

Pan Bedfordshire Multi Faith Guidance



Introduction

- The county of Bedfordshire is one which is very diverse, it is the home to a variety of different people with a range of different characteristics.
- The Equality Act 2010 stated that there were 9 protected characteristics. (Race, Religion, Sex, Sexual Orientation, Marriage/ Civil Partnership, Disability, Age, Pregnancy and Gender reassignment.)
- It is important that all practitioners working with children and adults understand that there are a range of different faiths a person can believe.
- This guide will aim to offer a basic insight and understanding to some of these faiths.



Christianity Origins and Beliefs

Christianity is a faith that stems from the belief that Jesus Christ came to earth as a living sacrifice to atone for all of our sins, that is sin from the past and sin that we have yet to commit! Up to that point, people of the Jewish faith had regularly made sacrifices using animals to repent of their sins but God sent his only Son to be the final sacrifice that would need to be made for man to have access to Heaven and an eternal relationship with God. God did not have to do this for us, but loved us so much that He sacrificed His only Son. This is grace and undeserved favour, Christians believe that there is nothing we can do to earn God's favour or gain access to Heaven apart from His grace. Acts 4:12 tells us that 'salvation is found in no one else, for there is no other name under Heaven given to men by which we must be saved.'

John 14:6 states that Jesus said to His followers ' I am the way, the truth and the life, No one comes to the Father except through me".

The Christian faith is based on Christ's death and resurrection and to deny Christ's bodily resurrection (John2:19-21) is to deny that Jesus' work here on earth was a satisfactory offering to God for the sins of mankind.

The deity of Christ – quite simply, Jesus is God and the Holy Trinity is made up of God the Father, God the Son and God the Holy Spirit.

The beginning of the Old Testament describes the Holy Trinity but not in name, when the Spirit of God was hovering over the waters. Jesus being the Word who was with God(John 1:1-5) and therefore the Holy Trinity existed at the point of Creation.

Christians believe you should follow the Ten Commandments as well as Jesus' teachings which were to love others, trust in God with all of your heart, have faith and forgive.



Dates in Christian Calendar

Advent and Christmas – most Christians celebrate Advent from 1st December but it officially begins on the fourth Sunday before Christmas Day(25 December) so can fall at any time between 27 November and 3rd December.

Epiphany – commemorates the visit of the Wise Men to Jesus as an infant and falls on 6 January(or 19 January in the Orthodox church). It is also the date when some Christians mark the baptism of Jesus at the age of about 30 in the River Jordan by John the Baptist. Epiphany is particularly celebrated by the Catholic and Orthodox churches.

Lent, Shrove Tuesday and Ash Wednesday – February/March/April. Lent is a period of about 6 weeks leading up to Easter and begins on Ash Wednesday – 40 days(excluding Sundays) before Easter Sunday. Lent is a time of solemnity and self-reflection for Christians and many will fast from certain foods or activities.

Holy Week and Easter – March/April. The timing is linked to the phases of the Moon and the Jewish festival of Passover. Easter commemorates the trial and crucifixion of Jesus Christ in around 30AD and His resurrection which is celebrated on Easter Sunday.

Palm Sunday – the day Jesus Christ rode into Jerusalem on a donkey, greeted by adoring crowds waving palm tree branches.

Maundy Thursday – thought to be the night of Jesus' betrayal by Judas. He was arrested after celebrating Passover with his friends at a meal known as the Last Supper.

Good Friday – the day of Jesus' trial and crucifixion.

Easter Sunday – the most significant date in the Christian calendar, marking the day that Jesus rode from the dead.

Ascension Day – the fortieth day after Easter Sunday, it commemorates the day Jesus ascended back into heaven from the Mount of Olives which overlooks Jerusalem.

Islam

Origins and Beliefs

People who follow the religion of Islam are known as Muslims. The word “Islam” means to “submit to God”.

Muslims believe that there is no god but Allah and that the prophet Muhammad is his final messenger. Muslims believe that the Quran was the word of Allah sent down to them.

