



Views of religious scholars  
Presentations • Poems • Hymns • Exhibition  
Brunch • Lunch • Refreshments

Sunday, September 28, 2014  
River Run Centre  
Guelph, Ontario, Canada

34<sup>th</sup>  
*Anniversary*

1-877-INFO-WRC

[www.WorldReligionsConference.org](http://www.WorldReligionsConference.org)



# PATHWAY TO PEACE

Sunday, Sept. 28, 2014

10:00 am - 4:30 pm

River Run Centre, Guelph

The world is passing through turbulent times. Crises throughout the globe continue to manifest newer and graver dangers. The conference aims to explore guidance based on the teachings of different religious and philosophical traditions to lead humanity on a path to security and peace; peace, at every level of human existence, individual, societal and international. The conference further hopes that such mutual exploration will encourage better understanding and promote harmonious co-existence among the members of Canada's cultural mosaic.

You're invited. Free Admission. Register Online at  
**[www.WorldReligionsConference.org](http://www.WorldReligionsConference.org)**  
Complimentary Brunch, Lunch and Refreshments.

Toll-Free: 1-877-INFO-WRC (1-877-463-6972)  
Email: [info@WorldReligionsConference.org](mailto:info@WorldReligionsConference.org)

## *Largest Multi-Faith Event in Canada*



# Interfaith Harmony

## Quotes from Recent Religious Leaders

"... This is the most attractive and peace-giving principle. It provides the basis for reconciliation among nations and promotes better moral conduct. It teaches us to believe in the truth of all the prophets ..."



*Hazrat Ahmad, Promised Messiah  
(Muslim Leader - 1835~1908)*



"... Our innermost prayer should be that a Hindu should be a better Hindu, a Muslim a better Muslim, a Christian a better Christian. I broaden my Hinduism by loving other religions than my own ... All religions are true..."



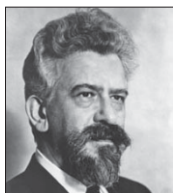
*Mahatma Gandhi  
(Hindu Leader - 1869~1948)*



"... The problem to be faced is: how to combine loyalty to one's own tradition with reverence for different traditions ..."



*Rabbi Abraham Joshua Heschel  
(Jewish Leader - 1907~1972)*



## Quotes from Contemporary Religious Leaders

"... My fundamental belief is that all religious traditions have the same potential to make better human beings, good human beings, sensible human beings, compassionate human beings ..."



*His Holiness Dalai Lama Gyatso  
(Buddhist Leader - Reign since 1950)*



"... All the major religions of the world taught the worship of God and love and compassion ... If these original teachings were upheld today it would lead to a harmonious society, free from conflict and war ..."



*His Holiness Mirza Masroor Ahmad  
(Muslim Leader - Khilafat since 2003)*



"... Dialogue is born from an attitude of respect for the other person, from a conviction that the other person has something good to say. It assumes that there is room in the heart for the person's point of view, opinion, and proposal ..."



*His Holiness Pope Francis  
(Christian Leader - Papacy since 2013)*



# Program

September 28, 2014



Presided and Moderated by  
Abigail Bimman  
TV Anchor & Journalist

As a videographer with CTV Kitchener, Abigail shoots and reports a wide range of stories for viewers across Southwestern Ontario. On weekends, she produces and anchors local newscasts. Her journalism has been recognized with awards from the Canadian Association of Journalists and RTDNA. Before joining CTV Kitchener, Abigail worked at Studio 12 News (Oshawa), Rogers TV, CTV Ottawa and CTV News Channel.

