

World Interfaith Harmony Week 2018



Halifax, Nova Scotia, Canada



UN World FEBRUARY 1-7 2018
Interfaith Harmony Week
www.ihhalifax.ca

*Exploring Similarities
Celebrating Diversity*





"In Halifax we celebrate diversity. We are enriched by our increasingly vibrant mix of faiths, cultures, and customs."
- Mayor Mike Savage, Halifax Regional Municipality

IHH Team Member Sophia Junfang Fu and Hasmeet Singh Chandok went to City Hall and talked with Mayor Mike Savage about the importance of Interfaith Harmony Week 2018.





World Interfaith Harmony Week 2018 (WIHW 2018) was celebrated in Halifax, Nova Scotia, Canada during one of the warmest winters in our history. This was the 5th year of Interfaith Harmony Halifax's (IHH) celebrations for this important week, designated by the United Nations, initiated by HM King Abdullah II of Jordan. Our theme for 2018 was "**Exploring Similarities, Celebrating Diversity**". With this theme as our focus, we once again celebrated Interfaith Harmony in Halifax through the elements of Sacred Spaces: Meeting our Neighbors, Interfaith Engagement Program, Interfaith Celebration, and Declarations of Interfaith Peace and Friendship.

IHH's exciting, new initiative in 2018, was to record all of the **Interfaith Minutes** that we spent together in harmony. As our coordinator, Kim MacAulay, encouraged: "Every minute that people of diverse faiths and good will come together in an open, respectful way, is a minute of Interfaith Harmony. How many minutes occur around the world, where people gather, not for fighting, but for Interfaith Harmony? This is news we can use to encourage our hearts and minds along the path of peace and friendship." In 2018, participants in WIHW spent **181,350 minutes** together for Interfaith Harmony in Halifax.

Interfaith Harmony Halifax is especially grateful this year for the support of our Mayor - Mike Savage. IHH team members Sophia Junfang Fu and Hasmeet Singh Chandok went to meet with Mayor Mike Savage. During their Interfaith Harmony conversation, Mayor Mike Savage recognized the importance of World Interfaith Week [\(and even joined in some Bhangra dancing\)](#): "I am proud to recognize World Interfaith Harmony Week; a time to demonstrate that there is more that unites us than divides us." Thank you for celebrating World Interfaith Harmony Week 2018 Halifax - it can open up and change our city and our world...



Left to Right: Hasmeet Singh Chandok, Chief Jean-Michel Blais, Sophia Junfang Fu
IHH team members were happy to share Interfaith Minutes with the Chief of Halifax Regional Police and take some video to help promote WIHW 2018.

"I strongly believe as police officers we need to try and understand the diverse community we serve."

[- Trudi McCulloch, Halifax Regional Police Officer](#)



The greatest joy in celebrating World Interfaith Harmony Week year after year, is to see the growth in collaborations and partnerships that develops over time. Our partnership with the Local Immigration Partnership here in Halifax, begun in previous years, grew significantly this year, with more municipal employees taking part in events. Municipal leaders who were introduced to our program last year actively promoted the program in 2018, transmitting the benefits of interfaith understanding to their colleagues.



Amit Parasram, Diversity Officer for the Halifax Regional Police receives his Interfaith Engagement Certificate

The most significant example of this expansion of the message of Interfaith Harmony was provided by our local Chief of the Halifax Regional Police, Chief Jean-Michel Blais. Chief Jean-Michel Blais met with IHH team members to contribute [video support](#) and encouraged all of his officers to take part in all aspects of WIHW 2018.



Heather Moran, Halifax Regional Police Officer receives her Interfaith Engagement Certificate

In 2018, Chief Blais participated in the Interfaith Engagement Program himself, visiting various Sacred Spaces and meeting with other participants to share their experiences with other "students" in 1.5 hour sessions before and after World Interfaith Harmony Week 2018. As a result of his leadership, a number of officers from the Halifax Regional Police also took part in the Interfaith Engagement Program and received their Certificates.



"I think it is impossible to continue hatred against a whole community of people if you are able to put a familiar face to that community" - [Jingyi Celia Luo, Interfaith Engagement Program Participant 2015 - 2018](#)

In 2018, IHH's Interfaith Engagement Program expanded to over 50 "students" who participated in either afternoon or evening sessions to discuss their learning and reflect on their experiences at the Sacred Space events that they all attended. The program is open to everyone, regardless of religious affiliation or none, and encourages intentional and experiential learning about interfaith similarities and differences in a safe environment.



