

MORE ABOUT INTERFAITH

What is it?

Interfaith refers to a spiritual orientation that underlies and embraces all the world's religious traditions. It accepts the notion that all faiths are ultimately expressions of the same profound, unitive consciousness, and derive from the same supreme being. As such, it is associated with *mystical* ways of understanding spiritual teachings, ways which embrace everyone, not just the followers of whatever religion is being discussed.

Spiritual Dilemmas Today

Differences between literally derived religious beliefs, including the tendency to think that only *our* religion is right, have been among the greatest causes of both warfare and domestic squabbles throughout history. More and more people are seeing the link between religion and ideas that no longer work in today's world. Not surprisingly, over the last 60 years or so in the United States, overall attendance at places of worship overall has steadily declined. According to the Pew Research Center, in the year 2021, 29% of US adults classified themselves as “nones”—that is, either atheist, agnostic or “nothing in particular.” The reasons? Religious organizations are “too concerned with money and power, too focused on rules and too involved in politics.”

Solutions

Clearly, we need teachings and priorities that reconcile superficial differences of belief, and unite our efforts. This is where interfaith orientations can contribute. We think that *everyone* has a spirituality that can be cultivated and harnessed—however much social, political and technological conditions have discouraged it in recent times. Religion may or may not play a part in a person's spiritual development; in any case, nothing is more important for our long-term happiness and mutual prosperity.

Where We Work

While interfaith ministers are familiar with the world's major religions, they often pursue their ministries mostly outside of them. They may be teachers, activists, social workers, involved in hospice care, and the like. Some religious clergy also hold interfaith credentials and privately think that way, even while serving their more orthodox group or denomination.