

WHO IS GOD?

NATURE AND CHARACTERISTICS

Views of distinguished scholars
Presentations • Poems • Songs • Exhibition
Lunch • Refreshments • Dinner

Saturday, October 1, 2011
J. G. Hagey Hall, University of Waterloo
Waterloo, Ontario, Canada



31st
Anniversary
Celebration

1-877-INFO-WRC
www.WorldReligionsConference.org



WHO IS GOD?

NATURE AND CHARACTERISTICS

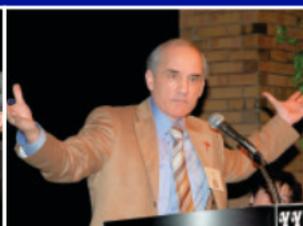
The conference will explore how different faiths and philosophical traditions explain the nature and characteristics of God. Distinguished scholars will deliberate at the conference. Faith groups will present spiritual poems and songs, and set up displays.

You are cordially invited to the largest multi-faith event of Canada, on Saturday, October 1, 2011 at 10:00 am at the Humanities Theatre of J. G. Hagey Hall, University of Waterloo. Complimentary Lunch, Refreshments and Dinner will be served. There is no admission charge.

Register Online at
www.WorldReligionsConference.org

Local Phone: (519) 623-2786
Toll-Free: 1-877-INFO-WRC (1-877-463-6972)
Email: info@WorldReligionsConference.org

Largest Multi-Faith Event in Canada



WORLD RELIGIONS CONFERENCE

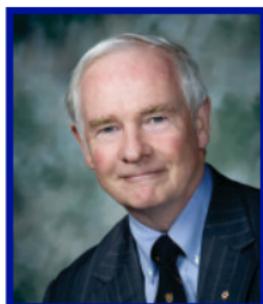
Comments from Dignitaries

“... Endeavors such as the World Religions Conference are vital for they demonstrate to the world that despite the richness of our differences, we have so much in common and can live together in a spirit of understanding and compassion ...”



(Supreme Court Chief Justice Beverley McLachlin)

“... provides an opportunity for people of diverse faith traditions, philosophies and cultural backgrounds to examine their differences and similarities ... That discussion is a vital part of education, moving us from knowledge to wisdom ... The efforts of our students to bring you all together speak to their belief that the religions of the world can make a valuable contribution to the problems that face our society ...”



(David Johnston, Governor-General of Canada)

“... This unique event - the largest multi-faith conference of its kind in Canada - brings together individuals from a wide range of religious beliefs ... The fact that you have been assembling in a spirit of dialogue and congeniality for almost three decades speaks to your commitment to foster mutual understanding, respect and acceptance and thus to make the world a better place ...”



(Prime Minister Stephen Harper of Canada)

“... We believe that mutual respect and a genuine desire for understanding are key to a peaceful world ... The World Religions Conference embodies these very values as it brings together people of beliefs in a spirit of cross-cultural and inter-faith appreciation and acceptance ...”



(Premier Dalton McGuinty of Ontario)

Program



Presided and Moderated by
Jeff Allan
K-W's Famous Radio Host

Famous talk radio host. Jeff has years of experience on air. Started at Toronto in 1987 and then went on to work on morning radio in Owen Sound, London, Winnipeg, Regina, Ottawa and now in Kitchener. Each day, listeners to 570 News can count on Jeff to bring the news stories everyone is talking about to the table with opinion, passion and the big questions listeners want answered.

Opening Session

10:00a ~ 12:20p

- 10:00a Doors Open (Registration and Social)
- 10:30a Opening World Religions Multi Media Presentation
- 10:40a Welcome by the Presiding Chair
— Jeff Allan, K-W's Famous Radio Host
- 10:45a Opening Readings from the Holy Scriptures - All Faiths
- 11:01a Opening Ceremony
— Introduction of Speakers and Dignitaries
— Unveiling of the World Religions Conference Plaque
— Singing of O'Canada - National Anthem of Canada
- 11:08a Introductory Remarks
— Lal Khan Malik, National President,
Ahmadiyya Muslim Jama` at Canada
- 11:14a Introduction to World Faiths & Philosophies*
 - 11:15a — Judaism: Dr. Allan Gould - Toronto
 - 11:20a — Hinduism: Swami Bhagwan Shanker - Hamilton
 - 11:25a — Sikhism: Hari Nam Singh Khalsa - Toronto
 - 11:30a — Humanism: Doug Thomas - Elmira
 - 11:35a — Islam: Muhammad Afzal Mirza - Mississauga
 - 11:40a — Christianity: Pastor Rick Pryce - Kitchener
 - 11:45a — Aboriginals: Gerard Sagassige - Kitchener
 - 11:50a — Buddhism: Sister Thich Quang - Hamilton
- 11:56p Messages and Greetings from Guest Dignitaries
— Representative of the University of Waterloo
— Local and Regional Leaders
— Provincial and National leaders
- 12:20p Complimentary Lunch and Social Break

Theme Session

"Who is God?"

