A graphic for World Religion Day featuring a central image of the Earth. Surrounding the Earth are six purple circles, each containing a white religious symbol: a cross (top left), a Star of David (top right), an Om symbol (middle right), a crescent and star (bottom right), a Khanda (bottom left), and a Dharma wheel (middle left). The background is a light blue sky with white clouds.

World Religion Day

16th January 2022

What Is World Religion Day?

World Religion Day is celebrated annually on the third Sunday of January.

The aim of World Religion Day is to promote understanding and peace between all religions and to encourage people to learn about other faiths and their followers.

It was initially started by followers of the Bahá'í faith.



The Bahá'í Faith

The Bahá'í faith was founded in 1863 in Iran. The Bahá'í faith believes that:

All religions have common features and that all religions should be respected;

All human beings are different but equal;

There is one God who is known by different forms in all religions, such as Buddha, Moses, Jesus and the Prophet Muhammad (Peace Be Upon Him);

The diversity between the religions is due to the way people think about god;

We all have the same rights regardless of our religion or creed.



The Bahá'í Faith

The National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'í of the United States came up with the idea of World Religion Day in 1949 and the first World Religion Day took place the following year, in 1950. It was decided that for one day a year, all religions should be celebrated and their similarities appreciated.



Since then, World Religion Day has moved on from being a strictly Bahá'í celebration and is now seen as a wider celebration of inter-faith harmony and understanding.

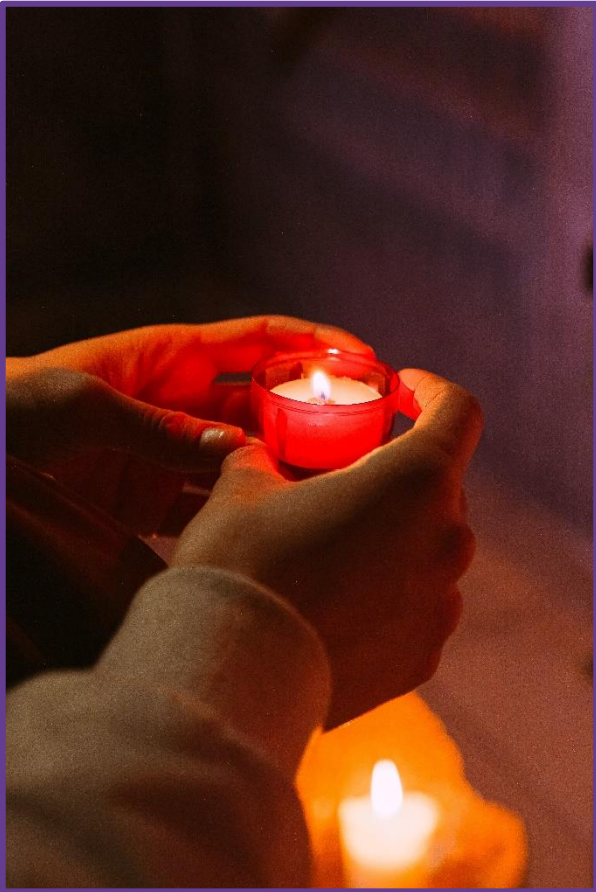
Why Do We Celebrate World Religion Day?

World Religion Day invites members of all religious groups from across the globe to recognise that all religions have a common spiritual goal. It aims to promote inter-faith understanding and harmony and unite people, regardless of their beliefs.

World Religion Day also seeks to overcome historical differences between religious groups. Throughout history, many conflicts and wars have been caused by arguments over religion and beliefs. The day aims to overcome this and achieve a peaceful understanding between faiths.



How Do We Celebrate World Religion Day?



World Religion Day is celebrated in a variety of ways. Many organisations celebrate the day by holding interfaith events, where faith leaders get together to give talks and lectures.

People are encouraged to talk with and to listen to people from faiths different from their own and to understand the basic principles of other religions.

There is time to reflect on the universal message of the six main religions – treating each other with respect and understanding, to create a better world for everyone.

How Many Countries Celebrate World Religion Day?



