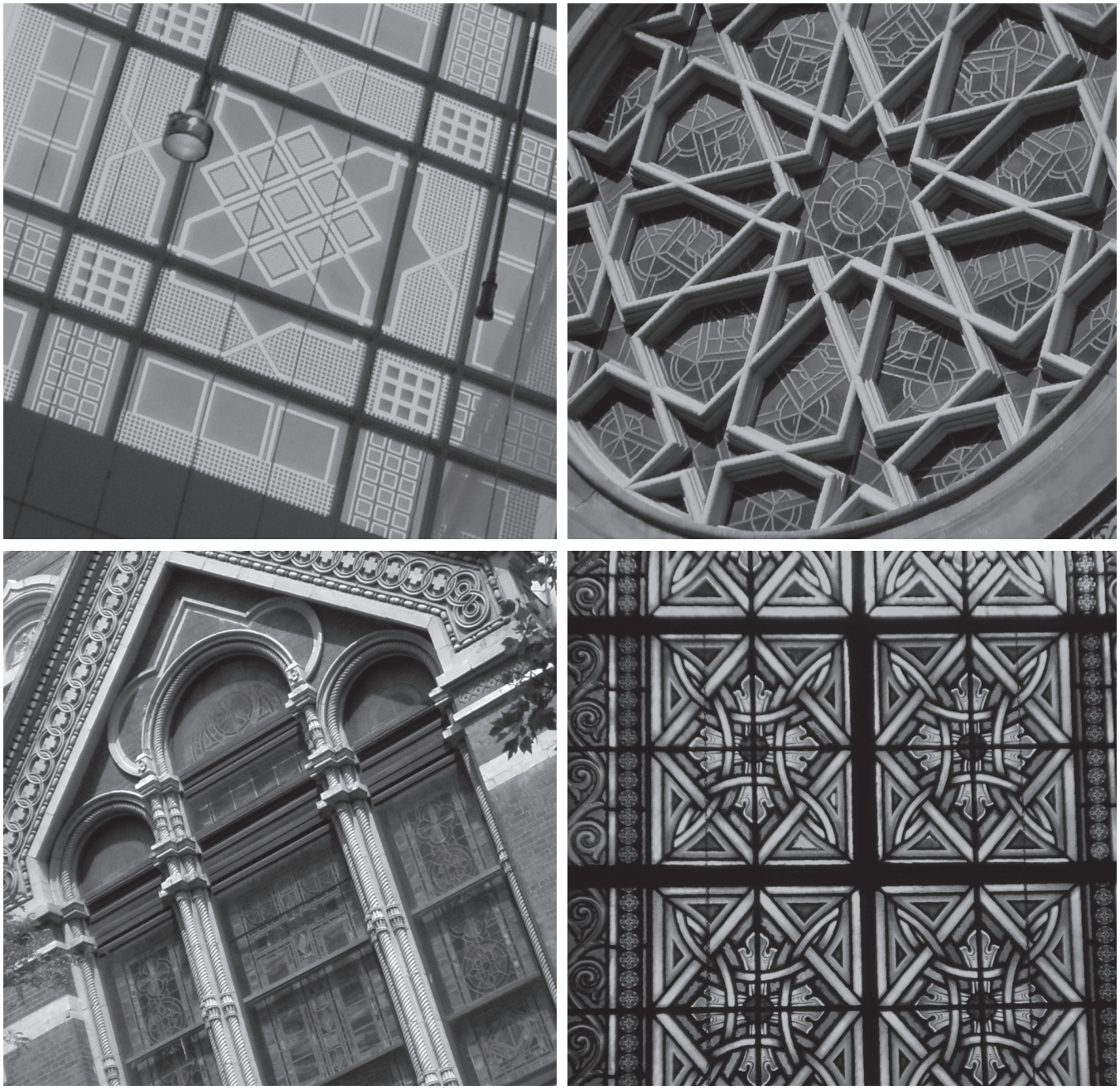
FIELD GUIDE: PRIMER

RELIGIOUS LITERACY PRIMER

FOR CRISES, DISASTERS, AND PUBLIC HEALTH EMERGENCIES



A FIELD GUIDE COMPANION FOR RELIGIOUS LITERACY AND COMPETENCY

National Disaster Interfaiths Network

USC Dornsife
Center for Religion and Civic Culture

This project was funded in part by the California Emergency Management Agency working in collaboration with the National Disaster Interfaiths Network (NDIN) and the University of Southern California Center for Religion and Civic Culture (USC CRCC). The *Religious Literacy Primer* is part one of a two-volume resource set together with its companion *Working with U.S. Faith Communities During Crises, Disasters and Public Health Emergencies: A Field Guide for Engagement, Partnership and Religious Competency*.

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Introduction

Faith communities have historically responded to disasters and human suffering, and over time several have developed expertise in service provision during various phases of the disaster lifecycle. In addition to a growing interest from government for greater faith engagement, there is also a growing interest from government in better understanding the nature of faith communities. Emergency managers and their public health and behavioral health partners are increasingly involved in providing crisis response within a religiously pluralistic environment. As noted by Stephen Prothero in his book Religious Literacy – What Every American Needs to Know – And Doesn't, the United States is "both Christian and pluralistic. Christianity may dominate, but this nation of immigrants is also a nation of religions," with dozens of world religions represented. Therefore, it is important for response plans and engagement with communities to include religious literacy and competency. Those who are committed to enhancing their religious literacy and competency skills are more likely to be effective caregivers and responders to the whole community than those who are not.

RELIGIOUS LITERACY IS THE BASIC UNDERSTANDING OF EACH FAITH COMMUNITY, ITS THEOLOGY, RITUALS, PRACTICES AND SACRED TEXTS.

RELIGIOUS COMPETENCY IS KNOWING HOW TO NAVIGATE AND ENGAGE EACH FAITH COMMUNITY AS A TRUSTED, KNOWLEDGEABLE, AND EFFECTIVE PARTNER.

This primer provides information on basic religious literacy for more than 20 of the largest religious communities in the United States. It is geared toward enabling emergency managers and their public and behavioral health partners to understand how faith communities and emergency management intersect. The reference structure should allow a reader to be quickly oriented to the content.

The information is written in a broad overview format so care should be taken to not over-generalize. Each individual in a faith community is unique in how they understand and interpret the mandates and the teachings of their faith tradition. While this primer has been deeply reviewed by many religious scholars, there will always be differing opinions and interpretations, even within a single tradition. We define and classify religious traditions as they define themselves, not by how others may view them. With this in mind, this guide best serves as a baseline for basic religious literacy that should be augmented by field experience working with religious communities and individuals in emergency management settings.

Reliable statistics on religious affiliation in the United States are notoriously difficult to obtain. Population statistics for each religious group were collected from several different sources. These numbers are often the subject of intense debate, so they should be considered estimates based on sources in the Works Referenced section.

We are indebted to the U.K. Home Office and Cabinet Office resource: The Needs of Faith Communities in Major Emergencies: Some Guidelines. Their work was the inspiration for developing this guide.

[1] Prothero (2007) page 32.

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We endeavor to ensure the document is as accurate and comprehensive as possible. Therefore, please send any comments, edits, or corrections to crcc@usc.edu and info@n-din.org. We will review the emails and issue periodic updates.

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1. *The American Religious Identity Survey* (2008), accessible through the Statistical Abstract of the United States 2012: http://www.census.gov/compendia/statab/cats/population/religion.html
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6. *The World Christian Database and World Religion Database*, as presented in tables via the Encyclopædia Britannica online: http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/1731588/Religion-Year-In-Review-2010/298437/Worldwide-Adherents-of-All-Religions (last accessed 3/21/2013). To access the World Christian Database: www.worldchristiandatabase.org;
   To access the World Religion Database: www.worldreligiondatabase.org

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1. Wikimedia Commons: http://commons.wikimedia.org
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3. Religious-Symbols.net: http://www.religious-symbols.net/

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Nine-Pointed Star

BAHÁ'Í (Pronounced "ba-ha-ee")

ADHERENTS CONSIDER THEMSELVES BAHÁ'Í.
ADHERENTS ARE CALLED BAHÁ'Í.
THE RELIGION IS CALLED BAHÁ'Í (OR, THE BAHÁ'Í FAITH).

U.S. Population	525,000 U.S. Members
Language (Worship)	No official language. U.S. Bahá'ís speak English or Farsi.
Founder(s)	Bahá'u'lláh (12 November 1817 - 29 May 1892) is the founder of the Bahá'íFaith, born in Tehran, Persia (present-day Iran). • The Báb (1819-1850) was Bahá'u'lláh's forerunner; having founded the Bábi Faith and heralded the coming of Bahá'u'lláh. Bahá'ís refer to the Báb and Bahá'u'lláh as Twin. • Abdu'lBaha the eldest son of Baha'u'llah succeeded him in 1892 and led the community until his death on 28 November, 1921. • Shoghi Effendi Rabbani, eldest Grandson of Abdu'lBaha, succeeded as Guardian after his grandfather's death in 1921 until his death in 1957. • In Shoghi Effendi's final message to the Baha'i World, dated October 1957, he named the Hands of the Cause of God, "the Chief Stewards of Bahá'u'lláh's embryonic World Commonwealth." Consequently, following Shoghi Effendi's passing, the Bahá'í Faith was temporarily stewarded by the Hands of the Cause until the election of the Universal House of Justice in 1963.
Branches & Denominations	• None
Basic Tenets	• The oneness of God, the oneness of religion, and the oneness of humanity. • All religions are divine in origin and represent successive stages of revelation. • Unification of humanity and end of racial and religious prejudice. • Search for truth is an individual responsibility. • Harmony of religion and science. • Universal education for all children. • Abolition of extremes of wealth and poverty. • Equality of the sexes.
Sacred Texts	The Bahá'í scriptures comprise the sacred Writings of Bahá'u'lláh, Founder of the Faith, and of his forerunner, the Báb. • The Writings of 'Abdu'l-Bahá, Bahá'u'lláh's eldest son and successor is also included in the Bahá'í scriptures. • Bahá'í scriptures are translated into many languages. • The Bahá'í scriptures belong to all; there are no restrictions on who may touch or handle the books, provided they are treated with respect.

BAHÁ'Í

Sacred Buildings/ Structures	• Sacred buildings include the Shrine of the Bab and the Shrine of Baha'u'llah in Haifa and Akka, Israel, respectively. • There are eight Houses of Worship throughout the world intended for worship of God by followers of all faiths. • Larger Bahá'í communities may have a Bahá'í center as a gathering place, but it is not considered sacred.
Governance (Judicatory)	The Bahá'í Administrative Order refers to the judicatory system of the Bahá'í Faith, and is split into two parts: the elected and the appointed. • The supreme governing institution of the Bahá'í Faith is the Universal House of Justice, located in Haifa, Israel. • Each country has its own national spiritual assembly comprised of nine members elected from the believers in that country.
Governance (Congregation)	• Defined by 'Abdu'l-Bahá, "Spiritual Assembly" is a term that refers to elected councils that govern the Bahá'í Faith. • Because the Bahá'í Faith has no clergy, the elected councils carry out the affairs of the community. • Spiritual Assemblies are chosen at both the local level and the national level.
Point of Contact	• Local: Local Spiritual Assembly (LSA) • Regional: Regional Bahá'í Council (RBC) • National: National Spiritual Assembly (NSA)
Religious Leaders	• No clergy; members of the local spiritual assembly, elected by the congregation, provide leadership.
Religious Objects/Symbols	Symbols include: • The Greatest Name: calligraphy of the phrase YáBahá'u'l-Abhá (O Glory of Glories). • Ring-stone symbol (which also serves as an aid to teaching and proclamation): three horizontal strokes representing the world of God, the world of God's Manifestations, and the world of humanity; a vertical line passing through the three horizontals as an indicator of their interconnectedness; two five-point stars, representing the Báb and Bahá'u'lláh (the Twin Messengers of God for this age). • Nine-pointed star (the number nine has great and varied significance for Bahá'ís, and – as the highest single-digit number, symbolizes completeness).
Facilitating Practices	Provide privacy for obligatory daily prayer.
Culture & Social Interaction	Bahá'ís represent many nations and ethnicities of the world. Generalization will not be useful.
Gender Roles/Interaction	One of the fundamental teachings of the Bahá'í Faith is that men and women are equal and that the equality of the sexes is a spiritual and moral standard that is essential for the unification of the planet and the unfolding of peace.
Principal Weekly Observance(s)	The Bahá'í calendar is based upon 19 months of 19 days each. Each month has the name of one of God's virtues or attributes. Baha'is gather for "feast" (their communal worship service) the first day of every Bahá'í month. Days begin at sunset on the previous solar day and end at sunset of the present solar day.

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BAHÁ'Í

Daily Religious Practices	Bahá'ís over the age of 15 must individually perform obligatory prayer daily, choosing from among a short, medium, or long prayer. In addition, believers are directed to meditate, to study scripture, and to offer devotional prayer daily. There is no set form for this. However, devotional prayers written by the central figures of the Bahá'í Faith and collected in prayer books are held in high esteem. Reading aloud of prayers from prayer books is a typical feature of Bahá'í gatherings. In the Bahá'í Faith the Qiblih is the location that Bahá'ís should face when saying their daily obligatory prayers, and is fixed at the Shrine of Bahá'u'lláh in Bahjí, near Akká, in present day Israel.
Holy Days/Festivals	There are nine Bahá'í holy days each year during which Bahá'ís do not work: • March 21: Naw-Ruz (Bahá'í New Year). • April 21: First day of Ridvan (meaning paradise), when Bahá'u'lláh resided in a garden in Baghdad and proclaimed his mission as God's messenger for this age). • April 29: Ninth day of Ridvan. • May 2: Twelfth day of Ridvan. • May 23: Declaration of the Bab in Shiraz. • May 29: Ascension of Bahá'u'lláh. • July 9: Martyrdom of the Bab (day of execution). • October 20: Birth of the Bab in Shiraz. • November 12: Birth of Bahá'u'lláh.
Rituals/Ceremonies	The Bahá'í Faith has no set rituals aside of the postures and actions mentioned in the medium and long obligatory prayers. Bahá'ís fast annually one Bahá'í month from March 2-20 during which they take no food or drink during the daylight hours.
Dress (Religious Restrictions)	Baha'is observe moderation and modesty in dress.
Death: Dying Practices	There are no special religious requirements for Bahá'ís who are dying, but they may wish to have a family member or friend to pray and read the Bahá'í scriptures with them. • Bahá'ís believe that the reality of an individual is spiritual, not physical. • The body is seen as the throne of the soul, worthy to be treated with honor and respect, even when dead. • Bahá'ís believe that, after death, the soul continues to progress to the next stage of existence closer to God.
Death: Body Preparation	• The body is carefully washed and wrapped in white silk or cotton, by family members or by others, according to the family's preference; the family may choose to allow others to observe the preparation of the body. • The body is not cremated; the body should be buried within an hour's traveling time from the place of death. • Unless required by law, the body should not be embalmed. • The body is buried in a coffin of as durable a material as possible. • While it is preferable that the body should be buried with the head pointing towards Qiblih, fixed at the Shrine of Bahá'u'lláh in Bahjí, near Akká, in present day Israel, this is not an absolute requirement, and may be impossible in some cemeteries without using two burial plots. This is a matter for the family. • At some time before interment, a special prayer for the dead is recited for deceased Bahá'ís aged 15 or over. This is the only specific requirement of a Bahá'í funeral service.

BAHÁ'Í

Dietary Laws and Customs	• Bahá'ís abstain from alcohol, but can take it in medicine. • Bahá'ís over the age of 15 observe an annual total fast from sunrise (approx. 6.30am) to sunset (approx. 5.45pm), March 2nd – 20th. • Bahá'ís who are ill, pregnant, breast-feeding, menstruating, or who have been traveling substantial distances are excused from this fast.
Health (Medical Care)	Bahá'ís believe in the healing power of modern medicine for physical ills while recognizing the role of the spirit, prayer, and turning to God. • There is no objection to being touched or treated by members of the opposite gender. • Blood transfusions, organ donations, and the administration of prescription drugs are all acceptable. • Consumption of alcohol or mind-altering drugs is forbidden, except when prescribed by a physician.
Health (Mental Health)	Bahá'ís believe in the healing power of modern medicine for mental illness, while recognizing the role of the spirit, prayer, and turning to God. • There is no objection to being touched or treated by members of the opposite gender. • Consumption of alcohol or mind-altering drugs is forbidden except when prescribed by a physician.
Pregnancy and Birth	• Prayers for the unborn child are often recited. Bahá'ís do not believe in abortion, except in unusual circumstances since they believe life begins at conception.
FOR SERVICE PROVIDERS	
Physical Contact	There is no objection to being touched or treated by members of the opposite gender.
Dietary Restrictions	Bahá'ís abstain from alcohol, except when prescribed by a physician.
Medical Treatment	Generally, Bahá'ís are open to use of conventional and state-of-the-art medical procedures.
Mental Health Care	Generally, Bahá'ís are open to conventional mental health care options.
Mass Care Facilities	• There is no objection to mixed-gender wards/care settings, but older Bahá'ís may prefer single-gender. • Bahá'í patients will be ministered to by friends, by family and by those appointed as spiritual caregivers by the community. Because the Bahá'í faith has no sacraments, these spiritual caregivers do not have a sacramental or priestly/ministerial role, nor do they have any authority over the patient.

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Dharma Wheel

BUDDHISM

ADHERENTS CONSIDER THEMSELVES BUDDHIST.
ADHERENTS ARE CALLED BUDDHISTS.
THE RELIGION IS CALLED BUDDHISM.

U.S. Population	3,348,000
Language (Worship)	Varies with branch and community; possibilities include Burmese, Chinese, Japanese, Korean, Pali, Sanskrit, Sinhala, Thai, Tibetan.
Founder	Siddhartha Gautama (c. 563 – 483 BCE), called the Buddha; also sometimes called Shakyamuni ("of the Shakya clan").
Branches & Denominations	U.S. Buddhism takes many forms—some of which stress self-help, some of which stress "other-help" (e.g. reliance on the Buddha of Boundless Light). Variations often reflect ethnic origins of a community's monastic or teaching lineage. Broadly, Buddhism's major branches are: • Theravada—including various schools in the south and southeast Asian countries of Bangladesh, Burma, Cambodia, Laos, Sri Lanka, and Thailand. • Mahayana—including Pure Land, Ch'an, Zen, Son; reform movements such as Won; Shinnyo-en; BLIA; Rissho Kosei-kai; Soka Gakkai; others. The American organization of Soka Gakkai goes by the name Soka Gakkai International (SGI) and prefer to be referred to as SGI. • Vajrayana—including various Tibetan schools and other forms of esoteric Buddhism (e.g., Shingon in Japan).
Basic Tenets	Many Buddhists embrace: • Confession of the Triple Jewel/Triple Refuge: "I go to the Buddha for strength; I go to the Dharma [the Buddha's teachings] for strength; I go to the Sangha [the community] for strength." The Theravada, Mahayana, and Vajrayana streams differ in their definition of these terms. • Belief in the Four Noble Truths: the inevitability of suffering; that suffering's origin is desire; that suffering will end when desire ends; that desire is extinguished by following the Noble Eightfold Path (Buddhism's Middle Way of morality, concentration, and wisdom). • Belief in karma, in samsara (the endless cycle of birth, death, and rebirth: not in the sense that souls migrate from one body to another, but rather in the sense that all life is interconnected; thus, what cycles endlessly is the accumulation of good and bad influences), and in the possibility of achieving enlightenment, thus passage to Nirvana. • A notion of "emptiness" (particularly in Mahayana and Vajrayana streams). Emptiness teaches the lack of substantiality or independence of things, and stresses the idea of no independent origination, that the present state of all things is the result of a previous state. Emptiness includes the teaching of impermanence; everything is always in a state of change. In other words, everything, including every sentient being, is an ever-changing process. This teaching loosens all attachments to views, stories and assumptions, leaving the mind empty of all greed, anger, and delusion; therefore empty of suffering of stress, anxiety, frustration and unsatisfactoriness.[1]

BUDDHISM

Sacred Texts	• Theravada: Tipitaka (Tripitaka; Three Baskets), particularly the Dhammapada (the second Basket). Also called the Pali Canon, the Tipitaka is a 32-volume collection of teachings of the Buddha and his disciples. • Mahayana: various Sutras (collections of teachings); each school of thought and practice has its preferred sutra(s), many in the language of the home country of that tradition; examples include the Lotus Sutra, Heart Sutra, Flower Garland Sutra. • Vajrayana: various tantras (texts about esoteric practices) and shastras (commentaries).
Sacred Buildings/ Structures	Depending on the branch of Buddhism, places of worship or practice may be called: • Vihara (Theravada monastery/temple). • Zendo (Zen meditation hall). • Gompa or ling (Tibetan monastic college). • Stupa (a votive containing relics). • Temple. • Monastery.
Governance (Judicatory)	No single governing structure has overarching authority over all U.S. Buddhists. • Buddhist movements may have a governing structure and national or world headquarters. • In many U.S. urban regions, Buddhist leaders from varying traditions have formed a Buddhist Council which facilitates collaborative celebration (especially of Wesak—the Buddha's Birthday) and social action.
Governance (Congregation)	• Some American temples and practice-groups are autonomous. Others acknowledge the authority of some umbrella organization (e.g. Buddhist Churches of America; Won Buddhism; BLIA; Shinnyo-en). • Priests, monks, or nuns may acknowledge association with a specific monastic lineage; they may be under the authority of a spiritual leader within their denomination, movement, or stream of thought.
Point of Contact	• Local: Temple • Regional: Regional Buddhist Council • National: None or a National Office (i.e., Tibet House, Buddhist Churches of America)

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BUDDHISM

Religious Leaders	Titles vary. Some in wide use include: • "Venerable" is often used for ordained nuns and monks. • Bhikku/Bhikkuni (Theravada monks/nuns); Bhante (honorific for Theravada monk). • Geshe (Tibetan). • Sensei (Japanese schools of practice generally), Roshi (Japanese Zen Buddhism), Ajari (Japanese Shingon Buddhism). • Minister (Won leaders). • Reverend (used by many reform movements as both noun and adjective to designate ordained leader). Ordained clergy exist in all three major branches. In Mahayana traditions, an ordained cleric may take additional vows not found in Theravada lineages. Some Mahayana lineages, especially of Tibetan and Japanese forms, include hybrid lay and clerical ordinations. The ordination of women in Buddhism as nuns ("Bhikkuni") is currently and historically practiced in the Mahayana tradition in regions such as East Asia, and now once again in Sri Lanka, as well as newly beginning in some Western countries to which Buddhism has recently spread, such as the United States.
Religious Objects/Symbols	Incense, oil lamps (or electric substitutes), flower and fruit offerings, a mala (string of beads) are in common use. Images and religious objects include: • Theravada: Buddha statue; Dharma Wheel. • Mahayana: varies according to the particular school of thought – for example: • Pure Land: Buddha statues (including Amitabha/Amida Buddha), various bodhisattvas (particularly the Bodhisattva of Boundless Compassion); swastika (representing samsara); Wheel of Becoming (representing samsara). In Chinese Buddhism, Ch'an and Pure Land imagery may be similar. • Zen: Great Empty Circle (Jpn. Unso). • Won: Unbroken circle. • Shinnyo-en: Reclining Buddha. • Soka Gakkai: Hanging Scroll in Praise of the Lotus Sutra by Nichiren. • Vajrayana: Prayer wheel, prayer bell, mandalas (sacred designs).
Facilitating practices	• Buddhists are not monotheists (many are nontheists), and will find reference to "God" by attending spiritual caregivers inappropriate. • A calm and peaceful environment with minimal distractions, especially for dying persons, is desirable.
Culture & Social Interaction	Tremendous variation among U.S. Buddhists, dependent more on ethnicity than religion.
Gender Roles/Interaction	Traditionally, Theravada nuns and monks touch no one, and should not be touched. However, in the U.S. context, some Theravada monks no longer adhere to the prohibition of cross-gender touching/hand-shaking. Traditional Buddhist teaching lends itself to the idea of gender equality, however certain gender limitations do exist in Buddhism and multiple canonical sources claim a second-class status of women in the Sangha.

BUDDHISM

Principal Weekly Observance(s)	In the U.S., many Buddhist communities hold weekly (or otherwise regular) gatherings for meditation, chanting, or other devotional practices; often dharma talks are offered regularly.
Daily practices	Many Buddhists practice daily chanting, meditation, or both. Some may perform puja (offering) by placing fresh fruit, flowers, and water before a statue of the Buddha; some also offer light (via an oil lamp) and incense. Some perform daily ritual prostrations.
Holy days/festivals	Buddhist holidays celebrate important moments in the life of the Buddha: his birth, enlightenment, and entry into Nirvana. • The Buddhist calendar is essentially lunar and is not standardized among Buddhist traditions. • U.S. Buddhist communities may observe the same festival (including Wesak—the Buddha's Birthday) on significantly different dates. • Full-moon days have special significance for many Buddhist schools of practice. • Within individual traditions of Buddhism, other holidays recognizing unique historical events and other observances are observed.
Rituals/ceremonies	Tremendous variation among U.S. Buddhist communities. • Some communities conduct a Buddha's Birthday ceremony during which sweet tea is poured over a Buddha statue. • Buddhist communities with Japanese origins may conduct an annual Floating Lantern Ceremony in honor of the departed. • Vajrayana practitioners undertake initiations such as the Kalachakra, which is about attaining Buddhahood and promoting peace.
Dress (Religious Restrictions)	Lay Buddhists dress in any way they choose. In some communities, lay Buddhists may wear robes or insignia similar to clergy, particularly when attending community gatherings for meditation or instruction. With regard to clergy: • In some streams of Buddhism, monks and nuns shave their heads; in others, they do not. • The color and style of robes for monks, nuns, priests, or ministers varies from one stream of Buddhism to another.
Death: Dying Practices	Buddhists see death as a natural part of a continuum of birth, illness, decline, death, and rebirth. • Many Buddhists wish to maintain a clear mind when dying, thus may refuse pain-relieving drugs if mental alertness will be impaired. • In most Buddhist traditions, there is a concept of an indeterminate time and state before rebirth into another form, which is why ritualization in the period immediately after death and the days following is considered critical. For some Buddhists, rituals at death are aimed at promoting human rebirth in the next life, as well as preventing rebirth in the lower realms. A person's state of mind at the moment of death is believed to influence rebirth. • It is helpful for someone who is dying to have a quiet environment. Some Buddhists may wish to summon a monk to perform some chanting of sacred texts in order to engender wholesome thoughts in the mind of the dying person.

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BUDDHISM

Death: Body Preparation	Buddhists from certain traditions (e.g., Tibetan) may request that the body not be handled or moved for an hour (or more) after death, and may require a religious professional to perform a rite of passage. With this exception, normal hospital postmortem procedures will be acceptable. • Preparation of the body for the funeral is frequently left to an undertaker, but in some instances relatives may also wish to be involved. Customs concerning dressing the body vary widely. • The body is usually cremated rather than buried.
Dietary Laws and Customs **Diet (Religious Restrictions)**	Many Buddhists are vegetarian or vegan (but certainly not all). • Buddhist nuns and monks in traditions coming to the U.S. from China, Taiwan, Korea, and Vietnam observe a vegetarian diet. • Some Buddhists observe a fast on full-moon days and new-moon days. • On fasting or festival days, a Buddhist might wish to abstain from eating after noon. • Theravada nuns and monks, and sometimes other Buddhist monastics, do not eat at all after noon.
Health (Medical Care)	Buddhists generally will accept any medical treatment that will prolong life—if it is likely to restore the ability to foster understanding and compassion. • Medication is acceptable when it facilitates healing or comfort. • In cases where the patient cannot recover or be restored to mindfulness, many Buddhists will prefer no further medical intervention.
Health (Mental Health)	Buddhists may believe that healing and recovery are promoted by awakening to wisdom of the Buddha, which is spiritual peace and freedom from anxiety. • Buddhists may utilize meditation practices to maintain mental equilibrium during stressful times. • The Buddhist patient (or family or friends) may wish to chant to generate calmness and positive energy. • The desire to maintain clarity of mind may outweigh the desire for pain medication.
Pregnancy and birth	Some Buddhists may embrace rituals and concerns related to pregnancy and childbirth that have ethnic and cultural roots (rather than roots in Buddhism per se). There is no single Buddhist view on abortion. Buddhists regard life as beginning at conception, but are divided as to whether there are absolute rules and whether exceptions can be made.

BUDDHISM

FOR SERVICE PROVIDERS	
Physical Contact	No religious restrictions; ethnic/cultural attitudes may be in play.
Dietary Restrictions	For lay Buddhists, none, beyond personal preference (i.e., vegetarian or vegan diet) • U.S. Buddhist nuns and monks in traditions originating in China, Taiwan, Korea, and Vietnam observe a vegetarian diet. • Theravada nuns and monks, and sometimes other Buddhist monastics, do not eat at all after noon.
Medical Treatment	No religious objections to blood transfusions or transplants; no religious objection to autopsy.
Mental Health Care	If available, a quiet space for silent reflection and meditation is desirable.
Mass Care Facilities	No religious requirements, but ethnic/cultural sensibilities may demand gender segregation and provisions for privacy.

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Christian Cross

CHRISTIANITY: ANABAPTIST

ADHERENTS CONSIDER THEMSELVES CHRISTIAN.
ADHERENTS ARE OFTEN KNOWN BY THEIR DENOMINATION (E.G. AMISH, BEACHY AMISH, BRETHREN IN CHRIST, CONSERVATIVE MENNONITE, HUTTERITE, MENNONITE, MENNONITE BRETHREN, ETC.)
THEIR COMMON FAITH TRADITION IS ANABAPTIST (RE-BAPTIZERS).

U.S. Population	387,100
Language (Worship)	English (with some U.S. congregations worshiping in the language preferred by their local congregations.) Old Order Amish and Old Order Mennonites often use Pennsylvania German while Hutterites use a dialect of German known as Hutterite German or Hutterisch among themselves and Lutheran German in worship.
Founder(s)	Anabaptism is a movement which developed alongside Protestant Christianity during the Reformation, with origins in Switzerland and Germany. Mennonites were named after one of their early Dutch leaders, Menno Simons. The Amish were named after one of the later leaders, Jakob Amman, and the Hutterites were named after Jakob Hutter.
Branches & Denominations	Of about 20 Anabaptist-related denominations in the U.S., the largest groups include the Beachy Amish, Brethren in Christ, Conservative Mennonites, Holdeman Mennonites, Hutterites, Mennonite Brethren, Mennonite Church USA, and Old Order Amish.
Basic Tenets	Mennonite theology emphasizes the teachings of Jesus and the ideal of a religious community based on New Testament models and imbued with the spirit of the Sermon on the Mount. Core beliefs deriving from Anabaptist traditions include: • Salvation through faith in Jesus Christ. • The authority of scripture and the Holy Spirit. • Believer's baptism as a sign of conscious commitment to a way of life. • Discipleship understood as an outward sign of an inward change. • Discipline in the church, informed by New Testament teachings, particularly of Jesus. • The Lord's Supper understood as a memorial rather than as a sacrament or Christian rite, ideally shared by baptized believers within the unity and discipline of the church. • Commitment to non-violence – included among the "historic peace churches". Mennonites and some other groups prefer peaceful methods of dispute resolution and do not support violent or lethal action by government agencies/ police even in the case of an active shooter. • Mutual accountability within the group for ethical/moral conduct.
Sacred Texts	The Christian Bible (comprising an Old Testament of 39 books and the 27 books of the New Testament) is foundational for all Anabaptists. Scripture is to be read and interpreted in community through the unifying presence of the Holy Spirit.

CHRISTIANITY: ANABAPTIST

Sacred Buildings/ Structures	Most Anabaptists call their worship site a "church." Some call it a meetinghouse. Most of the Amish meet in homes. Some Anabaptists meet in borrowed space (e.g. a school auditorium) or use a commercial space.
Governance (Judicatory)	Some Anabaptist churches are part of a national governing structure (e.g. Mennonite Church USA, Brethren in Christ), often organized into regional "conferences." While the congregation is the center of decision-making for most Anabaptist churches, mutual accountability within a regional conference is typical.
Governance (Congregation)	Many local congregations (even those of denominations with a robust regional or national governing structure) are self-governing, within the context of mutual accountability. Often, local governance is in the hands of an elected committee.
Point of Contact	• Local: Local congregations are usually led by a pastor/pastoral team • Regional: Varies by denomination (sometimes a Bishop or judicatory body) • National: Varies by denomination
Religious Leaders	Common terms for Anabaptist leaders include: minister, pastor, deacon, elder, bishop. • Few Anabaptists use the term "Reverend" among themselves; historically, the preferred title has been "Brother/Sister" for every member; more recent usage has included "Pastor."
Religious Objects/Symbols	Traditionally, Anabaptists have not used standardized visual symbols in worship or to identify themselves. Individual congregations/conferences/denominations may design their own symbols to aid in worship or to express their particular mission in the world. An empty cross is used in some Anabaptist churches as a symbol.
Facilitating Practices	Ask family what practices they turn to for support and provide privacy as needed.
Culture & Social Interaction	Anabaptists' engagement in cultural/social interaction ranges widely, from the Amish, who are primarily focused within their own communities, to more evangelical Mennonites who focus on mission and service projects locally or internationally. Old Order Amish do not use electricity and use horse and buggy for transportation instead of cars. Amish generally refer to non-Amish as "English". When interacting with police/law enforment, Mennonites and some other groups prefer peaceful methods of dispute resolution and do not support violent or lethal action by police, even in the case of an active shooter.
Gender Roles/Interaction	Many Mennonite denominations and churches include women and men equally in leadership. The Amish and other more conservative groups limit authority structures and leadership positions to men.
Principal Weekly Observance(s)	Most Anabaptists gather weekly for communal worship involving singing, Bible readings, and a sermon. • Most do this on Sunday mornings; a few meet at other times for convenience. • Many hold Sunday School for children; some also provide Sunday morning educational opportunities for adults as well. • Some hold mid-week Bible Study.

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CHRISTIANITY: ANABAPTIST

Daily Religious Practices	Anabaptists are encouraged to pray daily, to engage in Bible study and to endeavor to live out Jesus' teachings in their daily lives.
Holy Days/Festivals	• Christmas (commemoration of the birth of Jesus) and Easter (marking the resurrection of Jesus) are major holidays for Anabaptists. • Some also observe Palm Sunday (the Sunday before Easter marking Jesus' entry into Jerusalem), Maundy Thursday (last Thursday before Easter; celebration of Jesus' last supper), and Good Friday (Friday before Easter; commemorating the crucifixion of Jesus). • Pentecost (the celebration of the coming of the Holy Spirit on Jesus' followers) is recognized by all, and is a major celebration for some. • A few Anabaptists follow a set liturgical calendar; most are more generally scripture-based rather than calendar-oriented. • Thanksgiving Day (a U.S. national holiday) is celebrated by most Anabaptist churches.
Rituals/Ceremonies	Anabaptists churches maintain two characteristically Christian practices: Baptism and Communion/Lord's Supper. • Anabaptist churches reserve baptism for adults or children who have reached "the age of accountability." • Anabaptists see baptism as part of testifying publicly that one has become a Christian by accepting Jesus Christ as one's Lord and Savior (or, as an act of obedience, now that one is a Christian). • Some Anabaptists incorporate Communion/the Lord's Supper (a ritual involving the sharing of bread and cup — usually grape juice, not wine — into their regular Sunday worship once a month; others, once a quarter; still others, twice a year.
Dress (Religious Restrictions)	• Few Anabaptist denominations have clothing requirements for daily or Sunday clothing, except for modesty. The Amish and some other groups require head coverings for women at all times. • In stressing modesty, a few insist that women must always wear a dress or skirt (never trousers). • A few denominations or sects require women to cover their heads when attending worship, including the Amish, Old Order Mennonite and Conservative Mennonites. • A very few denominations require women to wear a distinctive head-covering at all times, including the Amish, Old Order Mennonites, and some Conservative Mennonites. • Some groups also have a distinctive comprehensive dress code for all members. For example, the Amish, Hutterites, Old German Baptist Brethren, and Old Order River Brethren all wear plain clothing. • Amish men typically wear beards while Mennonite men do not. • Fabrics worn by Mennonite women typically have patterns while Amish women typically wear plain fabrics. • There is no standard attire for Anabaptist clergy.
Death: Dying Practices	• Anabaptists generally prefer family or close friends to be at the bedside of a dying person; they may also find their pastor to be a reassuring companion at such a time. • Reading of scripture (especially the Psalms) to the dying and saying of bedside prayers are common practices, as well as singing. • Anabaptists have no essential end-of-life sacraments, although may request anointing.