Learning materials for the Interfaith Engagement Program include packets with a guide for what to expect at each Sacred Space, a journal, and a "passport" as well as their blue travel pouches - unique souvenirs of their journeys to the faith communities in Halifax.



The afternoon session of Interfaith Engagement Participants for 2018.



The evening session of Interfaith Engagement Participants for 2018.





Interfaith Harmony Halifax's ***Sacred Spaces: Meeting our Neighbors*** is open to all people of any faith or none. The program is especially meaningful for anyone who has ever wondered what goes on in a Mosque, a Temple, or a Pagan Ritual. IHH partners with various Faith Communities in Halifax, and prepares the hosts with best practices for welcoming Interfaith explorers. In 2018, IHH partnered with 13 communities in 13 different Sacred Space events:

Fung Loy Kok Taoist Tai Chi® Arts (Taoist)

Sikh Kirtan (Songs of Praise) and Langar (Communal Meal)

Universalist Unitarian Service

Muslim Jummah Prayer

Jewish Shabbat

Baha'i Community Devotional

Pagan Ritual Celebration of Imbolc

Christian Worship at the Lutheran Church of the Resurrection

Religious Society of Friends (Quakers) Meeting for Worship

Hindu Puja (Ritual Worship)

Brahma Kumaris Guided Meditation

Indigenous Talking Circle on Reconciliation

Taste of Shambhala

For more information on the Sacred Spaces: Meeting our Neighbors (and other IHH events), check out this article from *Touchbase, The Voice for Immigrants*, that published this online and in print to help us spread the message of Interfaith Harmony: <https://touchbaseonline.com/2017/12/17/un-interfaith-harmony-week-begins-february-1/>



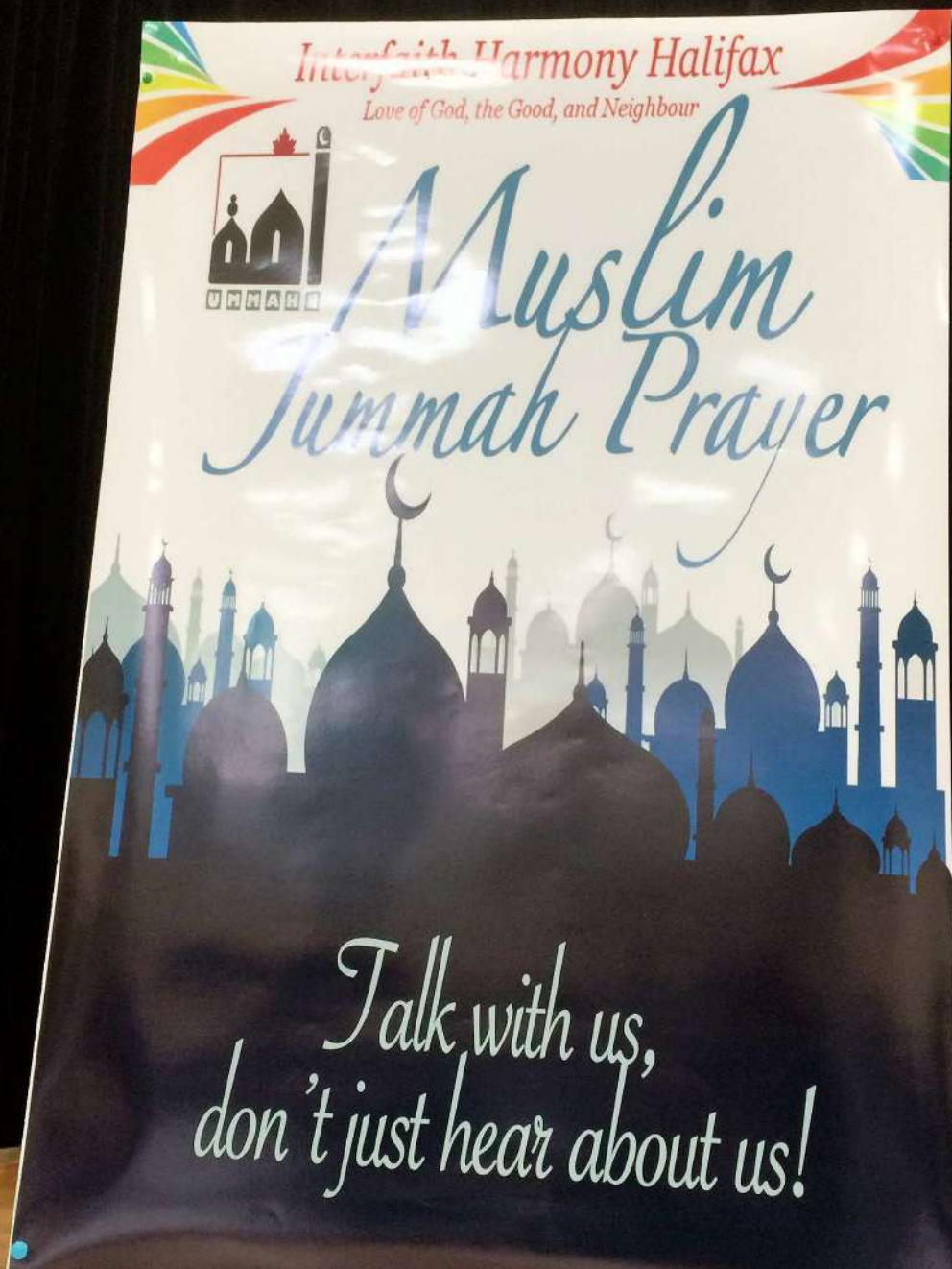
*"I'm glad the event went well all across the city. It was a pleasure to again receive the very interested and respectful guests."
- Steve Dingwell, Taoist Tai Chi*



