

## March 2015 eNewsletter



### Celebrating Twenty Years

**Anne Perry to Discuss "Where Spirit Intersects Art" on March 1 in the Wilmette Institute's Third Twentieth-Anniversary Web Talk**



Be sure to sign up to hear Dr. Anne Perry discuss the intertwined relationship between art and religion and their possible convergence in the Baha'i Faith. "Prepare to

be inspired," she says.

[Click here to continue>>](#)

**Another Success--Wilmette Institute's Second Twentieth-Anniversary Web Talk Featuring Ian Kluge Discussing "Baha'i Proofs for God"**

Now you can listen to Ian Kluge exploring Baha'i proofs for God, using many quotations from the Baha'i writings and PowerPoint slides and carefully defining terms and answering basic philosophical questions, all in easily accessible language.



[Click here to continue>>](#)

**Twentieth Anniversary Web Talks, March through December 2015**

### A popular course on climate change returns

"the deepening environmental crisis is 'driven by a system that condones the pillage of natural resources to satisfy an insatiable thirst for more.'

Given this reality, it is appropriate for Baha'i institutions to attempt to address these matters."  
--The Universal House of Justice, Department of the Secretariat,

letter to an individual, December 25, 2014

### [Climate Change](#)

One in a series of courses on Baha'i teachings on aspects of global civilization

Lead Faculty: [Christine Muller](#)

Faculty: [Gary Colliver](#), [Arthur Lyon Dahl](#), [Carole Flood](#)

**Duration of course:** Eight weeks (March 1 - April 26, 2015)



The **Climate Change** course explores the basic science of climate change and provides an understanding of how climate disruption impacts us today and will continue to affect us in the future. We will explore ethical questions related to climate change and address them in the context of the spiritual teachings of the world's religions, especially those of the Baha'i Faith. Some readings will help us make enlightened decisions for our personal and community lives that are consistent with our



To plan ahead for the Wilmette Institute's monthly Web Talks honoring its twentieth anniversary, from March (Anne Perry) through December (Michael Penn), [click here](#) for details on the next ten Web Talks and speakers (as well as links to previous talks).

### What Online Learners Are Writing about the Wilmette Institute: Six-Word Essays and More

You will want to read and ponder the spiritual depth that Wilmette Institute learners capture in six-word "essays" and what Spiritual Foundations for a Global Civilization students have to say some ten to fifteen years later.  
[Click here to continue>>](#)

### Sharing Your Six-Word Essays, Impressions, Reminiscences, or Stories

You are invited to add your own six-word essay, impressions, reminiscences, or stories about your Wilmette Institute experiences to the Wilmette Institute's archive on its twentieth anniversary (1995-2015).  
[Click here to find out how>>](#)

## News

### Association for Bahá'í Studies Announces Theme for Annual Conference and Issues Call for Presentations

For its 39th annual conference to be held near Los Angeles, California, the ABS has announced its theme ("Advancing the Life of the Mind") and posted a call for presentations. For the Theme Statement, Call for Presentations, Registration, Presentation Submission Form, and Poster Presentation Guidelines, [click here](#).

### Seeking Academic Credit for a Wilmette Institute Course? Here's One Way

The Wilmette Institute has now posted on its website a step-by-step list you can use as you seek academic credit for its courses through your college or university. Over the last two decades, the Institute has had a number of students arrange to receive credit for a number of its courses. We have distilled their experiences into a series of steps to help you seek credit.  
[Click here to continue>>](#)

### Afnan Library Opens in U.K.: Where There Is a Will, There Is a Way

spiritual and ethical values. Finally, we will learn to participate in public discourse by being empowered to present, from a Baha'i and interfaith perspective, spiritual responses to the climate crisis. For those interested in a more thorough study of climate change and its spiritual dimensions or who are interested in specific aspects of it, the course offers numerous optional resources. This course does not provide a forum for debate about whether climate change is real because there is overwhelming scientific evidence of human-caused global warming.

[Course Description](#) [Fees](#) [Course Schedule](#) [Register](#) [Financial Aid](#)

Discover how you can incorporate the arts into all your Baha'i activities

## The Baha'i Faith and the Arts

Another in a series of courses on Baha'i teachings on the arts

Lead Faculty: [Anne Perry](#)  
Faculty: [Sandra Lynn Hutchison](#), [Marjan Nirou Saniee](#)

**Duration of course:** Seven weeks (March 10 - May 5, 2015)



In **The Baha'i Faith and the Arts** we will explore the purpose of the arts from a Baha'i perspective; how art and religion have harmonized and conflicted in the past and how the Baha'i dispensation will be similar to and different from the past; the artist as a person with an important gift to share with the world; how the

Baha'i writings encourage artists; reframing imagination, creativity, and risk-taking within a Baha'i context and prioritizing the positive aspect of creativity to enhance our lives, our communities, the Baha'i Faith, and the future; and developing a serviceable language about the arts that enables us to integrate the arts more fully into Feasts, Holy Days, core activities, commemorations, and so on and to include more people in art making and appreciation of the arts.

