

**STATE OF WASHINGTON
DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTIONS**

**HANDBOOK OF RELIGIOUS BELIEFS
AND PRACTICES**

1987
FIRST REVISION 1995
SECOND REVISION 2004
THIRD REVISION 2011
FOURTH REVISION 2012
FIFTH REVISION 2013
SIXTH REVISION 2024

HANDBOOK OF RELIGIOUS BELIEFS AND PRACTICES

INTRODUCTION

The Department of Corrections acknowledges the inherent and constitutionally protected rights of incarcerated individuals to believe, express and exercise the religion of their choice. It is our intention that religious programs will promote positive values and moral practices to foster healthy relationships, especially within the families of those under our jurisdiction and within the communities to which they are returning.

As a Department, we commit to providing religious opportunities for incarcerated individuals within available resources, while maintaining facility security, safety, health and orderly operations. The Department will not endorse any religious faith, but we will ensure that religious programming is consistent with the provisions of federal and state statutes and will work hard with the Religious and Faith Communities to ensure that the needs of the incarcerated community are fairly met.

This desk manual has been prepared for use by religious coordinators/chaplains, administrators and other staff of the Washington State Department of Corrections. It is not meant to be an exhaustive study of all religions. It does provide a brief background of most religions having participants housed in Washington prisons. This manual is intended to provide general guidelines and define practice and procedure for Washington State Department of Corrections institutions. It is intended to be used in conjunction with Department policy. While it does not confer theological expertise, it will, provide correctional workers with the information necessary to respond to many of the religious concerns commonly encountered.

This document has been revised as of December 01, 2024.

HANDBOOK OF RELIGIOUS BELIEFS AND PRACTICES

Religious Services Staff

Each prison in the state has religious coordinators/chaplains and religious volunteers who work with incarcerated individuals to ensure that every individual has the opportunity to practice the religious beliefs of his/her choice. These dedicated members of the religious services work diligently to implement the intent of the Religious Freedom Policy (560.200) that governs all religious activities in Washington prisons.

Religious Literature

All religions have printed material that is used to instruct an individual in the teachings and practices of the specific faith. This literature can be in the form of study booklets, reference books, magazines, or another printed format. If this literature does not contain material that is a demonstrated and documented threat to safety, security, or the orderly running of the facility it should be allowed as personal property of the incarcerated individual or be obtainable in the facility or religious library.

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Anglican/Episcopal History/Background

The Anglican (British) Church was planted before 200 A.D. Christians from nearby Gaul (France) were thought to have brought Christianity over. By the year 314 A.D. there were British Bishops in attendance at the Council of Arles. In 325 A.D. they gave formal assent to the decisions of the Council of Nicea. Over 200 years later Pope Gregory of Rome sent missionaries led by Augustine. Conversions of the Saxons followed, beginning with the queen. Later, Augustine was installed as the first Archbishop of Canterbury. About the year 405 A.D. Patrick, consecrated bishop in France, began his great work in Ireland. The Celtic Church (Irish) was strongly monastic. Missionary work began from such places as Iona and Lindisfarne. Aidan went from the island of Iona around 700 A.D. to England. He was successful in his mission work among pagans who had invaded the country. Theodore Archbishop of Canterbury was responsible for uniting the British, Latin and Celtic missions in England into the Church of England.

During the Middle Ages King Henry VIII led the Anglican Church in freeing itself from Rome. The Pope's authority was formally renounced in 1534 by convocation of English clergy: "The Bishop of Rome hath not by Scripture any greater authority in England than any other foreign Bishop." Reforms soon followed. Work began on an English Prayer Book in 1544. A complete Book of Common Prayer was published in 1549. The genius behind this first Prayer Book was Thomas Cramner, Archbishop of Canterbury. A second Prayer Book, with minor modifications became available in 1552.

Today, the Anglican Communion, of which the Church of England is a part, considers itself to be reformed Catholic.

It is to be found in many countries of the world under national churches that recognize the spiritual primacy of the Archbishop of Canterbury. There are over 79 million Christians who call themselves Anglican. In the United States the church is known as the Protestant Episcopal Church.

The Episcopal Church traces its beginnings to Jamestown, Virginia. In 1607 the first permanent English Colony celebrated the Mass or Holy Communion. After America became independent from England the church elected its own bishop. More than two thirds of the signers of the Declaration of Independence were members of the Episcopal Church.

The Episcopal Church in the United State of America is led by a primate (bishop). It has recently concluded an agreement of inter-Communion with the Evangelical Lutheran Church of America. Ministry and programs are shared by the two churches. Members may attend each other's church and partake of the Eucharist. Other Anglicans who consider themselves as traditionalist have separated from the Episcopal Church. They continue to use the historic Book of Common Prayer. They consider themselves as continuers of the Ecclesia Anglicana.

Theology/Major Teachings/Belief

The beliefs and teachings of the Episcopal Church are set forth in the historic Creeds: The

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Apostles Creed and the Nicene Creed, “and in the proceedings from the Seven Ecumenical Councils.” Other documents which support its beliefs are the Creed of St. Athanasius and the Articles of Religion. The Book of Common Prayer as a whole describes the beliefs of Episcopalians.

Worship/Rites/Ceremonies

The daily services are Morning (Matins) and Evening (Evensong) Prayer. The Eucharist, Mass or Holy Communion, is the primary Service, instituted by Christ “for continual remembrance of his life, death, and resurrection, until his coming again.” “Bread and wine spiritually taken according to Christ’s command are the Body and Blood of Christ.” Holy Baptism is the means by which persons are received into the Church and become “inheritors of the Kingdom of God.”

Holy Books

The Holy Bible; The Book of Common Prayer (1928 or 1979 ed.)

Holy Days/Festivals

January 6	Epiphany (Commemorates the beginning of the Christian Mission to the Gentiles.)
April	Easter Day (Tells of Christ’s resurrection from the dead, teaches that all believers shall be raised up at the last day. The date of Easter determines the beginning of Lent.)
May	Ascension Day (Forty days after Easter Day, celebrates Christ’s return to heaven.)
May/June	Pentecost Day (Celebrates the gift of the Holy Spirit to the Church. commonly called the birthday of the Church.)
June	Trinity Sunday (Points to the doctrine of One God in Three Persons, Father, Son and Holy Spirit.)
November 1	All Saints Day
December 25	Christmas Day (Commemorates the incarnation, the birth of Jesus Christ.)
Every Sunday	Sundays (Sundays of the year are feasts of Jesus Christ.)

Other Feasts/Minor

January 1	The Holy Name
February 2	Presentation
March 25	The Annunciation
May 31	The Visitation
June 24	St. John the Baptist
August 6	The Transfiguration
September 14	Holy Cross Day

Other Feasts/Major

January-December	All Feasts of the Apostles
December 26	St. Stephen
December 28	Holy Innocents
March 19	St. Joseph
July 22	St. Mary Magdalene
August 15	St. Mary the Virgin

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September 29

St. Michael and All Angels

Work Proscription Days

None required by faith and practice.

Fast Days

March 9, 2011	Ash Wednesday (February 22, 2012; February 13, 2013; March 5, 2014; February 18, 2015; February 10, 2016; March 1, 2017; February 14, 2018; March 6, 2019; February 26, 2020; February 17, 2021; March 2, 2022; February 22, 2023) (Observed by special acts of discipline and self-denial.)
March/April	Good Friday (Observed by special acts of discipline and self-denial.)
March/April	Lent (Observed by special acts of discipline and self-denial.)
April 17-23	Holy Week (Observed by special acts of discipline and self-denial.)
March/April	Weekdays (Observed by special acts of discipline and self-denial. Ash Wednesday and Good Friday are appointed as fast days. Lesser fasts days, called "days of special observance", are all the weekdays of Lent and every Friday in the year, with the exception that fasting is never observed during the Easter or Christmas seasons, or on Feasts of our Lord. The Episcopal Church does not prescribe the specific manner of observance of these days.)
Every Friday	Fridays (Observed by special acts of discipline and self-denial. Ash Wednesday and Good Friday are appointed as fast days. Lesser fasts days, called "days of special observance", are all the weekdays of Lent and every Friday in the year, with the exception that fasting is never observed during the Easter or Christmas seasons, or on Feasts of our Lord. The Episcopal Church does not prescribe the specific manner of observance of these days.)
See Description	Ember Days (Wednesdays, Fridays, and Saturdays, after the first Sunday in Lent, Pentecost, and Holy Cross Day (September 14 and December 13.)

Dietary Restrictions

None required by faith and practice.

Leadership/Meetings and Worship

Morning (Matins), and Evening Prayer (Evensong) may be led by a lay person. Holy Eucharist, the Mass can be celebrated only by a priest or bishop.

Sources

The Book of Common Prayer, 1928 ed.; The Book of Common Prayer, 1979 ed.; The Ways and Teachings of the Church, Haughtwout; The American Prayer Book, Parsma and Jones; A Church to Believe In, Moore; Faith and Practice, Wilson; Liturgy and Worship, Clarke and Harris; The Study of Anglicanism, Sykes and Booty

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Asatru

History/Background

“Asatru” is an Icelandic word which means “belief in the Gods,” specifically old Norse and Germanic gods and goddesses. The Ásatrúarfélagið was recognized as a formal state religion in 1970’s Iceland, but there are previous, modern Heathen precedents in other nations.

Asatru is the most common name for contemporary Germanic paganism, but there are others, including (but not limited to) Aldsidu, Forn Sed, Fyrnsidu, Theodism, Irminism, Odinism, Wotanism or Odalism. All are based on reconstruction from historical sources, both literary and archaeological. The most commonly referenced texts are the “Elder” or Poetic and “Younger” or Prose Edda. There is no founder who made revealed pronouncements, and no central authority that establishes teachings or beliefs.

Theology/Major Teachings/Belief

Asatru cosmology, ideals and eschatology draw from various Norse sagas and myth, especially those of the Elder (Poetic) and Younger (Prose) Eddas. There are nine worlds attested there, centered on a cosmic “world tree” Yggdrasil. The human world of Midgard was created from the murdered body of a great giant Ymir and is said to end with a great future battle called Ragnarok, in which many of the gods and giants will be killed.

Connections with one’s ancestors, nature spirits and deities are encouraged. Three “norns” or fates are said to help shape the lives of men within a larger “web of wyrd,” but humans can choose actions which shape that, improving and so proving their worth.

Personal virtue and honor are valued, often formulated as “nine noble virtues” by some groups. Many Asatruar develop ongoing, devotional relationships with certain goddesses or gods, and some aspire to join Odin after death in Valhalla. Study of the lore is encouraged, as is divinatory and magical work with symbols called runes, and sometimes “galdr” chanting.

Worship/Rites/Ceremonies

Some Asatru maintain personal shrines or “ves” to their deities and may also work with runes for personal insights and connection to the divine. The main form of group worship is called a “blot” (rhymes with “boat”), modern practice being based on descriptions of various ceremonies in the lore.

Modern blot is usually held outdoors around a central fire and consists of at least one sacrifice to a specific god, usually followed by three rounds of “sumbel” in which participants use a shared drinking horn to offer libations, toasts and praise offerings to gods, ancestors, and others.

Other personal ceremonies such as marriages, memorials and rites of passage may also be held.

Holy Books

Key texts include the elder “poetic” or Saemunder Edda, the younger or “prose” Edda by Snorri Sturluson. Writings of other ancient chroniclers, Scandinavian and Germanic sagas, poetry are also common, with books on folklore frequently recommended.

Holy Days/Festivals

There are four holidays attested in the lore, but most modern Heathens celebrate the eight holidays of the Neopagan “wheel of the year” under various names at midsummer, midwinter, the spring and fall equinoxes, and the four holidays between these at the beginning of February, May, August and November.

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Work Proscription Days

None required by faith or practice.

Fast Days

None required by faith or practice.

Dietary Restrictions

There are no specific dietary laws, although some may opt to be vegetarians by personal conviction.

Leadership/Meetings and Worship

Heathen groups are often called “kindreds” and are largely autonomous, selecting their own leaders or sharing worship responsibilities among themselves.

Resources

- [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Heathenry_\(new_religious_movement\)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Heathenry_(new_religious_movement))
- Stefanie von Schnurbein, 2016. Norse Revival: Transformations of Germanic Neopaganism
- Jennifer Snook, 2015. American Heathens: The Politics of Identity in a Pagan Religious Movement
- Helene L Grueber, 1908. Myths of the Norsemen: From the Eddas and Sagas
- Edred Thorsson, 1984. Futhark: A Handbook of Rune Magic.
- Freya Aswynn, 1998. Northern Mysteries and Magick: Runes & Feminine Powers
- Diana Paxson, 2005. Taking Up the Runes
- Diana L Paxson, 2006. Essential Asatru: Walking the Path of Norse Paganism
- Patricia Lafayllve, 2013. A Practical Heathen's Guide to Asatru
- Ben Waggoner, 2020. Our Troth, Volume 1: Heathen History
- Ben Waggoner, 2021. Our Troth, Volume 2: Heathen Gods
- Ben Waggoner, 2022. Our Troth, Volume 3: Heathen Life
- Nicholas Goodrich-Clark, 1984. The Occult Roots of Nazism.
- Neil Gaiman, 2017. Norse Mythology.

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Astara

History/Background

Astara means “a place of light” and is taken from the name of the Greek goddess of divine justice, Astraea. Astara was born to help seekers find the light they search for while in this life. This religion also seeks to assist individuals to find the power that lies within them, helping them reach into the infinite and breathe into them the God, forces of love, life and light. Astara was established in October 1951. Members are in 85 countries.

Theology/Major Teachings/Belief

Astara is a comprehensive religion which embraces the mystical teachings of all religions. It is non-sectarian, non-denominational and presents no dogmas or precepts which bind the mind in anyway. Astarians are led through eight degrees (or directions) through study of lessons (22 lessons each). They consider Jesus the Christ as the leading master of Astara. “And whatsoever the Godward may be, the Astarian will give it dignity; true lighted souls seek only to ascend, all paths that lead to God must somewhere blend.” (Earlyne Chaney, co-founder).

Worship/Rites/Ceremonies

There are no set requirements for regularly scheduled public or private worship except for designated Holy Days. Practitioners may spend time in prayer and mediation or yoga.

Holy Books

Teaching from the four directions (degrees); Containing twenty-two (22) lessons each (The Book of Life); Holy Bible; Qur'an; Bhagavad Gita; Kabbalah; Practitioners may also receive the monthly Voice of Astara, and tapes on esoteric and metaphysical subjects.

Holy Days/Festivals

Fire Initiation Ceremony	Last weekend in May on a Saturday. Lists are burned in an urn.
Founding of Astara	Anniversary meal on the 3 rd weekend in October.

Work Proscription Days

None required by faith and practice.

Fast Days

None required by faith and practice.

Dietary Restrictions

Vegetarianism strongly advocated but not mandatory.

Leadership/Meetings and Worship

No formal clergy.

Sources

Astara, 792 West Arrow Highway, P.O. Box 5003, Upland, Oh 91785-5005

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Baha'i

History/Background

The Baha'i faith began in Persia (Iran), when a young Muslim merchant, Mirza Ali Muhammed began in 1844 to preach that the Day of God was at hand. He proclaimed himself to be the Bab or Gate. One greater than himself would initiate a new age of peace and justice. There was a hint that this would be the 12th Imam, since 1844 was also the 1000th anniversary of the disappearance of the 12th Imam. Mirza later announced that he was the returned Imam Mahdi. In 1848 he formally announced that Babism was a new religion. He was arrested and executed by a firing squad in 1850.

His successor was Mirza Husayn-Ali Nuri (known as Bahauallah, 'the Glory of God'). In 1863 he announced that he was the one whom the Bab foretold. He lived until 1892. He appointed his eldest son, Abdul-Baha to lead the Community and to interpret the Baha'i writings. Abdul Baha in turn appointed his eldest grandson, Shoghi Effendi, as his successor, the Guardian of the Cause. The word Baha'i derives from Baha ("Glory" or "Splendor") and means a follower of Bahauallah.

Theology/Major Teachings/Belief

Baha'i's believe that in every age God sends messengers called "Manifestations of God". Each messenger builds upon the Messages of those gone before. Although each is different, all are animated by the Spirit of God. This is basic to their belief in the oneness of God, the oneness of religious and the oneness of mankind.

Baha'i teachings encourage good character and the development of spiritual qualities, such as honesty, trustworthiness, compassion and justice. Other goals are the eradication of prejudices and universal education.

Healthy living is important to Baha'i's, alcohol and drugs are forbidden, smoking is discouraged, and vegetarianism is recommended. They also discourage asceticism and celibacy. They support strict monogamy, traditional family values being central to their teachings. Women are equal and there is no veiling or seclusion. Divorce is permitted but strongly discouraged. If divorce is contemplated, couples must spend at least one year living apart and attempt to reconcile. If divorce is still desired after that year; it is then granted. This year of "patience", is supervised by the local Spiritual Assembly. It also forbids killing, stealing, lying, adultery and promiscuity, gambling, alcoholic drinks, drug abuse, gossip and backbiting. It strives and stresses the importance of honesty, trustworthiness, chastity, service to others, purity of motive, generosity, deeds over words, unity and work as a form of worship.

Worship/Rites/Ceremonies

Though Baha'i's teach that the purpose of human life is to know and to worship God, they have no formal creed, no rituals or ceremonies. Baha'i's do not have priesthood. Meetings are planned by the local community. The meetings include devotionals services, study classes, social events and the observance of holy days. One may be from another religion and still be able to participate in all activities. However, when one becomes an "enrolled" Baha'i, he must sever his membership in another religion.

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For Baha'i's, the purpose of life is to know God and to love him, and to progress in the spiritual life. The tools for these are prayer and meditation.

Holy Books

Baha'i Prayers, A selection of prayers Revealed by Bahauallah, the Bab and Abdul-Baha; Writing of Bahauallah (regarded as equal to the Bible or Quran); Al-Bayan; The Hidden Words; The Kitabi-Igan or The Book of Certitude; The Seven Valleys; Kitabi-Agdas or The Most Holy Book

Holy Days/Festivals

March 2	First Day of Baha'i Fast
March 20	Final Day of the Baha'i Fast
April 20	Declaration of Bahauallah
May 23	Declaration of Bab
May 29	Ascension of the Bahauallah
July 9	Martyrdom of the Bab
October 20	Birth of the Bab
November 12	Birth of the Bahauallah
November 26	Day of the Covenant
November 28	Ascension of the Abdula-Baha

Work Proscription Days

None required by faith and practice.

Fast Days

March 2-20 The Fast observed from sunrise to sunset, all abstain from eating or drinking.

Dietary Restrictions

None required by faith and practice.

Leadership/Meetings and Worship

Baha'i's teach that the purpose of human life is to know and to worship God. They have no formal creed, no rituals or ceremonies. Baha'i's do not have priesthood. Meetings are planned by the local community. The meetings include devotional services, study classes, discussions, social events and observance of holy days.

Sources

The New Believers, Sects, "Cults," and Alternative Religions, David V. Barrett, Cassel & Co. 2001, London; Pamphlet, Welcome to the Baha'i House of Worship; The Joy of Sects, Peter Occhiogrosso, Doubleday, 1994, New York; Pamphlet, The Promise of World Peace to the Peoples of the World, a statement by the universal House of Justice; Pamphlet, The Vision of Race Unity, America's Most Challenging Issue, A Statement by the National Spiritual Assembly of the Baha'i's of the United State, 1991 Baha'i Publishing Trust, Wilmette, IL 60091; Pamphlet, One Common Faith, World Peace Through the Oneness of Religion; The Light of Unity, Healing Racism (Selections from the Sacred writing of the Baha'i Faith) 1998, 2000 Baha'i Faith Publishing Trust, Wilmette, IL 60091; The Baha'i's, A Profile of the Baha'i Faith and its

Worldwide Community, 1992, Baha'i International Community, Reprinted 1999, (Publication of the Office of Public Information, Baha'i International Community.

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Buddhism

History/Background

Buddhism traces its origin to India in the sixth century BCE (before the current era) and the experiences of the man, Siddhartha Gautama, through which he became known as the Buddha, The Awakened One. The events of his life provide the basic inspiration upon which all Buddhist communities have been built. The Buddhist community is known as the Sangha. The Sangha together with the Buddha (The Awakened One) and the Dharma or Dhamma (Teaching or Path) are known as the Three Jewels, the basic foundation of Buddhist belief.

Through the efforts of disciples, Buddhism spread from India throughout most of Asia. Eventually, it came to North America and Europe, where it has grown tremendously in the past century. Today, at least six percent of the people on earth follow this many faceted faiths. Their number is steadily increasing due to global migration patterns and interest by Westerners.

Theology/Major Teachings/Belief

Buddhism focuses not so much on a set of doctrines as a course of action. Buddhism is concerned with alleviating suffering through right living and mental, moral and spiritual discipline. The basic Buddhist teachings are summarized in the Four Noble Truths.

The Four Noble Truths

The Noble Truth of Dukkha (often translated as Suffering)

Existence is characterized by dukkha; dukkha is universal.

The Noble Truth of the Cause of Dukkha

Dukkha is caused by attachment, craving, and clinging to things and ideas that are inherently impermanent and limited.

The Noble Truth of the Cessation of Dukkha

We can work toward the alleviation of dukkha by reducing our attachment to things and ideas.

The Noble Truth of the Eightfold Path

We become less attached to things and ideas through diligent practice of the Eightfold Path. These include: right (or skillful) understanding or view; right thought; right speech; right action (following the precepts); right livelihood; right effort; right mindfulness or attentiveness and right concentration through meditation. In its balance between study and action, austerity and regular daily activities, the Eightfold Path is often known as the Middle Way. While all the steps are essential, different schools of Buddhism tend to emphasize different steps of path.

School of Buddhism

There are three major schools of Buddhism: The Theravada (Hinayana), The Mahayana and The Vajrayana.

Theravadin Buddhism exists today in Burma, Thailand, Cambodia, and Sri Lanka and to some extent in Vietnam. You may sometimes see the term Hinayana used to refer to this school, but this is an outdated term, now considered to be pejorative. Theravada is a school that emphasizes

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the teachings of the early sutras and is predominantly a monastic school in its countries of origin, in that monks and nuns are the primary practitioners of the Eightfold Path itself, with lay practitioners focusing on the moral teachings and gaining merit through support of the monastic community. In the United States and Canada many Westerners lay practitioners follow a version of this practice focused on meditation and called Vipassana, Insight Meditation, or Mindfulness Practice.

Mahayana flourished in China, Korea, and Japan and to some extent Vietnam. This stream of Buddhism originated in India, then moved to China where the Ch'an and Pure Land sects originated. Ch'an became Zen when it came to Japan, and Pure Land Buddhism is practiced as Jodo Shin or Shin Buddhism in Japan. Other Japanese Buddhist groups include Shingon and Nichiren. Zen and Nichiren are perhaps the best-known Mahayana schools among Westerners, and Jodo Shin is the most popular among Japanese American Buddhist communities.

When Mahayana came from India to Tibet, it became flavored with indigenous elements of the Bon religion to produce a new school called Vajrayana or tantric Buddhism, which is active in Tibet, Mongolia, Sikkim, Nepal and Bhutan. Vajrayana or Tibetan (as it is commonly known) practice is also quite popular among Westerners in Europe and North America.

An important teaching of the Mahayana and Vajrayana traditions is that anyone can, over time (even many lifetimes) and with great effort and commitment, achieve Buddhahood or enlightenment, and not just ordained practitioners. In the stage prior to Buddhahood, one is known as a Bodhisattva. Different Bodhisattvas provide inspiration, guidance, and support to practitioners, much as Bodhisattva of Compassion, known as Avalokiteshvara, Chenrezig, Kuan Yin, Kannon or Kanzeon. The Dalai Lama is considered to be an incarnation of Chenrezig.

There are three key concepts to understand in Buddhism, and that understanding is essential to the first step of the Eightfold Path, Right View. These are: impermanence (Anicca), suffering (Dukkha) and the absence of permanent soul or "self" (Anatta). Some authorities list the Three-fold Understanding as Anicca, Nirvana and Anatta. Nirvana is the end of suffering, the goal of Buddhist practice.

Anicca

Anicca (impermanence) is easily observable, everything changes. People grow old and die, seasons change. It is not possible to keep anything static.

Dukkha

Dukkha (suffering) is not the same as pain, sorrow, loss or anything we usually think of as suffering. It refers instead to the discontent we feel when we experience pain, sorrow, loss and so on. Things rarely are exactly to our liking, and when they are they do not stay that way, since everything is impermanent.

Anatta

Anatta (no-self) does not mean our body and sense of self are not real. It means that the ideas we have about them are not the whole picture. We do not exist apart from the rest of existence, but are completely interdependent on everything else, and we usually ignore this truth as we go

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about our daily lives. This is probably the most difficult Buddhist concept to understand, as our sense of a separate and distinct selfhood is so tenacious.

Through practicing the Eightfold Path, the Buddhist practitioner can eventually reach Nirvana, a state in which all craving, hatred and ignorance (known as the three poisons) have been extinguished. For this reason, it is sometimes listed as the third understanding instead of dukkha. The work of Buddhism is to liberate humans and all sentient beings from these poisons through a deep understanding of the Four Noble Truths and diligent practice of the Eightfold Path. Release from dukkha, an awakening, can only be experienced through sincere and diligent practice.

The Precepts

Buddhist moral understanding is not very different from that of other faiths. There are five moral teachings common to all Buddhist practitioners. There are ten in the Mahayana faiths, and many more specific moral teachings for those who are ordained. The basic five precepts or moral teachings of the Buddha are translated and interpreted in many different ways, but basically are: No killing; no stealing; no inappropriate sex; no lying and no intoxicants.

Related to concern about morality is the Buddhist law of cause and effect. Every action causes some result, which in turn causes some action, which again causes a result. This endless chain is often referred to as karma, or kamma. Actually, karma means volitional action (a choice we make), and the result or effect is known as the fruit of karma. Different Buddhist schools place different emphasis on karma, with some practitioners very focused on the karmic fruit of their own actions.

Worship/Rites/Ceremonies

It is important to understand that there are great variations in what is considered to be essential to individual or group practice in the different Buddhist schools, even greater perhaps than among the various Christian traditions. This stems in part from the fact that the historical Buddha intentionally did not name a successor, but encouraged his monks to think for themselves, using the teachings and practices he had already given them. With the lack of a centralized Buddhist authority and the huge cultural differences that have been added in over the years, Buddhism can look like it is many faiths, not just one.

Private Worship

The individual Buddhist will often have a shrine or altar in the home, which may be surrounded by decorations, utensils, flowers, candles or oil lamps. There is most often a Buddha or Bodhisattva image or painting on the altar with a receptacle for an offering of incense. Meditation or sutra (Buddhist scripture) chanting is one in front of the altar on a regular basis. Buddhist meditation beads are also widely used. These rosaries, sometimes referred to as malas, are usually of 108, 54 or 27 beads. The mala may be worn on the wrist in daily life and can encircle the hands in some meditation rites. The beads can be used to count the breath or to repeat invocations or mantras.

Vajrayana practitioners in particular should be allowed use of a mala, and their shrines should have a picture or statue of the Buddha, seven water bowls, some form of lights like candles or butter lamps, and the incense offering.

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Corporate Worship

Buddhists should be allowed to gather on a regular basis. Vajrayana practitioners have at least two “tsog” or offering days a month. Tsog are determined on a lunar calendar, but in the West may be set using the solar calendar commonly used. Some western Buddhist groups or Asian groups practicing in the West may follow a weekly Sunday service pattern in order to fit in with Western cultural norms. These services may include time for chanting sutras, meditation, a Dharma talk, and study. As the Sangha or community is one of the Three Jewels, these times to meet and reaffirm Sangha are essential to Buddhists.

Holy Books

The *Sutras* are the Buddhist scriptures. While counts vary, there are up to 84,000 individual sutras in three collections, many of which are considered to be the words of the Buddha. Each tradition focuses on sutras (usually one to three volumes of the 84,000) that most typify its teaching. It is recommended, but not always required, that the individual Buddhist have a personal copy of the sutras important to his/her tradition.

Holy Days/Festivals

Important festivals in the Theravadin tradition:

Full moon/May	Vesak/Wisakha Puja, celebration of the birth, enlightenment, and death of the historical Buddha. Celebrated on the day of the full moon in May.
Full moon/April	Dharma-Vijaya/Poson, commemorates the preaching of the Dharma to foreign counties, especially Sri Lanka. Celebrated on the day of the full moon in April.
Full moon/July	Dharma-chakka/Asalha Puja, commemorating the first proclamation of the Dharma by the Buddha. Celebrated on the day of the full moon in July.
Mid-April	New Year, often celebrated in mid-April.

Important festivals in the Mahayana tradition:

April 8	Buddha's Birthday
February 15	Nirvana Day, Commemorates the historical Buddha's bodily death.
December 8	Buddha's Enlightenment,
Mid-Summer/Spring/Autumn	In Japanese Buddhist traditions, memorial days are important and will vary with the sect. General days for commemorating the dead are O-Bon (mid-summer) and the spring and autumn equinox days.
January/February	New Year, Japanese is solar calendar, January 1. Chinese is lunar calendar, varies January/February.

