



**National Spiritual Assembly
of the Bahá'ís of New Zealand**

Te Rūnanga Wairua Tapu o nga Bahá'í o Aotearoa

1 September 2022
13 Asmá' 179

To all believers of Aotearoa

Dearly loved friends,

In a most significant message dated 24 May 2022 to the Bahá'ís of the World, the Universal House of Justice made the pioneer call for the Nine Year Plan addressing both international and homefront pioneering. On that same day, the Supreme Body also wrote to selected National Spiritual Assemblies, bestowing on Aotearoa the privilege and bounty of contributing our share to assisting countries that are at an early stage of development. The letter also anticipated a significant movement of homefront pioneers to assist with establishing programmes of growth in cluster after cluster, spelling out what experience has shown about the synergy generated when programmes of growth have become intensive in several adjoining clusters, and how, “when several such groups of adjoining clusters have emerged in close proximity, the evidences of the society-building power of the Faith grow by orders of magnitude within a population across a significant geographic area. It would be greatly beneficial if, when contemplating where to settle pioneers, the development of such dynamics is kept in mind.”

We have great pleasure in announcing that a Pioneering Task Force has been appointed to identify, orient, and deploy both international and homefront pioneers. The task force comprises three individuals: Pryanka Nassiry, Adel Salmanzadeh and Lyndsey Ula. The National Assembly is delighted that the three individuals taking up their weighty responsibilities on the task force all have sound experience at the grassroots level, are imbued with a strong sense of mission, have a vision of the process underway, and are wholeheartedly committed to the task at hand. They are thus very well placed to collaborate with a variety of institutions and agencies to rapidly identify, prepare, and deploy pioneers to receiving countries or regions.

New Zealand's first task is to deploy six international pioneers as quickly as possible, i.e. before the end of 2022, and the three countries to initially receive our pioneers will be the Czech Republic, French Polynesia and the Cook Islands. Thereafter, providing a steady flow of pioneers will be the aim, both internationally and on the homefront. The task force has therefore been granted the opportunity to work closely with the Continental Pioneer Committee, Counsellor Tessa Scrine, the National Spiritual Assembly, Regional Councils, and those key institutions, agencies and individuals serving the Auckland cluster, especially the Auxiliary Board members, since initially Auckland as our most advanced cluster will be the main source of pioneers.



All pioneering efforts, whether international or on the homefront, will be focused on widening the circle of participation by applying proven strategies for community-building. It is therefore useful for friends to have experience in applying the key elements that are involved in these community-building strategies to enable them to be effective pioneers.

Friends will appreciate that the onerous service to be given by the task force will require them to focus on identifying and orienting the friends who will be deployed formally by the institutions as pioneers either from New Zealand or within New Zealand. This does not mean that we do not want friends to offer themselves. Indeed, the National Assembly is eager to see a heightened consciousness amongst the entire community, particularly youth, about the spiritual privilege of pioneering, so that it becomes aspirational for young persons particularly, resulting in a culture of pioneering taking root amongst the generality of believers as it did in the Ten Year Crusade. As you may recall from the letter of 24 May from the Universal House of Justice, beyond those being formally deployed through institutional channels, “believers who are moved to offer a period of service as a pioneer can, of course, arise from anywhere and settle wherever in the world they feel they can make a contribution to the development of the Faith. Familiarity with the provisions of the global Plans and experience with teaching the Cause and community-building activities in one’s own cluster can be of tremendous advantage in this field of service.”

A dedicated email address has been set up for the task force, and they will undoubtedly welcome enquiries and offers. The email is pioneering@bahai.org.nz Please also keep in mind that deputisation of others to go in one’s stead is most meritorious and the Deputisation Fund set up under the umbrella of the National Fund is lovingly encouraged, as is the Continental Deputisation Fund under the auspices of the Continental Board of Counsellors.

Spiritual capacity, consecration and resolve will underpin the pioneering efforts. Bahá’u’lláh’s admonition directed to the “entire congregation of the faithful” is to be “unrestrained as the wind”. ‘Abdu’l-Bahá’s Tablets of the Divine Plan are a ‘clarion call’ to ‘travel far and wide’ to ‘plant pure seeds’ and shed abroad ever more widely the divine fragrances. The significance of this historical juncture and the need to respond to the demands of the hour must be appreciated, that pioneering becomes a “cause of the illumination of the world of humanity”.

With loving greetings,
National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá’ís of New Zealand

Suzanne Mahon
Secretary