CHRISTIANITY: ANABAPTIST

Death: Body Preparation	Most Anabaptists make use of a funeral home. There are no universally mandated Anabaptist practices regarding preparation of the body. Embalming is usual among Mennonites, as is the holding of "visitation" at the funeral home preceding the funeral. Funerals typically take place in churches, followed by burial in the church cemetery. Amish "visitations" are held in the home, possibly with a funeral at the meetinghouse and burial in the church cemetery.
Dietary Laws and Customs	Anabaptists hold a wide range of attitudes; generalizations are unhelpful here.
Health (Medical Care)	Attitudes in this category are wide-ranging. • Generally, Anabaptists are comfortable with the full range of conventional medical treatment options. The Amish will typically opt for homeopathic treatments as well as conventional medicine. The Amish and some others do not buy health insurance. • Most will not demand extraordinary means be taken to sustain life; most are quite comfortable to "allow natural death." • Some are comfortable with notions of organ transplantation; others are not.
Health (Mental Health)	While some Anabaptists (Amish and more conservative Mennonites) believe that Bible study and prayer should be the first intervention for mental health problems most others will generally be comfortable with conventional medical treatment for mental and other health issues.
Pregnancy and Birth	Abortion is generally opposed by Anabaptists; some do allow exceptions.
FOR SERVICE PROVIDERS	
Physical Contact	Adherents of some groups may prefer same-sex service providers. This is a cultural preference and not religiously mandated.
Dietary Restrictions	With regard to most Anabaptists, there are none which are religiously mandated. Most choose to avoid alcohol.
Medical Treatment	No specific concerns or recommendations. Generalizations may not be helpful here.
Mental Health Care	Some Anabaptists believe that Bible study and prayer alone instead of professional medical intervention can overcome mental health problems but others may be open to treatment by mental health professionals.
Mass Care Facilities	Anabaptists will appreciate being able to hold Sunday worship. Be cognizant that some traditional groups may not be comfortable in modern shelter settings or with utilizing technology including electricity, television, and internet.

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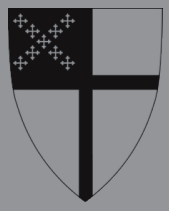

Episcopal Shield

CHRISTIANITY: ANGLICAN/EPISCOPAL

ADHERENTS CONSIDER THEMSELVES CHRISTIAN. ADHERENTS ARE CALLED CHRISTIANS OR EPISCOPALIANS IN THE UNITED STATES. THE RELIGION IS CALLED EPISCOPALIANISM IN THE UNITED STATES.

U.S. Population	1,952,000 (Episcopal Church USA)
Language (Worship)	English (with some U.S. congregations worshiping in any of a number of other languages).
Founder(s)	Decisive figures in the Anglican Reformation include Thomas Cranmer and Queen Elizabeth I of England. The role of King Henry VIII was primarily political. Following the American Revolution, the Anglican Church in America separated itself from the Church of England and was renamed the Episcopal Church with its governance restructured so that clergy were not required to accept the supremacy of the British monarch.
Branches & Denominations	The Episcopal Church is the primary Anglican body in the U.S., but has a presence in some 15 other countries as well. Some dozen other bodies share the heritage and the name—among them, the Reformed Episcopal Church. The Episcopal Church in the United States is part of the international Anglican Communion in a worldwide fellowship of self-governing churches with roots in the Church of England.
Basic Tenets	Anglican Christianity defines itself as both Protestant and Reformed, a branch of Christianity in which scripture, reason, and tradition are given equal authority. In the U.S., Episcopalians: • Believe in God as Triune, and in Jesus Christ to be God Incarnate, fully divine and fully human; the birth, ministry, death, and resurrection of Jesus are definitive. • Encourage the baptism of infants and children, and considers the Baptismal Covenant as foundational to its Social Teachings. • Consider the Eucharist the primary form of weekly communal worship. • Believe the Church to be one, holy, catholic (universal), and apostolic. • Believe in apostolic succession (ministry of the Church is derived from Jesus Christ's apostles by a continuous succession). • The Episcopal church upholds seven sacraments: Baptism, Eucharist, Confession and Absolution, Holy Matrimony, Confirmation, Ordination, and Anointing of the Sick.
Sacred Texts	• Episcopalians (and other Anglicans in the U.S.) use the Christian Bible comprising an Old Testament of 39 Books and the New Testament's 27 books (as do Protestants), plus fourteen books found in Catholic and Orthodox Old Testaments, which are placed between the Old and New Testaments called the Apocrypha. • Anglican Christians worship according to the Book of Common Prayer. • For members of The Episcopal Church, the Hymnal 1979 is considered an auxiliary sacred text.

CHRISTIANITY: ANGLICAN/EPISCOPAL

Sacred Buildings/ Structures	Episcopalians call their worship site a "church." For Episcopalians, a cathedral is a church which houses the bishop's chair (cathedra), and is central to the life of a diocese. The term parish is sometimes used to refer to a church's congregation or the congregation of a particular church.
Governance (Judicatory)	Member churches of the Anglican Communion have various forms of governance. The General Convention (a bicameral body with a House of Bishops and a House of Deputies—both lay and ordained) is the governing body of The Episcopal Church and meets every three years; between General Conventions, the Executive Council exercises oversight. At the pinnacle of the hierarchy of The Episcopal Church is the Presiding Bishop and Primate; each diocese is headed by a bishop, and may have several bishops.
Governance (Congregation)	Parishes (congregations) are administered by a Vestry (a panel of elected laypersons), the rector or priest-in-charge, and his or her staff. Some parishes are served by a deacon as well. Priests and deacons sometimes have non-parochial ministries.
Point of Contact	• Local: Local congregations are usually led by a rector; the senior warden may also be the point of contact. • Regional: Bishop • National: Presiding Bishop and Primate of The Episcopal Church
Religious Leaders	Lay people are considered leaders, serving as deputies and on vestries. Ordained leaders include deacons, priests, bishops, and others. • When addressing Episcopal clergy, male priests are often called "Father NAME." Women may be called "Mother NAME," although since some dislike this practice, it is wise to inquire about preference. Bishops and deacons are addressed by their title: "Bishop NAME" or "Deacon NAME." Archdeacons are called the Venerable.
Religious Objects/Symbols	• The symbol of the Anglican Communion is the Compass Rose, often encircled by the words "The Truth Shall Set You Free" in Greek. • The symbol of The Episcopal Church is a white shield divided into four sections by a red cross; the background of the top, left-hand section is blue, upon which is placed white X (cross). • Anglicans use both the crucifix and the empty cross. • The altar is central to Anglican worship. • Many Anglican churches have a lectern holding a Bible and a pulpit on opposite sides of the altar. • Anglicans may make use of icons (stylized painting) or statues of Jesus, Mary, and various saints. They may make use of symbols representing specific saints, and other visual symbols in the décor of the worship space.
Facilitating Practices	Episcopalians will appreciate the presence of a priest. They usually welcome the opportunity to receive communion from a priest, deacon, or Lay Eucharistic Minister.
Culture & Social Interaction	Episcopalians hold a wide range of attitudes; generalizations are unhelpful here.
Gender Roles/Interaction	While Anglicanism worldwide has a range of attitudes regarding gender roles, The Episcopal Church is generally egalitarian, with no gender qualifications for leadership roles or participation in worship.

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CHRISTIANITY: ANGLICAN/EPISCOPAL

Principal Weekly Observance(s)	The principal weekly observance for many Episcopalians (and for many Anglicans worldwide) is the Eucharist (also called Mass or Holy Communion).
Daily Religious Practices	• The Anglican Christian tradition provides the Daily Offices of Morning and Evening Prayer—formal patterns with prescribed texts, a cycle of Bible readings to be incorporated, and opportunity for personal supplication – which can be performed anywhere by anyone. Many clergy in this tradition maintain this daily practice; so do many laypersons. • Some Episcopalians receive communion daily.
Holy Days/Festivals	Episcopalians follow a liturgical calendar that begins with Advent (four Sundays prior to Christmas) and includes several major Feast Days, seasons of the church year (each distinguished by a particular focus and color for use in worship), and a list of commemorations of holy women and men. Major Holy Days include: • Christmas Day (commemoration of the birth of Jesus). • Epiphany (the recognition of Jesus by the Magi, followed by commemoration of Jesus' baptism and other manifestations of Jesus' divinity). • Ash Wednesday (the beginning of Lent – a period of six weeks before Easter involving spiritual renewal through self-reflection, fasting, alms giving, and prayer). • Palm Sunday (a feast Sunday before Easter marking Jesus' entry into Jerusalem). • Maundy Thursday (last Thursday before Easter; celebration of Jesus' last supper). • Good Friday (Friday before Easter; commemorating the crucifixion of Jesus). • Easter (feast marking the resurrection of Jesus). • Ascension (of Jesus into Heaven). • Pentecost (the celebration of the receipt of the Holy Spirit by Jesus' followers, thus the beginning of the Church). • In the U.S., some congregations celebrate "Homecoming Sunday" (usually in late summer; a time when people who have been away from the church return). • Thanksgiving Day (a U.S. national holiday) is celebrated as a religious holiday by some Episcopal churches.
Rituals/Ceremonies	Episcopalianism maintains the two characteristically Christian practices: Baptism and Communion/Lord's Supper. Episcopalians believe that baptism makes an individual a full member of the Body of Christ (the Church). • Many Episcopalians encourage the baptism of infants by sprinkling or pouring water on their head. • Typically, Episcopalians partake of Holy Communion weekly, using bread (leavened or unleavened) and wine. Some make provision for mid-week or daily communion. • Episcopalians interpret Communion sacramentally (i.e. they believe in the Real Presence of Jesus in the bread and the wine).
Dress (Religious Restrictions)	There is no mandatory dress for Episcopal laity. Typically, Anglican clergy wear a black shirt and white clerical collar. Some Anglican priests choose to wear a tab collar (white only in front), resembling those worn by Catholic priests. Bishops wear a purple clerical shirt, collar, and pectoral cross outside their shirt. • When celebrating Holy Eucharist, many Anglican clergy (especially in The Episcopal Church) wear elaborate vestments, similar to those of other leaders including those in the Roman Catholic and Orthodox Christian churches. • When officiating at other services, they wear a black cassock with a white surplice (over-garment).

CHRISTIANITY: ANGLICAN/EPISCOPAL

Death: Dying Practices	• The Book of Common Prayer provides liturgies and prayers for use with a person who is dying or who has just died. It is customary to call a priest, although others may be trained and authorized to minister in this way, • Reading of scripture (especially the Psalms) to the dying and saying of bedside prayers are common practices for Episcopalians. • Episcopalians may desire the sacrament of anointing as death approaches.
Death: Body Preparation	• Many Episcopalians make use of a funeral home. There are no universally mandated Episcopal practices regarding preparation of the body. Embalming is common, as is the holding of "visitation" at the funeral home on the evening preceding the funeral. • An Episcopal funeral liturgy emphasizes belief in and expectation of resurrection; it may include Holy Communion, if the family wishes. It is customary for the funeral to be held in a church rather than a funeral home. The funeral includes rites to be performed later at the burial. • Some Episcopalians (especially in the U.S.) request cremation rather than burial; some families may prefer a memorial service at some point after burial/cremation rather than a funeral.
Dietary Laws and Customs	Few restrictions or requirements in this category, although some Episcopalians do maintain a fast during the season of Lent.
Health (Medical Care)	Among Episcopalians, attitudes in this category are wide-ranging. Generally, Episcopalians are comfortable with the full range of conventional medical treatment options. • Some will demand extraordinary means be taken to sustain life; others are quite comfortable to "allow natural death." • Some are comfortable with notions of organ transplantation; others are not.
Health (Mental Health)	Generally, Episcopalians are comfortable with the full range of conventional mental healthcare options.
Pregnancy and Birth	Attitudes in this category are wide-ranging.
FOR SERVICE PROVIDERS	
Physical Contact	No specific concerns or recommendations. Generalizations may not be helpful here.
Dietary Restrictions	Some Episcopalians do maintain a fast during the season of Lent.
Medical Treatment	No specific concerns or recommendations. Generalizations may not be helpful here.
Mental Health Care	No specific concerns or recommendations. Generalizations may not be helpful here.
Mass Care Facilities	Episcopalians will appreciate being able to hold Sunday Eucharistic worship; they may desire to hold daily formal Morning Prayer and Evening Prayer.

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Christian Science Cross and Crown

CHRISTIANITY: CHRISTIAN SCIENCE

ADHERENTS CONSIDER THEMSELVES CHRISTIAN. ADHERENTS ARE CALLED CHRISTIAN SCIENTISTS. THE RELIGION IS CALLED CHRISTIAN SCIENCE.

U.S. Population	339,000
Language (Worship)	English
Founder	Mary Baker Eddy (July 16, 1821 – December 3, 1910)
Branches & Denominations	N/A
Basic Tenets	Christian Science is a system of belief and practice based on the teachings of Mary Baker Eddy. • It espouses a theistic monism by which everything shares one spiritual substance, which is real; matter is "unreal." • It teaches that God is all-loving Father-Mother, but otherwise is not anthropomorphized; Jesus is central, the reflection of God; divine Science, according to Mary Baker Eddy, is the Holy Comforter. • It acknowledges the crucifixion and resurrection of Jesus as means by which human beings come "to understand eternal Life, the allness of Soul, Spirit, and the nothingness of matter," according to Mary Baker Eddy. It teaches that God is all-good, the only reality; evil and illness are unreal, and can be overcome through a prayer-based system of healing.
Sacred Texts	The Bible (the 66 books of the Protestant canon) is the scripture of Christian Science. The King James Version is the translation in often used. • The Bible is studied in conversation with *Science and Health with Key to the Scriptures* by founder Mary Baker Eddy. • Together, the Bible and *Science and Health* are considered the Church's pastor, from which democratically elected lay members of the congregation read aloud during Church services and meetings. • Mrs. Eddy's other publications are also held in high regard.
Sacred Buildings/ Structures	In addition to the Mother Church (Boston, MA), many U.S. cities have one or more Christian Science "branches"—churches and Reading Rooms (bookstores managed and staffed by members).
Governance (Judicatory)	The First Church of Christ, Scientist (a.k.a. the Mother Church), Boston (MA) is the world headquarters of the movement. It is governed by a five-person Board of Directors and conducts business according to the *Church Manual.* Any Christian Scientist can become a member of the Mother Church. Currently, more than 130 countries are represented on the Mother Church membership roll.

CHRISTIANITY: CHRISTIAN SCIENCE

Governance (Congregation)	Christian Scientists may choose to affiliate with a local Christian Science church or society. These entities are subordinate to, and are considered branches of, the Mother Church, but are self-governed according to their own bylaws. These bylaws conform to regulations set forth in the *Manual of The Mother Church*—which establishes church organization; explains duties and responsibilities of members, officers, practitioners, teachers, and nurses; and provides rules for discipline and other aspects of church business.
Point of Contact	• Local: Each church is self-governed • Regional: N/A • National: The Mother Church (Located in Boston, MA)
Religious Leaders	Together, the Bible and Mary Baker Eddy's *Science and Health with Key to the Scriptures* comprise the pastor of the Church of Christ. There are no clergy. Rather: • A democratically elected First Reader runs the Sunday services and Wednesday meetings, and reads from the *Science and Health*; at Sunday services, an elected Second Reader reads from the Bible. • Full-time practitioners (healing ministers) are available for spiritual healing, which is uniquely different from medical or psychological techniques.
Religious Objects/Symbols	The Christian Science seal features the cross passing diagonally through a jeweled crown, encircled by words from Matthew 10.8: "Heal the Sick, Cleanse the Lepers, Raise the Dead, Cast Out Demons."
Facilitating Practices	Many Christian Scientists eschew conventional medical intervention, so will appreciate having their wishes respected. They will appreciate being given access to a Christian Science practitioner.
Culture & Social Interaction	Nothing of particular concern, except for the need for sensitivity when offering conventional Western medical treatment– and resulting family tension which sometimes arises if a Christian Scientist elects to accept medical procedures.
Gender Roles/Interaction	Christian Science is egalitarian. Men and women have equal status.
Principal Weekly Observance(s)	Sunday services feature instrumental music, singing, readings appointed for that week from the Bible and from Science and Health, a sermon based on those readings, and prayer. Wednesday evening testimony meetings feature scripture readings chosen by the First Reader to meet the needs of the particular congregation, prayer, and reports from attendees on healings and other insights gained during the week.
Daily Religious Practice	Observant Christian Scientists: • Maintain daily study of a weekly Bible Lesson (a collection of topic-specific passages from the Bible and *Science and Health)*. • Maintain a routine of daily prayer as stipulated in Manual of The Mother Church by Mary Baker Eddy.
Holy Days/Festivals	Christian Scientists observe Christmas (commemoration of the birth of Jesus) and Easter (feast marking the resurrection of Jesus); they may also observe Thanksgiving Day (a U.S. national holiday).

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CHRISTIANITY: CHRISTIAN SCIENCE

Rituals/Ceremonies	Christian Scientists speak of baptism and communion, but do not conduct the rituals implied by these terms in many other forms of Christianity: • Christian Scientists do not perform water-baptism; rather, they understand baptism as an ongoing process of spiritual renewal. They may apply for a document certifying that they "practice baptism daily by studying the Word of God and living their lives in a way that give evidence they are being bathed in Spirit and thus cleansed of sin." • Christian Scientists observe the Sacrament of Communion twice yearly—not by means of a ritual involving bread and wine/juice, but rather by kneeling in silent prayer as a congregation, followed by saying the Lord's Prayer in unison.
Dress (Religious Restrictions)	No particular requirements or restrictions.
Death: Dying Practices	• If a Christian Scientist has elected conventional Western medical treatment, their Christian Science practitioner will typically withdraw so as not to subject the patient to competing approaches. The patient and family may still appreciate privacy for daily prayers as death approaches. • The Church of Christ, Scientist has no official position on organ donation; such decisions are an individual matter.
Death: Body Preparation	Many Christian Scientists bury rather than cremate. The Church of Christ, Scientist has no official position on preparation of the body for burial. There is no mandated funeral ritual. Families are free to make their own plans.
Dietary Laws and Customs	No restrictions; however, many Christian Scientists abstain from alcohol, tobacco, pharmaceutical medications, and illicit drugs; many abstain from coffee and tea.
Health (Medical Care)	Every Christian Scientist is free to choose the form of healthcare he or she prefers. • Many prefer to rely on prayer (their own or that of a Christian Science practitioner) for healing of adverse health conditions. • Because of reliance on Christian Science practitioners rather than the conventional healthcare system, they may not be able to provide a conventionally documented medical history. • Some may be willing to accept conventional medical treatment, but may be unfamiliar with terminology or procedures. • While willing to accept certain conventional medical interventions, some may be reluctant to accept standard palliative treatment such as pain medication or IV fluids. • Opting for conventional Western medical treatment may cause tension within or interrupt the Christian Science patient's social support network.
Health (Mental Health)	As with physical healthcare, every Christian Scientist is free to choose the form of mental healthcare he or she prefers. • Many will prefer to rely on prayer (their own or that of a Christian Science practitioner) for healing of adverse health conditions. • Because of reliance on Christian Science practitioners rather than the conventional healthcare system, they may not be able to provide a conventionally documented medical history. • Some may be willing to accept conventional medical treatment for mental illness, but may be unfamiliar with terminology or procedures. • Opting for conventional Western medical treatment may cause tension within or interrupt the Christian Science patient's social support network.

CHRISTIANITY: CHRISTIAN SCIENCE

Pregnancy and Birth	• Use of birth control is an individual decision for Christian Scientists. • When pregnant, a Christian Scientist may prefer the services of Christian Science practitioner and a midwife to standard OB-GYN care. They may plan for a home birth with a midwife, acknowledging the midwife's legal mandate to transfer the case to a hospital if complications arise. • With regard to abortion, Christian Science trusts its members to use prayer to guide themselves to a solution that is right for them. As with other body-health issues, many Christian Scientists will prefer prayer over medical intervention. Christian Science also teaches that unwanted pregnancy is the result of societal problems awaiting spiritual healing.
FOR SERVICE PROVIDERS	
Physical Contact	No restrictions.
Dietary Restrictions	No restrictions.
Medical Treatment	When a Christian Scientist is taken to a hospital because of an accident but declines conventional medical treatment, this typically means that (as a competent adult) this individual is choosing to rely on prayer (individually, or with the help of a Christian Science practitioner) for healing. • Such an individual will co-operate with authorities to take appropriate actions, such as quarantine, which may be considered necessary to protect others. • Individuals relying on Christian Science practice may ask to be re-tested, or to have a pending procedure re-evaluated after having had time to pray for healing. • If a Christian Scientist has entered a hospital voluntarily, it can be assumed that the individual will accept conventional medical treatment, but might ask that drugs/therapy be kept to a minimum. • Individual Christian Scientists or their authorized proxies make their own decisions about blood transfusions and organ/tissue donation.
Mental Health Care	If a Christian Scientist has entered a hospital voluntarily for mental healthcare, it can be assumed that the individual will accept conventional medical treatment, but might ask that drugs/therapy be kept to a minimum.
Mass Care Facilities	Support is best provided by: • Providing time and a quiet space to pray. • Facilitating contact with a Christian Science practitioner. • Ensuring access to the Bible and *Science and Health*.

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Christian Cross

CHRISTIANITY: EVANGELICAL

ADHERENTS CONSIDER THEMSELVES CHRISTIAN. ADHERENTS ARE CALLED CHRISTIANS, OR EVANGELICAL CHRISTIANS, OR EVANGELICALS, AND SOME MAY CALL THEMSELVES CHARISMATIC CHRISTIAN OR PENTECOSTAL. THE RELIGION IS CALLED EVANGELICAL CHRISTIANITY OR EVANGELICALISM.

U.S. Population	44,233,466
Language (Worship)	English (with some U.S. congregations worshiping in the language preferred by their local congregations.)
Founder(s)	Evangelicalism is a movement within Protestant Christianity. In addition to other figures that are part of the history of Protestant Christianity, important leaders in Evangelicalism include Jonathan Edwards, George Whitfield, Charles Wesley, Dwight Moody, and Billy Graham.
Branches & Denominations	Church of Christ, Church of the Nazarene, Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod, National Baptist, Salvation Army, Seventh Day Adventist, and Southern Baptist are some of the larger denominations within the Evangelical tradition. Many nondenominational churches are evangelical.
Basic Tenets	As an umbrella term, Evangelicalism covers an enormous diversity of denominations and independent churches. Many evangelical churches are autonomous in their operation. The majority of Evangelicals believe: • In an assertion of a personal relationship with God through Christ, study of the Bible by laypersons, freedom of conscience on many matters, and a variety in worship styles. • That Jesus of Nazareth is considered God Incarnate. The birth, ministry, death, and resurrection of Jesus are definitive. • In a Trinitarian understanding of the nature of God. • That the Holy Spirit is important to all Evangelicals, but receives more emphasis from some than from others.
Sacred Texts	The Christian Bible (comprising an Old Testament of 39 books and the 27 books of the New Testament) is foundational for all Evangelicals. Many interpret the Bible literally. Some insist on the King James Version; others prefer (or even require) more recent translations, at least for reading in public worship.
Sacred Buildings/ Structures	Many Evangelicals call their worship site a “church.” Some call it a meetinghouse; a few call it a cathedral (but may not use it in the same way as Catholics and Anglicans do). It is common for church-buildings to have a steeple topped with a cross. Some Evangelicals meet in borrowed space (e.g. a school auditorium) or use a commercial space. Congregations can be small storefront churches or large-scale campuses with multiple buildings.
Governance (Judicatory)	Some Evangelical churches are part of a hierarchical governing structure (e.g. the Evangelical Free Church; Southern Baptist Convention); others are part of a loose federation; still others are completely free-standing and independent.

CHRISTIANITY: EVANGELICAL

Governance (Congregation)	Many local congregations (even those of denominations with a robust regional or national governing structure) are self-governing. Often, local governance is in the hands of an elected committee.
Point of Contact	• Local: Local congregations are usually led by a pastor. • Regional: Varies by denomination (sometimes a Bishop or judicatory body) • National: Varies by denomination (usually a national judicatory body)
Religious Leaders	Common terms for Evangelical leaders include: minister, pastor, deacon, elder, bishop. • Some Evangelicals use the term "the Reverend" as a noun meaning "clergyperson"; some use it only as an adjective. • In some traditions, deacons are clergy; in others, the word refers to a temporary elected office.
Religious Objects/Symbols	The cross is a major symbol for Evangelicals; the empty cross is generally used, rather than a crucifix, in order to emphasize the Risen Christ. The Bible itself may serve as a symbol. Many denominations have a distinguishing symbol or logo.
Facilitating Practices	Ask family what practices they turn to for support and provide privacy as needed.
Culture & Social Interaction	Some Evangelicals are conservative on social issues; others are less so, some are liberal.
Gender Roles/Interaction	Most Evangelical denominations and churches limit authority structures and leadership positions to men; some allow for leadership roles for women.
Principal Weekly Observance(s)	Most Evangelicals gather weekly for communal worship involving singing, Bible readings, and a sermon. • Many do this on Sunday mornings; a few (e.g. Seventh Day Adventists) meet on Saturday. • Many hold Sunday School for children; some also provide Sunday morning educational opportunities for adults as well. • Some hold (and may even expect all to attend) mid-week Bible Study.
Daily Religious Practices	Evangelical Christians are encouraged to pray daily and to engage in daily Bible study.
Holy Days/Festivals	• Christmas (commemoration of the birth of Jesus) and Easter (marking the resurrection of Jesus) are major holidays for all Evangelicals. • Some also observe Palm Sunday (Sunday before Easter marking Jesus' entry into Jerusalem), Maundy Thursday (last Thursday before Easter; celebration of Jesus' last supper), and Good Friday (Friday before Easter; commemorating the crucifixion of Jesus). • Pentecost (the celebration of the coming of the Holy Spirit on Jesus' followers) is recognized by many, and is a major celebration for some. • Some follow a liturgical calendar similar to Roman Catholic practice, thus observing the seasons of Advent (beginning four Sundays before Christmas) and Lent (a period of six weeks before Easter involving spiritual renewal through self-reflection, fasting, alms giving, and prayer). • Some Evangelicals observe days related to their denominational history. • Thanksgiving Day (a U.S. national holiday) is celebrated as a religious holiday by some Evangelical churches.

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CHRISTIANITY: EVANGELICAL

Rituals/Ceremonies	Many Evangelical churches maintain two characteristically Christian practices: Baptism and Communion/Lord's Supper. However, they can be sorted into several categories according to how they perform these rites and with what meaning. • Many Evangelical churches reserve baptism for adults (or children who are old enough to choose their religion), and may characterize themselves as "Born-Again Christians." • Many Evangelicals see baptism as part of testifying publicly that one has become a Christian by accepting Jesus Christ as one's personal Lord and Savior (or, as an act of obedience, now that one is a Christian). • Some Evangelicals incorporate Communion/the Lord's Supper (a ritual involving the sharing of bread and cup—which for some contains wine, but for many contains grape juice) into their regular Sunday worship once a month; others, once a quarter; still others, once a year. A few Evangelical denominations do this weekly.
Dress (Religious Restrictions)	Few Evangelical denominations have clothing requirements for daily or Sunday wear. • In stressing modesty, a few insist that women must always wear a dress or skirt (never trousers). • A few denominations or sects require women to cover their heads when attending worship, including the Apostolic Christian Church and some Pentecostal churches. This belief stems from 1 Corinthians 11, "But every woman praying or prophesying with her head unveiled dishonors her head. For it is one and the same thing as if she were shaved. 6 For if a woman is not covered, let her also be shorn. But if it is shameful for a woman to be shorn or shaved, let her be covered." • There is no standard attire for all Evangelical clergy. • Many wear a business suit or other more casual street clothing; Others may wear academic robes. • Evangelical choirs often wear robes or some other uniform when participating in worship.
Death: Dying Practices	• Evangelicals usually prefer family or close friends to be at the bedside of a dying person; they may also find their pastor to be a reassuring companion at such a time. • Reading of scripture (especially the Psalms) to the dying and saying of bedside prayers are common practices. • Evangelicals have no essential end-of-life sacraments, although they may request anointing.
Death: Body Preparation	• Many Evangelicals make use of a funeral home. There are no universally mandated Evangelical practices regarding preparation of the body. Embalming is common, as is the holding of "visitation" at the funeral home on the evening preceding the funeral. Some hold a short funeral at the funeral home, then proceed immediately to burial or cremation. • Some Evangelicals hold a church funeral (with the body present in a casket); some prefer a church memorial service several days (or longer) after the burial or cremation. • Many Evangelicals bury their dead, although cremation has also become popular.

CHRISTIANITY: EVANGELICAL

Dietary Laws and Customs	Evangelicals hold a wide range of attitudes; generalizations are unhelpful here.
Health (Medical Care)	Attitudes in this category are wide-ranging. While these attitudes may be informed by Evangelical Christian faith, many denominations have no medical care policies that members must follow. • Generally, Evangelical Christians are comfortable with the full range of conventional medical treatment options. • Some will demand extraordinary means be taken to sustain life; others are quite comfortable to "allow natural death." • Some are comfortable with notions of organ transplantation; others are not.
Health (Mental Health)	Many Evangelicals believe that Bible study and prayer alone instead of professional medical intervention can overcome mental health problems. They will generally be comfortable with conventional medical treatment for other health issues.
Pregnancy and Birth	Although abortion is generally opposed by many denominations of Evangelicals, there is no consensus on whether exceptions can be made and some do allow exceptions.
FOR SERVICE PROVIDERS	
Physical Contact	No specific concerns or recommendations. Generalizations may not be helpful here.
Dietary Restrictions	With regard to many Evangelical Christians, none which are religiously mandated. Many may choose to avoid alcohol.
Medical Treatment	No specific concerns or recommendations. Generalizations may not be helpful here.
Mental Health Care	Many Evangelicals believe that Bible study and prayer alone instead of professional medical intervention can overcome mental health problems but others may be open to treatment by mental health professionals.
Mass Care Facilities	Evangelical Christians will appreciate being able to hold Sunday worship. Because of the wide range of theological and social attitudes, it may be necessary to allow for more than one Evangelical worship opportunity in a mass care situation. Evangelical Christians will appreciate opportunities to hold Bible study.

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Watchtower

CHRISTIANITY: JEHOVAH'S WITNESSES

ADHERENTS CONSIDER THEMSELVES CHRISTIAN.
ADHERENTS CALL THEMSELVES JEHOVAH'S WITNESSES.
THE RELIGION IS CALLED JEHOVAH'S WITNESSES.

U.S. Population	1,914,000
Language (Worship)	Many U.S. congregations worship in English; some use Spanish or another language of their preference.
Founder	Charles Taze Russell (1879)
Branches & Denominations	N/A
Basic Tenets	As a millenialist, restorationist, nontrinitarian Christian movement which sees itself as the only true Christianity, it is distinctive in the following ways (among many others): • Belief that the Bible (the Protestant canon of scriptures) is the inspired, inerrant word of God—scientifically and historically accurate and reliable. • Belief that Jehovah (or, Jehovah God) is the sole name for God. • Belief that Jesus was executed on a stake (not a cross). • Belief in a complex and unique understanding of death and the eventual End Times in which the world will be restored to a state of paradise; after which beneficiaries of Christ will be resurrected with healthy, perfected physical bodies and will inhabit the earth. • Baptism must be by immersion after dedicating oneself to the movement's teachings; baptisms performed by other Christian denominations are not accepted. • Refusal to participate in ceremonies such as saluting or pledging allegiance to a national flag, to celebrate birthdays or traditional Christian holidays, or to serve in the armed forces. • Belief that acceptance of blood transfusions is a violation of certain scriptural edicts. • Refusal to participate in interfaith networks or alliances due to the believe that the Bible warns against interfaith mixing and that differing religious beliefs cannot bond through interfaith.
Sacred Texts	The Bible (the 66 books of Protestant canon). • The movements own *New World Translation of the Holy Scriptures* is the preferred translation. • Scripture study is facilitated by various publications of the Watch Tower Bible and Tract Society; members are provided with aids for reading the entire Bible in a year.
Sacred Buildings/ Structures	A Kingdom Hall is a place of worship and study for Jehovah's Witnesses.

CHRISTIANITY: JEHOVAH'S WITNESSES

Governance (Judicatory)	Governance is hierarchical. The Governing Body of Jehovah's Witnesses (based in Brooklyn, NY) is the movement's ruling council. It is responsible for formulating policy and doctrines, producing material for publications and conventions, and administering its worldwide branch office staff.
Governance (Congregation)	Each local congregation appoints a body of unpaid male elders and ministerial servants. Elders take responsibility for congregational governance, selection of leadership for meetings, oversight of public preaching, and so on; ministerial servants fill these roles as well, but can also teach and conduct meetings. Some teaching roles can be assumed by women.
Point of Contact	• Local: Disaster Relief Committee at local Kingdom Hall • Regional: N/A • National: The Governing Body (branch office for United States)
Religious Leaders	Elders and ministerial servants are appointed and serve locally.
Religious Objects/Symbols	Symbols and religious objects (other than the Bible) are not used in worship. However, the Watchtower (the publishing house and website of the movement) does have a distinctive logo.
Facilitating Practices	While Jehovah's Witnesses generally hold modern medicine and healthcare professionals in high regard, they maintain strong opposition to use of blood or blood products, based on their interpretation of certain Bible passages (Genesis 9.3, 4; Leviticus 17.10; Acts 15.28-29). • Caregivers should take seriously the right of competent adult patients to refuse blood transfusions and blood products. • When in doubt, and when possible, caregivers should consult a congregational elder or contact the local Jehovah Witnesses Hospital Liaison Committee.
Culture & Social Interaction	Modesty in dress is encouraged. In families, the husband is the primary authority.
Gender Roles/Interaction	While women and men are considered equal, and all baptized Jehovah's Witnesses are considered ordained ministers, some roles are limited to men. • Women are commonly appointed as full-time ministers, whether to evangelize as "pioneers" or "missionaries, or to serve at their branch offices. • Within the congregation, a female minister may only lead prayer and teaching when there is a special need, and must do so wearing a head covering. • Ministerial servants and elders must be male; only a baptized adult male may perform a Jehovah's Witness baptism, funeral, or wedding.
Principal Weekly Observance(s)	Congregations meet twice weekly (mid-week and weekends) for multi-session meetings involving the study of the Bible and Jehovah's Witness literature, singing, and prayer. Certain meetings are held in homes. Regular house-to-house visitation and preaching is part of their practice.
Daily Religious Practices	Prayer and Bible study, facilitated by Jehovah's Witness literature and study aids.
Holy Days/Festivals	Jehovah's Witnesses commemorate "the Lord's Evening Meal" or "Memorial of Christ's Death" on a date coinciding with Jewish Passover. • No traditional Christian festivals or holidays are celebrated. • Jehovah's Witnesses do not celebrate birthdays or other secular holidays.