**Sunday, January 28 Fung Loy Kok Taoist Tai Chi® Arts (Taoist)
 9:00 a.m. – 12:30 p. m. Fung Loy Kok Institute of Taoism,
 Atlantic Region Centre, 2029 North Park Street, Halifax**

On Sunday, January 28, guests are welcomed to the Fung Loy Kok Institute of Taoism. Sessions for the morning begin at 9 a.m. with chanting. At 10 a.m. guests will be encouraged to join us as we continue with Taoist Tai Chi® practice. Guests are invited to share lunch at 11:30 a.m. Lunch is prepared at the Centre by volunteers each Sunday, and provides a time of conversation and fellowship.

The mission of the Fung Loy Kok Institute of Taoism is to deliver all from suffering. It emphasizes spiritual development through the cultivation of both mind and body with the ultimate goal of achieving harmony with oneself and with the world. Fung Loy Kok promotes the principle of all cultures and religions moving together in peace and harmony. Individuals of all backgrounds and beliefs are welcome to participate.



"Peace be upon you. With your help the day was great. I think we should arrange these kinds of events more and more."

- Abdallah Yousri, Imam of Ummah Mosque



**Friday, February 2 Muslim Jummah Prayer
12:00 p.m. 2510 St. Matthias Street, Halifax**

On Friday, February 2, 2018 all people of good will are invited to explore the truth about Islam, its history, its culture, its people, and more than those at Ummah Masjid and Community Center in Halifax, Nova Scotia.

After the prayer, guests are invited to a reception and an open Q&A session. There are corners to try on hijab, to have their names beautifully written in Arabic calligraphy by an Islamic artist, to sit on the carpet and have a cup of Arabic tea, and to enjoy the Multicultural Dishes.





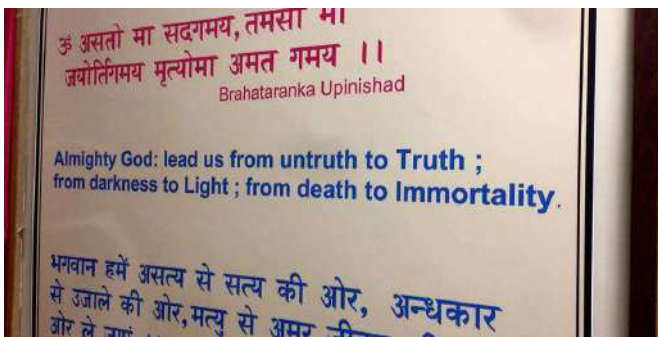
"I felt proud and happy about our work for Interfaith Harmony when the Interfaith Engagement Participants were asked to go up to the front to be presented at the Hindu Temple."

- IHH Committee Member



Sunday, February 4 Hindu Puja (Ritual Worship)
11:50 a.m. 6421 Cork Street (just off Oxford Street, Halifax)

Guide for Guests: Visitors remove footwear and wash their hands on the first floor, and then are escorted by a volunteer to the main temple on the second floor. Men sit on the right side and women on the left side. At 12:20 guests will be asked to introduce themselves. Guests can do Arati, the showing of lighted lamp to God. Guests have the option to take the holy drink which is a mixture of milk, honey, sugar, etc. After puja (ritual worship), a gourmet vegetarian meal follows on the first level.