[Course Description](#) [Fees](#) [Course Schedule](#) [Register](#) [Financial Aid](#)

Join a discussion about the Mashriqu'l-Adkkar, including a recent letter from the Universal House of Justice about this institution and how you can help lay the foundation for one in your community

## The Mashriqu'l-Adhkar: The First Hundred Years

A course in the series on Baha'i teachings on community and administration

Lead Faculty: [Robert Stockman](#)

On February 12, 2015, thirty-five years after the passing of the Hand of the Cause of God Mr. Hasan Baluzi, the research library he wished, in the codicil to his will, to house his extensive collection of papers and books opened in the U.K.

[Click here to continue>>](#)

#### **Shaykhism Course Prompts Deepening**

Wilmette Institute student, John Cotton from Russellville, Arkansas, USA, used information from the course **Introduction to Shaykhism** to give two deepenings on Shaykhism, using PowerPoint slides and drawing praise from his host for his "academic rigor and accessible explanations."

[Click here to read his account>>](#)

#### **Education Is Not a Crime Campaign Supported by Archbishop Tutu's Condemnation of Iran's Denial of Education to Iranian Baha'is**

Archbishop Desmond Tutu adds his voice to those of four other Nobel Laureates, condemning the denial of the right of Iranian Baha'is to higher education by the government of Iran and supporting the worldwide Education Is Not a Crime campaign.

[Click here to continue>>](#)

#### **Wilmette Institute Launches New Public Website with New URL**

The Wilmette Institute is continually trying to "level up" in an attempt to offer better services to its learners. This time the leveling up involves launching a new and improved public website with a new url and new features.

[Click here to continue>>](#)

#### **Save These Dates!**

An updated list of 2015 calls for papers, academic conferences, and webinars.

[Click here to continue>>](#)

### **Faculty News**

#### **Faculty Member Wendi Momen Receives MBE**

In June 2014, when Queen Elizabeth's birthday honors list was released, Wilmette Institute faculty member Wendi Momen learned that she would be receiving an MBE, a member of the Order of the British Empire, for services to the UN Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women and to the community in Bedfordshire in the U.K. On January 31, 2015, Wendi received her award from Prince Charles.

**Duration of course:** Seven weeks (March 15 - May 2, 2015)



Baha'u'llah, in His Kitab-i-Aqdas, instructed Baha'is to build Houses of Worship, which are dedicated to the praise of God. "The House of Worship forms the central edifice of the Mashriqu'l-Adhkar (the Dawning-place of the Praise of God), a complex which, as it unfolds in the future, will comprise in

addition to the House of Worship a number of dependencies dedicated to social, humanitarian, educational, and scientific pursuits." The course will examine the institution of the Mashriqu'l-Ashkar; explore authoritative texts by Baha'u'llah, `Abdu'l-Baha, Shoghi Effendi, and the Universal House of Justice about the institution; review the construction and uses of the Houses of Worship in Turkistan, the United States, Uganda, Australia, Germany, Panama, India, and Samoa; look at the construction of the House of Worship for South America in Chile; review guidance about the local and national Houses of Worship that are under way; explore the future of this very important Baha'i institution; and learn how you can help lay the foundation for a Mashriqu'l-Adhkar in your community.

[Course Description](#) [Fees](#) [Course Schedule](#) [Register](#) [Financial Aid](#)

Explore the material, spiritual, and ethical dimensions of economics and how they can advance the prosperity of humankind

## **Economics and the Baha'i Faith**

Yet another in a series of courses on Baha'i teachings on aspects of global civilization

Lead Faculty: [Mary Fish](#)

Faculty: [Hooshmand Badee](#), [Shahruz Mohtadi](#), [James West](#)

**Duration of course:** Eleven weeks (March 20 - June 3, 2015)



In **Economics and the Baha'i Faith** we will examine the guiding principles in the Baha'i authoritative texts that relate to economics and the betterment of society. The Baha'i Faith does not provide an economic system, but its spiritual and ethical values have much to say about the material aspects of life and the organization of society. We will review the world's economic conditions in light of

recent letters by Baha'i institutions and assessments by Baha'i and other experts and consider the implications of the moral and spiritual teachings of the Faith on Baha'i communities and wider society. Topics covered in the course will include the Baha'i perspectives on wealth creation and distribution, economic justice, spiritual solutions to economic problems, the elimination of poverty, the market economy, the work ethic, globalization, and advancement toward the prosperity of humankind.