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CHRISTIANITY: JEHOVAH'S WITNESSES

Rituals/Ceremonies	• Adult baptism by immersion. • No special rituals for the sick or dying.
Dress (Religious Restrictions)	Members dress modestly, but no specific attire is required.
Death: Dying Practices	Death is believed to be a state of deep unconsciousness until Jehovah transforms the world and the general resurrection takes place. • There are no special rituals for those who are dying, nor last rites to be administered. • Pastoral visits from elders will be welcomed.
Death: Body Preparation	• An appropriate relative can decide if a limited post mortem is acceptable to determine cause of death. • Autopsy acceptable if legally required. • Donation of body or organs is personal choice. • The dead may be buried or cremated, depending on personal or family preferences and local circumstances.
Dietary Laws and Customs	No specific restrictions.
Health (Medical Care)	Strongly opposed to blood transfusions and blood products. • Transfusion of whole blood, packed red cells, white blood cells, plasma, and platelets will be refused. • Pre-operative banking of one's own blood is not allowed. • Some members will accept albumin, immune globulins, hemophiliac preparations, non-blood volume expanders, and pre-operative erythropoietin. • Members favor procedures that reduce blood loss. • Members will accept cardiac bypass and dialysis if equipment is primed with non-blood products. • Use of extraordinary means to prolong life or exercise of right to die is an individual choice.
Health (Mental Health)	No specific religious mandates. However, an elder or other Jehovah's Witness spiritual advisor may be helpful.
Pregnancy and Birth	Abortion and artificial insemination by a donor are forbidden. Birth control is an individual choice.

CHRISTIANITY: JEHOVAH'S WITNESSES

FOR SERVICE PROVIDERS	
Physical Contact	No specific requirements.
Dietary Restrictions	No specific requirements.
Medical Treatment	Two medical interventions to which Jehovah's Witnesses object: elective termination of pregnancy and blood transfusion. • Jehovah's Witnesses often carry on their person an Advance Medical Directive/ Release document directing that no blood transfusions be given under any circumstances, and this document is renewed annually. • A more detailed *Health-Care Advance Directive* form outlining their personal treatment choices may also be carried. • Jehovah's Witness are generally amenable to sign hospital forms that direct that no allogeneic blood transfusion or primary blood components be administered under any circumstances, while releasing doctors, medical personnel, and hospitals from liability for any damages that might result from such refusal (despite otherwise competent care). • They understand the challenge that their decisions can sometimes pose for doctors and nurses. • In an effort to alleviate these situations, they have established a network of Hospital Liaison Committees whose members are trained to facilitate communication between medical staff and Jehovah's Witness patients. • This service is available at any time to assist with difficulties, either at the request of the treating team or the patient.
Mental Health Care	No specific requirements.
Mass Care Facilities	Preference for modesty may result in preference for privacy.

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The Angel Moroni

CHRISTIANITY: MORMONISM

ADHERENTS CONSIDER THEMSELVES CHRISTIAN. ADHERENTS ARE CALLED MORMONS OR LATTER-DAY SAINTS OR SAINTS. THE RELIGION IS CALLED THE CHURCH OF JESUS CHRIST OF LATTER-DAY SAINTS (ALSO KNOWN AS MORMONISM).

U.S. Population	6,267,771
Language (Worship)	English
Founder(s)	Joseph Smith (d. 1844); Brigham Young (1801-1877)
Branches & Denominations	Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints (LDS) is the main denomination. Smaller breakaway and reform denominations (which differ in governance and some points of belief and practice) do exist, both to the right and the left of the mainstream.
Basic Tenets	This religion derives from revelations received by Joseph Smith in upstate New York, and set out in *The Book of Mormon*. It embraces many distinctive beliefs and practices. • It sees itself as restoring the primitive Church of the New Testament, and teaches a form of apostolic succession. • It teaches that God (often called Heavenly Father), who is omniscient, has a material body. • It is centered on Jesus Christ as the firstborn of God, and teaches substitutionary atonement through Christ. • It teaches as well about the Holy Ghost (or Holy Spirit), but its explanation of the nature and interrelationship of Heavenly Father, Jesus Christ, and the Holy Ghost differs significantly from Trinitarian Christianity. Whereas many Christian traditions believe in the Trinity (that God, Jesus and the Holy Spirit are one substance), Mormons believe God the Father, Jesus and the Holy Spirit are separate beings. • Members are believed to be literal spiritual sons and daughters of a living Father in Heaven. • Mortality is a probationary period in which people are to obey the Lord's commandments given through ancient and current prophets, including presidents of the church.
Sacred Texts	• The King James Version of the Bible • *The Book of Mormon* • *Doctrine and Covenants* • *The Pearl of Great Price*
Sacred Buildings/ Structures	• Temples are open only to faithful members for marriages and other sacred ceremonies (and are closed Sundays). • Churches open on Sundays for worship and other services.
Governance (Judicatory)	The movement features a male hierarchical priesthood. It is governed by the First Presidency (the prophet and his counselors) and the Quorum of Twelve Apostles (also considered prophets); their pronouncements are considered authoritative.

CHRISTIANITY: MORMONISM

Governance (Congregation)	Local congregations are administered by unpaid laity.
Point of Contact	• Local: Ward, led by Bishop • Regional: Stake, led by stake president • National: The First Presidency & Quorum of the Twelve Apostles
Religious Leaders	No formal clergy; designated leaders play specific roles; priesthood is limited to men. Women's leadership takes other forms. Local churches are led and staffed by non-paid lay leaders.
Religious Objects/Symbols	LDS church steeples often are topped with an image of the Angel Moroni (from whom Joseph Smith received the revelation which is recorded in the Book of Mormon). Statues and portraits of Jesus are in common use.
Facilitating Practices	Members are open to all conventional and state-of-the-art medical care. • Individuals make their own decisions regarding medical treatment, but may consult with their personal "home teacher" some other church elder, in addition to their physicians and family. • Allow for visits by church representatives; privacy for prayer or ritual (anointing; communion).
Culture & Social Interaction	Although Mormon individuals and families are advised to be prepared spiritually and temporally to meet both problems of everyday life and emergencies that may arise, local church leaders have the responsibility to organize proper responses to assist individuals and families in an emergency. • Local churches are encouraged to prepare detailed emergency preparedness and response plans, based on principles contained in *Providing in the Lord's Way*. Branch Welfare Committees are identified as the coordinators if disaster strikes.
Gender Roles/Interaction	While church leadership is limited to men, women and men are said to be equal in God's eyes. Marriage is considered eternal, with families expecting to be reunited in the hereafter.
Principal Weekly Observance(s)	A "sacrament meeting" is the normative weekly form of worship on Sundays. It includes songs, prayer, distribution of individual portions of sacramental bread and water, talks by young people plus a sermon by an adult lay leader, and a benediction. Mormons also observe family home evenings in which an evening is set aside for family bonding, study, prayer and other wholesome activities on a weekly basis. Mormons refrain from work on Sundays.
Daily Religious Practices	Scripture reading and prayer is considered an important part of daily life.

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CHRISTIANITY: MORMONISM

Holy Days/Festivals	Christmas (commemoration of the birth of Jesus) and Easter (feast marking the resurrection of Jesus) are important celebrations in the church as well as national holidays. Other church-specific holidays include: • July 24: Pioneer Day (commemorates the arrival of Mormon pioneers in the Salt Lake Valley in Utah). • April 6: Date the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints was reorganized by the Prophet Joseph Smith.
Rituals/Ceremonies	• Naming and blessing of children. • Two elders required for ritual of blessing for sick.
Dress (Religious Restrictions)	Observant Mormons wear a sacred undergarment with short sleeves and knee-length legs, which is to be kept out of sight. • Hospitalized Mormons are excused from wearing it. • Patients who wish to wear it nevertheless will appreciate being provided with hospital pants as well as a gown.
Death: Dying Practices	Strong Mormon belief in glorious life after death can facilitate a peaceful, dignified death. • Blessing of the sick may be requested. In this rite, two elders of the church anoint the head of the sick person with consecrated olive oil, and say a special prayer for healing while laying hands upon the patient's head. • When a patient or the patient's family requests the Mormon rite of blessing of the sick, a quiet, private place should be provided, or an effort made to provide privacy in the hospital room. • Mormons believe that, at death, the individual's eternal spirit separates from the body, returns to God, and is reunited with others known before. Therefore, family members may ask the dying person to carry messages to deceased loved ones. • When dying has become inevitable, the church does not require "unreasonable means" be taken, but does oppose active euthanasia. • Mormon patients and their families may be comfortable with DNR (Do Not Resuscitate) orders. • Mormons may practice "baptism for the dead," or posthumous proxy baptisms of deceased ancestors by living volunteers.
Death: Body Preparation	• Organ donation is an individual choice. • Church or family members will usually arrange for the body of a faithful Mormon to be clothed in temple ritual attire for burial. • Burial recommended over cremation, but the decision is left to the family. • Autopsy is permitted.
Dietary Laws and Customs	• Observant LDS members abstain from alcoholic, caffeinated beverages, and tobacco; they are encouraged to consume wholesome herbs, fruits within season, and grains; consumption of meat should be moderate. • Fasting (no food or drink for 24 hours) is required once each month; ill people are not required to fast.

CHRISTIANITY: MORMONISM

Health (Medical Care)	Mormons willingly accept conventional and state-of the-art medical treatment. Typically, a Mormon will want to have a Bible or the Book of Mormon available for reading while hospitalized.
Health (Mental Health)	• The health code in the Latter-day Saints' *The Word of Wisdom* emphasizes a healthy diet and physical and spiritual fitness. • A Mormon experiencing a mental health crisis may appreciate a visit from their personal "home teacher" or another church representative.
Pregnancy and Birth	• Mormons believe that procreation is a central purpose of marriage. • Abortion is forbidden except when mother's life in danger or in the event of rape. • Fertility treatments are acceptable if the genetic material comes from the married couple.
FOR SERVICE PROVIDERS	
Physical Contact	No specific requirements
Dietary Restrictions	Typically, Mormons will refuse caffeinated drinks and alcohol.
Medical Treatment	• Necessary medical treatment can be carried out without delay and surgery and blood transfusions may be carried out as necessary. • Transplants and organ donation are an individual and family matter; there are no religious objections.
Mental Health Care	No specific requirements
Mass Care Facilities	• No specific requirements, other than privacy when undressing or changing clothing (for both genders). • Local LDS congregations have well-organized systems for rendering service to those in need.

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Orthodox Cross

CHRISTIANITY: ORTHODOX

ADHERENTS CONSIDER THEMSELVES CHRISTIAN.
ADHERENTS ARE CALLED ORTHODOX CHRISTIANS.
THE RELIGION IS CALLED ORTHODOX CHRISTIANITY.

U.S. Population	504,530
Language (Worship)	In the U.S., many Orthodox Christian congregations worship in English; some may opt for Greek, Russian, Arabic, or other language.
Branches & Denominations	Orthodox Christianity comprises nearly twenty administratively independent branches that share the same beliefs, sacraments, and canonical discipline. Each maintains the right to elect its own head and its bishops.In the US, the Greek Orthodox Church, the Orthodox Church in America, and the Antiochian Orthodox Church have the most adherents.
Basic Tenets	"Orthodox" means "correct teaching" or "correct worship." • Orthodox Christians believe in God as Trinity—Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. • They believe in the divinity of Jesus Christ (the anointed one). • They venerate Mary as Theotokos (God-bearer). • They believe God founded a Church that is one, holy, catholic, and apostolic. That is, it is in unity with God, shares the holiness of the Trinity, is filled with the truth that embraces all Christians in all times and places, and is a direct descendant in authority, doctrine, and tradition with the first Apostles. • They believe that all of life can be sacramental—filled with God's Holy Spirit by God's grace—but that this divine action is made clear through the Holy Mysteries of baptism, chrismation (anointing with oil after baptism), Eucharist, penance, marriage, holy unction (anointing for healing and forgiveness), and holy orders (ordination of clergy). • Orthodox believe that the Holy Tradition of the Church is continued through the Bible, the Nicene Creed (dating from the 4th century), icons (stylized paintings of Jesus, Mary, and saints), the decrees of the Ecumenical Councils, the Liturgy (patterns of worship), and the writings of the early Christian scholars.
Sacred Texts	• Orthodox Bible, a larger collection of writings than Bibles used by other Christians, with 49 or more books in the Old Testament, but the same New Testament (27 books) found in Bibles used by other Christians. The total number of books of the Bible varies slightly from one branch of Orthodox Christianity to another. • Icons (stylized paintings of Jesus, Mary, and saints) are said to be "written" (rather than "painted"), thus are considered sacred "texts." • The Nicene Creed and the decrees of the Ecumenical Councils are authoritative documents.

CHRISTIANITY: ORTHODOX

Sacred Buildings/ Structures	Church architecture symbolizes the relationship between God and creation. The sanctuary (the area behind the icon screen) is sacred space. • Cathedrals are churches that are also the seat of a jurisdiction (a diocese or archdiocese). • Churches are local houses of worship. The term parish is sometimes used to refer to a church's congregation or the congregation of a particular church. • Monasteries and convents house monks and nuns (respectively), and may also include a chapel and areas for instruction or work. They may have guest space as well.
Governance (Judicatory)	Orthodox Church branches are self-headed, each with its own patriarch. • The ecumenical patriarch of Constantinople (Istanbul) is recognized as the "first among equal" Orthodox bishops. All Orthodox Christians acknowledge his spiritual leadership. • The patriarch of Constantinople also oversees the Greek Archdiocese of America and certain other Orthodox bodies. • The Orthodox Church in America (OCA) is governed by the Holy Synod of Bishops (all diocesan bishops). The head of the synod is the Metropolitan of All-America and Canada. • Archdioceses, Metropolises, and Dioceses are administrative districts led by a bishop who oversees local churches in that jurisdiction.
Governance (Congregation)	Oversight of a local congregation falls to the priest and his staff. A council of congregation-members may also provide oversight and leadership.
Point of Contact	• Local: Congregation (sometimes called "parish"), led by a priest and staff • Regional: Diocese/Archdiocese/Metropolis, led by Bishop (or Metropolitan or Archbishop) • National: For the Orthodox Church in America, the Metropolitan. For Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of America, the Archbishop. • (Other Orthodox churches have their own U.S. heads.)
Religious Leaders	• Orthodox Christian leadership is hierarchical. • A Patriarch is an international head, considered first among equal bishops in his jurisdiction. • Regional leadership falls to bishops (or archbishops or metropolitans). • Priests and deacons provide sacramental and spiritual leadership; priests often are in charge of a local parish (congregation). • Orthodox leadership also includes many deacons, monks, nuns, and laypersons (some in positions of great importance).
Religious Objects/Symbols	• Three-bar cross; crucifix. • Bible. • Icons of Jesus, the Blessed Virgin Mary, and various saints. • Altar, shielded by the iconostasis (a physical screen with icons with doors leading into the sanctuary). • The Sacraments (Baptism, Chrismation, Holy Communion, Matrimony, Anointing the sick, Confession, Ordination). • Right hand held with thumb touching two fingers, remaining two fingers touching palm to symbolize belief in the Triune God and the two natures (divine and human) of Christ. A similar hand position is a symbol of blessing in the name of Jesus.

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CHRISTIANITY: ORTHODOX

Facilitating Practices	An Orthodox priest, deacon, or specially trained and designated lay chaplain should be summoned to perform Orthodox rites for sick or dying persons when requested. (There will be great preference for a priest.)
Gender Roles/Interaction	While church clerical leadership is limited to men, women and men are said to be equal in God's eyes and women do have leadership roles in the life of the church,.
Principal Weekly Observance(s)	The Divine Liturgy (which includes Holy Communion) is the principal weekly observance.
Daily Religious Practices	Orthodox Christianity encourages daily prayer and meditation, spiritual reading, and a desire to put into practice God's will in one's daily live. Orthodox Christians fast on Wednesdays and Fridays, plus four extended periods: • Great Lent (the seven weeks before Pascha). • Nativity Fast (40 days, November 15th through December 24th). • Fast of the Apostles (from the Monday eight days after Pentecost until June 28th —the Feast of Saints Peter and Paul). • Dormition Fast (August 1st-14th, in honor of death of the Virgin Mary). • Fasting involves abstinence from red meat, poultry, meat products, eggs, dairy products, fish, oil, and wine—with provision for eating some of these items on certain days during the long fasting periods. A spiritual guide may also grant other exemptions. December 24th is a strict fast.
Holy Days/Festivals	Orthodox Christians live by an annual calendar marked by twelve Great Feasts, and specific liturgical seasons (each with its own emphasis). This calendar begins in mid-November with the Nativity Fast, and includes many holidays—some of which are observed by other Christians. Orthodox Christians also observe a calendar of saint's days. Some of the major Orthodox Christian holidays (also observed by many Christian denominations) include: • The Nativity of Christ (Christmas): a celebration of birth of Jesus as God Incarnate. • Epiphany (12 days after the Nativity): a time of blessing of homes with holy water to recall Jesus' baptism. • The entry of Jesus into Jerusalem (Palm Sunday): one week before Pascha. • Great and Holy Friday: commemoration of the death of Christ on the Cross, beginning with worship on Thursday evening and concluding with Vespers on Friday afternoon. • Pascha: This ritual, preceded by a Vigil on Saturday evening which continues until dawn, celebrates the resurrection of Jesus from the dead. • Pentecost: commemorating the receipt of the Holy Spirit by the nascent Christian community, fifty days after Jesus' Resurrection.

CHRISTIANITY: ORTHODOX

Rituals/Ceremonies	Orthodox Christians observe many ritual practices, some of which are considered sacraments (outward and visible signs of inward and spiritual divine grace). These include: • Baptism: makes one a member of the Body of Christ. • Chrismation (also known as Confirmation): anointing with oil through which a baptized person is granted the gift of the Holy Spirit; normally combined with baptism. For converts who were baptized in other branches of Christianity, this is the entry rite to membership in the Orthodox Church. • Eucharist/Holy Communion: a ritual meal of consecrated bread and wine, which Orthodox Christians believe has become, through the power of the Holy Spirit, the Precious Body and Blood of Jesus Christ. • Confession. • Holy Anointing: anointing with oil for the provision of spiritual and physical healing; administered universally during Hoy Week, but available at any time—especially for the seriously ill. • Matrimony: sanctification of the contract of a Christian marriage. • Ordination: imposition of hands by a bishop, which confers on a candidate the ability to sanctify others through the holy and proper administration of the sacraments.
Dress (Religious Restrictions)	Mandated attire for laypersons in the U.S. is unlikely; while head covering at worship for women is the norm in Orthodox Christianity, it is often dispensed within U.S. parishes. Clergy, monks, and nuns usually wear identifying garb. • Clergy may wear traditional long black robe (cassock) or a black suit with a black shirt and white circular collar, but sometimes appear in secular settings in street clothes. • Clergy don ceremonial clothing when conducting services. • Monks and nuns wear distinctive identifying garments (habits).

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CHRISTIANITY: ORTHODOX

Death: Dying Practices	While the Orthodox Church has a high regard for the preservation and dignity of life (including the life of the sick, disabled, and unborn) it does not obligate its members to seek or agree to gravely burdensome or ineffective life-sustaining interventions. • Analgesics may be used in sufficient amounts to relieve pain, even if life is thereby shortened, so long as hastening death is not the intended effect. • Orthodox Christians believe in life after death. • The Sacrament of Anointing is very important when an Orthodox Christian is ill; the full liturgy of anointing is quite solemn and elaborate, with seven priests participating; an abbreviated form is used in an emergency. • When death is imminent, the Sacrament of Confession may also be requested. Families will request the presence of a priest. • Orthodox Christians believe that a child who dies unbaptized is in God's hands; they are not concerned for the safety of the child's soul. While it is, therefore, not necessary, Orthodox Christian families may, however, request an emergency baptism for a child whose life is in danger. This is seen as a fitting additional blessing. If no priest is available, the local bishop should be called for advice on how to proceed. • In the case of a stillbirth, the Orthodox Church provides an order of service with specific prayers. • When an Orthodox Christian approaches death, a priest is to be notified, and he will perform the Office of the Parting of the Soul from the Body. This rite includes portions for the dying person to say in his or her voice (when possible). • While this rite is intended to end when the person has died; the priest then says the Prayer After Death. When necessary, the priest may make one or more visits to the dying person after performing the Office of the Parting of the Soul from the Body.
Death: Body Preparation	The body of the deceased is to be treated with respect. Autopsy and organ donation are acceptable. Orthodox families may make funeral arrangements with their local parish and funeral home. • The normal practice is to plan a morning funeral service with a wake the evening before. • An open casket is the norm in an Orthodox funeral. • Family and friends will gather after the service to pay respect to the family of the deceased. • Cremation is not permitted. • Embalming is permitted. However, some parishes are reclaiming the responsibility of preparing the body for burial.
Dietary Laws and Customs	• Many Orthodox Christians take very seriously the fasting customs of the church, which involve abstinence from red meat, poultry, meat products, eggs, dairy products, fish, oil, and wine—with provision for eating some of these items on certain days during the long fasting periods. • The sick, the elderly, and pregnant or nursing women may be excused from the requirements of the fast. • Some Orthodox Christians such as members of the Ethiopian Church do not eat pork products.

CHRISTIANITY: ORTHODOX

Health (Medical Care)	Many Orthodox Christians will be open to conventional and state-of-the-art medical procedures. Use of blood or blood products is acceptable. • During illness, Orthodox Christians may receive spiritual strength by availing themselves of sacraments: Anointing; Confession; Eucharist (Holy Communion). • If the patient is able to receive food or liquid by mouth, Eucharist (Holy Communion) can be brought to the patient. If the patient is restricted from taking food or liquid by mouth, another rite or sacrament may be administered. • Orthodox Christians may practice daily prayer when hospitalized. • They may wish to have an icon available on their bed-stand. There may be a desire to have such items accompany the patient into surgery. Care should be taken so that such devotional items do not get lost. • They may wish to have a small prayer book at their bedside. • They often wear a cross around their neck that should not be removed unless absolutely necessary. • Orthodox Christians have their own networks of pastoral and social services.
Health (Mental Health)	No objection to normative mental health practices and treatment.
Pregnancy and Birth	Orthodox Christians hold a variety of attitudes toward birth control. There is an opportunity for prayer at the birth, certainly during the first day (for the child and the mother); another set for the eighth day and again at the fortieth day. Usually, a priest performs these; if no priest is available, the local bishop should be contacted. Orthodox Christianity opposes abortion except in cases where the life of the mother is in jeopardy.
FOR SERVICE PROVIDERS	
Physical Contact	No specific requirements.
Dietary Restrictions	Generally, no specific requirements, except during fasting seasons.
Medical Treatment	Generally accepting of all conventional and state-of-the-art medical care.
Mental Health Care	Generally accepting of standard care.
Mass Care Facilities	Access to a priest will be appreciated. Provision should be made for the celebration of Divine Liturgy on Sundays. Beyond this, no specific requirements. Ethnically, Orthodoxy is a highly diverse branch of Christianity, and this diversity is intense in the U.S. context. Many U.S. Orthodox Christians speak English, but some will be more skilled in some other language; possibilities include Greek and Russian, but there are many others.

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Pentecostal Cross and Flame

CHRISTIANITY: PENTECOSTALISM

ADHERENTS CONSIDER THEMSELVES CHRISTIAN.
ADHERENTS ARE CALLED CHRISTIANS, PENTECOSTAL CHRISTIANS, OR CHARISMATIC CHRISTIANS.
THE RELIGION IS CALLED PENTECOSTAL CHRISTIANITY.

U.S. Population	5,779,641
Language (Worship)	English (with some U.S. congregations worshiping in any of a number of other languages).
Founder(s)	Decisive figures in Pentecostalism include William Seymour, Aimee Semple McPherson, Oral Roberts, and Chuck Smith.
Branches & Denominations	Over 700 different denominations; 240 are classified as part of Wesleyan, Holiness, or Methodism, including Assemblies of God, Church of God, International Church of the Foursquare Gospel, and Church of God in Christ.
Basic Tenets	As an umbrella term, Pentecostalism covers a large diversity of denominations and independent churches. Many Pentecostal churches are autonomous in their operation. The majority of Pentecostals believe: • In a personal relationship with God through Christ, in the importance of study of the Bible by laypersons, in freedom of conscience on many matters, and a variety in worship styles. • Jesus of Nazareth is considered God Incarnate. The birth, ministry, death, and resurrection of Jesus are definitive. • Pentecostals are Trinitarian in their understanding of the nature of God. • The Holy Spirit is of primary importance to all Pentecostals, and can dwell in the individual, often giving them particular "gifts" such as prophecy and healing. • Many believe in the power of the Holy Spirit to impart miraculous healing through the work of those who are under his power.
Sacred Texts	The Christian Bible (comprising an Old Testament of 39 Books and the 27 books of the New Testament) is foundational for all Pentecostal. Many interpret the Bible literally. Some insist on the King James Version; others prefer (or even require) more recent translations, at least for reading in public worship.
Sacred Buildings/ Structures	Many Pentecostals call their worship-site a "church." Some call it a meetinghouse; a few call it a cathedral (but may not use it in the same manner as Catholics and Anglicans do). It is common for church-buildings to have a steeple topped with a cross. Some Pentecostals meet in borrowed space (e.g. a school auditorium) or use a commercial space. Congregations can be small storefront churches or large-scale campuses with multiple buildings.
Governance (Judicatory)	Some Pentecostals churches are part of a hierarchical governing structure (e.g. the Assemblies of God or Church of God in Christ); others are part of a loose federation; still others are completely free-standing and independent.

CHRISTIANITY: PENTECOSTALISM

Governance (Congregation)	Many local congregations (even those of denominations with a robust regional or national governing structure) are self-governing. Often, local governance is in the hands of an elected committee.
Point of Contact	• Local: Local congregations are usually led by a pastor • Regional: Varies by denomination (sometimes a Bishop or judicatory body) • National: Varies by denomination (usually a national judicatory body)
Religious Leaders	Common terms for Pentecostal leaders include: minister, pastor, deacon, elder, and bishop. • Some Pentecostals use the term "the Reverend" as a noun meaning "clergyperson"; some use it only as an adjective. • In some traditions, deacons are clergy; in others, it is a temporary elected office.
Religious Objects/Symbols	The cross is a major symbol for Pentecostals; the empty cross is generally used rather than a crucifix, in order to emphasize the Risen Christ. The Bible itself is a symbol. Many denominations have a distinguishing symbol or logo.
Facilitating Practices	Ask family what practices they support and provide privacy as needed.
Culture & Social Interaction	Some Pentecostals are conservative on social issues; others are less so; few are liberal.
Gender Roles/Interaction	Most Pentecostal denominations and churches limit their authority structure and leadership roles to men; some allow for leadership roles for women.
Principal Weekly Observance(s)	Most Pentecostals gather weekly for communal worship involving singing, Bible readings, and a sermon. • Many do this on Sunday mornings; a few meet on Saturday. • Many hold Sunday school for children; some also provide Sunday morning educational opportunities for adults as well. • Some hold (and may even expect all to attend) mid-week Bible Study.
Daily Religious Practices	Pentecostal Christians are encouraged to pray daily and to engage in daily Bible study.
Holy Days/Festivals	• Christmas (commemoration of the birth of Jesus) and Easter (feast marking the resurrection of Jesus) are major holidays for all Pentecostal Christians. • Some also observe Palm Sunday (a feast Sunday before Easter marking Jesus' entry into Jerusalem), Maundy Thursday (last Thursday before Easter; celebration of Jesus' last supper), and Good Friday (Friday before Easter; commemorating the crucifixion of Jesus). • Pentecost (the celebration of the receipt of the Holy Spirit by Jesus' followers) is recognized by many, and is a major celebration for some. • Some follow a liturgical calendar similar to Roman Catholic practice, thus observing the seasons of Advent (beginning four Sundays before Christmas) and Lent (a period of six weeks before Easter involving spiritual renewal through self-reflection, fasting, alms giving, and prayer). • Some Pentecostal Christians observe days related to their denominational history. • Thanksgiving Day (a U.S. national holiday) is celebrated as a religious holiday by some Pentecostal churches.

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CHRISTIANITY: PENTECOSTALISM

Rituals/Ceremonies	Many Pentecostal churches maintain two characteristically Christian practices: Baptism and Communion/Lord's Supper. However, they can be sorted into several categories according to how they perform these rites and with what meaning. • Many Pentecostal churches reserve baptism for adults (or children who are old enough to choose their religion), and may characterize themselves as "Born-Again Christians." • Many Pentecostals see baptism as part of testifying publicly that one has become Christian by accepting Jesus Christ as one's personal Lord and Savior (or, as an act of obedience, now that one is Christian). • Some Pentecostals incorporate Communion/the Lord's Supper (a ritual involving the sharing of bread and cup—which for some contains wine, but for many contains grape juice) into their regular Sunday worship once a month; others, once a quarter; still others, once a year. A few Pentecostal denominations do this weekly.
Dress (Religious Restrictions)	Few Pentecostal denominations have clothing requirements for daily or Sunday clothing. • In stressing modesty, a few insist that women must always wear a dress or skirt (never trousers). • A few denominations or sects require women to cover their heads when attending worship, for example the Church of Our Lord Jesus Christ of the Apostolic Faith, The Pentecostal Mission, the Deeper Christian Life Ministry, and the Christian Congregation in the United States; the Plymouth Brethren; and the more conservative Scottish Presbyterian and Dutch Reformed churches. This belief stems from 1 Corinthians 11, "But every woman praying or prophesying with her head unveiled dishonors her head. For it is one and the same thing as if she were shaved. 6 For if a woman is not covered, let her also be shorn. But if it is shameful for a woman to be shorn or shaved, let her be covered." • A very few require women to wear a distinctive head-covering at all times, and may also have a distinctive comprehensive dress code for all members. • There is no standard attire for all Pentecostal clergy. • Many wear a business suit or other more casual street clothing; some may wear academic robes. • Pentecostal choirs often wear robes or some other uniform when participating in worship.
Death: Dying Practices	• Pentecostals usually prefer family or close friends to be at the bedside of a dying person; they may also find their pastor to be a reassuring companion at such a time. • Reading of scripture (especially the Psalms) to the dying and saying of bedside prayers are common practices. • Pentecostals have no essential end-of-life sacraments, although may request anointing.
Death: Body Preparation	• Many Pentecostals make use of a funeral home. There are no universally mandated Pentecostal practices regarding preparation of the body. Embalming is common, as is the holding of "visitation" at the funeral home on the evening preceding the funeral. Some hold a short funeral at the funeral home, and then proceed immediately to burial or cremation. • Some Pentecostals hold a church funeral (with the body present in a casket); some prefer a church memorial service several days (or longer) after the burial or cremation. • Many Pentecostals bury their dead, although cremation has become popular.

CHRISTIANITY: PENTECOSTALISM

Dietary Laws and Customs	Few restrictions or requirements in this category.
Health (Medical Care)	Attitudes in this category are wide-ranging. While these attitudes may be informed by Pentecostal Christian faith, many denominations have no medical care policies that members must follow. • Generally, Pentecostal Christians are comfortable with the full range of conventional medical treatment options. • Some will demand extraordinary means be taken to sustain life; others are quite comfortable to "allow natural death." • Some are comfortable with notions of organ transplantation; others are not. • May request prayers for healing, however these rarely supplant other medical care, but may be seen as supplemental or complimentary.
Health (Mental Health)	Generally, Pentecostal Christians are comfortable with the full range of conventional mental healthcare options.
Pregnancy and Birth	Attitudes in this category are wide-ranging.
FOR SERVICE PROVIDERS	
Physical Contact	No specific concerns or recommendations. Generalizations may not be helpful here.
Dietary Restrictions	With regard to many Pentecostal Christians, none which are religiously mandated.
Medical Treatment	No specific concerns or recommendations. Generalizations may not be helpful here.
Mental Health Care	No specific concerns or recommendations. Generalizations may not be helpful here.
Mass Care Facilities	Pentecostal Christians will appreciate being able to hold Sunday worship. Because of the wide range of theological and social attitudes, it may be necessary to allow for more than one Pentecostal worship opportunity in a mass care situation. Pentecostal Christians will appreciate opportunities to hold Bible study.

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Christian Cross

CHRISTIANITY: PROTESTANTISM (Mainline)

ADHERENTS CONSIDER THEMSELVES CHRISTIAN.
ADHERENTS ARE CALLED CHRISTIANS (OR, ARE CALLED BY THE NAME OF THEIR DENOMINATION, E.G., METHODISTS, LUTHERANS, BAPTISTS).
THE RELIGION IS CALLED PROTESTANTISM (OR, IS CALLED BY A DENOMINATIONAL NAME SUCH AS METHODISM).

U.S. Population	22,568,258
Language (Worship)	English (with some U.S. congregations worshiping in any of a number of other languages).
Founder(s)	Decisive figures in the Protestant Reformation (and related movements) include Martin Luther, John Calvin, Huldrych Zwingli, John Hus, Thomas Cranmer, and Queen Elizabeth I. Each denomination of Protestantism acknowledges its own founders as well.
Branches & Denominations	Numerous denominations including but not limited to: African Methodist Episcopal Church, American Baptist Churches USA, Christian Church (Disciples of Christ), Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), United Church of Christ, United Methodist Church, Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA), etc. Episcopalians, although discussed separately by this Primer, are often caucused with mainline Protestant Christianity.
Basic Tenets	As an umbrella term, Protestant Christianity covers an enormous diversity of denominations and sects. The list is long, and includes groups whose views and practices differ sharply with each other. Many Protestant churches are autonomous in their operation. Beliefs and practices can vary even within the same denomination. Meaningful generalization is difficult, but the following tenets are foundational and relatively consistent throughout denominations. • Protestantism is characterized by assertion of a personal relationship with God through Christ, study of the Bible by laypersons, freedom of conscience on many matters, and a variety in worship styles. • Jesus of Nazareth is considered (by many) God Incarnate. The birth, ministry, death, and resurrection of Jesus are definitive. • Protestants are Trinitarian in their understanding of the nature of God. • The Holy Spirit is important to all Protestants, but receives more emphasis from some than from others.
Sacred Texts	The Christian Bible (comprising the Old Testament of 39 books and the 27 books of the New Testament) is foundational for all Protestants. Some interpret the Bible quite literally; many do not. Some insist on the King James Version; others prefer (or even require) more recent translations, at least for reading in public worship. Anglican Christians worship according to the Book of Common Prayer. Some other Protestant denominations have handbooks that guide the style and content of their worship, as well as other matters. As used by Protestant Christians, the hymnal can be considered an auxiliary sacred text.

CHRISTIANITY: PROTESTANTISM (Mainline)

Sacred Buildings/ Structures	Many Protestants call their worship-site a "church." Some call it a meetinghouse; a few call it a cathedral (but may not use it in the same as Catholics and Anglicans do). It is common for church-buildings to have a steeple topped with a cross. Some Protestants meet in borrowed space (e.g. a school auditorium) or use a commercial space. Congregations can be small storefront churches or large-scale campuses with multiple buildings.
Governance (Judicatory)	Some Mainline Protestant churches are part of a hierarchical governing structure (e.g. the United Methodist Church; the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America); others are part of a loose federation; still others are completely free-standing and independent.
Governance (Congregation)	Many local congregations (even those of denominations with a robust regional or national governing structure) are self-governing. Often, local governance is in the hands of an elected committee.
Point of Contact	• Local: Local congregations are usually led by a pastor. • Regional: Varies by denomination (usually a Bishop or judicatory body) • Varies by denomination (usually a national judicatory body)
Religious Leaders	Common terms for Protestant leaders include: minister, pastor, priest (Anglican/ Episcopal tradition), deacon, elder, bishop. • Some Protestants use the term "the Reverend" as a noun meaning "clergyperson"; some use it only as an adjective. • In some traditions, deacons are clergy; in others, it is a temporary elected office. • Women may be clergy in some Protestant denominations.
Religious Objects/Symbols	The cross is a major symbol for many Protestants; the empty cross is generally used rather than a crucifix, in order to emphasize the Risen Christ. The Bible itself may be used as a symbol. Many denominations have a distinguishing symbol or logo.
Facilitating Practices	Ask family what practices they turn to for support and provide privacy as needed.
Culture & Social Interaction	Some Mainline Protestants are conservative on social issues; others are liberal; many are somewhere in the middle. Because of the breadth of Protestantism, generalizations are unhelpful here.
Gender Roles/Interaction	Many Protestant denominations are quite egalitarian, with no gender qualifications for leadership roles or participation in worship. A few limit leadership roles to men.
Principal Weekly Observance(s)	Most Mainline Protestants gather weekly for communal worship involving singing hymns, Bible readings, and a sermon. • Most do this on Sunday mornings. • Many hold Sunday school for children; some also provide Sunday morning educational opportunities for adults as well. • Some hold (and may even expect all to attend) mid-week Bible Study.
Daily Religious Practices	Protestant Christians are encouraged to pray daily and to engage in daily Bible study.

