



# Building Community



## A PRAYER TO BEGIN WITH

O Thou kind Lord! Thou hast created all humanity from the same stock. Thou hast decreed that all shall belong to the same household. In Thy Holy Presence they are all Thy servants, and all mankind are sheltered beneath Thy Tabernacle; all have gathered together at Thy Table of Bounty; all are illumined through the light of Thy Providence.

O God! Thou art kind to all, Thou hast provided for all, dost shelter all, conferrest life upon all. Thou hast endowed each and all with talents and faculties, and all are submerged in the Ocean of Thy Mercy.

O Thou kind Lord! Unite all. Let the religions agree and make the nations one, so that they may see each other as one family and the whole earth as one home. May they all live together in perfect harmony.

O God! Raise aloft the banner of the oneness of mankind.

O God! Establish the Most Great Peace.

Cement Thou, O God, the hearts together.

O Thou kind Father, God! Gladden our hearts through the fragrance of Thy love. Brighten our eyes through the Light of Thy Guidance. Delight our ears with the melody of Thy Word, and shelter us all in the Stronghold of Thy Providence.

Thou art the Mighty and Powerful, Thou art the Forgiving and Thou art the One Who overlooketh the shortcomings of all mankind.

**I**n every community, there is work to be done. In every nation, there are wounds to heal. In every heart, there is the power to do it. —*Marianne Williamson*

**N**ever doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world; indeed, it's the only thing that ever has.—*Margaret Mead*

**I**f you want to go quickly, go alone. If you want to go far, go together.—*African Proverb*



**K**nowing full well that in a world of interdependent peoples and nations the advantage of the part is best to be reached by the advantage of the whole, and that no lasting result can be achieved by any of the component parts if the general interests of the entity itself are neglected.

*—Shoghi Effendi*





**T**he greatness of a community is most accurately measured by the compassionate actions of its members.—*Coretta Scott King*

**O**ur differences are our strength as a species and as a world community.—*Nelson Mandela*

**O**ur goal is to create a beloved community, and this will require a qualitative change in our souls, as well as a quantitative change in our lives.

—*Martin Luther King, Jr.*

**S**tart by doing what's necessary; then do what's possible; and suddenly you are doing the impossible.—*Francis of Assisi*

**M**ay your minds be ever bent upon the needs of the communities to which you belong, the condition of the societies in which you live, and the welfare of the entire family of humanity, to whom you are all brothers and sisters.

*—The Universal House of Justice*

**E**ach of you should use whatever gift you have received to serve others, as faithful stewards of God's grace.—*Peter 4:10*

**T**he ignorant work for their own profit; the wise work for the welfare of the world...—*The Bhagavad Gita*

**I**n a nation that was proud of hard work, strong families, close-knit communities, and our faith in God, too many of us now tend to worship self-indulgence and consumption. Human identity is no longer defined by what one does, but by what one owns. But we've discovered that owning things and consuming things does not satisfy our longing for meaning. We've learned that piling up material goods cannot fill the emptiness of lives which have no confidence or purpose.

**E**ach of us must rededicate ourselves to serving the common good. We are a community. Our individual fates are linked; our futures intertwined; and if we act in that knowledge and in that spirit together, as the Bible says: "We can move mountains."

*—Jimmy Carter*

**I**t means to consider the welfare of the community as one's own. It means, in brief, to regard humanity as a single individual, and one's own self as a member of that corporeal form, and to know of a certainty that if pain or injury afflicts any member of that body, it must inevitably result in suffering for all the rest.—*Abdu'l-Bahá*

**A**nd just as the viability of every cell and every organ is contingent upon the health of the body as a whole, so should the prosperity of every individual, every family, every people be sought in the well-being of the entire human race.—*The Universal House of Justice*



**W**ith all things and in all things, we are relatives.—*Sioux Proverb*

**I**f you light a lamp for somebody, it will also brighten your path.—*Buddha*

**W**hen a person responds to the joys and sorrows of others as if they were his own, he has attained the highest state of spiritual union.—*The Bhagavad Gita*



**I**f God so loved us, we also ought to love one another.—*1 John 4:11*

Ultimately, the power to transform the world is effected by love, love originating from the relationship with the divine, love ablaze among members of a community, love extended without restriction to every human being. This divine love, ignited by the Word of God, is disseminated by enkindled souls through intimate conversations that create new susceptibilities in human hearts, open minds to moral persuasion, and loosen the hold of biased norms and social systems so that they can gradually take on a new form in keeping with the requirements of humanity's age of maturity. You are channels for this divine love; let it flow through you to all who cross your path.

*—The Universal House of Justice*



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hat else will rescue the world but the efforts of countless souls who each make the welfare of humanity their principal, their dominating concern?

*—The Universal House of Justice*