## Social Media

### Wilmette Institute Facebook and Twitter Discounts

Follow the Wilmette Institute on Facebook and Twitter! Doing so could get you a discount on your next Wilmette Institute course. The Institute is offering discount codes for 10 or even 20 percent for selected courses via those two social media.

Like us on Facebook 

Follow us on  twitter

Find us on  Google+

## Wilmette Institute Links

[Wilmette Institute Public Website](#)  
[Wilmette Institute Course Delivery System](#)  
[Wilmette Institute Student Projects](#)  
[Wilmette Institute: Reference Materials](#)  
[Wilmette Institute: Twentieth Anniversary Web Talks](#)

## Other Links

[Association for Baha'i Studies, North America](#)  
[Baha'i Chair for World Peace](#)  
[Baha'i International Community](#)  
[Bosch Baha'i School](#)  
[ebbf \(Ethical Business for a Better Future\)](#)  
[Green Acre Baha'i School](#)  
[Institute for Studies in Global Civilization](#)  
[International Baha'i Website](#)  
['Irfan Colloquium](#)  
[Louhelen Baha'i School](#)  
[Louis G. Gregory Museum](#)  
[U. S. Baha'i Distribution Service](#)  
[U.S. National Baha'i Library](#)  
[Washington Baha'i History Museum](#)

## Mark Your Calendar

**June 1 - August 31, 2015**

[The Baha'i Faith: A Comprehensive Introduction](#)

**June 10 - July 29, 2015**

[Islam for Deepening and Dialogue](#)

**June 15 - August 3, 2015**

[Course Description](#) [Fees](#) [Course Schedule](#) [Register](#) [Financial Aid](#)

Explore Baha'u'llah's teaching about the individual and spiritual reality

## Baha'u'llah's Early Mystic Writings

One of a series of course exploring the revelation of Baha'u'llah

Lead Faculty: [Susan Maneck](#)

Faculty: [Necati Alkan](#)

**Duration of course:** Seven weeks (April 1 - May 29, 2015)



In **Baha'u'llah's Early Mystic Writings** we will explore a theme that dominates Baha'u'llah's early writings and continues throughout His revelation: the relationship of the individual to spiritual reality--to God, to spiritual truths, to principles of personal development, and to laws of conduct. We will explore

Baha'u'llah's Rashh-i-`Ama and some of His early poetry, The Four Valleys, The Seven Valleys, The Hidden Words, and the Tablet of the Holy Mariner. We will also read some Sufi texts that provide historical and literary context for allusions Baha'u'llah makes in His writings. We will round out our study with extensive commentaries and study materials by Baha'is on Baha'u'llah's early mystic writings.

[Course Description](#) [Fees](#) [Course Schedule](#) [Register](#) [Financial Aid](#)

Your chance, as an individual or couple, to learn techniques for making a strong marriage

## Creating a Fortress for Well-Being and Salvation: Strengthening Your Marriage

One in a series of courses focusing on how to strengthen marriages

Lead Faculty: [Susanne Alexander](#)

Faculty: [Alex Blakeson](#), [Wendi Momen](#), [Hoda Kemp](#)

**Duration of course:** Seven weeks (April 10 - June 7, 2015)



The first years of a marriage are an important time for establishing a strong foundation for your marriage. **Creating a**

[Dynamic Consultation](#)

**July 1 - August 18, 2015**  
[Gems of Divine Mysteries and Other Early Tablets by Baha'u'llah](#)

**July 6 - August 24, 2015**  
[Becoming a Couple: Preparing for Marriage](#)

**July 10 - Sept. 25, 2015**  
[Prayers and Meditations](#)

## August - December 2015 Course Schedule

Below is the Wilmette Institute's course schedule for August through December 2015.