*"You get all sorts of different foods at the different
Sacred Spaces!"*
- [Hasmeet Singh Chandok, IHH Committee Member](#)





"I recognized that different expressions of universal truth exist in all peoples, cultures, religions, and identities."

- Martin Solis, Interfaith Engagement Participant

On Sunday evening, February 4, 2018, Haligonians of all faiths and none gathered to sing, reflect, share stories, and refreshments, and join in dancing with the Maritime Bhangra Group! An outdoor smudging was led by Elder Billy Lewis prior to the start of the gathering, and an instrumental flute solo was offered by Buning Liu on a traditional Chinese flute.

A very special addition to our Interfaith Celebration in 2018 were reflections offered by 3 of our Interfaith Engagement Participants. These leaders were the first to offer their thoughts on "**Exploring Similarities, Celebrating Diversity**". Then, the audience got to participate in interfaith dialogue, as everyone discussed with their neighbor seated at their right: "*What will you do after today to express your 'love of God, the love of good, and love of your neighbor?'*" The thought-provoking discussion that followed was also opened up to anyone to share their conversation with the larger audience of 100 people gathered at the Halifax Central Public Library - Paul O'Regan Hall.

To read more about the 2018 Interfaith Celebration (and other WIHW 2018 events), check out this article published in *The Halifax Citizen*, a community division of *The Chronicle Herald*. This was published online and in print to help us spread the message of Interfaith Harmony: <http://thechronicleherald.ca/halifaxcitizen/1540799-halifax-celebrates-world-interfaith-harmony-week>







The closing of the WIHW 2018 Interfaith Celebration was led by the Maritime Bhangra Group. These community dancers have raised money for many charities, including over \$5000 for ALS and danced as far away as Parliament Hill in Ottawa, Canada for Canada's 150 celebrations.

On the evening of February 4, 2018, though, the Maritime Bhangra Group danced for Interfaith Harmony - and to help IHH raise funds for the New Mi'kmaw Native Friendship Centre. Through their efforts and the generosity of all in attendance, **IHH was able to raise just under \$500 for the Friendship Centre!** Thank you Maritime Bhangra Group - Interfaith fun and exercise was enjoyed by all.

Thank you to all who made Declarations of Peace and Friendship



WORLD INTERFAITH HARMONY WEEK

The Dartmouth Nova Scotia Stake of The Church of Jesus Christ of
Latter-day Saints

United Nations World Interfaith Harmony Week Public Declaration of Interfaith Peace and Friendship

Given the many tragic events around the world, directly or indirectly related to religious intolerance, misunderstanding and/or ignorance, World Interfaith Harmony Week offers a very meaningful opportunity for mutual self-reflection, open-mindedness, respect and understanding.

We acknowledge the diverse faiths, spiritual paths, and secular beliefs within our community and world.

We claim the privilege of worshipping Almighty God according to the dictates of our own conscience, and allow all the same privilege, let them worship how, where, or what they may.

We respect the equality of rights and privileges of residents from all our diverse communities, promote zero tolerance of discrimination, and recognize the diverse needs of our communities.

We affirm and appreciate that there can be harmony and strength through this diversity, and will support programs like the UN World Interfaith Harmony Week that promote peace and friendship among our diverse communities.

And we invite all sectors - business, education, health, human rights, justice, non-profit, political, government, and faith communities - to publicly make this declaration before or during the UN World Interfaith Harmony Week.

Print Name: Joel Glanfield _____

Signed:  _____

Date: _January 20, 2018_____

Position in Organization: President, Dartmouth NS Stake (diocese) _____

Organization Name: _The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints



WORLD INTERFAITH HARMONY WEEK



Wealth Management Private Banking

United Nations World Interfaith Harmony Week Public Declaration of Interfaith Peace and Friendship

Given the many tragic events around the world, directly or indirectly related to religious intolerance, misunderstanding and/or ignorance, World Interfaith Harmony Week offers a very meaningful opportunity for mutual self-reflection, open-mindedness, respect and understanding.

It provides us all with a very precious chance to sit, breathe, pray, sing, and even eat and celebrate with others. We can speak of how you invited me into your sacred space and I invited you into mine. We learned each other's name through the sound of each other's voice. We came to know each other through the warmth of understanding, peace and friendship.