- 1:20p Introduction to the Theme Session – Moderator
- 1:24p Jewish Perspective – Dr. Allan Gould - Toronto
- 1:39p Judaic Spiritual Poem or Song – Local Jewish Community
- 1:45p Hindu Perspective – Swami Bhagwan Shanker - Hamilton
- 2:00p Hindu Spiritual Poem or Song – Local Hindu Community
- 2:06p Sikh Perspective – Hari Nam Singh Khalsa - Toronto
- 2:21p Sikh Spiritual Poem or Song – Sikh Student's Association, UW
- 2:27p Humanist Perspective – Doug Thomas - Elmira
- 2:42p Secular Poem or Song – Society of Ontario FreeThinkers
- 2:48p Islamic Perspective – Muhammad Afzal Mirza - Mississauga
- 3:03p Islamic Spiritual Poem or Song – Ahmadiyya Muslim Childrens
- 3:09p Coffee Break – Complimentary Refreshments and Social
- 3:40p Announcing rules of the Q/A Session – Moderator
- 3:43p Christian Perspective – Pastor Rick Pryce - Kitchener
- 3:58p Christian Spiritual Poem or Song – Local Christian Community
- 4:04p Aboriginal Spiritual Perspective – Gerard Sagassige - Kitchener
- 4:19p Aboriginal Spiritual Poem or Song – Aboriginal Community of KW
- 4:25p Buddhist Perspective – Sister Thich nu Tinh Quang - Hamilton
- 4:40p Buddhist Spiritual Poem or Song – Local Buddhist Community

(* The order of speeches was determined via random draw on Oct. 16, 2010)

Concluding & Interactive Session

- 4:46p Vote of Thanks - Recognition of Speakers and Volunteers
– Mohammad Amir Sheikh, Regional President,
Ahmadiyya Muslim Jama`at
- 4:52p Open Question & Answer Session with all Speakers
- 5:40p Closing Remarks – Moderator & Chair
- 5:43p Silent Multi-Faith Prayer – All Faiths
- 5:45p Complimentary Dinner and Social

(Program agenda subject to change)

Speaker Profiles

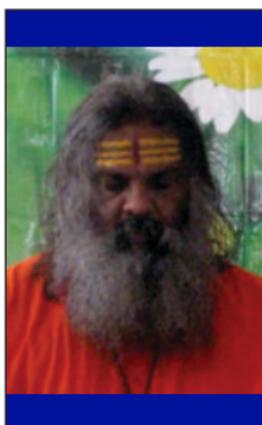
Distinguished Scholars of the World's Religions and Philosophies



Representing Judaism

Dr. Allan Gould - Toronto

Outstanding speaker and scholar of Judaism. Allan has a Masters in Theatre from New York University, and a Doctorate in English from York University. Has taught at York and U. of T. for a decade, and authored 42 books, published by 16 international publishers, including the highly-regarded anthology, *What Did They Think of the Jews?* Lectures frequently across North America on Jewish topics.



Representing Hinduism

Swami Bhagwan Shanker - Hamilton

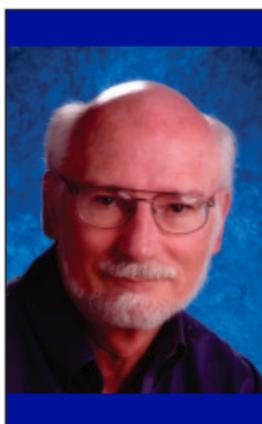
A devout disciple and lecturer of Shri Ashutosh Maharaj who is the Head of the world-wide mission, Divya Jyoti Jagrati Sansthan with head office in India. Born in Guyana, and migrated during early secondary school to Canada. Through guidance of his Master, Ashutosh ji, he regularly engages in spiritual discourses in many parts of the world. Electrical mechanical contractor by profession while simultaneously pursuing a path in Sanathan Dharma (Hinduism).



Representing Sikhism

Hari Nam Singh Khalsa - Toronto

Spiritual Leader, Mentor, Author, and Teacher not only within the Sikh Faith but to all people. Hari Nam Singh Khalsa hosts a nationally aired weekly TV program, "Insight Into Sikhism", the only regularly scheduled English-language television program about Sikhism. His mission is to uplift the truth and well-being of all people. Author of "Wisdom Shared" & "Aquarian Consciousness", Mr. Khalsa teaches individuals to expand beyond their self-imposed limitations.