Important festivals in the Vajrayana tradition:

9 th day of 4 th month of Tibetan Calendar	Buddha's Birthday
15 th day of 4 th month of Tibetan Calendar	Enlightenment Day, Nirvana Day
January/February	Losar/New Year, sometime in January or February determined by lunar calendar. The biggest celebration of the year, with events leading up to it and following from it.

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There are other celebrations including those of Tibetan cultural significance, as well as each sect within the Vajrayana tradition having numerous auspicious days and festivals in addition to these.

Work Proscription Days

None required by faith and practice.

Fast Days

None required by faith and practice.

Dietary Restrictions

As in the differences in holidays, different Buddhist communities follow dietary practices based on cultural origin. Monks in the monastery are expected to be vegetarian, although Theravadin monasteries accept offerings from the community regardless of ingredients, as these offerings are the primary lay practice. In the Tibetan-Mongolian tradition, both lay people and monks routinely eat meat, since fruits and vegetables were difficult to grow in these high barren regions. In the West, lay Buddhist practitioners often choose to follow a vegetarian diet and should be allowed this option.

Leadership/Meetings and Worship

In most of the Chinese-descended sects (China, Korea, Vietnam, Japan) monks reside in a monastery for training, then some become “priests” and serve lay communities in village temples. In Japan priests are allowed to marry. In the West priests from these Mahayana traditions may be referred to as Reverend or Venerable and may be married. In the Theravadin tradition monks never marry and, in the West, are referred to as Venerable. Tibetan sangha’s are also usually led by monks. In the West there are many lay leaders in all the traditions.

Burial Practices

There are many different traditions of Buddhism, and these sorts of life transition rituals may be as much culturally as religiously based. It would be important to determine which tradition the inmate is affiliated with. That said, there are some general points to make.

All efforts of the practitioner leading up to the time of death are geared toward directing whatever essence continues after death to a better situation upon rebirth. For some traditions this effort is very individual and for others, most notably in the Southeast Asian traditions, laypeople rely on monks to chant for them in the time leading up to death and shortly after.

The transition from living to dead is a gradual one, and so most traditions assume that an individual consciousness remains somewhat attached to the body for a period of time after official time of death, usually around 3 days. Chanting, burning of incense, and prayerful support during this time are considered most helpful in directing the disoriented newly dead person on their way. At a minimum, a quiet and peaceful atmosphere surrounding the remains is most helpful. For this reason, many Buddhists refuse to do organ donation.

Prayer, incense burning, and chanting take place at intervals following death, those intervals being determined by the tradition.

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In most Buddhist traditions cremation is the preferred method of disposal of the remains, as a new vessel will be used for the next incarnation. But cremation or burial should wait until the body has been at repose for a bit, to allow the consciousness time to leave the body. No need to embalm the body, unless the inmate has specifically asked for it, and has asked to be buried without cremation, which might be the case for Western convert Buddhists who are blending their Buddhist and birthright beliefs.

Venerable Santidhammo Tom Flint, who is registered as a volunteer at Monroe, has offered to assist with Southeast Asian inmates requiring chanting at death. He is an excellent resource in this matter, as well as Richard Baldwin, another Monroe volunteer, for the Tibetan traditions.

Sources

Religions by Myrtle Langley; Handbook of Religious Beliefs and Practices, Inmate Religious Beliefs and Practices by US Department of Justice Federal Bureau of Prisons; What the Buddha Taught by Walpola Rahula; The Heart of the Buddha's Teaching by Thich Nhat Hahn

Church of Satan

History/Background

Founded on April 30, 1966, in San Francisco by Anton Szandor LaVey, the Church of Satan is the first above-ground religious organization dedicated to the acceptance of Man's nature as an animal living in a cosmos that is indifferent to his existence. To Satanists, Satan is a symbol who represents pride, liberty, and individualism—qualities often defined as "Evil" by people who believe in and worship external deities. Satanism is thus not Devil worship. There is no belief in God, Satan, the soul, the supernatural or in any form of afterlife. LaVey had a background in the circus and carnival, playing both organ and calliope for the performers and he even spent time as a lion tamer. He also worked freelance as a photographer for the San Francisco Police department, and thus his earthy experiences, led him to reject religion in general as being unrealistic in their beliefs. He saw existing religions as a means for controlling the masses, and since most people seem to want and need some sort of unearthly parental figure, he considered that most religions had been invented to meet that need.

But LaVey noticed throughout history that there were iconoclastic men, creative thinkers who were not believers, such as Nietzsche, George Bernard Shaw, Mark Twain, Lord Byron, Charles Baudelaire and others, who saw Satan as not representing "Evil," but as a figure who embodied human resistance to authority, who championed the pleasures of life on earth, who saw through falsehoods and accepted the harsh realities of life. LaVey noted that there was no systematic philosophy which those bright rebels could embrace, so he set out to create it. He began with a "magic circle" of fellow freethinkers in the late fifties and early sixties, and by the time he had concretized a religion which he even referred to as "Ayn Rand with trappings," it was 1966. Being an experienced showman, he chose to announce the formation of his Church of Satan on April 30th, known traditionally as Walpurgisnacht, the night when supposedly the "forces of Darkness" held sway. He called 1966 the "Year One, Anno Satanas" using the roman numeral one to designate that year. 2011 is thus known as XLVI A.S.

LaVey performed rituals - weddings, baptisms, and funerals and invited the press, who found the voluptuous nude women who served as "altars of the flesh" to be sensational photo opportunities. He was often interviewed for men's magazines, and in 1969 he published *The Satanic Bible* which codified his philosophy and presented rituals which were intended as cathartic psychodramas to release pent-up emotions, rather than as forms of worship. Membership then grew rapidly and thus the organization became international in scope. LaVey's philosophy was meant for successful people who used their talents for artistic and material success, the movers and shakers of the world. Famous early members included actress Jayne Mansfield and entertainer Sammy Davis Jr. LaVey attracted a number of rock musicians who were proud to publicly claim affiliation, amongst who were King Diamond, Marc Almond, and Marilyn Manson.

LaVey remained the head of his organization until his death, writing books, recording his organ playing, and being the subject of several video documentaries. These are detailed on the official home page of the Church of Satan (www.churchofsatan.com). At the time of his death on 29 October, 1997, Anton LaVey left the Church of Satan under the command of Magistra Blanche Barton—his consort, mother of his third child, Satan Xerxes Carnacki LaVey, and chief

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administrative officer of the Church for the preceding 15 years who at that time was the officially appointed High Priestess. Anton LaVey took the survival of his Church seriously, and had appointed individuals to his Priesthood who could articulate the philosophy and who also had personal success outside of Satanism. So this Priesthood—along with the administrative bodies of the Order of the Trapezoid and the Council of Nine—continued working with Magistra Barton to maintain the mission of the Church of Satan, which still remains the work of transmitting the philosophy worldwide so that anyone who might be by nature a Satanist could have the chance to read the literature and discover the proper label for the type of person they are. On April 30, 2001, High Priestess Barton appointed Peter H. Gilmore as High Priest and Magus, and Peggy Nadramia as Grand Mistress of the Temple—Magistra Templi Rex. On April 30, 2002, Blanche Barton and Peggy Nadramia exchanged positions, so that Magistra Nadramia became High Priestess, and Magistra Barton Magistra Templi Rex, the chair-mistress of the Council of Nine. They all continue to hold these positions today. The headquarters for the organization moved from California to New York City in 2001.

Theology/Major Teachings/Belief

Essentially, Satanism is at base a rational philosophy of pragmatism, materialism and skepticism, generally promoting a libertarian point of social view with an emphasis on law and order to maintain the "social contract" all people accept by participating in civilization. Satan in Hebrew means the adversary or accuser, and LaVey felt that there was a need for a perspective that opposed all forms of spiritual belief - either Western or Eastern, and that included opposing the then current "occultism fad" that was growing in the mid-1960s. Satanism is a counter-position to spiritual beliefs, since Satanists see themselves as being carnal - they do not believe that there is any form of the spiritual, but that does not mean that Satanists wish to eradicate other religious perspectives, or to convert people of faith. The Satanic position is "live and let live," so long as other religions do not try to force Satanists into their beliefs through involuntary conversion or legislation of them. The American Constitution's principle of separation of church and state is endorsed by Satanists as a wise way to govern, allowing people the freedom of choice to be either religious or secular, without either camp forcing the other into actions which would be counter to their natures or wishes.

Satanists consider that they are born to Satanism. The potential Satanist reads any of the fundamental texts and sees himself reflected in them and thus understands that there are other like-minded people at large in the world. The Satanist view of the human species is that there are people who are from birth either inclined towards the spiritual - wanting guidance from something they wish to perceive as being "above" or "greater" than themselves, or inclined towards the carnal, meaning that they are the center of their own subjective universes and that they take the responsibility for creating their own hierarchy of values, rather than being handed rules supposedly coming from some deity or political authority. The carnal types are generally secular people, often humanists and atheists, and Satanists see themselves as a sub-set of those supporting secular free thought. Satanists are thus not neo-pagans, nor do they consider their philosophy to be a faith, since faith itself is rejected as being a blind belief in forces that do not exist. Reason is championed by Satanists as the tool for understanding existence.

To paraphrase what Anton LaVey explained in his fundamental work *The Satanic Bible*, Man invented all the Gods, doing so because many humans cannot accept or control their personal

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egos, feeling compelled to conjure up one or a multiplicity of characters who can act without hindrance or guilt upon whims and desires. All Gods are thus externalized forms, magnified projections of the true nature of their inventors, personifying aspects of the universe or personal temperaments which many of their followers find to be troubling. Worshipping any God is thus worshipping by proxy those who invented that God. Since the Satanist understands that all Gods are fiction, instead of bending a knee in worship to—or seeking friendship or unity with—such mythical entities, he places himself at the center of his own subjective universe as his own highest value. Satanists are thus their own “Gods,” and as beneficent “deities” can offer love to those who deserve it and deliver wrath (within reasonable and legal limits) upon those who seek to cause the Satanists—or that which they cherish—harm. This does not mean that Satanists see themselves as having God-like powers. The Satanist is very aware of being human with all the limits that come with being a fragile animal in a society which is usually ruled by Darwinian modes of competition for survival. Magus Gilmore’s essay “What, The Devil?” from his 2006 book *The Satanic Scriptures* can be read at www.churchofsatan.com and it discusses this in greater detail.

Satanism does not promote unbridled hedonism, since such would show a lack of discipline and respect for the rights of others. Instead, Satanism promotes Epicureanism, a self-disciplined approach to indulging with moderation in the pleasures that life offers. “Indulgence, NOT compulsion!” is the dictate for approaching life. Satanism supports individualism, and since the approach to life is pragmatic, each Satanist must decide for himself which political parties would be most personally beneficial. Satanism does not seek chaos or anarchy in society, but utilizes the ancient Roman standard of “Lex Talionis,” meaning that when people misbehave in the eyes of the social order, that the punishment must fit in both kind and degree the crime. Being convicted of a serious crime can be grounds for expulsion of a member or rejection of a membership application.

Satanism endorses all forms of human sexuality between consenting adults, including heterosexuality, homosexuality, bi-sexuality or even a-sexuality. Fetishism is encouraged as a means for sexual expression. Sex with children and non-human animals is forbidden. Since there is no faith or worship in Satanism, there are no regular services nor any church buildings. The Priesthood functions as authorized spokespersons for the philosophy, not ministers to a congregation. Ritual (called Greater Magic) in Satanism is not worship. It is a tool for emotional well-being the use of which is optional for each Satanist. Ritual is thus a form of self-therapy, a method for expressing and releasing emotions that might be hindering an individual from enjoying life. *The Satanic Bible* by Anton LaVey details the three basic forms of ritual - avenues for release feelings of anger (destruction ritual), sexuality (lust ritual) and grief and sympathy (compassion ritual). That book details the ritual implements that are ideal for either a personal or a group ritual, but ultimately all that is required is the power of the imagination of the person who performs the ritual. Lesser Magic is a term used to refer to how one charms people on a personal basis into doing things according to one's desires and is a practice of Satanists.

The Satanism of the Church of Satan was officially recognized by the government of the United States when it was included in their Department of the Army Manual for Chaplains. The Church of Satan does not endorse or recognize any other beliefs or organizations claiming to be Satanists.

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Worship/Rites/Ceremonies

There is no worship in Satanism. Animal sacrifice is not permitted in Satanic rites and ceremonies. Ritual - used as a cathartic psychodrama - may be performed at the choice of the Satanist, and the basic texts for this are present in *The Satanic Bible* by Anton LaVey. Rituals can be at any time of the day or night as desired but should be in a space in which all outside light may be cut off, the light within provided by one or more black candles. The room should offer privacy for the release of emotions verbally and if a lust ritual is performed, masturbation to climax is expected and that should be done in private. It is up to Satanists who decide to ritualize to determine how often it might be personally beneficial. Daily meditation on Satanic literature or imagery is possible, and there is no special day of the week for Satanists. If a Satanist decides to ritualize on a monthly basis, it is often done on the night of the dark of the moon.

It has been traditional in group ritual to have a nude or semi-nude woman recline on a platform to serve as an altar, but as is stated in *The Satanic Bible* this is not required. Tools for ritual include the text for the rite, a table or platform to serve as an altar, black candles and an additional white candle if a destruction ritual is performed, a bell, a cup to hold a beverage pleasing to the taste of the performer (it is not required to be alcoholic), a sword (can be substituted with a stick or wand to serve to point, or just an outstretched arm), gong (or cymbal - only expected for a large group rite), a phallic symbol (for group rites) and water in a bowl (the water can be flicked with the fingers when no phallic symbol is used), paper and pen (for writing a request to be burned in either the flame of a black or the white candle). A fire-proof dish is best to hold the ashes of the burned paper. The wall above the altar should have the Sigil of Baphomet (a goat face in a pentagram surrounded by two circles within which are the Hebrew characters spelling Leviathan starting at the bottom point and written counter-clockwise). This could be a simple print out of that graphic mounted on the wall or propped on the altar table in a frame. A medallion with this same symbol should also be worn by all participating. A black robe or cape may be worn, or all black clothing. Incense may be employed as well.

Satanists are also free to expand upon, embellish, or contract the standard ritual texts as needed so long as such changes respect the philosophy of Satanism.

Private Worship

Ritual may be done in private or solitary conditions. If the ritual texts from *The Satanic Bible* or *The Satanic Scriptures* are employed the sole performer plays the part of the Celebrant or Priest. The suggested ritual implements may be employed, or if they are forbidden to an inmate, then the person may use his imagination but should be allowed to be in a darkened room. A lust ritual would always be done solo.

Corporate Worship

In Satanism, group ritual is performed if a number of Satanists wish to ritualize together. If there are more than one doing a ritual, then one is chosen to play the role of the Priest or Celebrant. Ordained members of the Priesthood of the Church of Satan are not required for ritual. Compassion and destruction rituals may be done with more than one participant. Group ritual is not required by the Church of Satan.

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Holy Books

The books written by the founder of the Church of Satan, Anton Szandor LaVey, are required reading, with *The Satanic Bible* (includes basics of the philosophy and ritual practices) being the most important.

Holy Days/Festivals

Since Satanism is a self-centered religion, the highest holiday of the year would be the Satanist's own birthday which needs no ritual but should be spent in doing things a Satanist would enjoy. There is no requirement that a Satanist celebrate any holidays, and there are no hard and fast traditions or rites associated with them. Since Satanism embraces Nature, the other holidays a Satanist might choose to celebrate would be the seasonal turning points marked by the equinoxes and solstices - the dates of which vary from year to year, as well as the mid points between these which can be recognized as the climaxes of each season. In particular, April 30th, called Walpurgisnacht, is the Spring climax and the anniversary of the founding of the Church of Satan and is generally noted. Halloween, October 31, is the Fall climax and may be celebrated as a time when one's inner-self might be explored through the use of a costume, or one might recall those of importance in one's life who has died - as was done in European tradition on that night.

Work Proscription Days

None required by faith or practice.

Fast Days

None required by faith or practice.

Dietary Restrictions

None required by faith or practice. However, since Satanism respects animals, some Satanists may choose to be vegetarians.

Leadership/Meetings and Worship

The Church of Satan is not a social institution, rather it is an association of people supporting the philosophy and a trained hierarchy which represents and explains our teachings, so we do not have regular meetings or required worship services. Satanism is about self-discipline and development of talents through study and practice. Satanists who are incarcerated - if they merit such privileges - should be allowed to study subjects of interest, and access to materials which might allow them to write, create art, or play music.

Hierarchy

The Church of Satan has a system of degrees, the criteria for elevation being based not on mysticism or occultism, but on knowledge of practical subjects beyond Satanism, and even more than that, on the application of such wisdom towards measurable ends. Degrees should not be seen as "initiatory steps" which are expected of members since the Church of Satan is **not** an initiatory organization. No member is required to move beyond Registered Membership. The First Degree denoting Active Membership is only for members who seek more involvement with the organization and other local members. The remaining degrees (from the Second through the Fifth) are **not** open to application or to request. Our specific standards for them will not be publicly released. The administration watches the progress of qualified members, and may choose to grant recognition to outstanding individuals based on demonstrated excellence in the understanding and communication of Satanic Theory, coupled with significant potent practices in the arena of the real world which have produced superior achievements. People naturally and quite organically rise to particular levels, and we may take note at our discretion.

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Registered Membership is open to anyone who wishes to support the Church of Satan and it requires payment of a \$200 fee (check www.churchofsatan.com). It is important to note that since Satanism embraces law and order, those convicted of a serious crime may be expelled if they are members or forbidden to apply for membership if they are not members. One might consider oneself to be a Satanist if they read and completely agree with the fundamental literature of the Church of Satan, but they are not members unless they formally join. The Church of Satan has no responsibility for or towards anyone who simply proclaims himself to be a Satanist.

Registered Member (no degree) Active Member—Satanist (First Degree) Witch/Warlock (Second Degree) Priestess/Priest (Third Degree) Magistra/Magister (Fourth Degree) Maga/Magus (Fifth Degree)

“Administrator,” “Agent,” and “Grotto Master” are descriptive titles for what people do, not levels of rank, thus they can be held by members with different degrees. “High Priest”/“High Priestess” are the top administrative titles and can be held only by Fourth or Fifth Degree members.

Those who hold the Third through Fifth degrees are all members of the Priesthood of Mendes and individuals with these titles may be called “Reverend.”

An important point of emphasis: Our protocol for member interaction is based on the paradigm of a “mutual admiration society,” and this is applied across all levels of our hierarchy. Our members may earn each other’s admiration, but the behavior of general respect is our functioning basis. We do not expect all of our highly individualistic members to like each other, but we **do** require that they behave as ladies and gentlemen when dealing with each other in **all** situations and forums, whether they be online, in any printed or broadcast media and particularly in face-to-face situations. Interaction is never required, and in the case of extreme disagreement wherein civility apparently cannot be maintained, we expect involved members to cease interaction with each other. **Violation of this standard is a ground for expulsion.**

Agents

An individual who demonstrates a thorough grasp of the philosophy of the Church of Satan, skills in being able to communicate it, and would like to be trained as a contact for local media and other interested parties may be chosen to serve as an Agent for the Church of Satan. When you fill out your application for further involvement, let us know if you would like to be considered to be evaluated as a qualified contact point in your area or for media representation. You should then include material which demonstrates your qualifications, such as samples of your writing and video (via DVD) of yourself in a public speaking mode. Those who are appointed as Agents must demonstrate that they have already been making well-reasoned efforts to publicly clear-up misconceptions regarding our philosophy.

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Priesthood of Mendes

These are the individuals who act as spokespersons for the philosophy of the Church of Satan, which include the titles of “Priest”/“Priestess,” “Magister”/“Magistra,” “Magus”/“Maga.” Members of the Priesthood make up the **Council of Nine**, which is the ruling body of the organization, appointed by and responsible to the High Priest/Priestess. The **Order of the Trapezoid** consists of the individuals who assist in the administration of the Church of Satan. Members of our Priesthood are people of accomplishment in the real world—they have mastered skills and have won peer recognition, which is how they have attained their position—“as above, so below.” They are “movers and shakers” who are the core of our movement. While expected to be experts in communicating our philosophy, they are not required to speak on our behalf and they may even choose to keep their affiliation and rank secret, in order to better serve their personal goals, as well as those of our organization. Thus, you may (even as a member), encounter members of our Priesthood and never know it.

Membership in the Priesthood is by invitation only. The old truism “If you have to ask, you can’t afford it” is certainly highly pertinent to our Priesthood. Words to the wise: **Do not ask “How do I become a Priest?”**

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Druidry History/Background

The term “druid” originally refers to iron-age Celtic priests, as documented by Julius Caesar and others, analogous to other Indo-European priesthoods such as the Roman Flamens and the Vedic Brahmins.

As part of the modern Neopagan movement, Druidry is concerned with the natural world and the earth; additionally, while Druidry typically does not claim an unbroken line of practitioners from pre-Christian Europe, it finds a great deal of inspiration there.

Druids typically seek to deepen their practice through study of archeology and scholarship regarding Indo-European world, developing practices that have meaning to modern individuals. It is a polytheistic, non-dualist, non-sexist, non-racist, scientific, holistic, and ecologically oriented faith, with members throughout the world. Modern Druidry focuses on "right practice" rather than on "right belief" in any specific doctrine, so there is no standard set of beliefs.

The “druid revival” began in the late 1700’s. Druid groups prominent today include the Order of Bards Ovates and Druids (OBOD), Ar nDraiocht Fein (ADF), and the Ancient Order of Druids in America (AODA), among others.

Theology/Major Teachings/Belief

Druidry honors an Earth Mother and a variety of “kindred” spirits and beings, particularly gods and goddesses, nature spirits, and ancestors (both direct blood ancestors and "ancestors of spirit," who may or may not be directly related to the practitioner). Beings honored by the practitioner will often be of Celtic origin, but any Indo-European pre-Christian pantheon may be represented. Druidry also often respects local divinities as well, such as the spirits of local rivers, lakes, forests, and mountains.

Direct, spiritual contact with nature is valued, with Druidry counted among other “earth-based” or “nature” religions. Practitioners seek to be in harmony and right relationship with the natural world. A practitioner may worship at stones, statues, or trees, but this is an expression of the notion that all things are sacred in this world, and all have spirits, not that these items are deities in their own right.

Druidic ethics are relationship focused, with an emphasis on connection and reciprocity, both with the Gods and Spirits as well as other people. Some of these principles may be codified, such as with “Nine Pagan Virtues,” but not necessarily. ADF’s nine virtues include wisdom, vision, piety, courage, perseverance, integrity, hospitality, moderation, and fertility or productivity. Each druid is encouraged to develop what these terms mean to them and embody them through daily actions.

Worship/Rites/Ceremonies

Druidic rituals may be focused on the sun and usually require a representation of fire. Ideally, this will be in the form of a real, physical fire, but this is not required in all cases. A simpler representation of fire may be substituted (such as a battery-powered or LED candle, orange or red stone, or drawn picture of a fire). When present, fire represents divinity, lifting the individual’s prayers and sacrifices to the Kindreds. Sacred fire is the focus of most rituals. Other “hallows” or sacred portals may be represented as a well (particularly for ancestors) or a tree (as an “axis mundi” or for nature spirits).

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Rituals often begin with an acknowledgement of the Earth Mother and other opening prayers. A sacred center is established and opened, the kindreds then invited to witness the rite and receive sacrifice. Offerings of hand-made items, cut flowers, and food or drink are most often made; pork or other meats may also be offered. These offerings are taken out of human use (broken, burned, poured out, or placed out of reach), and form the first part of the reciprocal relationship. Blood sacrifice is not acceptable to modern Druids and is not a recognized part of modern rituals.

Once offerings have been made, an omen may be taken (using a symbol set such as runes, ogham, or observing birds) to determine what the blessings returned are. The blessings of such an omen may be ceremonially imbued into a beverage (non-alcoholic drinks such as juice or water are allowed for this) then shared communally. Once this is complete, all beings are thanked, and ceremonial portals closed.

Holy Books

Druidry is an experiential religion of connection and relationship, rather than textual interpretation. There are no sacred scriptures as such for Druidry, but those interested in Druidry are likely to read many books on archeology, Irish/British/Gaulish mythology and history, and classical works such as those by Julius Caesar or Tacitus. Academically credible texts are generally preferred.

Holy Days/Festivals

All modern druid organizations recognize the eight main festivals of the modern Neopagan “wheel of the year”: both solstices (midsummer and midwinter), both equinoxes (fall and spring), and the “fire festivals” near the beginning of February, May, August and November. These are called by various names among traditions and hearth cultures. Lunar observances may also be made, such as on the sixth day of the new moon.

There are eight modern solar festivals that most Druids celebrate, along with some moon-related events that move, depending on phase.

The Eight High Days

Samhain	October 31 st – The Feast of the Dead, where Ancestors are honored, and the final harvest is celebrated.
Winter Solstice (Yule)	Approx. December 21 st – A celebration of the returning light.
Imbolc	February 1 st – The feast of Brigid, where new life is celebrated, and tools are blessed.
Spring Equinox	Approx. March 20 th – A feast of planting and renewal and celebrating the triumph of the light over darkness.
Beltaine	May 1 st – A fertility festival of purification, typically involving may pole dances and other festivities.
Summer Solstice	Approx. June 21 st – A festival celebrating the height of the sun’s power.
Lughnassadh	August 1 st – A festival commemorating the funeral of Tailtiu and/or the marriage of the skilled god, Lugh, along with the first harvest.
Autumnal Equinox	Approx. September 23 rd – A festival celebrating the middle harvest and the descent into winter.

Work Proscription Days

None required by faith or practice.

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Fast Days

None required by faith or practice. Though some Druids may fast before High Days based on personal choice.

Dietary Restrictions

There are no specific dietary laws, although some Druids may opt to be vegetarians or vegans by personal conviction.

Leadership/Meetings and Worship

Religious leaders may be called “priest” or “priestess,” “druid” or “druidess,” or by other, culture-specific titles. Groups may refer to themselves as "groves" or "circles," and although some organizations have grades or formal certifications, Druidry in general does not require a credentialed priest for most worship services. Any individual can make sacrifice on their own behalf and work with the deities directly.

Resources

- [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Druidry_\(modern\)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Druidry_(modern))
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Eastern or Greek Orthodox

History/Background

The Christian Faith began in Jerusalem and spread to Alexandria, Antioch, Constantinople and Rome. In 1054 A.D. it split into the Western (Roman) and Eastern (Orthodox) Churches. The Orthodox Church is a family of “autocephalous” (self-governing) churches; it is not a centralized organization headed by a pontiff. The unity of the church is manifested in a common faith and communion in the sacraments and no one but Christ himself is the real head of the Church. The number of autocephalous churches has varied in history.

Theology/Major Teachings/Belief

Orthodoxy is the life that is an ongoing and developing, spiritual and organic union with God. This union with God begins with faith in the dogmas of the Holy Trinity, the Incarnation of the second person of the Holy Trinity, the Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, and the salvific operation of the Holy Church that was established by Jesus Christ and fulfilled by the Holy Spirit. The Orthodox Faith is manifested in the life of each believer through the rituals of the Church. With these rituals, which include the Sacraments (Baptism, Chrismation, Penance, Holy Eucharist, Matrimony, Ordination, Holy Unction), the believer receives Divine Grace which opens up the opportunity of the believer to achieve union with God.

The beliefs of the Orthodox Faith are expressed in Church Tradition that includes the Divine Scriptures (the Holy Bible), the teaching of the Ecumenical Councils, especially the Nicene-Constantinopolitan Creed, the Divine Services, the lives of the saints and the Oral Traditions of the Church.

Worship/Rites/Ceremonies

The main expression of worship in the Orthodox Church is the Divine Service. Each day is illuminated by a cycle of services that include Vespers, Compline, Midnight Office, Matins, First Hour, Third Hour, Sixth Hour, Divine Liturgy and Ninth Hour. Commonly some of the services are grouped together to form single services such as the All-night Vigil and the Liturgy Hours. Of the daily services the most vital is the Divine Liturgy during which is celebrated the Holy Eucharist.

Holy Books

Holy Bible; Prayer Books

Holy Days/Festivals

January 1	The Circumcision of Christ
February 2	The Presentation of Christ in the Temple
March 25	The Annunciation
April	Palm Sunday (Sunday before PASCHA/Easter)
April	Easter/Pascha
May	The Ascension of Christ (Always on a Thursday and 40 days after Easter/Pascha)
May/June	Pentecost (10 days after the Ascension)
August 6	The Transfiguration
August 15	The Dormition of the Theotokos (Mary)
August 29	The Beheading of John the Baptist (Strict Fast Day)
September 8	The Birth of the Theotokos
September 14	The Elevation of the Holy Cross (Strict Fast Day)
November 21	The Entrance of the Theotokos into the Temple

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December 25	Christmas/The Nativity of Christ
January-December	Saint Day (Each person has a patron saint. People usually celebrate their name day.)

Work Proscription Days

None required by faith and practice.

Fast Season

These are not fast days but abstention days. Eastern and/or Greek Orthodox can eat three light meals a day but have to abstain from meat, fish, dairy including eggs and no alcohol from Monday to Friday.