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CHRISTIANITY: PROTESTANTISM (Mainline)

Holy Days/Festivals	• Christmas (commemoration of the birth of Jesus) and Easter (feast marking the resurrection of Jesus) are major holidays for many Protestants. • Many also observe Palm Sunday (a feast Sunday before Easter marking Jesus' entry into Jerusalem), Maundy Thursday (last Thursday before Easter; celebration of Jesus' last supper), and Good Friday (Friday before Easter; commemorating the crucifixion of Jesus). • Pentecost (the celebration of the receipt of the Holy Spirit by Jesus' followers) is recognized by many, and is a major celebration for some. • Some follow a liturgical calendar similar to Roman Catholic practice, thus observing the seasons of Advent (beginning four Sundays before Christmas) and Lent (a period of six weeks before Easter involving spiritual renewal through self-reflection, fasting, alms giving, and prayer). • Some Protestants observe days related to their denominational history. • In the U.S., some congregations celebrate "Homecoming Sunday" (usually in late summer; a time when people who have been away from the church return). • Thanksgiving Day (a U.S. national holiday) is celebrated as a religious holiday by some Protestant churches.
Rituals/Ceremonies	Many Protestant churches maintain two characteristically Christian practices: Baptism and Communion/Lord's Supper. However, they can be sorted into several categories according to how they perform these rites and with what meaning. • Some Protestant churches baptize infants by sprinkling or pouring water on their head. Some reserve baptism for adults (or children who are old enough to choose their religion). A few churches do not conduct water baptisms at all. • Some Protestants say that baptism makes the person a Christian; others see baptism as part of testifying publicly that one has become a Christian by accepting Jesus Christ as one's personal Lord and Savior (or, as an act of obedience, now that one is a Christian). • Some Protestants incorporate Communion/the Lord's Supper (a ritual involving the sharing of bread and cup, which for some contains wine, but for many contains grape juice) into their regular Sunday worship once a month; others, once a quarter; still others, once a year. A few Protestant denominations do this weekly; a very few (Anglicans, notably) allow for daily Communion (or at least mid-week Communion). Even fewer do this not practice a Communion ritual at all. • A few denominations (Anglicans and Lutherans, notably) interpret Communion sacramentally (i.e. they believe in the Real Presence of Jesus in the bread and the wine/juice); many describe it as an ordinance or a memorial (a ritual performed because Jesus requires it, performed in remembrance of him).
Dress (Religious Restrictions)	Few Protestant denominations have clothing requirements for daily or Sunday clothing. • In stressing modesty, a few insist that women must always wear a dress or skirt (never trousers). • A few denominations or sects require women to cover their heads when attending worship. • A very few require women to wear a distinctive head-covering at all times, and may also have a distinctive comprehensive dress code for all members. • There is no standard attire for all Protestant clergy. • Some wear a black shirt and white clerical collar resembling those worn by Catholic priests; others dress in the same manner as their lay members. • When conducting worship, some Protestant clergy wear elaborate robes similar to what is worn by Catholic priests during Mass; others wear a black academic robe; still others wear street clothing. • Protestant choirs often wear robes or some other uniform when participating in worship.

CHRISTIANITY: PROTESTANTISM (Mainline)

Death: Dying Practices	• Protestants usually prefer family or close friends to be at the bedside of a dying person; they may also find their pastor to be a reassuring companion at such a time. • Reading of scripture (especially the Psalms) to the dying and saying of bedside prayers are common practices. • Protestants have no essential end-of-life sacraments, although some Lutherans or other denominations may request anointing.
Death: Body Preparation	• Many Protestants make use of a funeral home. There are no universally mandated Protestant practices regarding preparation of the body. Embalming is common, as is the holding of "visitation" at the funeral home on the evening preceding the funeral. Some hold a short funeral at the funeral home, then proceed immediately to burial or cremation. • Some Protestants hold a church funeral (with the body present in a casket); some prefer a church memorial service several days (or longer) after the burial or cremation. • Many Protestants bury their dead, although cremation has become popular.
Dietary Laws and Customs	Few restrictions or requirements in this category.
Health (Medical Care)	Attitudes in this category are wide-ranging. While these attitudes may be informed by Protestant Christian faith, many denominations have no medical care policies that members must follow. • Generally, Protestant Christians are comfortable with the full range of conventional medical treatment options. • Some will demand extraordinary means be taken to sustain life; others are quite comfortable to "allow natural death." • Some are comfortable with notions of organ transplantation; others are not.
Health (Mental Health)	Generally, Protestant Christians are comfortable with the full range of conventional mental healthcare options.
Pregnancy and Birth	Attitudes in this category are wide-ranging.
FOR SERVICE PROVIDERS	
Physical Contact	No specific concerns or recommendations. Generalizations may not be helpful here.
Dietary Restrictions	With regard to many Protestant Christians, none which are religiously mandated.
Medical Treatment	No specific concerns or recommendations. Generalizations may not be helpful here.
Mental Health Care	No specific concerns or recommendations. Generalizations may not be helpful here.
Mass Care Facilities	Protestant Christians will appreciate being able to hold Sunday worship. Because of the wide range of theological and social attitudes, it may be necessary to allow for more than one Protestant worship opportunity in a mass care situation. Protestant Christians will appreciate opportunities to hold Bible study.

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Crucifix

CHRISTIANITY: ROMAN CATHOLICISM

ADHERENTS CONSIDER THEMSELVES CHRISTIAN.
ADHERENTS ARE CALLED ROMAN CATHOLICS, OR CATHOLICS.
THE RELIGION IS CALLED ROMAN CATHOLICISM (OR SIMPLY CATHOLICISM).

U.S. Population	58,964,000
Language (Worship)	In the U.S., many Roman Catholic congregations primarily worship in English; some may worship in Latin, and others may worship in the primary language of the congregation e.g. Greek, Russian, or Spanish.
Branches & Denominations	A variety of Catholic Churches other than "Roman Catholic" are found in many cities. Many are in communion with the Roman Catholic Church (the Chaldean Catholic Church being but one example); others are not (one example being the Old Catholic Church).
Basic Tenets	Roman Catholicism teaches that the Church is the repository of the fullness of the teachings of Jesus and the Apostles, which is preserved in the written scripture and in church tradition. Doctrinal authority founded in the Bible and the actions of the seven Ecumenical Councils of the early church. Thus the Nicene Creed and the Chalcedonian Definition express official doctrine. The Roman Catholic Church maintains: • Belief in Jesus Christ as God Incarnate; Trinitarian understanding of the nature of God. • Belief in apostolic succession (direct, continuous descent of leadership from Jesus' apostles to the present), in the headship of the Pope in Rome, and in the threefold ministry of bishops, priests, and deacons. • Strong liturgical tradition. • Emphasis on the necessity and efficacy of seven Holy Sacraments, including baptism, Eucharist, prayers for the sick, marriage, confirmation and confession/penance, and holy orders/ordination. • Belief in transubstantiation, the notion that during the ritual of the Eucharist, the elements of bread and wine become the actual body and blood of Christ. • Emphasis on the veneration of Mary, the Mother of Jesus, and of the saints.
Sacred Texts	• Roman Catholic Bible (73 books, the Old Testament including 46, whereas the Protestant Old Testament has only 39)—with preferred translations being the New American Bible and the New Jerusalem Bible. • The Missal is the worshiper's guide during the Eucharist. • The Apostles' Creed and the Nicene Creed are authoritative documents incorporated into orders of worship.
Sacred Buildings/ Structures	• Basilicas are large churches. • Cathedrals are churches that are also the seat of a geographic bishop's jurisdiction (a diocese or archdiocese). • Churches are local houses of worship. The term parish is sometimes used to refer to a church's congregation or the congregation of a particular church. • Monasteries and convents house monks and nuns (respectively), and may also include a chapel and areas for instruction or work.

CHRISTIANITY: ROMAN CATHOLICISM

Governance (Judicatory)	• Holy See/Vatican: the international headquarters for Roman Catholicism, with leadership centralized in the Curia headed by a Pope. • U.S. Catholic Conference of Bishops is the seat of administration for U.S. Catholics nationally. Its offices are in Washington, D.C. • Archdioceses and Dioceses are administrative districts lead by a bishop and oversee local parishes in that geographic area. • Some Roman Catholic institutions and orders fall outside the supervision of these bodies of governance.
Governance (Congregation)	A local congregation is called a parish. Oversight may fall entirely to the pastor and his staff; it may fall, on the other hand, to an elected Parish Council.
Point of Contact	• Local: Parish, led by a priest and staff • Regional: Diocese/Archdiocese, led by Bishop, Archbishop or Cardinal • National: U.S. Catholic Conference of Bishops under jurisdiction of a Pope
Religious Leaders	Roman Catholic leadership is hierarchical. Ordained leadership roles are limited to men. Women can serve as nuns, sisters, or have other leadership opportunities. • A Pope is the international head; under certain circumstances, his pronouncements are considered infallible. • Regional leadership falls to archbishops and bishops. • Priests and deacons provide sacramental and spiritual leadership at all levels; many are in charge of a local parish (congregation). • Cardinals are priests (usually bishops) specially designated to become part of an advisory council "college" to the Pope. The also elect popes. • Monsignor is an honorific title conferred upon some priests. • Catholic leadership also includes many monks and nuns. • Some U.S. parishes have lay administrators who perform many of the duties and take on many of the roles once the exclusive domain of clergy. • Brothers and Sisters are non-ordained (lay) leaders who have usually taken a vow of poverty, celibacy, and obedience and often live an active vocation of both prayer and service.
Religious Objects/Symbols	• Crucifix; cross • Bible • Rosary (prayer beads) • The Seven Sacraments • Paintings and statues of Jesus, the Blessed Virgin Mary, various Saints • Various symbols (e.g. the Holy Water, Sacred Heart of Jesus)
Facilitating Practices	A Roman Catholic priest, deacon, or specially trained and authorized layperson should be summoned to perform the rite of anointing for a sick or dying person when requested. • Some Roman Catholics refuse visitation by clergy or chaplains who are not Roman Catholic; others will accept such visits, but for prayer or quiet conversation only.
Gender Roles/Interaction	While church leadership is limited to men, women and men are said to be equal in God's eyes.

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CHRISTIANITY: ROMAN CATHOLICISM

Principal Weekly Observance(s)	Roman Catholics are obliged to attend Mass Saturday or Sunday and receive Holy Communion once yearly (called "Easter Duty", and one of the laws of the Church). Holy Communion may be received more frequently (up to once daily). The sacrament of confession is required for sins classified as "mortal" sins. While some take the sacrament weekly, for many it is celebrated on a less frequent basis.
Daily Religious Practices	Roman Catholicism encourages daily prayer and meditation, spiritual reading, and a desire to put into practice God's will in one's daily live. • Common daily practices include praying the Rosary, Liturgy of the Hours, and Stations of the Cross to name just a few. • Some Catholics attend Mass daily.
Holy Days/Festivals	Roman Catholics follow an annual calendar that divides the year into liturgical seasons (each with its own emphasis and colors to be used in adorning the worship space). This calendar begins in late November or early December with Advent, and includes many holidays—some of which are observed by other Christians, others of which are peculiar to Roman Catholics (e.g. the Feast of Our Lady of Guadalupe, which celebrates the Virgin Mary as the mother of the Americas). This calendar also pairs many days of the year with a saint who is to be honored on that day. Some major Roman Catholic holidays (also observed by many Christian denominations) include: • Christmas: a celebration of birth of Jesus as God Incarnate. • Ash Wednesday: the beginning of the Lenten season. • Holy Week: leads up to Easter; begins with Palm/Passion Sunday, recalling Jesus' return to Jerusalem; includes Holy Thursday (recalling Jesus' institution of the practice of Holy Communion during his last meal with his disciples; observance may include ceremonial foot-washing of parishioners the feet as Christ did at "The Last Supper") and Good Friday (recalling Jesus' crucifixion). • Easter Sunday: The most important point in the Christian year celebrating the resurrection of Jesus from the dead. • Pentecost: commemorating the receipt of the Holy Spirit by the nascent Christian community, fifty days after Jesus' Resurrection; considered the birthday of the Church
Rituals/Ceremonies	Roman Catholics observe many ritual practices, the most important of which are considered sacraments (outward and visible signs of inward and spiritual divine grace). These include: • Baptism: mitigates original sin and makes one a member of the Body of Christ. • Confirmation: by which a Catholic receives the Holy Spirit and becomes an adult member of the Church. • Eucharist: a ritual meal, often called Mass, during which Catholics believe the bread and wine are transformed into the actual Body and Blood of Christ. • Reconciliation: involves the confession and forgiveness of sins. • Matrimony: sanctification of the contract of a Christian marriage. • Holy Orders: imposition of hands by a bishop, which confers on a candidate the ability to sanctify others through the holy and proper administration of the sacraments. • Anointing (Sacrament of the Sick): a ritual for healing; sometimes still called "Last Rites", but which may be performed at times and for reasons other than imminent death.

CHRISTIANITY: ROMAN CATHOLICISM

Dress (Religious Restrictions)	No mandated attire for lay persons. Clergy, monks, and nuns may wear identifying garb called habits required by their "order" (leadership). • Clergy often wear a black suit with a black shirt and white circular collar, but sometimes appear in street clothes. • Clergy don ceremonial clothing when conducting services. • Some monks and nuns wear distinctive identifying garments (habits).
Death: Dying Practices	While the Roman Catholic Church has a high regard for the preservation and dignity of life (including the life of the sick, disabled, and unborn) it does not obligate its members to seek or agree to gravely burdensome or ineffective life-sustaining interventions. • Analgesics may be used in sufficient amounts to relieve pain, even if life is thereby shortened, so long as hastening death is not the intended effect. • Roman Catholics believe in life after death. Because a priest is viewed as an intermediary between the believer and God, and one whose prayers have special merit, a priest is often requested at the time of death. • Sacrament of the Sick (Anointing) is very important, especially when death is imminent; the Sacrament of Reconciliation may also be requested. • Even when all sacramental care has been provided earlier, families may request the presence of a priest when death is imminent. • Roman Catholic families may request an emergency baptism for a child whose life is in danger. • Any chaplain (or even a nurse or a parent) can baptize in an emergency. • When someone other than a Roman Catholic clergyman performs an emergency baptism, the Roman Catholic chaplain or local parish should be notified so that the baptism can be registered in the local parish and a certificate can be issued. • While the deceased are not baptized, a family sometimes requests baptism of a stillborn infant or miscarried fetus; typically, a Roman Catholic chaplain will provide a naming ritual and a prayer of commendation.
Death: Body Preparation	The body of the deceased is to be treated with respect. Autopsy and organ donation are acceptable. Roman Catholic families may make funeral arrangements with their local parish and funeral home; this and usually includes plans for a wake. • The timing and style of the wake varies with the ethnicity of the deceased. • The funeral traditionally is held in a Catholic church, and may include a Mass. • Family and friends will gather after the service to pay respect to the family of the deceased. • Burial is preferred. • The body is embalmed and prepared for burial services • Roman Catholics may wish that an amputated limb be buried in consecrated ground.
Dietary Laws and Customs	Many Roman Catholics take very seriously laws of fasting and abstinence, refraining from eating meat on certain days and to limiting the quantity of food on other days. • During the season of Lent, Roman Catholics are required to abstain from eating meat on Fridays, but may eat fish.

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CHRISTIANITY: ROMAN CATHOLICISM

Health (Medical Care)	Many Roman Catholics will be open to conventional and state-of-the-art medical procedures. Use of blood or blood products is acceptable. • During an illness, Roman Catholics may receive spiritual strength by availing themselves of sacraments: • Sacrament of the Sick (anointing with oil by a priest), which is no longer limited to "Last Rites." • Sacrament of Reconciliation, which involves confessing one's sins to a priest in order to experience God's love and forgiveness, to resolve personal issues, or to prepare for death. The confidentiality of a confession to a priest is protected legally; medical personnel will want to facilitate the patient's privacy for this. • Eucharist (Holy Communion), which can be brought to the patient, if attending Mass is not possible. If the patient is restricted from taking food or liquid by mouth, the consecrated wafer may be touched to the patient's lips instead. Catholics may practice daily prayer when hospitalized. • Roman Catholics may wish to have a rosary or an image of Jesus, the Virgin Mary, a favorite saint, or a vial of Holy Water. There may be a desire to have such items accompany the patient into surgery. • Roman Catholics often wear a scapular (a small picture of Mary, Jesus, a saint, angel, or other mystical symbol) around the neck, and should not be removed unless absolutely necessary. • The Roman Catholic Church offers extensive network of pastoral, social, and medical support services.
Health (Mental Health)	No objection to mental health practices and treatment. The Roman Catholic Church offers an extensive network of pastoral, social, and medical support services.
Pregnancy and Birth	Only natural methods of birth control are condoned by the Roman Catholic Church. • Artificial Birth Control (Pill/Condoms), abortion, and sterilization are prohibited. • Baptism of infants required and urgent when prognosis is grave.
FOR SERVICE PROVIDERS	
Physical Contact	No specific requirements
Dietary Restrictions	Generally, no specific requirements, except during Lent.
Medical Treatment	Generally accepting of all conventional and state-of-the-art medical care.
Mental Health Care	Generally accepting of standard care.
Mass Care Facilities	Access to a priest will be appreciated. Provision should be made for the celebration of Mass on Sundays. Beyond this, no specific requirements. Ethnically, Roman Catholicism is a highly diverse branch of Christianity, and this diversity is intense in the US context. Many U.S. Roman Catholics speak English, but some will be more skilled in some other language; possibilities include Spanish, French, Vietnamese, Korean, and many others.

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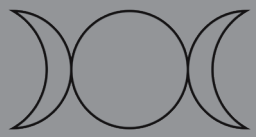

Triple Moon Goddess (Wiccan)

EARTH-BASED SPIRITUALITY

ADHERENTS TYPICALLY CONSIDER THEMSELVES PRACTITIONERS OF EARTH-BASED RELIGION.
ADHERENTS USUALLY CALL THEMSELVES PAGAN, WICCAN OR DRUID, OR MAY NOT HAVE A NAME FOR "WHAT WE DO" IF IT IS A FAMILY TRADITION WITHOUT LINKS TO A COMMUNITY.
THE RELIGION IS CALLED PAGANISM, WICCA, OR DRUIDRY. HOWEVER, SOME CULTURE-SPECIFIC GROUPS, LIKE KEMET/KEMETIC ORTHODOX FAITH, MAY USE OTHER TERMS.

U.S. Population	382,000 (numbers are hard to estimate accurately)
Language (Worship)	English; may also include other (mostly European) languages. Some groups may use older languages of sacred or inspired texts, or reconstructed Indo-European (e.g., ÁrnDraíochtFéin/A Druid Fellowship [ADF]) for portions of worship.
Branches & Denominations	Encompasses numerous religions: Animism, Druidism,Paganism, Pantheism, etc.
Basic Tenets	• One principal deity is often the Earth/Mother Nature; others may be accorded specific reverence and devotion. • Generally deep concern for ecological issues in keeping with widespread worldview of sacredness of the physical world. • Draws upon ancient pre-Christian Norse, Celtic, or Germanic religious concepts and practices, as well as Native American ones. Others may seek inspiration from other cultures (e.g., the Kemetic faith and ancient Egypt). • Law of Nature dictates that no action can occur without having significant repercussions throughout the world, eventually returning to affect the original actor, whether for good or bad. • Ritual is a central practice in establishing contact with the divine and finding harmony, healing and inspiration.
Sacred Texts	Some adherents of earth-based religions acknowledge the authority of certain written works and codes of conduct; others recognize no particular written works. • Those who acknowledge authoritative texts may consider them inspired, but do not see them as having authority or requiring veneration comparable to holy scripture in monotheistic faiths. • Individual revelation and personal experience are valued highly.
Sacred Buildings/ Structures	Outdoor sacred circles; Druid halls; spaces may be declared sacred in ritual and then de-sanctified at end of ritual.
Governance (Judicatory)	The Pagan Federation is the largest and oldest Pagan body worldwide, though by no means do all Pagans acknowledge its authority or even know of its existence. • Many other organizations and periodicals have also been documented. • With continuing growth comes ongoing change in this area.

EARTH-BASED SPIRITUALITY

Governance (Congregation)	Some belong to publicly recognized bodies such as A Druid Fellowship; the Order of Bards, Ovates, and Druids; and the Ancient Order of Druids in America; while others may not. • Individual leaders vary in authority and status depending on group. • For established groups, leadership is usually clear.
Point of Contact	• Local: Priest or other ritual leader • Regional: N/A • National: N/A
Religious Leaders	Individual groups may have elders, priests or priestesses who can speak for or have authority over a group. • Some Druid groups have recognized leaders. • Pagans may increasingly recognize certain writers, scholars (e.g., Ronald Hutton) and organizers as experts, spokespeople, etc.
Religious Objects/Symbols	Consecrated pendant in the form of a pentacle (interlaced five point star within a circle) or other symbols (triskele; Thor's hammer, etc.) may often be worn. • Removal without permission can cause distress. • Various sacred/ritual objects may include a wand, chalice, wine or juice, incense, candles, images of gods or goddesses, herbs, oil.
Facilitating Practices	Make time and space for rituals; provide privacy and quiet environments; offer supplies/objects for ritual or access to materials.
Culture & Social Interaction	Largely dependent on nature of practice and group affiliation; public presence and interaction vary with permanence and membership of group. • Many groups are receptive to visitors at "open circles." • Community misunderstanding and harassment has driven some groups to increased privacy and even secrecy depending on geographical location. • Some larger and well-established groups are quite public, e.g., ÁrnDraíochtFéin (A Druid Fellowship; ADF); the Order of Bards, Ovates, and Druids (OBOD).
Gender Roles/Interaction	General equality of sexes; single-gender groups do however exist, notably in Wicca (e.g., Dianic covens).
Principal Weekly Observance(s)	Principal (group) form of worship is usually called "ritual" or "circle." • Practices range widely among groups, from regular/weekly worship and classes to daily or seasonal ones. • Some observances may be open only to members. • Priests and priestesses, if present in a group, may perform special rituals. • Group practice occurs on the lunar observance days and on the eight seasonal festivals celebrated by many Pagans. • Many Pagans will however celebrate these on the most convenient date rather than on the exact astronomical date (e.g. solstices, full moon, etc.), although the latter is preferred.

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EARTH-BASED SPIRITUALITY

Daily Religious Practices	Individual study and private practice. • Many Pagans will keep an altar, shrine, or a devotional room (often called an altar or temple) in their own homes. • Private devotions take place whenever the individual wishes and may include prayer, meditation, chanting, reading of religious texts and ritual. • Ritual practice and items used on the altar in Pagan worship are described below.
Holy Days/Festivals	Eight Pagan Festivals are widely observed by many Pagans: • Samhain: October 31st • Yule (Midwinter): December 21st • Imbolc/Oimelc: February 1st • Spring Equinox/Ostara: March 21st • Beltane (Bealtaine; other spellings): April 30th/May 1st • Midsummer/Summer Solstice: June 21st • Lammas/Lughnasadh: August 1st • Autumn Equinox/Mabon: September 21 • Samhain, Imbolc, Beltane and Lughnasadh are historically attested Celtic festivals, whose names are also Celtic. • Along with the eight Pagan festivals, the full moon is often held to be a time of great magical energy, a good time for putting a lot of effort into one's spiritual life and work.
Rituals/Ceremonies	Rituals of naming and blessing (children, etc.); healing, consecration of ritual objects and spaces; rituals are a large part of Pagan practice.
Dress (Religious Restrictions)	In everyday life, Pagans do not usually wear special forms of dress. Ritual jewelry is however very common and may have deep personal religious significance. • In some traditions, the wearing of a ring, which symbolizes the person's adherence to Paganism or a particular Pagan path, is common. • The removal of such a ring may cause considerable distress. • Ritual clothing at festivals is common.
Death: Dying Practices	Many (though not all) Pagans believe in some form of reincarnation. • The emphasis in funerals is, therefore, often on joyfulness for the departed in passing on to a new life, but also consolation for relatives and friends that the person will be reborn. • Those who do not believe in reincarnation may celebrate the return to the natural and spirit worlds of the components that made up the life of the deceased. • Disposal of the body may be by burning (cremation) or burial. • Funeral services will take place in the crematorium chapel, at the graveside, or at the deceased's home. • In some traditions, any religious items of significance to the deceased are buried or burned with the body. These might include ritual jewelry, personal ritual items such as the Witch's anthem, and the person's religious writings (such as the Book of Shadows).

EARTH-BASED SPIRITUALITY

Death: Body Preparation	Wakes (mourning ceremonies) carried out around the body by friends and relatives are common in some traditions. • Consecrated items must not be removed from patient or handled by anyone but the wearer without permission.
Dietary Laws and Customs	Dietary practice varies, but many Pagans are vegetarian and some may be vegan. • Dietary choices are, however, a matter for individuals, who should be consulted on their personal preferences.
Health (Medical Care)	Patients may want contact with their coven members, group or community to request a healing rite.
Health (Mental Health)	• Access to ritual objects and practices, support of group or community, and respect for personal beliefs and identity can go far in supporting and sustaining mental health.
Pregnancy and Birth	• Rituals for blessing of pregnancy performed by women of community held during each of trimester of pregnancy. • Pagans may prefer when possible to have home births with midwives or doulas rather than hospital births.
FOR SERVICE PROVIDERS	
Physical Contact	There are no specific restraints on types of physical contact.
Dietary Restrictions	Many Pagans may be vegetarian or vegan; others may actively desire and pursue an organic diet.
Medical Treatment	No religious objections to blood transfusion or organ transplants. Many may desire to pair Western medicine with other alternative healing practices, including ritual
Mental Health Care	Many Pagans will be open to conventional options for care.
Mass Care Facilities	No specific requirements; however, sensitivity and courtesy when persons self-identify as an adherent of an earth-based religion will be appreciated, as will openness to their desire to conduct their rites and ceremonies.

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Om or AUM

Swastika

HINDUISM

ADHERENTS CONSIDER THEMSELVES HINDU.
ADHERENTS ARE CALLED HINDUS (OR, FOLLOWERS OF SANATANA DHARMA, OR DEVOTEES OF A PARTICULAR STREAM OF THOUGHT, TEACHER OR GURU).
THE RELIGION IS CALLED HINDUISM (OR, SANATANA DHARMA, OR VEDANTA).

NOTE: adherents of certain religion-communities with beliefs and practices that seem "Hindu," and may even be categorized as "Hindu" in some contexts, may eschew the label of Hinduism themselves. Examples in the U.S. include Brahma Kumaris, many who claim "Yoga Spirituality" as their religion, and some members of the International Society of Krishna Consciousness.

U.S. Population	1,479,000
Language (Worship)	Sanskrit
Founder	Hinduism as a label encompasses diverse ancient traditions; adherents say it is "founderless." Members of certain reform movements pay reverence to that movement's founding figure, for example: BAPS: Swaminarayan ISKCON: A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada Saiva Siddhanta Church: Satguru Sivaya Subramuniyaswami
Branches & Denominations	Contemporary Hinduism has four major branches: Vaishnavism, Shaivism, Shaktism, and Smartism. The Vaishnava (Vaishnavite) branch has many distinct denominations, among them ISKCON and BAPS.
Basic Tenets	Hinduism encompasses a wide range of beliefs about the nature of God and the divine human relationship. All agree that Ultimate Reality (Brahman) is without form. • Rather than the term Brahman, some prefer to speak of the Ultimate as Bhagavan—that which includes the limitless six elements: wealth, knowledge, overlordship, valor, dispassionateness, and fame. • Hinduism's branches and denominations differ according to the form through which they worship Ultimate Reality/God, the details of their descriptions of the complexity of the celestial realm, and their particular traditions of practice. • Among American Hindus, it is common to assert that *all* of Hinduism's 330 million deities are manifestations of the one Brahman. However, some American Hindus reject this notion.

HINDUISM

Basic Tenets	The four theological systems share many of Hinduism's most popular deities, but differ over their relation to the Ultimate. • For example, the elephant-headed Ganesha may be a form of the Ultimate in one system, and merely a helper of God in another. For Shaivites, Vishnu names a function of Shiva-as-Ultimate; for Vaishnavites, Vishnu personifies the Ultimate. A few key concepts are embraced by the majority of Hindus, regardless of theological or philosophical branch. These include: • Samsara: the cycle of birth, life, and rebirth. • Karma: the law of cause and effect, which drives samsara. • Reincarnation: the notion that the self takes birth multiple times (and, that there are multiple possible realms into which the self might be born). • Moksha: liberation; release from samsara. • Multiple valid methods (yogas, margas) to God including: • Jnana Yoga – the way to God through knowledge (uses the Upanishads as its source; often associated with advaita philosophy). • Bhakti Yoga – the Way to God through love (the most popular path; emphasizes devotional practices using deity-images in the belief that it is difficult for many people to pray to "the Impersonal Absolute). • Karma Yoga – the Way to God through work (emphasis on service).
Sacred Texts	• The Vedas are the oldest sacred texts of Hinduism. Of these four collections, the Rig Veda is the best known. • Two epics—the Mahabharata and the Ramayana—are treasured by many Hindus. The Bhagavad Gita (Comprising several sections of book six of the Mahabharata)—a dialogue between the human Arjuna and God (incarnate as Lord Krishna) on the nature of reality and duty—is core to the devotional practices of a great many U.S. Hindus. • The Srimad Bhagavatam is a central text for members of the International Society of Krishna Consciousness. • The Upanishads are a Collection of some 100 works of dialogue, poetry, and prose that emphasize salvation by insight and knowledge rather than mere reliance on ritual action.
Sacred Buildings/ Structures	A Hindu place of worship or practice is called amandir (Sanskrit for house of the divine). In the U.S., Hindu houses of worship are often called temples. Occasionally; a synonym from one of India's many languages may be used. • Mandirs will house one or many murtis (deity-statues, deity-images). Some may use two-dimensional representations of the divine. • A Hindu place of study with a spiritual guide is called an ashram. The U.S. is home to a number of ashrams.
Governance (Judicatory)	Some U.S. Hindu temples are members of international movements. • Examples include temples affiliated with BAPS [Bochasanwasi Shri Akshar Purushottam Swaminarayan Sanstha] or ISKCON [International Society of Krishna Consciousness]. • In these cases, a national or international headquarters provides governance and sets policies.

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HINDUISM

Governance (Congregation)	Many U.S. Hindu temples are independent entities. • Governance may be provided by a board of directors. • Many have gained not-for-profit status by incorporating as a Hindu Temple Society.
Point of Contact	• Local: Temple / Mandir • Regional: N/A • National: N/A
Religious Leaders	A variety of traditional leadership terms are in use by Hindus in the U.S.: • Pujari: a man specially trained to perform Hindu temple worship rituals, and is often referred to as a priest. • Guru: a teacher around whom disciples gather. • Pandit (sometimes, Pundit): a scholar and teacher of Hindu literature, law, ritual. • Acharya: a spiritual guide or instructor in religious matters, in some traditions believed to be an avatar of the divine. • Swami: an ascetic who has renounced his/her birth-name upon initiation into a monastic order. • A Hindu temple founder or president of its board of directors may also be considered a religious leader.
Religious Objects/Symbols	Objects for rituals – including: • Statues, symbols or pictures representing a particular deity. • Sandalwood paste, yogurt, incense, oil lamp, fresh flowers or fruit. • Symbols include: • AUM (Om): Sanskrit term often seen as a calligraphic representation of Ultimate Reality/God. • Swastika (often seen in Hindu iconography, and representing the process of samsara, driven by karma, and the hope for achievement of moksha (release, liberation).
Facilitating Practices	• Hospital visitation by Hindu clergy is not common; some Hindu patients will be open to visits by a chaplain from some other religion. • Family members will appreciate being involved in the plan of care and determine which member will provide personal care. • Be aware that, in some American Hindu families, the father/husband retains the traditional role of primary spokesperson to whom questions should be directed.
Culture & Social Interaction	Hindus who have come to the U.S. recently, or who are elderly, may have high standards of modesty. Observant Hindus may accept an invitation to a meal, yet maintain a fast.

HINDUISM

Gender Roles/Interaction	Hinduism in the U.S. context is often egalitarian. • Many U.S. temples have been founded by women, or have a woman as chief officer. However, some movements are quite restrictive of women (beyond the tradition of male-only pujaris [priests].) • In modern times the view of the husband as the soul of the married couple is less pronounced than in the past. • Arranged marriages are still practiced, but the bride-to-be has considerable voice in the matter.
Principal Weekly Observance(s)	Weekly congregational worship is not a Hindu tradition. However, in the U.S. context, many temples offer weekend opportunities for study or meditation. • Some movements do hold weekly congregational worship opportunities. Members of the BAPS movement are expected to meet weekly at the mandir for sabha—a spiritual discourse and congregational prayer and song. Member of ISKCON meet once or twice weekly for fellowship, chanting, a discourse by one of the monks, prayers, and a vegetarian meal. • The Bhakti tradition special ceremonies in honor of specific deities according to a lunar calendar. Thus, in a given month, there will be many times when the community will be present in the temple in large numbers for worship.
Daily Religious Practices	Daily practice is determined by many factors—most especially which yoga one follows. • Hindus who practice Bhakti Yoga perform daily puja (worship involving care for a deity-image as it were a royal guest) or arthi (a prayer ritual before an image, involving chanting while offering light from an oil lamp). • Hindus who practice Raja Yoga perform daily meditation, which may include taking specific postures and performing specific breathing exercises. • Some Hindus chant a specific mantra daily. • Some Hindus engage in daily study of sacred texts; the Bhagavad-gita is a favorite for many.
Holy Days/Festivals	Hindu holidays vary, depending on the theological branch in which one participates, whether one's family is from North India or South India, and whether one belongs to one of the more recent Hindu reform movements. • Krishna's Birthday (late August): important to Hindus in the Vaishnavite tradition, especially those whose devotion focuses on Krishna. • Navaratri (Nine Nights); also called Dussehra; a great Goddess festival in October; important to many Hindus; especially important to members of the Shakta theological stream. The focus of this festival varies regionally: for Hindus from North India, the focus is on Durga; in the South India tradition, three days are devoted to Lakshmi (Goddess of Wealth); three for Parvati (Daughter of the Mountains, another name for Durga), and three for Saraswati (the Goddess of Learning and the Arts, of Speech, and of the creative process). • Vijayadasami: the day following Navaratri, this is a day of rededication to one's profession, or of a child to his/her studies. For Hindus from North India, this is tied to remembrance of the story of Rama (enshrined in the epic *Ramayana*). • Holi: Celebration at the start of spring, with much use of colors. • Diwali: The festival of lights (in the fall), with its further meaning varying according to the part of India from which one's family hails. • Ganesha festival (late August or early September): a celebration of the elephant-headed deity, the Remover of Obstacles.