Muslims have 5 pillars of faith which are as follows

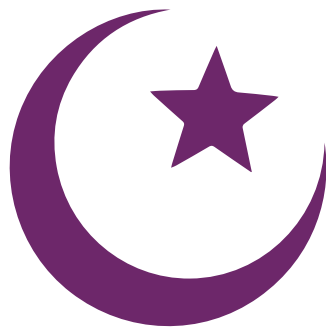
- Shahada (Declaration of faith)
- Salah (Obligatory 5 daily prayers)
- Zakat (Giving of charity)
- Sawm (Fasting through the month of Ramadan)
- Hajj (Religious pilgrimage where Muslims go to visit the Kabah (Which is where they pray towards.)

Festivals

Every year Muslims have a period of fasting which lasts for the holy month of Ramadan. They abstain from food, drinks and sex as well as bad thoughts from dawn to dusk for the whole month. Muslims are encouraged to grow in holiness and self discipline during the fasting month. At the end of the month, Muslims celebrate Eid al-Fitr the joyous fast breaking. On Eid al-Fitr Muslims try to wear new clothes. They say special prayers and then have a feast together. It is also a time for visiting friends and relatives.

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The other major festival is Eid al-Adha, a feast which commemorates the sacrifice of the ram sent by God for Abraham to sacrifice instead of his son.



Islam

When you visit a Mosque

Although Muslims can pray anywhere, they try to come together for prayer every Friday afternoon.

Mosques can be converted houses or magnificent domed buildings with a minaret (a tower from which the call to prayer is heard), when you enter a mosque, you will be expected to remove your shoes.

What is important about a mosque is that it provides a clean, dry space for prayer and is large enough for the community to gather on a Friday for congregational prayer. The mosque is also open for 5 prayers daily. The main room of a mosque is normally empty of furniture except a pulpit. The mihrab at the front is an alcove which marks the direction of Mecca, the direction people face when praying. Sometimes there will be a gallery for women. Outside the prayer room will be running water for people to wash before prayer.

When you go to a Muslim household

In a Muslim home you may see pictures of the Kabah or depictions of other Arabic scripture. You may also see a copy of the Qur'an on a high shelf, sometimes covered in a cloth and quotations from the Qur'an on plaques on the wall.

Devout Muslims pray five times a day, so it is possible that if you arrive unannounced, you may interrupt their prayer. If possible, just wait for them to finish prayer, it only takes a few minutes.

When visiting Muslim households you may be asked to take your shoes off, this is because Muslim's pray within their houses and do not want to make the floor they pray on to be made unclean.



Islam

Good practice in Islam

- Muslim's should pray 5 times a day as this is made obligatory for them.
- Muslim's should fast through the month of Ramadan which is in the Islamic calendar.
- Muslim's should celebrate both festivals of Eid which come twice a year.
- Muslims often pay Zakat which is obligatory charity towards the poor.
- Once a year in the month of Hajj many Muslims may travel to Saudi Arabia where they will perform a religious pilgrimage.
- Muslims tend to eat meat which is Halal, this means that the meat has been prepared and slaughtered correctly following religious procedures.
- Every Friday is very important to Muslims as this is the day where they perform their Jumma prayers which is prayed in a big congregation usually at Mosques.

Not so good practice in Islam

- Muslim's refrain from eating pork and also any meat which has been prepared without following procedures which make that meat halal.
- Some Muslim women may be uncomfortable to talk/ shake hands with the opposite without another male/ female family member present.
- Muslim's need to be fully focused when praying and as such you should never interrupt their prayer and ideally wait for them to finish praying.
- Muslim men and women are taught to be modest and this extends to what clothing they wear. When visiting a Muslim household where practicable allow for time for men/ women to cover themselves appropriately if they desire.
- Muslim's often pray at home and some may not wear shoes within the house due to this, if a Muslim asks you to take your shoes off before entering their house this is likely to be the reason. (This should only be done where practicable and not in all situations.)
- Practicing Muslim's do NOT drink alcohol.

Judaism

Origins and Beliefs

Judaism is an ancient religion dating back 4000 years to the family of Abraham. The central Jewish belief about God is summarised by the Shema, which is said twice daily: 'Hear O Israel, The lord is our God, The lord is one.'

There are 3 prayer times, (Shacharit in the morning, Minchah in the evening and Ma'ariv, (also known as Arbit), in the evening). There is an additional service called Musaf on the Sabbath and festivals.

