



Celebration of World Interfaith Harmony Week – 2024

Together at the Table





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Message from the Co-Chairs

Our theme this year was Together at the Table.

We created a new website and expanded our electronic outreach.

We found partnership in our cause from several groups. People of goodwill from 19 faith communities joined us to stand up and declare for interfaith harmony.

Places of worship opened their doors to the general public and we had more than 125 people attend services and spiritual celebrations with our Sacred Spaces program.

Our Interfaith Engagement Program guided 7 people to explore the ways of their neighbours.

In addition, we sponsored a panel discussion of the importance of food in different traditions, highlighting speakers from 4 different spiritual traditions and welcomed guests and participants to join in the conversation.

We concluded the week with a common celebration of a joyous sharing of music, dance, art and more, from multiple partners, hosting more than 320 people to celebrate with us from a variety of traditions in our Halifax community.

World Interfaith Harmony Week takes place against a backdrop of a world in disarray. This is the context in which we set out to create our celebration of harmony, and we bring a message of hope.

We are grateful for the opportunity to engage in this powerful sharing of life and wisdom with each other. The experience of coming to know each other is surely a cure for the ills of the world that we create in our separation.

Thanks to our strong organizational team and the many sacred spaces who have joined us to make this week possible.

We look forward to seeing you next year!

Co-Chairs

Joanna Mirsky Wexler & John Wrightman



World Interfaith Harmony Week 2024 - Calendar of Events

Together at the Table

For details and online links for events--see website interfaithharmonyhfx.com

Tuesday, Jan. 30 - 2:30- 4 pm or 6:30 8 pm	Introduction interfaith Engagement registrants (snow date, Thursday Feb 1, same times.)
Thursday, Feb. 1 - 1-2 pm	interfaith Conversation on Food and Faith, in person -- Halifax Central Library BMO Room
Friday, Feb. 2 - 7-8:30 pm on ZOOM only	Conversation with members of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints
Saturday, Feb. 3 - 2 pm	Halifax Baha'i Community Devotional, in person only -- Women's Council House, 989 Young Ave., Halifax
6:30 pm	Earth Spirit Society of NS , Live Celebration of Imbolc -- Universalist Unitarian Church, 5500 Inglis St., Halifax
Sunday, Feb. 4 - 11:30-1pm	Hindu Vedanta Ashram Society , in person -- Temple, 6421 Cork Street, Halifax
2-3pm	Shambhala Centre Buddhist Meditation , in person 1084 Tower Road, Halifax
Monday, Feb. 5 - 1:15-2:45 pm	Fung Loy Kok Taoist Society , in person 54 Woodlawn Rd. Dartmouth, Woodlawn United Church
7 pm	Brahma Kumaris Meditation Centre , in person and online -- 1 Cedarbrae Lane, Halifax

Tuesday, Feb. 6 - 12-1 pm	Religious Society of Friends (Quakers) Meeting in person, Room 303, Dal Student Union Bldg. 6136 University Ave.
6:45 pm	Earth Spirit Society of NS , online celebration of Imbolc
Wednesday, Feb 7 -7 pm	Beth Israel Synagogue study/talk, in person and on ZOOM -- 1480 Oxford Street, Halifax
Thursday, Feb. 8 - 12 noon	Atlantic School of Theology , regular service in person and ZOOM-- 660 Franklyn St., Halifax -- in chapel
7:30 pm	Al Rasoul Islamic Society Meeting, in person -- 1247 Bedford Highway (former fire station)
Friday, Feb 9 - 12 noon	Ummah Masjid , in person -- 2510 St. Mathias Street, Halifax, NS
6:45 pm	Chavurah Collective (Reform Judaism) , online
Saturday, Feb 10 - 9:15 am	Shaar Shalom Congregation Shabbat Service, in person -- 1981 Oxford Street but use back entrance on Pepperell
Sunday, Feb 11 - 10:45 am	New Horizons Baptist Church service, in person 5457 Nora Bernard St., Halifax, NS
2-4 pm	Closing Celebration All Welcome -- No Charge -- Halifax Central Library -- Paul O'Regan Hall



