MEETING THE

RELIGIOUS AND SPIRITUAL NEEDS

OF PATIENTS AND FAMILIES

Updated: June 19, 2009
INTRODUCTION

Online Interfaith Guide

Providing high-quality care at UPMC requires awareness of the diverse needs of our patients and their families. To assist in better understanding and meeting religious needs, we offer this online *Interfaith Guide: Meeting the Religious and Spiritual Needs of Patients and Families*.

The guide’s aim is to make available for reference basic information about the beliefs and practices of a variety of faith traditions. Faiths are presented in their traditional forms, but without theological explanations.

For quick easy reference, faiths appear in *alphabetical order*. Information for each faith is arranged in bulleted lists with bolded topics, grouped into three sections:

- introductory overview
- general list of beliefs and practices
- specific tips for health care staff

The online Interfaith Guide remains a *work in progress*. More faiths and updated information will be added in the future. For briefly highlighted religious information, the Interfaith Pocket Brochure for Staff is available by order from Workflow One (Item # UPMC.0414).

Special thanks to the staff of the Office of Pastoral Care, UPMC Presbyterian Patient and Family Support Services, for their vision and creation of the content of this online Interfaith Guide and the Interfaith Pocket brochure.

Whether patients are strong in a religious tradition or have no religious beliefs, at UPMC we recognize that all patients deserve dignity and respect. Thank you in advance for your compassionate care.

UPMC Center for Inclusion in Health Care

The mission of UPMC’s Center for Inclusion in Health Care is to ensure that inclusion is at the core of what we do every day at UPMC. Inclusion begins with a core belief that everyone deserves dignity and respect. Inclusion is built by accepting others through understanding and honoring differences.

Promoting inclusion in patient and family care involves cultural competency. The heart of cultural competency is understanding differences — of generation, physical ability, gender, ethnicity, race, sexual orientation, religion, social and economic background, and even ideas. Understanding differences leads to acceptance of others and opportunity for all.

For more information, contact the Center for Inclusion in Health Care on Infonet at http://inclusion.infonet.upmc.com or by phone at 412-605-3091.
AGNOSTIC and ATHEIST

Overview of Agnosticism and Atheism

Agnosticism
The word agnosticism has Greek roots that mean “no knowledge.” Agnosticism is the philosophical view that the ultimate nature of reality is unknown or unknowable. Agnostics either deny the possibility of knowing whether a God, gods, or afterlife exist, or they deny the possibility of knowing anything specific about these realities if they do exist. Doubt, or skepticism, about religious belief is what characterizes an agnostic. People can mistakenly think that an agnostic is an atheist or a non-religious person. However, an agnostic may still identify with a particular faith and follow its practices.

Agnostic theism holds that it not possible to sufficiently justify belief in a God, but accepts the possibility of belief at a time of perceived need for meaning.

Atheism
The word atheism also has Greek roots that mean “no God.” For some atheists, atheism is a philosophical view that rejects the idea that a God or gods exist and rejects religion. They also may reject the idea that supernatural beings, such as angels or spirits of the dead, exist. Many atheists say their atheism is simply the absence of belief in a God or gods. They may describe their philosophical view as humanism or naturalism.

Sometimes atheism is defined as the lack of religion, but some religions can lack the concept of a God, for example, secular theology and some types of Theravada Buddhism. In some periods of history, any individual who came into conflict with the accepted state religion was called an atheist. Currently, however, the term atheist applies mostly to individuals who choose to call themselves atheists.
Agnostic/Atheist Beliefs and Practices

- **Core Beliefs:** Lack of religious beliefs usually characterizes agnostics and atheists. Some agnostics choose to practice a religion while holding onto their doubts about it.

- **Important Rituals and Holidays:** None required.

- **Dietary Practices:** None required.

Tips for Staff — Care of Agnostic/Atheist Patients

- **Medical Treatment:** An agnostic or atheist patient should be treated in a respectful manner like all other patients. Never should a patient be pressured to take part in any religious ceremony or receive any form of pastoral care. However, a patient may desire a friendly, casual visit from a chaplain.

- **Dietary Requirements:** Dietary restrictions are individually chosen, depending on the personal preference of the patient.

- **Gender and Privacy Issues:** An agnostic or atheist patient may have personal preferences for care by health care staff of the same gender.

