

MULTIFAITH INFORMATION MANUAL

6TH EDITION

AN AUTHORITATIVE GUIDE TO
RELIGIOUS RIGHTS AND ACCOMMODATIONS



CANADIAN MULTIFAITH FEDERATION, TORONTO
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INTRODUCTION

The provision of spiritual and religious care in Canada is supported by the member faith traditions which comprise the Canadian Multifaith Federation (CMF) (formerly, Ontario Multifaith Council, OMC). The concept and realization of this Multifaith Information Manual have evolved from work begun in 1986. Throughout the evolution of this document, the principle of presenting the authentic voice of each faith tradition has been a constant. It is retained and enhanced in this edition.

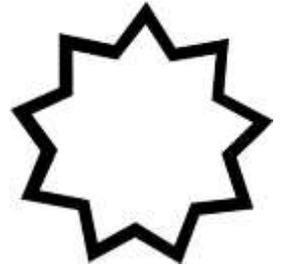
Each chapter in the Manual explores themes, such as, Basic Beliefs, Sacred Books, Worship, Structure, Divisions, Leadership, Rituals, Laws, Dress, Diet, Sacred Symbols, Death & Dying, and Holy Days & Festivals. Also included, for the first time, in this edition are Suggested Readings (See: Appendix A, page 328) and a Glossary of Common Terms in Spiritual and Religious Care (See: Appendix B, page 330).

This Manual also covers many more practical and ethical issues around care for believers of different faiths--at the end of a chapter are Frequently Asked Questions and faith-based responses (FAQs) (See: List of Questions, Appendix D, page 338).

Considerably expanded this edition covers new chapters on Scientology, Coptic Orthodox, Macedonian Orthodox, Spiritual Baptist, Humanist, Taoism, Spiritualist Church of Canada, Methodist, Quaker, Cao Dai, Centres of Spiritual Living, Eckankar and Unification Church. This Manual, however, is not an exhaustive catalog of all the religious traditions in Canada. If we have not included a religious tradition of significance to an institution or workplace, please feel free to inform us. We will be more than happy to find a way to accommodate in our future edition. For a list of others who were contacted, but had no response, please see Appendix C, page 337.

Credits at the end of each chapter identify the individual or group responsible for the content as approval for each faith tradition. These traditions reflect the diversity of our clients, and we thank the all the contributors for their hard work and perseverance. It is difficult to take the authentic presentations of so many diverse faith traditions and work them into a standard format. We hope that the flexibility of the manual's design will assist the reader while retaining the unique characteristics of each tradition.

BAHÁ'Í



MODE OF WORSHIP

Most Bahá'í communities host regular gatherings such as commemorations and celebrations of Holy Days, devotional gatherings, study groups, and informal presentations on the Bahá'í Faith (“firesides”). These gatherings can take place in individual homes, local Bahá'í Centres (if there is one), public places, or rental halls.

DIVISIONS/DENOMINATIONS

The Bahá'í international community has maintained its unity owing to the Covenant of Bahá'u'lláh. For Bahá'ís, the Covenant made by Bahá'u'lláh is both a renewal of the promise of divine guidance and a system that ensures its continuance. Specifically, the Covenant can be understood to be synonymous with the line of succession after Bahá'u'lláh. This line goes from Bahá'u'lláh to His son, ‘Abdu’l-Bahá, and then from ‘Abdu’l-Bahá to His grandson, Shoghi Effendi, and to the Universal House of Justice.

RITUALS

Obligatory

There are a minimum of rituals in the Bahá'í Faith. One of the letters written on behalf of Shoghi Effendi, the Guardian of the Faith, by his secretary asserts that “the Faith has certain simple rites prescribed by Bahá'u'lláh, such as the obligatory prayers, the marriage ceremony and the laws for the burial of the dead, but its teachings warn against developing them into a system of uniform and rigid rituals incorporating man-made forms and practices.”

Bahá'u'lláh wrote three obligatory prayers — the short, the medium and the long — and Bahá'ís are free to choose to say one of the three each day. The short and the medium prayer have to be said at specific times; the short has to be said once between noon and sunset and the medium has to be said three times daily: once between sunrise and noon, once between noon and sunset and once between sunset and two hours after sunset. The long prayer can be said at any time in the day. The medium and long prayers also include movements and gestures during the prayers, which are themselves obligatory except when a person is physically incapable of performing them.



INTRODUCTION

Founder

Hinduism does not have a founder. One of the oldest religions, Hinduism evolved through millennia.