## Opening Session

10:00a ~ 12:00p

- 10:00a      Doors Open  
              — Welcome and Registration  
              — Complimentary Brunch and Social  
              — Visit to World Religions Displays
- 10:30a      Opening World Religions Multi Media Presentation
- 10:40a      Welcome by the Presiding Chair  
              — Abigail Bimman, TV Anchor & Journalist
- 10:44a      Opening Readings from the Holy Scriptures - All Faiths
- 10:57a      Opening Ceremony  
              — Introduction of Speakers and Dignitaries  
              — Unveiling of the World Religions Conference Plaque  
              — Singing of O'Canada - National Anthem of Canada  
                  (Trevor Dick & Gateway Public School Orchestra)
- 11:05a      Introductory Remarks  
              — Lal Khan Malik, National President,  
                  Ahmadiyya Muslim Jama`at Canada
- 11:10a      Speaker's Introductory Remarks \*
- 11:11a — Islam: Muhammad Afzal Mirza – Toronto  
              11:14a — Humanism: Karis Burkowski – Waterloo  
              11:17a — Hinduism: Swami Chaitanya Jyotiji – Kitchener  
              11:20a — Christianity: Rev. John Lawson – Guelph  
              11:23a — Buddhism: Dr. Christopher Ross – Waterloo  
              11:26a — Judaism: Rabbi Michael Dolgin – Toronto  
              11:29a — Aborigines: Rick Rogers – Toronto  
              11:32a — Sikhism: Jagmeet Singh – Toronto
- 11:35a      Messages and Greetings from Guest Dignitaries  
              — Local and Regional Leaders  
              — Provincial and National leaders
- 12:00p      Break Time and Social Interactions  
              — Complimentary Lunch Service

# Theme Session

## "Pathway to Peace"

1:00p ~ 3:36p

- 1:00p Introduction to the Theme Session — Moderator
- 1:02p Islamic Perspective — Muhammad Afzal Mirza – Toronto
- 1:14p Islamic Spiritual Poem or Hymn — Ahmadiyya Muslim Children
- 1:19p Humanist Perspective — Karis Burkowski – Waterloo
- 1:31p Secular Poem or Song — Society of Ontario FreeThinkers
- 1:36p Hindu Perspective — Swami Chaitanya Jyotiji – Kitchener
- 1:48p Hindu Spiritual Poem or Hymn — Local Hindu Community
- 1:53p Christian Perspective — Rev. John Lawson – Guelph
- 2:05p Christian Spiritual Poem or Hymn — Local Christian Community
- 2:10p Buddhist Perspective — Dr. Christopher Ross – Waterloo
- 2:22p Buddhist Spiritual Poem or Hymn — Local Buddhist Community
- 2:27p **Coffee Break — Complimentary Refreshments and Social**
- 2:45p Jewish Perspective — Rabbi Michael Dolgin – Toronto
- 2:57p Judaic Spiritual Poem or Hymn — Local Jewish Community
- 3:02p Aboriginal Perspective — Rick Rogers – Toronto
- 3:14p Aboriginal Spiritual Poem or Hymn — Aboriginal Community
- 3:19p Sikh Perspective — Jagmeet Singh – Toronto
- 3:31p Sikh Spiritual Poem or Hymn — Sikh Student's Association

(\* The order of speeches was determined via random draw on Oct. 6, 2013)

## Concluding and Interactive Session

3:36p ~ 4:30p

- 3:36p Announcing rules of the Q/A Session — Moderator
- 3:38p Open Question & Answer Session — (45 minutes)  
— with all speakers of different faiths and philosophies
- 4:23p Vote of Thanks - Recognition of Speakers and Volunteers  
— Fwad Malik, President WRC Organizing Committee
- 4:27p Closing Remarks — Moderator & Chair
- 4:29p Silent Multi-Faith Prayer — All Faiths
- 4:30p **Social Interaction and Adjournment**

(Program agenda subject to change)

# Speaker Profiles

Distinguished Speakers of the 34th World Religions Conference - September 28, 2014



## 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 Toronto. Presented at numerous interfaith forums throughout Canada.



## Representing Humanism

**Karis Burkowski – Waterloo**

Sacred Secular Sanctuary president, and World Pantheist Movement board member, Karis is an atheist, embracing Secular Humanism and Scientific Pantheism (reverence for the Universe and Nature). Karis has celebrated with devotees in synagogues, cathedrals, temples, mosques and gurdwaras around the world. A member of Interfaith Grand River since 2001, she feels that the only acceptable spiritual path must be evidence-based, rational, empowering, and – essential in our multifaith world – tolerant.



## Representing Hinduism

**Swami Chaitanya Jyoti – Kitchener**

Disciple of H. H. Brahmārishi Shri Vishvatma Bawra Ji Maharaj, Chaitanya Jyoti is graduated in M.A. and M.Ed. and has been a lecturer at the Punjab Agriculture University, India. Now vice president of International Brahmārishi Mission and head preacher at Brahmārishi Mission of Canada. Received the Queen Elizabeth Diamond Jubilee Medal Award on November 14, 2012, for outstanding and selfless dedicated service to the community and to Canada for over 30 years.