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HINDUISM

Rituals/Ceremonies	Many Hindus perform a daily act of personal devotion at home, either alone or with others. • Ritual washing normally precedes the daily morning prayer ritual (puja). • Hindus recognize 16 life-transitions to be marked with samskaras (rituals). • Among these are the samskaras for blessing an unborn child, and the ceremonial occasion for naming a newborn. • Timing and ritual details vary. • Some families prefer to have these samskaras performed at home; others prefer to go to a temple for the ritual.
Dress (Religious Restrictions)	Hinduism does not prescribe specific clothing for laypersons, and many often wear Western-style clothing. • However, some Hindu women in the U.S. prefer to wear a sari (a one-piece garment wound around the body), particularly when visiting a temple of participating in a festival or special occasion. • Some Hindu women or men may wear shalwarkameez or pyjamakurta (loose pants and tunic). • Pujaris (ritual performers) customarily wear white traditional garments when on duty in the temple. • Those who have taken monastic vows (for example, in the ISKCON tradition) wear distinguishing traditional garments.
Death: Dying Practices	For the Hindu, death marks a passage, rather than an ending. While the body dies, the soul may take birth in another form. • Family or friends may try to make the atmosphere around the dying person peaceful, and focused on the divine; by reading from scriptures such as the Bhagavad-gita, or playing recordings of devotional music such as a hymn to Ganesha (the Remover of Obstacles).
Death: Body Preparation	Autopsy and organ donation are acceptable to many Hindus. • Hindus prefer cremation—traditionally within 24 hours of death. • Traditional preparation includes washing of the body, and wrapping it in a white seamless cloth. Some U.S. cities have crematoria in which Hindu rites and customs are accommodated. • It is customary for a family member to attend the body until cremated. • The deceased person's family may fast until the cremation takes place. • Traditionally, the eldest son will light the funeral pyre; in the U.S. context, some crematoria accommodate this custom by allowing a family member to operate the switch that begins the cremation process.

HINDUISM

Dietary Laws and Customs	Hindus follow a range of dietary practices. • Many Hindus are vegetarian. • Hindus who do eat meat usually will not eat beef, as they regard the cow with special reverence. • Some Hindus are vegan. • Some will eat only food they or their community members have prepared accompanied by prayer. • Some refrain from alcohol; or, from garlic and onion; or, from cheese. • Hindus may eat with the right hand only (the left hand being reserved for toileting and hygiene). • Fasting is commonplace and frequent, generally lasting just one day or one day a week, in connection with devotion to a particular deity or observance of a particular festival. Fasts may involve abstinence from certain foods only, or total abstinence from food and drink during daylight.
Health (Medical Care)	On the whole, Hindu patients will be accepting of all conventional and state-of-the-art medical treatment options. • Medication, blood and blood products, donation and receipt of organs acceptable. • Because many Hindus eat with their right hand and reserve the left hand for toileting and washing, they may prefer the right hand for placement of an IV. • Some Hindus may prefer Ayurvedic treatment options. Some Hindus may consult an astrological chart to determine an auspicious date for surgery. • Some Hindus, especially the elderly, may prefer that females be examined by females and males by males, whenever possible. • Some Hindus may be very uncomfortable with American-style hospital gowns and may prefer clothing from home; medical personnel might explore this option with the family. • Because of their belief in samsara and reincarnation, many Hindus are comfortable in deciding not to use life-extending technology when there is little likelihood of full recovery. • A Hindu patient may wish to display a picture of a deity on his/her hospital bed-stand or to meditate. • Notions of karma and rebirth may influence a Hindu's attitude in the face of illness: illness may be seen as the consequence of behaviors in past lives; it can also be seen as an opportunity to prepare for a better rebirth.
Health (Mental Health)	On the whole, Hindus will be accepting of all conventional and state-of-the-art mental healthcare options. • As with physical illness Notions of karma and rebirth may influence a Hindu's attitude in the face of mental health challenges.
Pregnancy and Birth	Birth control, artificial insemination and amniocentesis acceptable will be acceptable to many Hindus. Hinduism provides rites of blessing for pregnancy as well as for birth.

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HINDUISM

FOR SERVICE PROVIDERS	
Physical Contact	Some Hindus, especially the elderly, may prefer that females be examined by females and males by males, whenever possible.
Dietary Restrictions	Many Hindus are vegetarian; some are vegan. Of those who eat meat, it is rare that they will eat beef.
Medical Treatment	Blood transfusions, organ transplants, and all types of medicine for the purpose of saving life are permitted.
Mental Health Care	Standard protocols will be acceptable to many U.S. Hindus.
Mass Care Facilities	Among U.S. Hindus are some denominations that prefer (or may insist on) same-gender groupings. Hindus accustomed to performing daily puja, mediation, yoga, or some other spiritual discipline will appreciate being given time and an appropriate place to do so. Likewise, Hindus who wish to study scripture together will appreciate being allowed a space to meet.

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Happy Human

HUMANISM

ADHERENTS CONSIDER THEMSELVES SECULAR.
ADHERENTS ARE CALLED HUMANISTS.
THE RELIGION IS CALLED HUMANISM, OR SECULAR HUMANISM, OR ETHICAL CULTURE.

U.S. Population	90,000 (Estimate)
Language (Worship)	English
Founder	Various; today's U.S. Humanism owes debts to Thomas Paine and Felix Adler, among others.
Branches & Denominations	Difficult to determine, since many U.S. Humanists are unaffiliated. The American Ethical Union (a network of Ethical Culture Society congregations) is an example of a well-organized humanist denomination with many local chapters.
Basic Tenets	Humanism is not a creedal or doctrinal religion, nor do Humanists agree upon a particular text as "scripture" or source of ultimate truth. A few commonalities can be found among Humanists. • Humanists believe that moral values are founded on human nature and experience; ethical principles, on reason and mutual respect. • They encourage collaboration for the common good. • While some Humanists are theists, many reject notions of God or supernatural agency. • In general, Humanists do not believe in an afterlife.
Sacred Texts	N/A
Sacred Buildings/ Structures	No particular requirements. The Ethical Culture Society meeting places sometimes resemble a congregational church or a Quaker Meeting House.
Governance (Judicatory)	The American Humanist Association is a prominent U.S. umbrella organization. The International Humanist and Ethical Union is an international umbrella organization.
Governance (Congregation)	Many formal Humanist congregations or societies are self-governing.
Point of Contact	• Local: N/A • Regional: N/A • National: N/A
Religious Leaders	Leadership of a Humanist congregation or society is determined by consensus or election.
Religious Objects/Symbols	Various symbols are used. Sometimes, groups prefer nothing in particular.
Facilitating Practices	No specific guidelines

HUMANISM

Culture & Social Interaction	Many Humanists will prefer to not have references made to God or a deity; some may even be offended by others' expression of theism.
Gender Roles/Interaction	Tends to be egalitarian in leadership roles.
Principal Weekly Observance(s)	Some Humanist groups meet weekly for instruction or an inspirational lecture.
Daily Religious Practices	No prescribed daily acts of "faith or worship"; some may practice meditation.
Holy Days/Festivals	No religious festivals.
Rituals/Ceremonies	N/A
Dress (Religious Restrictions)	N/A
Death: Dying Practices	When death is imminent, a Humanist may appreciate the support of a secular counselor or a fellow humanist; the presence of family or close friends may also be appreciated. • Some may refuse treatment seen as prolonging suffering. • Some may strongly resent prayers being said for them or any reassurances based on belief in god or an afterlife.
Death: Body Preparation	• No specific requirements. • Choice between burial and cremation (more common) is personal. • Crosses and other religious emblems to be avoided in funeral services. (However, since many humanists believe that when someone dies the needs of the bereaved are more important than their own beliefs, some may wish decisions about their funeral and related matters to be left to their closest relatives.)
Dietary Laws and Restrictions	• No universal requirements. • Some humanists are vegetarian or vegan; others eat meat slaughtered by methods they consider humane—and thus will accept halal or kosher meat.
Health (Medical Care)	Attitudes will vary. No specific guidelines.
Health (Mental Health)	Attitudes will vary. No specific guidelines.
Pregnancy and Birth	Attitudes will vary. No specific guidelines.
FOR SERVICE PROVIDERS	
Physical Contact	No specific restrictions.
Dietary Restrictions	No specific guidelines.
Medical Treatment	Attitudes will vary. No specific guidelines.
Mental Health Care	Attitudes will vary. No specific guidelines.
Mass Care Facilities	Attitudes will vary. No specific guidelines.

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Star and Crescent

ISLAM

ADHERENTS CONSIDER THEMSELVES MUSLIM.
ADHERENTS CALL THEMSELVES MUSLIMS.
THE RELIGION IS CALLED ISLAM (OR, AL-ISLAM).

U.S. Population	6,665,000
Language (Worship)	Arabic (for prayer); In the U.S., sermons often are in Arabic, English. Farsi, Urdu or some other vernacular preferred by a congregation.
Founder	The Prophet Muhammad (570 – 632 CE); also transliterated Mohammad, Mohammed, or Muhammed.
Branches & Denominations	Sunni Islam is the largest branch accounting for nearly 80% of all Muslims. Shi'a Islam, the second-largest branch, includes some 15% of all Muslims; Shi'ism itself has several denominations—Twelver and Isma'ili being the largest. Sufism (sometimes called Islamic mysticism or mystical Islam) straddles the major branches of Islam. Many Muslims who identify as Sufis will also claim to be Sunni or Shi'a. However, the U.S. has been home to several small movements whose adherents claim to be "Sufi" but not "Muslim." Ahmadiyyah is an Islamic messianistic movement founded by Mirza Ghulam Ahmad in India in the late 19th century. It attracted many African-Americans in the early decades of the 20th century. Presently, its U.S. adherents include many South Asians. The U.S. religious landscape has spawned a number of Islam-based religious movements. Two of the most prominent are: • Nation of Islam: founded in Detroit, MI, in the 1930s by Elijah Muhammad (Elijah Poole) and his forerunner, Wallace D. Fard. • Moorish Science Temple of America: founded in Newark, NJ, by Noble Drew Ali (Timothy Drew) in 1913.
Basic Tenets	Islam means "submission" to the will of Allah (God). As a religion, it has three essential aspects: submission (normative practices), faith (normative doctrines), and the doing of the beautiful (rooted in God-consciousness). • Core practices (called the Five Pillars of Islam by Sunni Muslims) are Shahadah - testimony to God's Oneness and Muhammad's Prophethood, Salat—five-times-daily ritual prayer, Sawm—the annual fast during the month of Ramadan/ Ramazan, Zakat—charity, and Hajj (pilgrimage to the Ka'aba in Mecca, if health and means permit). • Shi'a Muslims call core practices the ten Ancillaries of the Faith, or (Branches) of Religion. Shi'a Islam include all practices on the Sunni list (with the exception that some Shi'a sects pray three times a day instead of five) but additionally: Khums – tax of 1/5; Jihad – struggle to please Allah; Amr-bil-ma'ruf - is a Qur'anic commandment to enjoin what is good; Nahi-anil-munkar - is a Qur'anic commandment to "forbid what is evil;" Tawalla – expressing love towards good; and Tabarra – expressing disassociation from Evil.

ISLAM

Basic Tenets	• Core doctrines (called the Six Pillars of Iman or belief/faith by Sunni Muslims) are belief in God, the angels, the revealed Scriptures (the Qur'an, but also the scriptures of Judaism and Christianity, a long line of Prophets (culminating in the Prophet Muhammad), the Day of Judgment (thus belief in life after death), and Divine Decrees regarding the Qadar, or ultimate destiny of each individual. • Shi'a Muslims call core doctrines the five Principles of the Religion, or Roots of Religion; their list calls for belief in God's Oneness; Divine justice; Prophethood; the notion that (after the death of Muhammad) authentic guidance of the Muslim fell to a series of infallible; divinely inspired Imams; and belief in resurrection.
Sacred Texts	The Qur'an is considered "God's speech"—the very words of God transmitted to Muhammad by the Angel Gabriel. • Some Muslims believe that the Qur'an should not be touched by non-Muslims, except with a cloth. • Any copy or translation should be handled with respect by all. • Observant Muslim women do not touch the Qur'an if they are menstruating. • The Hadith—the multi-volume collection of reports of what the Prophet Muhammad said and did—is second in authority after the Qur'an in determining matters of doctrine and practice.
Sacred Buildings/ Structures	A place for Muslims to gather for Salat (ritual prayer) is called a masjid (place of prostration) or mosque. In the U.S., many cities have at least one Islamic Center – which includes a mosque, but also features facilities for education, religious counseling, and dispute settlement. Dergah = a place where Sufis gather for fellowship, instruction, and prayer.
Governance (Judicatory)	• There are no senior muslim clerics in the U.S. with authority over all other imams in the United States. • Many communities have an Imams Council, sometimes called a Shura Council, which addresses areas of concerns to local Muslims, engages in advocacy, provides social services, and issues opinions on matters of Islamic Law.
Governance (Congregation)	Many U.S. Islamic centers and mosques are independent, and are overseen by a board of directors. For many U.S. Muslim congregations, the president of its board of directors is the chief decision-maker, and may also be its most public representative; for others, this role is assumed by (or is shared with) the imam.

Point of Contact	• Local: Islamic Center / Mosque (called Masjid in Arabic)
	• Regional: Sometimes a "Shura Council" (a voluntary association)
	• National: These groups are examples of organized national bodies without formal authority. They often serve an advocacy and/or convening role within a segment of the larger Muslim community. However, they do not represent the full diversity of Muslim communities in the U.S.:
	  • Islamic Society of North America
	  • American Society of Muslims
	  • Islamic Circle of North America
	  • Universal Muslim Association of America
	  • The Mosque Cares

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ISLAM

Religious Leaders	• Imam: prayer-leader; may also function as a spiritual advisor and expert in Islamic Law. (Traditionally, a congregation's Imam is a man; a woman may serve as prayer-leader for a women-only gathering.) • Shaykh/Shaykha: spiritual leader (usually male, occasionally female), especially of a Sufi Circle. • Muslim Chaplain: a Muslim man or woman with special training, able to give spiritual care in a hospital, prison, university, or the military.
Religious Objects/Symbols	• The Qur'an itself. • The word "Allah" (God) written in Arabic calligraphy. • Medallions containing the name of Muhammad, or of each of the Four Rightly Guided Caliphs (in Sunni understanding, the first four leaders of the Islamic community after the death of the Prophet Muhammad), or of each of the Twelve Infallible Imams (in majority Shi'ia understanding, the series of authoritative leaders of the Islamic community in the period following the death of the Prophet). • Minaret: traditional tower next to a mosque, from which the Call to Prayer is sounded.
Facilitating Practices	Discuss expected observances occurring during shelter/hospital/care center stay with individual/patient/family. Muslims will appreciate provision being made for their daily prayer rituals (Salat), with an adequate facility for performing the mandatory pre-prayer washing (Wudu). Salat can be performed in any clean space. In the absence of prayer rugs, freshly laundered towels or sheets can be substituted. Help may be needed in determining the direction of prayer (Qibla), which is oriented toward the Ka'abah in Mecca; cellphone apps are available for this.
Culture & Social Interaction	Some observant Muslims refrain from all physical contact with persons of the opposite gender who are not members of their family.
Gender Roles/Interaction	Mixed-gendered prayer is generally led by men; women will lead other women in prayer. Women leading mixed-gendered prayer is more rare. Scholars of Islam can be men and women. Congregational leadership positions are often held by men; though in some sects women play hold equal position. Notions of gender norms vis-à-vis congregational leadership vary greatly. Some Muslims believe that men and woman who are not immediate members of the same family should not interact socially or make physical contact with one another. (The views on this point are quite wide-ranging among U.S. Muslims.) The Qur'an expresses two main views on the role of women. • The Qur'an states that men and women are created from a single soul; it indicates that, before God, women and men are equal in terms of expectations of piety and can expect equal divine reward. Women and men are created for mutual benefit. • Because of physical differences and societal needs, the Qur'an calls for equanimity rather than equality of duties and privileges between women and men; the terms of inheritance are less than for men; men have permission to marry outside the religion, but it is commonly viewed that women should not.

ISLAM

Principal Weekly Observance(s)	Muslim men are expected (if at all possible) to pray in congregation on Fridays in the early afternoon; this is called Ju'mah. • Women may attend Ju'mah prayer at the mosque if they wish; they are permitted to pray at home if they prefer. • Shi 'ah Muslims often gather on Thursday evenings to pray a long supplication of Imam Ali and to perform the evening salat. • Many Sufi circles meet weekly (some on Thursday evening, some on Saturday evening or some other evening) for fellowship, spiritual guidance (in the form of a discourse by their shaykh), supplication, dhikr (sometimes pronounced zikr—remembrance of God's Names), and salat.
Daily Religious Practices	Salat (ritual prayer) five times daily facing the Ka'abah in Mecca: before dawn, soon after midday, late afternoon, after sunset, and late evening; exact timings determined by sunrise and sunset. • Ritual washing (Wudu) is to be performed before praying. • Salat is performed shoulder-to-shoulder in rows behind the imam in many mosques; men line up immediately behind the Imam and women form lines behind the men; in some mosques, men are on one side, women on the other (with some sort of barrier down the center; in some, women are in a different part of the building from the men. • Salat involves the recitation (silently or aloud) of specific texts and the performance of a series of postures; opportunity is included for individual supplication.
Holy Days/Festivals	Muslims follow a 12-month lunar calendar. Major observances include: • The First of Muharram: commemorates the date on which the Prophet and his community made the Hijra (migration) from Mecca to Medina—thus beginning a new Islamic society; begins the new Islamic Year (celebrated by some branches of the Muslim community; merely noted by others). • The Ten Days of Muharram: days of lamentation observed by Shi'a Muslims in remembrance of the martyrdom of Imam Hussein bin Ali, the grandson of the Prophet, at Karbala (Iraq) in 61 A. H. • 'Ashura (the Tenth of Muharram) is observed by Shi 'a as the anniversary of Husayn's death. Some Sunni Muslims observe it as the anniversary of the day on which God created Adam and Eve, heaven and hell, the tablet of the decree, the pen, life, and death. • Milad al-Nabi (the Prophet's Birthday: because it lacks basis in the Qur'an some Sunni Muslims believe there should be no special celebration of this occasion). • Ramadan/Ramazan: a month of total fasting from food and liquids (and from intercourse and smoking) during daylight hours. • Laylat al-Qadir (Night of Power): all-night prayer during Ramadan. • Eid al-Fitr (Festival of Fast-Breaking): three-day celebration at the end of the month of Ramadan, including special prayer as a community in the mosque, visits with family and friends, special foods, giving of gifts to the children, and making a special charitable donation. • Eid al-Adha (Festival of Sacrifice): a four-day commemoration of Abraham's willingness to sacrifice his son that begins on the tenth day of the month of the annual Hajj (pilgrimage), and includes donation of food to the poor.

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ISLAM

Rituals/Ceremonies	• Shahadah (testimony): a ceremony in which a person repeats the Islamic declaration of faith: "there is no deity but God, and Muhammad is the messenger of God" in the presence of witnesses, thus becoming a Muslim. • Wedding: Islamic marriage is regarded as a legal (albeit sacred) contract; couple's contract is worked out in detail with the help of family members and advisors, the contract is ratified by recitation of the Fatiha (the first chapter of the Qur'an). In addition, the couple may declare their agreement to an imam (in front of family and friends), who then offers a discourse on the joys, obligations, and challenges of marriage. • 'Aqiqah (also called other names based on the country of origin of the family): An informal ceremony by which a new infant is welcomed into the Muslim community; sometimes the infant's head is shaved (or, a tuft of hair is clipped); traditionally, sheep or goats are slaughtered, and the meat is shared with family, friends, and the poor.
Dress (Religious Restrictions)	• Many Muslim women wear hijab (headscarf); a loose garment leaving only the hands showing may be worn in public or in the presence of men who are not family members; a few Muslim women wear a niqab (face-veil). • At the least, observant men are to cover their bodies from navel to knees when in public; some devout male Muslims prefer to wear a head-covering at all times.
Death: Dying Practices	When death is imminent, family and friends will gather to recite from the Qur'an (or will play recordings of Qur'an chapters). Particularly appropriate are *Surah Ya Sin* (Chapter 36) and *Surat'l-Mulk* (Chapter 67). The dying person will try to say the Shahadah prayer (the testimony of faith); or, will appreciate family or friends reciting it. The dying person's face or bed should be turned towards Mecca.
Death: Culture/Practices	The family or a Muslim chaplain should be consulted before giving postmortem care. • When giving post-mortem care, the deceased's head should be turned to the right, the arms laid to the sides of the body. The hair of the deceased should not be cut. • A Muslim family will expect to bury the deceased quickly.
Death: Body Preparation	• Autopsy is acceptable when necessary. Organ donation is acceptable. • Many Muslims prefer that a Muslim of the same sex as the deceased prepare the body. Some U.S. cities now have Islamic funeral homes; many Muslim congregations include people well trained to perform the ritual washing of bodies for burial. Detached body parts to be treated with respect. • The body is then wrapped in plain cloth (three pieces for a man and five for a woman), then placed on the right shoulder in a plain coffin. • A Muslim funeral is usually held at a mosque. The ritually prepared body is present in a coffin; a eulogy is given; the Janazah (the special prayer for the deceased) is performed. • Next of kin or local Muslim community will make arrangements for burial (never cremation), preferably within 24 hours. • Muslims prefer to bury the body directly in the ground, facing Mecca; some U.S. cities now have cemeteries where this is allowed. In the grave, the face of the deceased should be positioned towards Mecca.

ISLAM

Dietary Laws and Customs	Many Muslims believe in only eating halal food, especially halal meat. • All fruits and vegetables are acceptable; vegetarian meals are generally acceptable. • Poultry, mutton, and beef are halal if the animal has been slaughtered in accordance with Islamic law; Some Muslims may accept Kosher meat as having fulfilled this requirement. • Muslims are not to eat pork in any form; foods and utensils that have come into contact with pork should not touch any food to be eaten by a Muslim. • Fish is acceptable, but some Muslims refrain from eating shellfish. • Consumption of alcohol in any form is forbidden. (Some Muslims say that this includes alcohol used in cooking; others say that cooking dissipates the alcohol, so the food may still be eaten. In general it is best to omit alcohol including items like vanilla in cooking.) • Halal food should be clearly labeled where other food is served. • Many Muslims believe that food should be eaten only with the right hand. Muslims fast from dawn to sunset during the month of Ramadan/Ramazan; some fast in a similar fashion at other times during the year. • Fasting during Ramadan/Ramazan is compulsory for all except menstruating, pregnant or lactating women; young children; and the infirm.
Health (Medical Care)	Muslims often believe that God has predetermined what will happen in one's life, including the place and time of death, thus may complain very little, and will cope with illness by trusting in God. • No restrictions on blood or blood products, medications, amputations, or biopsies. • Organ donation and reception is permitted, although this has raised questions related to Judgment Day for some Muslims. Many surgical implants are permitted; however, some Muslims believe it is forbidden to have anything containing a pig or shellfish product implanted in their bodies. • Many Muslims will be comfortable accepting conventional surgical procedures. • Some Muslims are uncomfortable with (and may even refuse) a healthcare provider who is not of the same gender. • Muslim women patients should be accommodated if they desire a hospital gown that will cover their entire body, and if they desire to keep their hair covered.
Health (Mental Health)	*The Journal of Muslim Mental Health* may provide helpful resources to Muslims seeking mental health services. Generally, Muslims are open to conventional mental health care options, but this may be limited by cultural factors outside of faith.
Pregnancy and Birth	• Birth control is acceptable. Generally Muslims view abortion as not acceptable, except in instances of great risk to the mother's life. • Muslim women may prefer to receive care from female healthcare staff only. • Artificial insemination permitted between husband and wife. • Because Muslims believe that the soul is "breathed into" the fetus at four months' gestation, a miscarried fetus before that point may be discarded as would any other tissue; a fetus miscarried after that point is to be washed and shrouded, is to have the Janazah (funeral prayer) recited on its behalf, and buried as would any human being.

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ISLAM

FOR SERVICE PROVIDERS	
Physical Contact	• Treatment by medical staff of any religion permissible; men and women generally prefer to be treated by staff of the same gender whenever possible. • Handshakes or any contact between genders is not customary in some settings. • Muslims ritually wash after using the toilet, so a tap or container of water for washing should be provided whenever the toilet area is separate from the bathroom.
Dietary Restrictions	• Meat must be halal (i.e. the animal has been slaughtered according to Islamic legal prescriptions). • Pork is forbidden. • For some Muslims, shellfish is forbidden. • Alcohol is forbidden.
Medical Treatment	• Many conventional procedures are acceptable; many state-of-the-art procedures will also be acceptable. • Blood transfusion is acceptable. • Check with the family/Imam to see whether organ donation, transplants are acceptable.
Mental Health Care	*The Journal of Muslim Mental Health* may provide helpful resources to Muslims seeking mental health services. Generally, Muslims are open to conventional mental health care options, but this may be limited by cultural factors outside of faith.
Mass Care Facilities	In a rest center, suitable facilities for pre-prayer washing, time to conduct prayers, and a clean prayer room with a prayer mat/rug and compass, or sign pointing toward Mecca, are appreciated.

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Jain Prateek Chihna

JAINISM

ADHERENTS CONSIDER THEMSELVES JAIN.
ADHERENTS CALL THEMSELVES JAINS.
THE RELIGION IS CALLED JAINISM.

U.S. Population	12,700
Language (Worship)	Prakrit, Sanskrit.
Founder	Mahavira (599-527 BCE) is considered the founder of Jainism. • Chitrabhanu was the first Jain monk to travel to the United States; he arrived in 1971, gave several lectures about Jainism at Harvard University, and established a Jain center in New York. • In 1975 a second Jain monk, Acharya Sushil Kumar Ji, arrived in the United States, and established multiple Jain centers.
Branches & Denominations	Three main branches: • Swetambara: those whose monks and nuns wear white robes, and whose murtis (devotional statues) are embellished, with eyes looking straight ahead. • Digambara: those whose monks wear no clothing at all, and whose murtis (devotional statues) are plain, with eyes downcast. • Sthanakvasi: those who reject the use of murtis (devotional images). • Swetambara and Digambara both have several denominations with adherents in the U.S.
Basic Tenets	Jains believe that the universe is beginningless and endless, with no divine manager or creator God • Each living being is an eternally individual soul caught in samsara (perpetual birth-death-rebirth). • Freedom from samsara is achieved by cultivating right knowledge, right faith, and right conduct—practice of three core Jain values: non-harming; non-attachment; and recognition of multiplicity of viewpoints. • All sentient beings have the potential to become purified souls; taking birth as a human being enhances this potential. • At points in human history, a series of 24 Tirthankaras (crossing-makers) have appeared to encourage the establishment of the Jain way of life; Mahavira was the 24th and last of these guides. • Jain prayer is not supplication; rather, it comprises recollection of the example of the tirthankas and hoping to be like them, by striving toward an ascetic lifestyle.
Sacred Texts	Jain scriptures are called the Agam Sutras (or Agamas) and are based on the sermons of Mahavira. The Digambara collection differs somewhat from the Swetambara version, but the general content is the same.

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Sacred Buildings/ Structures	• A Jain house of worship is called a mandir or a derasar. • A Jain Center (or temple) may be found in many U.S. metropolitan areas. • Generally, U.S. Jain Centers include a multipurpose meeting space, a commercial kitchen, administrative offices, classrooms, and a residence for the pujari (ritual expert) and his family, as well as the worship hall.
Governance (Judicatory)	JAINA (Federation of Jain Associations in North America) was founded in the 1980s as a network of Jain temples in the U.S. and Canada; JAINA enhances solidarity, provides advocacy, and holds conventions.
Governance (Congregation)	Jain Centers are independent and self-governing, usually with a board of directors.
Point of Contact	• Local: Jain Center • Regional: N/A • National: JAINA (Federation of Jain Associations in North America)
Religious Leaders	• Jain Temples often have a pujari on staff who maintains the images and conducts puja (ritual of hospitality for the images) and arthi (ritual of light). • A Jain Temple may have a resident Guru. • The president of the board of directors and other Jain Center officers are considered religious leaders, and provide interface with the wider community.
Religious Objects/Symbols	Symbols: • A symbol in common use comprises an open, raised hand denoting friendly reassurance and ethical responsibility; on the palm is written ahimsa (non-violence); below it is written (in Sanskrit) “All life is bound together by mutual support and interdependence.” • Lokapurusha: a diagram of the cosmos in the shape of a human being, which serves as an aid for teaching Jain doctrine. • Ritual objects: • Murtis (statues/images) of the tirthankaras are used in Jain devotional practice. Statues of other beings from the celestial realm may also be found in Jain temples. • A bell suspended from the ceiling is used during worship; oil lamps are used to perform arthi.
Facilitating Practices	Jains practice their own methods of meditation, and will appreciate a quiet place for this.
Culture & Social Interaction	While beliefs vary between the branches of Jainism, all branches follow a vegetarian diet (many choosing a vegan diet). Some strict Jains may choose not to eat after sunset so care should be taken when planning meetings or events where food is served.
Gender Roles/Interaction	Jainism is essentially egalitarian. • Women are often prominent in U.S. temple administrative leadership. • Women may take monastic vows in the Swetambara sect. • Menstruating women are asked not to enter the ritual area of a Jain temple’s murti-hall.

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JAINISM

Principal Weekly Observance(s)	Weekly congregational gathering is not part of the Jain tradition. • However, in the U.S., Jains often gather on weekends for meditation, instruction, and performance of devotional rituals (puja, arthi, hymn-singing) plus a sermon by a Guru giving guidance in following Jain principles. • Many congregational gatherings are determined by the rhythms of the lunar calendar.
Daily Religious Practices	• The NavkarMaha-Mantra (Great Salutation Formula) is the most important, most basic Jain formula, and can be recited at any time of day. • Meditation is a daily practice for many Jains.
Holy Days/Festivals	Jain holidays follow a lunar calendar. The most significant are: • ParyushanParva: eight or ten days during August or September. Having reflected on the year past, prayers are recited; sins are confessed; forgiveness is sought from all sentient beings; penances are undertaken. • SamvatsariPratikramana (or Samayika)—a detailed, three-hour ceremony of spiritual review and renewal of faith at the end of ParyushanParva.
Rituals/Ceremonies	Rituals at the temple (mandir; derasar) • Dravya Puja: making symbolic physical offerings to images of the Tirthankaras. • Bhav Puja: concentration on the Tirthankaras with deep feeling. • Meditation: use of any of several methods. • Samayika (equanimity): the practice of remaining calm and undisturbed for a period of 48 minutes or more.
Dress (Religious Restrictions)	• Swetambara Jain monks and nuns wear white traditional clothing. • White traditional Indian garments and a mask over the mouth are worn when performing certain rituals. Otherwise, there is no religiously mandated clothing for Jains. • Jain laymen in the U.S. tend to wear western-style clothing. • Jain laywomen may wear western-style clothing, but many prefer to wear traditional Indian dress, such as the sari.
Death: Dying Practices	If death is certain and there is nothing to benefit by staying in the hospital, Jains may prefer to spend his/her last moments at home. • He/she will wish for mental detachment of all desires and concentrate on the inner self. • Family members or others will assist by reciting text or chanting verses from the canon. • As much peace and quiet should be maintained as possible. • When a person is aware of approaching death, and feels that all his or her duties have been fulfilled, he or she may decide to gradually cease eating and drinking. This form of dying is also called santhara.
Death: Culture/Practices	• A mantra is recited and hymns are sung at the deathbed. • The body is cremated within twenty-four hours of death if possible. • Before cremation, the Jain funeral rites consist of a period of meditation for the peace of the soul, and a sermon and advice to those present. • After cremation, the ashes are traditionally scattered in the Ganges or another sacred river. Some Jain families follow Hindu customs for the deceased.

JAINISM

Death: Body Preparation	In the Indian subcontinent, the dead person is normally cremated within twenty-four hours of death (though there may be a delay of up to a week among the diaspora in Europe and the United States).
Dietary Laws and Customs	Jains are vegan. • No root vegetables (such as onions, garlic, potatoes, carrots, beets). • No alcohol. • No dairy products. • Generally acceptable: salads, fruits, cooked grain of all types, cooked vegetables, bread or biscuits made without the use of eggs and dairy products.
Diet (Religious Restrictions)	Observant Jains undertake fasts on various days throughout year: • Every lunar month has at least five days during which strict Jains might fast. • Some fasts involve abstaining from green things on certain designated calendar days, or eating only once a day, or eating twice a day, or not eating at all. • A Jain day of fasting is a thirty-six hour period—from the evening of the day before until the morning of the day after. • Annually, in late August or early September, Jains keep a week-long fast, which may mean eating just once a day, or eating twice a day. • Some Jains perform eight days of strict fasting where they drink only boiled water, and only during sunlight hours. • Some Jains perform month-long fasts, selecting certain days to have a single meal, and keeping a total fast on the other days.
Health (Medical Care)	Jains are willing to accept conventional Western-style medical procedures, but will weigh options carefully. Jain principles of ahimsa (non-harming) and aparigraha (non-attachment) play major roles in helping Jains make decisions regarding medical care, particularly in determining the extent to use life-extending technology, or whether to make or receive an organ donation.
Health (Mental Health)	Generally, Jains are open to conventional mental healthcare options; many Jains promote meditation and fasting as means to reduce tension.
Pregnancy and Birth	Abortion is forbidden; birth control an individual choice. No religiously mandated rituals around childbirth.
FOR SERVICE PROVIDERS	
Physical Contact	Same-gender contact and separate male and female wards preferred; no taboo where medical and/or specialist personnel are involved.
Dietary Restrictions	Vegan diet should be observed.
Medical Treatment	Blood transfusions and organ transplants are acceptable, if not obtained at the expense of another life. Medication for the purpose of saving life usually accepted without question.
Mental Health Care	On the whole, Jains will be accepting of all conventional and state-of-the-art mental healthcare options.
Mass Care Facilities	If toilet and bathroom are separate, a water supply and beaker should be provided in the toilet for cleaning purposes.

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Star of David

JUDAISM

ADHERENTS CONSIDER THEMSELVES JEWISH.
ADHERENTS ARE CALLED JEWS.
THE RELIGION IS CALLED JUDAISM.

U.S. Population	5,242,000
Language (Worship)	Hebrew and English
Founder(s)	The patriarch Abraham is in one sense the founder of Judaism. In another sense, the founder is Moses, to whom God gave the entirety of Jewish Law (as the Orthodox may note). In yet another sense, the Rabbis who codified the Jewish scriptures c. 100 CE, and compiled the Talmud, can be said to have founded Judaism as it is practiced today. Each of the major denominations of Judaism has its own founding figure.
Branches & Denominations	In U.S., four main denominations: Orthodox, Conservative, Reform, Reconstructionist; some may add a fifth: Humanistic. The U.S. Jewish community also has many ethnic/cultural sub-divisions; Ashkenazim (roots in Russia and Eastern Europe) Sephardim (heirs of Jews expelled from the Iberian Peninsula in 1492), and Mizrachi (Middle Eastern and North African). Smaller groups include, but are not restricted to, Indian Jews such as the Bene Israel, Bnei Menashe, Cochin Jews, and Bene Ephraim; the Romaniotes of Greece; the Italian Jews; the Teimanim from Yemen and Oman; various African Jews, including the Beta Israel of Ethiopia; and Chinese Jews.
Basic Tenets	Beliefs and practices vary considerably from one denomination to the next. • The Shema (taken from the Book of Deuteronomy) begins: Sh'maYisrael Adonai Eloheinu Adonai Echad (Hear, Israel, the Lord is our God, the Lord is One), and is the central affirmation of Judaism. Most Jews believe in God, who is one, indivisible; by whose will the universe and all that is in it was created. • Most Jews see Judaism as a means of recognizing and realizing a covenant relationship of God and Humanity. Judaism is therefore about kedushah (sacredness) mitzvah (obligation); and emunah (faith). They differ among themselves in the degree of literalness with which they approach halacha (Jewish Law). • The notion of kedushah (sacredness) encourages Jews to "make sanctuaries in time" by observing Shabbat and following a unique calendar in parallel to that of larger society, and to engage in "holy eating" by following the dietary requirements of Jewish Law. • For many Jews, the notion of mitzvah means that the commitments, obligations, duties, and commandments of Torah (divine instruction) have priority over rights and individual pleasures. • Judaism teaches that the sanctity of life is paramount; saving life overrides nearly all obligations. • Jews have a strong sense of peoplehood; this is often expressed in terms of "chosenness" (although the Reconstructionist Movement rejects this notion). • For Jews, congregational prayer and community is the cornerstone of faith; the study of Torah is equivalent to prayer.