Nature of Religion

Monotheistic; With the belief that God is everything and everything is of God. As such there are many manifestations and revelations of God.

SCRIPTURES

Currently most used

- The Vedas, Upanishads
- The Gita
- The Ramayana
- The Mahabharata
- The Puranas

BASIC BELIEFS

- A wide variety of beliefs held together by an attitude of mutual tolerance. All approaches to God are valid.
- Humankind's goal is to break free of this imperfect world and reunite with God.
- The soul reincarnates and transmigrates until reunion with God.
- Many Hindus are vegetarians as the killing of living creatures is not favoured.
- One must perform his or her duties to God, parents, teachers and society.

MODE OF WORSHIP

- Worship occurs in a Temple or at home. Or in any open place for general assembly of devotees.
- One must be barefoot during religious worship or any kind of religious celebration.
- One must sit at a lower elevation than where the image of the deity has been placed
-

STRUCTURE

- Hinduism is not a church-based religion. Therefore, there is no central hierarchical structure within the religion. However, there are many monastic orders that have ancient lineage related to geographic points in India. Each order may have a hierarchical structure. As of the date of this edition the Hindu Dharma Acharya Sabha of India is considered the leading body of representation for Hindus in India and across the globe.



LAWS

In Islam, the moral code and religious law is called Sharia. It deals with many topics including secular law and personal matters. For the purposes of this book, the application of Sharia law is limited to matters of religious accommodation with respect to diet, marriage, prayer and others. This information can be found in the respective sub-headings within this chapter.

In general, Islamic laws distinguish among lawful (*Halal*) unlawful (*Haram*) and detestable (*Makruh*) actions that are permitted, not permitted, or discouraged by God the Lawgiver. Anyone who engages in haram is liable to God's punishment, as well as legal punishment according to Islamic Shariah. The basic principle in Islamic law is that all things and actions are Halal except those that are specifically prohibited by God and His Messenger. Anything or action that is Haram is very harmful to the individual and /or the group, both physically and spiritually.

DIETARY REQUIREMENTS

For a Muslim, there are two types of food and drink, *Halal* (lawful) and *Haram* (unlawful). The unlawful forbidden (*Haram*) food and drinks include:

- Meat of carnivorous animals and birds.
- Meat from dead animals and birds that died naturally through accidents, or by strangling, falling, beating or killed by wild animals.
- Blood that poured forth (as distinguished from the blood remaining in the flesh or organs).
- Flesh of swine (pigs) such as bacon,, ham or pepperoni, including all products and by-products (lard, pepsin, lipase, rennet, gelatin) prepared from pork.
- Food upon which any other name has been invoked besides that of Allah.
- Intoxicants including all types and varieties of alcohol and intoxicating drugs.

The lawful (*Halal*) food includes:

All herbivorous animals, poultry and birds. They must be slaughtered by Muslim invoking names of Allah. Jugular vein must be severed and the blood must ooze out.

Fish and all other seafood from rivers, lakes, seas or oceans as long as the water is not polluted.

All Haram foods and their by-products are forbidden. Baked, dairy, processed and cooked foods must be free of all pork and animal shortenings as well as their by-products. Only vegetable oil is used for frying and in preparation of bread, salad dressing, desserts and muffins. Contamination must be avoided during preparation and handling.

JUDAISM



HOLY DAYS/FESTIVALS

Jewish holy days are special days in the Jewish calendar that celebrate moments in Jewish history. Shabbat and all Jewish holydays begin on the evening before the holy day as marked on our calendar.

Shabbat (Sabbath)

Shabbat is the weekly day of rest lasting from shortly before sundown on Friday evening to nightfall Saturday night. This day commemorates G-d's day of rest after six days of creation. It plays a pivotal role in Jewish life and is governed by a large corpus of religious law. At sundown on Friday, candles are lit, and a blessing recited, to welcome Shabbat. The evening meal begins with the Kiddush, a blessing recited aloud over a cup of wine, and the Motzi, a blessing recited over the Challah bread. It is customary to have two Challot, (braided loaves of Challah bread) on the table. During Shabbat, Jews are forbidden to engage in any activity that falls under 39 categories of melakhah, translated literally as "work" - but actually reflects man's active control over his environment.

Rosh Hashanah

The Jewish New Year. It is also known as the Day of Remembrance and the Day of Judgement as it is the time when G-d judges what will happen to each person in the coming year. Work, as defined above, is prohibited on Rosh Hashanah.

