



**A guide to the beliefs and practices of a number of faith communities
in Scotland, with a directory of addresses of places of worship,
produced for the
Churches Agency for Inter Faith Relations in Scotland (CAIRS)
by Andrew Sarle
CAIRS Inter Faith Education Officer
March 2009**

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This resource has been prepared to aid understanding and dialogue between members of the diverse faith communities in Scotland, for CAIRS, the Churches' Agency for Inter Faith Relations in Scotland.

Information in this resource is as accurate as possible, but details e.g. telephone numbers may no longer be current. The introductions to each faith are based on a guide published in 2008 by the University of Glasgow Inter Faith Chaplaincy, which was produced with assistance from the Scottish Inter Faith Council, particularly the Chief Executive, Mrs Pramila Kaur, Sr Isabel Smyth and members of the SIFC Executive committee.

Andrew Sarle

CAIRS Inter Faith Education Officer.
March 2009

Scottish Inter Faith Council

The Scottish Inter Faith Council (SIFC) encourages and supports initiatives aimed at increasing mutual understanding and respect between the members of all religious communities. It is dedicated in its work to break down and diffuse barriers of discrimination and prejudice and promote tolerance and acceptance within society.

As well as promoting better understanding between faith communities, the SIFC can function as a vehicle of communication between the Scottish Executive and the various communities living in Scotland. Collectively it represents a major cross section of the faith communities in Scotland and its representative members are committed to the process of developing inter faith structures at both local and national levels.

Faith Communities Members

The 2001 Census section on religious affiliation gives the following statistics for members of religious faiths in Scotland:

Buddhist	6,380
Christian	3,294,545
Hindu	5,564
Jew	6,448
Muslim	42,557
Sikh	6,572
Other	26,974

Faith Festivals

Calendars detailing the major (and in some cases minor) festivals and fasts for different faiths can be found on the Web.

A calendar may be found at www.acts-scotland.org/cairs/articles/festcal.doc

The BBC calendar at <http://www.bbc.co.uk/religion/tools/calendar/> is highly recommended.

The Baha'i Faith

Introduction

The Baha'i Faith began in Persia on 23rd May 1844, when a person known as the Bab (Gate) proclaimed that he was a Messenger from God and also the herald of 'the Promised One', a messenger greater than himself. He and his followers were severely persecuted by the Persian authorities and the Bab was finally executed in 1850.

In 1863 a person known as Baha'u'llah (the Glory of God) claimed to be the one whose coming the Bab had foretold. He announced that he had come to help bring about a new age of global civilisation which would be characterised by unity and peace. Because of his personal influence and powerful teachings Baha'u'llah was banished from Persia, and later exiled to the prison fortress of Akka in Palestine. He died at a place called Bahji near Akka in 1892. Baha'u'llah's shrine in Bahji is today the holiest shrine of the Baha'i world and is both the spiritual and physical focus of the Baha'i global community.



Basic beliefs

The Baha'i Faith is an independent world religion which proclaims the oneness of God, religion and humankind. Baha'is believe that God reveals His purpose progressively through prophets such as the founders of all the major world religions which exist today.

Key Baha'i beliefs are, belief in one God; the unity of mankind; independent investigation of truth; the common foundation of all religions; the essential harmony of science and religion; equality of opportunity for men and women; elimination of prejudice of all kinds; universal compulsory education; the need for a universal auxiliary language; abolition of extremes of wealth and poverty; the protection of religious and cultural diversity, and the establishment of universal peace by a world government which will have international courts of justice.

Customs and practices

Baha'i custom and practice is founded on authenticated scripture written by Baha'u'llah. The focus of Baha'i community life is the Nineteen Day Feast when local Baha'is meet to worship, discuss the affairs of their faith and have fellowship together. Obligations on individual Baha'is include daily prayer and keeping a yearly nineteen day fast when no food is consumed from sunrise to sunset. The affairs of the Baha'i faith are administered by 'Spiritual Assemblies' which consist of nine people elected by the Baha'i community. These democratic assemblies operate at local, national and international level. The international administrative body is known as the Universal House of Justice and is based on Mount Carmel in Israel.

Places of worship

World wide, the Baha'i faith has a temple on every continent where Baha'is and people of every faith can come and worship God. Depending on the size of their community, Baha'is may worship at their local centre or meet to worship in individual homes.

Festivals

Festivals and holy days are based on the birthdays of important figures of the Baha'i faith or significant events in the history of the faith. The birthday of Baha'u'llah, for example, would be an important holy day and is celebrated on the 12th of November.

Food and diet

Baha'is do not have food laws as such but are advised to eat moderately and keep to a balanced, healthy diet. They do not drink alcohol and drug-taking is not allowed unless prescribed by a competent doctor.

Concerns of the community

Baha'is are concerned about anything that leads to conflict or disunity in the community or in the world. To this end, they are encouraged to support activities which further one or all of the principles of their faith. Baha'is are encouraged to protect the interests of their community and country but are also expected to take on the role and responsibility of world citizens.

'The earth is but one country and mankind its citizens' (Baha'u'llah).

Baha'i contacts in Scotland

Baha'i Council of Scotland

www.bci.org/scotland
bcs@bahai.org.uk

Assoc. of Baha'i Women - Scotland

16 Weavers Close
Arbroath DD11 1UT
www.manvell.org.uk/abw/
jshelagh@aol.com
01241 870101

Aberdeen LSA

147 North Deeside Road
Bielside
Aberdeen AB15 9EA
www.bci.org/aberdeen
aberdeen_bahai@hotmail.com
01224 861217

Alford

Angus

www.bahai.org.uk/angus/
jshelagh@aol.com

Annandale & Eskdale

website.lineone.net/~dunbah/ang

Ardesier

www.spanglefish.com/InvernessBahai/index.asp?pageid=6383
rdavies2b@yahoo.co.uk

Argyll & Bute

Badenoch & Strathspey

Banff & Strathspey

Black Isle South

Bridge of Weir

www.bahai.org.uk/renfrewshire/

Buchan Caithness

Carrick

Central Fife

Chirnside

Clackmannan

c/o 4 Simpson Ct
Tillicoultry FK13 6QQ
www.bahai.org.uk/clackmannan/
bahai@post95.freeserve.co.uk
01259 750757

Deeside

Donside

web.ukonline.co.uk/sam.goodwin/Default.htm
Andrew_Goodwin@compuserve.com

Dornoch

www.bahai.org.uk/dornoch/
invernesscommunity@hotmail.co.uk

Dumfries

www.bahai.org.uk/dumfries/
venuscarew@yahoo.co.uk
01387 262321

Dundee LSA

10 Maryfield Terrace
Dundee DD4 7AE
www.bahai.org.uk/dundee/
dunbah@LineOne.net
01382 454459

Dunfermline

www.bci.org/dunfermline
bs@eliasieh.freeserve.co.uk
01387 262321

Duns**East Ayrshire****East Dunbartonshire****East Fife****East Kilbride****East Lothian****East Renfrewshire****Eastern Borders****Edinburgh LSA**

44 (BF1) Albany Street
Edinburgh EH1 3QR
www.bci.org/edinburgh
secretary@edin-bahai.org.uk
0131 333 2170

Fort William

www.spanglefish.com/InvernessBahai/
index.asp?pageid=6845
wendymkeenan@googlemail.com
0800 0381844

Glasgow LSA

www.b-youth.com/glasgow/
glasgow@b-youth.com
0141 574 8748

Helmsdale

www.spanglefish.com/InvernessBahai/
index.asp?pageid=6409
invernesscommunity@hotmail.co.uk
0800 0381844