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Sacred Texts	Torah: both the written Torah (which may be defined as the Five Books of Moses; or, as the totality of Jewish written scripture) and the Oral Torah (now in written form as the Talmud); • Traditionally, the Torah (i.e. the Five Books of Moses) is in scroll form, particularly when used in worship. • Jewish sacred texts are organized in book form as the Tanakh—an acronym for its three sections: Torah, Nevi'im (Prophets), and Ketuvim (Writings). The Talmud is a multi-volume companion to the Torah (the Five Books of Moses), organized by topic. The Siddur (prayer book; guide to Shabbat worship) can also be considered a Jewish sacred text.
Sacred Buildings/ Structures	A Jewish house of worship is called a synagogue (from the Greek for "house of assembly"). • It may be called a Beth Knesset (Hebrew for "house of assembly"), a Beth Midrash (house of study), or Shul (Yiddish for "house of study"). Using "temple" instead of "synagogue" is common in the Reform Movement. • These items are necessary to make a space a synagogue: a Torah scroll, and ark in which to store it, and a NerTamid (eternal light) over the ark. • In some synagogues, the ark is designed to recall the biblical Tabernacle: the portable dwelling place for the divine presence built to specifications revealed to Moses at Sinai. A Sukkah is a temporary hut constructed for use during the week-long Jewish festival of Sukkot. The Temple Mount in Jerusalem is the remainder of the structure built during the reign of biblical King Solomon, and destroyed by the Romans in 70 CE.
Governance (Judicatory)	There is no Chief Rabbi in the United States; there is no umbrella organization uniting all U.S. Jews. • Each denomination or movement has a national office that sets policy, and performs administrative or disciplinary functions for its Rabbis.
Governance (Congregation)	Governance of the local congregation falls to its Board of Directors. • Many synagogues are affiliated with one of major denominations, and receive guidance from its headquarters; some are completely independent. In Hasidic Judaism, each sect/denomination has a Rebbe (Senior Rabbi) who governs the entire community and its junior Rabbis.

Point of Contact	• Local: Synagogues
	• Regional: Within denominations, there are regional associations of rabbis. Also, many Jewish Federations manage or oversee a board of rabbis with will generally include rabbis from the major sects of Judaism, outside of Orthodox and Hasidic.
	• National:
	  • Union of Orthodox Jewish Congregations of America (Orthodox)
	  • United Synagogue of Conservative Judaism (Conservative)
	  • Union for Reform Judaism (Reform)
	  • Jewish Reconstructionist Federation (Reconstructionist)

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Religious Leaders	• Rabbi means "teacher." Many Rabbis are employed by a synagogue congregation to lead worship and provide spiritual guidance, and assume many of the functions typical of Protestant Christian clergy. • A Cantor (Chazzan) is a music-leader for congregational worship, and has training similar to that for rabbis. • In the Reform, Conservative, and Reconstructionist movements, women can be ordained as rabbis and cantors. • Hasidic sects call their leaders "Rebbes." Their training and authority differs from that of rabbis ordained in the Reform, Conservative, and Reconstructionist movements.
Religious Objects/Symbols	• Torah scroll. • Menorah (many-branched candle-stand). • Symbol: six-pointed star of David. • Tallit (prayer shawl). • Kippah (yarmulke): skullcap worn by observant males, and some females. • Mezuzah: a small case containing verses from Deuteronomy, and attached to doorposts of Jewish residences and businesses. • Tefillin (phylacteries): a prayer aid comprising a black box containing verses from Deuteronomy, and straps for fastening the box to one's forehead and one's left arm during Morning Prayer; used by Orthodox men and some Orthodox women, and by some men and some women in the other Jewish movements.
Facilitating Practices	• Discuss expected observances occurring during shelter/hospital/care center stay with individual/patient/family. Be aware that there are several approaches to observing Jewish dietary laws, even among the very Orthodox. Facilitators should determine the degree to which this person "keeps kosher" (requires food complying with Jewish dietary laws), thus what their specific requirements are.
Culture & Social Interaction	This will differ broadly from denomination to denomination. Even within the Orthodox category there is considerable range.
Gender Roles/Interaction	Orthodox Judaism limits leadership to men, although women within the Modern Orthodox Movement have challenged this. • Only men may become Orthodox rabbis and cantors, although in recent years, some women have sought equivalent training. • Among Orthodox Jews, many avoid physical contact with persons beyond their immediate family of the opposite gender. Couples may avoid physical contact during the wife's menstrual period. The Reform, Conservative, and Reconstructionist Movements all are quite egalitarian, as is the Humanistic Jewish movement. • Both women and men may be ordained as rabbis and cantors. • Cross-gender contact is allowed. • Some couples take on the practice of avoiding physical contact during the wife's menstrual period.

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Principal Weekly Observance(s)	Shabbat (Sabbath or Shabbos) is observed from 17 minutes before sundown on Friday until an hour past sundown on Saturday. • Orthodox and some Reconstructionist Jews observe the timings very strictly. • Reform and Conservative Jews may be less strict about the timing of Shabbat, preferring to have observances start and end at the same time every week. • All Shabbat observance may be home-based, with opening and closing rituals to be performed by the family. • Some Jews attend a Friday evening service called Kabballat Shabbat (Shabbat Welcome), which is joyous and prayer filled. • A Saturday Shabbat Service is longer; its focus is the chanting of the Torah portion for the week; a sermon will also be given. • A Havdalah service marks the end of Shabbat, and includes wine, spices, prayer, and a special multi-wicked candle. • Some Jewish congregations hold educational programs at the synagogue on Sundays. Traditional Jewish weekly observance includes Torah reading at Morning Prayer in the synagogue on Mondays and Thursdays.
Daily Religious Practices	Observant Jews say formal prayers three times a day (morning, noon, evening). "Laying tefillin" (making use of the prayer aids comprising two small boxes containing passages from Deuteromy, with long leather straps for tying to one's forehead and one's left arm) is part of the Morning Prayer ritual.
Holy Days/Festivals	The observance of festivals is very important. The major ones are: • Rosh ha-Shanah (New Year), Days of Awe (period of introspection between Rosh ha-Shanah and Yom Kippur), Yom Kippur (Day of Atonement—a day set aside for fasting, depriving oneself of pleasures, and repenting from the sins of the previous year). • Sukkot (Feast of Booths—a festival commemorating the wandering in the desert and the final harvest). • Simchat Torah (celebration of the receipt of the Torah). • Chanukah (Feast of Light). • Purim (celebration of Queen Esther's rescue of the Jewish people). • Pesach (Passover—commemorating the exodus from Egypt). • Shavuot (Feast of Weeks—a festival commemorating the giving of the Torah and the harvest of the first fruits).
Rituals/Ceremonies	• Brit Milah ("Bris") is a Jewish circumcision ceremony performed on eight day-old male infants by a mohel. At this time the baby is also named. • The birth of girls is often celebrated among Reform and Conservative Jews with a Simchat Bat ceremony, where the baby is welcomed into the community and given her name. • Bar Mitzvah and Bat Mitzvah: reaching the age of b'nai mitzvah signifies becoming a full-fledged member of the Jewish Community with the responsibilities that come with it. In recent years, Jewish girls participate in a similar ceremony when they turn twelve years old. • Marriage: On a spiritual level, Jewish marriage is understood to mean that the husband and wife are merging into a single soul. Marriages involves a legal contract called a ketubah.

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Dress (Religious Restrictions)	Many U.S. Jews dress in ways indistinguishable from the general public. Some Orthodox Jews dress in distinctive ways that identify them, not only as Orthodox Jews, but as members of some particular sect within Orthodox Judaism. • Observant Jewish men and women will keep their heads covered at all times. Men may wear a hat or skull-cap (the yarmulka or kippa) or both. • Married Orthodox women will wear a hat, scarf or wig (or a wig plus a hat or scarf). They will appreciate provisions keeping their hair covered when hospitalized. • Orthodox women and girls are required to keep the body and limbs covered with modest clothing, and always wear a dress or skirt (never trousers). Many will appreciate hospital gowns that allow them to preserve their modesty. • Certain sects of Orthodox men are likely to wear black clothes (sometimes 18th century dress), grow the forelocks of their hair long (as ringlets called payot or payos), and maintain full beards.
Death: Dying Practices	Jewish beliefs about dying run the gamut from the notion that one's soul returns to heaven as the body returns to the dust of the earth, to a notion that nothing persist after physical death. • Jews endeavor to die (or to allow death) with dignity. It is usual for a companion to remain with a dying Jewish person until death, reading Psalms; the Shema or the Vidui (confession) might be recited as well. • Some Jews believe that the dying person should not be touched or moved, since such action might hasten death, which is not permitted. • Jewish ethicists have defined death as occurring when respiration and circulation have ceased irreversibly. Few Orthodox Jews acknowledge "brain death," neither do many Conservative Jews.
Death: Culture/Practices	Once death has come, the concern is that the body be accorded dignity. • Some Jewish legal interpreters condone donation of a body to a medical school only if all parts will be given a proper Jewish burial when no longer needed. • Some Orthodox and Conservative Jews do not approve of autopsy, unless required by law or the life of a specific person depends on it (for example, if it might yield information about a hereditary illness, thus saving a family member). • Some Orthodox and Conservative Jews may request return of all body parts and fluids be returned after autopsy for burial. Some Orthodox families may request that their rabbi observe the autopsy. • Particularly in the case of Orthodox Jews, the family should be consulted before medical personnel give postmortem care. The family may prefer that designated individuals from the Jewish community wash the body and prepare it for burial; they may prefer a funeral home familiar with Jewish belief and ritual. • Organ donation is a personal choice. The Jewish comfort level with organ donation has increased significantly (even among Orthodox Jews) as medical procedures have been refined, and the donor (or the family) can be assured that it will be used to help someone.

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Death: Body Preparation	Immediately after death a Chevra Kadisha (Holy Fellowship) should be notified; they will arrange for funeral before sunset on the day of death, if possible, but will not move the body on the Sabbath. • The body should not be moved any more than absolutely necessary, out of respect. • The body should be attended constantly from death until burial. It customary to have a shomer or shomera (guard) sit by the body and recite psalms. • Body parts must be treated with respect and remain with the corpse if possible. • Any clothing, dressings or medical equipment containing any of the deceased person's blood must be buried with the corpse. • The body is to be wrapped in a simple white shroud, although Jews have elaborate rituals for doing so. • The body is to be buried in a plain wooden coffin, not cremated.
Dietary Laws and Customs	Observant Jews uphold Kashrut (Jewish dietary law); also known as "keeping kosher." • Pork is not permissible in any form. • Seafood with both fins and scales is permissible; shellfish is not permitted. • Red meat and poultry must come from an animal slaughtered in accordance with kosher standards. • Meat and milk products must not be cooked or consumed together; separate sets of cookware and dishes must be kept for each. Milk products must not be eaten during or after a meat meal, and many observant Jews will wait three to six hours before dairy products are eaten or drunk following a meal containing meat. • Many non-orthodox Jews who keep kosher will find a vegetarian meal, even if cooked in a non-kosher kitchen, acceptable. • Alcohol is allowed; wine is used in various Jewish observances. Some Jews will only drink Kosher wine. Fasting plays a role in Jewish observance. • Yom Kippur is a major annual 25-hour fast from food and drink observed by the majority of Jews. • The Jewish calendar includes other fast days that are less widely observed. • During the period of Passover, no leavened bread is eaten; unleavened bread known as matzah may be consumed instead. There are several agencies that certify food as kosher. In caring for an observant Jew, it is important to inquire which guidelines they follow. Many will only eat food that they receive in a container marked with the seal they recognize.
Health (Medical Care)	The Talmud requires Jews to live in a community in which healthcare is available, offered, and can be received. Jews take seriously the notion of pikuah nefesh (preservation of life). Therefore, in general, Judaism imposes no restriction on use of conventional or state-of-the art medical options. • With regard to illness, Judaism recognizes the tension between the desire for cure and the recognition that the need to come to terms with the larger process of which illness is a part. • According to the Talmud, one should not hasten death, neither should one postpone it artificially. So, some Jews will disdain feeding tubes, respirators, and other heroic measures on this basis. • Jewish ethicists stress that patients should not be made to suffer unnecessary pain.

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Health (Mental Health)	Generally, Jews are open to conventional mental health care options.
Pregnancy and Birth	• Many Jews, especially the Orthodox, believe that a miscarried fetus should be buried. • Birth control is permitted, except among Orthodox Jews. Artificial insemination permitted (although perhaps not among some Orthodox Jews). • Jews believe that abortion is not only acceptable, but mandatory to save a woman's life. • While Orthodox Jews prohibit abortion in nearly all other cases, Conservative Jews allow it in limited circumstances while Reform Jews permit it in a wider range of cases.
FOR SERVICE PROVIDERS	
Physical Contact	Orthodox men and women (especially members of Ultra-Orthodox or Hasidic sects) actively avoid physical contact (such as shaking hands) with people of the opposite gender. • Such Jews will not welcome being comforted by being hugged or touched by someone of the opposite gender who is not a family member.
Dietary Restrictions	Jews who observe Jewish dietary laws should be asked about their specific approach to keeping kosher. • Some will expect food certified by their preferred agency. • Some will opt for a vegetarian diet as an alternative.
Medical Treatment	• Some Orthodox will not wish to be touched by a care provider of the opposite gender; others will allow it on the basis that saving a life supersedes other concerns. • Unless surgical procedure is immediately necessary for preservation of life, may be avoided during Sabbath or other holy days. However, all laws normally applying on the Sabbath or festival can be overruled for the purpose of saving life or safeguarding health. • Blood transfusion is permitted and is a matter of personal choice. Transplants and organ donation are usually permissible, but may require advice from a rabbi.
Mental Health Care	Generally, Jews are open to conventional mental health care options.
Mass Care Facilities	• A quiet area for prayer should be provided if possible. • Provision should be made for an Orthodox woman so that she will not be made to sleep in a space in which men (other than her husband) are present. • Sensitivity to kosher food requirements will be much appreciated. • A place to wash hands outside of the restroom is important for Orthodox Jews.

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Native American Church of North America

Sun Sign

NATIVE AMERICAN/ AMERICAN INDIGENOUS RELIGION

ADHERENTS CONSIDER THEMSELVES NATIVE AMERICAN (OR INDIAN, OR PREFER TO GO BY THE NAME OF THEIR NATION, E.G. LAKOTA).
ADHERENTS CALL THEMSELVES NATIVE AMERICANS (OR INDIANS, OR PREFER TO GO BY THE NAME OF THEIR NATION, E.G. LAKOTA).
THE RELIGION IS CALLED NATIVE AMERICAN/INDIGENOUS RELIGION (OR MAY BE NAMED ACCORDING TO THE NATION OF THE PRACTITIONERS, E.G. LAKOTA RELIGION/LAKOTA SPIRITUALITY.

U.S. Population	186,000
Language (Worship)	Worship is conducted in the native language of the particular group; in the case of an eclectic group, worship may be conducted in English or in several languages.
Founder	Ancient traditions; no record of founder-names.
Branches & Denominations	Numerous branches. Native American Religion takes at least four forms: • Embrace of a denomination of Christianity, but retain some tribal religious traditions. • Practice of one's own tribal tradition exclusively (and there are many distinct traditions (e.g. Hopi, Diné, Lakota, Ojibwe). • Embrace of a New Religious Movement (e.g. Native America Church), which synthesizes aspects of Christianity with aspects of indigenous practice and belief. • Embrace of "pan-Indian" or "trans-tribal" spirituality, integrating aspects of the religions of various indigenous peoples' nations.
Basic Tenets	Particular Native American systems of belief and practice are unique, and deserve to be appreciated as such. A few commonalities can be discerned, however: • Recollection of many sacred narratives that are rich with the symbolism of seasons, weather, plants, animals, earth, water, sky, and fire. • The principle of an all-embracing, universal and omniscient Great Spirit, a connection to the Earth, diverse creation narratives and collective memories of ancient ancestors are common. • Traditional worship practices include dance, songs, and trance.
Sacred Texts	America's Native American religions are narrative-based rather than scripture-based. Sacred narratives have been passed on from generation to generation. However, many of these narratives have been committed to writing.
Sacred Buildings/ Structures	• Some Native Americans favor construction of a building in which to conduct ceremonies and meetings. • Others favor use of a designated outdoor space. • Several tribes—Oglala Lakota, Diné (Navajo), Potawatomi, Keetowah, and others—make use of a sweat lodge as a form of prayer and meditation. This practice may also involve chanting.

NATIVE AMERICAN/AMERICAN INDIGENOUS RELIGION

Governance (Judicatory)	No overarching organization, although there are organizations which work nationally to organize powwows (gatherings to dance, sing, socialize, and honor Native American/First Nations culture).
Governance (Congregation)	Forms of local governance vary broadly.
Point of Contact	• Local: Medicine Man/Women or Shaman • Regional: N/A • National: N/A
Religious Leaders	Ceremonies are conducted by whoever knows the tradition well enough to do so. This may be the chief; it may be some other elder. In some circles, women conduct ceremonies.
Religious Objects/Symbols	These vary from tradition to tradition. • Some ritual objects include the ritual pipe, the drum, and the flute. • Some symbols include the turtle and the thunderbird. • Medicine bag: leather pouch usually worn around neck. Religious articles carried by elders must not be touched by anyone other than the elder; if inspection is required, an elder should be invited to provide inspection services. A woman should not come near sacred objects during menstruation.
Facilitating Practices	Native Americans will appreciate being given permission and space to conduct their ceremonies (especially those related to healing and death).
Culture & Social Interaction	Varies broadly.
Gender Roles/Interaction	Women may have significant leadership roles. Some traditions provide rites of passage unique to young women. Many traditions ask women to stay out of the ceremony-circle when menstruating (because of the belief that women are too powerful at that time).
Principal Weekly Observance(s)	Some groups meet weekly for ceremonies or to conduct a sweat lodge. Some conduct ceremonies on full moon days.
Daily Religious Practices	The details of daily practice vary from one tradition to the next.
Holy Days/Festivals	Native American/Indigenous religions have seasonal ceremonies throughout the year. They are invariably tied to the cycles of nature. • Keetoowah (Cherokee), for example, hold an annual Green Corn Festival and Ripe Corn Festival (Thanksgiving). • Keetoowah hold festivals annually for other reasons as well: Atahuna is held for reconciliation and forgiveness; and Busk, for purification. Uku is the Priest's Festival.

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NATIVE AMERICAN/AMERICAN INDIGENOUS RELIGION

Rituals/Ceremonies	• May be performed with intent of seeing, understanding, or obtaining a vision of clarity of oneself and individual issues in order to relate to oneself and others. • Prayer accompanied by burning of sacred plants, i.e. sweet grass, sage, cedar or tobacco. Many First Nations also hold rites of passage. • Most hold birth ceremonies to mark the proper start of the child down the path of life. • Initiation ceremonies once marked the onset of puberty for Native American boys and girls, which lasted over several days and in some cases, several months. Many of these ceremonies are no longer practiced due to the constraints of modern life; others have been revived. • Marriage ceremonies have traditionally been community celebrations focusing on the participants and impressing the importance of the new stage of life they are entering. • Celebrations for Northwest coastal peoples take the form of a potlatch, a gift-giving festival and primary economic system practiced by indigenous peoples of the Pacific Northwest Coast of Canada and United States. A grand occasion for feasting to celebrate occasions like the birth of a child or a rite-of-passage, potlatch includes traditional singing and dancing, and lots of traditional food. For certain Northwest peoples, the dancing makes use of large, elaborate masks.
Dress (Religious Restrictions)	No religiously mandated everyday dress. However, for ceremonies and dances, special clothing is necessary, and sometimes needs to be earned. These garments should be treated with respect.
Death: Dying Practices	Broad variation.
Death: Culture/Practices	Funerals are believed by many Native Americans to be the beginning of another journey into the next world. Since one's spirit needs help to make this journey, strict rules often govern the behavior of the living relatives of the deceased to ensure that their loved one starts this journey successfully.
Death: Body Preparation	America's various First Nations each have unique burial customs, but many prefer to lay out the body of the deceased for several days before burial. • Lakota are one of the groups that prefer to lay out the body of the deceased. When the day for it comes, the burial usually happens in the afternoon, followed by a big feed, and giving away the deceased's possessions. • During a Mohawk home-wake, someone keeps watch over the body at all times. Because members of the deceased's clan are in mourning, they are not permitted to touch the body, or do the grave-digging, which must be performed by someone outside the clan. • Cherokee traditionally kept the body of the deceased in their home for four days, while conducting ceremonies for the lingering life force of the deceased. The body is washed. Some people still paint the face black and red. • While burial is more traditional, many Native people now prefer to be cremated, so that there is no body to exhume and study, as has happened to Native Americans in the recent past.
Dietary Laws and Customs	Varies broadly from one tradition to the next.

NATIVE AMERICAN/AMERICAN INDIGENOUS RELIGION

Health (Medical Care)	• General comfort for conventional medical care options, but a preference for traditional healing methods at the same time. • May believe that ill health results from not living in harmony or being out of balance with nature and social and supernatural environments. • Members of many tribes and nations express serious discomfort at the notion of organ transplantation. • In many traditions, it is the custom to save lost teeth, amputated limbs, and surgically removed organs for eventual burial with the body.
Health (Mental Heath)	Some willingness to accept conventional mental health care options.

Pregnancy and Birth	• Pregnant woman are generally included in religious ceremonies until delivery.
	• Many Native traditions provide ceremonies for baby-welcoming in which the baby is welcomed on the sacred path, named, and celebrated as a new member of the tribe.
	  • Zuni show the baby to the sun for the first time on the eighth day; Hopi do this on the 20th day.
	  • Kwakiutl and Haida of the Pacific Northwest hold a baby-naming in the context of a potlatch.
	  • Navajo babies become full members of the tribe four days after they laugh for the first time.

FOR SERVICE PROVIDERS	
Physical Contact	Not able to generalize.
Dietary Restrictions	Not able to generalize.
Medical Treatment	Some willingness to accept conventional treatment options; may have strong preference for tribal healing methods in addition or instead. Include elder, medicine person, or spiritual leader as colleague to assist in healing process.
Mental Health Care	Some willingness to accept conventional treatment options. Include elder, medicine person, or spiritual leader as colleague to assist in healing process.
Mass Care Facilities	Opportunity to conduct ceremonies (especially daily purification) will be appreciated.

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Scientology cross

Scientology symbol

SCIENTOLOGY

ADHERENTS CONSIDER THEMSELVES SCIENTOLOGISTS.
ADHERENTS CALL THEMSELVES SCIENTOLOGISTS.
THE RELIGION IS CALLED SCIENTOLOGY.

U.S. Population	55,000
Language (Worship)	English
Founder	L. Ron Hubbard
Branches & Denominations	None
Basic Tenets	Scientology beliefs and practices are viewed as being grounded in rigorous research, and its doctrines are accorded a significance equivalent to that of scientific laws. • Scientology views life in compartmentalized urges (drives, impulses) toward survival. These are called "dynamics" and there are eight in all. • It puts forth a long list of inalienable human rights that "no agency less than God has the power to suspend." Scientology beliefs revolve around a notion of the thetan—the individualized expression of the cosmic source, or life force, named after the Greek letter theta. • The thetan is the true identity of a person—an intrinsically good, omniscient, non-material core capable of unlimited creativity. • Thetans are reborn time and time again in new bodies through a process called "assumption" which is analogous to reincarnation. Scientology posits a causal relationship between the experiences of earlier incarnations and one's present life, and with each rebirth, the effects of the MEST universe (matter, energy, space, and time) on the thetan become stronger.
Sacred Texts	Dianetics: The Modern Science of Mental Health by L. Ron Hubbard is available in 32 languages.
Sacred Buildings/ Structures	Scientology organizations and missions are found in many cities. The movement's headquarters is in Los Angeles, CA.
Governance (Judicatory)	The movement is centrally governed by the Scientology President.
Governance (Congregation)	Local congregations are responsible for securing and maintaining their own worship spaces.
Point of Contact	• Local: Church, governed by a minister and board of directors • Regional: N/A • National: Continental Liaison Office (Los Angeles)
Religious Leaders	Scientology ministers perform functions similar to those of Protestant clergy.

SCIENTOLOGY

Religious Objects/Symbols	The Scientology symbols include:
	• A cross with an "X" where the horizontal bar represents the material universe, and the vertical bar represents the spirit.
	• An 'S' with two stylized triangles summarizing the religion's doctrine:
	  • The lower triangle represents the Scientologist's striving for ARC—Affinity (affection, love or liking), Reality (consensual reality) and Communication (the exchange of ideas).
	  • The upper triangle (called KRC) represents the relationship between Knowledge, Responsibility and Control.

Facilitating Practices	None specifically.
Culture & Social Interaction	Scientology aims to improve society by application of its principles. Scientologists come from all walks of life and support numerous social betterment programs, which are intended to produce successful drug-abuse rehabilitation, improve educational standards and help reduce crime.
Gender Roles/Interaction	Ministry is open to both men and women. As people are viewed as spiritual beings, there are no specific gender rules or mandates in Scientology.
Principal Weekly Observance(s)	Worship services each Sunday the Church's Chaplain or another minister conducts a public worship service which is open to both members and non-members of the Church. Scientology worship includes recitation of the Creed of Scientology, sermons, congregational auditing and prayer. Each week, usually on Friday, parishioners gather for graduation, a time when they acknowledge their fellow parishioners who have completed a course or level of auditing.
Daily Religious Practices	Scientology daily practice focuses on auditing, through which the individual gets rid of "spiritual disabilities" and increases his/her abilities.
Holy Days/Festivals	Scientology holidays commemorate events in the life of the founder and other important points in the history of the movement. New Year's Eve is also celebrated.
Rituals/Ceremonies	Scientology congregations celebrate weddings and naming rituals with their own formal ceremonies. In addition they mark the passing of their fellows with funeral rites.
Dress (Religious Restrictions)	No restrictions.
Death: Dying Practices	Scientology teaches that the spirit (thetan) leaves a particular body when that body no longer is adequate to its needs. It will then find another physical body to inhabit. The soul does not undergo judgment. The reincarnation process is automatic. Therefore, death is a sad occasion, but it also considered liberating.
Death: Culture/Practices	Given the Scientology tenet that the body is mortal but the spirit is immortal, and given the minister's role in comforting those bereaved by loss, a funeral ceremony serves to end the cycle of the life passed and focus on the future..
Death: Body Preparation	Scientologists may bury or cremate their dead.

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SCIENTOLOGY

Dietary Laws and Customs	No dietary restrictions.
Health (Medical Care)	Scientology encourages the use of the full range of conventional medical treatment options. Scientologists are allowed to make their own decisions regarding organ donation and reception.
Health (Mental Health)	Scientology sees conventional Mental Health Science as based on principles that are in severe opposition to its own principles, and speaks quite sharply against the fields of psychiatry and psychology.
Pregnancy and Birth	The Church of Scientology does not mandate a position on abortion or birth control. Founder L. Ron Hubbard wrote that both abortion and attempted abortion could cause trauma to the fetus and to the mother in both spiritual and physical ways. Abortion is therefore rare among Scientologists, who recognize that even an unborn fetus may already be occupied by a spiritual being. In some instances, however, abortion might be an option owing to health concerns for the mother or other personal factors. Scientology advises silent birth, a procedure advised by L. Ron Hubbard in which everyone attending the birth should refrain from spoken words as much as possible due to effects on mother and child.
FOR SERVICE PROVIDERS	
Physical Contact	No specific concerns.
Dietary Restrictions	None.
Medical Treatment	Scientology encourages the use of the full range of conventional medical treatment options. Scientologists are allowed to make their own decisions regarding organ donation and reception. During birth, Scientologists may request those in the delivery room to be as quiet as possible.
Mental Health Care	Eschews conventional psychology and psychiatry as contrary to its principles.
Mass Care Facilities	Scientology sees conventional Mental Health Science as based on principles that are in severe opposition to its own principles, and speaks quite sharply against the fields of psychiatry and psychology. Sensitivity to this belief should be observed when offering these services in a mass care/shelter setting where Scientologists are present.

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Torii (Shrine Gate)

SHINTO

ADHERENTS CONSIDER THEMSELVES SHINTO FOLLOWERS.
ADHERENTS CALL THEMSELVES SHINTO FOLLOWERS (SOMETIMES, SHINTOISTS).
THE RELIGION IS CALLED SHINTO OR KAMI NO MICHI (BOTH MEANING "THE WAY OF THE DEITIES").

U.S. Population	87,400
Language (Worship)	Japanese
Founder	None
Branches & Denominations	There are five main denominations: • Jinja (Shrine) Shinto (most prevalent today) • Kokka (State) Shinto • Koshitsu (Imperial Household) Shinto • Kyoha (Sectarian) Shinto • Minzoku (Folk) Shinto
Basic Tenets	The Shinto worldview features reverence for nature and emphasis on beauty in the natural world. • Humanity and bodily life are fundamentally good—as are sexuality and fertility. • The focus is on life, and on counteracting anything that brings sickness and death. Not only should physical pollutants be removed, but human relationships likewise should be kept healthy and pure. • Shinto emphasizes sincerity, fulfillment of obligations, and apology for errors. Shinto teaches that Kami (superiors, deities) are everywhere, and are personified, named, and approached with reverence. • Kami may be nature spirits, familial ancestors, or the spirits deceased emperors, saints, or heroes. • Kami are the central objects of worship for the Shinto faith. • Some Shinto practices are home-centered. The family maintains a kamidan (a home shrine) inside the house or in the garden, and makes offerings of rice and water to the resident kami. • Each jinja (Shinto shrine) has a kami—which may be a natural object or a famous person. Two of the most famous jinja in Japan are Ise (the Sun Goddess Shrine) and Tsubaki (the Earth God Shrine). Another Tsubaki Shrine is located in Granite Falls, WA. • Shrine worship has four components: purification, offering, prayer, and (occasionally) symbolic feasting by drinking rice wine. • Some shrines house a sacred object, but these remain hidden. • If a shrine has a building, it is likely to have a small hall in which the kami resides (and which is off limits to visitors) and a larger hall where prayers may be said. Purity—Shinto teaches that certain deeds create a kind of ritual impurity that one should want cleansed for one's own peace of mind and good fortune rather than because impurity is wrong. Wrong deeds are called impurity. • Purification rites are a vital part of Shinto. They are done on a daily, weekly, seasonal, lunar, and annual basis.

SHINTO

Sacred Texts	Shinto has no official scriptures. • The narratives of Shinto oral tradition began to take written form in the 8th century CE. • Kojiki is the chronicle of ancient events. • Nihongi is the chronicle of Japan.
Sacred Buildings/ Structures	A Shinto shrine is called a jinja. Its entrance is marked by a Torii (two uprights with two crossbeams); the main hall for communal worship is called a haiden. U.S. Shinto-followers may maintain a home-shrine called a kamidan.
Governance (Judicatory)	In the U.S., the Tsubaki Grand Shrine of America is a branch of the Tsubaki Shrine in Ise, Japan. The International Shinto Foundation is registered as a Not-for-Profit Corporation in the State of New York. It employs a priest who is responsible for providing Shinto ceremonies for Shinto-followers up and down the Atlantic Seaboard.
Governance (Congregation)	Although a branch of the Tsubaki Shrine in Japan, Tsubaki Grand Shrine of America is also in a sense self-governing. It claims to be the only full-service Shinto jinja in the US.
Point of Contact	• Local: Shrines • Regional: N/A • National: N/A
Religious Leaders	A Shinto priest may be called a sensei; a priest may be male or female. In the U.S., Shinto priests are often addressed as “Reverend.”
Religious Objects/Symbols	The symbol of Shinto is the torii, an arch built of wood or stone. • Once a perch for sacred birds, it now is a gateway of honor. • To pass through a tori is to make the first step to purification. • A haraigushi (wand) is used to order to sweep away stagnation.
Facilitating Practices	None specifically.
Culture & Social Interaction	Many Shinto Followers in the U.S. are Japanese or Japanese-American. The religion is tightly related to Japanese cultural sensibilities.
Gender Roles/Interaction	Shinto personifies the Ultimate Deity as feminine. Women and men both can become Shinto priests. Shinto provides ceremonies for girls and women, as well as for boys and men.
Principal Weekly Observance(s)	Shinto-Followers gather on Full Moon days (rather than weekly) for a special ceremony. Some may come together weekly for Aikido instruction, which is seen as a spiritual discipline.
Daily Religious Practice	The Shinto priest’s daily routine involves gishiki (Shinto ceremony). • Chohai (daily ritual) begins early in the morning with self-purification, then ritual purification of the shrine grounds and building, food offerings for the kami, and an invitation to the kami to perform cleansing action. • The Shinto day begins and ends with gratitude.

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SHINTO

Holy Days/Festivals	For Shinto-followers, the annual cycle includes celebrations and commemorations virtually every month. • Koshinsatsu Takeagehiki is the annual Shinto festival of purification by burning, early in the year. It is the time for Shinto-followers to remove old ritual objects and charms from their household shrines and exchange them for fresh ones. There is a bonfire ceremony in which used items are burned. • In early February comes Setsubun (Old Japanese Lunar New Year), which marks the end of winter. On this day, it is customary for people to throw soy beans, to shoo away bad fortune and invoke the good. • There are many other annual Shinto festivals.
Rituals/Ceremonies	Rites of passage may also be held at the shrine. The Shichi-Go-San, (Seven-Five-Three) is a rite of passage for five-year-old boys and three-year-old or seven-year-old girls. It is a time for these young children to personally offer thanks for the Kami's protection and to pray for the continuance of healthy growing.
Dress (Religious Restrictions)	None for layperson, except during certain rituals. The priest has special ceremonial garb which is loosely based on the kimono and is black and white.
Death: Dying Practices	When a Shinto-follower is dying, it is quite common for the family to arrange for a Buddhist funeral.
Death: Culture/Practices	While it is quite common to turn to Buddhism when a loved one dies, Shinto does have a funeral ceremony (called a shinsosai), and the Tsubaki Shrine of North America has performed many. • A Shinto funeral is a series of ceremonies, beginning with a vigil, during which the mitama (soul) gets used to the idea of not being alive anymore. As well, the vigil acknowledges that, though this person is dead and is not coming back, family and friends sense that the mitama is still there. • Next comes the senrei-sai, the ceremony of transferring the mitama from the body to a mitama-shiro, a specially prepared memorial plaque. • Then comes the shinsosai—the funeral ceremony itself, performed in front of the memorial plaque. • Finally, there is a ceremony for seeing the body off at the time of cremation, and another ceremony for the people returning home. Traditionally, Shinto funeral ceremonies will take place in the home of the deceased person rather than in the shrine. However, some rituals for the dead can be, and often are, performed on the Grand Tsubaki Shrine grounds. Special precautions are necessary, however, because the items used in the ceremony and the garb worn by the priest must be kept away from the main shrine building.
Death: Body Preparation	American Shinto-followers try to avoid embalming by opting for cremation. Customarily, the ashes are buried rather than sprinkled or spread – and never near the Shinto shrine.
Dietary Laws and Customs	Nothing specific.

SHINTO

Health (Medical Care)	In general, American Shinto-followers are comfortable with many of the options conventional Western health care offers. • However, because Shinto is a life-affirming worldview whose main focus is cleanliness and purity, and since terminal illness and death connote impurity and negativity, Shinto-followers may turn to Buddhism for help in dealing with them. • On the other hand, Shinto can help its followers be matter-of-fact and accepting in their approach to terminal illness, facing it with a traditional adage: "it cannot be helped." • This absolves the patient of any blame or feeling of failure. Generally, Shinto is not in favor of organ transplantation because it is contrary to the natural process. Shinto teaches that the body wants to return to nature; it wants to decompose, and the mitama (soul) wants to be on its way. Shinto values the ongoing relationship between the person who died and the family and friends left behind. Shinto-followers may be concerned this relationship will be damaged or disrupted by cutting into a corpse for autopsy or organ-harvesting.
Health (Mental Health)	Many American Shinto-Followers will be comfortable with standard mental health care options.
Pregnancy and Birth	When a Shinto-Follower gives birth, the infant is brought into the shrine to be initiated as a new believer to receive the Kami's blessing.
FOR SERVICE PROVIDERS	
Physical Contact	No specific concerns.
Dietary Restrictions	No particular restrictions.
Medical Treatment	Many Western-style medical options will generally be acceptable. Conversations about making or receiving an organ donation will need to be handled with care. Taking extraordinary measures to sustain life runs counter to Shinto philosophy, but decisions are left to the individual.
Mental Health Care	Many Western mental health care options will be acceptable.
Mass Care Facilities	No specific needs or concerns.