Fast of Gedaliah

Fast day on the day after Rosh Hashanah commemorating the death of the last governor of Judea after the Babylonians burned the First Temple in 586 B.C.E.

Ten Days of Repentance

The days between Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur. A time for reflection and repentance.

Yom Kippur

The Day of Atonement is the holiest and most solemn day of the year. Jews ask for forgiveness from G-d through a day of prayer and fasting. The fast begins before sundown the day before Yom Kippur and concludes after nightfall on Yom Kippur day (approximately 25 hours duration). Work, as defined above, is prohibited on Yom Kippur.

LUTHERANISM

Death & Dying Beliefs

Lutherans believe that when we die, our souls await the final consummation of all things on the day Christ returns. We shall then receive glorified bodies that are free from tears, pain, sickness and age—perfectly renewed and glorified resurrection bodies. In these new and glorified bodies, we shall spend all eternity in heaven, enjoying the presence of God and all the saints, forever and ever.

Practices

As death approaches, Lutherans often request private communion, which involves confession. In some cases, Lutherans may request the 'Commendation of the Dying', also known as 'Last Rites'. Ordained clergy normally provides these.

(P.106 – Occasional Service – A Companion to Lutheran Book of Worship; Published by Augsburg Publishing House, Minneapolis and Board of Publication, Lutheran Church in America, Philadelphia – October 1987).

(P.101 – Occasional Service – A Companion to Lutheran Book of Worship; Published by Augsburg Publishing House, Minneapolis and Board of Publication, Lutheran Church in America, Philadelphia – October 1987)

(P.65 – Renewing Worship – Life Passages – Evangelical Lutheran Church in America – Published by Augsburg Fortress – 2002)

After death occurs, pastors usually conduct a funeral service, which may take a variety of forms, depending upon the wishes of the deceased's family and friends. In its simplest form it may be a memorial service without the body present, a service for the Burial of the Dead, or a full service which includes the Burial of the Dead, a service of the Word and a celebration of the Eucharist (Holy Communion). In the case of the latter two, the body may or may not be present as requested by the individual's family and friends.

In some cases, Lutherans have prearranged their funeral services and their wishes should be honoured. Normally, services for members are conducted in a church but they may also be conducted in other settings such as a funeral home and chapel. It is also appropriate for the pastor to conduct a committal service at the graveside. In the months following death, pastors are available to provide counseling to friends and family.

THE PENTECOSTAL ASSEMBLIES OF CANADA

INTRODUCTION

Founder

The Pentecostal Assemblies of Canada (PAOC) was formed in 1919 as a Canadian expression of a global Pentecostal revival. Although Pentecostal churches began to appear as early as 1906, it wasn't until 1919 that a nucleus of them became incorporated with the Canadian government. Very quickly other congregations from across Canada became affiliated. Pentecostalism's global growth is estimated at about 600 million persons who would identify themselves as Pentecostal or Charismatic. Presently, the PAOC is the largest Evangelical denomination in Canada as well as one of the largest Protestant churches. It has close to 240,000 adherents in Canada meeting in close to 1,200 congregations. There are a number of other groups in Canada who would also describe themselves as Pentecostal or Charismatic and hold similar faith and ethical convictions.

Nature of Religion

Monotheistic, Trinitarian, Christian. Pentecostal "spirituality" is rooted in an understanding that one can have a personal relationship with God the Father as the Spirit applies the saving work of Jesus Christ. Salvation cannot be earned, it can only be accepted. Sincere, genuine faith and obedience confirms our commitment to Christ. God's presence is known in a Christian's life by His Spirit's constant companionship. Each day is lived in anticipation of God's love and power being at work. The effect of God's presence in a Christian's life includes comfort and peace, miraculous interventions, and Spirit-enabled works of witness and service.

SCRIPTURES

Pentecostals believe in the authority and divine inspiration of the Holy Bible. It is the standard by which all decisions, positions and behaviour are judged. The Bible is read literally, which means it takes seriously the intent of the author. Attention is paid to the various genres in the Scriptures so that appropriate interpretive methods are used for each type of literature it contains. The same Spirit who inspired the authors of the Bible also aids us in its interpretation. The Lord speaks to us in His Word, both when we read it alone and when we hear it together.

Although many authors contributed to the writing of the Bible, we affirm the consistency and continuity of all Scripture, since the Scripture is God-breathed or inspired.