Inverness LSA

www.bahai.org.uk/inverness/
invernesscommunity@hotmail.co.uk
0800 038 1844

Kincardine**Kircudbright**

www.bahai.org.uk/dumfries/
bcs@bahai.org.uk
01557 330575

Lerwick LSA

9 Millgaet
Gilbertson Road
Lerwick ZE1 0HG
www.bci.org/shetland
robert.bennet@ukonline.co.uk
01595 692035

Lewis & Harris

01557 330575

Linlithgow**Lochaber**

www.spanglefish.com/InvernessBahai/
index.asp?pageid=6845
wendymkeenan@googlemail.com
0800 0381844

Lochmaben

www.bahai.org.uk/dumfries/
vj.unique@gmail.com
01387 811544

Midlothian

www.bci.org/midlothian_bahai
midlothian@bci.org
01387 811544

Moray**Mull****Nairn & Glen Mor**

www.spanglefish.com/InvernessBahai/
index.asp?pageid=6382
nairnbahais@aol.com
0800 038 1844

Nithsdale

www.bahai.org.uk/dumfries/

North Ayrshire

North Lanarkshire

North Uist

www.bci.org/north.uist.bahai.community
sandi@solas.fsnet.co.uk

Orkney LSA

Inchvannie
3 Old Scapa Road
Kirkwall KW15 1BB
www.bci.org/orkney/
orkneybahai@aol.com
0800 0381844

Perth

Renfrewshire

www.bahai.org.uk/renfrewshire/

Ross & Cromarty

Rutherglen

Sanqhar

www.hoyne.co.uk/sanquhar/
bahai-sanquhar@hoyne.co.uk
0800 0381844

Shetland

alanmckay@zetnet.co.uk

Skye & Lochalsh

Skye Central LSA

www.breacais.demon.co.uk
lsa@breacais.demon.co.uk
01471 822317

South Ayrshire

South Lanarkshire

Stewartry

Stirling

Stornoway

Sutherland

Uist & Barra

www.bci.org/uist.barra.bahai.community
bcs@bahai.org.uk

West Fife

West Kilbride

West Lothian

Western Borders

www.robhain.com/bahai/faithweb/
HariDoc@aol.com

Wigtown

Where no other details are given, contact the Baha'í Council of Scotland.

Brahma Kumari

The Brahma Kumaris World Spiritual University (BKWSU)

The Brahma Kumaris World Spiritual University (BKWSU) acknowledges the intrinsic goodness of all people. We teach a practical method of meditation that helps individuals understand their inner strengths and values.

A worldwide family of individuals from all walks of life, we are committed to spiritual growth and personal transformation, believing them essential in creating a peaceful and just world.

Acknowledging the challenges of rapid global change, we nurture well-being by promoting spiritual understanding, leadership with integrity and elevated actions to help guide us towards a better world.



Brahma Kumaris in Scotland

The first centre opened in Scotland in 1978 and now there are four established centres in Scotland, with outreach activities in the main cities and towns. In Scotland we offer regular spiritual retreats, workshops and space for people to experience stillness and silence at our centres.



For over thirty years, the Brahma Kumaris have been helping to bring people of different faiths and cultures together, believing that a deeper understanding between faiths, based on acceptance and respect, will contribute to a culture of peace and non-violence in our world community.

The BKWSU in Scotland have participated in Inter Faith activities since the days of the "International Flat" in Glasgow, and played an active part in the consultation phases of the Edinburgh Interfaith Association. Later in 1993 the BKWSU Centre of Aberdeen facilitated an event "A Hearing of Inter-religious Understanding and Co-operation" to celebrate the centenary of the World Parliament of Religions. This was the first "Inter Faith" event for the City of Aberdeen, which was supported by the Aberdeen Council bringing people from different faiths together for dialogue.

At the close of the event Dadi Janki (Administrative Head of the BKWSU) invited those who were interested in Inter Faith Dialogue to meet immediately and this has resulted in a flourishing Aberdeen Inter Faith Group. The BKWSU were part of early consultation phase of the SIFC since 1998. Today the BKWSU continue to be active

in Inter Faith Dialogue and support interfaith groups throughout Scotland, in particular Glasgow, Edinburgh, Dundee, Aberdeen and Inverness.

Brahma Kumari contacts in Scotland

National:

Global Co-operation House
65-69 Pound Lane,
London NW10 2HH
www.bkwsu.org/uk
london@uk.bkwsu.org
020 8727 3350

Aberdeen

66a Hamilton Pl
Aberdeen AB15 5BA
bkwsu.org/uk/aberdeen
aberdeen@uk.bkwsu.org
0224 639105

Ayr

Garden St
Ayr KA8 0BB
www.brahmakumaris.org.uk/glasgow
glasgow@uk.bkwsu.org
0141 883 3139

Crieff

www.brahmakumaris.org.uk/glasgow
glasgow@uk.bkwsu.org
0141 883 3139

Dundee

Saggar House
26 Byron St
Dundee DD3 6QX
bkwsu.org/uk/dundee
dundee@uk.bkwsu.org
01382 815033

Edinburgh

20 Polwarth Cres
Edinburgh EH11 1HW
www.brahmakumaris.org.uk/edinburgh
edinburgh@uk.bkwsu.org
0131 229 7220

Glasgow

PO BOX 4077
Crookston
Glasgow G53 7WL
www.brahmakumaris.org.uk/glasgow
glasgow@uk.bkwsu.org
0141 883 3139

Inverness

'The Spectrum Centre'
1 Margaret St
Inverness IV1 1LS
bkwsu.org.uk/inverness
inverness@uk.bkwsu.org
01463 221842

Perth

www.brahmakumaris.org.uk/edinburgh
edinburgh@uk.bkwsu.org
0131 229 7220

Stirling

Mayfield Centre
Sunnybank Road, St. Ninian's
Stirling FK7 0DB
www.brahmakumaris.org.uk/glasgow
glasgow@uk.bkwsu.org
0141 883 3139

Buddhism

Introduction

Buddhism is based on the teachings of the Buddha Shakyamuni who lived in Northern India about 2500 years ago. A Buddha is to be revered, not as a God, but as an example of how we should all aspire to live our lives.

Basic beliefs

The essence of Buddha is within each of us and we can all attain our Buddhahood through sincere practice of the eight-fold path, which includes virtuous conduct such as compassion and generosity, meditation and the cultivation of wisdom. Many Buddhists are believers in spiritual rebirth but this is understood as a causal connection between lives rather than the transmigration or reincarnation of an unchanging individual soul. For most Western Buddhists faith in the efficacy of following the eight-fold path is more central than assent to specific verbal formulations of religious belief.



Customs and practices

Although it is particularly strong in northern areas of the Indian subcontinent and in some parts of South East Asia, Buddhism is a world wide religion. Many Eastern Buddhist traditions started becoming established in the West during the 20th Century. This was the case in Scotland where we now have perhaps as many as ten schools from several traditions represented.

These include the Theravadan tradition (originally mainly from India, Sri Lanka, Burma and Thailand) which has meditation groups in several Scottish cities; the Tibetan tradition, (which has a wide influence through northern India, and China to Mongolia) of which three schools are active, the best known being the Kagyu school with its main centre at Samye Ling near Langholm and meditation groups in most main Scottish cities; and the Zen Buddhist tradition, (which originated in China, spread to Korea, Japan and Malaysia) and is most strongly represented in Scotland by the Soto Zen School which has a priory in Edinburgh and meditation groups in several cities.

Places of worship

The term 'worship' is not really appropriate to Buddhism, where there is no belief in a separate creator God. Buddhist temples, centres or meeting places are where Buddhists gather to meditate, study, chant or pray together.

