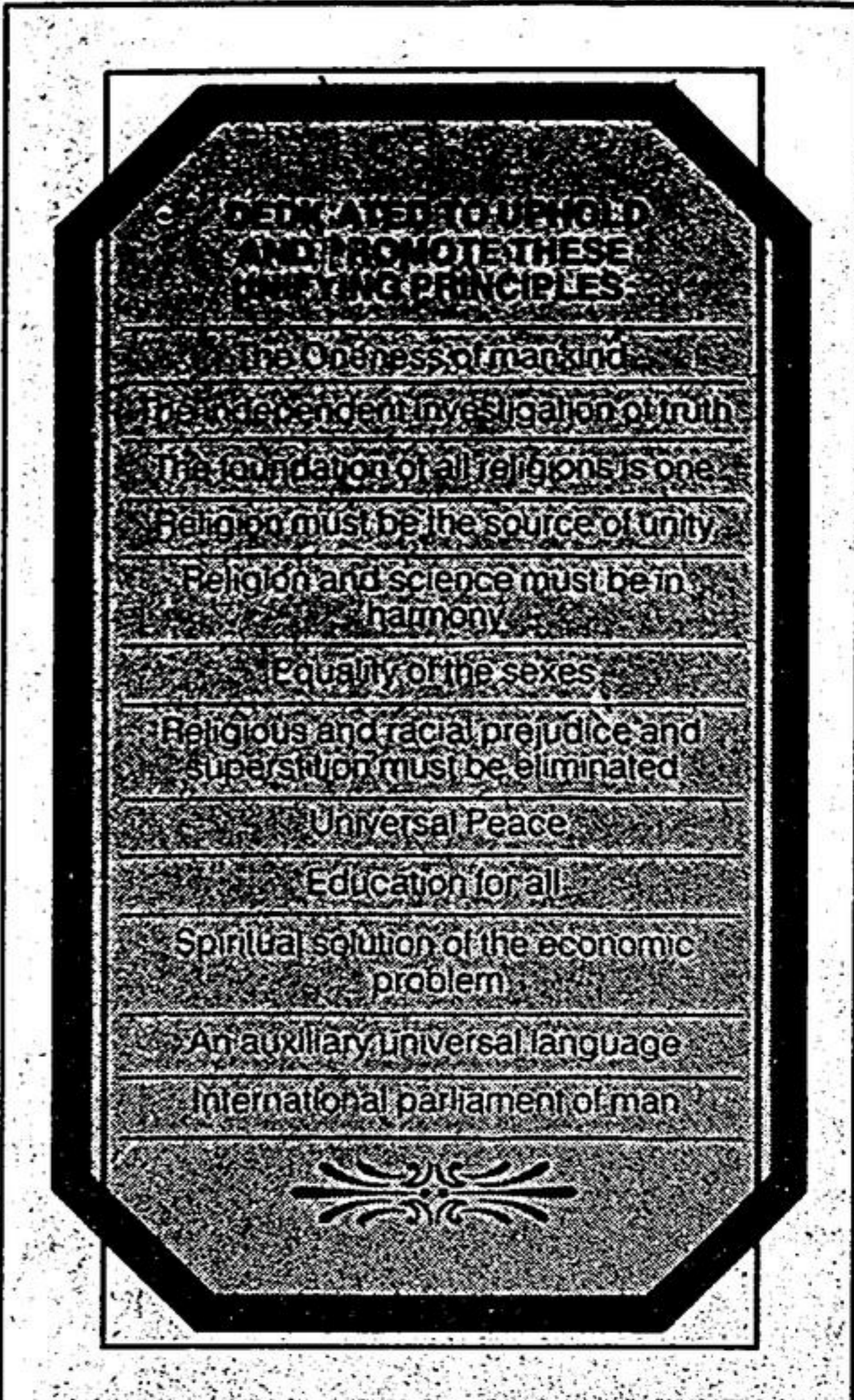


THE BAHÁ'Í SPIRITUAL ASSEMBLIES IN THE AREA WELCOME THE FORMATION OF THE

FIRST

BAHÁ'Í SPIRITUAL ASSEMBLY

of Whitchurch Stouffville



THE SPIRITUAL ASSEMBLY OF THE BAHÁ'IS OF TORONTO

THE SPIRITUAL ASSEMBLY OF THE BAHÁ'IS OF NORTH YORK

THE SPIRITUAL ASSEMBLY OF THE BAHÁ'IS OF EAST YORK

THE SPIRITUAL ASSEMBLY OF THE BAHÁ'IS OF YORK

THE SPIRITUAL ASSEMBLY OF THE BAHÁ'IS OF ETOBICOKE

THE SPIRITUAL ASSEMBLY OF THE BAHÁ'IS OF SCARBOROUGH

THE SPIRITUAL ASSEMBLY OF THE BAHÁ'IS OF MISSISSAUGA

THE SPIRITUAL ASSEMBLY OF THE BAHÁ'IS OF AJAX

THE SPIRITUAL ASSEMBLY OF THE BAHÁ'IS OF MARKHAM

THE SPIRITUAL ASSEMBLY OF THE BAHÁ'IS OF RICHMOND HILL

THE SPIRITUAL ASSEMBLY OF THE BAHÁ'IS OF NEWMARKET

THE SPIRITUAL ASSEMBLY OF THE BAHÁ'IS OF EAST GWILLUMBURY

THE SPIRITUAL ASSEMBLY OF THE BAHÁ'IS OF VAUGHAN

THE SPIRITUAL ASSEMBLY OF THE BAHÁ'IS OF PICKERING

THE SPIRITUAL ASSEMBLY OF THE BAHÁ'IS OF KING TOWNSHIP

THE SPIRITUAL ASSEMBLY OF THE BAHÁ'IS OF AURORA

Standing (left to right): Carolyn Spratt, Bahiyiyih Nakhjavani, Terry Spratt. Seated (left to right): Bonnie Heidema, Jim Heidema (and Paul), Stan

Phillips, Karen Mills, Lorraine Pritchard, Allan Chousky. Nine members of Whitchurch-Stouffville's first Bahá'í Spiritual Assembly.



To: the newly formed Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of Whitchurch-Stouffville.

Our feelings of pleasure, thankfulness and fulfillment can hardly be described.

Those of us in the surrounding Bahá'í communities who have joined together to announce the birth of your Assembly look back with wonder to that moment when we formed. Only as time went on could we begin to understand the significance of that occasion or appreciate its implications.

The concept in the Bahá'í Faith, for instance, that authority exists only in the Institution of the Spiritual Assembly itself, and not in its individual members, that outside the Assembly meeting each of us individually stood no higher than any other member of the community — taught us to approach our work with humility.

It is with deep affection for your new-born Institution that we wish to share with you, as you begin your work, some of the resources we have discovered on which you will be able to draw.

SPIRITUAL SPRINGTIME

As it is within nature, and as it is within religion, all things go through four stages: spring, summer, fall and winter. Then after winter, the cycle is repeated with a new springtime. In only its 134th year of existence, the Bahá'í Faith is still in the very early part of its springtime, and you along with it. As a part of a divinely-ordained Administrative Order which in time, as we know, will become the foundation on which a world civilization will be built, you are still little more than a shoot. From that shoot, though, will come the trunk, the branches, then the blossoms, and finally the fruit, which, we must never forget, will fulfill man's age-old dream of peace on earth.