BASIC BELIEFS

- Humankind is born into "original sin." Sin separates us from God, which means that humankind experiences physical sickness, emotional brokenness and fractured families and communities. The final result of sin is death.
- God has a plan of redemption that enables our sin to be forgiven without violating the intrinsic justice and holiness of God. This plan of redemption is based upon Jesus Christ's substitutionary death on our behalf. He gave his life as a ransom for each of us.



money

What considerations are funeral related, that deal specifically with:

- funeral practices:
In general, chanting for the deceased, with ceremonies led by Taoist priests. Ceremonies include offerings of food and drink, as well as paper replicas of and other goods that are burned in order to be sent to the deceased.
- family involvement:
Family are involved to the extent that they wish
- clergy involvement:
Ceremonies led by Taoist priests.
- acceptable condolences:
Any sincere condolences are acceptable. In Chinese culture, Chinese New Year is not a time to discuss death.
- timing for visitations :
- prayers :
Many possibilities depending on the tradition. Generally associated with deities that relieve suffering, such as the Lord Taiyi or the Boddhisattva Guanyin.
- services :
Include prayers as outlined above. Funeral takes place in memorial hall dedicated to paying respect to deceased. Temporary altar set up including image of deceased, offerings of rice, fruit, tea and wine and other offerings. Those in attendance pay respect by bowing and pouring an offering of wine on the ground in front of the altar.
- mourning periods:
The period of mourning is 49 days, with particular focus on each 7 days after death.
 - Any other details:
When the mourning period is complete, a permanent plaque for the deceased is set up in a memorial hall, often in a separate part of a temple. There, the spirit of the deceased is cared for by the temple, and offerings can be made by loved ones on significant days, including the festivals dedicated to ancestors as well as the anniversary of death.

Requirements about sacred space in your faith tradition:

- a. List all that is mandatory (please include details of direction, design, tools, symbols, icons, etc.)**
 - i. representation of deity. Can be an image or text. To be located in a place of respect, facing south if practical.
- b. List all that is optional:**
 - i. incense burner
 - ii. candles
 - iii. tea

WHAT THEY SAY ABOUT THIS BOOK

The audience of this book are professionals in a variety of settings who require authentic information regarding accommodations in spiritual and religious care. This is what some of them have said about the Multifaith Information Manual:

"The Multifaith Information Manual has been my 'go to' reference since its inception in 1986. It is an invaluable resource for discerning the facts, issues, and concerns for Chaplains for the patients, residents, inmates, and Staff in their care. It is a quickly referenced, straight-forward guide that only gives the information, contact information, and practical insights we need, without unnecessary jargon or details. This Manual is a 'must-have' and will find it's place near the desk of any spiritual and Religious Caregiver in the Province." **Rev. Nick Swirski**, B. A. Div., Chaplain Maplehurst Correctional Complex, Milton, Ontario.

"... it is my privilege to endorse this important work. The Multifaith Information Manual is a resource we use regularly at Toronto Youth Assessment Centre. The MIM gives us clear insight and direction in determining religious rights and requirements of inmates." **Rev. Fred Boom**, Duty Chaplain, Toronto Youth Assessment Centre, Ordained Elder in the Free Methodist Church.

"... we placed the manuals on nursing floors as an educational resource. Staff read sections concerning their patients or residents and enjoyed checking information on their faith traditions. The manuals are a concrete demonstration of our commitment to multi-faith education as well as spiritual care." **Harry Lynch**, Chaplain, Providence Centre.

"The Multifaith Information Manual is a valuable tool for educators. It is an accessible resource which can assist in the development of a truly inclusive curriculum and in the accommodation of the range of religious requirements, practices, and observances of Toronto's diverse communities." **Vanessa Russell**, Instructional Leader, Equity Department, Toronto District School Board.

"This Canadian publication focuses on the practicalities of meeting the needs of friends who may belong to a specific faith community with useful sections on sacred objects and writings, and on the beliefs and practices regarding death appertaining to the faiths included. Faith communities represented includes: Buddhist, Christian, Hindu, Jain, Jewish, Muslim, Pagan, Rastafarian, Sikh and Zoroastrian." **Soul Midwives Shop**, Birmingham (UK)

"I have found the Multifaith Information Manual to be an exemplary, easy to use and very helpful resource that fairly represents and references the varieties of faiths, and the different versions and characteristics of a faith, that can apply within Ontario and across Canada." **Len Thomas**, Humber College Chaplain.

"This manual is essential information for institutional leadership concerned about human rights and human dignity. It is a wonderful resource for spiritual and religious care providers but also gives importance guidance for any administrator wanting to helm a holistic and humane institution of any kind." **Kate Johnson**, chaplain at Queen's University.