Jews believe that the 5 books of the Torah are the word of God, dictated to Moses, as well as Prophets and Writings, (which are collectively known as the 'Written Torah'). There is also the 'Spoken Torah', a collection of texts believed to be God's word, passed down orally until being written down around the 3rd century CE. This is the Talmud, comprising the Mishnah and the Gemara.

Festivals

The start of the Jewish year begins with Rosh Hashanah, which is a two day festival celebrating the start of the year. The first 10 days of the Jewish year, (including Rosh Hashanah), are especially holy, and conclude with Yom Kippur, the Day of Atonement, (a 25 hour fast).

Other major festivals include Sukkot, (Tabernacles – the celebration of the harvest), Pesach, (Passover – the celebration of the Exodus), and Shavuot, (Weeks – the celebration of the giving of the Torah at Mt Sinai).

Among other festivals, Jewish people also celebrate Chanukah and Purim, which although do not have as many restricting rules as other festivals, have a lot of celebrated tradition around them such as eating oily foods on Chanukah and wearing costumes on Purim.



Judaism

When you visit a synagogue

A synagogue is a place for study and prayer. There will normally be an Ark containing the Torah scrolls, and a bimah, (platform), from which the scrolls are read. In orthodox synagogues, men and women sit separately, often with separate entrances. Synagogues often have a rabbi, (teacher).

Jewish men will cover their head with a kippah, and married Jewish women will cover their heads as well, (but not with a kippah in orthodox communities). You are under no obligation to, but if you are inside a synagogue you may wish to cover your head man as a sign of respect; your custodian/bowler/flat cap will suffice.

You will find security at almost every synagogue, often run by the Community Security Trust, (CST). Most will welcome a visit from uniformed officers. Please engage with them if visiting as they may have offences to report or information which can be developed into intel.

When you go to a Jewish household

When you enter a Jewish home, you may notice a small box attached to the right doorpost. Inside is a parchment containing parts of the Shema (see beliefs). This is known as a mezuzah. Jews normally touch this as a sign of peace and respect.

Inside you may see some items that have symbolic value in Jewish family life, for instance a Chanukah, a branched candelabrum, lit when the festival of Chanukah is celebrated. No images of God are found in the Jewish home. The Jewish Sabbath begins at sunset on Friday and lasts until nightfall on Saturday. Jewish people spend that time in study, prayer and rest. Those observing the Sabbath do not answer the phone, write, use electricity, drive or spend money, (among other restrictions).



Good practice in Judaism

- The Sabbath (Shabbat) is the Jewish day of rest. It starts on a Friday afternoon, about one hour before dusk and lasts for approximately 25 hours, until after dark the following day. As daylight hours vary, the beginning and end times of the Sabbath also vary throughout the year.
- Observant males wear a head covering most, if not all of the time. Observant married women will wear a head covering, or a wig in public. It is not a requirement for a non-Jew to wear a head covering in a Synagogue, however it is respectful to do so.
- It should be noted that when life is at risk, Jewish law provides that most other laws must be disregarded to save a life. Tasks not directly contributing to saving a life, such as taking notes, writing, using electronic equipment, etc would not normally be included whereas a phone to call 999 would be.
- When a Jewish person dies, the funeral must take place as soon as possible following the death, sometimes even on the actual day of the death. After the funeral, the immediate family of the deceased (parents, children, siblings, and spouses) mourn for seven days. This is known as 'sitting Shiva', meaning 'seven' in Hebrew. During the Shiva the immediate family stay at home, say prayers and receive condolences from well-wishers and often not working.

Not so good practice in Judaism

- Highly observant Jewish people will not touch people of the opposite sex outside of their immediate family, even to shake hands. It would be best to not reach out your hand to someone of the opposite sex, however if they reach out to shake your hand then clearly they do not observe this practice.
- During the Sabbath, Jews abstain from many things such as writing, driving or using electricity. (This is important to note as making/ signing a statement or watching/providing CCTV would not be permitted.)
- Observant Jews only eat food which is kosher, permitted by the dietary laws. They do not eat forbidden animals, such as pig, nor permitted animals that have not been slaughtered in accordance with these laws. They will also avoid any food that has been cooked in the same equipment used to cook non-kosher food, to avoid the risk of eating remnants of the non-kosher food. Some Jews are very strict about following these restrictions.