August 15 - October 2, 2015  
Baha'i History, 1863-2015

September 1 - October 19, 2015  
Practicing the Arts

September 7 - October 25, 2015  
Two Peacemakers: Baha'u'llah and Deganawida

September 10 - October 29, 2015  
Zoroastrianism for Deepening and Dialogue

September 15 - November 15, 2015  
Sustainable Development and the Prosperity of Humankind

September 22 - December 22, 2015  
Introduction to Archives for Baha'i Archivists

September 27 - November 14, 2015  
Navigating Some Complex Subjects: Strengthening Your Marriage

October 1 - November 18, 2015  
World Federation

October 7 - November 24, 2015  
The Leaves of the Twin Divine Trees

October 10 - November 28, 2015  
Introduction to the Kitab-i-Iqan

October 15 - December 9, 2015  
The Equality of Women and Men: Application in Private and Public Life

October 20 - December 9, 2015  
The Life of Baha'u'llah

**Fortress for Well-Being and Salvation** will help you apply spiritual principles from the Bahá'í teachings to create a healthy integration of your lives together; form excellent communication, decision-making, and connection patterns; consult and make conscious choices of roles and responsibilities in your home; establish regular spiritual practices of prayer, study, and worship; determine how and when you serve your community and humanity; prepare for parenthood and/or establish a blended family; and build a unified and supportive extended family.

[Course Description](#) [Fees](#) [Course Schedule](#) [Register](#) [Financial Aid](#)

Learn about many facets of living a spiritual life

## [Baha'i Spirituality: Pathway to Mental Clarity, Inner Calm, Awareness of God, and Physical Health](#)

Another in a series of courses on the individual, marriage, and family development

Lead Faculty: [Christopher White](#)

**Duration of course:** Seven weeks (April 15 - June 3, 2015)



How does Baha'i spirituality help us develop mental clarity, spiritual awareness, inner calm, and even physical health? In **Baha'i Spirituality** we will begin with a discussion of prayer and meditation in comparative perspective. Then we will consider the distinctive elements of Baha'i prayer and meditation; the artistry of bodily postures and divine verses blended in the obligatory prayers; the history and significance of the Greatest Name and its use in prayers and meditations; the spiritual and physiological benefits of fasting; and how fasting might promote self-control and restraint. We will read and discuss insights from recent studies in medicine, psychology, and other scholarly fields to aid us in understanding how Baha'i spirituality can lead to profound experiences of peace, encouragement, and joy.

[Course Description](#) [Fees](#) [Course Schedule](#) [Register](#) [Financial Aid](#)

Turn to the Babís for clues about living a spiritual life and building strong Baha'i communities

## [Rediscovering the Dawnbreakers: The Bab and](#)

November 1 - December 19, 2015  
'Abdu'l-Baha in America

November 10 - December 29, 2015  
Exploring the New Testament

November 15, 2015 - January 2, 2016  
Century of Light

November 20, 2015 - January 7, 2016  
Science, Religion, and the Baha'i Faith

December 1, 2015 - January 18, 2016  
The Secret of Divine Civilization

December 10, 2015 - January 27, 2016  
One Common Faith

December 15 - February 2, 2016  
Exploring the Qur'an

## [the Babi Religion, 1844-53](#)

One of a number of courses on history and biography

Lead Faculty: [Moojan Momen](#)

Faculty: [Jim Harrison](#), [Daniel Gebhardt](#)

**Duration of course:** Six weeks (April 20 - June 1, 2015)



### In **Rediscovering the Dawnbreakers**

we will study the earliest period of the history of the Babi and Baha'i Faiths-- including the life and teachings of the Bab and the lives and exploits of His followers, the Dawnbreakers of the Heroic

Age--and will provide opportunities for meditating on the spiritual qualities needed for those who endeavor to live a Baha'i life and to serve the Faith. We will cover the birth of the Babi revelation, including the declaration of the Bab, the enrollment of the Letters of the Living, and the Bab's pilgrimage to Mecca; His banishment to Adhirbayjan, His imprisonments in Maku and Chihriq, and the Conference of Badasht; upheavals in the Babi community in Mazanderan, Nayriz, and Zanzan; the martyrdom of the Bab in 1850; developments after the Bab's martyrdom, including an attempt on the life of Nasiri'd-Din Shah; Baha'u'llah's role in helping the Babis and His imprisonment in the Siyah-Chal in Tehran; the martyrdom of Tahirih; the executions of many of the Bab's disciples and the fate of those who persecuted the Bab and His followers; and a summation of the life of the Bab and His followers, the Dawnbreakers. This study of early Babi and Baha'i history is aimed at suggesting how one can understand contemporary Baha'i communities and their efforts to grow and expand.

