

# Regional Bahá'í Council of the Northeastern States

*Connecticut • Maine • Massachusetts • New Hampshire • New Jersey • New York*

*Pennsylvania • Rhode Island • Vermont*

December 8, 2020

To the institutions, agencies, and believers in the Northeast

Dear Friends,

In the first of the Tablets of the Divine Plan, Abdu'l-Bahá praised God that the Northeastern States were in the utmost capacity. In the ninth, He wrote that because those nine states were favored in faith and assurance, they had obtained spiritual privilege. But how can we, the spiritual children of 'Abdu'l-Bahá, imagine how vast the blessings showered upon this region have been? What depth of gratitude must we have that the beloved Master spent the greatest part of His time in North America here? How can we adequately follow His example of opening the doors of teaching, sowing pure seeds, and planting blessed trees in the region?

After speaking of the spiritual privilege enjoyed by the nine states, the Master added, "They must realize the value of this bounty; because they have obtained such a favor and in order to render thanksgiving for this most great bestowal, they must arise in the diffusion of divine fragrances..." The believers must irrigate the fields and engage in the cultivation of the "heavenly plantations so that the seeds may grow, prosperity and blessing be realized, and many rich and great harvests be gathered in."

In those early days, wonderful heroes and heroines in the Northeast devoted their lives to the diffusion of the fragrances of God. Even now, with hearts longing to help establish the Kingdom of God on earth, the believers sever themselves from the things of this world, and, dedicating their time and energy, serve and sacrifice at the threshold of the Beloved. At present, for the worldwide Baha'i community, this means heeding the call of the Universal House of Justice to function within the framework of action of the Five Year Plan - in other words, the core activities in which we are engaged.

Aware of the importance of devotional gatherings as a core activity, their potency in building relationships based on the Word of God and inspiring hearts in the love of God, their effectiveness as portals of growth to other activities, and their ability to build loving, unified communities, the Regional Bahá'í Council established a regional goal of attaining 999 new devotional gatherings by the Day of the Covenant.

This was not an easy goal, and it has not yet been achieved. On the Day of the Covenant, there were 626 new devotional gatherings, a wonderful accomplishment, but not quite there yet. Therefore, the Regional Council has decided to extend the goal of 999 new devotionals to Ridván of 2021, with the expectation that during this expanded period, the friends will arise to add an additional 373 devotionals to those in progress, while at the same time maintaining those already taking place.

To simplify awareness of the start of new devotionals, we are asking for assistance. Please report all new devotionals held with regularity to the Regional Council at [secretary@rbcne.usbnc.org](mailto:secretary@rbcne.usbnc.org) or 631-258-3571. This does not alter the reporting process within the clusters, which should also continue. New

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devotionals can be reported to the Council by cluster agencies, Spiritual Assemblies, cluster statistics officers, or the friends who host them. They can be any type of devotionals, whether for a couple or family, with a friend, or a group of people. They can be attached to other activities such as Assembly meetings, study circles, children's classes, or junior youth groups. Perhaps they take place among those who live together, via Zoom, or even by telephone. If you have questions, contact the Regional Council for clarification.

Please pray that many souls will arise to begin another devotional to help intensify the lights of the devotional spirit that radiate from our beautiful region, and let us all be mindful that, in our service, we are responding to the hope of 'Abdu'l-Bahá that each soul in the Northeast will become a "peerless and unique irrigator." Then, with hearts bursting with the love of God and united in our effort to shine in this region, these words, the wish of our beloved Master for us to hear, will reach us from the Supreme Concourse: "Blessed are you, and again blessed are you!"

With overwhelming love for the friends whom it is our privilege to serve,

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Marie McNair, Secretary