Sikhism

Origins and Beliefs

The Sikh tradition began in the Punjab (five rivers) region over 500 years ago. The first guru or teacher of the faith, Guru Nanak, taught a faith in one immortal being. He also encouraged followers to lead a life of service to humanity.

The Sikh belief about God is found in the 'Mool Mantra', the first hymn written by the first Guru Nanak. It begins: "There is only one God. Truth is his name. He is the creator. He is without fear he is without hate". For Sikhs, God has no physical qualities, so there can be no images of God. God is present in all people and all things. Because of this, Sikhs believe in the equality of all human beings. The Gurdwara, the Sikh place of worship, is open to all. Everyone is welcome to eat in the Langar, their free communal kitchen.

Festivals

Several festivals are widely celebrated by Sikhs in Britain.

Baisakhi (also Vaisakhi) is a festival which commemorates the beginning of the Khalsa, the Sikh religious community, by Guru Gobind Singh in 1699.

Hola Mohalla (or simply Mola), a three day spring festival, is a joyous occasion.

Diwali, like the Hindu festival and a theme of light. It celebrates the release of Hargobind, the sixth guru from captivity.



Sikhism

When you visit a Sikh gurdwara (Temple)

A Gurdwara is the place where Sikhs congregate to pray and worship. At the front of the worship room will be a copy of the Sikh holy book, the Guru Granth Sahib. It will be resting on beautifully covered cushions on a throne like platform and will be covered with colourful embroidered cloths. The main act of worship is reading from these scriptures.

Before entering the building, you will be expected to remove your shoes and cover your head. Sikhs will approach the Guru Granth Sahib, bow or prostrate themselves in front of the book and make a small offering of money and say a short prayer and back away from the book. Then they will sit down, the men on one side and the women on the other.

When you go to a Sikh household

In a Sikh home you may see pictures of the Gurus of the Sikh tradition on the walls. Many families have a particular devotion to one or more of the Gurus. You may also see a picture of the Golden Temple in Amritsar in the Punjab, the most important place of Sikh pilgrimage.

Some Sikh families have a special room where they keep a copy of the scripture, and the Guru Granth Sahib, usually placed on a special throne like table. They use this room to read the scriptures and to meditate. If you enter this room, you should cover your head and remove your shoes.



Good practice in Sikhism

- The turban is probably the most striking feature in the dress of men. However, not all Sikh men wear a turban and some Hindus (and Sikh women) wear them. Some sikh men now cut their hair. Both Sikh men and women dress modestly.
- Sikh's follow the 5 K's in their dress code, these are as follows;
 1. Kesh - uncut hair usually worn under a turban for men. The hair is not cut because to cut it disturbs the way the body naturally functions.
 2. Kanga - a small wooden comb to keep the hair well groomed.
 3. Kara - a steel bangle worn on the right wrist symbolising strength, continuity and equality.
 4. Kirpan - a small sword, a symbol of the fight against evil.
 5. Kaccha - shorts which were part of the military uniform of Guru Gobind Singh's time and which now symbolises sexual restraint.
- One of the most important beliefs of Sikhism is the equality of all people. In the early days the Gurus taught that women did not need to seclude or veil themselves. Women have equal rights to participate or lead religious services in the gurdwara and many Sikh women work outside the home.

Not so good practice in Sikhism

- Sikhs do not eat beef or halal or kosher meat (killed according the rules of Islam or Judaism). If they are meat eaters, they usually eat chicken, lamb or pork. Many are vegetarians and dairy products are common in their diet.
- Sikhs are forbidden to use tobacco or alcohol.
- Large Gurdwaras sometimes serve meal 24 hours a day. If you are invited to eat in the Langar (Common Dining room), you should not offer to pay for the food, but you could offer to make a donation to the Gurdwara before leaving.
- Do NOT enter Gurdwara's without taking shoes off and covering the head.
- Important matters are normally the concern of the whole family, so if you need to speak to a Sikh woman, you may feel more comfortable if there are other family members present.