Representing Humanism

Doug Thomas - Elmira

Retired teacher, Canadian historical fiction novelist, Doug Thomas is the President of the Society of Ontario Freethinkers and founding President of Secular Connexion Séculaire, a new advocacy group for Canadian Humanists. He is publishing editor of Canadian Freethinker magazine with essays published internationally in The United States, Europe and India. A respected Agnostic Humanist, Doug actively promotes open secularism as a means of separating Church from State in Canada.

Speaker Profiles

Distinguished Scholars of the World's Religions and Philosophies



Representing Islam

Muhammad Afzal Mirza - Mississauga

Prolific speaker and a learned scholar of world religions. Takes keen interest in youth welfare. Regularly hosts a live phone-in radio program explaining contemporary Islamic issues. Graduated from the Ahmadiyya Islamic University in 1976. Worked as an Islamic Missionary in various cities in Pakistan, USA and now in Canada. Former Vice President of the Institute of Islamic Studies in Mississauga. Presented at numerous interfaith forums throughout Canada.



Representing Christianity

Pastor Rick Pryce - Kitchener

An ordained Pastor in the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada, currently serving with St. Philip Lutheran Church in Kitchener. Very involved with multi-faith work, and recently appointed to the Steering Committee of Interfaith Grand River. Represented Christianity at various multi-faith events and performed spiritual presentations at previous World Religions Conferences. Recently published in the Lutheran Journal Consensus. Working on his Doctor of Ministry Degree at Waterloo Lutheran Seminary.



Representing Aboriginals

Gerard Sagassige - Kitchener

Aboriginal spiritual and cultural Advisor. Gerard works within Healing of the Seven Generations, a community healing strategy and support program in Kitchener-Waterloo. An Ojibwe of the Great Mississauga Nation. Raised with belief, faith and prayers and still maintains a guidance structure from a circle of Aboriginal Elders. Life's priority focus is to seed one's healing path for the legacies of residential school era and the 60's scoop of Aboriginals.



Representing Buddhism

Sister Thich nu Tinh Quang - Hamilton

Excellent teacher. Acquired a B.A. in Philosophy, a Diploma in Human Services, majoring in Addictions and Mental Health. Post-graduate training was at the Gestalt Institute of Toronto. Spends several months a year in Ba Ria - Vung Tau, Vietnam, with her teachers. Her training has been in Korean and Vietnamese Zen. Sister was ordained in Vietnam by her Master, Most Venerable Thich Nhat Lien.

Glimpses from recent World Religions Conferences



October 16, 2010: Keeping Faith Alive In Contemporary Society - UW



October 24, 2009: Is God Relevant in Today's World - UW



October 26, 2008: Founders of Religion, Model for Humanity - UW



November 24, 2007: How Religion Can Protect the Environment - UW



December 2, 2006: My Faith and Freedom of Conscience - Waterloo

Past World Religions Conferences

- 1981 – Life and Teachings of Various Religious Founders
Brier Park School, Brantford
- 1981 – Life and Teachings of Various Religious Founders
North Park Collegiate, Brantford
- 1982 – Life and Teachings of Various Religious Founders
Brier Park School, Brantford
- 1983 – Life and Teachings of Various Religious Founders
North Park Collegiate, Brantford
- 1984 – Concept of Salvation
North Park Collegiate, Brantford
- 1985 – Human Rights in Religion
North Park Collegiate, Brantford
- 1986 – The Rights of Men and Women in Religion
North Park Collegiate, Brantford
- 1987 – Existence of God in Religion
North Park Collegiate, Brantford
- 1988 – Life After Death
North Park Collegiate, Brantford
- 1989 – World Peace
North Park Collegiate, Brantford
- 1990 – Drug Abuse
North Park Collegiate, Brantford
- 1991 – Solution of Modern Social Problems
North Park Collegiate, Brantford
- 1992 – Racial, Religious and Cultural Tolerance
North Park Collegiate, Brantford
- 1993 – War or Peace - What Awaits Humanity?
North Park Collegiate, Brantford
- 1995 – Family Values in Religion
North Park Collegiate, Brantford
- 1996 – Role of Religion in the Future
North Park Collegiate, Brantford
- 1997 – Are There Any Absolute Universal Values?
North Park Collegiate, Brantford
- 1998 – Mankind in the Next Millennium
North Park Collegiate, Brantford
- 1999 – Morality in the Next Millennium
North Park Collegiate, Brantford
- 2000 – Changing Faces of the Family - Religious Perspectives
North Park Collegiate, Brantford
- 2001 – Reconciling the Existence of God & Human Suffering
University of Waterloo, Waterloo
- 2002 – World Peace - What Religions Can Achieve
University of Waterloo, Waterloo
- 2003 – In Search of the Existence of God
University of Waterloo, Waterloo
- 2004 – Why Religion?
University of Waterloo, Waterloo
- 2005 – The Basis and Concept of Salvation
Centre in the Square, Kitchener
- 2006 – My Faith and Freedom of Conscience
University of Waterloo, Waterloo
- 2007 – How Religion Can Protect the Environment
University of Waterloo, Waterloo
- 2008 – Founders of Religion - Model for Humanity
University of Waterloo, Waterloo
- 2009 – Is God Relevant in Today's World?
University of Waterloo, Waterloo
- 2010 – Keeping Faith Alive In Contemporary Society
University of Waterloo, Waterloo
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 <p>Club FEDERATION OF STUDENTS</p>	<p>University of Waterloo</p> 
	<p>WATERLOO REGION RECORD Community Partnerships Program</p> 
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 <p>Sikh Students' Association (UW)</p>	 <p>Visualizing oneness in all Brahmarishi Mission</p> <p>Brahmarishi Mission of Canada (Kitchener-Waterloo)</p>
<p>KW Council of Churches</p>	 <p>Sri Sathya Sai Baba Spiritual Group (UW)</p>
 <p>Aboriginal Student Services (UW)</p>	 <p>Waterloo Riverview Dharma Centre</p>
	