Lent time is determined by the Orthodox calendar, so it changes every year. They do not go by the Gregorian calendar proposed by Pope Gregory.

Great Lent	8 weeks prior to Easter, First week abstain from meat, all other weeks abstain from all meat, fish, dairy, eggs and olive oil.
Apostle's Fast	(The Monday after Orthodox All Saints Sunday [about 8 weeks after Easter] – June 28) abstain from Meat, dairy, eggs and olive oil.
Dormition Fast	(August 1-15) Abstain from meat, dairy, eggs and olive oil.
Advent	(November 15 – December 24) Abstain from meat, dairy, eggs and olive oil.

On all above fasts olive oil is allowed on the weekends.

Fast Days

January 18	Epiphany
September 11	Beheading of St. John the Baptist
September 27	Elevation of the Holy Cross
Every Wednesday	(Except on January 7-17, February 2-8, February 15-22, the week after Easter/Pascha and a week after Pentecost.)
Every Friday	(Except on January 7-17, February 2-8, February 15-22, the week after Easter/Pascha and a week after Pentecost.)

Dietary Restrictions

During fasting Eastern and/or Greek Orthodox can eat three light meals a day but have to abstain from meat, fish and dairy including eggs.

Leadership/Meetings and Worship

Orthodox Christians believe that with prayers and offerings of the faithful, the prayers and actions of the priest, along with agency of the Holy Spirit and gifts offered at the Divine Liturgy, i.e. the bread and wine, truly become the Body and Blood of our Lord Jesus Christ. The Divine Liturgy cannot be served without the presence of a priest.

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Gnosis

History/Background

The Contemporary Gnostic Movement of Samael Aun Weor

Gnosis is a Greek word that means "Knowledge," knowledge that implies direct knowing about the great mysteries of life. Gnosis is knowledge gained through inner experience that permits one to know the answers to the greater philosophical and existential quandaries.

Gnosis refers to a profound and sacred inner process that unfolds between *what we are as Consciousness* and *what we are as Divinity*. This implies that Man can have direct knowing about divine things, but more importantly, the Gnostic process permits God to gain knowledge of Himself through his vehicle: the Human Consciousness.

Gnosis is not considered a conversional religion, it can, in fact, drive one deeper into one's original spiritual tradition. The point of Gnosis is to resolve the central conflicts of life.

Tradition and Revelation

Gnosis makes a distinction between Tradition and Revelation. The result of living through the Gnostic process is called **Revelation**, the revealing of the Divine in man. This personal process becomes collective through a group of people sharing the same gnostic expression, and this is how a **Tradition** is formed.

The Gnostic perspective holds that there is a current of Revelation that moves through the whole history of humanity and eventually takes form in early Christianity. From there, Gnosis passes to the Magyars, Cathars, Templars, Sufis, Alchemists and many other esoteric societies, to the Masons, to the Rosicrucians, and then to Master Samael Aun Weor, in a continuous chain of Gnostic knowledge.

History/Background

The founder of the contemporary Gnostic movement is **Samael Aun Weor**. He was born in Colombia on March 6, 1917. From an early age he became interested in the transcendental aspects of life and began a profound search in the various metaphysical schools existing at that time to find answers to the eternal questions: Who are we? What is the purpose of life? Why do we suffer?

He became a student of the Theosophical Society and the Gnostic-Rosicrucian school of Dr. Arnold Krum-Heller, eventually researching their entire libraries and lecturing in both schools. Over time, he became familiar with the Masonic tradition, the systems of Gurdjieff, Krishnamurti, Sivananda and others. He studied Kabbalah, Buddhism, Christianity and Alchemy in depth, experiencing the inner Truth of each teaching, investigating each theory in the depths of his consciousness in order to verify its reality. Then he began a path towards self-knowledge that lead him to the discovery of the different dimensions of nature, the worlds of the inner Being and the synthesis of the esoteric path.

Samael Aun Weor passed away on December 24, 1977, in Mexico City. Having established a worldwide Gnostic movement, he left a complete system of teachings that unveil, synthesize and provide practical application for the esoteric teachings of all times. Spreading to all the continents of the globe, the Gnostic teachings have given rise to many associations and enabled many who have dedicated themselves to practice and study to enter the path of the mysteries for themselves, to realize their own Gnosis, their own Being.

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Major Teachings

The Gnostic approach to its body of doctrine is to start with meditation and mindfulness to aid in relaxation so that one can begin to provoke change for the better in oneself, to become more conscious. Then later the student will have a better context to understand the major points of the theological doctrine.

To put it succinctly, the psychological work of the Gnostic involves teaching virtues of the Essence at the expense of psychological defects of the Ego. As one cleans up one's thoughts and actions and controls negative emotions, he/she becomes a better citizen, helping others, and little by little the Great Mysteries can be revealed through inner Revelation. Gnosis teaches that the Universal Spirit of Life wants to train men and women to serve as instruments of Divine

The 3 Factors for the Revolution of the Consciousness: The practical work that drives the whole Gnostic process can be synthesized in 3 factors represented in the life of Jesus by his Birth, Death and Sacrifice.

- 1. Alchemical Birth:** By cultivating and transmuting one's inner creative energies the Soul is born.
- 2. Mystical Death:** Through serene observation and profound inner meditation one becomes aware of not only one's Divine Inner Being, but also the dense elements of the Psyche, egos, that produce suffering and must die to be reborn in the Light of Consciousness.
- 3. Sacrifice to Humanity:** This factor is fulfilled by assisting others, by extending the Divine Mercy that has been given to oneself for the benefit of all Beings. In that way those who yearn for it are led to the Final Liberation by assisting and being assisted in an unbroken chain of Universal Compassion.

Theology

Theology: This word refers to "a dialogue about God," from the Greek root *Theo* and *Logos*. In one sense it refers to the dialogue two people can have about God, but for the Gnostic, it includes the dialogue God can have with himself through his vehicle, the human consciousness.

Gnosis defines itself as a **Mono-Polytheistic** religion. Samael Aun Weor says that the abuse of **Polytheism** led to the rise of **Monotheism** instituted by Moses, and the abuse of Monotheism has led to the formation of **Atheism**. Gnosis seeks to restore the balance by recognizing God as a **Multiple-Perfect Unity**, that is, both one AND many.

The Gnostic Creed: As a practitioner, the Gnostic accepts the theological teachings of the master's as a hypothetical possibility with the hope of one day experiencing the Truth directly as his/her gnostic process unfolds. So belief in the following theological points is not a requirement for the Gnostic Student.

God the Father: To understand the concept of God in Gnostic theology, one must first know something about the Manifested and the Un-manifested God.

- 1. Aelohim** is the unknowable and un-manifested God.
- 2. Elohim** is the manifested one, the creator of heaven and Earth.

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Worship/Rites/Ceremonies

Practices: Meditation, Mindfulness, Dream Yoga.

Meditation: Meditation practice is a major part of the Gnostic studies because it is through meditation that one can activate the consciousness within. Meditation with prayer is a mystical science. It allows one to relax, to quiet the mind and to perceive the peace and serenity of one's true internal nature.

The purpose of meditation is to obtain information, experience, to learn the skills needed to walk the path within. The meditation techniques taught include a variety of practices that begin with the relaxation of the physical body and proceed to inner quietude of the mind.

Mindfulness: This is the general term used for the development of awareness in daily life. The technical term is **Self-Observation in Self-Remembering**. **Self-Observation** requires effort that in time rouses the consciousness from its ordinary state so that one can begin to have a sense of separation from the process of habitual thought, emotion and action. This state of consciousness that arises is called **Self-Remembering** and encompasses a wide range of experience from a mild state of relaxation and serenity to the direct perception of oneself as a spiritual being connected to God and to all life on earth.

Dream Yoga: This refers to the practice of awakening the consciousness within the dream state. As a physical practice it is no different from a mindfulness practice, one does it while falling asleep. Effort in Dream Yoga helps to improve the practices of Meditation and Mindfulness, and the three together bring consciousness and spiritual development to every aspect of one's life.

Private Worship

It is recommended for the student to keep a daily practice of meditation, prayer and mindfulness. When possible, it is best to practice meditation in private, or with others who are also practicing meditation. Also, it is recommended for the student to keep a journal to record dreams and observations of meditation and mindfulness practice.

Holy Books

The course of study is developed from the works of Samael Aun Weor. Most of these books are available in English and are available for prison libraries as well as for individual purchase. Many prisoners are receiving books donated by Glorian Publishing.

No special treatment or handling is required of these books. There are several national and international organizations of schools as well as many independent schools and practitioners, each having a particular way of approaching the Gnostic Work.

Holy Days/Festivals

February 4th.

Feast of the Gnostic New year commemorates the beginning of the New Era of Aquarius which started in the year 1962.

March 6th.

Birth of the V. M. Samael. Missionary's Day

Holy Thursday and Good Friday.

Celebration of the passion and death of our Lord Jesus Christ, Master of Masters.

October 27th.

Celebrates the advent of Samael Aun Weor, Logos of Force.

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December 24th.

Celebration of Christmas.

Work Proscription Days

None.

Fast Days

None.

Dietary Restrictions

It is generally encouraged to avoid pork.

Burial Practices

Notify the Gnostic Missionary of the death and preserve the body for 3 days without removing organs. When possible, the missionary can give the last rites and perform the funeral service. Cremation is generally recommended; however, this is left to the discretion of the deceased or his/her family.

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Note: source materials from GSSAW (Gnostic Society of Samael Aun Weor) monasteries are not published works, but are synthetic commentaries on the Gnostic doctrine.

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Islam History/Background

Islam traces its origin to the Prophet Muhammad who was born in the city of Mecca, Arabia about AD 571. At the time a power vacuum existed between two great empires of the East and West, Persia and Byzantium; Mecca was a center of the prosperous caravan trade between Southern Arabia and the Mediterranean.

Orphaned at an early age, Muhammad was looked after by a succession of relatives. Eventually a rich uncle sent him on trading excursions to the north where it is reported that he met Christians. At the age of 25, to his surprise, he was proposed to by a wealthy widow of 40 named Khadija bint Khuwaylid. She bore him three daughters but no son.

In middle life, Muhammad began to show mystical traits and developed the habit of withdrawing to the hills for contemplation. On one such occasion at the age of 40, he received a revelation calling him to denounce the paganism and polytheism of Mecca and preach the existence of one God, Allah. He was encouraged by his wife, but in the first years only a few others followed him. Some of these were prominent citizens, who are known as ‘the Companions’.

Then in AD 622, at the request of the citizens of nearby Medina, he left Mecca for Medina, accompanied by a few followers. This is the celebrated *Hijrah* or ‘emigration,’ the event from which the Muslim calendar begins. Muhammad immediately set about eliminating the polytheists. He rededicated the ancient sanctuary of the Ka’aba to Allah, making it the central shrine of pilgrimage for Muslims. It remains so to the present day.

The next two years were spent consolidating the tribes of Arabia. Then, suddenly, in 632 Muhammad died without naming a successor. He was succeeded by a series of caliphs (‘successors’), the first two of whom were the Companions, Abu Bakr and Umar.

Theology/Major Teachings/Belief

Islam is the religion of the Oneness of God and the equality and unity of humanity. It is, in essence, the same monotheistic message throughout the history of mankind. Islam is an abstract word which means “submission” and is derived from “salaam” meaning “peace”. In a religious context, Islam means achieving peace of heart and mind through complete submission to the good will of God and obedience to His beneficial laws. An adherent of Islam is called a Muslim (submitter), one who submits to the will of God and behaves in accordance with His sublime teachings. The basic creed of Islam is expressed in the Shahada, the declaration of faith, “There is no god, but Allah and Muhammad are His Servant and Messenger.”

The concept of God in Islam describes Him as the Almighty, the Eternal, the Compassionate, the Merciful, the Creator and Sustainer of the Universe. His will, accordingly, is a will of

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Benevolence and Goodness and His laws are prescribed for the well-being and best interest of humanity. As a universal message of One God, Islam was revealed by Allah to many prophets of different nations and different times including Abraham, Ishmael, Isaac, Jacob, David, Moses, Jesus, and Muhammad (Peace be upon them). Muslims, thus, accept all the prophets of God previous to Muhammad without distinction to any of them. Muhammad, however, is the final prophet from Allah with the final revelation, the holy Qur'an, which came to restore the authenticity and purity of monotheism; the message of One God and the Unity of Mankind.

The Qur'an is the holy book of Islam, its primary source of teachings and sacred laws (Shari'ah). It is highly recommended that every Muslim man and woman recite a portion of the Holy Qur'an every day. Recitation of the Qur'an in Arabic is a form of worship and a daily reminder for practicing its Noble teachings. The other sources of religious laws include the Hadith or the Sunnah, which includes the sayings, actions, and approval of Prophet Muhammad, the Consensus (Ijma') of the Muslim scholars and jurists, and the analogy (Qiyas) derived from the interpretation and exposition of the Qur'an, Hadith, and Ijma'.

Observation of Modesty:

Islam prescribes that both men and women behave and dress modestly. Muslims believe that men and women should be valued as members of society who must be judged by their wisdom, skills, and contribution to community, and not by their physical attributes. There are a number of ways in which Muslims express such teachings, which will vary depending on personal practice.

Some observant Muslim men wear a beard and/or a small head covering, called a *kufi*. When in public, many observant Muslim women wear loose-fitting, non-revealing clothing. In the presence of unrelated men, many observant Muslim women wear attire known as *hijab* in observance of religious commands. This attire, which may vary in style, usually includes covering the hair, neck, and body, except the face and hands. Some observant Muslim women following another religious interpretation may wear *niqab*, or a face veil. Asking a woman to remove her hijab publicly is tantamount to asking someone to undress in public.

In a correctional environment, men and women may need to remove their head covering for security screening. Approved religious head coverings will be searched by a same-sex staff outside the view of employees or visitors of the opposite sex. Searches of religious head coverings may be conducted by an opposite-sex staff only when there is no same-sex staff available and there is an urgent, legitimate need for the search to take place. If there are any questions as to the nature of the head covering or face veil, maximum accommodation should be offered.

The Department should clearly communicate to all offenders, in policy, that the use of a religious head covering to conceal or transport contraband may result in the loss of accommodation for that offender.

The Cardinal article of faith in Islam are below:

- The belief in One God, Supreme and Everlasting, Infinite and Mighty, Merciful and Compassionate, Creator and Sustainer of the Universe
- The belief in Allah's Angels as purely spiritual and splendid beings in the service of God

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- The belief in all the prophets/messengers of God without any discrimination among them
- The belief in the Holy Books of God including the Qur'an, the Torah, the Psalms of David, and the Gospel
- The belief in the Divine Decree of God (Qada' and Qadar)
- The belief in life after death and the individual's accountability before God on the Day of Judgment.

These fundamental articles of faith are expressed and enacted through acts of worship contained in the Five Pillars of Faith. Islamic worship, religious requirement and daily life are enunciated and regulated by sacred laws, called the Shari'ah that are based on divine revelation and derived from the Qur'an and the Sunnah, the tradition of the Prophet Muhammad.

There are two basic groups within Islam, the Sunni and the Shi'ites, who differ on two fundamental issues: the line of succession following Muhammad; and the religious authority.

The overwhelming majority of Muslims are Sunnis. Sunnis believe that all authority should be elected by the consensus of the community. They maintain that the Qur'an and Hadith, as interpreted by Muslim scholars, are the only authoritative basis of Islam. The Shi'ites in comparison, believe that the line of succession is through the family of Muhammad. They believe that religious authority rests in an Imam, whose interpretations and pronouncements regarding the Qur'an, doctrine, and practice are divinely inspired and infallible.

Worship/Rites/Ceremonies

Private Worship

The most important aspect of Islamic practices is the five Pillars of Islam. In order to be a practicing Muslim, the individual has to observe these fundamentals with devotion:

The Shahada or The Declaration of Faith

The individual Muslim is to believe and pronounce that "There is no god worthy of worship except Allah (God) and Muhammad is His Servant and Messenger."

Prayer (Salat)

Prayer (Salat) is the obligatory (Fard) worship which is observed five times a day. These are Morning Prayer (Fajr) between break-of dawn until just before sunrise, Noon Prayer (Dhohr/Zuhr) between just after midday until mid-afternoon, Afternoon Prayer (Asr) late afternoon until just before sunset, Sunset Prayer (Maghrib) sunset until darkness, and Night Prayer (Isha) throughout night hours. To find prayer times in your area please visit www.islamicfinder.org. Before the Prayer is held, ablution or ritual washing is required. The prayer has to be performed in a clean place; i.e., no dirt or toilet. Standing on a clean surface (e.g. a mat, carpet, blanket, or towel) a Muslim faces Mecca (northeast direction) and prostrates himself/herself before God in prayer as prescribed by religious law. These prayers are preferably said within a congregation if it is possible. The Friday Prayer, which will be explained later, is a mandatory congregational prayer, conducted by an Imam who is chosen on the basis of his knowledge, practice, and piety.

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Charity (Zakat)

Charity (Zakat) is a religious tax that entails payment of two and one-half percent of one's annual savings or capital. It is to be used primarily for aiding the poor and the needy.

Fasting (Saum)

Fasting (Saum) the month of Ramadan, is obligatory for every Muslim man and woman. In Islam, fasting means abstaining completely from food, drink, smoking and marital relations every day of Ramadan before the break of dawn until sunset. Ramadan, the holy month of fasting, is the ninth lunar month of the Islamic calendar. Fasting infuses the individual with a genuine virtue of deprivation, vigilance and sound conscience, discipline, patience, self-control, and sympathy to the needy and poor. Adequate, suitable food and drink should be provided at the commencement and the conclusion of the fast each day to prevent ill health. A Muslim may be exempt from fasting if he/she is ill and /or traveling. Women are exempt when they are pregnant or when menstruating. All missed days, however, have to be made up on other days. It is highly recommended that Muslims increase the recitation of the Holy Qur'an and observe the nightly prayers called Tarawih (Taraweeh, Terawih).

Pilgrimage (Hajj)

Pilgrimage (Hajj) to the holy city of Mecca, in which the Ka'aba, the holiest shrine of Islam is located. The sacred Ka'aba, toward which all Muslims turn their faces in prayer, was built by the Patriarch Prophet Ibrahim as the First House of God. The performance of Hajj is obligatory, at least once in a lifetime, upon every Muslim, male or female, who is financially and physically capable.

Corporate Worship

Friday (Jummah) is the most important day of worship in Islam. It is the weekly occasion earmarked by God for Muslims to express their collective devotion. A quorum (Jammah) of three or more adult Muslims is usually required to hold the Friday congregational service. Ritual washing (gusul/bathing) is required before the prayer. The prayer is held at noon and led by an Imam from among the worshippers. He is to be chosen on his merits of piety and knowledge of the

Holy Qur'an. The prayer starts with a formal sermon (Khutbah) and is followed by the prayers. All kinds of normal work are allowed on Friday as on any other weekday.

Festivals

Eid ul-Fitr (Eid al-Fitr, Id-ul-Fitr, Id al-Fitr)

Eid ul-Fitr is the Feast of Breaking the Fast, marks the conclusion of Ramadan, the month of fasting. Eid means recurring happiness or festivity. Eid ul-Fitr is a day of giving thanks where Muslims assemble in a brotherly and joyful atmosphere to offer their gratitude to God for helping them fulfill their spiritual obligation of fasting. On this day, a Muslim does not work, but dresses in new or clean clothes and attends the congregational prayers of Eid. The Alms of Fasting (Fitr) is to be given before the prayer. Eid ul-Fitr prayer is obligatory where Muslims assemble at any time from sunrise to noon to say Takbir, a certain verbal prayer which is said before the actual prayers begin, perform the prayer and listen to the sermon. A celebration with food or without may be held and greetings and gifts are exchanged. Non-Muslims are welcomed to the celebration.

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Eid ul-Adha (Eid al-Adha, Id ul-Adha, Id ul-Kabir)

Eid ul-Adha the Feast of Sacrifice coincides with the conclusion of the annual pilgrimage to Mecca. Eid ul-Adha is the greatest festival in Islam when about 4 million people assemble in the Grand Sacred Mosque Al-Masjid al-Haram) to renounce the mundane concerns and glorify God for His grace and bounties. As on the Feast of Breaking the Fast, Muslims go to the congregational Eid prayer after sunrise in their best clothes, tidy, and high spirits. A certain verbal prayer is said before the actual prayers begin. This is known as Takbir. The main prayer is led first by an Imam followed by the sermon. A celebration with food may be held, gifts, and greetings are exchanged, and the non-Muslim guests are welcomed. On this day, Muslims do not engage in any work. The Observance of Eid ul-Fitr and Eid ul-Adha are religiously required.

The day of Hijrah

A Muslim works on this day but takes additional time in the leisure hours for study (no standard observance is required).

Meeldun Nawled (Mawlid an-Nabi, Milad an-Nabi, Mawlud-e Sharif, Zadruf-e Payambar-e Akram, Eid al-Mawlid an-Nabawi, Eid-e-Milad-un-Nabi, Mawlid en-Nabaoui Echarif, el Muled (en- Nabawi)/Muled en-Nabi, Maulidur-Rasul, Yawm an-Nabi, Maulid Nabi, Maulud Nabi, Mawlid)

The birthday of the Prophet Muhammad is marked by extra study, the narration of accounts of the prophet's birth, life and teachings, and Muslims are encouraged to emulate his character. A Muslim works on this day (religiously sanctioned but is considered controversial).

Lailat ul-Israa Wal Mi'raj (Isra and Mi'raj, Lailatu-Isra'wal-Mi'rai, Laylat ul-Isra wal Mi'raj, Lailat al-Isra wal Miraj, Isra wal Mi'Raj, Isra wal Miraj)

The Night Journey and Ascension of the Prophet are commemorated by the Muslims by spending a portion of this night in reading and studying the Qur'an and performing optional worship. A Muslim works on this day (no standard observation is required).

Ramadan (Ramadhan, Ramadaan, Ramazan, Romjan)

The period of disciplined fasting between dawn and sunset that last 29 or 30 days, depending on the position of the moon (i.e., from the sighting of one new moon to the next). Special additional worship in congregation (Taraweeh) is recommended before retiring each night during the month of fasting. Reciting parts of the Holy Qur'an is recommended during each day of Ramadan.

Lailat-Ul Qadr (Laylat al-Qadr, Shab-e-Qadr, Layla al-Qadar, Laylatul-Qadr)

The night when the Prophet first received Allah's revelation through Angel Gabriel is marked by the Muslims spending a portion of the night offering optional worship, supplications, and studying. A Muslim works on this day.

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Holy Books

Holy Qur'an (Sunni); Noble Qur'an with Arabic and translation (Shi'a)

Holy Days/Festivals

- Eid ul-Fitr The festival marking the Breaking of the Fast of Ramadan, celebrated at the end of the month of Ramadan. The Islamic date for the festival is Shawwal 1. The first day of Eid ul-Fitr is work proscription day
- Eid ul-Adha The Feast of Sacrifice commemorating the intended sacrifice of the prophet Abraham is celebrated at the end of the annual pilgrimage. The Islamic date for this festival is Dhu al-Hijjah 10. The first day Eid ul-Adha is a work proscription day.

There are a number of additional religious occasions on which observances are marked.

The Day of Hijrah New Years Day, the immigration of the Prophet Muhammad from Mecca to Medina. The Islamic date is Muharram 1.

Meelaclun-Nabi The celebration of the birthday of Prophet Muhammad. The Islamic date is Rabi Al Awwal 12.

Lailatul-Irs' and Mi'raj The night of the Journey and the Ascension of Prophet Muhammad to heaven. The Islamic date is Rajab 27.

Ramadan The month of fasting when the Qur'an was revealed to Prophet Muhammad. The Islamic date begins on Ramadan 1.

Lailatul-Qadr The night Prophet Muhammad first received the message of Allah through the Angel Gabriel. The Islamic date is Ramadan 27, starting with the night of the 26th.

Martyrdom of Husain the son of Ali or Ali Abdul Talib
Shi'ites celebrate/commemorate this event.

The Islamic calendar is lunar based, with the month being counted from the new moon to the new moon on a lunar calendar. The dates of Islamic festivals move eleven days backward through the seasons each year (since it is eleven days shorter than the solar calendar followed in the US). The Islamic holy days start from the sunset of the day before to the sunset of that holy day.

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The first day of Eid ul-Fitr and the first day of Eid ul-Adha and Jummah are work proscription days.

Fast Days

Ramadan

The period of disciplined fasting between dawn and sunset that last 29 or 30 days, depending on the position of the moon (i.e., from the sighting of one new moon to the next).

Fasting begins just prior to the morning of prayer (Fajr) and ends after the evening prayer (Maghrib) on each day of Ramadan.

For those offenders who meet the requirements of DOC policy 560.200 Washington State DOC will provide a Ramadan sack lunch that is religious program approved.

Dietary Restrictions

Muslims are forbidden to consume the following:

- Pork
- Pork by products
- Pork derivatives: this includes bacon, ham, pork chops, spare ribs, and lard/shortening.
- All types of blood, (except in the liver and spleen, or insignificant amounts of blood that are impossible to drain even in proper slaughtering).
- The meat of any animal that has died naturally; has been killed by strangling, a violent blow, or a headlong fall; has been gored to death; has been partly eaten by a wild animal unless it can be slaughtered (in the prescribed manner) before it is dead; or has been sacrificed as an offering to idols.
- All intoxicating liquors, food that is mixed with alcohol, and any harmful drugs.

Shi'a Muslims are only allowed to eat Halal meats. They are not allowed to eat kosher meats nor are they allowed to eat any other meat not slaughtered according to the methods prescribed by the Qur'an and Sunnah of the prophet.

Muslims are not allowed to touch anything make with pork content. This includes such products as soap, or any food that contains pork products. Utensils used for the preparation of pork and its products may not be used before a complete washing.

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The requirements for obtaining wholesome meat are as follows:

- 1) The animal should be inspected by an Imam before is it slaughtered and found to be healthy.
- 2) The animal should be slaughtered in such a way as to allow its blood to flow out freely and completely, (i.e., with a sharp tool cutting the main veins and throat).
- 3) No other than the name of Allah is to be invoked at the time of slaughtering. The name of Allah should be invoked over the animal at the time of slaughter (e.g., in the name of Allah the most Great).
- 4) The meat should be inspected to ensure that it is wholesome and does not contain any matter injurious to human health.
- 5) The person who slaughters the animal may be a Muslim, Jew, or Christian, but not an atheist, pagan, or polytheist. Muslims would eat meat slaughtered by Christians or Jews who invoke the name of God upon slaughtering the animal.

Leadership/Meetings/Worship

An Imam must be permitted to conduct the prayers and worship service and to attend to the religious needs of Muslim inmates. The need for an Imam is more pressing when there are large numbers of Muslim inmate in a correction center. A learned and practicing inmate can be approved to assist in worship services.

Marriage

In the Islamic community, there is no requirement for ordination. That being said, marriage rites are facilitated by an individual recognized and approved by the religious community. A marriage is valid with 2 witnesses, a Wali (Guardian for an under aged girl), a dowry and a civil marriage license in accordance with State law.

Burial Practices

Step A

Contact Muslim Community Center

- Possible person to contact Chairman, Burial Committee (Telephone numbers of the Islamic centers throughout the USA and Canada is in a different link.) Also Burial and Funeral regulations of the 50 states in the USA and the provinces in Canada is in a different link) Your local contact at the Islamic Centers should be aware of the State Governments and Provincial Governments burial and funeral regulations.

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Step B

Washing the Body

- A male's body is to be washed by a male.
- A female's body should be washed by a female.
- A minor's body can be washed by either a man or a woman.
- A husband can wash his wife's body and vice versa.

Procedure for Washing the Body

- Place the body on the washing table.
- Keeping the private parts of the body covered, remove all other garments from the body.
- Gently but firmly press the stomach and clean out by a towel or cloth any excretions that may have resulted by stomach pressing.

The body is now ready for washing. Body should be washed with your hands or a piece of clean cloth. Use clean and warm water to wash the body.

- The body is to be washed three times, five times or seven times, always an odd number of times.
- For each washing, first place the body on its left and wash the right side using warm water and soap. Then place it on its right side and wash the left side. Male's hair should be unbraided, washed and combed. Female's hair should be gathered into two braids, with loose hair at end of each braid.
- For the final washing, scented water (non-alcoholic scent) can be used.
- Now perform ablution (wudu) for the body. Do not forget to clean the teeth and nose also.
- Generous application of non-alcoholic perfume can be made on various parts of the body. Perfumed cotton can be placed on the front and the rear private parts and the nostrils.

Step C

Wrapping the Body (Kafan)

- For men, three pieces of clean, cotton preferably white cloth should be used. Each piece of cloth should be large enough to cover the entire body.
- A similar procedure applies for women except that five pieces of cloth are used. Again, each piece of cloth should be large enough to cover the entire body.
- Apply non-alcoholic perfume to the kafan.
- Use a piece of cloth and tie the top (head side) and bottom (foot side). The two tie knots should be different so as to recognize the head side.

