

# World Religion Day

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

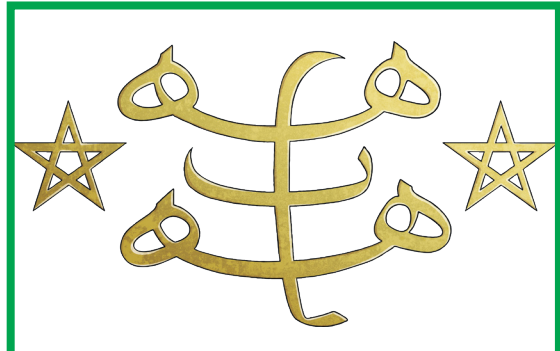
The aim of World Religion Day is to promote understanding and peace between all religions, encouraging people to learn about other faiths and their followers.

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

## Who is the Bahá'í faith?

The Bahá'í faith was founded in 1863 in Iran. Bahá'ís believe 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 Prophet Muhammad (PBUH).
- 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 ringstone symbol represents people connecting with God.**

**creed - our beliefs or faith**

Keeping in line with these beliefs, the National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of the United States announced the institution of World Religion Day in 1949 and the first World Religion Day took place 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 strictly a Bahá'í celebration and is now seen as a wider celebration of inter-faith harmony and understanding.

## The Aim of 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.

### The Six Main Religions

The six major worldwide religions that are most widely practised are Christianity, Islam, Buddhism, Judaism, Hinduism and Sikhism. A common theme linking these religions is that they all encourage respect, equality, and kindness to others.

#### Sikhism

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

#### Christianity

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

#### 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.

#### Judaism

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

#### Islam

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

#### Did You Know...?

Buddhists have a promise called the bodhisattva vow, which is the commitment to put others before oneself.

#### Did You Know...?

Janism is an ancient Indian religion. Jains believe that one should treat all creatures in the world as one would like to be treated.

### Celebrating World Religion Day

World Religion Day is celebrated in a variety of ways. Many people and faith leaders will attend special services which focus on respecting other religions; celebrating their similarities and reflecting on the universal message of the six main religions: to treat each other with respect and understanding and show how we can come together to create a better world for everyone.

**My religion is simple. My religion is kindness.**  
- Dalai Lama (Buddhist spiritual leader)