There are a number of such centres in Scotland ranging from the large Tibetan tradition temple at Samye Ling together with its retreat centre on Holy Island and the Glasgow Buddhist Centre to smaller institutions and retreat centres in Portobello, Dundee and elsewhere. Some groups make use of hired premises or meet together in private homes.

Main festivals

Buddhists have many celebrations throughout the year. These generally commemorate particular events of the Buddha's life and include his birth (Wesak), his enlightenment, the day of his first teaching (Dharma Day) and his death (Parinirvana). The dates of these events are generally expressed through the lunar calendar and there is some variation between the different traditions. Some Buddhists may also fast on New Moon and Full Moon days.

Food and diet

Although their high valuation of life and their rejection of violence means that some Buddhists are vegetarian, this is not always the case.

Concerns of the community

One of the steps on the Eight-Fold Noble Path is the practice of 'right livelihood' and this has promoted a tendency in western Buddhists to seek employment within what are referred to as the 'caring professions'. They also support such initiatives within the community as Angulimala, the Buddhist Prison chaplaincy service, and hospital chaplaincy. A significant proportion of Buddhists are also actively engaged in movements promoting justice and peace.

Buddhism contacts in Scotland

Aberdeen

Friends Meeting House
98 Crown Street
Aberdeen AB11 6HJ
aberdeenbuddhistgroup@yahoo.co.uk
01224 276 810

Aberdeen

Friends Meeting House
98 Crown St
Aberdeen AB11 6HJ
www.meditateinglasgow.org/Meditationclasses.html

Aberdeenshire Community of Interbeing

pmarkhope@hotmail.com
01330 825274

Rokpa Aberdeen

Unitarian Church
Skene Terr
Aberdeen AB10 1RN
www.aberdeen.rokpa.org
info.rokpaaberdeen@gmail.com
07986 956 365

Ayr

Ayr College
Dam Park, Content Ave
Ayr KA8 0EU
www.meditateinglasgow.org/
Meditationclasses.html

Borders & Lothian Community of Interbeing

01896 756400

Castle Douglas

St Ninians Church
68 St Andrews St
Castle Douglas DG7 1EN
www.meditateinscotland.org/
classes_castledouglas.php

Dhanakosa Retreat Centre, Balquhidder

Dhanakosa
Balquhidder
Lochearnhead FK19 8PQ
www.dhanakosa.com/
info@dhanakosa.com
01877 384 213

Dumfries

Gracefield Arts Centre
28 Edinburgh Rd
Dumfries DG1 1JQ
www.meditateinscotland.org/
classes_dumfries.php

Tharपाल International Retreat Centre

Parkgate
Dumfries DG1 3LY
www.meditateinscotland.org/
retreat@tharpaland.org
01387 860 618

Dundee

10 Constitution Rd
Dundee DD1 1LL
www.meditateinglasgow.org/
Meditationclasses.html

Samye Dzong Dundee

51 Reform Street
Dundee DD1 1SL
www.dundee.samye.org
info@dundee.samye.org
01382 872020

East Kilbride

Central Library
Olympia Centre
East Kilbride

www.meditateinglasgow.org/Meditationclasses.html

East Neuk, Fife

0795 1417 242

Edinburgh FWBO Buddhist Centre

30 Melville Terrace
Edinburgh EH9 1LP
www.edinburghbuddhistcentre.org.uk
contact_us@edinburghbuddhistcentre.org.uk
0131 662 6699

Edinburgh

St. George's West
Shandwick Place
Edinburgh EH2 4PF
[www.meditateinglasgow.org/
Meditationclasses.html](http://www.meditateinglasgow.org/Meditationclasses.html)

Edinburgh Community of Interbeing

St Marks Unitarian Church
7 Castle Terrace
Edinburgh EH1 2DP
www.interbeing.org.uk/
edinburghwildgeese@hotmail.com
0131 398 8401

Edinburgh Kagyu Samye Dzong

Theosophical Soc.
28 Great King Street
Edinburgh EH3 6QH
www.edinburgh.samye.org/
info@edinburgh.samye.org
0131 466 1978

Edinburgh:Portobello Priory

27 Brighton Place
Portobello
Edinburgh EH15 1LL
www.portobellobuddhist.org.uk
prior@pbpriory.freemove.co.uk
0131 669 9622

Rigpa Edinburgh

Salisbury Centre
2 Salisbury Road
Edinburgh EH16 5AB
www.rigpa.co.uk/index.php?pid=53
rigpa@rigpaedinburgh.com
0131 663 7564

Rigpa Edinburgh

2a Eldindean Place
Bonnyrigg
Edinburgh EH19 2EY
www.rigpa.co.uk/index.php?pid=54
rigpa@rigpaedinburgh.com
0131 663 7564

Edinburgh Theravadin Buddhist Group

Christ Church Hall
6a Morningside Road
Edinburgh EH10 4DD
www.theravadanbuddhists.org.uk/
info@heartwoodmusic.com
0131 226 5044

Fife, Poppy Seed Community of Interbeing

01337 810465

Findhorn, Northern Lights Community of Interbeing

susanneolbrich@yahoo.co.uk
01309 692253

Forres

Newbold House
Forres
www.bigmind.org.uk/
01309 676110

Glasgow

Glasgow Acad (Turner)
Colebrook St.
Glasgow G12 8HD
[www.meditateinglasgow.org/
Meditationclasses.html](http://www.meditateinglasgow.org/Meditationclasses.html)

Glasgow FWBO Buddhist Centre

329 Sauchiehall Street
Glasgow G2 3HW
www.glasgowbuddhistcentre.com/
glasgowbud@aol.com
0141 333 0524

Glasgow Community of Interbeing

01236 825168

Rokpa Glasgow

7 Ashley Street
Woodlands
Glasgow G3 6DR
glasgow.rokpa.org
glasgow@rokpa.org
0141 332 9950

Scotland's Buddhist Vihara

1 Caldercuilt Road
Glasgow G20 0AD
www.tsbv.org.uk/
info@tsbv.org.uk
0141 586 7493

Glasgow: Sri Lanka Buddhist Centre

2020 Maryhill Road
Glasgow G20 0AB
0141 586 7493

Glasgow: Vajrayana Buddhist Centre

www.meditateinglasgow.org/
info@meditateinglasgow.org
0141 946 1027

Glasgow Zen

Rokpa, 7 Ashley St
Woodlands
Glasgow G3 6DR
www.glasgowzen.org
contact@glasgowzen.org
0141 339 3888

Hamilton

Rm3, Whitehill Centre
9 Hunter Rd
Hamilton ML3 0LH
www.meditateinglasgow.org/
Meditationclasses.html

Holy Island

Holy Island
Lamlash P.O.
Isle of Arran KA27 8GB
www.holyisland.org
reception@holyisland.org
01770 601100

Inverness

Volunteering Highland
1a Millburn Rd
Inverness IV2 3PX
www.meditateinglasgow.org/
Meditationclasses.html

Inverness

Caravan E9
Buncrew Park
Inverness IV3 8RH
www.bigmind.org.uk/
01463 223951

Rokpa Highlands

Highland Council HQ
Glenurquhart Rd
Inverness IV3 5NX
www.highlands.rokpa.org/
info@highlands.rokpa.org
0790 056 1296

Kagyü Samye Ling Monastery and Tibetan Centre

Eskdalemuir
Langholm DG13 0QL
www.samyeling.org/
admin@samyeling.org
01387 373232

Kirriemuir

Beech Tree
8 High St
Kirriemuir DD8 4EY
[www.meditateinglasgow.org/
Meditationclasses.html](http://www.meditateinglasgow.org/Meditationclasses.html)

