

18 October 2017

Dear Members of the Bahá'í and United Community,

On behalf of the entire United Theological Seminary of the Twin Cities' community I welcome you to United for this celebration of the 200<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the birth of the Prophet Bahá'u'lláh; and wish you peace and blessings on this important commemoration.

The Prophet Bahá'u'lláh taught a oneness of all peoples, a unity that transcends ethnicity, race, religious beliefs or other nonessential differences. The following summary sent to me by one of our students says it well:

The fundamental principle enunciated by Bahá'u'lláh ... is that religious truth is not absolute but relative, the Divine Revelation is a continuous and progressive process, that all the great religions of the world are divine in origin, that their basic principles are in complete harmony, that their aims and purposes are one and the same, that their teachings are but facets of one truth, that their functions are complementary, that they differ only in the nonessential aspects of their doctrines, and that their missions represent successive stages in the spiritual evolution of human society ...

United Theological Seminary of the Twin Cities was founded on principles that align well with those of the Prophet Bahá'u'lláh; we believe in religious pluralism and support an ecumenical view within our predominant backgrounds in Christian faith. Ultimately, we exist to develop leaders to serve not simply within a specific faith or religious tradition, but to explore the boundless possibilities of a loving and beloved community!

I cannot help but wonder if the Prophet Bahá'u'lláh would be saddened today to see the rising rhetoric of nationalism, white supremacy and an increasing fear and hatred of all people who are judged by some to be “other.”

So, on behalf of United Theological Seminary of the Twin Cities I invite those in the United Community to join with the Bahá'i Community in Minnesota and Worldwide in fostering the vision of the Prophet Bahá'u'lláh to nurture a world where all people are part of one creation.

I invite us together to celebrate the common harmonies of our respective religious paths and work to eliminate the fear and hate that generates from the perception of difference and supports the injustices and conflicts that fill our world.

I hereby proclaim this day in honor of the memory of the teachings of the Prophet Bahá'u'lláh and the important and timeless message that he brought all of us.

Thanks Be to God!

Sincerely,

Lewis P. Zeidner, Ph.D.

President