



FAMILY CONNECTIONSV

Find time to explore these questions as a family after each session.

Session 1

- Do all paths lead to the same God?
- Can some paths get you somewhere, but not quite to God? Where might the paths get you?

Session 2

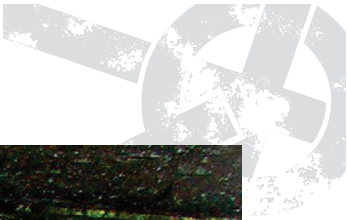
- Have you chosen to believe in God, or have you always simply assumed that God exists? Why?
- Why do you choose to believe in God rather than not to believe in God?
- Why do you choose to believe in one God rather than many gods?
- Why do Christians believe in one God?

Session 3

- What would Christianity be like without Christ? What would we believe? What would Christian worship be like?
- How might your life be different if you believed Jesus was merely a prophet and not the Son of God who died for your sins?
- What is a good reason for you to believe in Jesus? Would those reasons convince someone who didn't grow up believing in Jesus to believe in him?

Session 4

- Do you ever spend time with people who are not Christian? If not, why not? If so, do you ever talk about your different religious beliefs?
- What is the best thing that can happen by having friends from other religions? What is the worst thing?
- What is the difference between sharing your faith and persuading someone? Can someone do both sensitively? Can you do either respectfully?
- How far can you go with interfaith relations before abandoning your Christian beliefs or breaking your commitments?











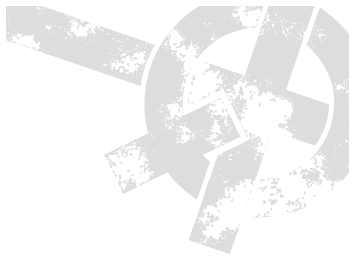


FAITH STATEMENT

God is the Creator, Redeemer, and Sustainer of our world. God's Spirit works in surprising places throughout creation and is found even among people who are unaware of the Spirit's presence. The Creator endows all persons with God's own image.

—From Part 2 of *Presbyterian Principles for Interfaith Dialogue*





1. Atheism



© 2010 Geneva Press
Permission to reproduce this page granted to purchasers of this material.



2. Monothelism



© 2010 Geneva Press
Permission to reproduce this page granted to purchasers of this material.

Web Resource 2a
680508



3. Polytheism



4. Pantheism



5. Panentheism



© 2010 Geneva Press
Permission to reproduce this page granted to purchasers of this material.

Web Resource 2a
680508



6. Henoththeism



© 2010 Geneva Press
Permission to reproduce this page granted to purchasers of this material.

Web Resource 2a
680508



Theists (One God)

Baha'i
Christianity
Hare Krishna
Islam
Jehovah's Witness
Judaism
Mormonism
Rastafarianism
Sikhism
Zoroastrianism
Yoruba

No Gods

Atheism
Buddhism

Polytheists (Many Gods)