Melrose

Chaplaincy Centre
Borders Gen Hospital
Melrose TD6 9BS
[www.meditateinscotland.org/
classes_borders.php](http://www.meditateinscotland.org/classes_borders.php)

Paisley

Wynd Centre
6 School Wynd
Paisley PA1 2DB
[www.meditateinglasgow.org/
Meditationclasses.html](http://www.meditateinglasgow.org/Meditationclasses.html)

Perth

St Paul's Centre
14 New Row
Perth PH1 5QA
groups.yahoo.com/group/perthsangha
PerthBuddhists@aol.com

Shetland

Freefield Centre
North Road
Lerwick ZE1 0NP

Stirling

ASC
13 Pitt Terrace
Stirling FK8 2EZ
[www.stirling-buddhist-centre.org.uk/
info@stirling-buddhist-centre.org.uk](http://www.stirling-buddhist-centre.org.uk/info@stirling-buddhist-centre.org.uk)
01324 626587

Stirling

Argyll Centre
Princes St
Stirling FK8 1HQ
[www.meditateinglasgow.org/
Meditationclasses.html](http://www.meditateinglasgow.org/Meditationclasses.html)

Stornoway

www.bigmind.org.uk/
01851 820779

Stranraer

Central Library
North Strand St
Stranraer DG9 7LD
[www.meditateinscotland.org/
classes_stranraer.php](http://www.meditateinscotland.org/classes_stranraer.php)

Tain

[www.bigmind.org.uk/
jo@highlandeco.org.uk](http://www.bigmind.org.uk/jo@highlandeco.org.uk)

Christianity

Introduction

Christianity was founded in what is today modern day Israel and Palestine around 2000 years ago. It is based on the teachings of Jesus of Nazareth, known as Christ. This means 'the anointed one', and Christians believe Jesus to be the Son of God. Christians see themselves as following in the way of Jesus who revealed the forgiving love of God for all people and God's concern for human beings.

Basic beliefs

At the centre of Christian belief is Jesus who is regarded as the revelation of God. For many Christians this revelation is such that he is understood to be the very incarnation of God. In Jesus, Christians come to know something of the nature of God who is seen as loving and forgiving. Jesus is regarded as the one who has transformed human nature so that it need no longer follow its sinful inclinations but rather lead a life of love and service. Their experience of God in Jesus has led them to see God as a community of three persons, Father, Son and Holy Spirit, called the Trinity. Christians believe that the world was created by God and will be brought to its fulfilment at the end of time. In the mean time they believe in the presence and support of God's spirit among all.



The Christian holy book is called the Bible and is in two parts. The first equates roughly to the Jewish Bible has been called the Old Testament. The second is the New Testament which contains the Gospels (records of Jesus' life and his teachings), the Acts of the Apostles, the writings of St Paul and some other works.

Customs and practice

Individuals are admitted into the Christian Church through baptism which can take place in childhood or adulthood. The central ritual of much Christian worship is Holy Communion or Eucharist which is a sharing of bread and wine in memory of Jesus' last supper with his disciples. This action unites Christians in a symbolic or sacramental way with the death and resurrection of Jesus and one another. It can

also act as a recommitment to follow in the path set out by Jesus' life and example. Private prayer and meditation is important to Christians in their daily life.

Places of worship

The Christian holy day takes place on a Sunday when congregations gather in churches to worship and celebrate Holy Communion. In the Catholic tradition this takes place weekly and even daily while in some Protestant churches it takes place on a monthly or quarterly basis or even annually.

Main festivals

Important dates in the Christian Calendar include Christmas, the celebration of Jesus' birth (25 December), and the central Christian feast of Easter that commemorates the death (on Good Friday) and resurrection (on Easter Sunday) of Jesus. The exact dates for Easter vary from year to year but are usually around the end of March or beginning of April. The forty days before Easter are known as Lent and it is common for many Christians to make some form of self-sacrifice during this time, such as fasting or going without something for this period. It is also a time for increased prayer and helping others. Pentecost, which celebrates the coming of God's Spirit, and is thought of as the birth of the Church, is also an important festival.

Food and diet

In Christianity, all is seen as a gift of God. This means that no food is seen as unclean but everything is to be enjoyed in moderation and gratitude. Fasting on particular days and at particular times of the year is also common.

Concerns of the community

Christians are concerned about working for the values of God's kingdom on Earth: justice, peace and reconciliation. They are concerned for justice for all people and so are involved with justice, peace and development issues. Working together with others for the common good of the nation and the world is important for them.

Christian contacts in Scotland

There are several thousand Christian places of worship. For contact details approach local churches or

Action of Churches Together in Scotland

Inglewood
Alloa FK10 2HU

01259 216980

ecumenical@acts-scotland.org

www.acts-scotland.org

Action of Churches Together in Scotland (ACTS) is an organisation created by nine of the churches in Scotland:

Church of Scotland (Presbyterian)

Congregational Federation

Methodist Church

Religious Society of Friends (Quakers)

Roman Catholic Church

Salvation Army

Scottish Episcopal Church (Anglican)

United Free Church of Scotland (Presbyterian)

United Reform Church

There are other denominations and groupings who are not member Churches of ACTS, including

Associated Presbyterian Church

Baptist Union of Scotland

Church of the Nazarene

Evangelical Alliance (Scotland)

Evangelical Lutheran

Free Church of Scotland

Free Church (Continuing)

Free Presbyterian Church

Independent churches

Orthodox churches

Pentecostal churches

Seventh-day Adventists

Unitarian churches

For contact details of some of these consult

<http://www.scottishchristian.com/churches/>

Others claim to be parts of the Christian Church, but are not accepted as such by the 'mainstream' churches. These include

Jehovah's Witnesses

Latter Day Saints (Mormons)

Unification Church (Moonies)

Hinduism

Introduction

The Hindu tradition has no founder and is best understood as a group of closely connected religious traditions rather than a single religion. It represents a complete way of life. Hindus believe in one God and worship that one God under many manifestations or images. They believe that all prayers addressed to any form or manifestation will ultimately reach the one God. Hinduism does not prescribe any particular dogmas; rather it asks individuals to worship God according to their own belief. It therefore allows a great deal of freedom in matters of faith and worship.



Basic beliefs

Hindus consider that religion is a sanctified and disciplined path one should follow to reach a higher level of consciousness or goal, ie to become a better person. This can only be done by following the path of Dharma. Dharma is at the heart of Hinduism which is often called the Sanatana Dharma. Dharma means the ancient law which underlies the order of the universe and is reflected in a moral and ethical life. Hindus believe in the law of karma - a simple law of cause and effect. 'As you sow, so shall you reap'. They also believe in the divine nature of the soul, which is indestructible and immortal. It transmigrates from body to body depending on the merits and sins of one's actions (karma) accumulated in a lifetime. In the end, one's karma (action) determines one's future rebirth.

Hindus further believe in the descent (avatar) of Divinity to protect the righteous and destroy the unrighteous. There have been several examples of this in Hinduism including Rama, Krishna and Buddha. They serve as an example and inspiration for pious Hindus. In one sense Hindus accept the prophets of all religions as manifestations or avatars of God and recognise the presence of God in all living beings.

Customs and practices

Prayer and the reading of the Holy Scriptures, which give Hindus an example of how they should live, are important practices. Worship or veneration of the divine image takes place around a shrine morning or evening in devout Hindu homes. There are two kinds of scripture in Hinduism: the holiest texts, called the Vedas, and the great epics of the Mahabharata and Ramayana. The Bhagavad Gita, which

is part of the Mahabharata, is a very popular text in the West. Hindus follow the lunar calendar and particular days are set aside during the week and month to honour particular manifestations of God.