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Material Required

Name of the Cloth Piece	Approximate Size
Kafan	4ft x 12ft
Head Wrap	4ft x 4ft
Body Wrap	4ft x 6ft
Chest Wrap	4ft x 4ft
Body Sheet	4ft x 8 ft

Also see Attachment A, Authentic Step by Step Illustrated Janazah Guide, complied by Mohamed Ebrahim Siala. Salman Al Farisi Islamic Center 610 N.W. Kings Blvd, P.O. Box 35, Corvallis, Oregon USA 1417-1996

Sources

Handbook of Religious Beliefs and Practices; *Religions* By: Myrtle Langley; *Inmate Religious Beliefs and Practices* By: US Department of Justice Federal Bureau of Prison; Islamic Humanitarian Service, 81 Hollinger Crescent, Kitchener, Ontario, Canada, N2K-2Y8; Authentic Step by Step Illustrated Janazah Guide, complied by Mohamed Ebrahim Siala. Salman Al Farisi Islamic Center 610 N.W. Kings Blvd, P.O. Box 35, Corvallis, Oregon USA 1417-1996

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Jehovah's Witness

History/Background

The original Bible study group was founded in the 1870's by Charles Taze Russel, a Christian minister from Pennsylvania. The Jehovah's Witnesses were spoken of by others as the Russellites or the Millennial Dawnites, names are not now used. Zion's Watch Tower Tract Society was first incorporated in 1884, renamed the Watch Tower Bible and Tract Society in 1896, then Watch Tower Bible and Tract Society of Pennsylvania in 1995. The Pittsburgh Bible House served as headquarters from 1889 to 1909. The name "Jehovah's Witness" was specified in 1942.

Jehovah's Witnesses are organized into 97 branches, each including at least one nation, around the world. Branches are composed of districts, districts of circuits, and circuits of congregations. In the United States there are currently 32 districts and 337 circuits. Each circuit includes approximately 22 congregations.

Theology/Major Teachings/Belief

The Watchtower Society has emphasized the nearness of the end of the world. This belief is one reason Jehovah's Witnesses have been so zealous in outreach. It also explains why they are encouraged to avoid as many "worldly involvements" as possible. Children are discouraged from participating in extracurricular school activities. Since they believe government/social systems are a part of the satanic order, Witnesses do not vote, salute, or pledge allegiance to any flag or sing national anthems. Witnesses reject the Trinity, stating that Jehovah is no Babylonish triad of Gods, no God of three persons in one individual. Jehovah is only one God, one person. God is a personal being who cannot have any being equal to him. Jesus, therefore, is a created being, known in his pre-existence as Michael the Archangel. Jesus gave up his divinity and lived as a perfect human being on earth. Jesus died on a "torture stake" as a corresponding ransom for Adam's sin. Witnesses reject Jesus' physical resurrection in favor of a spiritual resurrection with temporary visible manifestations. Christ may be called the Son of God but not God the Son. The impersonal "holy spirit" (Witnesses do not capitalize the name) "is the invisible active force of the Almighty God which moves His servants to do His will."

Three things are necessary for salvation which includes faith in Jehovah, faith in Jesus' ransom sacrifice, and good works. Good works include immersion baptism by a male Witness, active association with the Watchtower Society, righteous conduct, and consistent proclamation of God's Kingdom. Most Witnesses expect to "live forever in paradise on earth." Jehovah's Witnesses reject hell as a place of eternal punishment. They believe that a just loving Jehovah will simply annihilate individual who reject him. Prior to annihilation at the final judgment, most persons, it is believed, will have a final opportunity to accept Jehovah.

Worship/Rites/Ceremonies

Corporate Worship

Each Witness is expected to attend weekly group study meetings. The number of such meetings depends on availability of time, space, and supervision. Most Witnesses would prefer to meet in a room other than a Chapel because of the symbols that are usually present. If the chapel has no religious symbols, it is acceptable place to meet. Each Witness is expected to attend several

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meetings each week designated for preparation of effective home missions. Meetings are held in the Kingdom Hall which serves both as a place of worship and education center. These meetings begin and end with song and prayer. No special equipment is needed.

Private Worship

Daily study of the Bible is required. Before becoming a Witness, a person must study the Bible and learn Christian way of living. Each Witness must devote time to spreading the word of Jehovah and the teachings of the Bible.

Holy Books

Witnesses accept the Bible as the infallible word of Jehovah. The New World Translation of the Holy Scriptures, initially released between 1950 and 1960, is generally used.; The two periodicals of the Society, *The Watchtower* and *Awake*, serve both as a means of keeping Witnesses abreast of the understanding of the Scriptures and as a way of sharing the good news of Jehovah's Kingdom.

Holy Days/Festivals

March/April The Lord's Evening Memorial Meal, A communion service celebrated on Nisan 14

Work Proscription Days

None required by faith or practice.

Fast Days

None required by faith or practice.

Dietary Restrictions

None required by faith or practice.

Leadership/Meetings/Worship

All trained, baptized, and fully committed Witnesses, men and women, share in giving Bible instruction, and are called "brother" and "sister" (the terms Reverend and Father are not used). Congregations are governed by a body of elders appointed by the governing body in New York. These local ministers (elders) serve without pay. Overseas missionaries and supervisory personnel are frequently full-time and are specially trained.

Sources

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Judaism

History/Background

Judaism is the religion and Culture of the Jews. There are an estimated 14.8 million Jews in the world, approximately 5.3 million in the United States, 7 million in Israel and the remainder dispersed throughout the world, many of them in Eastern Europe. In the holocaust of World War II, some six million Jews were annihilated in Nazi occupied Europe, as Hitler's armies sought to “purify” the “Aryan race.”

Early Jewish narrative and experience are told in the Hebrew bible, beginning with the “Pentateuch” [Five Books of Moses], also known as the “Torah” [written law], which is only complete with the inclusion of other holy writings and an oral tradition that was later committed to written form [See Religious Law below]. These documents are a compendium of history, law and ethical teachings.

Beginning with a narrative of pre-history, Creation, and the first humans, the Torah focuses on the Patriarchs [founding fathers] and Matriarchs [founding mothers] of the Jews, most notably the first Patriarch Abraham, who is said to have made a direct covenant with God that would then extend to all of Abraham’s descendants. To this day, Jewish prayer invokes the names of the Patriarchs Abraham, Isaac and Jacob and the Matriarchs Sarah, Rebecca, Rachel, and Leah. In about 1800 BCE*, the Torah states that Abraham and his family settled in Canaan, roughly the same location as the present state of Israel. In biblical times, these Hebrew speaking people were known as Ivri and then Israelites [Children of Israel], from the name given to Abraham’s grandson, Jacob by God, and then during the post-biblical Kingdom of Judah they became known as “Jews.”

Facing famine, the tribal retinue of Jacob and his children entered Egypt, where their descendants became slaves. In 1312 BCE* [Hebrew calendar year 2448], the Torah teaches that the Israelites were led out of Egypt by Moses through the direction of God. This singular event, termed “The Exodus,” freed the enslaved Israelites and enabled them to re-affirm their covenantal relationship with God, culminating in the receiving of Torah, symbolized by the first “Ten Commandments” at Mt. Sinai.

Though Moses himself was unable to enter “The Promised Land” [Canaan/Israel], the Israelites re-settled the land in 1272 BCE* and established a centuries long presence there led by selected judges, priests, prophets and kings. Toward the turn of the millennium, rabbis [scholars; teachers] led the people’s search for an understanding of the correct ways to serve God. By the second century CE*, Judaism’s religious system had become the binding experience for the people, particularly crucial in the aftermath of the 70 CE* Roman destruction of the Temple in Jerusalem which had been Judaism’s holiest site and the center of post-biblical Jewish life. In about 500 CE*, the rabbis’ teachings of written and oral law were compiled into the written volumes of the “Talmud.” Conscious of their covenantal relationship with God, the Jews retained their religious, cultural, and communal identity wherever they went and no matter what circumstances they lived, whether they were persecuted or prospered.

The Judaism of today is based mainly on the Talmud and 613 commandments derived from the

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Torah (by early renowned rabbis), several of which cannot presently be fulfilled without the existence of the holy Temple. The central tenets of Judaism were well defined in the 12th century CE* by Rabbi Moses Ben Maimon [the “Rambam” or “Maimonides”] in his ‘Thirteen Principles

of Faith,” which include a belief in one God and the eventual coming of a Messiah [“Anointed One”]. Judaism’s tenets and practices have been and are continually being further defined to varying degrees by branches (i.e. denominations) of Jewish life.

In 1948 CE*, shortly following World War II, the tiny State of Israel was born. It was intended to create a secure permanent homeland for the Jews. Israel’s short history has been one of remarkable economic and artistic achievement, and of painful struggle for recognition, identity and survival.

*As are also employed by most historians, the terms BCE [Before Common Era] and CE [Common Era] are generally used by Jews as they do not believe that a Messiah has yet been revealed and they, therefore, do not use the Christian terms BC [Before Christ] or AD [Year of Our Lord].

Theology/Major Teachings/Belief

“Judaism” is the term for the religion, cultural elements, and practice of the Jewish people. It is the oldest of the three western monotheistic religions and therefore is the ancestor of both Islam and Christianity. At the heart of Jewish belief, there exists only one eternal God who is the creator and the ruler of the universe and all that is in it. The majority of observant/traditional Jewish religious systems believe that God is transcendent and eternal, knowing and seeing everything. Some belief systems within Jewish religious communities carry varying degrees belief in God’s omniscience and omnipotence. For the literalist readers of Torah, God has revealed God’s law (Torah) for the Jews, who are to serve as a light and example to the world. Abraham, the biblical Patriarch was the first to give expression to the Jewish monotheistic faith system, and it is through him that the blessing and the inheritance from God to the Jewish people comes, particularly the promise of the land that has a central place in Jewish thought and practice.

The essence of the Jewish prayer expression is contained in the biblical “Shema” that is recited every morning and evening by observant Jews: “Hear O Israel the Lord is our God; the Lord is one. You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your might. And these words which I command you today shall be upon your heart.” (Deuteronomy 6:4-6). In addition, to this and other scriptural and rabbinic mandates, Jewish practice incorporates an ever-growing body of rabbinic commentary and interpretation.

Religious Law

Traditionally, Jewish life is guided by the 613 Mitzvot, commandments, that are derived from Torah. The Talmud (based on oral Torah), and the Code of Jewish Law [“Shulchan Aruch”], codified rabbinic (i.e. scholarly) commentary on religious law, are highly specific about individual and community conduct.

In recent times, some Jewish communities have departed from the more historical role of written and oral Torah as religious law. Within the following major groupings of Judaism, variations of

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approach with respect to religious belief and practice, ritual observance, lifestyles, and degree of acculturation have developed.

Orthodox Judaism

A traditional approach that asserts the divine origin of the Torah as communicating a changeless revelation of God's eternal and fully authoritative will. Following "Halachah" (Rabbinic defined law) is obligatory, and thus, of all the branches, Orthodox Judaism places the greatest and strictest demands on its adherents in its concern for preserving older forms of religious practices and observing strict religious codes of behavior. Hassidim is one well-known expression of orthodoxy

Conservative Judaism

This branch emphasizes the historical development of Judaism, thereby allowing it to make adjustments and reinterpretations, since it views the basic Jewish theological and ritual concepts as objects of continuing and evolving change. At the same time, there is a strong emphasis in halachah and maintaining Jewish practices that are deemed more traditional. Within Conservative communities and individuals, there can be a strong emphasis on preserving "the People of Israel" and on Zionism.

Reform Judaism

This is a liberal and non-authoritarian mainstream branch of Judaism; It regards Torah as guidance and prophetic wisdom rather than as literal divine revelation. Thus, ethical concepts are emphasized over ritual law. Revelation is believed to be a continuing process; therefore, Reform Judaism upholds the notion that Judaism is still evolving.

Reconstructionist Judaism

A small but influential branch that follows an approach to Judaism developed by Rabbi Mordecai Kaplan. Kaplan emphasized human values and the centrality of Jewish peoplehood. In practice, it is very close to both Conservative and Reform Judaism.

In general, however, Judaism remains relatively constant in terms of basic beliefs and practices, and most Jews see themselves as members of the Jewish community rather than as members of a single branch.

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Who is a Jew?

Traditionally, Jewish religious law defines a Jew as one who is born of a Jewish **mother** [see note below] or one who has been properly converted to Judaism. Stringency of conversion requirements varies from branch to branch, but all mainstream branches are in agreement that mere self-declaration does not constitute conversion. The basics of the conversion process include rabbinic sponsorship and lengthy study in a formal program that culminates with approval by a rabbinic body/court [“Beit Din”]. Although most prison systems allow inmates to simply designate their own religious status, the Jewish community only recognizes those who meet the preceding criteria as being Jewish. Furthermore, Jews usually do not proselytize or encourage conversion (as Judaism does not assert that it is the only path to redemption/salvation), and it would be almost impossible for a person to meet conversion requirements while incarcerated.

Consistent with the Patriarch Abraham’s covenant with God, all Jewish males are required to be ritually circumcised. Religious law specifies that this ritual is performed when the male is eight days old. In the case of a convert, ritual circumcision is done along with other required rituals following Beit Din approval.

Note: Elements of the Reform and Reconstructionist movements have recently broken with established religious law by affirming patrilineal descent (provided that the child is raised exclusively Jewish through confirmation age), seeking converts, allowing women to practice certain liturgical duties and customs previously reserved for men (e.g., ordaining women as

Rabbis, women publicly reading from the Torah, and women donning items such as skull caps (*kippot/yarmulkes*), prayer shawls (*tallitot*), and phylacteries (*tefillin*), etc.).

Mainstream Judaism does not recognize “Messianic Judaism” (i.e., “Christian Jews”, “Jews for Jesus”, etc.), or the “Hebrew Israelite,” “Black Hebrew” and “Yahweh Ben Yahweh” sects or similar groups as being bona fide branches of Judaism. Some individuals who belong to these groups are ethnically and culturally Jewish, however, mainstream Judaism acknowledges these groups as other (and primarily Christian) forms of religious expression outside of Judaism.

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Worship/Rites/Ceremonies

Private Worship

An observant Jew is required to pray three times a day, which includes morning, afternoon, and evening. Although preferably with a quorum (*Minyan*) of at least ten adult Jewish men in a synagogue setting (if one is available). Prayers can alternately be recited individually at home or wherever else an individual may be located. An additional morning worship service is included on the Sabbath and Festivals, along with special prayers for specific holy days. A Hebrew or Hebrew/English (or Hebrew/other local language) prayer book containing structured liturgies are used during prayers. Male Orthodox and Conservative men wear skullcaps (*Yarmulke/Kippah*), while many Reconstructionist and Reform Jews also cover the head during prayer with a skullcap or ordinary hat. In the liberal and progressive movements of Judaism (Conservative, Reform, and other), many non-males also wear *Kippot*, *talitot*, and other religious items.

Note: Most Orthodox men will cover their heads at all times as a sign of reverence to God. During morning prayer, a prayer shawl (*tallit*), which has fringes at the four corners (in obedience to a command found in the Torah), is worn by adult males. On non-Sabbath/Festival days, two small leather phylacteries (*tefillin*) boxes are attached to the forehead and arm with leather straps by adult Orthodox males and by some male, female, and non-binary adherents of other branches. The boxes contain four passages of Hebrew scripture written on parchment, Exodus 13:1-10 and 13:11-16, Deuteronomy 6:4-9 and 11:13-21. Although these items may be visually inspected (if handled with respect and care), **only a qualified rabbi or scribe may open the sewn closed portions of the boxes. It is important to note that whenever possible, a Jewish inmate should not be required to pray in a room/cell that contains either a toilet or symbols of any other religious denominations.** Many Orthodox women cover their heads with a scarf or wig at all times as a sign of modesty according to Jewish law.

Jews affix a “Mezuzah,” a small parchment scroll (on which is written the opening paragraphs of the Shema, which prescribes this practice) within a protective container. The Mezuzah is affixed to the upper right-hand corner of the doorpost of the front door of the home and synagogues. In the homes of more observant Jews, Mezuzahs are also placed on the doorposts of every other living room (except bathrooms). Though inmates may request a Mezuzah for their living area and/or chapel, a prison is not considered an appropriate place to post a Mezuzah.

Corporate Worship

Although a Minyan is required to conduct a complete Jewish worship service, a lesser number of Jewish males and females can conduct corporate/communal and individual prayer with certain proscribed sections of the service being omitted. Those who are not properly Jewish cannot be counted in a Minyan. Likewise, in many if not most communities of strict observance, non-Jews should not utter some particular Jewish blessings or participate in certain Jewish liturgical functions.

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The Pentateuch (Torah) is divided into weekly portions which are publicly read throughout the Jewish calendar year in synagogues each Sabbath from a Hebrew hand-scribed parchment scrolls. Parts of these are further publicly read each Monday and Thursday morning. Related sections of the writings of the Prophets are also publicly read on the Sabbath. Specified other holy writings are publicly read on various holy days. A specially trained person is required to present (possibly chant) these readings out loud (which can only be done from proper scrolls). Certain difficult conditions would have to be met in order for such readings to be done in a prison setting.

The Sabbath and Festivals and Other Holy Days

Observant Jews are not permitted to work or engage in various other ‘weekday’ activities on the Sabbath, which is devoted to worship and other related ceremonies. Biblically mandated festivals generally follow the same rules as the Sabbath, with the addition of particular observances and customs. Post-biblical holy days are generally not as restrictive and have their own observances and customs. The celebration of these events should be part of a shared religious experience by as many Jewish inmates as possible, so corporate worship and other joint activities are encouraged. Prayer books and other religious materials needed for these events may be obtained from national and/or local Jewish chaplaincies, local synagogues, and/or Jewish communities. See the diet section [below] for special dietary requirements.

Basic observances/customs for the Sabbath, Festivals and Holy Days are as follows:

The Sabbath (Shabbas/Shabbat)

“Shabbas/Shabbat” is a weekly day devoted to religious activities and community - it is considered to be the most important of all Jewish holy days. The beginning of the Sabbath just prior to sundown each Friday is marked by the lighting of candles, a minimum of two per household which must be capable of burning for at least one-half hour and which must be allowed to burn out by themselves. A special prayer must be recited over the candle lighting by somebody who is properly Jewish. Similarly, following Friday evening and Saturday morning worship services, a special prayer [Kiddush] is recited over wine or grape juice by somebody who is properly Jewish. In addition, a special prayer is said over challah (bread) as part of the Friday night ritual.

Note: It is permissible to use grape juice as substitute for wine, provided that the grape juice meets religious dietary (i.e., kosher) standards. It is also traditional to say a prayer over and eat special braided bread (Challah) before meals on the Sabbath.

Note: Kosher unleavened bread (Matzah) may be substituted for challah. The end of the Sabbath occurs approximately one hour past sundown each Saturday and is marked with a special service (havdallah), during which candles, wine (or grape juice), and spices are used.

Note: As Jews are not permitted to work on their Sabbath and certain festivals, it is appropriate to request that Jewish inmates work as substitutes for other inmates on non-Jewish holidays.

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Festivals/Holy Days

The following Festivals, specific dates of which are delineated in Torah, and other rabbinic mandated holidays are in sequential order as they occur through the Jewish calendar year that begins in early autumn.

Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur

The two-day Jewish New Year [Rosh Hashanah] is a period of religious self-examination and resolution. A ram's horn [Shofar] is blown as a call to look into one's soul and improve one's ways. It is customary at the meal on the eves of Rosh Hashanah to eat apple dipped in honey and to wish others a good and sweet year. A new fruit, usually pomegranate, a sweet carrot dish

[tizimmes], honey cake, round challah (bread) and other symbolic foods from different places in the world are also eaten at this time. Another custom is to send greeting cards to one's relatives and friends.

The ten days beginning with Rosh Hashanah are considered to be "Days of Awe" and repentance, culminating with the Day of Atonement [Yom Kippur] which is considered to be the most solemn day in the Jewish calendar as it is believed that this is when God decrees each Jew's fate for the remainder of the year. It is a day spent praying and fasting. Many people wear white garments throughout Yom Kippur. During the day of observance, a special fifth worship services is added, and it concludes with the Shofar being blown.

Note: Prior to the beginning of the approximately 25-hour fast, it is traditional to eat a hearty meal that includes humble foods, such as hard-boiled eggs, lentils, and rice. Some of the foods are round to symbolize the cyclical and circular nature of life.

Succoth (Succoth, Sukkot, Sukkos)

This is an eight-day period of rejoicing. Temporary booths covered with branches are built on porches, terraces, roofs, or yards. Observant Jews eat all their meals and may sleep within these huts. Four species of plants, the citron (Etrog), palm branch (Lulav), myrtles (Hadassim), and willow (Aravot), as enumerated in the Torah, are bound together and used individually by Jews during services in the synagogue and the booths. These items may be obtained for Jewish inmates from Jewish chaplaincy organizations.

Shemini Atzeret/Simchat Torah

This holiday corresponds to the final day of Succoth but is a separate and complete holy day in itself that is usually marked by a festive meal. On the following day of "Simchat Torah," the concluding annual reading of the entire Pentateuch and initiation of the next year's reading is joyfully conducted, most notably by dancing with Torah scrolls in synagogue.

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Chanukah

This post-biblical eight-day celebration commemorates the recapturing of the Holy Temple in 165 B.C.E from Assyrian-Greek oppressors. In preparation for the rededication of the temple, which had been spoiled by the enemy, only one small jar of acceptable oil was found to rekindle the temple's candelabra (Menorah). The stated Chanukah miracle teaches that a single day's supply of the oil burned for the entire days required to recapture the Temple. In honor of this miracle, Jews light candles on each of the evenings of Chanukah, beginning with one candle on the first evening, two on the second evening, etc. Each evening an additional candle is used to light the others, requiring a total of 44 candles for the entire holiday. Children are often given gifts of coins and they play a traditional game with a spinning top (dreidel). Because of the significance of oil in the Chanukah miracle, it is also customary to eat potato pancakes fried in oil (latkes) and/or jelly filled donuts (sufganiyot) during the holiday.

Purim

This day commemorates the saving of the Jewish community under Persian rule (in 450 B.C.E.) from massacres. This biblical narrative is recalled in the Book of Esther that is publicly read on this day with much flourish. This is a particularly joyous holiday, during which gifts of food and charity are given. A festival meal is required and it is traditional to eat pastries (Hamantashen) shaped in the triangular form of the hat of the villain in the Purim story.

Pesach (Passover)

The Passover Festival recalls the deliverance of the Jews from slavery in Egypt during biblical times. The holiday lasts for eight days, beginning with the "Seder" ceremonies during the first two evenings when the deliverance from Egypt is recounted from a special book (Haggadah). Certain ceremonial items are consumed, including unleavened bread (Matzah), bitter herbs, and four cups of wine (or grape juice). No products containing any leavening can be consumed during this period, and many Jews also refrain from eating other foods (such as legumes and rice). The Seders are required to be particularly festive, and they are often the highlight of the year for Jewish inmates. Even Jewish inmates who do not maintain a religious diet (i.e. Kosher) during the rest of the year will follow the special Passover diet. It is also very important that Jewish dietary authorities be consulted regarding supervised and certified Passover foods.

Lag B'Omer

This holiday occurs during the 49 days of the "Omer" counting the days to mark the time between the Exodus from Egypt and the revelation of the Torah. On the 33rd day (Lag B'Omer), Jews commemorate the ending of an epidemic that befell students of the great scholar Rabbi Akiva and the anniversary of the great sage Rabbi Shimon Bar Yochai. The first day of the Omer occurs on the second day of Passover and concludes on the holiday of Shavuot.

Shavuot

The two-day Festival of Shavuot commemorates God's gift of the Torah to the Jews at Mount Sinai, at which time they formally created a covenant with God and became a nation. It is customary for adult males in orthodoxy (i.e., those over the age of 13), and adults of all genders in the progressive Jewish movements, to stay up all night and study the Torah. Consuming a dairy meal is also traditional.

Tisha B'Av

The 9th day of the month of Av (Tisha B'Av) is the final day of three weeks of mourning the two destructions of the Holy Temple on the historical date of the 9th of Av in 587 B.C.E. and 70 C.E. Though it is not a biblically mandated day of observance, work is discouraged but not prohibited during this 25-hour fast day. In the case of inmates who are fasting, it is discouraged to mandate work or exertion.

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Holy Books

The biblical books of the Torah include: (Pentateuch 'Bible'); Nivi'im (21 books of Prophets); Ketuvim (13 books of Writings, including the Psalms).

Note: A single text containing the Torah, Nivi'im and Ketuvim is called a "Tanach", and a single text containing the Pentateuch and selections from Prophets is called a "Chumash".

As is previously noted, prayer books (siddurim) containing liturgies for the Sabbath, various festivals, and holy days are necessary for worship. Although abridged forms of all liturgies can be found in some complete single texts, these are not necessarily adequate for some observances.

Other holy books written by the rabbis include but are not limited to commentaries, Midrash, Mishnah, and Talmud.

Holy Days/Festivals

The Jewish calendar is a lunar one, as opposed to the solar or Gregorian calendar used by most of the world. Published calendars that list both Gregorian and Jewish dates (with designated Jewish religious observance dates/times noted) are readily available from Jewish chaplaincy organizations, most synagogues, and other Jewish community organizations. Charts of dates that list several years ahead of time are also available for planning purposes from Jewish organizations. Like the Sabbath, all Jewish festivals and holy days begin at or just prior to sundown, and they end at or shortly following sundown. Precise times are commonly listed on Jewish calendars and can easily be found online.

Dates are reckoned by the Jewish lunar calendar months and, therefore, will vary in relation to Gregorian calendar dates. Jewish holy days and festivals begin the evening prior to the specified dates.

Rosh Hashanah	The New Year, Day of Repentance and Judgment. Celebrated on the 1 st and 2 nd of Tishrei
Yom Kippur	Day of Atonement, the most solemn day in the Jewish calendar. Celebrated the 10 th of Tishrei.
Succoth	The Festival of Tabernacles, celebrated from the 15 th to the 23 rd of Tishrei (the first two days of Succoth and the last two day of Succoth, also known as Shemini Atzeret and Simchat Torah are work proscription days.
Shemini Atzeret	Special celebration ending Succoth, celebrated on the 22 nd of Tishrei
Simchat Torah	The Rejoicing of Torah, celebrated on the 23 rd of Tishrei.
Pesach (Passover)	The Festival of Freedom, celebrated from the 15 th to the 22 nd of Nisan, only the first two days and the last two day of these holidays are work proscription days.
Shavuot	The Festival of Weeks, commemorating the giving of the Torah. Celebrated on the 6 th and 7 th of Sivan.
Chanukah	The Festival of Lights, celebrated on the 25 th of Kislev through 2 nd of Tevet.
Purim	Commemoration of the saving from massacre of the Jewish community, as recalled in the Book of Esther, celebrated on the 14 th of Adar.

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Lag B'Omer	Commemorating the ending of an epidemic suffered by the students of Rabbi Akiba, celebrated on the 18 th of Nisan.
Tisha B'Av	A day of mourning, commemorating the two destructions of the Holy Temple, celebrated on the 9 th of Av.

Work Proscription Days

Jews are not permitted to work entirely or engage in various other 'weekday' pursuits during the weekly Sabbath, Rosh Hashanah, Yom Kippur, the first two days and the last two days of Sukkoth (including Shemini Atzeret), Simchat Torah, Purim, the first two days and last two days of Pesach, Shavuot, and prior to midday on Tisha B'Av.

Fast Days

In addition to the full fast days (from before sunset to after the following sunset) on Yom Kippur and Tisha B'Av, the following daytime fasts (from daybreak through nightfall) occur annually: Fast of Gedaliah on 3rd of Tishrei, Fast of 10th of Tevet on 10th of Tevet, Fast of Esther on 13th of Adar, Fast of Firstborn (for first born males of Jewish families only) on 14th of Nissan, Fast of 17th of Tammuz on 17th of Tammuz, and Fast of Gedaliah on 3rd of Tishrei. These dates are occasionally rescheduled (primarily due to conflicts with the Sabbath). Consult with a Jewish calendar for precise dates and times. Jewish fasts prohibit both food and water, but not prescription medications. Also, persons with physical ailments that would be aggravated by fasting (males under age 13, females under age 12, and pregnant or nursing women) are all excused from fasting.

Any Jewish inmate, whether or not participating in a regular Jewish religious and/or Passover diet program, must be permitted to fast on religiously prescribed fast days.

Fasting Jewish inmates must be provided with extra nourishment via two fast bags for each fast, one to consume prior to the fast and the other to consume following the fast.

- Jewish offenders should be provided with extra nourishment prior to the two 25 hour fasts with 2 kosher fast bags provided daily
- Jewish daytime fasts, which occur 5 times annually, also demand the provision of 2 Kosher fast bags for inmates.

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Dietary Restrictions

Jewish dietary law (Kashruth) is an important aspect of religious observance for all Orthodox, many Conservatives, and some Reform and Reconstructionist Jews. Foods that are fit (kosher) for consumption are handled in a particular manner. Such foods are specified in the Torah and further defined through Rabbinic Law. These dietary laws are extremely complex. Therefore, only qualified supervisory personnel should be allowed to oversee the types of foods, its dispensation, and make decisions regarding kosher diets.