Hinduism

Origins and Beliefs

Hinduism is an ancient religious tradition which grew up in the Indian subcontinent.

The word 'Hinduism' is used to describe the way of life which is shaped by the many ancient religious traditions of India. Within Hinduism there are many different beliefs and practices. Hindu understandings of God are complex. Many Hindus worship God in the form of a variety of images. Brahma is the creator, although his image is not often worshipped. Statues and pictures of Vishnu, the preserver, and Shiva, the destroyer, are often seen in Hindu temples and homes. Hindus believe in reincarnation or rebirth. The life that a person leads now determines the next life that he or she will lead, so it is important to lead a good and moral life. The ultimate aim is to be released from this cycle of birth, death and rebirth and to be united with God.

Festivals

The temple becomes a focal point for Hindus at festival times. In Britain, some festivals are widely celebrated by the Hindu community. Diwali (festival of lights) is a new year festival for some communities, celebrating the triumph of good over evil. Lights and special lamps are lit as part of this celebration.

Holi is a joyous spring festival celebrated with bonfires, dancing, processions and spraying coloured water over everyone. Janmashtami the birthday of Krishna, one of the most beloved of the deities, is celebrated in the temple with songs, dances and special sweets. A cradle with an image of the baby Krishna is often found both in Hindu homes and in the temple.



Hinduism

When you visit a Hindu temple

When you enter a Hindu temple (Mandir), you must remove your shoes. The inside of Hindu temples in Britain normally have large, colourful images of the Hindu deities. You may see people making offerings of food, money or flowers to the deities.

Twice a day there will be a short aarti ceremony when light is offered to the deities. Afterwards, a lamp is brought amongst the worshippers who put a coin on the tray, then place their hands over the flame and touch their heads. This gesture means symbolically accepting the light of God.

When you visit a Hindu home

When you enter a Hindu home, it is best not to shake hands unless the other person makes the first move. If you feel comfortable doing so, you might put your hands together in the namaste sign.

Inside the home you may see pictures and statues of Hindu deities. There may be a corner of a room or a small room set aside as a shrine. At this shrine usually the woman of the household will offer worship on behalf of the household. If you are invited to look at the shrine room, you should offer to remove your shoes.

It is preferable for a man not to speak to a Hindu woman on her own. It is better if the husband or another family member is present.



Good practice in Hinduism

- Caste, the complex system of Hindu social organisation, still plays a part in the lives of Hindu families. It has an influence on important family matters such as marriage, food and dress customs. There are four major castes - the Brahmin or priestly caste is the highest. There are also many subcastes whose differences still have influence on personal, social and family matters. Caste rules are often relaxed in Britain, but you may come across some who follow them strictly.
- When you enter a Hindu home, it is best not to shake hands unless the other person makes the first move.
- When you enter a Hindu temple (Mandir), you must remove your shoes.
- When you leave a Hindu temple you may be offered a piece of fruit or some sweets. It is polite to accept them.

Not so good practice in Hinduism

Hindus do not eat beef. Apart from this, there is quite a lot of variation in diet. Some are strict vegetarians, avoiding all food which might contain animal products of any kind, including eggs. Others may eat fish, chicken and eggs; some will eat lamb or mutton as well.

- Many Hindus do not drink alcohol or smoke
- Some undertake fasts in which they refrain from certain foods for a period of time. When offering food to a Hindu, it is best to ask first what they can eat.

Buddhism

Origins and Beliefs

Buddhism began in India over 2,500 years ago. It is based on the teachings of Siddhartha Gautama who became the Buddha: the awakened one.

Buddhists are followers of the teachings of Siddhartha Gautama, a prince who lived in North East India 2,500 years ago. Although he lived a life of luxury and good health, he saw death, old age, poverty and sickness and wanted to find a way to end suffering. He tried different spiritual paths but finally through meditation and looking within himself, he found enlightenment and an end to suffering. This state is known as Nirvana.

Festivals

Buddhists throughout the world, celebrate a variety of festivals, often having to do with the life of the Buddha. An example of this is Wesak Day, which celebrates the birth, enlightenment and death of the Buddha. This takes place on the full moon day of May.