Places of worship

Hindus frequently view systematic organisation with some mistrust, believing it to be often showy and wasteful. Likewise, worship and general religious activity are commonly centred around the home. However Hindu temples or Mandirs, which have a priest, educated in the scriptures, do have public worship twice daily and Sunday has become a day for communal worship and activity. Only trained priests are able to perform religious ceremonies on special occasions though anyone may perform puja.

Main festivals

There are many religious festivals which are celebrated in different ways by different communities. The most commonly celebrated festivals are Diwali (or Deepavali), the Festival of Lights, and Navrathri, nine nights during which goddesses such as Durga, the Great Mother, are worshipped. This takes place over nine days and nights twice a year.

Food and diet

The influence of charity is apparent in the importance attached to hospitality: every pious Hindu is expected to keep some food aside for an unexpected guest and no-one should ever be turned away hungry. The reverence for life surfaces again in the concept of ahimsa (non-injury), one of the highest principles which encourages many Hindus to be vegetarian.

Concerns of the community

Hindus should show love and respect for all beings as a way of recognising the divinity within all creatures. Charity is extremely important. It is generally practiced in a discreet, individual manner, and is seen as a means of extending the natural love for the family into the wider community. Hindus also have a concern for the future of their young people and offer support to all members of their community, particularly vulnerable groups such as the elderly.

Hindu contacts in Scotland

Gopal Mandir (Dundee)

1R 25 West Street
Dundee DD3 6SB
swami1313@yahoo.com
01382 832 164

Tayside Hindu Cultural & Community Centre

10-12 Taylors Lane
Dundee DD2 1AQ

Edinburgh Hindu Mandir & Cultural Centre

St Andrew Place
Leith
Edinburgh EH6 7EG
0131 440 0084

Hindu Mandir (Edinburgh)

5 Pendreigh Avenue
Edinburgh EH7 4HG

Gujarati Assoc. of Scotland

189 Harvie Avenue
Newton Mearns
Glasgow G77 6LT
agandhi@ukgateway.net
0141 639 6946

Hindu Mandir Sabha (Glasgow)

10 Great George Street
Glasgow G12 8PD

Hindu Mandir/Temple of Scotland (Glasgow)

1 La Belle Place
Glasgow G3 7LH
<http://www.hindumandirglasgow.org.uk/>
0141 332 0482

ISKCON (Scotland)

Karuna Bhavan
Bankhouse Road
Lesmahagow ML11 0ES
www.iskcon.org.uk/scotland/index.html
scotland@iskcon.org.uk
01555 894790

Humanism

Introduction

Humanism is a diverse movement with ancient roots that reflects the views of millions of people around the world, the outcome of a long tradition of free thought. It is a coherent moral and ethical standpoint independent of religion, an ethical way of life that comes from within all of us, which extends to all people, irrespective of their chosen life styles or personal decisions and views, that most fundamental of welcomes which assures them of fairness, compassion and tolerance.

"Humanism is a democratic and ethical life stance, which affirms that human beings have the right and responsibility to give meaning and shape to their own lives. It stands for the building of a more humane society through an ethic based on human and other natural values in the spirit of reason and free inquiry through human capabilities. It is not theistic, and it does not accept supernatural views of reality."- IHEU (International Humanist and Ethical Union).

Basic beliefs

The core of Humanism is that it is a way of being that brings out the best in people. Human Rights law is important to all humanist organisations globally, they endorse the principles of humanitarian ideals that are enshrined in such declarations, covenants and conventions, as well as universal initiatives which promote the peaceful co-habitation of all the world's people, especially through the United Nations. Essentially, its beliefs and fundamental principles are embodied in "The Amsterdam Declaration 2002". Humanism is a belief in the advancement and understanding of humanity through its own efforts.

Customs and practices

This is not relevant on a collective permanent basis as customs and practices are determined on a personal basis with the foundations of reason, experience and compassion at the centre. Registered Humanist Celebrants do conduct non-religious ceremonies to observe life rites (eg birth, coming of age, marriage, death) and other public and private occasions.

Places of worship

The term worship is not relevant to Humanism, Humanists meet regularly in all main centres of population to talk, learn and share ideas, to debate, discuss and

campaign on social and moral issues, and to socialise and celebrate life and significant events.

Main festivals

Humanists celebrate rites of passage; they may observe commonly taken holidays and may incline towards nature-based celebrations. Many Humanists now celebrate Darwin Day on 12 February.

Food and diet

There are no special dietary requirements; this is down to individual choice.

Concerns of the community

Human endeavour is the main concern of the Humanist community worldwide – what we do, why we do it, how we do it and what the outcome will be. Humanists aim to create an open and inclusive society, and so campaign for a secular state and for secular education. Most importantly, because Humanists believe that only humankind can solve its problems, its main concern is that peace, harmony and sustainability can and must prevail on earth by human will and effort, and that this can only be via conscious collective means at this point in our evolution.

Humanist contacts in Scotland

Humanist Society of Scotland

272 Bath Street

Glasgow G2 4JR

www.humanism-scotland.org.uk

info@humanism-scotland.org.uk

0870 874 9002

Islam

Introduction

The Muslims' religion and way of life, spiritually and materially, is Islam. Islam is an Arabic word which means submission to God. The root of the word Islam comes from a word meaning peace and it is the way of peace as laid down in the Quran. The word can also mean submission and it is through submission to God's will that a Muslim finds peace. Islam is a world religion that originated in the Middle East in the seventh century CE. Now it is practised by about a fifth of the world's population.

Muslims originally came to live in Scotland in the early 1940's mainly from Pakistan or India. Thereafter others came from Africa and the Middle East.

Basic beliefs

At the heart of Muslim belief is belief in the unity and universality of God. The Arabic word Allah means the One God. Muslims also believe in the unity of mankind, under one father, Adam, and have a strong sense of the Muslim community or Ummah and are aware of their solidarity with all Muslims worldwide. Muslims recognise the prophets such as Noah, Abraham, Jacob, Moses and Jesus, and see Mohammed (peace be upon him) as the last and final prophet. Mohammed (pbuh) was born in Makah in 570 CE. He received the Holy revelation from God through the Angel Gabriel over a period of 23 years. This revelation was recorded in Islam's Holy Book known as the Quran, which is regarded as the literal word of God. Muslims are taught to recite the Quran in Arabic as any translation of the Holy Book is seen as inadequate.

Customs and practices

Islam has two principal bases of faith. The first is that there is no god worthy of worship but the one universal God (Allah), creator and sustainer of all beings. The second is that Mohammed (pbuh) is his messenger. Islam has five pillars that represent the foundation stones of Islamic worship and action:

Shahadah: There is no God but the one true God and Mohammed is his messenger.
Reciting this with intention three times makes someone a Muslim

Salat: Prayer takes place five times a day at given times. It involves a prescribed sequence of kneeling and standing postures and is made facing Makah.

Zakat: Two and a half percentage of a Muslim's assets over a given specified amount is given in welfare tax to benefit the poor and needy each year.

Hajj: This is an annual pilgrimage to Makkah (Mecca) which takes place at a fixed time of the calendar. It is a requirement at least once in a lifetime for those who can afford it.

Sawm: During the month of Ramadan Muslims are required to abstain from food, drink and sexual acts from dawn till sunset. The ill, old and travellers are exempt.

Places of worship

Prayer can take place anywhere and often a rug is used to mark out the place of prayer. The word Mosque means a place of prostration and can refer to any place of prayer. Purpose built Mosques will be used for communal prayer, community gatherings,

Quranic education and the gathering together for the traditional Friday mid-day sermon. These Mosques are often characterised by their dome and minaret, the tall tower from which the call to prayer has traditionally come. No images representing a living being are allowed in the Mosque, which could be decorated very artistically using calligraphy.

