms. Love revealeth with unfailing and limitless power the mysteries latent in the universe. Love is the spirit of life unto the adorned body of mankind, the establisher of true civilization in this mortal world, and the shedder of imperishable glory upon every high-aiming race and nation.”

Quote by 'Abdu'l-Bahá: Maria Burton

“The Lord, peerless is He, hath made woman and man to abide with each other in the closest companionship, and to be even as a single soul. They are two helpmates, two intimate friends, who should be concerned about the welfare of each other.

“If they live thus, they will pass through this world with perfect contentment, bliss, and peace of heart, and become the object of divine grace and favor in the Kingdom of heaven.”

Honoring Their Union: Susanne and Craig

United in mind, heart, and soul, we affirm that the intent of our relationship is to create an extraordinary family. Our commitment is to:

- ♠ Treat each other with love, honor, respect, courtesy, and integrity.
- ♠ Support and encourage each other's personal growth and transformation and the transformation of others.
- ♠ Honor and respect our own and each other's physical, mental, emotional, and spiritual needs and assist each other in meeting those needs wherever possible.
- ♠ Fully express and share all aspects of our selves and our lives.
- ♠ Deal with issues that arise as soon as possible.
- ♠ Be fully conscious, fully present.
- ♠ Maintain some time alone.
- ♠ Cherish, honor, and respect our children by nurturing bonds of communication and love.
- ♠ Build and maintain loving and open relationships with all family members.
- ♠ Enrich our lives with separate and mutual friendships.

- ♠ Pray separately and together daily.
- ♠ Read and deepen on the Bahá'í Writings together daily.
- ♠ Be examples of service to ourselves, each other, our families, friends, and communities.
- ♠ Be playful, have fun, and incorporate humor into daily life.
- ♠ Act with integrity in all things, particularly in our finances, our work, and our service commitments.
- ♠ Enrich our lives with the arts.
- ♠ Be patient, accepting, and nurturing, maintaining the constancy of our relationship through times of adversity and when we are not being our best selves.

Honoring of Parents and Children: Craig and Susanne

Honoring of Community: Susanne and Craig

Flute musical interlude for meditation: Jan Sabet-Sharghi