To get rid of desire, a person must follow what Buddhists call the Eightfold Path, known as the middle way. By learning to think, behave and meditate in a new way, a person can learn to control desire. The Buddha formed the Sanga, a community of monks and nuns to help him spread this teaching. Buddhists do not believe in a creator (God). The Buddha was a holy man and a teacher who is greatly revered but he is not considered to be divine.



Buddhism

When you visit a Buddhist vihara or shrine

When visiting a shrine, you should remove your shoes as a sign of respect. It is best not to offer to shake hands with a monk or a nun.

Buddhists often meditate before an image of the Buddha. They may make offerings such as flowers, fruit, incense, light and water. They may also visit temples or stupas (a mound like hemispherical structure) where relics of the Buddha, saints and spiritual teachers are enshrined.

When you visit a Buddhist's home

You may see a small shrine or image of the Buddha in a Buddhist home. Around the image there may be offerings of items such as flowers, fruit, tea or water and incense. It is best not to offer to shake hands unless the person makes the first move. Some Buddhists do not have the custom of shaking hands.



Paganism

Origins and Beliefs

Paganism is a polytheistic and pantheistic nature-worshipping religion that recognises the divine in all living things. Paganism is a legally recognised and protected religion in the UK, and was the indigenous religion of the UK until 686.

Pagans recognise that there are no false divinities. The most common paths of Paganism in the UK are Wicca, Druidry, Heathenism and Shamanism.

Wicca is a revivalist path established in the UK in the 1940s by Gerald Gardner. It is usually Duotheistic – worshipping a God & Goddess, but from a Pantheistic perspective, in that the Earth and all life is considered divine & sacred.

Druidry can be traced back to the beliefs of the 4th century BC Irish and Welsh Celts. Druids were those entrusted with knowledge learnt through music, songs, stories and the written word. See OBOD (Ovates, Bards & Druids).

Heathenism was introduced into the UK during the Anglo-Saxon period from pre-Christian Northern territories. Heathenism is very much led by a code of honour and conduct, in which charity, personal deeds and honesty are integral.

Shamanism a solitary path, often linked to tribal pre-Christian beliefs, in which the individual uses meditation, chants, trance and altered states of consciousness to gain a personal experience of the divine.

Pagan days of observation

Feb 1 – Imbolc. The end of Winter / beginning of Spring, a celebration of the cycle of life beginning anew.

March 19-22 – Ostara (Spring Equinox). Night and day are equal – days become longer and fields become fertile

May 1 – Beltane. The end of Spring / beginning of Summer, a celebration of fertility and plentiful crops and livestock. Traditionally a time of marriage in Pagan communities.

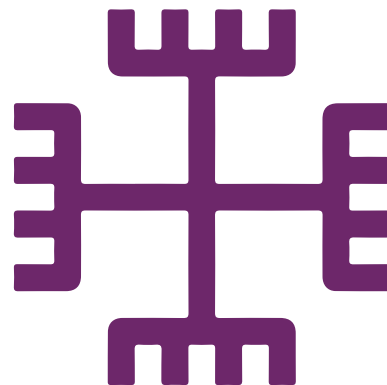
June 19-23 – Litha (Summer Solstice). Summer / light is at its height/ most powerful, a celebration of what the sun provides.

August 1 – Lughnasadh or Lammas. A celebration of the crop harvests and a time of thanks. The end of Spring / beginning of Autumn.

September 21-24 – Mabon (Autumn Equinox). Night and day are equal – nights become longer and colder and traditionally more difficult. A time for fruit and berry harvests.

October 31 – Samhain. As the year gets colder and harder, traditionally this time of year was associated with death but Pagan pragmatism also celebrates those who have passed beforehand and who influenced us. A time for quiet reflection and honouring our relatives. The end of Autumn / beginning of Winter. Traditionally a time for culling cattle and preparing the meat to last over winter.

December 20-23 – Yule (Winter Solstice). Winter / darkness is at its height/most powerful, a time of reflection of the year passed, your achievements and your hopes for next year. A particularly significant time for Heathen Pagans, who celebrate 12 days of Yule, starting with the veneration of their female relatives and friends past and present.