Main festivals

Ramadan is the ninth month of the Islamic Lunar Calendar and the month of the Islamic fast. The appearance of the new moon at the end of Ramadan marks the beginning of the festival of Eid ul Fitr. During this festival Muslims visit the Mosque, give charity, exchange presents and cards and celebrate with family and friends. Eid ul Adhi coincides with the completion of the pilgrimage to Makkah. It is celebrated by pilgrims and non-pilgrims alike and unites the whole Islamic community, the Ummah with the Hajj. At this time Muslims offer sacrifices of lambs or other animals to commemorate the sacrifice of Abraham's son.



1 The Ka'aba

Food and diet

Muslims differentiate between food which is allowed (halal), and food which is forbidden (haram). Pork, any other part of the pig, carnivorous animals or blood are haram. Meat must also be slaughtered according to biblical rites by a Muslim butcher. The consumption of intoxicants is also forbidden.

Concerns of the community

The Muslim community is concerned about the recent increase in Islamophobia and wants to rectify wrong images of Islam.

Muslim contacts in Scotland

Muslim Council of Scotland

PO Box 7595
Glasgow G42 2EZ
info@mcsotland.org

Aberdeen:

Mosque & Islamic Centre

164 Spital
(off King St)
Aberdeen AB24 3JD
www.aberdeenmosque.org/
gsfaberdeenmosque@yahoo.co.uk
01224 493764

Alloa: Musalla As-Salaam

97 Whins Rd
Alloa FK10 3RF
www.musalla.org/centres/Alloa.htm
imam@musalla.org
01259 724623

Bathgate:

Saraji Islamic Studies Centre

5 Whitburn Rd
Bathgate EH48 1HE
www.musalla.org/centres/Bathgate.htm
imam@musalla.org
01506 635380

Bellshill:

Lanarkshire Muslim Welfare Society

Clydesdale St
Mossend
Bellshill ML4 2RS
www.lanarkshiresmosque.com
01698 730650

Dumfries Islamic Society

Noblehill School
243 Annan Rd
Dumfries DG1 3HP
01387 710253

Dundee:

Tayside Islamic & Cultural Education Society

96a Victoria Rd
Dundee DD1 2NP
01382 224817

Dundee Central Mosque/Islamic Centre

6 Miln St
Dundee DD1 5DD
www.dundeecentralmosque.org.uk
info@dundeelamicociety.co.uk
01382 228374

Dundee: Jamia Masjid Billal (Scottish Islamic & Cultural Centre)

5-7 Dura Street
Dundee DD4 6RU
01382 226913

Dunfermline:

Mosque & Islamic Centre

Woodmill Rd
Dunfermline KY11 4AF
01383 739816

Edinburgh:

Daral Arquam

59 Laurieston Place
Edinburgh EH3 9HY
0131 229 5212

The Mosque - Anwar-e-Madina

11 Pilrig St
Edinburgh EH6 5AN
0131 554 9904

Annandale Street Mosque

Anwar-e-Madina
43-45 Annandale Street
Edinburgh EH7 4AZ
0131 556 1226

Shahjalal Mosque & Islamic Centre

8a Annandale Street Lane
Edinburgh EH7 4LS
0131 557 1841

Edinburgh Central Mosque

50 Potterow
Edinburgh EH8 9BT
info@icet.org.uk
0131 667 0140

Roxburgh Mosque

12 Roxburgh St
Edinburgh EH8 9TA
0131 556 1902

Idara Taleem-ul-Quran

8-10 Temple Park Cres
Polwarth
Edinburgh EH11 1HT
0131 229 3844

Falkirk Islamic Centre

6-8 Burnhead Lane
Falkirk FK1 1UG
www.musalla.org/centres/Falkirk.htm
imam@musalla.org
01324 611018

**Glasgow:
Shia Ithna Ashri Islamic Centre
Scotland**

19 Ashley St
Glasgow G3 6DR
0141 332 9639

Ahl Al-bait Society

25 Woodside Place
Glasgow G3 7QL
0141 564 1105

**Al Furqan Islamic Centre / UKIM -
Glasgow Islamic Centre**

19 Carrington Street
Glasgow G4 9AJ
www.alfurquanmosque.com
www.alfurquhanmosque.com/contact/php
0141 331 1119

Glasgow: Muslim House

16 Queens Cres
Glasgow G4 9BL
0141 331 0373

**Glasgow Islamic Centre & Central
Mosque**

1 Mosque Ave
Gorbals
Glasgow G5 9TA
www.geocities.com/Athens/Oracle/942
2/mosque.html
http://www.centralmosque.co.uk?cm?
contact
0141 429 3132

Dawat-ul-Islam Mosque

31 Oakfield Ave
Hillhead
Glasgow G12 8LL
0141 357 3733

Madrasa Zia-ul-Quran

257 Kenmure Street
Glasgow G41 2QX
0141 423 8001

Masjid Noor

79 Forth St
Pollokshields
Glasgow G41 2TA
0141 429 3383

Jamiat Ahl-e-Hadith

133 Springkell Ave
Pollokshields
Glasgow G41 4EY
0141 427 6122

**Jamia Islamia (Anjaman-Ehya-e-
Islam)**

275 Tantallon Road
Shawlands
Glasgow G41 3JW
0141 632 8028

Madrasa Taleem-ul-Islam

161 Nithsdale Road
 Pollokshields
 Glasgow G41 5QS
 0141 424 0787

Khazra Central Mosque

138 Butterbiggins Road
 Glasgow G42 7AF
 0141 422 1154

Langside Mosque & Madrassah

196 Langside Rd
 Glasgow G42 7JX
 0141 423 2425

Masjid Al-Farooq & Muslim Community Centre

32-38 Dixon Avenue
 Cross Hill
 Glasgow G42 8EJ
 0141 433 2686

Al-Huda Islamic Centre

65 Albert Road
 Cross Hill
 Glasgow G42 8DP
 0141 423 3836

Markazi Jamiat Ahl-e-Hadith

23-25 Garturk Street
 Govanhill
 Glasgow G42 8JG
 0141 433 2686

Madrasa Alarabia al-Islamia

490 Paisley Road West
 Ibrox
 Glasgow G51 1PY
 0141 427 2152

Fife Islamic Centre (Glenrothes)

786 Poplar Road
 Glenrothes KY7 4AA
 01592 612970

Holytown:**Lanarkshire Jamia Mosque**

2 Cleland Road
 Carfin
 Holytown ML1 4EB
 01698 262 008

Kirkcaldy Islamic Education & Cultural Society

24 Boreland Road
 Kirkcaldy KY1 2YG
 01592 597888

Fife Islamic Centre (Kirkcaldy)

Cumbræ Terr
 Kirkcaldy KY2 6SF
 01592 641057

Livingston:**Anwar-e-Madina Jammia Mosque & Madrassa**

1 Craigshill East Road
 Livingston EH54 5DT
 01506 431165

Perth Islamic Centre

65 Glasgow Rd
 Perth PH2 0PE
 elseeadwy@hotmail.com
 01738 440442

Stirling:**Central Scotland Islamic Centre**

Burghmuir Rd
 Stirling FK7 7PE
www.musalla.org/centres/Stirling.htm
 imam@musalla.org
 01786 474324

Other Muslim groups considered heretical by 'mainstream' Islam, include

Ahmadiyya Muslim Association

8 Haugh Road
 Glasgow G3 8TR

0141 334 7931

Jainism

Jainism is the oldest religion in the world. It believes a cyclical nature of the universe. Thus a universe without beginning, without end and without creator. There are twenty-four Tirthankars. Lord Rishabhdev was the first Tirthankar (MAKER OF THE FORD). Lord Mahavira is the last twenty-fourth Tirthankar of this era. He was born in Bihar in 599 to 527 BC. Lord Mahavira is not the founder of Jainism but he explained the code of conducts and implemented daily rites for his followers. He felt such changes are essential for proper religious practice. The present Jain scriptures reflect only his teachings.