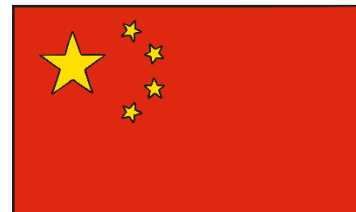
UK



USA



Brazil



China



Kenya



Israel



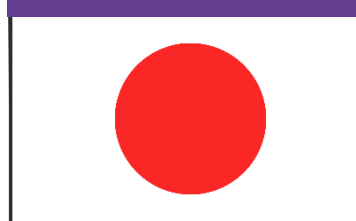
Australia



India



Russia



Japan

What Are the Six Major Religions?

Nearly 75% of the world practices one of these six religions:



Christianity:



Judaism:



Hinduism:



Buddhism:



Sikhism:



Islam:



World Religion Day promotes their similarities and the role religion has played in uniting people across the planet.

Christianity



Followers: Christians

Place of worship: church

Holy book: Bible



Beliefs:

God created the world;

The Holy Trinity - there is only one God, who is God the Father, God the Son and The Holy Spirit;

God sent his Son, Jesus Christ, to save humanity from their sins;

Jesus died on the cross and then rose from the dead after his crucifixion;

The Ten Commandments - given by God to Moses and written in the Bible.

Judaism



Followers: Jewish people

Place of worship: synagogue

Holy book: Torah

Beliefs:

There is only one God;

Special agreement (or covenant) with God to uphold His laws;

Faith of action - Jews are judged by how they live, rather than what they believe;

The Shabbat (the seventh day of creation) is the most important day of the week – Jewish people stop working and make time for God and family.



Hinduism



Followers: Hindus

Place of worship: mandir

Holy book: Vedas



Beliefs:

Hindus believe in a universal soul called Brahman;

Reincarnation -
Hindus believe that
this is governed by
Karma;

Trimurti - the three aspects
of the universal supreme
God, known as Vishnu,
Brahma and Shiva;

Truth is eternal -
pursue knowledge
and understanding
of the truth;

Tridevi - goddesses who are
equally as important as
the Trimurti – Saraswati,
Lakshmi and Parvati;

Dharma - Hindus
believe it is
necessary to always
do the right thing;

Moksha - the ultimate goal
for all Hindus meaning
liberation from the cycle of
birth and rebirth.

Buddhism



Followers: Buddhists

Place of worship: Buddhist temple

Holy book: Tripitaka



Beliefs:

Buddha was human, not a god;

The Three Jewels – the Buddha, the dharma (teachings of Buddha) and the sangha (community and practitioners);

The Four Noble Truths – the truth of suffering (Dukkha), the truth of the origin of suffering (Samudaya), the truth of the end of suffering (Nirodha) and the path to the end of suffering (Magga).

Sikhism



Followers: Sikhs

Place of worship: gurdwara

Holy book: Guru Granth Sahib

Beliefs:

There is only one God and all humans are children of God;

Everyone is equal and should be treated the same;

Reincarnation;

Live honestly;

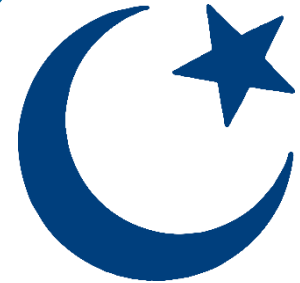
Share with others;

The Five Ks – Kesh (uncut hair), Kanga (a wooden comb), Kara (a steel bracelet), Kachera (cotton underwear) and Kirpan (steel sword).

Always keep God in mind;



Islam



Followers: Muslims

Place of worship: mosque

Holy book: Qur'an



Beliefs:

Allah is the one and only God;

Prophets (special messengers);

Muhammad (PBUH) was the final prophet;