We acknowledge the diverse faiths, spiritual paths, and secular beliefs within our community and world.

We respect the equality of rights and privileges of residents from all our diverse communities, promote zero tolerance of discrimination, and recognize the diverse needs of our communities.

We affirm and appreciate that there can be harmony and strength through this diversity, and will support programs like the UN World Interfaith Harmony Week that promote peace and friendship among our diverse communities.

And we invite all sectors - business, education, health, human rights, justice, non-profit, political, government, and faith communities - to publicly make this declaration before or during the UN World Interfaith Harmony Week.

Print Name: Scott Christie

Signed:  Date: Jan. 15/18

Position in Organization: Private Banker

Organization Name: RBC Wealth Management Private Banking



Exploring Similarities
Celebrating Diversity



A major component of our efforts to spread the message of Interfaith Harmony during WIHW 2018 was the filming and promotion of videos on Youtube. IHH team members Sophia Junfang Fu and Hasmeet Singh Chandok spent many hours interviewing local officials, past engagement participants, and IHH team members on why WIHW 2018 and Interfaith Harmony were important to them.



Many of our interviewees mentioned our 2018 theme of **"Exploring Similarities, Celebrating Diversity"**. John MacLennan expressed this so well: "World Interfaith Harmony Week is a wonderful opportunity to meet people of different beliefs, faiths; to recognize that we have much in common and appreciate the differences that are existing amongst different faiths."



Questions included "Why do you feel it is important to promote Interfaith Harmony in Halifax and in the world?" "During World Interfaith Harmony Week, what have you enjoyed about participating in events in Halifax?"

In total, 8 Youtube videos were promoted during WIHW 2018

[Bhangra with the Mayor \(Mike Savage\)](#)

[What is World Interfaith Harmony Week?](#)

[Introduction to the UN WIHW in Halifax \(Kim MacAulay\)](#)

[IHH Interview \(Hasmeet Singh Chandok\)](#)

[IHH Interview \(Delvina Bernard\)](#)

[IHH Interview \(Jingyi Celia Luo\)](#)

[IHH Interview \(Rana Zaman\)](#)

[IHH Interview \(Janet & John MacLennan\)](#)





Interfaith Harmony Halifax

Thank you to all of our sponsors who supported Interfaith Harmony Halifax in 2018. Your generosity allowed us to promote the vision of the UN World Interfaith Harmony Week, which is to spread harmony through promoting Love of God, the Good, and Love of the Neighbor.

Interfaith Harmony Week

The World Interfaith Harmony Week was first proposed at the UN General Assembly on September 23, 2010 by H.M. King Abdullah II of Jordan. Just under a month later, on October 20, 2010, it was unanimously adopted by the UN and henceforth the first week of February will be observed as a World Interfaith Harmony Week. Three prizes are awarded annually by the King himself and IHH is truly grateful to be the 2016 3rd prize winner.

Vision: To spread harmony through promoting Love of God, the Good, and Love of the Neighbor. This wording is meant to include people of all faiths, and all people of good will with no declared faith or spiritual tradition.



UN World **FEBRUARY 1-7 2018** Interfaith Harmony Week

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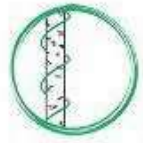
**Exploring Similarities
Celebrating Diversity**



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United Pagan Collective

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The magazine for global Canadians

E.S.S.I.S



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Thank you to all of our Hosts of the Sacred Spaces

Thank you to our hosts and host communities for participating in the recent observance of World Interfaith Harmony Week. This was the fifth year that the Week was observed in Halifax, and a total of thirteen communities opened their doors and hearts to receive guests. As participants in the Interfaith Engagement program (those wearing the blue travel pouches) met this week, they used words like “joyful,” “unity,” “deeper connection,” “an adventure,” “affirming the kindness and goodness of others,” “feeling welcome to this city,” etc. to articulate their experience of visiting Sacred Spaces. A sincere thank you for promoting Interfaith Harmony in Halifax.