Jainism recognises the fundamental natural phenomenon of *mutual dependence* which forms the basis of modern day particle physics and deep ecology. Life is viewed as a gift of togetherness, accommodation, and assistance in a universe teeming with interdependent constituents. Jainism is nature in purest and truest form.

Jainism lays heavy emphasis on non-violence. "Ahimsa Parmo Dharm" is the main teaching of Jainism. The aim of nonviolence is to convert your approach to win over their mind and heart and persuade them that your point of view is right. An important element is often to make sure that the opponent is given a face saving way of changing their mind. Non violence is a power which can be wielded equally by all children young men and women or grown up people, provided they have a living faith in the God of love and therefore have equal love for all mankind. When non violence is accepted as the way of life it must pervade the whole being little or large, human being or nature. Non violence is the soul force or the power of Godhead within us.

The Main Teachings of Jainism:

1. **Non violence.** Not to kill but to save & nurture life.
2. **Non stealing.** Not to steal but to be generous.
3. **Truthfulness.** Not to lie but to strive for truth.
4. **Chastity** (Bhramcharaya). To avoid sexual misconduct & practice purity.
5. Not to speak abusively but to **speak kindly**
6. Aprigraha - **no possession of anything**

The essence of Jainism is **concern for the welfare** of every being in the whole universe and for the health of the universe itself. Jains believe that animals and plants as well as human beings contain living souls. Each of these souls, whatever form it may be in, is considered of equal value and should be treated with respect and compassion.

Jainism contact in Scotland

Mrs Mahdu Jain

mjain@yahoo.co.uk

0141 942 5705

Judaism

Introduction

Judaism is a truly ancient religion which has been practised for five and a half thousand years. It is based on the belief in the one true and universal God.

Basic beliefs

Jews believe in the Torah (Divine Law) which was revealed to Moses and which is unchanging. They also believe in one God who is omniscient and who will reward the righteous and punish the wicked at the end of time when there will be a resurrection of all the dead. Jews are still awaiting the Messiah who they believe has still to come.

Customs and practices

There are several basic tenets by which Jews must live their lives – to carry out the Ten Commandments and to live according to Jewish values that are based on love of neighbour and tolerance of one's fellow human beings.

Places of worship

Jewish people worship in a synagogue, which is often a centre for the many aspects of communal life. On the Eastern wall, facing Jerusalem, is an 'ark', or closed, usually curtained, cupboard where the 'Sifrei Torah' or holy scrolls of the five books of Moses (the first five books of the Hebrew Bible) are kept. These are made of parchment, are hand-written by scribes and are treated with great care and reverence. They are removed during some services and read from by the Rabbi or other members of the synagogue on the 'Bimah'. This is a raised platform, either on the front of the ark or in the centre of the synagogue, from which prayers are also led.



All males and married females are required to cover their heads inside the synagogue. In an orthodox synagogue, men and women sit separately whereas in liberal or reformed synagogues, they sit together.

Main festivals

There are a number of festivals throughout the calendar. These include the Jewish New Year, which normally occurs in September or October and is marked by two days of reflection and prayer. Ten days after this comes Yom Kippur, the Day of Atonement. This is the most solemn day of the Jewish calendar and is spent in prayer and a 25 hour fast. In the spring there is Pesach, or Passover which commemorates the delivery from slavery in Israel. Shabbat (the Jewish Sabbath) begins before nightfall on Friday and lasts until the sighting of the first three stars on Saturday night. It should be observed as a day of rest and most Orthodox Jews will not write, travel, work or cook during it.

There are three daily services in the synagogue, with longer services on Saturday and festival mornings.

Food and diet

Judaism also has a number of dietary laws. Food that has been prepared in a ritually acceptable way is known as 'Kosher'. For meat to be considered kosher it must have been prepared correctly, normally under rabbinical supervision. Some meat such as pork and rabbit will not be considered kosher. Meat and dairy products should not be taken at the same meal and fish without scales or fins are also non-kosher.

Obviously, the extent to which these laws are upheld will depend on the individual. However, after many centuries of dispersal from their original homeland in the Middle East most Jews staying in Scotland will feel intrinsically Scottish, and their lifestyle is likely to reflect this.

Concerns of the community

Concerns of the community include maintaining the ability to uphold the religious rituals of circumcision and Jewish dietary laws, ensuring facilities to comply with Jewish practices of swift burial, and raising awareness among hospital staff of the specific needs of Jewish patients, particularly when dying and after death. Some Jews have concern regarding non-Jewish religious observance in schools and there are also some issues relating to organ donation. A continuing and on-going concern of all Jews is the manifestation of anti-semitism.

Jewish contacts in Scotland

Scottish Council of Jewish Communities

222 Fenwick Rd
Glasgow G46 6UE
www.j-scot.org.uk or www.scojec.org
j-scot@j-scot.org.uk
0141 638 6411

Glasgow Jewish Representative Council

222 Fenwick Rd,
Glasgow G46 6UE
glasgowjewishrepcouncil.org
office@glasgowjewishrepcouncil.org
0141 577 8200

Aberdeen Hebrew Congregation

74 Dee St
Aberdeen AB11 6DS
www.aberdeenhebrew.org.uk
info@aberdeenhebrew.org.uk
01224 582 135

Jewish Network of Argyll and the Highlands

friends@frankhouse.me.uk
01445 712 151

Dundee Hebrew Congregation

9 St Mary's Pl
Dundee DD1 5RB
www.j-scot.org.uk/Communities/
Dundee/index.html
dundeehc@googlemail.com
01382 223 557

Edinburgh Hebrew Congregation

4 Salisbury Rd
Edinburgh EH16 5AB
www.ehcong.com
secretary@ehcong.com
0131 667 3144

Edinburgh Liberal Jewish Community

www.eljc.org
info@eljc.org
0131 777 8024

Sukkat Shalom: Edinburgh Liberal Jewish Community

www.eljc.org/
sukkatshalomsec@aol.com
07891 439 646

Garnethill Hebrew Congregation

127 Hill St
Glasgow G3 6UB
www.haruth.com/JewsUKGarnethill.html
eric.jacobs@ntlworld.com
0141 332 4151

Langside Hebrew Congregation

12 Niddrie Road
Glasgow G42 8QA
0141 649 2962

Netherlee, Clarkston & Queens Park Hebrew Congregation

Clarkston Road
Glasgow G44 3YP
0141 637 8206

Giffnock & Newlands Hebrew Congregation

222 Fenwick Rd
Glasgow G46 6UE
www.giffnockshul.co.uk
rabbimrubin@talk21.com
0141 577 8250

Lubavitch of Scotland

The Glen
222 Fenwick Road
Glasgow G46 6UE
www.lubofscot.co.uk
info@lubofscot.co.uk
0141 638 6116

Newton Mearns Hebrew Congregation

14 Larchfield Court
Newton Mearns
Glasgow G77 5BH
www.nmhc.org.uk
office@nmhc.org.uk
0141 639 4000

Glasgow Reform Synagogue

147 Ayr Rd
Newton Mearns
Glasgow G77 6RE
www.grs.org.uk
shul@grs.org.uk
0141 639 4083

Paganism

Introduction

Paganism with its roots in the indigenous, pre-Christian religions of Europe has evolved and adapted to the circumstances of modern life. Its re-emergence in Scotland parallels that observed in other Western countries, where it has been growing rapidly since the 1950's. The social infrastructure of Paganism reflects the value the community places on unity in diversity, consisting of a polycentric network of interrelated traditions and local groups served by a number of larger organisations. In Scotland the Pagan Federation acts as an educational and representative body liaising with government and other relevant bodies on behalf of the Pagan community.