Buddhism
Falun Gong
Hinduism
Jainism
Shinto
Wicca
Zoroastrianism

Divine Is (in) Everything

New Age
Scientology
Taoism

Various Ideas

Confucianism
Native American religions
Unitarianism





MANDALA



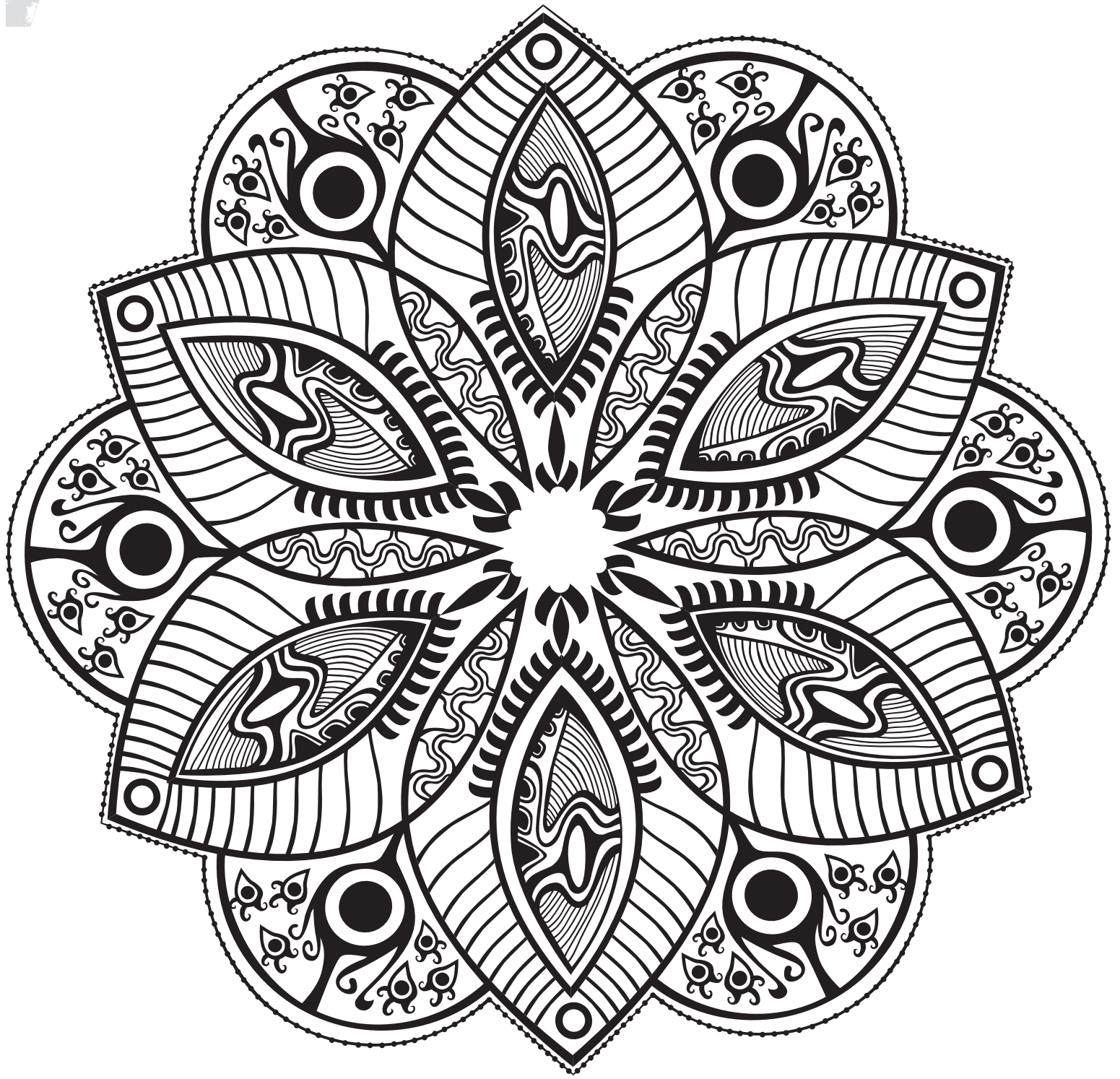


MANDALA





MANDALA





Questions for Participants to Ask the Guest

- How many people participate in your belief system?
Where do they predominately live?
- What are their holidays like?
- What do they regularly wear and eat?
- How do they worship?
- What do young people learn and do in your belief system?
- Why do people of your belief system not believe there is one God?
- What does your belief system have to say about the Bible?
- If your belief system does not believe in any gods, how is it a religion?
- If your belief system believes in many gods, how can you choose which to worship?
- What does it have in common with Christianity?

Questions for the Guest to Ask the Group

- What about my belief system seems most similar to Christianity?
- What would you tell teenagers from my belief system about Christianity?
- How would you try to convince someone from my belief system that God is one?
- How would you explain the experience of God as one?
- How would you explain the concept of God as one?
- How would you respond if someone from my belief system asked you about the Trinity (that Jesus is God, and God is God, and the Holy Spirit is God)?



















Moses	Howard Stern	David Blaine	Mel Gibson	Tom Hanks
Mary	Steven Spielberg	Harry Houdini	Chuck Norris	Jeff Foxworthy
Jesus	Jerry Seinfeld	Muhammad	Mister Rogers	Jeff Gordon
Harrison Ford	Judy Blume	Malcolm X	Mr. T	Johnny Cash
Jake and Maggie Gyllenhaall	Shel Silverstein	Muhammad Ali	LeAnn Rimes	Alice Cooper
Shia LaBeouf	Anne Frank	Kareem Abdul-Jabbar	Kanye West	George W. Bush
Gwyneth Paltrow	Isaac Asimov	Cat Stevens	Jessica Simpson	Barack Obama
Natalie Portman	J. D. Salinger	Shaquille O'Neal	Denzel Washington	Martin Luther King Jr.
Adam Sandler	Stan Lee	Congressmen Keith Ellison and Andre Carson	Kurt Warner	Billy Graham
Jon Stewart	Calvin Klein	C. S. Lewis	Isaac Newton	
Ben Stiller	Ralph Lauren	Clay Aiken	Dikembe Mutombo	
Paula Abdul	Levi Strauss	Bono	George Foreman	



QUR'AN EXCERPTS

2:136

We believe in Allah and in that which has been revealed to us, and in that which was revealed to Abraham, and Ishmael and Isaac and Jacob and the tribes, and in that which was given to Moses and Jesus, and in that which was given to the prophets from the Lord, we do not make any distinction between any of them and to Him do we submit.