 <p>Across Boundaries Multifaith Institute (Toronto)</p>	<p>callture wherever you go</p> 
 <p>Promoting Cross Cultures Magazine and better understanding</p>	 <p>BOSS www.beamon.ca</p>
 <p>CHURCH OF SAINT MICHAEL Waterloo, Ontario</p>	 <p>LFA WLU FreeThought Alliance</p>
 <p>St. Philip's Lutheran Church Kitchener</p>	 <p>Forest Hill United Church Kitchener</p>

Disclaimer: Views expressed at this conference are those of the speakers and may NOT necessarily reflect the views of the Federation of Students or the University of Waterloo or any other organization.

ORGANIZERS



Ahmadiyya Muslim Jama`at
5 Elliot Street, Cambridge,
Ontario N1R 2J3



Ahmadiyya Muslim
Students' Association
Univ. of Waterloo & Wilfrid Laurier

Message from our Premier Sponsor

Ahmadiyya Muslim Jama`at

*T*his conference was envisioned by the founder of worldwide Ahmadiyya Muslim Jama`at, who claimed to be the divinely appointed Promised Messiah and al-Imam al-Mahdi^{as} in 1889.

*T*he Ahmadiyya Muslim Jama`at organizes it in many countries on a regular basis. Scholars of various religions express the beauties of their respective faith, in a peaceful and brotherly atmosphere.

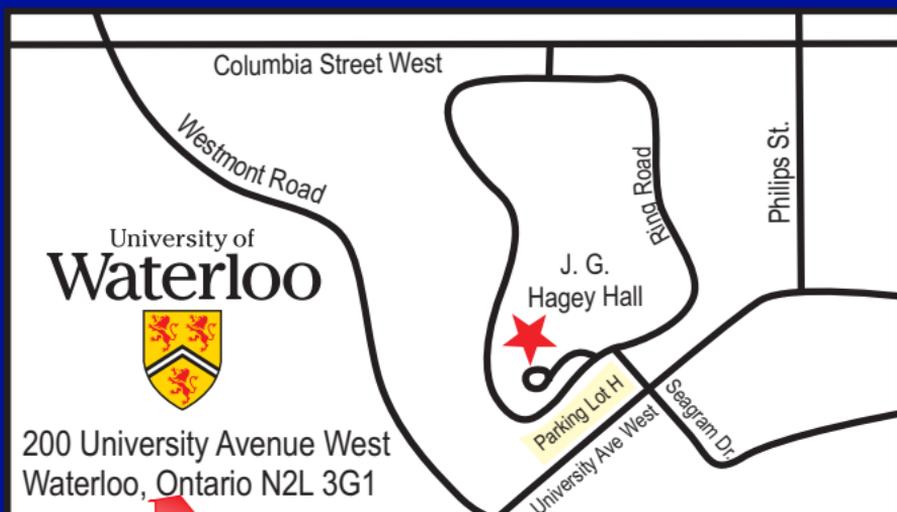
*T*he Ahmadiyya Muslim Jama`at is an embodiment of the benevolent message of all world religions — peace, universal brotherhood, and submission to the Will of God.

*I*n Canada, the Ahmadiyya Muslim Jama`at has been organizing this conference for 31 years.



National Head Office:
Bai'tul Islam Mosque
Maple, Ontario, Canada

www.ahmadiyya.ca
www.alislam.org



View Excerpts of Past Conferences
<http://www.youtube.com/WorldReligionsConf>

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(Guaranteed only if you arrive before 11:00 am)

RSVP suggested: www.WorldReligionsConference.org

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