## Representing Christianity

**Rev. John Lawson – Guelph**

John is a minister in the United Church of Canada currently serving in Guelph. Before theological studies in Princeton, New Jersey he studied International History at Western and London School of Economics. John is passionate about the spiritual connection with the environment, was a candidate for the Green Party in Guelph during the last federal election and is involved in multi-faith dialogue in the Guelph community.



# Speaker Profiles

Distinguished Speakers of the 34th World Religions Conference - September 28, 2014



## Representing Buddhism

**Dr. Christopher Ross – Waterloo**

Psychologist, Dr. Ross provides psychotherapy spiritually-informed by world wisdom traditions. An Associate Professor at Wilfrid Laurier. Recent publications: "Buddhism, Healing and Pastoral Care" in *Psychotherapy: Cure of the Soul*, and "Type-wise: Using Jung's Theory of Psychological Types in Teaching Religious Studies". Current teaching: "Therapeutic and religious responses to grief loss and death", "Spirituality in the human life cycle", "Religious experience", and "Buddhism, psychotherapy and western psychology".



## Representing Judaism

**Rabbi Michael Dolgin – Toronto**

Senior Rabbi of Temple Sinai Congregation of Toronto and Past President of both the Toronto Board of Rabbis and the Reform Rabbis of Greater Toronto. Ordained by the Hebrew Union College-Jewish Institute of Religion in 1992 and is proud to have served Temple Sinai during the last 22 years. His congregational rabbinate has focused on the creation of new liturgy and meeting the challenges of Jewish life through study, prayer, and learning.



## Representing Aboriginals

**Rick Rogers – Toronto**

A member of the Aamjiwnaang First Nation, Bear Clan, with tribal affiliations of the Chippewa/Pottawatomi Nations. For several years in Ontario, Rick has been involved with Aboriginal organizations as well as non-aboriginal educators and organizations including Concerns Canada, Univ of Toronto, Toronto Board of Education, Correctional Services and various social service groups. Rick's strongly feels a need to make people aware of Aboriginal lifestyles.



## Representing Sikhism

**Jagmeet Singh – Brampton**

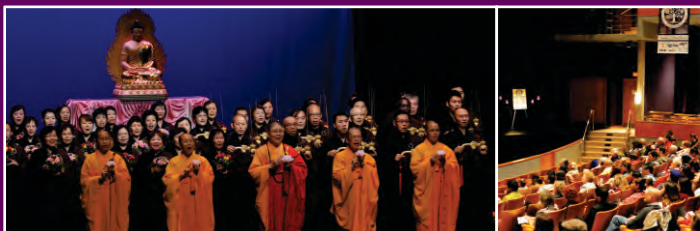
MPP Singh was re-elected in Bramalea-Gore-Malton during the 2014 provincial election. Jagmeet presented a bill in the Legislature, calling for the month of April to be recognized as Sikh Heritage Month which received royal assent. Mr. Singh was listed as one of Toronto Star's Top 12 people, named as Ontario's 75 most powerful people and featured as Toronto's 50 Most Influential People as one of the 5 youngest rising stars.

# History in Canada

## World Religions Conferences

This conference has been organized in Southwestern Ontario, Canada (Brantford, Waterloo, Kitchener, Guelph) for 34 years. Each year the event explores a new theme and promotes interfaith harmony, respect and tolerance between the followers of different faiths and philosophies.

### Glimpses from Recent Years



October 6, 2013: Religious Freedom as Practised by Founders - Guelph



October 13, 2012: Idea of an Ideal Government - Waterloo



October 1, 2011: Who is God? Nature and Characteristics - Waterloo



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



# WORLD RELIGIONS CONFERENCE

## In the Eyes of Canadian 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...”

*The Right Honourable Beverley McLachlin  
Chief Justice of the Supreme Court of Canada*



“... Your presence at this conference demonstrates a shared belief in working together and collaborating with one another to understand the varied perspectives of faith structures as they relate to our world today ... you are learning more about each other and taking an active role in improving the human condition for all ...”

*His Excellency The Right Honourable 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 longevity of this annual event is testimony to the respect Canada shows towards the varied faiths of its citizens. I trust that you will embrace the convention's message of respect and inclusion ...”