5:82b

Thou wilt find the nearest in friendship to the believers to be those who say, We are Christians. That is because there are priests and monks among them and because they are not proud.





FAITH STATEMENT

Question 49. Will all human beings be saved?

No one will be lost who can be saved. The limits to salvation, whatever they may be, are known only to God. Three truths above all are certain. God is a holy God who is not to be trifled with. No one will be saved except by grace alone. And no judge could possibly be more gracious than our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ.

—*Study Catechism: Full Version*





Questions for Participants to Ask the Guest

- How many people are part of your belief system?
Where do they predominately live?
What are their holidays like?
What do they regularly wear and eat?
How do they worship?
- What do young people learn and do in your belief system?
- What do people of your belief system believe about Jesus? About God?
- What does your belief system have to say about the Bible? Why don't they believe what the Bible says about Jesus?
- How do you believe that God "saves" people without Jesus?
- What does your belief system have in common with Christianity?

Questions for the Guest to Ask the Group

- What about my belief system seems to you most similar to Christianity?
- What would you tell teenagers from my belief system about Christianity?
- What do you really believe about Jesus Christ? Why do you really believe in Jesus Christ?
- Other than Jesus, what are the most important beliefs in your faith? How would you feel about a non-Christian who shared some of those beliefs?
- Do you think it is important to convert non-Christians to Christianity? Why or why not?



Scripture Passages:

Romans 14:4, 22
Colossians 2:16–17
John 10:15–17

Discussion Questions:

- What does this Scripture passage say about relating to people who are not Christian?
- How do you feel when someone of another religion tells you about his or her faith?
- How would you feel if someone tried to convert you to his or her faith?
- Is it dangerous to hang out with non-Christians if you aren't a deeply committed Christian? Why or why not?
- Would you ever try to convert someone to Christianity? How? Why?



I never noticed it when I was younger. In fact, if my dad hadn't told me, I don't think I would have realized it at all. It wasn't until much later that I began to pick up on the subtle clues. On the rare occasion that I actually saw my uncle, religion wasn't typically the focus of our family gatherings. It was recently that I started examining his behavior a little more closely.

You see, my uncle is an atheist. That means that he doesn't believe that a supreme being exists. In other words, he believes that there is no God and that the universe was created in some other way. He doesn't follow any aspects of religion, except that he celebrates Christmas with my whole family. He even denies the true meaning of Christmas and focuses solely on the food and gifts. Lately, I've taken to noticing that he refuses to close his eyes or bow his head when our family prays before meals. He often uses the Lord's name in vain, as though it has no value or importance whatsoever. He sometimes behaves in a manner that I'm sure isn't pleasing to God. It's difficult for me to comprehend how anyone can deny God's existence outright. I can't even imagine living without the knowledge of God's love and the support God gives me every day. Although I don't treat my uncle differently intentionally, I am confused, saddened, disheartened, and bewildered by his beliefs.

My dad, a Christian, often speaks of how frustrating it is to him that my uncle doesn't realize what he is missing out on. The two brothers sometimes quarrel and bicker over religion, but my uncle appears firm and undeterred from his beliefs. As I have grown older, more mature, and less ignorant of my own faith, I have begun to understand my uncle better. I realize that I shouldn't turn away from my relative simply because of his beliefs. I can't pretend like he isn't who he is, and I need to embrace the lifestyle he has chosen. I may disagree with my uncle, but I love him just the same. In fact, I may even love him more because of his atheism. Without his conscious knowledge of God's care, my uncle needs all the human support he can get. I have decided that prayer and affection is the least I can give my family member who has strayed from the loving path of God. I hope that the Christian influences around my uncle will help him eventually to realize the glory, tenderness, and forgiveness of God. I, for one, will always love and accept my uncle, and I hope he comes to learn that God will, too.



Questions for Participants to Ask the Guest

- Why did these people begin to argue and fight?
- Why did it escalate? Why haven't they found or didn't they find some resolution?
- Other than religion, what else was the conflict about?
- Is conflict part of the values of these religions? If not, why did religion become part of the issue?
- Did religious people on either side try to stop the conflict? How successful were they?
- How can religion help stop conflicts?
- How can religion keep conflicts from happening?

Questions for the Guest to Ask the Group

- What would you do if a non-Christian country started a religious conflict with America?
- What would you do if America started a religious conflict with a non-Christian country?
- Why does religion gets abused and manipulated in conflicts?
- How can religion make peace?