Basically, kosher foods are divided into three categories: meat, milk, and “pareve” (i.e. neutral). Meat and milk products cannot be cooked, served, or eaten together. They require separate cooking, serving and storage utensils (from non-kosher foods), and also require separation from within kosher kitchens. Meaning, milk and meat require separate handling, one from the other within kosher kitchens and food categories.

Milk products (e.g., liquid milk, cream, cottage cheese, and cheeses) are considered kosher if proper supervision has been provided to ensure there is no contact with any meat product (e.g., meat sourced rennet used in the production of many cheeses). Milk from prohibited animals must also not make contact with dairy kosher utensils and facilities. Milk products may not be eaten with or immediately after meat products. An interval of time, usually a minimum of three hours, depending on the custom of the community, must elapse between consuming meat and then milk.

Meat of only kosher animals and fowl is permitted. Kosher animals, as specified in Torah scripture, are those that both chew their cud and have split hooves (e.g., cows, goats, sheep, etc.). Kosher fowl are primarily those which are not birds of prey (e.g., chickens, ducks, geese, turkeys) and fowl is treated as meat. All of these must be slaughtered and dressed in a prescribed manner (by qualified butchers) to be considered kosher. Meat may be eaten following a short interval after eating most soft milk products (or the pallet is cleaned by consuming something that is pareve). However, aged cheeses require the same time interval as applies for meat to milk.

Pareve products consist of all neutral substances such as fruits, vegetables, grains, eggs, etc. Pareve products may be cooked and eaten together with either meat or milk products.

Fish are considered pareve, but they must have both fins and scales to be kosher. Therefore, shellfish, catfish, shark, most bottom feeders, etc. are prohibited. Fish do not have to be slaughtered or dressed in a prescribed manner and generally may be consumed together with milk or meat products at the same meal.

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There are several organizations that supervise the production of kosher food products. These organizations can usually be identified by their unique registered symbols that are prominently placed on product labels. The labels state that they have been certified kosher. As the degree of supervision varies from one organization to another, it is best only to use products that meet an Orthodox Jewish degree of approval, as this will cover the requirement of all inmates on a religious diet program. Kosher foods are easily obtained through various retail outlets and kosher purveyors.

Note: A plain letter 'K' on a package is not assurance of kosher status as it usually merely means that the manufacturer itself is claiming the product to be kosher.

A qualified kosher food supervisor should always be consulted regarding any questions pertaining to certification and/or handling of foods served to Jewish inmates on a religious diet program. Contact with kosher food supervisors can usually be made through the Department of Corrections' Religious Programs office or through various Jewish community organizations such as synagogues and Jewish chaplaincy programs.

Leadership/Meetings/Worship

Rabbis are ordained spiritual leaders in Judaism. However, as there are no sacraments in Judaism, there is no liturgical distinction between clergy and laity. Thus, a trained lay person may lead a prayer service.

Cantors are persons specifically trained in prescribed ritual for public worship and are recognized as Jewish clergy. Many lay persons are also trained in specific aspects of Jewish religious practice such as liturgical reading, kosher slaughtering, dietary supervision, ritual circumcision, etc.

Death and Burial Practices

Any Jewish inmate who is at immediate risk of dying should be allowed and offered the opportunity of a form of religious confession to be performed in the presence a Jewish religious authority. Therefore, in any case involving a Jewish inmate who is seriously injured, terminally ill, or about to be executed, a rabbi or Jewish chaplain should be contacted as soon as possible in order for appropriate arrangements can be made.

Cremation, embalming and other defilements of the body are prohibited in Judaism. Autopsies are only permitted as required by law. Also, be aware that a medical examiner/coroner has the authority to release a body without conducting an autopsy under most non-homicide circumstances, especially in the case that a doctor signed a death certificate that lists the cause of death. In such cases, an autopsy can often be prevented. Any autopsy plan should be delayed until consultation with a Jewish authority, such as a rabbi or rabbinic board endorsed chaplain, has taken place.

Burial requirements for Jews are quite specific, but the basics are:

1. As soon as possible following the death through burial, the body should be guarded by a Jewish person of the same gender.
2. With rare exceptions (such as the Sabbath, certain holidays, and waiting for the arrival of dignitaries), burial must be accomplished by sundown of the following day.

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3. The body must be properly washed and dressed in prescribed burial attire by Jewish community members who are certified in those procedures. Non-certified Jews in this ritual cannot touch the body.
4. A plain wooden coffin held together with wooden pegs [i.e., no nails/screws] must be used.
5. Burial must be in Jewish owned and authorized ground [e.g. a Jewish cemetery].
6. The burial service has its own specific liturgy and procedures that must be conducted by somebody who is Jewish and qualified to perform them, preferably a rabbi.
7. Periods of mourning also have specific requirements.

Generally, the best way to handle the death of somebody who is actually Jewish is to immediately contact a Jewish chaplain or local synagogue. In circumstances where a Jewish authority is not immediately available, most Jewish burial societies have 24-hour arrangements in place, even to cover the Sabbath, religious holidays, etc., so an emergency telephone number will usually be provided in a synagogue telephone voicemail message.

Handbook of Religious Beliefs and Practices; *Religions* By: Myrtle Langley; *Inmate Religious Beliefs and Practices* By: US Department of Justice Federal Bureau of Prison.

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Messianic History/Background

This religious group is sometimes referred to as “Messianic Judaism”. They hold to the belief that Yeshua (Jesus) “is the Redeemer (Savior) spoken of in the Torah (Old Testament). Early Christians whose activities are described in Acts 15:19-21; 21:17-27 were called Messianic Jews, who were “Zealous for Torah.” They therefore consider themselves as a continuation of the witness of the first converts to Christianity. Followers of this religious group prefer to be called “Messianic Jews(MJ)” rather than Christians.

Theology/Major Teachings/Belief

Messianic Judaism (MJ) is the religion of the followers of Yeshua (Jesus) who desire to recover the Hebrew roots of their faith, worshipping and living in accordance with the Torah (Law) of Moses as taught by Yeshua and His disciples. In the 1st Century CE (AD), MJ was one of the many sects of Judaism. As such, it adheres to many of the tenants and practices of ancient Judaism. In modern times, MJ differs from traditional Judaism by its confession of Yeshua as the promised Messiah of the Hebrew prophets, and the acceptance of the Apostolic Scriptures (New Testament) as authoritative.

The heart of MJ is the belief that there is only one God, the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and that He has revealed Himself through His creation, His word (the Bible, with the Torah as the first and foundational revelation), and in His Son, Yeshua our Messiah. MJ affirms that salvation is by faith alone and not based upon one’s ethnicity. Therefore, both Jews and non-Jews who confess Yeshua as the Messiah and accept forgiveness of sins through His work of salvation, are equally part of the family of God, sharing in all of the privileges and responsibilities of covenant membership.

MJ affirms the absolute and final authority of the written Scriptures (39 books of the Tenach; 27 books of the Apostolic Scriptures). While the Oral Torah (writings and compilations of the ancient Sages, primarily the Mishnah and Talmud’s) are held in high regard, they are nonetheless not accorded the same authority of Scripture. Various groups within MJ give a higher or lesser degree of importance to Oral Torah.

Worship/Rites/Ceremonies

Private Worship

Daily prayers in the morning, afternoon, and evening are the standard tradition of MJ. Additional prayers are added on the Sabbath and Festivals. Prayers may be private or corporate, but corporate prayers are preferred. On the Sabbath and Festivals, corporate prayers are required. A prayer book (Siddur) is used which contains the prayer services and various blessings for different occasions. It is traditional for males to wear a head covering during prayers, and some in MJ wear the traditional Kippah or yarmulke all day as a sign of reverence to God. The Kippah may be of various styles and colors, chosen by the individual. It is also traditional to wrap oneself in a prayer shawl (Tallit) for prayer. The Tallit has fringes on all four corners in accordance with the biblical commandment (Num 15). Some also wear an undergarment (Tallit katan) which has fringes attached on all four corners. The Tallit katan is worn all day. On

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weekdays, males may also wear small black leather boxes (phylacteries or Tefillin) with leather straps for morning prayers. These boxes contain four passages of Scripture: Exodus 13:1-10, 11-16; Deuteronomy 6:4-9, and 11:13-21 and are strapped to the forehead and arm in compliance with the biblical commandment. These may be inspected, but only a qualified Rabbi should open the boxes themselves for inspection. Whenever possible, an inmate should not be required to pray in a room that contains a toilet or symbols of other religions.

A mezuzah is a small parchment scroll on which is written the opening paragraphs of the Shema. The scroll is placed in a protective container that is affixed to the upper right-hand doorpost of the front door of the home, as well as upon other doors within the dwelling (especially if these doors lead to the out-of-doors).

The individual should have his or her own prayer book and Bible (containing the Old and New Testaments) for private worship. When possible, the Bible should contain the Hebrew (with translation) of the Old Testament (Tenach) and the Greek (with translation) of the New Testament (Apostolic Scriptures). If such editions are not available, the individual should have the complete Bible in his or her primary language. In addition, whenever possible, an individual should be allowed to have his or her own Torah Scroll for study and as one of the central symbols of the life and worship of MJ.

Corporate Worship

Traditionally a quorum (minyan) of 10 adults is required for corporate prayers, but this requirement can be waived in a prison setting. While the presence of a trained rabbi is always welcomed, it is not necessary since MJ does not have sacraments. Any individual can lead in services and prayers.

There are set times for prayers in traditional Judaism, and some Messianic follow this religious tradition. However, the set times are somewhat flexible in various traditions among traditional sects of Judaism. Generally, the requirement to pray three times a day (morning, afternoon and evening) can be fulfilled individually, i.e., without meeting with others or with a minyan. What is more, if one fails to pray at set times through the day, this is not considered to be a violation of religious requirements. So the bottom line is that there is no religious requirement for Messianics to meet for prescribed times of prayers.

The Torah (first five books of the Bible) is divided into weekly sections to be read through in one year. Some groups follow a three-year cycle (patterned after the earlier triennial cycle used in ancient Israel). There are also sections from the Prophets (the haphtarah) and the New Testament (Apostolic Scriptures) which are read in parallel with the assigned Torah section. These are read publicly in the Sabbath morning service, and some groups read them as well on Mondays and Thursdays.

It is important that a MJ group who regularly worships together have a Torah Scroll, if at all possible, since the Torah Scroll is an important symbol of MJ. The Torah Scroll represents the word of God, and is symbolic of the Incarnate Word, Yeshua the Messiah.

If at all possible, it is also important that people within the MJ group have access to the ancient

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writings of the Sages (the Mishnah, Midarshim, and Talmud). Since learning and study is one of the core values of MJ, library materials that help explain the Judaic background of the Scriptures, a messianic interpretation of the Tenach (Old Testament) and the various traditions of MJ (especially for festivals and their meaning).

Holy Days/Festivals

The Sabbath

As noted above, on the Sabbath and certain days of the Festivals common work and commerce are forbidden. Those who are part of the MJ group worship together on these days. The celebration of these days should be a shared religious experience for all, whether Jew or non-Jew, in accordance with Scripture.

The Sabbath is a day of rest, devoted to God. It begins at sunset on Friday evening and ends at sunset on Saturday. The beginning of the Sabbath is marked by the lighting of at least two candles which should be capable of burning for at least one-half hour and should be allowed to burn out themselves. A special prayer is recited over the candle lighting. Also included in the Sabbath eve (Erev Shabbat) celebration is the reciting of the Kiddush over wine. It is permissible to substitute grape juice for wine at these celebrations. It is also traditional to eat braided bread (called challah) on Sabbath eve as well as on the day of Sabbath. A special blessing is recited over the Sabbath bread. The Sabbath is ended by a ceremony called Havdallah (separation), in which the Sabbath is marked as separate from the six days of work. This ceremony consists of wine, spices, and a multi-wicked candle, all with appropriate blessings. The wine symbolizes the joy of Sabbath, the spices remind of the sweetness of the day, and the multi-wicked candle is a reminder that the people of God are to be a light to the nations, and that the blessings of Sabbath should shine in one's life throughout the week.

The Festival days that are Sabbaths generally follow the pattern of the weekly Sabbath with the addition of particular observances and customs. The Festival traditions are listed below beginning with Passover, which is the first festival of the religious calendar in MJ:

Passover (Feast of Unleavened Bread)

Passover (Pesach) is perhaps the best known of the festivals and commemorates the deliverance from Egypt during biblical times. It is called "the time of our freedom." It lasts for seven days (some, who follow a more rabbinic view, celebrate for eight days) of which the first and last are Sabbaths. The first evening is celebrated with a Passover Seder, a meal at which the exodus story is retold from a special book called a Haggadah. Certain ceremonial foods are eaten, including unleavened bread (matzah), bitter herbs, and four cups of wine or grape juice. No products containing leaven may be consumed during the days of Passover.

The Passover is a particularly important festival for MJ since it was at this time that Yeshua was crucified. It is at the end of the Passover week that Yeshua arose from the dead. Thus, while Passover commemorates the exodus from Egypt, for MJ it also marks the zenith of God's promise to bring a redeemer through whom one might be free from the penalty of sin.

Lag B'Omer (the 33rd Day of the Omer)

This is a minor festival occurring during the 49 days that separate Passover from Shavuot

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(Pentecost). It commemorates the ending of an epidemic that befell the students of the great scholar Rabbi Akiva. Traditionally this is celebrated by outings to parks or woods.

Shavuot

Shavuot (Festival of Weeks or Pentecost) is the festival marked by counting 7 weeks plus one day (for a total of 50 days) following Passover. There are two methods of counting this period in MJ. Some count 50 days beginning on the 16th day of Nisan, so that they celebrate Shavuot on the 6th of Sivan each year. Others begin counting on the first Sunday following Passover, which means for them that Shavuot will always fall on a Sunday. Shavuot commemorates the giving of the Torah at Sinai, as well as the sending of the Spirit of God upon the disciples of Yeshua to equip them for the ingathering of the nations through the proclamation of the Gospel. Some groups stay awake throughout the night before Shavuot, study some aspect of the Torah, as a way of showing appreciation for the gift of the Torah on Shavuot. It is traditional to read the Ten Commandments aloud at the Shavuot morning service, and to have a meal at lunch that incorporates dairy (cheeses, cream, milk, etc.).

Tisha B'Av

This day commemorates the day upon which calamity has befallen the people of Israel throughout her history. Both the 1st and 2nd Temples were destroyed on this day, and the Jews were expelled from Spain on this day in 1492. It is observed as a fast day by some groups within MJ. It is traditional to read the book of Lamentations in a corporate meeting.

Rosh Hashanah

This is the beginning of the civil year in the Jewish calendar. It is a period of self-examination and resolution. It is required to blow a Shofar (ram's horn) on this day, which is a solemn call to repentance, and to self-examination, along with a resolution to improve one's ways. It is customary to eat apples dipped in honey as a symbol of hope for a sweet new year. In addition, other sweet foods are eaten (sweet carrot dish, called tizimmes; honey cake; round challah bread). It is traditional on the afternoon of Rosh Hashanah to go to a body of water and cast small stones or pieces of bread into the water as symbolic of one's sins being taken away through the forgiveness afforded by God through His Messiah, Yeshua. This ceremony is called Tashlich. It is also traditional to send greeting cards to friends wishing them a good and sweet new year. The days between Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur are considered "days of awe and repentance."

Yom Kippur (Day of Atonement)

This is the most solemn of days in the Jewish calendar. It is a complete fast day for those who are able. It is traditional to wear all white clothing, including a white Kippah or yarmulke for males. In MJ, some females also wear a Kippah or yarmulke. The day is marked by attendance in the synagogue, with services of prayer throughout the day. At the concluding service, the Shofar is blown one last time. This is a reminder that the time of for repentance will come to an end. It also is a vivid reminder that Yeshua promised to return, and that His coming would be with the sound of the trumpet. After sunset, when the day has ended, it is traditional to break the fast together with a meal of rejoicing for the atonement that has been accomplished through the sacrifice of Yeshua upon the execution stake (cross). This time of rejoicing leads into the festival of Sukkot which comes next.

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Sukkot

Sukkot is the “season of our rejoicing.” Its name means “booths” or “huts,” (Hebrew “Sukkot”) and is a reminder that when Israel came out of Egypt, she dwelt in temporary huts. Though she had only humble means of shelter, the freedom from the slavery of Egypt was a possession of untold worth. The festival as a whole anticipates the coming of Yeshua to dwell with us upon the earth as He reigns from His throne in Zion. Traditionally, huts are built on porches, roofs, or in yards, and meals are eaten in these huts. Some sleep in the huts as well. Four species of plants, the citron (Etrog), palm branches (Lulav), myrtle branches (Hadassim) and willows (Aravot) are bound together (the Etrog is held in the hand) and are brought into the sukkah in accordance with the Scriptural command. This symbolizes the ingathering of the nations from the four corners of the earth to confess the one God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob.

Shemini Atzeret

This is the eighth day of Sukkot but is a festival unto itself as well. It is the final day of feasting and celebration.

Simchat Torah

This day follows Shemini Atzeret and commemorates the joy of the Torah. It marks the end of the yearly reading cycle and beginning of the new cycle. It is traditional to dance around the Torah Scroll, and to parade the Torah Scroll(s) throughout the synagogue.

Hanukkah

Hanukkah, the Feast of Dedication, commemorates the rededication of the Temple in 165 BCE when the Temple was recaptured from the Assyrian-Greek oppressors. Tradition has it that when the Jewish priests re-entered the Temple, they found only one cruse of oil which remained unopened. This oil should have lasted only one day in the lighting of the Temple Menorah. A miracle occurred, however, in which the oil lasted for the complete eight days needed to cleanse the Temple. In honor of this miracle, an eight-branch menorah (called a “Hanukkah”) is utilized for the eight days of Hanukkah.

Each evening an additional candle in the menorah is lit, until all eight (plus a ninth candle used for lighting the others) burn on the final day. Children are given money and play a traditional game with a spinning top (called a dreidel). Since the festival centers around the miracle of the oil, it is also traditional to eat potato pancakes (fritters) fried in oil (called latkes) during the holiday, as well as small donuts fried in oil (called sufganiot).

Purim

This day commemorates the victory of the Jewish people over their enemies during the Persian rule in 450 BCE, as told in the book of Esther. It is traditional to read the book of Esther (megilat Esther) publicly on this day. It is a day of rejoicing and fun. Children traditionally dress up as one of the characters in the Esther story. Cookies made in the shape of the hat of Haman, the villain, are eaten (called Hamentashin).

Holy Books

Bible; The Torah (Pentateuch); Nevi'im (prophets) and Ketuvim (writings including psalms) in Hebrew; a daily prayer book; a Sabbath prayer books; festival prayer books or a combination of the preceding

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Calendar

MJ follows the lunar calendar of normative Judaism, though some groups within MJ may differ as to the exact interpretation of calendrical issues. Published calendars which list both the biblical as well as the Gregorian dates are available from most messianic congregations and organizations.

Holy Days/Festivals

MJ keeps the prescribed holy days as given in the bible. The most important of these is the weekly Sabbath (Shabbat, pronounced Shabbos by Ashkenazi Jews). As is the case for all holy days, the Sabbath begins just prior to sunset Friday evening and ends when three stars are visible on Saturday evening (approximately 42 minutes after sunset). On Sabbath common work and commerce are forbidden. It is to be a day set apart as different as the six days of work.

Religious services commence on Friday evening before sunset and are held throughout the day on Sabbath.

The Appointed Times of the Torah (with further explanation below). The other observed holy days are:

Rosh Hashanah	The Day of Blowing the Shofar (Yom Torah) commemorates the Kingship of God as the Creator of the world and anticipates the future reign of Yeshua upon the earth. It is celebrated on the 1st of Tishri.
Yom Kippur	Day of Atonement, is the most solemn day of the yearly calendar, and is a day of reflection on one's own sin and failings, as well as the great price that was paid for sins by the Messiah's death. It is celebrated on the 10th of Tishri.
Sukkoth	Festival of Booths is celebrated from the 15th through the 22nd of Tishri, of which the first day is reckoned as a Sabbath on which common work and commerce are forbidden.
Shemini Atzeret	A special celebration ending the festival of Sukkot, on the 22nd day of Tishri. This day is reckoned as a Sabbath on which common work and commerce are forbidden.
Simchat Torah	Rejoicing in the Torah, a day of celebrating the gift of the Torah, on the 23rd day of Tishri.
Pesach (Passover)	The Festival of Freedom is also called the Feast of Unleavened Bread (Chag HaMatzot) and is celebrated from the 15th to the 23rd of Tishri. The first and last days are reckoned as Sabbaths on which common work and commerce are forbidden. It is the festival that commemorates the redemption from Egypt, and ultimate the eternal redemption of God's people through the death, burial and resurrection of Yeshua.
Shavuot (Festival of Weeks, or Pentecost)	Commemorating the giving of the Torah and the special outpouring of the spirit. Shavuot is normally celebrated on the 6 th of Sivan, though some groups will celebrate it fifty days from the first Sunday following Pesach.

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The following post-biblical holidays established by rabbinic law do not require absence from work or school:

Hanukah	Festival of lights, celebrates the victory of the Maccabees in recovering the temple and sanctifying it for worship, as recorded in the books of Maccabees. It is celebrated.
Purim	Celebrates the divine rescue of the Jewish people during the time of Esther, as recorded in the book of Esther. It is celebrated on the 14 th of Adar.
Lag B'Omer	The 33 rd day of counting the Omer, commemorates the end of a plague suffered by the students of rabbi Akiva. This minor festival is celebrated by some groups within MJ. It is celebrated on the 18 th of Lyar.
Tisha B'Av	The 9 th day of Av, a day of mourning for the destructions of the first and second temple.

Work Proscription Days

Within the messianic faith, the Sabbath (Shabbos) is considered to be the most important of all religious holidays. On the Sabbath, which is observed from 18 minutes prior to sunset Friday until three stars are visible, approximately one hour past sunset Saturday, the observant Jew does not engage in such weekday pursuits as work, business transactions, or travel. Religious services commence on Friday evening before sunset and are also held on Saturday morning, afternoon, and again at sunset. The first two days and last two days of Pesach (Passover) are work proscription days, and the first two days and the last two days of Succoth are work prescription days.

Fast Days

In addition to the complete fasting on Yom Kippur and Tisha B'Av, there are minor fast days in the Hebrew calendar. Complete fasting is from sunset to sunset. Minor fast days are from daybreak until sunset.

These minor fast days are the 10th of Tevet, the 17th of Tammuz, and the 3rd of Tishri, all of which are associated with mourning the destruction of the Temple. The 13th of Adar commemorates the fast called by Queen Esther, and the 14th of Nisan is a minor fast day for first-born males commemorating the killing of the first-born during Pesach.

While MJ generally observes the complete fast day of Yom Kippur, some groups may also observe the complete fast day of Tisha B'Av as well as the minor fast days noted above. On complete fast days eating and drinking are prohibited, while on minor fast days liquids are allowed. Fasting should not be observed by pregnant or nursing women, or by people requiring special medical care. Fasts are observed by males over 13 years of age, and females over 12 years of age.

Yom Kippur	10th of Tishrei (25 hour fast)
Tisha B'Av	9th of Av (25 hour fast)
10th of Tevet	Daybreak through nightfall fast.
17th of Tammuz	Daybreak through nightfall fast.
3rd of Tishrei	Fast of Gedaliah – Daybreak through nightfall fast.
13th of Adar	Commemorating Esther's own Purim fast, Daybreak through nightfall fast.

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14th of Nisan For first-born males only commemorating the killing of the first-born during Pesach. Daybreak through nightfall fast.

Any Messianic inmate, whether or not participating in a regular Messianic religious and/or Passover diet program, must be permitted to fast on any religiously prescribed fast day, provided that such fasting would not be detrimental to his or her medical condition. Any Messianic inmate observing a prescribed religious fast must be provided with adequate nourishment directly following the end of any such fast.

Dietary Restrictions

MJ groups observe various degrees of kosher eating. The stricter groups follow a traditional rabbinic kosher diet which requires that milk and meat not be eaten together. Foods marked Pareve (neither milk nor meat) may be eaten with either. Many MJ groups do not separate meat and milk but abide by the kosher food laws explicitly given in the Torah. The kosher food laws are given in Leviticus and Deuteronomy. Only meat from kosher animals is permitted. These are those that chew the cud and have divided hooves (e.g., cows, goats, sheep, etc.). Kosher fowl are primarily those which are not birds of prey (e.g., chickens, ducks, geese, turkeys). Kosher meat must be slaughtered in such a way as to allow the blood to be entirely drained off. Meat which contains blood is not kosher. Kosher seafood is from fish that have scales and fins. All other seafood is non-kosher (e.g., lobster, crab, and all shellfish). All vegetables and fruit are kosher. Many prepared products have kosher symbols, though some symbols are less reliable than others. Where strict kosher diet is being observed, the highest kosher symbols (those of the Orthodox) should be used since these are the most consistent and reliable.

There are no specific religious requirements for Messianic members to avoid the consumption of food before prayers on the Sabbath, or any other day, as far as that is concerned.

Leadership/Meetings/Worship

Preferably a rabbi is required to be present with a minyan (10 males) when the Torah is brought out. All other services may be held by members together.

Sources

Beth Ha Shofar Congregation, 206/246-5345; Union of Messianic Jewish Congregation, 800/692-8652; Messianic Jewish Alliance, 800/225-6522; International Messianic Jewish Alliance, 757/495-8246; Messianic Jewish Movement International, 800/4-Yeshua; Messianic Jewish Resources International (Catalog) 6204 Park Heights Avenue, Baltimore, MD 21215-3600; 410/358-5687, www.MessianicJewish.net

Moorish Science Temple of America

History/Background

The Moorish Science Temple of America (MST of A) was founded by Prophet Noble Drew Ali who was considered by the members to be Allah's last Prophet in this day. It was founded in Newark, New Jersey in 1913. The Prophet taught his revelation to the true and divine creed of Islam to his followers and all that attend the meetings.

In 1925, The Holy Prophet moved to Chicago, Illinois, and set up the headquarters of the Moorish Science Temple of America at the Supreme Grand Major Temple. He incorporated the MST of A in the state of Illinois in 1926. The MST of A has grown to over 260 Temples and Branch Temples around the country since its conception.

Theology/Major Teachings/Belief

Allah and Islam

Members of the Moorish Science Temple believe in the Old Time Religion and Everlasting Gospel of Islam. They worship Allah the Great God of the Universe. As Muslims the members of the Moorish Science Temple worship Allah only and are firm in that none is due worship, thanksgiving, adoration, and praise but Allah alone. Moorish-Americans (Moors) honor all true and divine Prophets of Allah which includes but is not limited to Jesus, Mohammed, Buddha, Confucius. Moors honor and strictly adhere to the true and divine creed of Islam brought by Prophet Noble Drew Ali. The Moors believe in reincarnation; thus they honor Prophet Noble Drew Ali, Jesus, Mohammed, Buddha, Confucius, Noah and many of the Prophets of Allah as being the same person reincarnated.

Prophet Noble Drew Ali

As Jesus was the pattern for men in his day and Mohammed was the pattern for men in his day the Moors are to pattern their lives after Prophet Noble Drew Ali. They are to live the divine Principles of Love, Truth, Peace, Freedom and Justice. The Holy Prophet Noble Drew Ali taught the Moors to learn to love instead of hate. Allah is Love and men need to love to be in harmony with Allah.

Holy Qur'an

As Muslims the Moors' holy day is Friday which is the holy day for Muslims all over the world. The holy book that the moors study from is the Holy Qur'an of the Moorish Science Temple of America which is united with the Holy Qur'an of Mecca.

Moorish American Prayer

Allah, the Father of the Universe, the Father of Love, Truth, Peace, Freedom and Justice, Allah is my Protector my Guide and my Salvation by night and by day. Thru His Holy Prophet Drew Ali. Amen.

Divine Constitution and By-laws

The Moors believe that their constitution and by-laws are divinely inspired.

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Worship/Rites/Ceremonies

Private Worship

Daily Observances

A good Muslim prays both day and night. All Moors, i.e. members of the Moorish Science Temple of America must keep their hearts and minds pure with love and bodies clean with water.

Moors do not eat pork or anything that will harm them. The Holy Prophet Noble Drew Ali did not drink, or smoke and he told the Moors to imitate him. Moors are not to use anything that would serve to shorten their life or destroy themselves.

Weekly Observances

All Moors are required to attend congregational worship services on Friday, which is the holy day, and to attend Sunday school classes on Sunday.

Worship in congregation is very important to Muslims because the Prophet Mohammed said it is 27 more times more valuable to worship in congregation than to worship alone. The congregation opens Holy Day service with the saying of the Moors prayer in unison. The chairman of the Temple leads this prayer. After prayer the chairman reads the divine laws from the Holy Prophet.

Holy Books

Holy Qur'an of the Moorish Science Temple of America; Members of the MST of A honor all of the sacred books that Allah sent to man through His Prophets. Moors are taught to honor man, because when they honor man, they honor Allah.