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Khanda

SIKH FAITH (Pronounced "sick")

ADHERENTS CONSIDER THEMSELVES SIKH.
ADHERENTS CALL THEMSELVES SIKHS.
THE RELIGION IS CALLED SIKH FAITH, SIKHI, OR SIKHISM.

U.S. Population	286,000
Language (Worship)	Punjabi/Gurmukhi
Founder	Guru Nanak (1469-1539)
Branches & Denominations	Many U.S. Sikhs are part of the mainline tradition from the Punjab; followers of Yogi Bhajan may be considered a separate denomination.
Basic Tenets	Sikhism is a monotheistic religion, which originated in northern India. While its original context included both Hindus and Muslims, members see it as a distinct religion (not a blend of Hinduism and Islam, or an offshoot of either). • Sikhs believe that God is imminent; nothing in this creation is devoid of or distinct from God's essence. • God is omnipresent, transcdendent, omnipotent, and omniscient. • Emphasis is placed on ethics, morality, and values. • Sikhs believe in Samsara, Karma, and Reincarnation, but also believe that birth as a human is a rare opportunity; one is to make the best of one's present lifetime. • The Sikh lifestyle is summarized as: work hard and earn an honest living, remember God, and share the fruits of one's labors with those in need. • Sikh teaching emphasizes the principle of equality of all humans and rejects discrimination on the basis of caste, creed, and gender.
Sacred Texts	Guru Granth Sahib is the holy scripture of Sikhism. • It is a collection of writings of Guru Nanak (the founder), many of the nine human gurus who followed him as leaders of the community, and selections from the writings of a few Hindu and Muslim holy persons. • Sikhism's Tenth Guru declared the Guru Granth Sahib to the "Living Guru" for Sikhs; there will be no more human gurus. • All copies of the Guru Granth Sahib are paginated identically. • As the living teacher of the community, any copy of the Guru Granth Sahib is to be accorded the respect and care due royalty, which includes ceremonially awakening it each day, attending it when it is outside its "bedroom," and ceremonially putting it to bed each evening. The Rehat Maryada (Sikh Code of Conduct) is the source of guidance in details of Sikh law and practice.
Sacred Buildings/ Structures	Sikh houses of worship are called gurdwaras; sometimes they are referred to as temples. Typically, a gurdwara includes a commercial kitchen as well as a hall for community worship and meals (langar hall).

SIKH FAITH

Governance (Judicatory)	The Akal Takhat (located in Amritsar, Punjab) is the highest juridical authority for Sikhs worldwide; this office has the authority to issue edicts to provide guidance or clarification on any matter of Sikh doctrine or practice. It can also issue reprimands.
Governance (Congregation)	Each gurdwara (temple) is independently governed by a board of directors.
Point of Contact	• Local: Gurdwara, led by a board of directors • Regional: N/A • National: The World Sikh Council – America Region
Religious Leaders	Sikhism has no clergy. Anyone may fill any role in worship. • A scholar of Sikhism (gyani or giani) or the head of a gurdwara's board of directors may also be considered a Sikh religious leader. The worship leader is called the Granthi (the one who tends the sacred scripture). Granthi may also mean someone with deep knowledge of the scriptures, able to teach others about it. • A musician may be called a ragi (one who knows the ragas/melodies).
Religious Objects/Symbols	Sikhs typically wear the Five Ks (panjkakaar)—five articles of faith (the names for which all begin with the letter K); initiated Sikhs (also called Khalsa Sikhs) must wear the Five Ks at all times. They are: • Kesh (uncut hair, tied and wrapped in a dastara/Sikh Turban). • Kanga (wooden comb, worn under the turban). • Kachchera (cotton underwear). • Kara (an iron bracelet, worn on the right wrist). • Kirpan (a curved dagger, symbolizing commitment to justice). Other Sikh symbols include: • Ik Onkar: the opening words, in elegant Gurmukhi script of the Mool Mantra (the first page of the Sikh holy book), which means "One with Everything" (implying "Creation is in the Creator"). • Khanda: symbol comprising a double-edged sword (khanda) representing belief in one God; the Chakkar, an unbroken circle representing God's eternity; two crossed kirpans (daggers) representing spiritual authority and political power. • Nishan Sahib: saffron triangular flag bearing with the Khanda symbol is flown above every gurdwara.
Facilitating Practices	• Provide privacy for daily prayers. • Respect wearing religious objects; do not remove them without permission; do not demand that an observant Sikh remove any of the Five Ks (articles of faith).
Culture & Social Interaction	Sikhs focus on the idea that human beings must work for a living and play an active role in society. The guiding principles of the Sikh faith are Truth, Equality, Freedom, Justice, and Karma. Therefore, they will often seek out ways to be helpful to those in need.
Gender Roles/Interaction	Sikhism teaches egalitarianism and a leveling of caste distinctions. Therefore, the role and place of women should be parallel to that of men, but preferences for men in leadership roles may be present in communities.

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SIKH FAITH

Principal Weekly Observance(s)	In the Punjab, visiting the Gurdwara can be part of one's daily routine; Sikh communities in the U.S. usually establish a pattern for meeting weekly for a prayer service. • Sikh communal worship features devotional singing of hymns taken from the Sikh holy book, using traditional melodies and accompanied by harmoniums and tabors; a reading from scripture (chosen at random), and a discourse explaining it or some particular tenet of the faith, and the Ardas (standing prayer). • Toward the end of the service, karahprashad (a lump of sweet pudding) will be distributed. • After the service, worshipers adjourn to the langar hall for a community meal, traditionally eaten sitting in rows on the floor.
Daily Religious Practices	Devout Sikhs say five prayers each morning, one prayer in the evening, and one prayer at bedtime. Each of these prayer times concludes with recitation of the Ardas (the standing prayer which is also said in Sikh communal worship).
Holy Days/Festivals	Sikhs follow a modified lunar calendar. The Sikh year includes six primary holidays. • All holidays follow a similar pattern of celebration: three days of worship, with special food distributed free from the langar. • The dates for commemorating the birth of each of the ten gurus are distributed throughout the year. Those of the founder (Guru Nanak) and of the tenth guru (Guru Gobind Singh) are especially important. • Baisaki is a commemoration of the formation of the Khalsa in 1699. • Guru Granth Day celebrates the proclamation that the Sikh scripture is the perpetual living Guru.
Rituals/Ceremonies	Sikhs participate in daily and weekly prayer services, which include ceremonial waking, enthroning, and retiring the Guru Granth Sahib each day. Khande-di-Pahul (sometimes called "taking amrit") is perhaps the most important occasional Sikh ceremony. • This is a pre-dawn ritual of initiation (sometimes called Sikh baptism). • It involves preparation of sweetened water, which is sprinkled on the initiative, and drunk by those participating in the ceremony. • Amritdhara (initiated) Sikhs are considered members of the Khalsa (society of the pure) and commit themselves to performance of the daily prayers and wearing of the five articles of faith.
Dress (Religious Restrictions)	Many (including children) wear the Five Ks (articles of faith). • Kesh (uncut hair, tied and wrapped in a dastara/Sikh Turban). • Kachchera (cotton underwear). A devout Sikh may wish to have begun to step into the fresh undergarment before completely removing the old one, thus never being completely without it. • Kara (an iron bracelet, worn on the right wrist). Devout Sikhs never remove the bracelet from their wrist. • Kirpan (a curved dagger, symbolizing commitment to justice). Devout Sikhs prefer not to remove their kirpan; however, some will do so under certain circumstances, and others substitute a dagger-charm on a necklace. • Kanga (wooden comb, worn under the turban). The Kanga is kept with the hair and used twice per day.

SIKH FAITH

Death: Dying Practices	As death approaches, Sikhs are encouraged to focus on prayer, which may be sung or read, in the belief that saying prayers while the soul is leaving will help that the soul get to God faster. The Sikh family will want to be present when the death is declared, or when they feel that the soul is leaving. Those working with Sikh families should make an attempt to accommodate this.
Death: Culture/Practices	Sikhism teaches that once the soul leaves the body, the body becomes less important as it was merely the repository for the soul. • While the body is to be treated with dignity, it is ultimately something to dispose of. • At the funeral home, prior to cremation, Sikhs will say the Sohila (the night prayer, but also a reminder of death), to encourage the soul to leave its home and go eternally forward. • After cremation, family and friends go to the gurdwara, where the community will say the Ardas (standing prayer), the main prayer of Sikh worship. There may also be singing of hymns focusing on the constant need for self-preparation, so that the soul will be prepared (when the time comes) to leave and to go on its journey.
Death: Body Preparation	Traditionally, Sikhs will bring the body of a deceased family member home, where it will be bathed in milk and water by family members of the same gender, and cremated very soon after death. • While waiting for the time of cremation, the prepared body is placed on the floor, where family members attend it until time for the funeral. Prayers are recited continuously; if necessary, family members will sleep on the floor next to the body. • In the U.S. it is typical to postpone the funeral for a day or two, or longer, to allow family to come travel. The family may even hold a "viewing." • Delaying the funeral makes embalming necessary, which is a change to traditional Sikh practice.
Dietary Laws and Customs	• Sikhs are forbidden from eating meat killed in a ritualistic or religiously prescribed manner by throat-cutting (as is the case with kosher and halal meat). • Forbidden meat is called Kutha meat; permitted meat is called Jhatka meat. • Meals served from a Gurdwara's langar are to be completely vegetarian. Sikhs are forbidden from bringing meat of any kind into the langar. • Consumption of alcohol, drugs, tobacco, and other intoxicants is forbidden.
Health (Medical Care)	Generally, Sikhs are open to all conventional and state-of-the-art medical treatment options. • Observant Sikhs never cut their hair; initiated Sikhs have taken a vow to never cut the hair on any part of their body. Therefore, medical procedures which require any degree of hair-shaving can be deeply upsetting to an observant Sikh. • Observant Sikhs wear a special undergarment, and may finding it upsetting if it is necessary to remove it or go without during medical care. • Observant Sikhs who wear a turban will prefer to remove it themselves (when absolutely necessary), and will want the cloth stored respectfully. They will want to keep their hair covered with an under-turban, and will appreciate cooperation from the medical care team on this matter.

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SIKH FAITH

Health (Mental Health)	Generally, Sikhs are open to conventional mental healthcare options. The religion encourages use of prayer and meditation in dealing with depression, anxiety, and other mental illnesses.
Pregnancy and Birth	Sikh women are encouraged to read and recite Sikh scriptures daily during pregnancy. The Rehat Maryada (Code of Conduct) explicitly forbids ritual housecleaning for purification after childbirth, because it rejects all traditional notions that childbirth causes pollution. Sikh baby-welcoming ceremonies are spelled out in the Rehat Maryada: • Soon after the baby is born, the Mool Mantra (the summary of Sikh faith) is whispered in its ear, and a drop of honey is placed on its tongue. • The mother is encouraged to pray or meditate or chant Waheguru (Almighty God) while the baby nurses. • Whenever the newborn's mother feels ready she and her family take Karhah Prasad (sacred pudding) to the gurdwara for a joyful ceremony of hymn-singing and prayer. A portion of scripture is read. The Granthi (the person attending the holy book) announces the first letter of the reading; the congregation accepts it; and the parents choose a name for the child, which begins with that letter. Closing prayers are recited, and Karhah Prashad is distributed to everyone. • Abortion is not directly addressed in scripture but generally forbidden as it is seen as interference in the creative work of God. Exceptions are made in circumstances where the life or health of the mother is in serious jeopardy or the fetus has serious defects that will not allow it to survive beyond birth. • Birth control is also not directly addressed by scripture; rather couples are left to decide whether to use family planning and which method to choose.
FOR SERVICE PROVIDERS	
Physical Contact	• No religion-prescribed restrictions.
Dietary Restrictions	• Observant Sikhs are forbidden from eating halal or kosher meat. • Sikhs may eat meat slaughtered by conventional methods. • Some Sikhs are vegetarian by choice. • Consumption of alcohol, drugs, tobacco, and other intoxicants is forbidden.
Medical Treatment	Generally, Sikhs are open to conventional and state-of-the-art healthcare options. • Observant Sikhs who have unshorn hair will find shaving in preparation for medical procedures to be deeply upsetting. • Observant Sikhs will want to continue to wear the Five Ks (articles of faith) as best they can during hospitalization. • A turban-wearing Sikh who must remove their turban for a medical procedure will want the cloth to be stored respectfully.
Mental Health Care	• Generally, Sikhs are open to conventional mental healthcare options.
Mass Care Facilities	• Sikhs will appreciate a place to meditate and say daily prayers. • It is unlikely that a copy of the Sikh holy book will be brought to a mass care facility; however, if that situation were to present itself, Sikhs will appreciate cooperation with their effort to store it and protect it according to Sikh Law. • Mixed gender concerns may stem from practices found in Indian culture, rather than in Sikhism itself. It is important to be aware that sensitivity to gender mixing may be present.

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Yin and Yang

TAOISM (Pronounced "dou-iz-uhm")

ADHERENTS CONSIDER THEMSELVES TAOIST/DAOIST.
ADHERENTS CALL THEMSELVES TAOIST/DAOIST.
THE RELIGION IS CALLED TAOISM/DAOISM.

U.S. Population	18,000
Language (Worship)	• Chinese languages: Cantonese, Mandarin, others • English
Founder	• Lao-tze (4th century CE, perhaps) is commonly regarded as the founder of Taoism/Daoism.
Branches & Denominations	Many; American Taoism/Daoism takes a variety of forms. • Many Taoists/Daoists in America are adherents of some form of Chinese Daoism transplanted to the U.S. • Fewer are part of a New Religious Movement sometimes labeled Popular Western Taoism by observers; this is better described as a modern construction of a Taoism-based religion (rather than part of the historic Taoist/Daoist tradition).
Basic Tenets	Taoism is both a complex system of indigenous Chinese beliefs, rituals, and practices, and a highly influential school of Chinese philosophy. Some people are drawn much more to the ritual than philosophy. Some prefer the philosophy to the ritual. • In Taoism, the Tao is the underlying First Principle of the universe, source and determiner of everything, a force flowing through all life. • There is no notion of a personal Ultimate or notion of a sovereign creator of the universe. • The Tao is not worshipped, but is acknowledged and respected in the effort to become one with it. • Taoism emphasizes themes such as naturalness, spontaneity, simplicity, detachment from desires, and most importantly, wu-wei (actionless action). • Naturalness is regarded as a central value in Taoism. It describes the primordial state of things as well as a basic character of the Tao. It is associated with spontaneity and creativity and involves the freeing of oneself from selfishness and desire while appreciating simplicity. • Wu-wei is the philosophy that the universe works harmoniously according to its own ways. When someone exerts their will against the world, they disrupt harmony. Taoism asserts that one must place their will in harmony with the natural universe in order to avoid harmful interference and achieve their goals effortlessly.
Sacred Texts	The *Tao Te Ching,* or *Daodejing*, is widely regarded to be the most influential Taoist text.
Sacred Buildings/ Structures	Many large and famous Taoist temple complexes exist in China. In the U.S. context, traditional Chinese Taoist temples are small, and may resemble the Chinese Buddhist temples in their neighborhood. U.S. Taoism/Daoism also makes use of halls and spaces adequate for the practice of Qi-gong or Tai chi.

TAOISM

Governance (Judicatory)	For Taoism/Daoism in the U.S., none beyond the local level.
Governance (Congregation)	Organizations with a Taoist/Daoist connection of some sort can be found in a number of U.S. cities. Some of these have incorporated. Some serve a local Chinese-American community and others serve a primarily Euro-American constituency. All are independent. There seems to be networking between them at this point.
Point of Contact	• Local: Temple/Community Group • Regional: N/A • National: N/A
Religious Leaders	Priests are experts in Taoist/Daoist ritual performance. Masters are experts in Qi-gong, Tai Chi, or one of the other Taoist/Daoist arts; masters typically hold classes regularly, and have developed a coterie of disciples. Some categories of Taoist leaders typically are married. Other schools of Taoism require celibate priests.
Religious Objects/Symbol	Well-known Taoist symbols include: • The Taijitu (yin-yang symbol) • The Ba gua ("Eight Trigrams") Taoism has developed elaborate iconography—including statues and paintings of a complex pantheon of celestial beings, such as: • Jade Emperor (Yu-huang), ruler of all heavens, highest among all spiritual entities, ruler of earth and humanity, yin and yang, indeed all of creation. • Shang-ti (Lord-Above), ruler of the universe, but not the Ultimate Creator. • T'u-ti Kung (Earth God) a local caretaker, responsible for neighborhoods, farms, mountainsides. • Ch'eng Huang (God of the City Wall and Moat), a celestial "district magistrate." • Tsao Chun (Lord of the Stove—the Kitchen God), who observes family members and reports on their behavior to the Jade Emperor.
Culture & Social Interaction	With regard to the ethnically Chinese Taoist community in the U.S., issues of cultural and social interaction are as much a matter of Chinese cultural sensibilities as they are of the Taoist religion itself.
Gender Roles/Interaction	Because the complementarity of opposites is central to Taoism, women have a significant role in this religion. • Throughout history there have been important female Taoist teachers, matriarchs of Taoist movements, and important nuns. The Taoist pantheon includes many female deities of great significance.
Principal Weekly Observance(s)	In the U.S. context, weekly Taoist practice often takes the form of weekly Qi-Gong or Tai Chi classes.
Daily Religious Practices	A recurrent and important element of Taoism are rituals, exercises and substances aiming at aligning oneself spiritually with cosmic forces, at undertaking ecstatic spiritual journeys, or at improving physical health and thereby extending one's life, ideally to the point of immortality. • Students of Qi-Gong or Tai Chi may practice daily on their own. • In the U.S. context, one can find Chinese Taoist temples, which are open daily. Adherents are able to stop in at will, in order to make offerings and meditate. • Taoism includes practices such as ch'i-kung (breathing exercises) or T'ai-chich'uan (development of mental and physical discipline through slow, graceful movements).

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TAOISM

Holy Days/Festivals	Ethnically Chinese Taoists/Daoists in the U.S. will observe the holidays of the traditional Chinese calendar, among them Chinese New Year; Qing Ming (spring tomb-sweeping day); Hungry Ghost Festival (mid-summer).
Rituals/Ceremonies	• At certain dates, such as during the Qing Ming Festival or on the full moon day of each month, food may be set out as a sacrifice to the spirits of the deceased or the gods. • Joss paper, or Hell Ban Notes, may be burned ritually, on the assumption that the actual items will be translated by the fire to the spirit world, for the benefit of departed loved ones. • Taoist ritual includes taking advantage of fortune-telling by means of astrology, I Ching, and other means. Some Taoists engage mediums to interact with the spirit world.
Dress (Religious Restrictions)	No religion-based clothing requirements.
Death: Dying Practices	Family members gather at the bedside to pray for and counsel the dying person.
Death: Culture/Practices	• Friends and relatives visit the bereaved families usually in the evening prior to the funeral when gifts of money or flowers are given and help is offered. • Traditionally, at the memorial service, the family circles the open casket three times, chanting. Each generation pays respect: the spouse and son honor the deceased with bowing and incense; the daughters and grandchildren do the same. • The coffin is then closed and placed in the hearse. The eldest son rides with the coffin, and will hold a large incense stick out the window. In case the spirit of the deceased gets lost, the incense will guide him. A family member calls the name of the deceased every five minutes to remind the deceased person's spirit to keep up with the hearse. • Burial should take place in a gravesite chosen by a Taoist master making use of burial feng shui, burial geomancy. The gravesite is circled three times, then the coffin is put to rest. Burial completed, the family sits down to a picnic right at the gravesite. The meal may include some of the favorite foods of the deceased. • An expected period of mourning is observed usually lasting a month. • At some point after the fact, the family may arrange for an elaborate Taoist temple funeral, performed by a celibate monastic priest. A family may hire a Taoist priest to perform a very elaborate, multiple-stage (and sometimes, multiple-day) funeral ceremony through which various deities are given offerings, are told of the good deeds of the deceased, and are petitioned to forgive any debt incurred by wrongdoings. Paper effigies of the deceased and whatever he or she will need in the afterworld are burned; and a smooth transition of the deceased loved one to the heavenly realm is assured.
Death: Body Preparation	Traditionally, Taoists do not believe in embalming or cremation.
Dietary Laws and Customs	Some Taoists may be vegetarian; many are not. The Taoist notion of Yin-Yang (complementarity of opposites) informs traditional Chinese preferences for food combinations (e.g. sweet with sour).
Health (Medical Care)	Taoists may prefer Chinese medicine to conventional Western options.

TAOISM

Health (Mental Health)	Taoists may be open to conventional Western options, but may also see their practice of Qi-Gong or Tai Chi as a method for improving mental health.
Pregnancy and Birth	Nothing in Taoist ethical codes explicitly forbids abortion although it is not encouraged. Chinese religions including Taoism emphasize the importance of balance and harmony — in the individual, in the family, and in society generally. Having too many children can upset this balance, so sensible planning has been a valued part of human sexuality in Taoism and Confucianism.
FOR SERVICE PROVIDERS	
Physical Contact	No major concerns.
Dietary Restrictions	May abstain from certain foods on certain days of the month (e.g. full moon days); may prefer Chinese approach to balancing flavors. May be vegetarian, but this should not be assumed.
Medical Treatment	May prefer Chinese traditional medicine to Western options.
Mental Health Care	May see their practice of Qi-Gong or Tai Chi as a method for improving mental health.
Mass Care Facilities	The concerns of ethnically Chinese Taoists in a mass care situation may be as much informed by general Chinese culture as by the religion of Taoism/Daoism per se.

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Faravahar

ZOROASTRIANISM

ADHERENTS CONSIDER THEMSELVES ZOROASTRIANS (OR, ZARATHUSTHIS). ADHERENTS CALL THEMSELVES ZOROASTRIANS, ZARATHUSTHIS, PARSIS. THE RELIGION IS CALLED ZOROASTRIANISM (OR ZARATHUSTHI, OR ZARATHUSTRIANISM, OR MAZDAYANSNA).

U.S. Population	64,200
Language (Worship)	Ancient Avestan and Pahlavi
Founder	The Prophet Zarathustra (also known as Zoroaster), who lived between 1400 and 1200 CE (perhaps).
Branches & Denominations	American Zoroastrians divide into camps (if not actual denominations) along various lines. • Orthodox and Progressive, or Reform wings: Progressives are willing to accept converts, assert that only the Gathas are to be considered scripture, and have a relatively less complicated cosmology; the Orthodox hold that one must be born of two Zoroastrian parents in order to be counted as a member of the religion, accept a later collection of texts as scripture (in addition to the Gathas), and embrace a more complex cosmology. • Those whose families come to the U.S. directly from Iran have customs, which differ somewhat from those who have come to the US from India (and are often called Parsis). • Iranian and Indian Zoroastrian calendars have been out of sync with each other for centuries. A calendar reform, which restored holidays to their proper agricultural seasons, was accepted a few years ago by some American Zoroastrians. As a consequence one temple congregation can include use of three conflicting religious calendars.
Basic Tenets	Zoroastrians believe that there is one universal and transcendent God, Ahura Mazda. He is said to be the one uncreated Creator to whom all worship is ultimately directed. • The religion stresses the practice of "Good Thoughts, Good Words, Good Deeds." • Humans bear responsibility for all situations they are in, and in the way they act toward one another. Reward, punishment, happiness, and grief all depend on how individuals live their lives.
Sacred Texts	• The *Avesta* is the religious book of Zoroastrians that contains a collection of sacred texts. The compilation of these ancient texts was successfully established underneath the Mazdean priesthood and the Sassanian emperors. Only a fraction of the texts survive today. • The texts that remain today are the Gathas, Yasna, Visperad and the Vendidad. Along with these texts is the communal household prayer book called the *Khordeh Avesta*, which contains the *Yashts* and the *Siroza*. The rest of the materials from the *Avesta* are called "*Avestan* fragments".

ZOROASTRIANISM

Sacred Buildings/ Structures	• A Zoroastrian place of worship is called a Darbe Mehr (house of prayer). • Ancient fire temples still being tended in India and Iran are important to this religion. Attempts are being made by some groups to establish an authentic fire temple in the US. • Zoroastrians are also known for their Towers of Silence—special structures on which to place a corpse (rather than to cremate or to bury in the ground). Consideration has been given to constructing Towers of Silence in North America.
Governance (Judicatory)	• A governing council in Mumbai issues edicts on matters of Zoroastrian faith and practice. In the U.S., the Orthodox pay great heed—the Progressives, far less so. • FEZANA (Federation of Zoroastrian Associations in North America) is an umbrella group seeking to unite and assist Zoroastrian congregations in the U.S. and Canada.
Governance (Congregation)	Local congregations are independent and self-governing—usually by a board of directors.
Point of Contact	• Local: Adherents worship alone or at home with family • Regional: N/A • National: FEZANA (Federation of Zoroastrian Associations in North America)
Religious Leaders	A Zoroastrian priest is called a mobed. • The Zoroastrian priesthood is hereditary, all-male, and has a ritual function only. Boys can be ordained at a young age. • In addition to priests, community leaders include Zoroastrian scholars, activists, and congregation officers.
Religious Objects/Symbols	A stylized portrait of Zarathustra is often hung in a Zoroastrian home or congregational meeting place. Faravahar or Fravaharan is an ancient figure resembling a bearded man astride wide-spread wings; with an unbroken ring as his "saddle," and (extending below that) tail-feathers and two long threads—each with a curl at the end. • Some say that, in the ancient Avestan language, the literal meaning of this figure's name is forward-pulling force; others say it comes from the verb to choose. • Some say it signifies the Fravashi—the guardian spirit Ahura Mazda provides for each person. • Others see it as a teaching tool by which each and every element of the figure is a reminder of an element of Zoroastrian teaching—particularly, the role played by Good Thoughts, Good Words, and Good Deeds in the soul's journey toward union with Ahura Mazda. • The Urn of Fire is another apt symbol for Zoroastrianism, since fire is considered the "Son of God." • Daily prayer and jashan (the elaborate ritual of prayer and offering) must be performed in the presence of fire.
Facilitating Practices	Zoroastrians will appreciate time and a place to perform their daily prayers (which require the kindling of a small fire in an urn).
Culture & Social Interaction	No particular concerns.

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ZOROASTRIANISM

Gender Roles/Interaction	Women and men have the same daily prayer obligation, and the same obligation to live of life of "good thoughts, good words, good deeds." Women cannot be priests (a ritual-performance role), but the religion otherwise encourages equality among genders.
Principal Weekly Observance(s)	In the U.S., Zoroastrian congregations meet weekly, bi-weekly, or monthly (as they are able) for fellowship, instruction, and congregational participation in rituals, particularly a Jashan (formal prayer rite with fire) officiated by a mobed (priest).
Daily Religious Practices	According to ancient tradition, Zoroastrians (women as well as men) are to pray five times daily (sunrise, noon, sunset, midnight, dawn) standing, and in the presence of "clean" fire (the symbol of righteousness). • Ablutions are to be performed in preparation for prayer. • The prayers themselves use texts from the Zoroastrian scriptures in Avestan and Pahlavi—two ancient Persian languages. • While praying, one unties and ties one's kushti—the sacred knotted cord that ought to be worn as a belt over a sacred shirt (sudreh) at all times by initiated Zoroastrians. • There is symbolism attached to the number of threads in the cord, and the number of knots. • Minor differences have developed over the centuries between the Iranian and Parsi customs for performing the rite, which includes many supplications and concludes with the Fravarane: the Declaration of Faith.
Holy Days/Festivals	• JamshediNoruz (Fasli): New Year's Day according to the Fasli calendar used in Iran. • Khordad Sal (Fasli). • Farvandigan (Fasli). • Zartusht-no-Diso (Shenshai). • Farvardigan. • No Ruz (Shenshai): New Year's Day on the Shenshai calendar. • Khordad Sal (Shenshai). • Fravardin (Shenshai). • Zartusht-no-Diso (Fasli).
Rituals/Ceremonies	A Jashan (formal prayer rite with fire) officiated by a mobed (priest) can be performed for many celebratory occasions or a memorial. • The flames rise and ebb as the priest chants, fans, and adds more fuel. • The prayer texts vary, depending on the occasion, and the ritual can take an hour. • All of the elements of creation are represented on the platform where the priest, dressed in white, and wearing a mask so as not to pollute the fire, sits to perform his task." Navjote is the rite of initiation by which one declares that he or she is a Zoroastrian, demonstrates ability to recite the daily prayers while tying a kushti, and receives a sudreh.
Dress (Religious Restrictions)	As part of their inner garments, observant, initiated Zoroastrian children and adults wear a cotton vest made called a sudreh, with a small front pocket into which one is to put one's good thoughts, words, and deeds. They also tie a cord called a kushti around the waist. Many Zoroastrians wear western-style clothing, unless they are participating in a traditional ceremony.

ZOROASTRIANISM

Death: Dying Practices	When death approaches, Zoroastrian prayers become very important to the believer. A family member may wish to read from the Gathas.
Death: Culture/Practices	When death occurs in a Zoroastrian family, the hope is that someone will take note of the exact time. • This information will be important later on, since there will be anniversaries to mark it. • In a traditional Zoroastrian home, no food will be cooked during the interval between the death of family member and the disposal of the body, and the bereaved will abstain from meat. • Friends and relatives will make sure meals are brought in. • Zoroastrian priests will perform the prayers over the deceased, which can last for about an hour. • Prayers over the body cannot take place in a Darbe Mehr, as that would deconsecrate the space. Several services are held when a Zoroastrian dies. For many of them the body is not present. • For the first four days, there are specific prayers to help the soul of the deceased with the different stages through which it is passing, and those rituals may be held at the Darbe Mehr. • The funeral prayer takes at least an hour, and consists of the first Gatha, the longest of the prayers of Zarathustra. Traditionally, Zoroastrian prayer is performed in front of an urn of fire. It is unlikely that a funeral home will allow this, so a candle may be substituted.
Death: Body Preparation	Prayers are recited, the body is washed, and then the sudreh and kusthi—the traditional undergarment and waist-cord—are put back on the person. Zoroastrians don't embalm, as embalming would introduce something artificial into the person that had just been cleansed; and there is no viewing (thus no reason to embalm for a nicer appearance). • In India, many Zoroastrians still transport the body of a deceased family member to a traditional dakhma, a Tower of Silence, where the flesh is consumed by birds of prey and the wear and tear of the elements. • Because this is not an option in North America at this time, families may choose burial or cremation. Many Zoroastrians opt for cremation (even though fire is considered holy).

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ZOROASTRIANISM

Dietary Laws and Customs	Zoroastrians have no mandated dietary requirements. • However, some do set dietary boundaries for themselves on philosophical grounds, based on the religion's core doctrine: Vohu Mana (good mind; power of the mind; intelligence; wisdom). • Exercise of Vohu Mana necessitates kindness toward animals (thus precludes slaughtering them for food). • Therefore, to maintain a vegetarian diet is to do a "good deed" (another core Zoroastrian principle) and meat-eating is not. • Some Zoroastrians maintain a vegetarian diet for four days each month, and during the entire eleventh month of the Zoroastrian calendar. They do this in honor of Vohu Mana (here understood as a divine being much like an archangel—as well as "good mind," intelligence, or wisdom). • There are also traditional dietary guidelines to be followed when someone has died. For the three days of mourning, the family and very close friends abstain from meat, and limit themselves to fish and vegetables. Traditionally, there will be no cooking in the deceased person's home during this period. Food is prepared by relatives or friends and delivered to the deceased's immediate family.
Health (Medical Care)	• Many Zoroastrians are prone to Glucose-6-Phosphate Dehydrogenase deficiency, a common human enzyme deficiency. • Generally, Zoroastrians are open to the full range of conventional and state-of-the-art medical treatment.
Health (Mental Health)	Generally, Zoroastrians are open to the full range of conventional mental healthcare options.
Pregnancy and Birth	• Most Zoroastrians oppose abortion but believe it is an individual choice with individual consequences. • Pregnant women in the Persian Zoroastrian community are encouraged to eat a special diet balanced between hot and cold. In the Parsi community there are special rituals at the fifth and seventh month of pregnancy. • When a child is born in a hospital some Zoroastrians will request that a divō (lamp) be kept alight in the confinement room for three days or so.
FOR SERVICE PROVIDERS	
Physical Contact	No religiously mandated restrictions.
Dietary Restrictions	Some Zoroastrians choose vegetarianism. Some fast regularly and for the entire eleventh month of the Zoroastrian calendar. If very recently bereaved, a Zoroastrian will abstain from meat.
Medical Treatment	Generally, Zoroastrians are open to the full range of conventional medical treatment options.
Mental Health Care	Generally, Zoroastrians are open to the full range of conventional mental health care treatment options.
Mass Care Facilities	Observant Zoroastrians will appreciate provision being made for their daily prayer rituals, which require an open flame.

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National Disaster Interfaiths Network

BE A READY CONGREGATION PARTNER
Tip Sheets for Faith Community Partners

Competency Guidelines: Sheltering & Mass Care for Buddhists

These guidelines are provided to inform cultural competency and reasonable religious accommodation mandates for U.S. Mass Care providers, and to assist staff and volunteers in competently meeting the needs of Buddhists during disaster response or recovery operations—whether at a government or private shelter, or a shelter in a Buddhist temple or any other house of worship.

In Mass Care registration or service settings, a Buddhist person may or may not choose to self-identify and, despite common assumptions, their outward dress or appearance may not identify them as Buddhist. Typically, Buddhists conform to the clothing styles of country where they live. However, recent immigrants as well as Buddhist monks and nuns may wear ethnic clothing or robes, respectively. Therefore, given the geographic origins of Buddhism many adherents are Asian or South Asian. However, Asian or South Asian garb does not necessarily indicate religious observance. For example, Christians, Shinto, Taoists and members of other faith communities from Asia and South Asia may also wear the same/similar ethnic clothing. Although some Buddhist may feel comfortable raising concerns about their religious needs, others may not voice their concerns regarding any or all of the following issues.

SHELTERING

- **Greetings and Physical Interaction:** Upon entering a Mass Care setting, families and individuals who self-identify as Buddhist, or Buddhist monastics (monks and nuns), will feel most welcome if staff demonstrate an understanding of and attempt to accommodate their cultural and religious needs. Though Buddhist monastics will not necessarily expect staff to be knowledgeable of their customs, a recognition of and an attempt to observe certain practices will be appreciated by them as well as lay Buddhists. A greeting common to all Buddhist traditions is to put the palms together in *anjali* (the gesture of prayer) and bow the head. Most Buddhists do welcome handshakes with an embrace, but preferably between same sexes. Staff and other guests should understand that this is more customary than religious.
  Special Note: Buddhist monks and nuns should typically not be touched by laypersons. Especially in the Theravada tradition of the Southeast Asian countries of Burma, Cambodia, Thailand, and Laos, they should also never touch others. In all Buddhist traditions, an acceptable form of address when speaking to a monk or nun is "Venerable."
- **Shelter Setting:** For lay Buddhists, there are no specific religious restrictions regarding sleeping or arrangements. However, for monastics, monks should have sleeping quarters separately from nuns and other women. Nuns should be sheltered separately from monks and men. In addition, a monk should never be alone with a woman (lay or monastic) and a nun should never be alone with a man (lay or monastic). Generally speaking, a gender segregated sleeping space, divided into same-gender areas by a curtain or partition (acceptable), or separate rooms (preferable), is required.