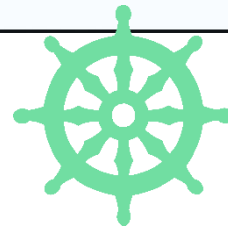
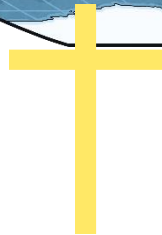
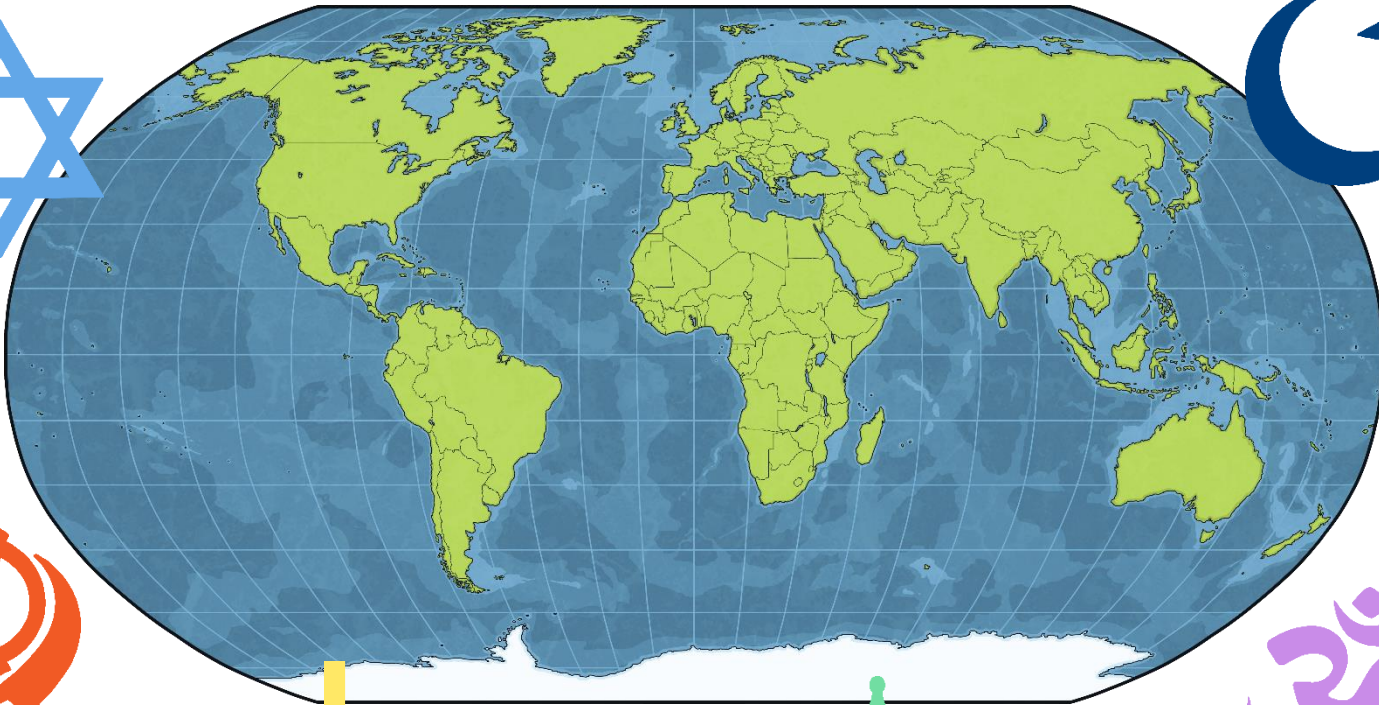
The Day of Judgement - when all people will be judged by their beliefs and deeds;

The Qur'an - God's revealed book containing The Five Pillars of Islam.

Predestination - the belief that whatever God wills to happen, happens;

Countries and Religions

Just as some countries can share similar traditions and festivals, they can also share many religions.



Similarities

The Bahá'í faith believes that all religions have things in common and teaches that all religions should be respected.

What do all religions have in common?

The love of a higher being or God;

A holy book;

A place of worship.

World Religion Day is celebrated to **promote interfaith understanding**, which means involving many different religions and uniting them together.



Similarities

It is important that there is harmony and that people feel comfortable to unite together, whatever their faith.

Many events are held around the world and people are asked to look at the similarities across different religions.

Special religious services are held around the world, celebrating these similarities.



When we learn about other religions, we can work together to create a better world.

Similarities



Christianity:

In everything, do to others as you would have them do to you.



Judaism:

What is hateful to you, do not do to your neighbour.



Hinduism:

This is the sum of duty; do not do to others what would cause pain if done to you.



Buddhism:

Treat not others in ways that you would find hurtful.



Sikhism:

I am a stranger to no one and no one is a stranger to me. I am a friend to all.



Islam:

Not one of you truly believes until you wish for others what you wish for yourself.

Can you spot similarities here?

What words are repeated?

What could you do in your life to show this?

Reflection

All religions share the same key messages –

treat each other with respect
and love one another.

Celebrate World
Religion Day this
January to promote
interfaith
understanding,
harmony and help to
unite everyone,
whatever their faith.