Holy Days/Festivals

All Fridays	The Holy Day for Muslims all over the world.
January 8 th	Prophet Noble Drew Ali's Birthday
January 15 th	Moorish American New Year
March 17 th	Moorish American Tag Day
December 1st Saturday	Anniversary of the Young People, Moorish National League
December 3rd Saturday	Anniversary of the Sisters Auxiliary

Work Proscription Days

The first day of Eid ul-Fitr and the first day of Eid ul-Adha are work proscription days.

Fast Days

None required by faith or practice.

Dietary Restrictions

Moorish Americans are prohibited from eating pork products.

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Leadership/Meetings/Worship

In prison those who care for the property of the Branch Temples of the Moorish Science Temple of America, Inc. are called “Acting Mufti” unless designated otherwise by Brother R. Love El, Grand Sheik of the Moorish Science Temple of America, Inc.

The Acting Grand Sheik is in charge of the Branch Temple, and the Acting Muftis are selected by him. Regardless of rank, all Acting Muftis must operate on a basis of discipline, carrying out the righteous instructions of the Grand Sheik.

Acting Muftis should have a meeting at least once per month where study is facilitated by an instructor or his assistant. There are to be no radical or criminal issues taught at any time.

Neither Muftis, nor any other members, are to hold court to resolve violations or issues. The Acting Grand Sheik’s solutions should be the teachings of our Holy Prophet Noble Drew Ali.

Sources

Handbook of Religious Beliefs and Practices; *Inmate Religious Beliefs and Practices* By: US Department of Justice Federal Bureau of Prisons

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Native American History/Background

There are over 500 recognized tribal nations in the United States and dozens of tribal linguistic groups, each with varying religious and spiritual practices associated with the culture. In the Pacific Northwest, the primary language group is the Salishan, a linguistic and cultural grouping that stretches from the Coast of Washington State into Montana. In contemporary Indian Country, the Pacific Northwest is now home to tribal members originating from hundreds of tribes throughout North America.

Washington State is the home to the most Alaska Natives south of Alaska and hosts a significant number of Plains tribes due to federal relocation, migration and financial factors on economically disadvantaged reservations. This is relevant to this history and background to give a context to the vast array of religious and spiritual practices imbedded in each tribal culture that are now practiced here in Washington.

The Spiritual Importance of Native Languages

Historically, American Indian/Alaska Native people did not have a written language, rather, most had an oral tradition in which all experiences and beliefs are spoken rather than written. Native Americans are not at odds with other religious groups but recognize that their own traditions precede the beliefs of other religions. The languages are ancient, ceremonial and holy. Holy Men and Medicine Men originated and interpreted symbols of events which took place in the past. The languages are prophetic in that they keep pace with the times, manifesting the oral traditional values of all Native American languages in the prescribed spiritual manner.

Theology/Major Teachings/Belief

Traditional Native religions exhibit a great deal of diversity, largely due to the relative isolation of the different tribes that were spread out across the entire breadth of the North American continent for thousands of years, allowing for the evolution of different beliefs and practices between tribes. Native American religion is closely connected to the land in which Native Americans dwell and the supernatural. Native American religions tend not to be institutionalized but rather experiential and personal. This has been a source of a great deal of misunderstanding. Native American religions tend to be carried out mainly in a family or tribal location first and are better explained as more of a process or journey than a religion. It is a relationship experienced between the Creator and the created.

For Native Americans, religion is never separated from one's daily life unlike Western cultures where religion is experienced privately and then gradually integrated into one's public life. Conversation about theology and religion, even within their society, is extremely limited but to live and breathe is to worship.

Native Americans see all of life as essentially sacred and do not segment human action into secular, sacred, and psychological. Therefore, any action takes on spiritual significance and all actions must be interpreted in the light of spiritual consequences. All of life is sacred be it human, animal, vegetable or another elemental. Native American spirituality is not so much a set of rules as a technique of action and a way of life leading toward the divine. For Native Americans,

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a relationship with God is experienced as a relationship with all of creation which interestingly, is ever present and does not require an institution or building. All of creation has life. Rocks, trees, mountains, and everything that is visible lives and is part of creation and therefore has life which must be respected.

Elders are highly respected in the Native American tradition because with age comes wisdom. God is viewed as a Grandfather Spirit and tribal peoples look to God in the way they look to their elders for wisdom and guidance. Native Americans use a holistic approach to life and tie physical healing, spiritual growth and religious observance in with the totality of nature, feeling in harmony with the natural rhythm of life promotes total health (physical and spiritual).

Major Religions of American Indians and Alaska Natives

Reiterating that there are hundreds of tribal ceremonies, religious practices and spiritual traditions, there are some religious practices that are more organized and cross tribal boundaries. While not close to exhaustive, some examples of these are:

- Longhouse: From the Northeast, the longhouse takes the form of traditional Iroquois religion and a small amount of Christian tradition.
- Smokehouse: A Coast Salish winter ceremonial, the invitational feast, related to the winter spirit dance but was a larger affair that included bathing and fasting in order to attract spiritual guardians. The feast, occurring in large smokehouse structures, included games, gambling, trading, singing, dancing, and masked performances.
- Native American Church: A Southwest religion, also known as “peyote ceremony”
- Shaker Religion: Primarily in the Pacific Northwest, this religion blends Christianity and Traditional NW Coast Native traditions.

Many Native Americans have unexpected visions. Medicine people seek visions regularly and increasingly and the younger generation of Native Americans consult medicine people for advice. Hanblcheyapi, the vision quest, was once a part of every Indian boy's coming of age and was open to women also. During the teen years, the person would go off alone, usually for four days, to meditate without food and sometimes without water, to seek a sign from the spirit world as to what life would be in the future.

Among Native Americans the number four is a number of great power. There are four "kingdoms of life":

- Four directions
- Men and animals have four limbs
- The year has four seasons
- A human goes through four ages (Childhood, youth, adulthood and old age.)

An ideal person is said to possess four virtues:

- wisdom
- courage
- generosity
- purity

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The greatest of all Native American virtues is generosity. Many tribes and tribal people their wealth by giving away their possessions to the needy and the helpless or to their friends, this is most prevalent in Northwest Coast “Potlatch” traditions but is a dominant theme in many Native religious practices.

Native Americans believe that elements, plants, and animals are our brothers and sisters and that they have sacred energy with them just as people do. The Indian hunter kills with sadness and regret, and only when necessary. Hunting for sport or trophies is frowned upon.

Native American religion is more than mere power and clairvoyance. It is the skein that binds the culture and makes life meaningful. Reverence runs through every aspect of life.

Native American religion, even though it is oral and unwritten, will forever be the way of life for all Native Americans. The Creator made our religious beliefs through our spiritual languages. The Native American heritage and traditional cultures are forces of nature that cannot be altered or changed. This is why the heritage, and culture has survived to the present time. The sacred way in which our spiritual languages were created makes it impossible to modify the semantics of each word. Native American linguistics is a symbolic language. What the Native American says in one word takes many words in the English language.

Worship/Rites/Ceremonies

Private Worship

Individual Native Americans will often smudge. This is a way to purify oneself before prayer. This is a process using smoke to clear away negative energies and to attract positive energies. Small amounts of sage, sweet grass, or a high-grade tobacco, with a few additives in it as possible are used to produce smoke. Tobacco, like sage, tends to draw the negativity out of things and the sweet grass brings in positive energy. Other plants, like cedar and juniper, may also be used because of their special healing powers. Lavender and sage are also used. The individual desiring to smudge lights the mixture, let's smolder, and then draws the smoke toward the heart and over the head to receive its blessing. After the smudging takes place, the smoke is offered to the four directions, Mother Earth and Father Sky.

Community Worship

While every Native person in the U.S. has their own unique tribal spiritual tradition and religious practice, there are many widely accepted traditions that can be considered “inter-tribal” and generally accepted across tribal spiritual, religious and cultural boundaries. For incarcerated Native individuals, these ceremonies constitute a critically vital component of spiritual life. Often when a Native person enters into a correctional institution, those religious practices which might be practiced on the outside are “suspended” in order to embrace those practices which build the spiritual foundations for them on the inside. Some of these widely practiced spiritual traditions are:

Pipe Ceremony

The Pipe Ceremony involves the use of the Sacred Pipe and is an important religious activity for many tribes spanning North America. The pipe represents the universe. It is a sacred altar that

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can be taken anywhere. In it all the kingdoms are united. The bowl is made of stone or clay to represent the elemental kingdom. The stem is of wood and represents the plant kingdom. The pipe sometimes is decorated with fur and feathers to represent the animal kingdom. It used by two legged humans, thus bringing all the kingdoms into the ceremony. Sometimes the pipe has four streamers of red, black, white and yellow representing the colors of the four directions and the four races of humans. The bowl represents the female energies while the stem represents the male. The bowl is the flesh and blood of the Native People; the stem is the bones. The symbols of the pipe are never ending like the universe itself.

The pipe and any objects used with it should be smudged before the actual pipe ceremony. In a pipe ceremony, the bowl is filled with sage, tobacco, kinnikinnick or sweet grass in a ritual manner. First, pinches are offered to the Great Spirit, to the Earth Mother and to the four directions. When the pipe is lit, a puff of smoke is offered to each of the four directions, to the Great Spirit and to our Mother Earth. The smoke from the pipe is the breath of prayer as it drifts up from the bowl and it is believed that when the smoke is drawn through the stem the breath of the Great Spirit is taken into the body. When the smoke, an ethereal substance, penetrates between realms of the physical and the spiritual, prayers are sent to the Creator. The pipe must be awaked and consecrated by the medicine person or a pipe carrier. The medicine person selects the pipe bearer who is in charge of preparing for the ceremony. The pipe, as it is passed from person to person, becomes a powerful tool for healing and helping the earth and all of her relations today.

Sweat Lodge

The Sweat Lodge Purification Ceremony is conducted by a Native American spiritual leader. This is a ceremony of purification (physical and spiritual) and is an experience that helps to cleanse, heal, open, learn, and grow. The Sweat Lodge is a dome shaped structure made from willow saplings. It is shaped in the form of an oval and covered with materials that keep in the heat and keep out the light. In the center of the lodge is a hole where rocks are placed that have been heated in a fire pit outside. The door of the Sweat Lodge faces east and a spiritual path leads to an altar mound in front of the door. The mound is built from the earth removed from the lodge center pit. After proper prayers to the fire, the participants enter the sweat lodge. Clothing is not always worn. When everyone is seated inside the lodge, the rocks are ceremonially placed in the pit. Then the lodge flap is closed, and sage and/or other medicine is sprinkled on the stones to rid the lodge, and those in it, of any negative energies. The sweet grass is placed on the stones to bring in good energies. Water is poured over the stones and steam billows in the darkness. Sweat runs down the body and takes the poison out. The Great Spirit and Grandmother and Grandfather Spirit are invited in. Then, one by one, the powers of the four directions are invited in. There is the singing of songs, rubbing of sage on sore parts of the body and prayers offered to the Great Spirit.

During the ceremony, Forgiveness for wrong doings is sought and the ceremony is a means of bringing together in harmony, those taking part. The Sweat Lodge is erected on ground that has been consecrated and should be treated with respect. The reason for a privacy screen is to cut the ceremony off from outsiders who might not understand what is going on. It is not an essential part of the lodge. Because the ground is consecrated, a woman on her “moon” desecrates it. Women should avoid entering the sweat lodge area during their menstrual cycles.

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There are a number of ideas about the sacred Sweat Lodge. We find that the Sweat Lodge ceremony is a religious service that worships the Creator of all living on the Mother Earth.

In the Native American Indian world, when you enter with sweat lodge or the rite of purification, your physical body literally enters your mother's womb.

Talking Circles

Talking circles are historically credited to the Woodland tribes in the Midwest, where the circles were used as a form of parliamentary procedure and are a Native American spiritual tradition of building community through the life of the circle. The Circle provides members with a sense of belong and comfort and reminds members of life and his or her place in it

The talking circle represents a respectful and cohesive group format that creates a set of expectations and behaviors through ritual and symbolizes an approach to life. Each person participates in the Circle and each person serves an important and necessary function that is valued no more or no less than that of any other person.

The Circle Represents

- *Harmony* instead of power
- *Cooperation and patience* instead of competition
- *Privacy* instead of control
- *Speaking softly and slowly* instead of loudly and fast

In the context of incarcerated individuals, the talking circle is a critically important mechanism for Native people to explore empathy and listening skills, self-awareness, sense of interconnection with other inmates and respect and appreciation for diversity through exploration of individual and cultural differences.

Holy Books

None required by faith or practice.

Holy Days/Festivals

To a Native American every day is sacred, but at regular intervals many Native Americans take part in a Sweat Lodge Purification Ceremony. This ceremony can take place any day in the week and at any time during the day. Native American Sweats are permitted two times per month, resource permitting, in addition to quarterly Change of Season Sweats. Wood is limited to 1/8 of one cord or 32 cubic feet per sweat, exceptions may be made when wood is damp or uncured.

Also, on the solstice equinox, most tribes have a special ceremony to celebrate the changing of the season. Change of Seasons happen four times annually. Fry bread is provided at each Native American Change of Season and must be prepared no more than 18 hours in advance of the ceremony. Two pieces of fry bread for each offender accompanied by peanut butter, butter and jam. Offenders may take one piece back to their unit for consumption during that day.

The Native American Pow Wow is both a secular and sacred ceremony. It is a time for Native Americans to gather for fellowship, fun and to enjoy the company of other Native Americans.

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The dances performed during the Pow Wow often have significant spiritual overtones. Some of the dances are for men only. Other dances include women and children. Pow Wow also includes the practice of “gifting.” Gifting is not payment for something; rather it is recognition of having respect for and honoring another individual. In the Native community, it is custom to “gift” all of the participants at Pow Wow. Gifted items are generally handcrafted by the population or the community and may be gifted to any event participant or to anyone contributing support to the events. The Pow Wow is an annual event.

Work Proscriptions Days

None required by faith or practice.

Fast Days

None required by faith or practice. Fast is a vital and important part of numerous ceremonies. An example of that is Sundance (Natosi Okan), Native Americans fast for twelve days out of the year four days in the fall, four days in the spring and at the Sundance itself, the fasting the Native Americans do abstain from both food and water. Hemblecha (Vision Quest) is also another ceremony which is four days but can be longer. Fasting is required for certain ceremonies but not a requirement in a correctional setting.

Dietary Restrictions

Native Americans do not have a specific diet but feel the eating of healthy and nutritional food is a necessary part of the total sacredness of life.

Leadership/Meetings and Worship

Native American spiritual leaders or medicine persons have been taught the sacred traditions involved in the practice of Native American religion. These people are acclaimed by the tribe as authentic medicine people. Without the tribal stamp of approval, a person claiming to be a spiritual leader should not be used to conduct Native American ceremonies.

Sources

Handbook of Religious Beliefs and Practices; *Inmate Religious Beliefs and Practices* By: U.S. Department of Justice Federal Bureau of Prisons.

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Paganism **History/Background**

“Paganism” is a common term for various, post-industrial religious practices which emerged after the nineteenth-century, romantic movement. These became increasingly more structured throughout the twentieth century and later crystallized into more specific traditions, but not all Pagans are wed to particular structures such as those of Wicca, Druidry or Heathenry.

Modern paganism is sometimes called “Neopaganism” to differentiate it from the original, pre-Christian religions of Europe, although most modern Neopagans draw heavily upon European mythology and lore. The term “paganism” is sometimes (but rarely) used for similar or “adjacent” practices such as ceremonial magic, other earth-based traditions, traditions of the African religious diaspora such as Santeria or Voodoo, and occult-inspired practices such as Satanism, but none of those are addressed here.

Theology/Major Teachings/Belief

Paganism draws mainly upon the mythology and lore of Indo-European cultures such as those of pre-Christian Europe, either generally or with a more specific or limited focus such as Ancient Greece, Rome, Celtic or Germanic. These traditions may also be interpreted as a form of earlier or more general religious beliefs in a primal Mother Goddess and other gods of various sorts, or even understood as the manifestation or source for psychological archetypes.

Belief in forces greater than humanity is common, often as manifest in the natural world and related cycles of life and the seasons. Pagans seek to improve themselves through greater understanding and cooperation with supernatural powers and the natural world, often practicing “magic” of various sorts, however understood. They may study widely in the sciences, mythology, ecology and psychology of various sorts for insight, actively engaging those forces through rituals or spell work.

Worship/Rites/Ceremonies

Most modern Pagans acknowledge and honor some version of the eight-fold “wheel of the year,” with high days on the solstices (midsummer and midwinter), equinoxes (spring and autumn), and four “cross-quarter” days or “fire festivals” near the beginning of February, May, August and November. In addition to these solar cycles, many Pagans acknowledge the phases of the moon with ceremony and practice, usually on the “full” or “new” moon each month. Other ceremonies or rituals may be held on an “as needed” basis for healing, growth, insight or to mark “rites of passage” such as birth, initiation, marriage or death.

“Solitary” pagan worship may take many forms, but usually involves a combination of symbolic tools and language, often with specific rituals and gestures. Purpose-based “spells” often include herbs and other natural objects, candles of specific colors, herbs or oils and symbolic objects of various types such as dolls, string, written sigils or other symbols. “Divination” for meditation or insight is common, as is the keeping of a personal grimoire, spiritual journal or “book of shadows.” Personal practice is often quite individualistic, to the point of idiosyncrasy, and may be difficult to generalize.

Group observance usually takes the form of gathering in a circle, indoors or outdoors, often with an altar or fire in the center as a point of ritual focus. Procession into and out of the circle is common, as are a variety of symbolic rituals and gestures, which may take the form of music or dance.

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Drumming is common, as are various uses of incense or candles or oils and quiet times of introspective “trance” work or meditation. Parts of this may be common across multiple rites, with liturgical language, but much is also specific to the group or occasion, making over-generalization imprudent.

Holy Books

Paganism is more a religion of experience and connection than of textual interpretation, although certain lore or literature or poetry may be important for individual traditions or people. Pagans may use ancient poems from “the lore,” more modern poetry, or their own creations. No one text is sacred to all Pagans, but many texts are sacred to some Pagans, with only modest overlap.

Holy Days/Festivals

Most modern Pagans acknowledge and honor some version of the eight-fold “wheel of the year,” with high days on the solstices (midsummer and midwinter), equinoxes (spring and autumn), and four “cross-quarter” days or “fire festivals” near the beginning of February, May, August and November. In addition to these solar cycles, many also acknowledge the phases of the moon with ceremony and practice, usually on the “full” or “new” moon each month. Other ceremonies or rituals may be held on an “as needed” basis for healing, growth, insight or to mark “rites of passage” such as birth, initiation, marriage or death.

Some Pagans may acknowledge historically attested festivals such as Roman Saturnalia or Lupercalia, Germanic holidays such as Mother Night or Disablot, and specific holidays such as the Celtic “fire festivals” of Imbolc, Beltane, Lughnasadh and Samhain, either on specific days or at one of the eight “wheel of the year” holidays.

Work Proscription Days

None required by faith or practice.

Fast Days

None required by faith or practice, although some Pagans may fast regularly or periodically as a personal, spiritual practice.

Dietary Restrictions

There are no specific dietary laws, although many Pagans have traditionally opted to be vegetarians or vegans by personal conviction.

Leadership/Meetings and Worship

Some Pagan traditions have formal designations for worship leaders, but most worship is strongly participatory, with the group deferring to whomever has organized a given ceremony for coordination. Each person is assumed capable of holding their own ceremony and of having a direct relationship with divinity, however conceived.

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Protestant Interdenominational, Non-Denominational History/Background

Christians are the followers of Jesus of Nazareth, who believe him to be the Christ, or Messiah, sent from God for the salvation of his people.

Protestants believe that the Christian Church truly began on the day of Pentecost, as mentioned in the second chapter of the book of Acts. Since Protestants believe that God indwells believers through the Holy Spirit, (Acts:2) the Church first began its service to God on this day.

Springing from Judaism, Christianity follows the teachings and example of Jesus and views Him as the fulfillment not only of the promise of God's deliverer from the Old Testament of the Bible, but also as the establishment of the new covenant between God and those who would seek after Him.

Jesus did not refute the teachings of Jewish scripture but sought to bring into a sharper focus those tenets set forth in the covenant between God and the Jews. Jesus brought the concept that God's people were not only those of the Jewish race but included all those regardless of social or economic standing who sought reconciliation and fellowship with God as well as all those who would respond to his seeking after them.

Christians, although differing with each other in many aspects of theology and doctrine, believe that Jesus' death on the cross as atonement for sins, His resurrection from the dead, and His giving of the Holy Spirit are foundational to the faith.

The earliest followers of Jesus were Messianic Jews but by 70 A.D. non-Jews, or Gentiles, were increasingly among the followers of, "the Way" and in Antioch by the end of the first century were referred to as "Christians."

The early centuries of Christianity witnessed diverse interpretations of beliefs, which resulted in the formation of different groups within the faith. The Roman Catholic Church quickly emerged as the dominant institution around the beginning of the fourth century; however, other groups following the "tradition of descent" or the "evangelical alternative" continued to spread the teachings of Jesus. In 1054 the Great Schism (or Eastern Schism) divided the Roman Catholic Church of the West from the Orthodox Church of the East. Another separation occurred with the Protestant Reformation. The reformation started well before the 1500's; there have been many who tried to bring reform to the Church, but it was not until Martin Luther and John Calvin that what we know as the Reformation took place. This is when many separated from the Church of Rome.

By 1540, two great types of the reform of religion in northern Europe had made themselves manifest. Luther had molded the one type. Calvin had molded or begun the molding of, the other. Luther was for retaining medieval doctrine, government, worship, many things whatever seemed to him desirable and not forbidden in the Word of God. Calvin was for bringing the Church into conformity with the pattern shown in the Word. He would have the Church hold the faith taught in the Word, govern itself according to the principles

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He believed in the sufficiency of the Scriptures as a rule of faith and practice and would have had the Church conform in all aspects of Scripture teaching. Luther who also believed in Sola Scriptura shared the same belief.

Those who embraced the separation were referred to as “Protestants.” The name is actually a derivative to the verb “protestari” which means not simply “to protest” in the sense of “to raise an objection,” but denotes a broader connotation meaning “to avow or witness or confess.” Protestants believed they were professing the pure teachings of the early church, which had been viewed as obscured through medieval Catholicism. Protestantism has been referred to as the recovery of New Testament Pauline theology.

Arising from the Reformation were several “groups” liturgical and non-liturgical including the Lutherans, Calvinists, Anglicans, Presbyterians, Independents, and Erastians (founded by the Dutch theologian Erasmus 1466-1536). In the 17th and 18th centuries, these churches further divided along theological lines and produced denominations including Baptists, Methodists, Episcopalians, Disciples of Christ, Congregationalists, and Church of the Brethren among others. Both Luther and Calvin recognized that with the reforms there would be many splits within the church. Many of these denominations saw impressive growth in America during the First and Second Great Awakening movements.

Another phenomenon, which occurred during the late nineteenth and early twentieth century in America, was the emergence of new religious groups. Centering mainly on individualistic scriptural interpretations and joining in the societal “millennial fever” experienced at the turn of the century, these groups developed theologies and doctrines that differed sometimes greatly from generally accepted Christian doctrine.

One of the most significant changes in the last quarter century is the deep popularization that has occurred with Christianity. On the one side are those who are characterized as liberal, progressive or mainline and on the other side are those who are called conservative, traditionalist, evangelical or fundamentalist. These divisions have at times become more significant than divisions caused along denominational lines.

A parallel shift in emphasis is seen in a moving away from the denominational level to the congregational level. The identification of churches with their denomination is minimized; what becomes important is the local congregation in a specific community. In addition, congregations are assuming functions which used to belong to centralized denominational offices. These shifts are also reflected in the theological beliefs and experiences. An individual’s belief in Jesus Christ, and their relationship with Christ, along with one’s adherence to the Scriptures have become more determinative than denominational expressions of faith. This has resulted in a decline in membership of many “mainline” denominations and a rapid increase in growth of membership in loosely structured denominations and non-denominational, interdenominational and independent churches.

This shift is very evident in the inmate population. Many more inmates claim to be non-denominational, fundamentalists, or charismatic than those who identify themselves with specific

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denomination or religious organization.

Due to the large variety of Christian Churches identified under the general category of Protestant Christianity, or general Christian, it is extremely difficult to come up with a set of theological statements with which all “Christians” would agree. Even the following major tenants will vary in interpretation among the different Protestant faith groups.

Theology/Major Teachings/Belief

The Trinity

The basic underlying belief of Christianity is the belief in the Trinity, that there is one God who exists in three persons: God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit. Since each person of the Trinity has the same essence, God is described as One. Christians believe that the concept of the Trinity is implicit in the Old Testament and becomes more explicit in the New Testament of the Bible. The classic definition of the Trinity is that God is one essence and three in person. Many different explanations have been given to describe this seeming paradox. For example, water has three forms, solid, liquid, and gas (ice, water and steam), but has only one chemical formula. All share the same ingredients but have three different forms. This is symbolically similar to the Trinity, God the Father, God the Son and God the Holy Spirit. All have the same essence but function in distinct roles. God is Creator (Father), Redeemer (Son), and Sustainer (Holy Spirit).

Supremacy of Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior

Jesus is the central focus as Redeemer and Savior. Christians stand on the scriptural teaching that an individual’s belief in Christ’s sacrifice atoning death and His physical resurrection from the dead are essential for salvation (Romans 10:9-10). The Old Testament points forward to the coming of Jesus Christ and the New Testament describes the fulfillment of His coming and how this was worked out in the early New Testament church.

The Scriptures

Christians rely on the **Holy Bible** as the source for all teachings and doctrines practiced in the church (2 Timothy 3:16-17). The Old Testament consists of 39 books and the New Testament has 27 books. Many translations of the Bible are in existence today. For centuries, the most widely accepted translation was the King James Version; a translation authorized by the English monarch James, first published in 1611. A number of Churches believe that the King James Version is still the only acceptable Bible. The bestselling translation today is the New International Version, first published in 1978.

Justification by Faith

Christians believe that an individual receives forgiveness from sins and experiences a “newness” of life from God through acceptance by faith and not merited by works or personal achievement (Ephesians 2:8-9).

Salvation and Eternal Reward

Protestants believe that God seeks individuals for fellowship. However, human beings through sin have alienated themselves from their Creator. Those who accept God’s grace receive salvation, or deliverance, from eternal damnation, the penalty of rejecting God ultimately

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resulting in spiritual death. God's reward to the repentant faithful is his abiding presence with us and the promise of eternal life (Romans 6:23, John 3:16).

Sacraments/Ordinances

Christians acknowledge one source of God's grace, that being the Word, which may be manifested in such ways as preaching/proclamation, active ministry and other sacraments. Sacraments or ordinances are best described as the Word of God made visible. Christians, generally believe in two ordinances for which there is scriptural evidence that they were established and practiced by Jesus himself, namely Baptism (Mathew 28:18-20) and the Lord's Supper (Mathew 26:26-29).

Baptism

Baptism is a rite of purification by water, a ceremony invoking the grace of God to regenerate the person, free him or her from sin, and make that person a part of the church. Formal baptism is performed by immersion, pouring or sprinkling, depending on the tradition. Baptism can be performed on babies or can be postponed until a person is relatively mature and can make a formal confession that Jesus Christ is Lord and Savior of his or her life.

The Lord's Supper

Partaking of the elements, the bread and the wine, or grape juice is some traditions, the believer is united in some form with Christ and with other members. Much difference of opinion exists with the celebration of the Lord's Supper. Some believe that a change occurs by which the body and blood of Christ join with the bread and wine. Others believe that no such change takes place, but that there is a union with Christ and each other. Still others believe it is an occasion to remember the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. Some Christians use unleavened bread, others use raised bread. In addition, some Protestants use wine while others use unfermented grape juice. All Christians receive both elements. The frequency of celebrating the Lord's Supper among Christians ranges from weekly to once a year.

The Church

Christians believe that God indwells believers through the Holy Spirit. Where God's people gather together for worship or service, there is fellowship with God and with each other. The Church, like a body, functions with the cooperation of its combined members. Christians likewise believe that God has empowered the church with spiritual gifts that when performed properly edifies and equips the church for ministry (Matthew 16:18; Ephesians 2:19-22).

Priesthood of All Believers

Christians hold fast to the scriptural teachings found in 1 Peter 2:9. Each individual has access to God the Father through Jesus the Son in the power of the Holy Spirit. Forgiveness, reconciliation, salvation, revelation of and understanding God's divine will etc., are sought and attained on a personal level.

Eschatology or Doctrine of the Last Things

Probably nowhere is the Protestant branch of Christianity more divided than on this subject of eschatology. The last book of the Bible, the book of Revelation, is the key to understanding the different viewpoints. Much emphasis is made on the interpretation of the thousand-year reign of Christ (Revelation 20), the events surrounding that reign and the interpretation of Biblical

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prophecy. There are basically three major views on the thousand-year reign of Christ, called the Millennium.

One view is that certain prophesied events need to happen before a literal thousand-year reign of Christ (premillennialism) is ushered into history. Upon completion of the thousand-year reign, judgment will come. Many different interpretations of this view exist among the more fundamentalist and evangelical churches. Another view is that the thousand-year reign of Christ is symbolic (amillennialism) of the period of time between Christ's first coming and Second Coming. A third view is that the church is victorious in the world today and that the church will usher in a golden age on earth before the Day of Judgment (postmillennialism).