[Course Description](#) [Fees](#) [Course Schedule](#) [Register](#) [Financial Aid](#)

Explore Baha'u'llah's Tablet on His "Lesser Covenant" and the station of 'Abdu'l-Baha in a new provisional translations

## [The Tablet of the Branch: A Closer Look](#)

A new course in a series of courses on the revelation of Baha'u'llah

Lead Faculty: [Shahrokh Monjazeb](#)

**Duration of course:** Three weeks (May 6 - 26, 2015)



**The Tablet of the Branch**, a tablet that Baha'u'llah revealed in Edirne about His "Lesser Covenant" and the station of 'Abdu'l-Baha, will feature two live webinars and two weeks of home study. Using a new and improved provisional English translation of the Arabic text of the tablet, we will explore Baha'u'llah's seminal pronouncement about His "Lesser Covenant" and examine other often overlooked contents of this significant tablet. Beyond its disclosure of the station of

the "Most Mighty Branch," we will focus on the implications of the tablet. The two webinars (live video sessions) will be held on May 10 and May 27 at 2 p.m. Eastern Standard Time; after you register, you will be provided with links to the webinars. This Wilmette Institute course is the first to rely primarily on live video.

[Course Description](#) [Fees](#) [Course Schedule](#) [Register](#) [Financial Aid](#)

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Discover what other religions think about the purpose and destiny of America

## [Religious Myths and Visions of America](#)

One in a series of courses about world religions

Lead Faculty: [Christopher Buck](#)

**Duration of course:** Seven weeks (May 10 - June 26, 2015)



In **Religious Myths and Visions of America** we will explore beliefs about America and its destiny held by major religious communities, including the Baha'i Faith, Buddhism, Catholicism, Christian Identity, the Christian Right, Islam, Judaism, Mormonism, the Nation of Islam, Native American religions, and mainline Protestantism. We will compare the many

perspectives and how they are similar to or different from those of the Baha'i Faith. Registrants must purchase Christopher Buck's *God and Apple Pie: Religious Myths and Visions of America*, for the course readings will not be available in electronic form.

[Course Description](#) [Fees](#) [Course Schedule](#) [Register](#) [Financial Aid](#)

Acquire skills and find encouragement for your writing project

## [Writing Biographies and Histories](#)

One of a number of courses on history and biography

Lead Faculty: [Robert Stockman](#)

Faculty: [Thelma Batchelor](#), [Roger Dahl](#), [Richard Hollinger](#), [Jenny Lockwood](#), [Adam Thorne](#)

**Duration of course:** Six weeks (May 15 - July 8, 2015)



**Writing Biographies and Histories** is designed to help Baha'is who wish to write the history of their local community, compose a memoir about their own lives, or produce a biography of someone. Units in the first half of the course will cover such topics as selecting a topic and settling on an audience; the philosophy and ethics of biography and history writing; collecting oral history; research in archives, libraries, and online; organizing notes and outlining the topic. In the second half of the course, participants will pursue a specific research and writing project, advised by the faculty. The Wilmette Institute may be interested in publishing some short histories, biographies, and memoirs on its public website.

[Course Description](#) [Fees](#) [Course Schedule](#) [Register](#) [Financial Aid](#)

Explore Judaism to understand the oldest monotheistic faith and its relationship to the Baha'i Faith and to dialogue with its members

## [Judaism for Deepening and Dialogue](#)

One of a series of courses on world religions and scriptures

Lead Faculty: [Ted Brownstein](#)

Faculty: [Peter Terry](#)

**Duration of course:** Seven weeks (May 20 - June 26, 2015)



Judaism, the oldest of the Semitic religions, can be said to be the mother Faith of Christianity, Islam, the Babi Faith, and the Baha'i Faith. In **Judaism for Deepening and Dialogue** we will focus on the eternal spiritual teachings that, according to the Baha'i writings, all religions share. We will also explore Jewish theology and principles; Jewish history--Biblical, post-Biblical, modern, and modern sectarian; post-Biblical literature; the Jewish calendar, prayer,

and life-cycle rituals; and Jewish/Baha'i dialogue. Our aim is to study Judaism for the purposes of deepening (acquiring a better understanding of the basics of another divinely revealed religion and, by comparison, of the Baha'i Faith) and dialogue (sharing one's faith perspective with people of other religions in an informed and respectful manner).

[Course Description](#) [Fees](#) [Course Schedule](#) [Register](#) [Financial Aid](#)

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#### ABOUT US

The Wilmette Institute offers quality online courses on the Baha'i Faith. It is committed to engaging a broad and diverse international community of learners in deep study of the Faith and to fostering love for study of the Faith. The Wilmette Institute was established in January 1995 by the National Spiritual Assembly of the Baha'is of the United States.

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Wilmette Institute, 1233 Central Street, Evanston, IL, 60201-2886 USA

Phone 1.877.WILMETTE (1.877.945.6388) - Fax: 1.847.733.3563

Email: [info@wilmetteinstitute.org](mailto:info@wilmetteinstitute.org)

Web: <http://wilmetteinstitute.org>

Moodle: <http://courses.wilmetteinstitute.org>

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