2024 participating communities

- New Horizons Baptist Church.
- The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints
- Ummah Masjid (Sunni Islam)
- Al Rasoul Islamic Society (Shi'a Islam)
- Maritime Bhangra Dancers (Sikh Society)
- Hindu Vedanta Ashram Society
- Religious Society of Friends (Quaker)
- Shambala Buddhist Centre
- Baha'i Community
- Brahma Kumaris Society
- Shaar Shalom Congregation (Jewish, Conservative)
- Beth Israel Synagogue, (Jewish, Orthodox)
- Chavura Collective (Jewish, Reform) · The Atlantic
- School of Theology
- Earth Spirit Society of Nova Scotia
- Mennonite Community
- M'ikmaw Native Friendship Centre
- Fung Koy Lok Taoist Society
- St. David's Presbyterian Church



Report from IHH Sacred Spaces Committee for Feb. 2024

There were a total of 19 Sacred Spaces participating in various ways in Halifax Nova Scotia for World Interfaith Harmony Week 2024.

Most faith communities, if not all, welcome visitors at any time of the year but during World Interfaith Harmony Week specific communities welcome those visiting by mentioning that it is World Interfaith Harmony Week, and Interfaith Harmony Halifax advertises/promotes visits to those specific communities.

This year three Jewish communities-Conservative, Orthodox, Reform participated, one with an in-person service, one with online service only, and one both in-person and online. Two Muslim groups, one Shia and one Sunni, held in-person meetings, as did Sikh, Hindu, Quaker, Buddhist, and Baha'i groups, and New Horizons Baptist Church. The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints and the local Brahma Kumaris society held online meetings only. The Atlantic School of Theology held their service both in-person and online, as did the Earth Spirit Society of Nova Scotia. There was representation from the Mennonites, in an Interfaith Conversation on Faith & Food at the Halifax Central Library and at the closing Celebratory event, three additional groups participated: Elder Deb Eisan from the Mi'kmaw Native Friendship Centre, the Fung Koy Lok Taoist Society, and St. David's Presbyterian Church Choir.

Numbers of visitors varied depending on the day, the weather, health, and if the event was in person, online or both. Due to inclement weather, a number of events were rescheduled and this affected attendance. We are looking at ways to circumvent this issue in the future as February weather is often unkind. Since COVID there are many who are still nervous meeting in close quarters.

The theme this year was Together at the Table and I would say there were several common ideals among all groups: the importance of seeking and showing love, light, peace and unity, and of sharing our food and hospitality with others.

Communications

Interfaith Harmony Halifax connects with local communities through:

- Participating spiritual communities- Individual communities are able to publicize through their social media, email advertising, announcements as well as in the weeks leading up to the events.
- We increased the level of social media activity leading up to WIH week on Facebook and Instagram, with many communities putting out special invitations to events.
- We created a new website to represent us.
- <https://interfaithharmonyhfx.com/>
- <https://www.instagram.com/halifaxharmony/>
- <https://www.facebook.com/UNWorldInterfaithHarmony>
- Direct Marketing via the Halifax site <https://haligoniac.ca/>





Interfaith Engagement Program

What is it?

Before IHH begins, IEP participants will meet for an introductory session where you will get to know one another and prepare for the Sacred Spaces events. During the week the IEP provides you with a cohort of fellow attendees. At the conclusion of IHH Week, we gather again for a Closing Session to share our experiences and reflections.

Why participate?

The IEP offers the opportunity to develop a deeper sense of community among those who attend IHH's events. It is both educational & fun and offers the possibility to get to know people who you might not otherwise meet.

Interfaith Engagement Program report

Thirteen people registered for the Interfaith Engagement Program 2024 - 4 returning and 9 first-time participants. Including co-facilitators, Robyn and Jocelyne, 9 people took part in the Introductory Session. It was decided early on that the IEP would take place in person and not online. The intimacy of the in-person session was appreciated by participants. This year the IEP was hosted in the Dalhousie University Multifaith Services space on Dal's campus, which worked very well. In addition, DMS provided Student Assistant support as our IEP registrar. DMS SA Dhruvi Shah developed the registration portal and assisted us with communication.

The IEP was hindered by the delay in confirming Sacred Spaces and Events. We really didn't get going until January while promotion for the IEP has to go out as early as October in order to attract attention. Having a confirmed list of IHH events is the 'thing' that draws interest. We will attend to this issue for future celebrations.



Celebration!

Our 2024 Celebration was the best attended in our 11 years, with more than 320 people attending between 2 – 4 pm.

We had beautiful expressions of faith, spirituality and culture from 11 different communities, and people of all ages participated together.

The afternoon was an assortment of: blessings, music, dance, Tai Chi, performance and visual interpretations of the event by artists It was also a wonderful chance to get to know each other.