"We feel very blessed to have been able to participate again this year and thank you for this special opportunity for us and our community." - Rabbi Weiss, Shar Shalom Synagogue



"It was great to have everybody here. It was a really wonderful evening. I hope that everyone feels welcome to come back soon. We have soup every Wednesday! - Richard Vogler, Programs Manager, Halifax Shambala Center



"We were surprised by the turn out for the service. We failed to get a head count, but there were at least 50 guests. - Rev. Norm Horofker, Universalist Unitarian

Thank you to all IHH Planning Committee Members



"All different people and faiths are seeking to do good and be good in the world." - [John MacLennan, IHH Committee Member](#)



UN World FEBRUARY 1-7 2018 Interfaith Harmony Week

www.ihhalifax.ca

Exploring Similarities
Celebrating Diversity

SACRED SPACES 2018 CALENDAR

Sunday: January 28

Fung Loy Kok Taoist Tai Chi® Arts (Taoist)
9:00 a.m. 2029 North Park Street, Halifax

Sikh Kirtan and Langar
11:30 a.m., 10 Parkhill Road, Jollimore

Thursday: February 1

Universalist Unitarian Service
7:00 p.m. 5500 Inglis Street, Halifax

Friday: February 2

Muslim Jumah Prayer
12:00 p.m. 2510 St. Matthias Street, Halifax

Jewish Shabbat
5:30 p.m. 1981 Oxford Street, Halifax

Saturday: February 3

Bahá'í Community Devotional
2:00 pm, 5793 University Avenue, Halifax, Room C170

Pagan Ritual Celebration of Imbolc
6:30pm, 5500 Inglis St. Halifax

Sunday: February 4

Worship at the Lutheran Church of the Resurrection
10:00 a.m. Corner of Windsor and Allan Streets, Halifax

Religious Society of Friends (Quakers) Meeting for Worship
10:30 a.m. 660 Francklyn Street, Halifax

Hindu Puja (Ritual Worship)
11:50 a.m. 6421 Cork Street (just off Oxford Street, Halifax)

Celebration
6:00 p.m. to 8:00 pm. Paul O'Regan Hall at Halifax Central Library

Monday: February 5

Brahma Kumaris Guided Meditation
7:00pm, 1 Cedarbrae Lane, Halifax

Tuesday: February 6

Indigenous Talking Circle on Reconciliation
7:00pm, 2158 Gottingen Street (Mi'kmaw Native Friendship Centre)

Tuesday: February 7

Taste of Shambhala
6:00 p.m. Shambhala Centre, 1084 Tower Road, Halifax

All are welcome to participate in the sacred events.
Enjoy hospitality, friendship, and refreshments.
For more information visit www.ihhalifax.ca



UN World **FEBRUARY 1-7 2018** Interfaith Harmony Week

www.ihhalifax.ca

Exploring Similarities
Celebrating Diversity

INTERFAITH ENGAGEMENT PROGRAM

Intensive week-long experiential engagement with the people, places, and practices of world religions in the City of Halifax, including

- Celebration, education, hospitality, rituals, spiritual practices, and worship services.
- Visits to sacred spaces to observe, meet, and engage with diverse faith communities.
- Participation in an intentional learning community, receiving a certificate.

Requirements for Certificate

- Participate in a two-hour session before and after the week-long event.
- Attend at least three of the thirteen faith events, and the interfaith celebration.
- Reflect on your experience during the week and share learning with others.

COST: FREE

Early Bird Deadline: Jan. 05 / **Registration Deadline:** Jan. 15

Intro Session: Mon., Jan. 22, 3-4:30 PM or 7-8:30 PM

Closing Session: Mon., Feb. 12, 3-4:30 PM or 7-8:30 PM

5670 Spring Garden Rd., Suite 902 (corner of Spring Garden / Brenton)

For more info or to register: info@ihhalifax.ca

www.ihhalifax.ca



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WHAT WORKS FOR YOU

UN World FEBRUARY 1-7, 2018 Interfaith Harmony Week

www.ihhalifax.ca

FEBRUARY 4, 2018

INTERFAITH CELEBRATION EXPLORING SIMILARITIES - CELEBRATING DIVERSITY

Smudging, Music, Reflection,
Sharing, Dance, Song
Refreshments, Socializing,
'Connection Corner', and Displays

COST: FREE

No Registration Required



Time: Sun., Feb. 4, 7:00-9:00 p.m., outdoor smudging at 6:30 p.m.

Place: Halifax Central Library, O'Regan Hall
5440 Spring Garden Road, Halifax

For more info: info@ihhalifax.ca



Monetary donations for
the **new** Mi'kmaw Native Friendship Centre

Sponsored by the Maritime Bhangra Group



www.ihhalifax.ca