The whole subject of the end times is very popular today among Christians. Many books of theology have been written on the subject and currently a whole series of novels are written around the theme and the various aspects of the literal thousand-year reign of Christ.

Worship/Rites/Ceremonies

Christians expect to have the opportunity to attend weekly congregate worship in order to receive God's grace through such various means as the proclamation of the Word, opportunity for individual reconciliation/forgiveness, and observance of the ordinances or sacraments. Due to this wide variety of worship expressions among the inmate population, the Chaplain must be sensitive to the diversity and should provide a variety of worship styles in Christian worship services.

Worship services following the specific liturgy and faith of the Chaplain will ordinarily be conducted on days other than Sunday.

Holy Books

The Holy Bible

Holy Days/Festivals

Christians differ sometimes significantly from denomination to denomination, culture, and yet hold in common the basic tenets of the Cross and the Resurrection of Christ. While not mandated as days of religious observance, the liturgical calendar (the lectionary) highlights several seasons that are significant in the life of the church and are worthy of consideration for special services, remembrances, etc.

December 25	Christmas Day (The celebration of Christ's birth.)
Sometime	Epiphany (Commemorates the beginning of the Christian mission to the Gentiles and growth of the Church.
Sometime	Ash Wednesday (Lent begins.)
Palm Sunday	Maundy Thursday, Good Friday, Easter
Good Friday	The celebration of Christ's death and burial. The date changes since the date follows the lunar/solar cycle.
Easter	The celebration of Christ's resurrection from the dead. This is fundamental with all Christians. Christ's resurrection is the cornerstone of their faith. The date changes since the date follows the lunar/solar cycle.
Pentecost	Celebrates the gift of the Holy Spirit to the Church. Commonly called the

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	birthday of the church.
Ascension Day	Celebrates Christ's return to the Father in heaven. Forty days after Easter.
All Saints' Day	November 1

Work Proscription Days

Christians, in general, embrace the concept in Psalm 118:24 in which every day is considered a unique gift from God and that none, more so than others. However, there are several days of religious significance important to the Christian believer. These dates are Easter, Good Friday, and Christmas.

Fast Days

Fasting is a matter of individual conscience and may occur at any time of the year. There are no mandatory fast days. (Exception: Episcopal or Anglican, see Anglican)

Dietary Restrictions

None required by faith or practice.

Leadership/Meetings/Worship

Worship meetings are led by Pastors or Priests depending on the church or denomination. Lay persons participate in all aspects of worship.

Sources

Handbook of Religious Beliefs and Practices; *Religions* By: Myrtle Langley; *Inmate Religious Beliefs and Practices* By: US Department of Justice Federal Bureau of Prisons, *What We Evangelicals Believe* By: David Allan Hubbard

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Rastafarian **History/Background**

The religion is of Caribbean origin. It started in Jamaica and named after Ra Tafari who was crowned Haile Selassie, Emperor of Ethiopia in November 1930. The religion based on a vision of Black domination.

Theology/Major Teachings/Belief

The Rastafarian movement is antiestablishment and bitter on the question of race. The religion reinterprets the Old Testament claiming leaders are present-day prophets.

Lifestyle includes Old Testament dietary rules, uncombed locks and beards.

This religion is not part of the Muslim faith and many of the sanctioned practices of the Rastafarian religion are contrary to the established belief patterns of Islam.

This religion is not a unified movement. Many adherents gather in small informal bodies and are not affiliated with organized groups.

The wearing of dreadlock and beards is mandatory. Women are required to wear dresses and keep their head covered in public.

Worship/Rite/Ceremonies

No mandatory requirement.

Holy Books

King James Version of the bible

Holy Days/Festivals

None required by faith or practice.

Work Proscription Days

None required by faith or practice.

Fast Days

None required by faith or practice.

Dietary Restrictions

Ovo-lacto vegetarian.

Leadership/Meetings and Worship

None required by faith or practice.

Sources

Handbook of Religious Beliefs and Practices; Inmate *Religious Beliefs and Practices* By: US Department of Justice Federal Bureau of Prisons.

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Roman Catholic **History/Background**

Catholicism is a Christian tradition comprised of faith theologies and doctrines and is characterized by specific liturgical, ethical, and spiritual operations and behaviors. It is related to other particular ecclesial traditions that are also in communion with the Bishop of Rome in Italy. The Roman Catholic Church is a Christian church in communion with the Eastern-rite Catholic churches such as Armenian, Byzantine (includes Greek Catholic Church), Coptic, Ethiopian, East Syrian (Chaldean), West Syrian, and Maronite.

Theology/Major Teachings/Belief

Catholic Christians believe in Jesus Christ as the Son of God and are part of the larger Christian group of believers. Catholics believe in one God in three persons, which is referred to as the Holy Trinity. They also believe that Christ was born of the Virgin Mary, died, was buried, rose again, ascended into heaven, and will come again to judge the living and dead. Through the death of Christ, all humankind has been offered eternal life. Catholic beliefs are contained in the Nicene and Apostles' Creed, and the Church Councils.

The Roman Catholic Church is a community of believers who have been incorporated into Christ through Baptism. The power of this faith centers on the belief that Jesus Christ was sent by God to be their Redeemer. As such He is the head and founder of the Church. As an organization and visible society, this people of God share the same faith and are governed by the successors of Peter (the Popes), and the Bishops in communion with the Pope. The doctrine and practices of the Church significantly affect the religious life of its people, none more significantly than the seven sacraments described under the title of Worship.

The Roman Catholic Tradition is an inherited pattern of thought, action, or behavior, which connects Catholics to Christ. Catholic Tradition may be defined as the Word of God, given to the Apostles by Christ and the Holy Spirit, and handed down to their successors through the Church. Scripture, Apostolic Tradition, and the Magisterium (the teaching authority of the Church) guided by the Holy Spirit, combine to bring Catholics God's revelation at any particular moment of time.

The Six Traditional Precepts of the Catholic Church

The following are the basic requirements for being a Catholic:

To assist at Mass on all Sundays and Holy Days of Obligation

- In the United States the Holy Days of Obligation are:
 - Solemnity of Mary, Mother of God January 1st
 - The Ascension of Jesus (40 days after Easter or can be moved to the following Sunday by the local Bishop)
 - Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary into Heaven August 15th
 - Feast of All Saints November 1st
 - Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary (That she was conceived without Original Sin) December 8th
 - Christmas December 25th

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To confess one's Serious Sins

- The Church advises a Catholic to go to confession whenever one has a serious sin on one's soul, especially prior to receiving communion.

To Receive Holy Communion During Easter Season

- The Easter season begins on Ash Wednesday and ends on Trinity Sunday (57 days after Easter).

To Contribute to the Support of the Church

- Catholics should give financial (money) support to the church according to one's means and/or donate time and/or talent to one's parish.

Observe the laws of the Church concerning Marriage

- Catholic marriages must be witnessed by a priest or deacon. If an individual is married not in the Catholic Church, they can ask a Priest about getting the marriage blessed. If a Catholic has been married before, it is important to seek an annulment prior to marrying a second time. To be married in the Church, a Catholic should promise to raise their children in the Catholic Faith and avoid artificial methods of birth control. Natural family planning is 98.6% effective in avoiding pregnancy. For further information contact: The local catholic parish and/or your facility catholic chaplain.

Participate in the missionary activity of the Church

The doctrine and practices of the Roman Catholic Church significantly affects the religious life of its people. Therefore, this section will simply outline a few concepts that are important to know when working with an individual from this faith group.

Blessed Virgin Mary

Because she is the Mother of Jesus, Mary is the Mother of God. As the document on "The Church, Paragraph 53, from Vatican II puts it: "At the message of the angel, the Virgin Mary received the Word of God in her heart and in her body and gave Life to the world. Hence, she is acknowledged and honored as being truly the Mother of God and the Mother of the Redeemer" (The Church, 53). As Mother of the Lord, Mary is an entirely unique person. Like her Son, she was conceived as a human being (and lived her whole life) exempt from any trace of original sin. This is called her Immaculate Conception. Before, during, and after the birth of Jesus her Son, Mary remained physically a virgin. At the end of her life, Mary was assumed that is, taken up body and soul into heaven. This is called her Assumption.

The Saints

The Church also honors saints who are already with the Lord in heaven. These are people who have served God and their neighbors in so outstanding a way that they have been canonized. That is, the Church has officially declared that they are in heaven, holds them up as heroic models, and encourages us to ask their intercession with God for us all.

Worship/Rites/Ceremonies

Private Worship

Individual worship for the Catholic encourages daily prayer and meditation, spiritual reading, and a desire to put into practice God's will in one's daily life. Common catholic practices include praying the Rosary, Liturgy of the Hours, and Stations of the Cross to name just a few.

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Corporate Worship

Community worship is the most important aspect of the Catholic faith. As a people of God they worship together. They usually prepare for and celebrate the seven sacraments. A sacrament is an outward sign of inward grace, instituted by Jesus Christ, to give grace. The seven Sacraments of the Catholic Church are below.

Baptism

Baptism is the sacrament which cleanses one from original sin and makes one a member of the Body of Christ. (John 3:5)

Confirmation

Confirmation is the sacrament by which a Catholic receives the Holy Spirit in a unique and special way. (Acts 1:8)

Eucharist

The bread and wine are changed into the Body and Blood of Christ when the words of consecration are pronounced by the priest at Mass. (Matthew 26: 26-28)

After being initiated into the Most Holy Eucharist, each of the faithful is obliged to receive holy communion at least once a year. This percept must be fulfilled during the Easter season unless it is fulfilled for a just cause at another time during the year. The Diocese of the United States has an indult which allows the Easter duty to be satisfied from the First Sunday of Lent to Trinity Sunday. The Church warmly recommends that the faithful receive Holy Communion when they participate in the celebration of the Eucharist; she obliges them to do so at least once a year.

Reconciliation

The sacrament of Reconciliation (Confession) is the sacrament whereby all sins committed after Baptism is forgiven. Jesus Christ instituted the Sacrament of Reconciliation when He breathed on his Apostles and gave them power to forgive sins, saying: "Whose sins you shall forgive, they are forgiven." The priest forgives sins by the power of God when he pronounces the words of absolution. The words of absolution are: "I absolve you from your sins, in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit." (John 20:23)

Anointing of the Sick

The authority in Scripture for the Sacrament of the Anointing of the Sick is in the fifth chapter of St. James, where it is said: "Is any one sick among you? Let him bring in the elders of the church; and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord. And the prayer of faith shall save the sick man; and the Lord shall raise him up; and if he be in sin they shall be forgiven." The priest anoints the sick person with holy oil, accompanied with prayer. (James 5:14-15)

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Matrimony

Matrimony is the Sacrament which sanctifies the contract of a Christian marriage, and gives a special grace to those who receive it worthily. Catholic marriages must be witnessed by a priest or deacon after completing 6 to 12 months of marriage preparation. (John 2:1-10)

Holy Orders

The imposition of hands by a bishop which confers on a candidate the spiritual faculty to sanctify others through the holy and proper administration of the sacraments of the People of God. (Luke 22:19)

Adults seeking admission to the Catholic Church must go through a period of formation called the Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults (RCIA). The journey of conversion leading to Baptism has four stages as described below.

- Pre-catechumenate: A time for initial inquiry by the candidate and evangelization by trained and designated Church leaders.
- Catechumenate: A time for serious instruction and formation in Christian belief and lifestyle.
- Period of Election: Occurs at the beginning of the Lenten season when a catechumen decides that he/she is ready for initiation. The Lenten season becomes a time of prayerful reflection and discernment. This stage leads directly to the celebration of the initiation sacraments (Baptism, Confirmation and Eucharist) at the Easter Vigil.
- Mystagogia: The newly initiated continue their reflection and instruction on the recent sacramental experiences. This occurs mainly between Easter and Pentecost and can continue up to a whole year.

Holy Books

Catholic Bible; New Jerusalem; New American; American Standard Version; Revised Standard Version (Catholic Edition)

Holy Days/Significant Celebrations

Ash Wednesday	This is to remind Catholics to turn away from sin and live in the example of Christ. This begins the Lenten season.
Holy Thursday	The Thursday before Easter Sunday. This liturgy includes washing the feet as Christ did at “The Last Supper”.
Good Friday	This is the Friday before Easter Sunday. This celebration includes veneration of the cross.
Palm Sunday	This is the Sunday before Easter. Palm leaves are used to celebrate the entry of Christ into Jerusalem.
Easter Sunday	The most important celebration of the year celebrating the resurrection of Jesus from the dead and ending the Lenten, Holy Week season.
Our Lady of Guadalupe	The celebration of the mother of the Americas.

Work Proscription Days

None required by faith or practice.

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Fast Days

Fasting means limiting oneself to one full meal, and two smaller meals, which together do not exceed the main meal for those aged 14-59.

- Ash Wednesday
- Good Friday

During the Lent season Catholics are required to abstain from eating meat on all Fridays (including Good Friday). They may however eat fish on those days.

Dietary Restrictions

The Catholic laws of fasting and abstinence impose most Catholics a serious obligation to refrain from eating meat on certain days and to limit the quantity of food on other days. (See above Fast Days)

Leadership/Meetings/Worship

In accord with Catholic belief, the Mass is not valid in the Catholic tradition unless celebrated by a priest. Services of “The Word and Communion” may be lead by designated lay persons or deacons.

Sources

Catechism of the Catholic Church and Roman Catholic Canon Law, Cardinal Joseph Ratzinger, United States Catholic Conference, Libreria Editrice Vaticana. 1994, Washington D.C.; Handbook For Today's Catholic, A Redemptorist Pastoral Publication, Liguori, Publications, 1994, Washington D.C.; Handbook of Religious Beliefs and Practices

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Seventh-Day Adventist History/Background

The Seventh-Day Adventist church is a Christian church with roots common to all Christendom. They are strict religionist who base their faith on the bible, emphasize a second coming of Jesus Christ, and observance of Saturday as their day of worship. They are evangelistic, conducting missionary activity in 184 countries of the world. The church was organized in 1863.

An important figure in formation of the Adventist church organization was Ellen G. White, who gave guidance to the group of men studying out what would become the doctrines of the church as she received visions of instruction from the lord. She and her husband, James, began the publishing work, now expanded into close to 100 publishing establishments scattered around the world. Mrs. White's inspired guidance and encouragement also were instrumental in starting the vast medical program and extensive elementary through university level education systems now carried on worldwide.

Theology/Major Teachings/Belief

Seventh-Day Adventist teach that Christ entered into the holy of holies in the heavenly sanctuary in 1844, to make an investigation of his people, with the purpose of cleansing all sin and revealing whose who will be safe to save when he returns. They believe that "the dead know not anything," and accept the literal statement that "in death there is no remembrance of thee." When death occurs, a man's "breath get forth, returneth to his earth: in those everyday thoughts perish." (See PS 6:5, 146:4, Eccl 9:5). The condition between death and resurrection is referred to as sleep, from which only the life giver, Christ, can awaken the "sleepers" as the Lazarus. This Christ will do at his second coming. The wicked will be slain by the brightness of his coming; the righteous dead will be raised from the graves and join the righteous living with Jesus for the journey to heaven. There they will remain for 1000 years. When the thousand years are ended Christ and his followers will descend from heaven in the New Jerusalem, "the holy city," and the final destruction of the wicked and Satan will take place. Then the lord will create the earth anew, for an eternal habitation for the righteous.

Seventh-Day Adventist believes that the bible teaching that our bodies are "the temple of the holy spirit," means that they should follow a healthful lifestyle. They thus teach abstinence from alcoholic beverages, tobacco in all its forms, narcotic drug use, (unless prescribed by a physician for medicinal purposes), and all other foods and beverages which debilitate the mind and body. Adventists emphasize the eating of grains, nut, fruits, vegetables, and do not use flesh foods listed as "unclean" in Leviticus 11 in the bible. They operate 26 food factories specializing in food acceptable to the Seventh-Day Adventist diets.

What is not mandated, Seventh-Day Adventist recommend that their members do not bear arms in time of war but encourage that they chose rather to serve in noncombat branches of the military as medics and other related specialists. They prefer to be called "conscientious cooperators."

They teach that the Sabbath must be observed on the seventh day of the week (Saturday). They observe the Sabbath from sundown Friday night to sundown Saturday night, by refraining from

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all unnecessary work and spending the sacred hours in worship, bible and nature study, and missionary endeavors.

Adventists believe that salvation is by grace through the righteousness of Jesus Christ. They also believe that salvation the ten commandments are a reflection of god's character and are to be observed as an expression of their love for God and their fellow men, as directed by Jesus in John 14:15, when he admonished, "If ye love me, keep my commandments." They accept the gifts of the Holy Spirit including the Spirit of Prophecy. As followers of Jesus, Adventists believe that they should manifest true modesty in dress and behavior. They firmly oppose any explanation of creation other than the literal account in the Book of Genesis in the Bible.

Worship/Rites/Ceremonies

The weekly Sabbath is celebrated from sundown Friday to sundown Saturday. During Sabbath hours, only those duties relating to works of mercy, alleviation of suffering, or the protection and preservation of human life are performed; labor and secular activities are avoided. Any able bodies SDA should be willing to work in situations as just listed. There are no other doctrinally required holy days specific only to Seventh-Day Adventist. Seventh-Day Adventist should not be required to work on the Sabbath.

Private Worship

The Seventh-Day Adventist Church does not hold its member to a formalized requirement in the matter of worship, other than that the time must be provided for personal Bible study and prayer. Observance of the Sabbath from sundown Friday to Saturday is basic and mandatory.

Corporate Worship

In the formal aspect of group worship, a simple liturgy free of rituals is recommended. Seventh-Day Adventist observes the Lord's Supper (communion) during corporate worship. This includes The Ordinance of Humility (Foot washing ceremony), the symbol of servant hood instituted by Christ.

Holy Books

Holy Bible; Books written by: Ellen G. White; Inspirational SDA writings

Holy Days/Festivals

Major Christian holy days.

Work Proscription Days

Seventh-Day Adventist should not be required to work on the Sabbath.

Fast Days

None required by faith or practice.

Dietary Restrictions

An Ovo-lacto vegetarian (allows eggs and milk) or a vegetarian, no eggs, no milk and no animal products at all diet is suggested as ideal for health, but "clean" meats from animals that have split hoof and chew the cud, as outlined in Leviticus 11 of the Bible, may be eaten according to the individual decision. Unclean meats, pork, shellfish and others outlined in Leviticus 11, and foods

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containing unclean meats are not allowed. No alcoholic beverages, tobacco, or non-medical narcotics are allowed.

Also recommended is to stay away from food stimulant and leavening agents.

Food stimulants-the most common of these stimulants identified as harmful are vinegar (contained in most pickles, salad dressing, barbeque sauce, ketchup, mayonnaise, and all relishes) and spices, especially all peppers, cinnamon, cloves, ginger and mustard).

Leavening agents-there are objections to using baking powder and baking soda especially in breads. The idea is to eat only breads leavened with yeast or to eat unleavened bread.

Leadership/Meetings/Worship

Within the Seventh-Day Adventist Church, spiritual leadership is provided by ordained ministers, who are given their credentials and are under the direction of the conference organization, are in the employ of the Church and can serve and minister anywhere. Additional leadership is provided by lay elders who serve in the local congregation. Church members expect free access to the pastoral ministry of the Church for spiritual counsel and advice.

Sources

Handbook of Religious Beliefs and Practices; *Religions* By: Myrtle Langley; *Inmate Religious Beliefs and Practices* By: US Department of Justice Federal Bureau of Prisons

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Sikh History/Background

The early 16th century was a time of bitter conflict in North India. A series of invasions culminating in 1526 establishes Muslim supremacy. The Punjab area was one of the most hotly contested regions, and it was here that Nanak (1469-1539) was born. One day while bathing in a river, he had a vision of God's presence in which he was told to go into the world and teach the repetition of the Name of God, the practice of Charity, meditation and worship, and the keeping of ritual purity through absolution.

According to tradition, after a full day of silence, he uttered the Pronouncement, "There is no Hindu (the native faith of Indian) and no Musselman (Muslim)." He adopted a unique garb which combined both Hindu and Muslim features and developed an eclectic faith which took elements from many religions, principally Hindu and Muslim. From Islam he taught of One Creator of God, called the True Name to avoid such designations as Allah or Vishnu. From Hinduism he taught the ideas of karma, reincarnation and the ultimate unreality of the world. Nanak also emphasized the unique role of the guru (teacher) as necessary to lead people to God. After Nanak's death, nine gurus followed him in succession.

The fourth guru, Ram Dass, began the Golden Temple of Amritsar, the present headquarters of the world SIKH community. The fifth Guru, Arjan, completed the Temple and installed the *Siri Guru Granth Sahib* or *Adi Granth*, the collected writing of Nanak, within it.

The tenth guru, Gobind Singh (1666-1718), had the most significant role other than Nanak in molding the SIKH community. He completed the *Adi Granth* in its present form and militarized the Sikhs by forming the Khalsa, the Community of the Pure. Members were initiated by baptism in which they drank and were sprinkled with sweetened water stirred with a sword. They changed their name to Singh (Lion) and adopted the Five K's:

- Kesh, or long hair, a sign of saintliness
- Kangh, a comb for keeping the hair neat
- Kach, short pants for quick movement in battle
- Kara, a bracelet signifying sternness and restraint
- Kirpan, a sword of defense. Women adopted the surname Kaur (princess).

After Gobind Singh's death, the *Adi Granth* became the guru, and no further human gurus were allowed. The military emphasis continued, however, and the Sikhs served with distinction in British army units.

In the 19th century, variant forms of Sikhism emerged. Param Guru Shri Dayal Singh Sahib began to gather followers, and in 1861 formed the Radhasoami Satsang. It was distinguished from other forms of Sikhism by the development of a new line of gurus. Both the Radhasoami Satsang and the Rahani Satssang, which came from it, have been transplanted to the United States. The Sikh Dharma and its education branch, the Healthy, Happy Organization represents orthodox Sikhism.

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Theology/Major Teachings/Belief

Many Sikh sects emphasize a particular aspect of the religion, but all Sikhs recognize three basic truths: the One-ness of God, the leadership of the ten gurus; and the *Granth Sahib* (Holy Scripture) of Divine Revelations. Five of the Sikh sects are: the Nirankari, who emphasize pure worship. The Singh Sahha, who emphasize education; the Sahajdharis, who reject militarism and are always clean shaven; the Udasis, who emphasize Indian ascetic principles and frequently cut their hair and shave their beards; and the Singhs, who emphasize the teachings on the tenth guru, Gobind Singh.

Worship/Rites/Ceremonies

Private Worship

There are a number of daily rituals which may be practiced by members of the Sikh faith, but all practices are dependent on the member's sect within Sikhism, and none of these practices are mandatory. Generally, each day begins with an early morning bath and meditation and/or chanting of the Name of God, the recitation of particular prayers and hymns and, again, Sikhs recite special prayers before they go to bed.

Corporate Worship

Corporate worship for members of the Sikh faith includes hymns, chanting, prayer and the recitation and explanation of the hymns of *Guru Granth Sahib* (the Holy Scriptures). Group worship is not required but it is stressed in that it is helpful in the development of "group consciousness" which is basic to the community.

The festivals listed in Holy Days are celebrated in a variety of ways, dependent on the particular Sikh sect, but they are not mandatory. Frequently the festivals of the birthday of Guru Nanak; the birthday of Guru Gobind; the Baiskhi, birthday of Khasla; the anniversary of Guru Anjun Dev's Martyrdom are preceded by a 48-hour continuous reading on the *Granth Sahib* (holy scripture) from the beginning to the end and celebrated by larger groups and longer services. There is also the customary distribution of sweet food, Karah Prasad, to all present at these celebrations.

Holy Books

Guru Granth Sahib, the Sikh scripture

Holy Days/Festivals

Ten Gurus Births and Deaths

Sikhs celebrate the anniversaries of the births and deaths of the ten gurus, especially Guru Nanak in November, Guru Ran Dass in October and Guru Gobind Singh in December. There are 20 anniversaries celebrated.

The Anniversary of the Baiskhi

Generally celebrated in April

The Birthday of Khalsa

Generally celebrated in April

The calculations of all the above dates are based on the lunar cycle and the Indian calendar and can be obtained from Sikh centers.

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Work Proscription Days

None required by faith or practice.

Fast Days

None required by faith or practice.

Dietary Restrictions

Ovo-lacto Meatless or vegetarian.

Leadership/Meetings/Worship

Leadership is dependent on the particular sect.

Source

Handbook of Religious Beliefs and Practices, Sikh Temple of Spokane, 1420 N. Barker Rd.
Greenacres, WA 99016, (509) 892-3799

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The Church of Christ, Scientist (Christian Science)

Religious obligations

In Christian Science, religious and moral duties are summed up in the two Great Commandments taught by Christ Jesus and in the Ten Commandments. We are to love the one God supremely and we are to love our neighbor as ourselves (treating others as we would have them treat us). We regularly study the Bible, which is the foundation of Christian Science teaching. The writings of Mary Baker Eddy are also studied as an aid to understanding the Bible. There is an emphasis on living what we learn – on growing spiritually and applying our understanding in life practice. This is to be done humbly and prayerfully, looking to the grace and guidance of God for salvation and healing. Other specific duties are spelled out in the Church Manual, written by Eddy.

Holy Days REQUIRING accommodation:

There are no mandatory Holy Days that Christian Scientists observe, but Christian Scientists especially revere the spiritual significance of Christmas, Easter, and Thanksgiving Day. Most Christian Science families celebrate many of the Christmas and Thanksgiving Day traditions of their cultures. Religious services are held in church every Sunday, Wednesday, and on Thanksgiving Day.

Religious rituals that are recommended but not necessarily mandatory:

While there are no religious rituals, observances, or practices, the Christian observances of baptism and communion do hold important spiritual significance to a Christian Scientist.

Work Proscription Days if any:

None. Many Christian Scientists do honor Christians' reverence for Sunday as a day of consecration.

Annual event (Is there one specific time of year when annual event should be scheduled when able?):

None, except that many members of The Mother Church (The First Church of Christ, Scientist, headquartered in Boston – also called “The Mother Church”) attend (online at least) the Annual Meeting of this Church, held in early June.

Once a year, students of Christian Science who have gone through a two-week course on Christian Science called class instruction, attend a one-day Association address given by the teacher of the course or a guest speaker. They meet in person or virtually with other students to listen to the address, participate in fellowship, and study Christian Science. The date of the address is decided each year by the Association. Attendance is highly valued.

Worship/rituals/religious practice

Worship origins/history: Christian Science is a religious denomination founded by Mary Baker Eddy formally in Massachusetts in 1879. Local Christian Science churches can currently be found in close to 60 countries around the world. One scholar has termed the denomination an “old new” Christian minority; another calls it a “new/old gospel of primitive Christianity.” Like other Christians, Christian Scientists look to Jesus Christ as the exemplar Christian, and to the Bible as their Book of Life. **Worship basics:** Christian Scientists look to Jesus' words in guiding their sense of worship, e.g.: “...the true worshippers shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth...” (John 4:23). Individual worship for the Christian Scientist includes daily prayer and daily study of the Bible and Eddy's textbook, *Science and Health with Key to the Scriptures*. The Church provides topical citations from these two books that make up weekly Bible Lessons for study during the week and reading aloud during the Sunday church service.

· **Public worship services:** There are no ordained clergy to conduct services. Services are conducted by elected Readers who read from the Bible and *Science and Health* – from the church's

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official Bible Lesson sermon citations. These two books are considered the dual and impersonal pastor of the church. Churches of Christ, Scientist, have open services on Sunday and Wednesday. The published Bible Lesson sermons are read throughout all the churches at the Sunday service, which also includes Scriptural reading, hymns, a solo, silent prayer, and the Lord's prayer. The Wednesday evening meetings include topical readings from the Bible and Science and Health selected by the individual Reader conducting the service, hymns, prayer, and extemporaneous sharing of healings and spiritual insights by members of the congregation.

- Other resources: Other church worship support resources include Bible-focused Sunday School classes for children and teens; Reading Rooms - quiet places for prayer, spiritual study, and purchase of the Bible, biblical resources, and Christian Science literature; public lectures on Christian Science; and an array of church periodicals. Published literature can also be found online at www.jsh.christianscience.com and www.csmonitor.com.

- Healing practice: Followers of Christian Science are known for their reliance on prayer for the healing of illnesses and other life problems. Christian Science healing is not optimistic positive thinking of the human will, but is biblically grounded, involving the endeavor to faithfully follow Jesus' command, "he who believes in me, will also do the works that I do" (John 14:12). Christian Science healing is based on an understanding of, and heartfelt response to, God as infinite good, whose all-powerful, ever-present love can be relied upon to cure bodily ills and other problems.

