

Gurdwara



A Sikh place of congregational worship is called 'Gurdwara' which is open to visitors irrespective of their colour, faith, gender or background. The common translation of the term as temple is not satisfactory as Sikhism possesses no sacrificial symbolism. Sikhs have neither idols nor altars in their holy places. The essential feature of a Gurdwara is the presiding presence of the Sri Guru Granth Sahib, the eternal Guru or Word of God. Hence the name Gurdwara (guru + dwara = the Guru's Door).

An essential part of any Gurdwara is the 'langgar' (free kitchen) which is open to all. It is a practical expression of the Sikh ideals of equality, sharing and oneness of humanity. The Gurdwara also serves as a community centre, a school and a base for local charitable activities.

Singh and Kaur

Every Sikh male has 'Singh' (meaning lion) as his last name and every Sikh female has 'Kaur' (meaning princess) as her last name. So you can never go wrong calling a Sikh gentleman "Mr Singh" and a lady "Ms Kaur". The whole Sikh Community is collectively called the "Khalsa Panth".

Sikh Greeting

Whenever a Sikh meets another Sikh, they greet each other with folded hands, saying: 'Waheguru ji ka Khalsa, Waheguru ji ki Fateh' (The Khalsa belongs to the wonderful Lord, who is always victorious.)

Prayer

Since Sikh dharma does not have a formal priestly class or ordained clergy, public worship can be led by any competent initiated male or female Sikh. When meditating or praying, neither day, direction or location are as important as a real need for communication and desire for experience with the Unknown. A Sikh shall remember God always and everywhere. In their daily prayers Sikhs seek the blessings of God 'for the good of all humankind'

The Sikh congregational prayer ends with:

Nanak Naam chardhi k-1a,
Tayre bhaaneh sarbat da bhalaa.
Nanak says, through the Divine Name, may our spirits rise; and by Your Will O'God, may humankind prosper in peace.

Gurdwaras in Victoria

Gurdwara Sahib Blackburn
127 Whitehorse Road, Blackburn VIC 3130

Gurdwara Sahib Craigieburn
344 Hume Highway, Craigieburn VIC 3164

Gurdwara Sahib Hoppers Crossing
417 Sayers Road, Hoppers Crossing VIC 3029

Gurdwara Sahib Keysborough
198 - 206 Perry Road, Keysborough VIC 3073

Gurdwara Sahib Shepparton
240 Doyles Road, Shepparton VIC 3603

Gurdwara Sahib Werribee
560 Davis Road, Tarneit VIC 3029

Nanaksar Thaath
430 Evans Road, Lynbrook VIC 3975

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Who Are The SIKHS



“There is one God
Whose name is Truth
The Creator
Without fear
Without hate
A timeless being
Beyond births and deaths
Self-illuminated
Revealed only by
the Guru's grace”

(Sri Guru Granth Sahib - Sikh Sacred Scriptures)

Highlights

- Sikhism was founded by Guru Nanak in 1469.
- Guru Granth Sahib is the eternal spiritual guide of the Sikhs.
- Sikhism's central theological belief is that there is one God for all of creation, a loving Creator attainable through meditation and remembrance of God's Name.
- Sikhism does not recognise racial, class, caste or earthly distinctions.
- Sikhism recognises the complete equality between women and men in all spheres of life; political, social and religious.
- Sikhism is a way of life that advocates the practice of holistic life experiences - work, worship and service.
- In 1699 Guru Gobind Singh - the tenth Sikh Guru - revealed a new, voluntary order of the Sikhs, called the Khalsa (meaning "belonging only to the Divine").
- Twenty-five million Sikhs worldwide trace the origin of their religion to Punjab.
- The total Sikh population in Australia is 26,500 and of these 9,000 reside in Victoria.

Background

The word "Sikh" means disciple or student. Sikhs are students and followers of Guru Nanak (b. 1469), the founder of the Sikh religious tradition, and the nine spiritual masters — called Gurus — who succeeded him. Sikhism, as a monotheistic faith, is a new revealed religion with its own unique, divine scriptures, which are collected in the

Guru Granth Sahib, the eternal spiritual guide of the Sikhs. This extraordinarily poetic treasure of sacred and practical wisdom contains not only the writings of the Sikh Gurus, but remarkably, those of Muslim and Hindu saints as well. It is also notable in that the holy text was written and compiled by the Gurus themselves. Sikhism is not a sect of Hinduism or Islam, or synthesis of these two faiths.

Sikh Beliefs

Sikhism's central theological belief is that there is one God for all of creation, a loving Creator attainable through meditation and remembrance of His Name. He is known by many names, including Jehovah, Ram, Allah, Waheguru and Parmesur. God does not belong to any one person or nation and nor does He love a certain group of people more than another group. God is the same everywhere and all people worship the same formless Lord.

As well as believing in the oneness of God, Sikhs also believe in the oneness of humanity. Just as God transcends the boundaries of race, class, gender, and ethnicity, the Sikh religion dismisses such earthly distinctions. To give this idea a concrete form, the Sikh Gurus incorporated divine revelations from people of different faiths into the Sikh Holy Scripture.

Sikhs are enjoined to lead moral lives, earn their living through hard work and honest means, and to share the fruits of their labor with the needy through charitable contributions and work. Sikhism is a way of life that advocates the practice of holistic life experiences — work, worship, and service — in order to attain perpetual union with God, while creating a just social order in this world. A Sikh is enjoined to lead a wholesome family lifestyle, and to avoid celibacy or asceticism as a means of reaching God.

The Sikh religion is profoundly egalitarian and democratic, as its adherents believe steadfastly that all people have civil rights, including the freedom of religion.

Sikh doctrine resonates with the Gurus' belief that all people have the right to follow their own path to God, without condemnation or coercion from others. Spurred by their religion's dictates, Sikhs have a long, celebrated heritage of speaking out against injustice and for standing up for the defenceless.

Sikh dharma does not claim to be the only way to God. It accepts all religions to be divine in origin, and therefore, routes to God. In addition to this, Sikhs place no faith in superstition, fasting or pilgrimage as rituals which seek inner transformation in merely outer actions.

Khalsa

On March 30, 1699, Guru Gobind Singh—the tenth and last Sikh Guru—established a new, voluntary order of the Sikhs, called the Khalsa (meaning "belonging only to the Divine"). The Khalsa consists of Sikhs who undergo an initiation ceremony and dedicate themselves to living by the high standards of the Sikh Gurus at all times, as well as maintaining their physical distinctiveness in society by maintaining five articles of faith. The Khalsa sisterhood and brotherhood upheld the highest Sikh virtues through the harshest and most difficult times in Sikh history.

Sikhs display their commitment to their beliefs by wearing five mandatory articles of faith, all beginning with the letter 'K'. One of the more conspicuous and noteworthy of the articles of faith is the Kes (unshorn hair), which is kept covered by a distinctive turban. The other articles are the Kirpan (sword), Kara (steel bracelet), Kanga (comb) and Kacchera (undergarment). They all have deep religious meanings for Sikhs, who wear them to honour the teachings of their beloved Gurus and maintain their physical, moral and spiritual development.