It gave an opportunity for political leadership at all levels of government to support and welcome all of our communities.



**INTERFAITH
HARMONY WEEK
CLOSING
CELEBRATION**

**FEB
11
2PM - 4PM**

**WHERE

HALIFAX CENTRAL
LIBRARY
PAUL O'REGAN
HALL**

Welcome speech

MCs - Joanna Wexler and Rachana Samtaney

Land Acknowledgement

Co-chair IHH - John Wrightman

Welcome & Smudging

Elder Deb Eisen

Andy Filmore, MP

Lisa Lachance, MLA

Mayor Mike Savage

Muslim Community Prayer and Reading

Spirit Sing Pagan Choir

Hindu Temple Youth Dance

Vedanta Ashram Society

Saint David's Choir

The Presbyterian Church of Saint David

Miq'maq Women's Drumming Circle

Songs from the Jewish Community

Ba'hai Community singers

Tai Chi Demonstration

Hindu Temple Youth Bhajan Group

Vedanta Ashram Society

New Horizons Baptist Choir

Maritime Bhangra Group

Close and Meet & Greet

**Live Painting during celebration
Debbie Mosher and Mahnaz Roshan**

*Program spelling corrections: Baha'i Community singers and Spirit Song Pagan Choir

Celebration Highlights: A gallery







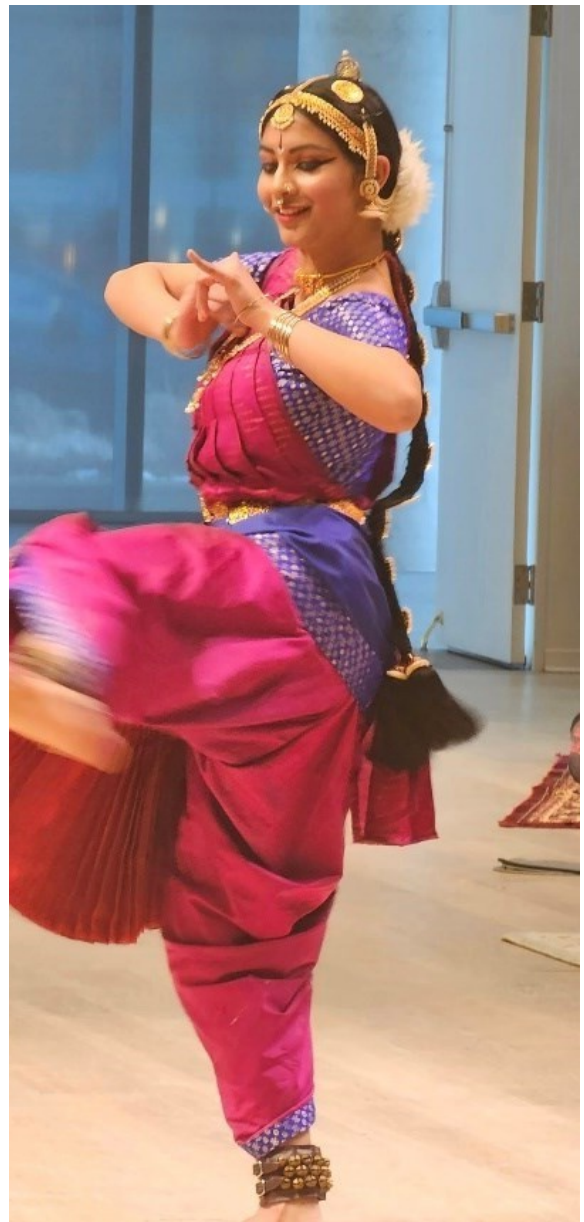


















Testimonials

“I support WIHW actively because communication and understanding are crucial to surviving the 21st century. We need to redirect our human energies from conflict to healing the earth and each other.”

John W.

“Volunteering with Interfaith Harmony Halifax over the past seven years has enriched my life. Through the experience of working with many good people I have learned that we can have unity of purpose in our diversity when we understand and respect one another's spiritual beliefs and practices, and our common humanity.”

Janet M.

“Volunteering and being a part of IHH has been one of the most meaningful forms of community engagement that I have ever been a part of. The people I have met through IHH have become friends and co-creators of a more harmonious community.”

Jocelyne T.

Sponsors



Halifax Public
Libraries



ASSANTE
WEALTH MANAGEMENT