PRAYER

- **Prayer Rituals:** Shelter operators and residents should be made aware that observant Buddhists are encouraged to pray or meditate daily—upon rising and before going to bed.
- **Preparing a Buddhist Prayer Space:** Particularly at a time of disaster or crisis, prayer is important to all people of faith. Although Buddhist contemplative practice, chanting, and other forms of prayer and veneration can be offered at any place and time, a designated space (shrine) is preferable. A Buddhist shrine will typically include an image of the Shakyamuni Buddha (the image of the historical Buddha, Siddhārtha Gautama). Shrines may also include flowers, candles, incense, and bowls for offering water, food, or other items that may be distributed and consumed later. Images or icons of other important Buddhist figures may be included/substituted depending on the specific tradition or traditions of the local Buddhist community. Images and items may be displayed for rituals and respectfully stored for later use.

  Generally speaking, Buddhist practitioners will be comfortable sharing such a space with religious others without requiring much in the way of specific items. Buddhists are usually comfortable meditating in chairs, though meditation cushions (or blankets) are best. (In sitting meditation, if the knees are above the waist, sitting for extended periods becomes uncomfortable.) Cushions or blankets would also be helpful for kneeling while chanting. In addition, a clear space for full-body prostrations might be appreciated.

  In keeping with disaster chaplaincy best practices, a Mass Care chapel or prayer room should be established as a multi-faith space, without images or statues of any specific faith tradition. The area should be a quiet designated space with removable chairs, a plain table, and perhaps candles.

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FEEDING

- **Vegetarian Food or Not:** Despite assumptions, there are no set dietary laws in Buddhism. Buddhist dietary restrictions are structured very differently than those of the Abrahamic (Christian, Jewish and Muslim) religions. There is no such clear distinction between permitted and forbidden foods in Buddhism. Therefore, there is a great deal of diversity in traditional Buddhist practice. It is always best for Mass Care providers to ask a local Buddhist community about their dietary needs, rather than to assume they are vegetarians or that they will eat meat. However, traditionally, many Buddhists are vegetarians.

  Vegetarian diet is often interpreted as "do not harm," and many Buddhists choose to be vegetarian as a result of this precept. However, a basic tenet of Buddhism is that of reincarnation and the belief that animals can be reincarnated as humans and vice versa. As a result, most Buddhists do not kill animals, and many do not eat meat or fish because this is considered to be bad for their karma. Buddhism gives utmost importance to *ahimsa* (non-violence), so there is a relationship between this concept and vegetarian practice in Buddhism.

- **Alms and Offerings:** Buddhist monastics thrive on donations and offerings from their local communities. For Theravada monastics, going on "alms-rounds" to receive the generous offerings (*dāna*) of the local community, even in a Mass Care setting this is an important practical and symbolic gesture. When offering food to monastics it is customary to present it with your hands on the table, saying something like, "Please accept this offering of food." Vietnamese, Chinese, and Taiwanese monks and nuns are strict vegetarians, though others may not be. Practically speaking, Mass Care staff may find it helpful to leave food for monastics with lay Buddhists to disperse. This is a meritorious action for practicing Buddhists.

HOLIDAYS

- There are many Buddhist holy days held throughout the year. Many celebrate the birthdays of *Bodhisattvas* (deities) or other significant dates in the Buddhist calendar. The most significant celebration happens every May on the night of the full moon: Buddha Day, a celebration of the birth, enlightenment and death of the historical Buddha over 2,500 years ago.

MEDICAL, EMOTIONAL OR SPIRITUAL CARE

- When possible, some Buddhists may be more comfortable seeking and/or receiving assistance from same-gender service providers. Some may have difficulties in communicating openly or forthrightly with those of the opposite gender.
- Special Note: Given the restrictions regarding monastics' being alone with persons of the opposite gender, Buddhist monks and nuns will only seek and/or receiving assistance from same-gender service providers. In addition, their medical treatment rooms and bed wards should be gender segregated by curtain or partition (acceptable), or separate rooms (preferable).

BUDDHIST DRESS

- Buddhist dress is usually a combination of culture and ethnicity, not religious requirement. Lay Buddhists usually do not wear distinctive clothing or haircuts, but sometimes may have stoles, pins, or vestments to denote lay leadership responsibilities within their respective communities. Typically, Buddhists conform to the clothing styles of the country where they live. However, recent immigrants, as well as Buddhist monks and nuns, may wear ethnic clothes or robes, respectively. Buddhist dress does not indicate a person's level of education or reflect on a particular conservative (or liberal) religious or political orientation.
- Buddhist monks and nuns usually wear distinctive robes or clothing, which will look different depending on region and tradition. In addition, in certain traditions, their heads are shaved.

BUDDHISM

Buddhism is one of the five major world religions, with at least 500 million adherents worldwide. There are 3–4 million Buddhists in the United States (two-thirds of whom are Asian American). Adherents follow the teachings of Siddhārtha Gautama, the historical Buddha ("Awakened One") who lived in India around the fifth century BCE. He taught four "noble truths": (1) the truth that life is suffering/anxiety/dissatisfaction/stress; (2) the truth of its cause; (3) the truth of its cessation; and (4) the truth of the path toward its cessation. Typically, three schools of Buddhism are spoken of: the Theravada of South and Southeast Asia, the Mahayana of East Asia, and the Vajrayana of Central Asia—each having many traditions, variations, and communities). In the Theravada tradition, the Pali texts are canonical; in the Mahayana, the Sanskrit Buddhist *sutras* and commentarial literature and Chinese *Āgamas*; and in Vajrayana Buddhism, the *Kanjur* and *Tanjur*, as well as vast commentarial literature in the Tibetan language. The religion is called Buddhism in English, and adherents are Buddhists.

UNIVERSITY OF THE WEST

This Tip Sheet was written in collaboration with:
Rev. Danny Fisher-Coordinator the Buddhist Chaplaincy Department at University of the West
University of Southern California-Center for Religion and Civic Culture

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Competency Guidelines: Sheltering & Mass Care for Hindus

These guidelines are provided to inform cultural competency and reasonable religious accommodation mandates for U.S. Mass Care providers, and to assist staff and volunteers in competently meeting the needs of Hindus during disaster response or recovery operations—whether at a government or private shelter, or a shelter in a Mandir (Hindu Temple) or any other house of worship.

In Mass Care registration or service settings, a Hindu person may or may not choose to self-identify and, despite common assumptions, their outward dress or appearance may not identify them as Hindu. Moreover, ethnic South Asian garb does not necessarily indicate religious observance. For example, Buddhists, Christians, Muslims, Sikhs, and members of other faith communities from South Asia may also wear the same/similar ethnic clothing. Although some Hindus may feel comfortable raising concerns about their religious needs, others may not voice their concerns regarding any or all of the following issues.

SHELTERING

- **Greetings and Physical Interaction:** Upon entering a Mass Care setting, families and individuals who appear in Hindu cultural dress (see next page) or self-identify as Hindu will feel most welcome if staff demonstrate a willingness to respect and meet their cultural and religious needs. These first impressions matter. Staff must also recognize greeting customs. Hindus may prefer to be greeted by others who say "hello" while bringing their palms together at chest level and uttering the reverential salutation *Namaste* (translated as, "I bow to you," in Sanskrit). Most Hindus do welcome handshakes with an embrace, but preferably between same sexes. Staff and other guests should understand that this is more customary than religious. Therefore, when greeting a Hindu of the opposite gender, one should wait until after the Namaste greeting to see if a hand is offered first before initiating a handshake.

- **Shelter Setting:** Hindu families and individuals will be most comfortable in sleeping settings where men are separated from women. When a communal sleeping space is the only option, it is customary for Hindu men and women to remain fully clothed and take turns sleeping in order to watch over their resting family. A gender segregated sleeping space, divided into same-gender areas by a curtain or partition (acceptable), or separate rooms (preferred), is advised. Preadolescent Hindu children may accompany either parent or guardian, wherever they are most comfortable.

PRAYER

- **Prayer Rituals:** Shelter operators and residents, should be made aware that many observant Hindus pray twice a day—upon rising and before going to bed. These daily prayers are preceded by a ritual washing in running water. If the bathroom space is limited, posted signs can alert residents of potential ritual use and indicate times this ritual use will take place. It is also appropriate to post signs that instruct all residents to keep the floor and sink areas dry, clean and safe.

- **Preparing a Hindu Prayer Space:** Particularly at a time of disaster or crisis, prayer is important to all people of faith. Although Hindu prayers can be offered at any place and any time, a designated prayer space is preferable. It is customary for floors to be covered and it is a religious requirement that the space contain images, religious iconography, or statues of Hindu gods and goddesses. Even a single religious picture (Rama, Krishna, Ganapati, Lakshmi, etc.) of a deity would suffice in most cases. Any images, religious iconography or statues can be displayed for worship and then respectfully stored between religious rituals. In keeping with disaster chaplaincy best practices, a Mass Care chapel or prayer room should be established as a multi-faith space, without images or statues of any specific faith tradition.

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FEEDING

• Vegetarian Food: Traditionally observant Hindus follow a *Brahman* (vegetarian) diet in accordance with Hindu tradition. Therefore, many Hindus will only eat food from trusted vegetarian or vegan sources, including caterers, purveyors, and MREs (Meals Ready to Eat). The most orthodox Hindus also avoid onion, garlic, and gelatin byproducts. Ideally, Mass Care meals should include a traditional vegetarian or vegan option.

Most Hindus follow a balanced vegetarian diet. *The Mahabharata,* one of four sacred texts, explains "meat-eating has a negative influence on existence, causing ignorance and disease." It also states "a healthy vegetarian diet is *sattvic*, i.e., under the influence of goodness, able to increase purity of consciousness and longevity."

"Having well considered the origin of flesh-foods, and the cruelty of fettering and slaying corporeal beings, let man entirely abstain from eating flesh." *The Manu-smrti (5.49)*

HOLIDAYS

• Observant Hindus may set aside time for contemplation and quiet reflection during special festival days should they fall during their stay in a shelter. Shelter staff should be sensitive to those who may sleep more than normal, be found reading from religious texts, or offering extra prayers.

MEDICAL, EMOTIONAL OR SPIRITUAL CARE

• When possible, religiously observant Hindus may be more comfortable in seeking and/or receiving assistance from same-gender service providers. Some may have difficulties in communicating openly or forthrightly with those of the opposite gender. Medical treatment rooms and bed wards must be gender segregated by curtain or partition (acceptable), or separate rooms (preferable).

HINDU DRESS

• Religious Hindus (especially women) may dress in clothing that may fall outside of American/Western fashion norms. Females may wear a *Salwar Kameez* (a long shirt and pant set) or *Saree* (a 6 yard by 44 inch light weight cloth) draped over a draw string ankle length petticoat) and blouse. Hindu dress is usually a combination of culture and ethnicity, not a religious requirement. It is a false assumption that females are forced or required to dress traditionally, and most would be deeply offended by that assumption. Hindu dress does not indicate a person's level of education or reflect on a particular conservative (or liberal) religious or political orientation.

HINDUISM

Hinduism is the world's oldest organized religion and the third largest. It has an estimated one billion adherents. Approximately 2 million Hindus live in the U.S. and worship at over 1,000 *Mandirs* (Hindu temples). Hindus believe in the *Vedic* (scriptural) mandate that "Truth is One," but the wise may express that truth in different ways. Therefore they believe that all paths to divinity are valid. A Hindu holy book, the *Bhagavad Gita*, emphasizes one's duty to family, community, nation and the world in a selfless manner. Although Hinduism has sects, (e.g., Shaivites and Vaishnavites) these differences will not matter in most contexts.

Hinduism is not a singular system of beliefs and ideas, but a conglomerate of diverse beliefs and traditions in which the prominent themes include:

- *Dharma* (ethics and duties)
- *Samsara* (rebirth)
- *Karma* (right action)
- *Moksha* (liberation from the cycle of Samsara)

Hinduism teaches that there is only one supreme Absolute called "Brahman." However, it does not advocate the worship of any one particular deity. The gods and goddesses of Hinduism amount to thousands or even millions, all representing the many aspects of Brahman. Therefore, it is characterized by the multiplicity of deities. Fundamental to many Hindus is the Trinity of Brahma, Vishnu, and Shiva—creator, preserver, and destroyer, respectively.

This Tip Sheet was written in collaboration with:
Dr. Amrutur V. Srinivasan, Author of Hinduism for Dummies by Wiley Publishers
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Competency Guidelines: Sheltering & Mass Care for Jews

These guidelines are provided to inform cultural competency and reasonable religious accommodation mandates for U.S. Mass Care providers, and to assist staff and volunteers in competently meeting the needs of Jews during disaster response or recovery operations—whether at a government or private shelter, or a shelter in a Shul/Synagogue (Jewish Temple) or any other house of worship.

In Mass Care registration or service settings, a Jewish person may or may not choose to self-identify and, despite common assumptions, their outward dress or appearance may not identify them as Jewish. Moreover, ethnic Eastern European or Middle Eastern garb does not necessarily indicate religious observance. Although some Jews may feel comfortable raising concerns about their religious needs, others may not voice their concerns regarding any or all of the following issues. Please note that some of the following issues are more significant in the Orthodox and traditionally observant communities.

Special Note: When traditional Jews need to make a decision related to Jewish law (shelter arrangements, food or medicine), they often entail consulting with their rabbi, or at least a rabbi they can trust. For example, in deciding whether to eat something that is not certified "kosher" (when that is the only option), they will depend on the ruling of a rabbi. So Mass Care providers are advised to reach out to and involve a respected local rabbi.

SHELTERING

- **Greetings and Physical Interaction:** Upon entering a Mass Care setting, families and individuals who appear in Jewish dress (see next page) or self-identify as Jewish will feel most welcome if staff demonstrate a willingness to respect and meet their cultural and religious needs. These first impressions matter. Staff must also recognize greeting customs, especially between males and females. Some Orthodox Jews do not exchange handshakes with, or embrace, people of the opposite gender. Staff and other guests should understand that this is not a sign of rudeness, but a cultural and religious requirement. Therefore, when greeting a Jewish person of the opposite gender, one should wait until or if they extend their hand to shake, rather than first extending one's own.
- **Shelter Setting:** Jewish families and individuals from traditional sects will be most comfortable in sleeping settings where men are separated from women. A gender segregated sleeping space, divided into same-gender areas by a curtain or partition (acceptable), or separate rooms (preferred), is advised. Preadolescent Jewish children may accompany either parent or guardian, wherever they are most comfortable.

PRAYER

- **Prayer Rituals:** Shelter operators and residents, should be made aware that many observant Jews pray three times in every 24-hour period. These prayers are preceded by a ritual washing. In public prayer, there is a requirement to have a *minyan* (a quorum of ten) Jewish adults (usually bar mitzvahed males over the age of 13—many non-Orthodox sects count females in the *minyan)*. Men are required to wear a skullcap, called *a kippah* (Hebrew) or *yarmulke* (Yiddish) during prayer and religious women may wear head coverings including wigs, hats, or shawls. Before morning prayer, it is traditional for Jewish men to put on a *tallit* (prayer shawl) and *tefillin* (a set of small black leather boxes with long straps also known as phylacteries). Each box contains scrolls of parchment inscribed with verses from the Torah (Old Testament). Hand-tefillin are placed on the upper arm, and then strap wrapped around the arm, hand, and fingers. Head-tefillin are placed above the forehead. When at prayer, men may bow vigorously and murmur their prayers. Public readings of a set of passages from a Torah scroll take place on Mondays, Thursdays, and Saturdays as well as Jewish holy days.
- **Preparing a Jewish Prayer Space:** Particularly at a time of disaster or crisis, prayer is important to all people of faith. Although Jewish prayers can be offered at any place and any time, a designated prayer space is preferable. It is a religious requirement that the space be free of images or religious iconography. In keeping with disaster chaplaincy best practices, a Mass Care chapel or prayer room should be established as a multi-faith space, without images or statues of any specific faith tradition. The area should be a quiet designated space with removable chairs facing East. (Jews are required to pray facing East, towards Jerusalem). Orthodox Jews will only pray in gender segregated groups within a common prayer space. Orthodox men and women must be separated by a partition or curtain. It is preferable that no one walks in front while people are praying.
  Special Note: If Jews are evacuated with a Torah (biblical parchment scroll). Under rabbinic authority, the Torah would need a special designated and secure Ark (cabinet) to rest in, except for the times it is being used for rituals.

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FEEDING

- Kosher Food: Traditionally observant Jews follow dietary rules in accordance with *halakha* (Jewish law). These dietary laws are defined by the terms *kosher* (permitted) and *treif* (prohibited). Food that is acceptable meets the standards of *kashrut*. Reasons for food not being kosher include the presence of ingredients derived from non-kosher animals (pig, shellfish, etc.) or of kosher animals that were not slaughtered in the ritually proper manner. Other reasons include mixing meat and milk, producing wine or grape juice (or their derivatives) without rabbinic supervision, or using produce from Israel that has not been *tithed* (the process of removing a little over 10% of the product, reciting certain Torah passages, and discarding the removed portion), or cooking with non-Kosher cooking utensils and machinery. Many religious Jews will only eat packaged food that contains a *hechsher* (Kosher approval). The *hechsher* is the special certification mark found on the packages of products (usually foods) that have been certified as kosher (view symbols at www.yrm.org/koshersymbols.htm). Therefore, many Jews will only eat food from kosher food sources, including caterers, purveyors, and MREs (Meals Ready to Eat). Preventing the mixing of *fleischic* (meat products) and *milchic* (milk products) has led to the practice of maintaining separate sets of cookware, tableware, and flatware for meat and dairy. If a food is neither meat nor dairy (i.e., non-dairy bread), it is considered *parve* and can be mixed with dairy and meat products, including kosher fish. The most orthodox Jews will only eat *glatt kosher* meals that are prepared with kosher food under strict rabbinic oversight in accordance with *kashrut*. Ideally, Mass Care meals should include a kosher option, prepared under supervision of a Rabbi or a trusted member of the community. Use disposable utensils (to avoid mixing non-kosher products) and keep meat and milk separated. Holiday and Shabbat meals also require a small portion of wine for ritual use.

SABBATH AND HOLIDAYS

- *Shabbat* (sabbath), the day of rest, is the seventh day of the Jewish week. Shabbat is observed from about 18 minutes before sunset on Friday evening until the appearance of three stars in the sky on Saturday night. Shabbat observance entails refraining from a range of activities, including using electricity, cooking, carrying objects outside of the home, showering, traveling, writing, working, and tearing objects. Rabbinic tradition mandates three Shabbat meals, two of which begin with a special *kiddush* (sanctification) recited over wine. All foods prepared by Jews must be prepared before Shabbat begins; in emergency settings Jews may eat meals prepared by non-Jews. Please note that several lights should be left on throughout the day and should not to be turned off until the end of Shabbat. Shabbat begins and ends with the ritual lighting of candles. Mass Care shelters should provide a safe space where those observing Shabbat can light candles and let them burn out—they cannot be extinguished. Electronic candles will not suffice. A brief ceremony called “Havdallah” (separation) ends the Shabbat on Saturday night (sunset) involving a braided candle, a spice box, and a small amount of wine.

MEDICAL, EMOTIONAL OR SPIRITUAL CARE

- Observant male Jews may be more comfortable in seeking and/or receiving assistance from service providers of the same gender. Some may have difficulties in communicating openly or forthrightly with those of the opposite gender.

JEWISH DRESS

- Religious Jews may dress in clothing that may fall outside of American/Western fashion norms. Orthodox Jews may dress in 16th century Eastern European dress. Males may wear a black hat, felt hat, or *kippah* (skullcap). Some may wear long jackets. Some males may wear *tzitzit* (fringes) which hang out of their shirts. Married Orthodox females may wear a wig or a head covering over their hair. Some may wear loose fitting clothing, long skirts and/or long sleeves. It is a false assumption that Orthodox females are forced to dress modestly, and most would be deeply offended by that assumption. Men and women are required to dress modestly within certain sects. Jewish dress does not indicate a person’s level of education or reflect on a particular conservative (or liberal) religious or political orientation. However, Hasidic and Orthodox Jews can be categorized as conservative, and tend to adhere rigidly to gender roles and responsibilities and conservative social norms.

JUDAISM

Judaism, the oldest present monotheistic religion, has an estimated thirteen million adherents. Approximately 42% of Jews live in the U.S. and worship at over 3,700 synagogues. The largest Jewish religious movements are Orthodox Judaism, Conservative Judaism, and Reform Judaism. Also, Reconstructionism and Renewal, although space does not permit us to explain the nuances of these. A major source of difference between these groups is their approach to Jewish law.

- Orthodox Judaism maintains that the Torah &Jewish law are divine in origin, eternal, unalterable, and be strictly followed.
- Hasidic Judaism is a popular movement within Orthodox Judaism. Hasidic Jews are called *Hasidim* in Hebrew. This word derived from the Hebrew word for loving kindness (*chesed*). The Hasidic movement is unique in its focus on the joyful observance of God’s commandments (*mitzvot*), heartfelt prayer and boundless love for God and the world He created. Many ideas for Hasidism derived from Jewish mysticism (*Kabbalah*).
- Conservative and Reform Judaism are more liberal in terms of religious practice, with Conservative Judaism generally promoting a more "traditional" interpretation of Judaism's requirements than Reform Judaism.
- A typical Reform position is that Jewish law should be viewed as a set of general guidelines rather than as a set of restrictions and obligations whose observance is required of all Jews.

The religion is called Judaism, and adherents are Jews.

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This Tip Sheet was written with Rabbinic oversight and in collaboration with:
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Jewish Disaster Response Corps and the University of Southern California-Center for Religion and Civic Culture

Jewish Disaster Response Corps JDRC

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Competency Guidelines: Sheltering & Mass Care for Muslims

These guidelines are provided to inform cultural competency and reasonable religious accommodation mandates for U.S. Mass Care providers, and to assist staff and volunteers in competently meeting the needs of Muslims during disaster response or recovery operations—whether at a government or private shelter, or a shelter in a Mosque (Masjid, in Arabic) or any other house of

In Mass Care registration or service settings, Muslims may or may not choose to self-identify and, despite common assumptions, their outward dress or appearance may not identify them as Muslims. Moreover, ethnic or regional garb does not necessarily indicate religious observance. For example, Christians, Hindus, Sikhs, and members of other faith communities from the Middle East or South Asia may also wear the same/similar ethnic clothing. Although some Muslims may feel comfortable raising concerns about their religious needs, others may not voice their concerns regarding any/all of the following issues.

SHELTERING

- **Greetings and Physical Interaction:** Upon entering a Mass Care setting, families and individuals who appear in Islamic dress or self-identify as Muslim will feel most welcome if staff demonstrate a willingness to respect and meet their cultural and religious needs. These first impressions matter. Staff must also recognize greeting customs, especially between males and females. Muslims greet one another, and can be greeted by, the Arabic salutation—As-Salamu Alaykum ("peace be upon you"). Muslims do not generally exchange handshakes with, or embrace, people of the opposite gender. Staff and other guests should understand that this is not a sign of rudeness, but a cultural and/or religious custom. Therefore, when greeting a Muslim of the opposite gender, one should wait until or if they extend their hand to shake, rather than first extending one's own.
- **Shelter Setting:** Due to religious prohibitions, Muslim families and individuals will be most comfortable in sleeping settings where men are segregated from women and children. When a communal sleeping space is the only option, it is customary for Muslim men and women to remain fully clothed and take turns sleeping in order to watch over their resting family. A gender segregated sleeping space, divided into same-gender areas by a curtain or partition (acceptable), or separate rooms (preferable), is advised. Preadolescent Muslim children may accompany either parent or guardian, wherever they are most comfortable. However, where the family includes only an adult male and a preadolescent girl, shelter operators should attempt to allow the two to sleep in an area without women or adolescent boys.

PRAYER

- **Ritual Washing for Prayer:** Shelter operators and residents, should be made aware that many Muslims pray three to five times (or more) in every 24-hour period. These daily prayers (*Salat*) are preceded by a gender segregated washing ritual (*wudu*), which includes the washing of feet, hands, and face in clean running water—not a wash basin or bowl. If possible, and for the comfort of all shelter residents, it is preferable to have one designated wudu bathroom for men and one for women (an "out of view" distance from one another is preferable). If the bathroom space is limited, posted signs can alert residents of potential ritual use and indicate times this ritual use will take place. It is also appropriate to post signs that instruct all residents to keep the floor and sink areas dry, clean and safe.
- **Preparing a Muslim Prayer Space:** Particularly at a time of disaster or crisis, prayer is important to all people of faith. Although Islamic prayers can be offered at any place and any time, a designated prayer space is preferable. Muslims remove their shoes before entering a prayer room. It is customary for floors to be covered and it is a religious requirement that the space be free of images or religious iconography. In keeping with disaster chaplaincy best practices, a Mass Care chapel or prayer room should be established as a multi-faith space, without images or statues of any specific faith tradition. The area should be a quiet designated space with removable chairs, a plain table, and perhaps candles. Muslims will only pray in gender segregated groups within a common prayer space—men in front and women behind. On rare occasion, a partition or curtain separating males and females may be requested.

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FEEDING

- **Halal Food:** Many Muslims follow religious dietary laws written in the Quran, the Muslim holy book. These dietary laws are defined by the Arabic terms *halal* (permitted) and *haram* (prohibited). In accordance with the Quran, pork and alcohol are examples of items considered to be haram. Therefore, many Muslims will only eat food from halal food sources, including caterers, purveyors, and MREs (Meals Ready to Eat). Halal food sources include meat that has been ritually slaughtered (*zabiha*). Ideally, Mass Care meals should include a zabiha/halal option, or, if unavailable, a vegetarian option. In addition, snacks should not contain gelatin, meat, meat byproducts, or lard.
- **Ramadan Fast:** Muslims often fast from sunrise to sunset during the lunar month of Ramadan, the most sacred month in the Muslim religious calendar. Ramadan, a period of self-reflection and charitable acts or giving, includes ritual prayer, daytime fasting, and communal pre-dawn and sunset meals. While it can fall at anytime during the year, Ramadan will fall within the U.S. hurricane season for the next several years. During this month, shelter operators and feeding staff may need to offer adjusted/alternative mealtimes to accommodate their Muslim residents' dietary needs. During Ramadan, Muslims eat breakfast (*suhr/suhoor*) before dawn and refrain from eating and/or drinking until sunset, when they break their daily fast by eating dates with water (prescribed within the Quran) if available. Dinner (*iftar*) is followed by sunset prayers (*salatalMaghrib*) and a late night set of prayers, *Isha*, and then *Taraweeh*. Emergency managers and shelter staff should be aware of the physiological impact of fasting. Though many Muslims feel spiritually empowered during Ramadan, others also note that fasting takes its toll on their physical and mental acuity. Shelter staff should be sensitive to those who may sleep more than normal, be found reading from religious texts, or offering extra prayers.

MEDICAL, EMOTIONAL OR SPIRITUAL CARE

- When possible, religiously observant Muslims may be more comfortable in seeking and/or receiving assistance from same-gender service providers. Some may have difficulties in communicating openly or forthrightly with those of the opposite gender. Medical treatment rooms and bed wards must be gender segregated by curtain or partition (acceptable), or separate rooms (preferable).

ISLAMIC DRESS

- Muslims may dress in clothing that may fall outside of American/Western fashion norms. Males may wear a small hat (*kufee*) or turban. Some may wear long robes (*thobes*) or a long shirt and pant set (*shalvar-kameese*). Some males may wear their pant-legs slightly shorter than the standard fashion. Females may wear a head covering (*hijab)* over their hair, ears, and neck. Some may cover their entire bodies with loose fitting clothing, covering all of their body, except for their face, feet, and hands, called an *abaya*. Though rare in the United States, some females may veil their faces, using what is called a *niqab*, wear elbow length gloves, or a *burka*, if covering the body from head to toe. Islamic dress is usually a combination of culture and ethnicity as much as piety. It is a false assumption that females are forced or required to dress modestly, and most would be deeply offended by that assumption. Islamic dress does not indicate a person's level of education or reflect on a particular conservative (or liberal) religious or political orientation.

ISLAM

Islam, the world's second largest religion, has an estimated one billion adherents. Approximately 2.6 million Muslims live in the U.S. and worship at over 2,100 masjids. Islam, which means "submission to Allah (God)," has five pillars: prayer, fasting, charity, pilgrimage to Mecca, and testifying on the oneness of Allah and the prophethood of Mohammad. Their holy book, the Quran/Koran speaks of caring for the poor, a day of judgment, and the afterlife. Islam is comprised of two major sects, Sunnis (the majority) and Shiites, and several other smaller sects. The religion is called Islam. ("Islamic" is an adjective; adherents are called Muslim.)

This Tip Sheet was written in collaboration with:
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Competency Guidelines: Sheltering & Mass Care for Sikhs

These guidelines are provided to inform cultural competency and reasonable religious accommodation mandates for U.S. Mass Care providers, and to assist staff and volunteers in competently meeting the needs of Sikhs during disaster response or recovery operations—whether at a government or private shelter, or a shelter in a Gurdwara (a Sikh temple) or any other house of worship.

In Mass Care registration or service settings, Sikhs may or may not choose to self-identify and, despite common assumptions, their outward dress or appearance may not identify them as Sikh. Moreover, ethnic or regional garb does not necessarily indicate religious observance. The Sikh faith originates from the Punjab region of Pakistan and India. For example, aside from the Sikh turban (*Dastar*) which some Sikh men (common) and women (less common) choose not to wear, Buddhists, Christians, Hindus, Muslims and members of other faith communities from South Asia may also wear the same (or similar) ethnic clothing. Although some Sikhs may feel comfortable raising concerns about their religious needs, others may not voice their concerns regarding any or all of the following issues.

SHELTERING

- **Greetings and Physical Interaction:** Upon entering a Mass Care setting, families and individuals who appear in a turban or Punjabi garb, or self-identify as Sikh, will feel most welcome if staff demonstrate a willingness to respect and meet their cultural and religious needs. These first impressions matter. Staff must also recognize greeting customs. Sikhs greet one another, and can be greeted by non-Sikhs with the Punjabi salutation—*Sat Sri Akal*: roughly translated as, "Blessed is the person who says 'God is Truth." Sikhs do exchange handshakes with, or embrace, people of the opposite gender.
- **Shelter Setting:** Due to culture and tradition—especially among recent Sikh immigrants, Sikh families and individuals will be most comfortable in sleeping settings where men are segregated from women and children. When a communal sleeping space is the only option, it is customary for Sikh men and women to remain fully clothed and take turns sleeping in order to watch over their resting family. A gender segregated sleeping space, divided into same-gender areas by a curtain or partition (acceptable), or separate rooms (preferable), is advised. Preadolescent Sikh children may accompany either parent or guardian, wherever they are most comfortable. However, where the family includes only an adult male and a preadolescent girl, shelter operators should attempt to allow the two to sleep in an area without women or adolescent boys.

PRAYER

- **Ritual Washing for Prayer:** Shelter operators and residents, should be made aware that Sikhs pray three to five times daily in every 24-hour period—up to three times in the morning, once in evening and once before sleeping at night. These daily prayers (*nicnam banis)*, are taken from the Guru Granth Sahib (Sikh holy book) and are spoken in Gurmukhi, the Sikh language of prayer in which the Guru Granth Sahib is written. While Sikhs do not engage in a specific washing ritual for prayer, they are enjoined to wash their hands before entering a prayer space or handling scriptural texts out of respect. If possible, and for the comfort of all shelter residents, it is preferable to have one designated washing bathroom for men and one for women. If the bathroom space is limited, posted signs can alert residents of potential ritual use and indicate times this ritual use will take place. It is also appropriate to post signs that instruct all residents to keep the floor and sink areas dry, clean and safe. A wash basin or bowl can be provided in a chapel setting.
- **Preparing a Sikh Prayer Space:** Particularly at a time of disaster or crisis, prayer is important to all people of faith. Although Sikh prayers can be offered at any place and any time, a designated prayer space is preferable. Sikhs remove their shoes before entering a prayer room. It is customary for floors to be covered. In keeping with disaster chaplaincy best practices, a Mass Care chapel or prayer room should be established as a multi-faith space, without images or statues of any specific faith tradition. The area should be a quiet designated space with removable chairs, a plain table, and perhaps candles.

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Continued on reverse

FEEDING

- Many Sikh follow both cultural and religious dietary practices written in the Guru Granth Sahib (Sikh holy book). Sikhs are forbidden from eating *halal* meat, kosher meat or alcohol and other intoxicants. All other foods are permissible, except those containing liquor or other intoxicants. Many Sikhs may be vegetarians out of cultural tradition or personal conviction, although such a prescription is not made by religious dietary law. Sikh Mass Care meals should include a vegetarian option. In addition, snacks should not contain gelatin, meat, meat byproducts, or lard.

MEDICAL, EMOTIONAL OR SPIRITUAL CARE

- When possible, religiously observant Sikhs may be more comfortable in seeking and/or receiving assistance from same-gender service providers. Some may have difficulties in communicating openly or forthrightly with those of the opposite gender. Medical treatment rooms and bed wards must be gender segregated by curtain or partition (acceptable), or separate rooms (preferable).

SIKH DRESS

- **Clothing:** Sikhs may dress in clothing that may fall outside of American/Western fashion norms. Although it is common for Sikh men to wear western clothing with a turban, older Sikhs and recent Sikh immigrants may wear ethnic or regional Punjabi garb. Baptized males (called *Amritdhali* or *Khalsa*) are required to wear a turban (*dastar*) - boys wear thin head covering (*patka*) . Some may wear a long shirt (*kurta*) or pant set (*salvar-kameez*). Some males may wear their pant-legs slightly shorter than the standard fashion. Females may wear a head covering (*chunni)* (common) or a turban (less common) over their hair. Some may wear a long shirt and pant set (*salvar-kameez*) or a loose fitting wrapped dress (*sari*). Sikh dress does not indicate a person's level of education or reflect on a particular conservative (or liberal) religious or political orientation.

- **Headress:** The Sikh turban (dastar) is a crown of commitment and dedication to service all humanity. It is an article of faith that represents honor, self-respect, courage, spirituality, and piety. Observant Sikhs also wear the turban partly to cover their long, uncut hair (*kesh*). The turban is mostly identified with the Sikh males, although some Sikh women also wear turban. The Sikh faith regards gender equality as an important part of its teachings.

- **Articles of Faith:** The five articles of faith (*Panji Kakar*) are required to be worn by baptized Sikhs at all times. They are commonly called the "Five Ks," and are not just symbols, but articles of faith that collectively form the external identity and the devotee's commitment to the Sikh "*way of life" (rehni*). The Five Ks include *Kesh* (uncut hair), *Kangha* (hair comb) *Kara* (steel bracelet), *Kachera* (cotton undergarments), and *Kirpan* (a strapped curved dagger/small sword). Shelter operators and security should be familiar with these articles, especially the Kirpan and recognize that it is required article of faith. Some Sikhs only wear a small replica Kirpan. Although not recommended, local authorities may require that all Kirpan be checked while in a shelter or secure area.

Sikhism

- Sikhism, the world's fifth largest religion, has an estimated 25 million adherents. Approximately 500,000 Sikhs live in the U.S. and worship at over 250 gurdwaras (temples). Sikhs do not have clergy. Founded just over 500 years ago, Sikhism preaches a message of devotion and remembrance of God at all times, truthful living, equality of humankind, social justice and denounces superstitions and blind rituals. Sikhism is based on the teachings of its ten Gurus enshrined in the Guru Granth Sahib (Sikh holy book). Sikhs are the disciples of God who follow the Guru's writings and teachings. The word "Sikh" means "disciple" in the Punjabi language. The religion is called Sikhism. (Sikh is also an adjective; adherents are called Sikhs, pronounced "sic" or "seek.").

This Tip Sheet was written in collaboration with:
The Sikh Coalition, UNITED SIKHS, and the University of Southern California-Center for Religion and Civic Culture

UNITED SIKHS

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