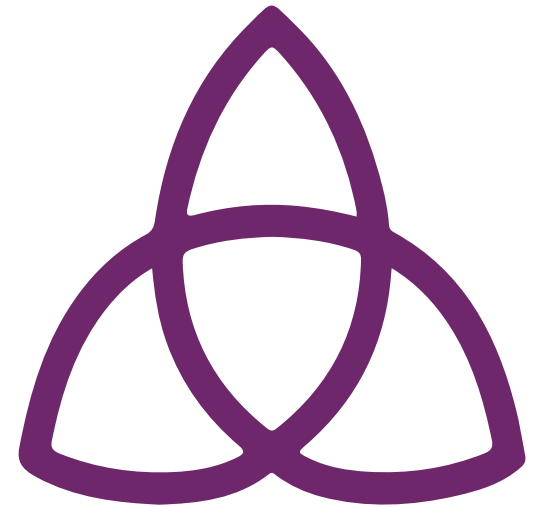


What Paganism is

- A legally recognised and protected religion in the UK, and was the indigenous religion of the UK until 686.
- An umbrella term for several different paths.
- Paganism is a polytheistic and pantheistic nature-worshipping religion that recognises the divine in all living things.
- Polytheism is the worship of multiple deities, Pantheism is the worship of nature as divine.
- Pagans recognise that there are no false divinities - The most common paths of Paganism in the UK are Wicca, Druidry, Heathenism and Shamanism.

What Paganism is not

- Satanism; whilst we recognise no false divinities, Satan is a Christian concept.
- Occultism; whilst there is a degree of crossover, not all Pagan paths believe in magic or the supernatural.
- Like it is depicted on the TV
- Freemasonry Animal sacrifice Dancing naked around trees!



Rastafarianism

Origins and Beliefs

Developed in 1930s within Jamaica following coronation of Haile Selassie as King of Ethiopia. Rastafarians believe Haile Selassie will return members of the black community who live in exile back to their homeland of Africa. Rastafarians follow the Nazarite Vow of Separation. In UK many Rastafarians belong to organisation known as the Twelve Tribes of Israel.

- Rastafarians do not consider themselves to be Christian.
- Believe in Jehovah (one single God). Some consider Haile as Jehovah.
- Believe reincarnation follows death and life is eternal.
- The body is regarded as the temple of god.
- Post Mortems are considered distasteful.

Each family is different, each case is different regardless of the bereaved family's cultural or religious background.

Customs

- Marijuana is regarded as herb of religious significance.
- Most do not eat meat.
- Fish with scales is acceptable.
- Pork is forbidden.
- Only natural food is eaten and never canned.
- Many follow Mosaic diet where grapes, currants and raisins are not eaten.
- Men wear dreadlocks hairstyle as a symbol of faith and a sign of black pride.
- May wear hat with colour of red, yellow and green.
- Orthodox members will not cut their hair.

Rastafarians don't have specific religious buildings for worship. However, they usually meet weekly at their home or community centre for reasoning sessions.



Taoism

Origins and Beliefs

Taoism (or Daoism) is a religion which originated in China.

The Tao is not a thing but is everywhere and considered the mother of the universe.

It is a religion of unity and opposites; Yin and Yang. Other key concept is the five elements of matter (water, fire, earth, metal and wood).

Taoist do not believe in a God.

There are two sacred scriptures which are Tao Te Ching & Chuang-tzu.

Life is seen as eternal/ Death is seen as another phase of life.



Customs

Original Taoists may be vegetarian.

Religious books and articles must be stored respectfully and wrapped in clear and clean bag for the detainees to take out themselves.

Taoist funeral ceremonies include an altar upon where a sacred lamp, two candles, tea, rice, and water are placed. The tea symbolises yin, water symbolises yang, and rice represents the union between them.

The funeral ceremony usually takes place in a person's house and is held over an odd number of days.

Five plates of fruit symbolise the elements of wood, fire, earth, metal and water to ensure the body is healthy. An incense burner is placed in the middle of these elements to bring refinement and purification of the soul.

The candle is lit up for the body all that time before burial.

During the vigil and the funeral the relatives wear white.

Finding out more

If you would like further copies, a large-print copy or information about us and our services, please contact us at our address below.

Për Informacion

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برای اطلاع

Za Informacije

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Informacja

Per Informazione

তথ্যের জন্য

للمعلومات



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