Teachings

The Christian Science church was founded to "commemorate the word and works of our master Jesus Christ which should reinstate primitive Christianity and its lost elements of healing." (Church Manual, p. 17) Eddy's book, *Science and Health with Key to the Scriptures*, is the definitive statement of Christian Science teachings. This book includes six religious tenets or key points of Christian Science, summarized in 1894 by a Chicago journalist in the *Daily Inter-Ocean*: "The 'confession of faith' [of Christian Science] includes the declaration that the Scriptures are the guide to eternal Life; that there is a Supreme Being, and His Son, and the Holy Ghost, and that man is made in His image. It affirms the atonement; it recognizes Jesus as the teacher and guide to salvation; the forgiveness of sin by God, and affirms the power of Truth over error, and the need of living faith at the moment to realize the possibilities of the divine Life." The final Tenet, not represented in this summary, takes the form of a sacred Christian commitment: "And we solemnly promise to watch, and pray for that Mind to be in us which was also in Christ Jesus; to do unto others as we would have them do unto us; and to be merciful, just, and pure." (Op. cit., p. 497) This commitment to prayer is individual, heartfelt, and actively expresses the Christian Scientist's commitment to healing sin, sickness and blessing mankind. Jesus instructed his followers to pray by entering into the closet and shutting the door (Matthew 6:6). Echoing this instruction, Eddy writes, "In order to pray aright, we must enter into the closet and shut the door. We must close the lips and silence the material senses. In the quiet sanctuary of earnest longings, we must deny sin and plead God's allness." (Science and Health, p. 15) Eddy asked members of the Church of Christ, Scientist specifically to include the following in their daily prayers: "'Thy kingdom come;' let the reign of divine Truth, Life and Love be established in me, and rule out of me all sin; and may Thy Word enrich the affections of all mankind and govern them!" (Church Manual, p. 41)

Special Diet and/or Dietary Restrictions:

There are no required diets or dietary restrictions, but the teachings specify that members of the Church of Christ, Scientist should refrain from the use of alcohol, tobacco, and drugs.

Fasting Days:

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None.

Holy Book(s):

The Holy Bible is the foundational text of Christian Science — to be studied and to inspire prayer — in conjunction with our denominational textbook, Science and Health with Key to the Scriptures, by Mary Baker Eddy. Eddy's other writings, published in Prose Works are also useful aids for spiritual study.

What Primary Authority/Organization has documented information about the faith and practice?

The First Church of Christ, Scientist, in Boston, Massachusetts is the denominational headquarters. Its primary website, given below, has accurate information on Christian Science. The Christian Science Committee on Publication for the State of Washington is also a resource:

Lance Matteson, Christian Science Committee on Publication for the State of Washington;
email: washington@compub.org; telephone: 425-949-8405.

Resource website:

www.christianscience.com

Qualified spiritual leader:

Leadership of Christian Science is vested in its founder, Mary Baker Eddy (1821-1910), through her published writings.

We are a lay church and while adherents regularly study the Bible and the other Christian Science teachings, the church does include individuals who help support spiritual progress. After an authorized class conducted by a Christian Science teacher and demonstrated practice, the church recognizes spiritual healers known as Christian Science practitioners. Practitioners give Christian Science treatment to help bring healing to those who ask them for help overcoming sickness, other troubles, or really any situation. There are no clergy, but elected Readers conduct the twice weekly worship services. Christian Science nurses have a demonstrable knowledge of Christian Science practice, and the practical wisdom needed in a sick room.

Branch churches will also support Christian Science chaplains and jail or prison volunteers to provide services in correctional facilities.

Other information you would like to provide or feel is relevant:

Common misconceptions briefly corrected:

1. Christian Science is unrelated to Scientology.
2. Christian Science does not blame failure of healing on the patient, nor does it see sin as the only cause of disease.
3. Christian Science affirms that through God's love and grace we find healing and eternal life. Christian Scientists do not believe it is God's will that anyone should suffer, thus they strive to care for their children and patients humanely, safely, and responsibly.
4. While Christian Scientists generally rely on spiritual treatment for healing and preventing disease, health care choices are not dictated to members or followers by the church. The church takes the health and wellbeing of individuals, families, and the community seriously, encourages responsible health care decisions, and respects public health laws and requirements. Christian Scientists give earnest consideration to the greater good of their communities, do not fear vaccination, and are not doctrinally prohibited from being vaccinated. Indeed, they will be vaccinated if it's required.

5. Christian Science does not glibly deny the existence of evil; rather it teaches followers

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humbly and progressively to learn and live the presence and supremacy of an infinitely good God, who is Love itself, and whose beloved children we all are – in our deepest spiritual reality. But in human experience, sin and evil must be faced, not ignored nor superficially brushed off. This precludes shallow denialism and cold theorizing. It instead urges consecrated lives evidencing the harmony, or present “kingdom of heaven” preached by Jesus.

The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints (Also known as Latter-day Saints, or LDS, or Mormon)

History/Background

The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints had its beginning in New York in the 1820's. Joseph Smith had a vision in his early teens that was the basis for the founding of the Church. As he matured, he had a number of visions and revelations in which he was instructed to restore the original church that Jesus Christ had established during his ministry. He was directed by an angel, Moroni, to unearth a set of ancient golden records from a hill near his parents' farm. The book contained "the fullness of the everlasting Gospel." He translated these records and published them in 1830 as "The Book of Mormon." According to the Book of Mormon, a prophet named Lehi lived in Jerusalem about 600 BC. God commanded Lehi to lead his family and a small group of people to the American Continent. There they became a great civilization, who Latter-Day Saints believe are among the ancestors of the Native Americans. The Book of Mormon records that following His crucifixion and resurrection, Christ visited these inhabitants of the Western Hemisphere, taught the gospel, and organized His church among them.

Joseph Smith was instructed to restore the Church of Jesus Christ. In 1829, the powers of the priesthood of the New Testament church, which included the authority to baptize and confer the gift of the Holy Ghost, were conferred upon Joseph Smith and his associate Oliver Cowdery by John the Baptist and in a subsequent visit, the authority of the apostleship by Peter, James and John. In 1847, to escape persecution, members of the church migrated westward, initially settling in what is now Salt Lake City, Utah, and subsequently colonized much of the intermountain West. In 2020 membership was over 16 million worldwide with a presence in 160 countries and written Church materials translated into 166 languages.

Theology/Major Teachings/Belief:

The scriptures define the doctrine of Christ as exercising faith in Jesus Christ and His Atonement,

repenting, being baptized, receiving the gift of the Holy Ghost, and enduring to the end. The following are some of the unique or basic beliefs of the Latter-day Saints church:

The Godhead: Members believe that God the Father, Jesus Christ, and the Holy Ghost comprise the Godhead and are all separate and distinct beings. God the Father and Jesus Christ have physical bodies which are glorified and immortal. The Godhead is one in purpose but not in form.

Jesus Christ: Jesus Christ is the first-born spiritual Son of God and His only begotten Son in the flesh. In the spirit world He distinguished himself by his perfect faith and obedience and became one with God. In the great council in Heaven before this earth was created, he offered himself as a sacrifice to satisfy justice and redeem all mankind. Jesus Christ was unique as a mortal being. He is literally the physical son of God. As the Son of God, he had power over death as the Son of a mortal mother he had the capacity to die. Thus, his death and sacrifice were voluntary.

He lived a perfect life. His voluntary atonement served to appease the demands of justice and provide mercy to the repentant sinner.

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Fall of Adam: Adam and Eve in their paradisaically innocent state {not yet mortal} were unable to have children. Yet they were commanded to multiply and replenish the earth. This conflict provoked the Fall. By partaking of the fruit of the Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil, Adam and Eve brought the consequences of mortality with pain and suffering, physical death, sin, and separation from God. This was in reality a blessing planned before the earth was formed to provide mankind mortal bodies and earthly experiences. God was not surprised nor was He disappointed, "All things were done in the wisdom of Him who know all things. Adam fell that men might be. Men are that they might have joy."

Original Sin: Adam and Eve in their innocence committed no sin but a transgression of commandment. A tenet of the faith is that "men will be punished for their own sins and not for Adam's transgression."

The Atonement of Christ: The Atonement of Jesus Christ is the gospel. All other doctrines are merely appendages of it. The Atonement was necessary because of the Fall and lifts man out of the bondage of death and sin. All mankind receives immortality or resurrection as a free gift through the Atonement of Jesus Christ. Salvation from sin and eternal life (life with God) is made possible by Christ's Atonement but must be earned by obedience to the principles and ordinances of the gospel. The Book of Mormon states "for we know that it is by grace, that we are saved, after all we can do."

Lucifer: Lucifer, also known as the devil or Satan, is also one of the spirit sons of God. But he rebelled against God and led a pre-existence rebellion in Heaven in which one-third of the hosts of heaven fought against God. He was cast out of Heaven and abides on earth with his host of rebellious followers. They do not have bodies and therefore cannot progress toward living with God in Heaven. Lucifer's intent is "that all men might be miserable like unto himself."

Baptism: An essential ordinance required of all men to enter the kingdom of God. It must be performed by immersion by one having Priesthood authority to baptize.

Church Organization and Modern Day Revelation: Church members believe in the same organization that existed in the New Testament church with apostles and prophets. God still speaks to man today through revelation and through a prophet just as He did in ancient times to reveal His will to man.

Holy Scripture: "We believe the Bible to be the word of God as far as it is translated correctly." The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints accepts the King James Version of the Bible as scripture. They also include as canonized scripture The Book of Mormon, The Doctrine and Covenants (containing modern revelation to the church) and The Pearl of Great Price (a compilation of selections from the Book of Moses, key teachings of the fall and pre-existence of man, and the history of Joseph Smith's vision).

Eternal Family Relations: Family relationships can last forever not just for this life. When a marriage is performed by the proper authority in the holy temple, it can last for eternity.

Pre-Existence in the Spirit World: Men and women lived with Heavenly Father as His spirit children before they were born. In this setting, they had the opportunity to grow, mature and learn many eternal truths.

Purpose of Life on Earth: Coming to earth and gaining a body was an essential part of Heavenly Father's plan of progression towards eternal life. When we are born a "veil of forgetfulness" is placed across our memory of our pre-existence. Our life on earth is an opportunity to grow and prove to ourselves that we can follow Him in faith.

Baptisms by Proxy and Salvation for the Dead: Those who lived and died on the earth without the knowledge of the gospel are given the opportunity to accept and embrace it through teachings in the

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spirit world. The required ordinance of baptism is performed vicariously in temples here in mortality by faithful members of the church. They teach that such proxy baptisms, once accepted, are as if the departed spirits had accepted the gospel and been baptized while in this life. {1 Corinthians 15:29)

Restoration: The Church of Christ was lost with the death of the apostles and the loss of the authority of God and the subsequent apostasy that followed as the religious leaders and followers changed many of the basic teachings of Jesus Christ. It was restored by the Savior when he directed Joseph Smith to establish the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. While they consider themselves Christian, they are neither Catholic nor Protestant but Restorationist. **Life After Death:** The Book of Mormon teaches that "all the spirits of men, as soon as they are departed from this mortal body... whether they be good, or evil are taken home to that God who gave them life. The spirits are classified according to the purity of their lives and their obedience to the will of the Lord while on earth. The righteous and the wicked are separated, but the spirits may progress as they learn gospel principles and live in accordance with them. The spirits in paradise can teach the spirits in prison.

Salvation by Grace and Obedience: Church members believe that salvation comes through the Atonement of Jesus Christ by obedience to laws and ordinances of the gospel. The grace of God as manifested in the Atonement makes possible the gift of salvation. Each person must choose to partake of that gift by exercising faith and obedience to the gospel of Jesus Christ. They teach that men and women will be judged by their works and received reward or punishment according to their own deeds in mortality.

Worship/Rites/Ceremonies: Sunday worship at 534 congregations in the State of Washington includes the Sacrament (bread and water) in remembrance of the Savior and His Atonement. Members fast the first Sunday of each month and donate the money saved as an offering to help the poor. The state currently has three temples located in Bellevue, Spokane, and Tri-Cities, with a fourth being built in Moses Lake. There are 168 temples operating worldwide. The primary purpose of temples is for faithful Latter-day Saints to participate in sacred ceremonies such as marriages, which unite families forever, and proxy baptisms on behalf of deceased ancestors who did not have the opportunity to be baptized while living

Holy Books:

- **The Holy Bible:** The Church of Jesus Christ accepts the King James Version of the Bible to be the most correctly translated copy of the Old and New Testament.
- **Book of Mormon:** This is a sacred record of peoples in ancient America between 600 BC and 421 AD and includes the account of Christ's visit to the Western Hemisphere where he organized a church as he did in Palestine. It contains a record of God's dealings with the people and the recorded words of their prophets. In 1982 the church added a subtitle, "Another Testament of Jesus Christ" to the Book of Mormon.
- **The Doctrine and Covenants:** This is a collection of revelations and declarations revealed to Latter-day prophets and is significant doctrinal scripture for church members.
- **The Pearl of Great Price:** This is a small volume with five sections. In selections from the Book of Moses, key teachings include the necessity and benefits of Adam's fall, Adam's baptism by immersion, and the pre-existence of human spirits. Also included is a history of Joseph Smith's first vision, the Book of Abraham, and the Thirteen Articles of Faith, which are thirteen concise statements of the core beliefs of the Latter-day Saints.

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The Articles of Faith of The Churches of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints:

1. We believe in God, the Eternal Father, and in His Son, Jesus Christ, and in the Holy Ghost.
2. We believe that men will be punished for their own sins, and not for Adam's transgression.
3. We believe that through the Atonement of Christ, all mankind may be saved, by obedience to the laws and ordinances of the Gospel
4. We believe that the first principle and ordinances of the Gospel are: First, Faith in the Lord Jesus Christ; Second, Repentance; Third, Baptism by immersion for the remission of sins; Fourth, Laying on of hands for the gift of the Holy Ghost.
5. We believe that a man must be called of God, by prophecy, and by the laying on of hands by those who are in authority, to preach the Gospel and administer in the ordinances thereof.
6. We believe in the same organization that existed in the Primitive Church, namely, apostles, prophets, pastors, teachers, evangelists, and so forth.
7. We believe in the gift of tongues, prophecy, revelation, visions, healing, interpretation of tongues, and so forth.
8. We believe the Bible to be the word of God as far as it is translated correctly; we also believe the Book of Mormon to be the word of God.
9. We believe all that God has revealed, all that He does now reveal, and we believe that He will yet reveal many great and important things pertaining to the Kingdom of God.
10. We believe in the literal gathering of Israel and in the restoration of the Ten Tribes; that Zion (the New Jerusalem) will be built upon the American continent; that Christ will reign personally upon the earth; and, that the earth will be renewed and receive its paradisiacal glory.
11. We claim the privilege of worshiping Almighty God according to the dictates of our own conscience, and allow all men the same privilege, let them worship how, where, or what they may.
12. We believe in being subject to kings, presidents, rulers, and magistrates, in obeying, honoring, and sustaining the law.
13. We believe in being honest, true, chaste, benevolent, virtuous, and in doing good to all men; indeed, we may say that we follow the admonition of Paul - We believe all things, we hope all things, and we have endured many things, and hope to be able to endure all things. If there is anything virtuous, lovely, or of good report or praiseworthy, we seek after these things.

Holy Days/Festivals: As with all groups who claim affiliation with Christianity, the Latter-day Saints observe the major Christian holy days, and the Sabbath (Sunday) is observed as a holy day of worship.

Fast Days: Members fast the first Sunday of each month and donate the money saved as an offering to help the poor.

Dietary Restrictions: As a result of revelation of a health code received in 1833 and included in the Doctrine and Covenants, Latter-day Saints eat meat sparingly, encourage the use of wholesome herbs, fruits, and grains, and totally abstain from tobacco, alcohol, coffee, tea, and drugs. Prescription drugs are allowed.

Leadership/Meetings/Worship: Congregations, called wards, comprise a specific geographical area over which a Bishop presides. Bishops extend calls to others in the Ward to serve in other leadership positions, for children's programs, teen age youth programs, and Relief Society (Women's Auxiliary formed in 1842 to help the poor and needy).

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Wards are grouped into Stakes, eight to ten per Stake.

Stakes are presided over by a Stake President. Groups of Stakes, or Regions, are presided over by a member of the Seventy (Exodus 24:1 & 9; Luke 10:1). Presiding over the entire church is the Prophet and President with two Counselors, and the Council of the Twelve Apostles. Church leaders at all levels serve without compensation. Male members twelve and older in good standing are ordained to an office in the Priesthood (Deacon, Teacher, Priest, Elder, and High Priest). Bishops and Stake Presidents are asked to serve by the Prophet and President of the Church. Women in the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints also serve in various leadership and service callings with the delegated authority of the priesthood. In 2019 the church membership in Washington State was nearly 300,000 comprising 534 congregations. There are over sixteen and a half million members worldwide.

Sources: KJV version of The Holy Bible; Doctrine and Covenants; Book of Mormon; Encyclopedia of Mormonism, Salt Lake, Desert Book Co. 1964, Doctrines of Salvation; Marvelous Work and a Wonder, Salt Lake Desert Publishing Co.; The Articles of Faith, The Pearl of Great Price, Website: ChurchofJesusChrist.org

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The International Society for Krishna Consciousness

History/Background

Krishna consciousness meant to be conscious of God. It is recorded in the Vedic scriptures (Veda means knowledge), many of which are acknowledged to be at least 5,000 years old (3,000 BC) in written history alone. Previous to 3,000 BC there was a disciple succession of spiritual masters who passed on Krishna consciousness and this disciple succession continues until the present day. Historically, the Movement is known as the Vaishnava religion. Vaishnave means personal servant of God, the same God of the Bible and Koran. The modern spread of Vaishnavism outside of India was first due to the inspiration and teachings of Lord Chaitanya Mahaprabhu (1486-1534 AD), which were later taken up in the mid-19th century by Bhaktivinoda Thakur, who translated Vaishnave works intended for the English-speaking countries.

Current world leader is His Divine Grace A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada (Srila Prabhupada). He came to the United States in 1965, having been especially commissioned by his spiritual master to bring Krishna consciousness to the Western countries, and founded the International Society for Krishna Consciousness (ISKCON) in New York City the following year.

Theology Major Teachings Belief

Devotees of ISKCON believe that humanity fallen from original intention, needs to return to “Krishna Consciousness.” Devotees strive for “self-realization,” that is to become lovers of God. Chanting is the means. Faithful Krishna’s chant the mantra (repetitious names for God) at least 1,728 times a day, believing that to do so is to cry out for God, who will not ignore such pleas.

Krishna devotees demonstrate a high level of commitment. Materialism is rejected and austerity is espoused. Most possessions are turned over to the temple. Physical pleasures are abhorred, clothing and hairstyles are altered, all for the sake of gaining Krishna consciousness. A major teaching is the belief of reincarnation. To the Krishna follower the soul is eternal and only inhabits a physical body on its way to perfect Krishna consciousness. Each soul has been engaged in a lengthy cycle of reincarnations based upon behavior in past lives. Devotees believe that if enough spiritual enlightenment is attained during their human lives, they may break the cycle of reincarnations and achieve a perfect eternal relationship with Krishna.

Worship/Rites/Ceremonies

Group worship is required at least twice a day for full disciples. Each devotee is required to arise before sunrise for worship and chanting. The program includes chanting the holy names of God before the Deities (representation of the Supreme Being and pure devotees or saints), similar to the images often utilized in Catholic Churches. The evening ceremony is similar. Worship is usually performed in a Temple with an altar, Deities and a seat for the spiritual master. Japa (prayer) beads, or sacred bead necklace and a marking on the forehead constitutes minimum equipment for worship.

Holy Books

Sacred writings, Bhagavad Gita; Bhagavata Purana

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Holy Days/Festivals

All holy days of the ISKCON are reckoned according to the lunar calendar and occur on different days each year.

Major festivals are:

July	Jagannatha or Ratha-Yatra
August	Krishna Janmashtami, Krishna's Birthday.
August	Vyasa Puja, The spiritual master's birthday.

Work Proscription Days

None required by faith and practice.

Fast Days

None required by faith and practice.

Dietary Restrictions

Devotees eat no fish, meat, eggs, garlic, or onions. Alcohol, drugs, coffee, tea and smoking are not permitted. A vegetarian diet is required.

Leadership/Meetings/Worship

A president, disciple by Srila Prabhupada, serves each local facility as its spiritual leader and administrator. In the Temple, the Brahmins (second initiates) are responsible for worship, instruction, ceremonies, etc., and are expected to preach.

Sources

Handbook of Religious Beliefs and Practices; *Inmate Religious Beliefs and Practices* By: US Department of Justice Federal Bureau of Prisons

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Unity

History/Background

Unity is a religious movement that does not require its followers to become members or to hold a fixed set of beliefs. Unity describes itself as “the religions of the written word.” In the 1880’s, Charles and Myrtle Fillmore, co-founders of Unity, discovered new truths about life and health. After both experienced healings from limiting physical conditions, they began a ministry of praying for the sick and teaching classes in their Kansas City home. Thus Unity was born.

Theology/Major Teachings/Belief

Students of Unity generally regard the Bible highly, while believing that other sacred books also contain imminent truths. In the view of Unity, authority lies partly in a special understanding of the Bible. Unity makes a distinction between the “Outer” Bible and the “Inner” Bible.

The words of the outer Bible have inner meanings, inner applications and implications, which portray the divine constitution of humankind and the unfolding of the individual Soul. Authority lies also in one’s personal communion with God, and the Bible is helpful in this process. Unity does not claim that its interpretations of Biblical statements are infallible or final. It holds that as human spiritual consciousness expands, individuals will receive ever-increasing revelations of truth. Unity desires that its teachings may afford additional light to those who are seeking God.

The ideas of Unity are centered on two basic propositions:

- 1) God is good.
- 2) God is available. In fact, God is in you.

Worship/Rites/Ceremonies

Private Worship

Daily prayer and meditation.

Corporate Worship

Weekly worship.

Holy Books

Bible; Other sacred books containing eminent truths.

Holy Days/Festivals

None required by faith or practice.

Work Proscription Days

None required by faith or practice.

Fast Days

None required by faith or practice.

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Dietary Restrictions

None required by faith or practice.

Leadership/Meetings/Worship

Worship is led by a minister and lay participation is encouraged.

Sources

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Wicca History/Background

Wicca is a syncretic Neopagan religious tradition popularized in the 1950's by Gerald Gardner (1884–1964), and the basis for many other Neopagan practices. Wicca is a nature religion which venerates a Great Goddess and Her consort, a Horned God, in addition to other deities and nature spirits such as elementals of air, earth, fire and water. Claiming origins in the neolithic period or before, Wicca honors nature, seasons, lunar cycles and eightfold “wheel of the year.” Esbat rituals may be celebrated on the new and full moon, while major sabbat festivals are celebrated on the equinoxes, solstices, and “cross-quarter days” near the beginning of February, May, August and November. Some Wiccan traditions may be more culturally focused, worshipping specific gods and goddesses from historical cultures.

Wiccan groups are usually called “circles” or “covens,” some of which require initiation or recognize self-initiation. Individual practice often involves meditation, divination, prayers or magic, with a wide variety of tools and practices including herbs or candles.

Although there are some common liturgical elements and ceremonies, there is no single sacred text, and most traditions encourage practitioners to keep a personal magical journal, grimoire or “book of shadows.”

Theology/Major Teachings/Belief

The American Council of Witches issued an April 1974 document titled Thirteen Principles of Belief, which touches on several key principles, but there is no single agreed-upon text or holy scripture.

1. We practice rites to attune ourselves with the natural rhythm of life forces marked by the phases of the Moon and the seasonal Quarters and Cross Quarters.
2. We recognize that our intelligence gives us a unique responsibility towards our environment. We seek to live in harmony with Nature, in ecological balance offering fulfillment to life and consciousness within an evolutionary concept.
3. We acknowledge a depth of power far greater than that is apparent to the average person. Because it is far greater than ordinary it is sometimes called "supernatural", but we see it as lying within that which is naturally potential to all.
4. We conceive of the Creative Power in the universe as manifesting through polarity - as masculine and feminine - and that this same Creative Power lies in all people, and functions through the interaction of the masculine and feminine. We value neither above the other, knowing each to be supportive of the other. We value sex as pleasure, as the symbol and embodiment of life, and as one of the sources of energies used in magickal practice and religious worship.
5. We recognize both outer and inner, or psychological, worlds - sometimes known as the Spiritual World, the Collective Unconscious, Inner Planes, etc. - and we see in the interaction of these two dimensions the basis for paranormal phenomena and magickal exercises. We neglect neither dimension for the other, seeing both as necessary for our fulfillment.

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6. We do not recognize any authoritarian hierarchy, but do honor those who teach, respect those who share their greater knowledge and wisdom, and acknowledge those who have courageously given of themselves in leadership.
7. We see religion, magic and wisdom-in-living as being united in the way one views the world and lives within it - a world-view and philosophy of life which we identify as Witchcraft, the Wiccan Way.
8. Calling oneself "Witch" does not make one a Witch - but neither does heredity itself, nor the collecting of titles, degrees and initiations. A Witch seeks to control the forces within her/himself that make life possible in order to live wisely and well without harm to others and in harmony with Nature.
9. We believe in the affirmation and fulfillment of life in a continuation of evolution and development of consciousness, that gives meaning to the Universe we know, and our personal role within it.
10. Our only animosity towards Christianity, or toward any other religion or philosophy of life, is to the extent that its institutions have claimed to be "the only way," and have sought to deny freedom to others and to suppress other ways of religious practice and belief.
11. As American Witches, we are not threatened by debates on the history of the Craft, the origins of various terms, or the origins of various aspects of different traditions. We are concerned with our present and our future.
12. We do not accept the concept of absolute evil, nor do we worship any entity known as "Satan" or "the Devil", as defined by Christian tradition. We do not seek power through the suffering of others, nor do we accept that personal benefit can be derived only by denial to another.
13. We believe that we should seek within Nature that which is contributory to our health and well-being.

Worship/Rites/Ceremonies

Group esbats and sabbats normally take place in a circle, indoors or outdoors, and involve fire. This is in addition to more common private or "solitary" practice, which may involve study, meditation, divination and "spell work" with cords, herbs, oils, candles and similar. Other ceremonial objects include magical tools such as a cup (chalice), plate, wand, knife (athame) bell, among others. Prayers and offerings may also be made to deity images of various types at a home shrine, and Wiccans frequently keep a magical journal and ceremonial grimoire, spellbook or "book of shadows." Within the rules of the institution, devotional items, and religious books and literature should be accessible at these times, and when an inmate may be in solitary confinement.

Holy Books

There is no single scriptural text in Wicca, although individual Wiccans may have specific texts, they consider sacred, and many portions of any "book of shadows" may be common between multiple individuals and traditions.

Work Proscription Days

None required by faith or practice.

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Fast Days

There are no specific fast days required by faith or practice, although some Wiccans may fast for personal and magical reasons.

Dietary Restrictions

There are no specific dietary laws, although many Wiccans may opt to be vegetarians or vegans by personal conviction.

Leadership/Meetings/Worship

Wiccan circles are autonomous and may choose or share leadership and other responsibilities. Some traditions have a system of “degrees” (usually three) to recognize skill or achievement, but not all.

Burial Practices

There are no special burial practices for Wiccans.

Resources

- <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Wicca>
- Ronald Hutton, 1999. The Triumph of the Moon: A History of Modern Pagan Witchcraft.
- Starhawk, 1979. The Spiral Dance: The Spiral Dance: A Rebirth of the Ancient Religion of the Great Goddess.
- Raymond Buckland, 1986. Buckland's Complete Book of Witchcraft.
- Scott Cunningham, 1988. Wicca: A Guide for the Solitary Practitioner.
- Janet and Stewart Farrar. Eight Sabbats for Witches (1981). The Witches' Way (1984).
- Gerald Gardner. Witchcraft Today (1954) The Meaning of Witchcraft (1959).
- US DOJ Bureau of Prisons, 2002. Inmate Religious Beliefs and Practices (TRM T5360.01)

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World Wide Church of God

History/Background

The World Wide Church of God is a study in transition, progression and change. It was founded in the 1950s and 1960s by Herbert W. Armstrong who strongly opposed traditional doctrines and teachings of the protestant church. Following the death of Armstrong in 1986, Joseph Tkach Sr. became head of the World Wide Church of God (WCG). Mr. Tkach would usher in sweeping doctrinal and theological changes to WCG. Under Tkach leadership the focuses of the church became the Gospel of Jesus Christ and grace and not prophecy or the millennium, issues heavily emphasized by Armstrong. Today, Jesus Christ is recognized as Lord and Savior who gives instruction for all areas of life. Additionally, there is a very strong emphasis placed on prayer and individual study of the scriptures as dynamics for spiritual growth.

Theology/Major Teachings/Belief

At this point in the history of the WCG, there appears to be no major divergent teachings from evangelical Christianity.

Worship/Rites/Ceremonies

WCG utilizes a conservative, evangelical form of worship and teaching in their church services.

Holy Books

The Holy Bible

Holy Days/Festivals

December 25 th	Christmas
April	Easter

Work Proscription Days

None required by faith or practice.

Fast Days

None required by faith or practice.

Dietary Restrictions

None required by faith or practice.

Leadership/Meetings/Worship

The World Wide Church of God utilizes ministers and lay leaders.

Sources

World Wide Church of God website at www.wcg.org; Christianity Today Article, "From the Fringes to the Fold," by Ruth Tucker.