*The Right Honourable Stephen Harper  
Prime Minister of Canada*



“... Hosting events such as this represent an opportunity to renew our commitment to religious freedom. It is also a chance to be inspired and enlightened by the wisdom of different religious and philosophical traditions ...”

*The Honourable Kathleen Wynne  
Premier of Ontario*

# Premier Sponsor & Organizer



**AHMADIYYA  
MUSLIM JAMA'AT**

*C a n a d a*

The Ahmadiyya Muslim Jama'at is the largest organized Muslim Community in the world that believes in the awaited Messiah; Mirza Ghulam Ahmad<sup>as</sup>, who founded the Community in 1889.

He presented the vision of the World Religions Conference over 100 years ago. A religious movement to unite humanity, the 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. It is known for its motto:

**Love For All, Hatred For None**

[amjcanada.com](http://amjcanada.com)

[alislam.org](http://alislam.org)

## Municipal Partners



## Media Partners



# Faith Group Partners

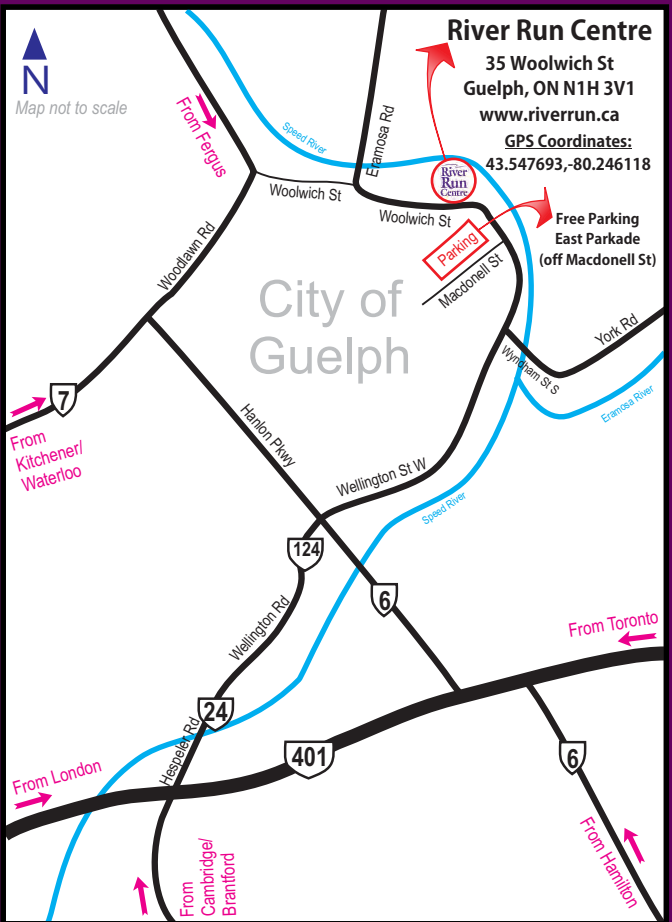
	Brahmarishi Mission of Canada (Kitchener-Waterloo-Guelph)		Church of Our Lady Immaculate, Guelph
	Sikh Students' Association		Duff's Presbyterian Church (Guelph)
	KITCHENER ONTARIO STAKE THE CHURCH OF JESUS CHRIST OF LATTER DAY SAINTS		Sri Sathya Sai Baba Spiritual Group (UW)
		Waterloo Riverview Dharma Centre	
		Ahmadiyya Muslim Students' Association Univ of Waterloo, Wilfrid Laurier & Univ of Guelph	
	St. Philip's Lutheran Church Kitchener		KW Council of Churches
	Multi-Faith Resource Team Ecumenical Campus Minister The University of Guelph		CHURCH OF SAINT MICHAEL Waterloo, Ontario
			Forest Hill United Church Kitchener

## Other Partners

	Society of Ontario Freethinkers reason • ethics • dignity • equality		callture wherever you go
	University of Waterloo FEDERATION OF STUDENTS		SACRED SECULAR SANCTUARY
	Aboriginal Student Services (UW & WLU)		Aboriginal Resource Centre University of Guelph
	Promoting Harmony CROSS CULTURES through knowledge and better understanding		LFA WLU FreeThought Alliance
	SERVING MANKIND Humanity First CANADA		Dietary Supplement Everactive <sup>TM</sup> GOLD

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 Visit online [www.WorldReligionsConference.org](http://www.WorldReligionsConference.org) for details.

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