Your Spiritual Assembly, like the 17,000 others around the world, has been called into being to hasten that day. You have been given special powers to do this.

HISTORICAL CLIMAX

You have the knowledge, first of all, that the changes which have overtaken the world have a cause, and will ultimately have a positive result. As it has been with the appearance of the Founders of each of the world's religions, mankind has been once again thrust forward in its collective evolution. The process that has previously united the family, tribe, city-state and nation, will in this day reach its climax with the unity of the entire human race. The upheaval, violence, apathy, immorality of today's society are, in a sense, the last excesses of mankind's adolescence enroute to its maturity.

ONENESS OF RELIGION

Secondly, you can tap the most powerful force there has ever been to join people together; namely, faith. Superstitions, conflict with science, and antagonistic creeds, each claiming exclusive rights to the truth, those regrettable aspects of religion that we see today, are but signs that religion had passed into the winter of its life. With the coming of the Bahá'í Faith, and another springtime, we have made a remarkable discovery. All religions, we now know, are essentially one. Drawing their inspiration from the same Divine Source, each represents an unfolding revelation of God's purpose for man. As did Moses, Jesus and Muhammad in the past, Bahá'u'lláh, Founder of the Bahá'í Faith, has revealed God's will and purpose for today.

PEACE OF MIND

Thirdly, you can gain strength from the certainty that as signs of disintegration around you daily in-

crease, you are involved in a mighty process of integration which must finally emerge triumphant over the confusion of this age of transition. This conviction you will be able to share with those around you. With it you will be able to encourage your friends, and offer assurance in the face of doubts and apprehension.

Not that you will be immune from these things. They will strike you with as much force as they would anyone else. But you, and all those who, through you, come to understand the implications of the Bahá'í Faith, will be well armed.

GOD'S PLAN

With an understanding of God's plan for today, you will ward off the anxiety and tension of an uncertain and troubled world.

ONENESS OF MANKIND

With the knowledge of the oneness of religion and the oneness of mankind you will be able to dissolve the prejudices that set one kind of people against another — prejudices that are at the very root of mankind's collective problems.

BAHA'U'LLAH

With an acceptance of Bahá'u'lláh, through Whom God has revealed his will and purpose for today, we can acquire a vision and a purpose for our lives that no force on earth can shake.

These are the powers of assurance and faith that you have latent within your Assembly. We pray they may flourish and render valuable service to every one in Whitchurch-Stouffville.

Our deepest regards,
Bahá'í Spiritual Assemblies in the area

The Bahá'í Faith
A promise kept.