Basic beliefs

Pagans understand Deity to be manifest within nature and recognise Divinity as taking many forms, finding expression in Goddesses as well as Gods. Goddess worship is one of the primary characteristics of Paganism. Pagans believe that nature is sacred and that the natural cycles of birth, growth and death observed in the world around us carry profoundly spiritual meanings. Human beings are seen as part of nature, woven into the great web of life along with other animals, trees, stones, plants and everything else that is of this earth. Most Pagans believe in some form of reincarnation, viewing death as a transition within a continuing process of existence. In Paganism, spiritual truths find expression in mythopoeic and symbolic forms rather than through doctrine, and reflect a synergy of polytheistic, pantheistic and animistic understandings of the divine.

Customs and practices

Pagan ethics emphasise the responsible exercise of personal freedom in trying to live in harmony with others, and with nature. Pagans frequently use the phrase 'If it harms none, do what you will' to describe this approach to life. Pagan worship seeks to honour the divine powers and to bring the participants in harmony with them, to celebrate the turning of the seasons, and to mark the transitions of human life with appropriate rites of passage. Rituals usually begin with the creation of sacred space by the marking out of a symbolic circle and the blessing of those within. They may involve meditation, chanting, music, prayer, dance, poetry and the enactment of symbolic drama, together with the sharing of food and drink.

Places of worship

Paganism has no buildings dedicated as places of public worship. Instead, Pagans hold their ceremonies in woods, on hilltops, along the seashore, at standing stones, in parks, gardens and private homes.

Festivals

Nearly all Scottish Pagans celebrate a cycle of eight seasonal festivals known as the Wheel of the Year. These are Samhain (31 October), Midwinter or Yule (21 December), Imbolc (2 February), Spring Equinox (21 March), Beltane (30 April—1 May), Midsummer (21 June), Lughnasadh (1 August) and Autumn Equinox (21 September).

Food and diet

For ethical reasons, most Pagans have a strong preference for foods derived from organic farming and free-range livestock rearing, while many are vegetarian or vegan

Concerns of the community

Pagans regard nature as sacred and are deeply concerned by the damage inflicted by modern, industrialised societies on the natural world. Many regard environmental activism as a religious duty. Pagans honour Deity in female as well as male forms and strongly uphold equality of the sexes. Women play a very prominent role in Pagan religion. Pagans take it for granted that different people will experience the divine in different ways, and are thus very tolerant of other life-affirming religious beliefs. Proselytising is regarded as offensive and ill-mannered.

Pagan contact in Scotland

Pagan Federation (Scotland)
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KY10 3YA
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Sikhism

Introduction

The Sikh faith is a distinct religion revealed through the teachings of the 10 Gurus, the first of whom was Guru Nanak Dev ji. He was born in 1469 CE in the Punjab, India.



In 1708 the tenth and the last human Guru, Guru Gobind Singh ji, vested spiritual authority in the Holy Sikh Scriptures (Guru Granth Sahib ji) and temporal authority in the community of baptised Sikhs (Khalsa Panth).

Basic beliefs

Sikhs strictly believe that there is One God, who is Nirgun (transcendent) and Sargun (immanent). While being absolute and beyond human comprehension, God can be realised and experienced through contemplation and service. The object of a Sikh's life is to develop God consciousness and ultimately to receive God's grace. Life presents the opportunity to do so through truthful living and selfless service in the context of a family life. A Sikh's way of life is guided by the following principles: Nam Simran – remembering and praying to God at all times; Kirat Karna - earning a living by honest means; Wand Shakna - sharing with the poor and needy; Sewa - selfless service to

God and humanity; Equality - to treat all human beings as equal. A Sikh practices purity of thought, purity of action, and respect and love for God's Creation. He or she has been given the human form to practice dharma (spirituality).

Customs and practices

The tenth Guru, Guru Gobind Singh Ji, abolished distinctions of caste, colour, race or religion by introducing the concept of equality by making it obligatory for baptised Sikhs to

- a) share Amrit (holy water),
- b) adopt the same religious name of Singh (lion) for men and Kaur (Princess) for women;
- c) wear five articles of faith, commonly known as the five K's.

These are:

- Kesh (uncut hair),
- Kangha (a small wooden comb),
- Kara (an iron/steel bangle),
- Kirpan (a short sword)
- and Kachhera (special shorts).

Although not mentioned in the five articles of faith, the daastar (turban) is an essential accompaniment, which is worn to maintain the sanctity of Kesh (hair) and is treated with utmost respect. The Guru instructed Sikhs to say prayers in the early morning, at sunset and before retiring, to abstain from alcohol, tobacco and drugs, and to contribute a minimum one-tenth of their wealth, mind and body for religious purposes or to the needy.

Places of worship

The Sikh place of congregational worship is called a Gurudwara, meaning 'Doorway to the Guru' or 'House of God'. The Gurudwara usually consists of two halls: a prayer hall and a larger hall where the congregation sits together and shares a free community meal. Everyone is welcome at the Gurudwara providing they abide by the code of discipline. On entering the Gurudwara and before going into the prayer hall, heads must be covered with a large scarf or handkerchief both for men and women, shoes removed and hands washed. It is preferable if women wear long skirts and trousers. The prayer hall represents God's court. Sikhs give utmost respect to the Holy Sikh Scriptures, which is the embodiment of all the Gurus and contains the Word of God.



Main festivals

A Sikh festival or holy day is called a Gurburb: Remembrance Day. This usually refers to the birth or the death of the Gurus. Vaisakhi (13/14 April) celebrates the day in 1699 when Guru Gobind Singh Ji founded the order of the Khalsa, the

community of baptised Sikhs. Diwali (October/November) commemorates Guru Hargobind Ji's return from imprisonment to the Harmandir Sahib (Golden Temple).

Food and diet

Sikhs do not take alcohol, tobacco or other intoxicants. Observant Sikhs, especially those who are baptised, are vegetarian. They also exclude eggs and any food containing animal derivatives.

Concerns of the community

Government funding is required to maintain Punjabi language classes. Hospitals, schools, social work departments etc need to be given clear guidelines that Sikh articles of faith cannot be removed, for example in cases of pupils doing PE in schools, patients undergoing operations and travellers flying by air.

Sikh contacts in Scotland

National:

www.sikhsinscotland.org

Dundee:

Sri Guru Nanak Gurdwara

1-3 Nelson St
Dundee DD1 2PN
www.dundeegurudwara.org
info@dundeegurudwara.com
01382 223383

Edinburgh:

The Sikh Temple

1 Sherrif Brae
Leith
Edinburgh EH6 5TJ
edinburghsikhs.com/Gurdwara
0131 553 7207

Glasgow:

Central Gurdwara Singh Sabha

134-8 Berkeley St
Pollockshields
Glasgow G3 7HY
0141 221 6698

Guru Nanak Gurdwara

27 Otago St
Kelvinbridge
Glasgow G12 8JJ
0141 334 9125

Sikh Temple

128 McCulloch St
Glasgow G41 1NX

Guru Granth Sahib Gurdwara

163 Nithsdale Rd
Pollockshields
Glasgow G41 2AL
0141 423 8288

Shri Guru Tegh Bahadur Gurdwara

32 St Andrews Drive
Glasgow G41 5SG
0141 427 2763

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