- **Need for Clergy:** None required. Patients who are facing their own mortality may choose to reconsider a faith tradition. In a time of need, agnostic or atheist patients may reconsider a faith tradition from their past or the faith tradition of a trusted family member or friend. Staff should be open to patients’ requests. Patients sometimes surprise even themselves, for example, by asking for a Bible. Pastoral Care staff are available to patients to assist them in exploring spirituality.

- **Dying and Death:** No rites are required. Staff should be open to requests from an agnostic or atheist patient who might ask for a Bible, for example. Pastoral Care staff can assist patients in exploring spirituality at any time. Autopsy is an individual choice of the patient or the family.
• **Organ Donation:** Organ donation and transplantation is a personal choice that depends on the wishes of an agnostic or atheist patient and on the decision of the family.
AMISH

Overview of the Amish Faith

The Amish churches of the Christian faith evolved in the late 16th century from the Anabaptist and Mennonite Protestant reformation movements of central and northern Europe. These groups prescribed adult baptism and practices based on the Bible and other scriptures. Rooted in the teachings of Swiss leader Jakob Amman, the Amish focus on modesty in clothing and lifestyle, discipline in congregations, and strong community values.

Deeply embedded in the basic doctrines of Christianity, Amish spiritual beliefs and practices also have been shaped by the Amish’s history of persecution and martyrdom and their seclusion from the larger society. Although the Amish originated in Europe, today Amish communities exist only in the Americas, with a concentration in the northeastern United States.

Amish Beliefs and Practices

- **Core Beliefs:** The Amish hold the basic beliefs of Christianity. They believe in a triune God of Father, Son, and Holy Spirit; salvation through Jesus Christ, the Son of God; the sacredness of human life and the body, made in God’s image; and the resurrection of the body to eternal life. It is important to recognize that the Amish focus more on day-to-day practice of neighborly love, nonviolence, and forgiveness than on theological formulas.

- **Scriptures:** Religious scriptures that have shaped the Amish faith include Luther’s German Bible (especially the Sermon on the Mount in the Gospel of Matthew), the Martyrs Mirror, the Ausbund, and the Dordrecht Confession of Faith.
• **Modest Living:** In their practice of modesty, the Amish refrain from the use of electricity and telephones in their homes and the use of cars. They prohibit fancy drapes, ornaments, personal photographs, cosmetics, jewelry, wristwatches, and showy clothing.

Clothes are mostly homemade of a solid-color with no patterns, prints, or plaids.
- Women wear calf-length dresses with sleeves, usually with a cape and apron over the dress, and a small white cap, which can be covered by a bonnet.
- Men wear denim pants and button-up shirts with suspenders for work and black suits with a white shirt, suspenders, vest, and coat for church. Men also cover their heads with straw hats or black felt hats, depending on the season.

• **Separatist Communities:** A history of persecution and martyrdom within the Amish faith has molded Amish values. Texts such as the 1,100-page Martyrs Mirror have promoted Amish practices of religious isolation — keeping their communities separate from society at large. The solitary life of Amish communities urges members to remain united. In times of difficulty and disaster, the Amish help one another rather than turn to government programs such as Social Security or commercial forms of assistance such as insurance plans.

• **Clergy:** Amish regions are divided into individual church districts of 25 families each (approximately 125 members). Each church district has a bishop, deacon, and one or two ministers.

• **Worship:** The Amish hold church services in their homes, in line with their values of modesty and tight-knit communities.

• **Important Rituals and Holidays**
  - **Baptism:** After turning age 16, an Amish person can be baptized into the Amish faith and admitted into the church. The ceremony usually consists of sprinkling with water. Candidates prepare for the ceremony through review of the Dordrecht Confession of Faith. This book contains many defining concepts of the Amish faith, including nonviolence, excommunication, and shunning.
• **Communion:** Communion occurs once in the spring and once in the fall. This all-day event includes foot-washing, a practice based on the Gospel of John.

• **Christmas:** The Amish celebrate Christmas on Dec. 25, usually with a family gathering, meal, and gift-giving. The Amish also observe Old Christmas, which falls on Jan. 6 on the old Julian calendar.

• **Dietary Practices:** Fasting occurs on the morning of important religious holidays, such as Easter, Ascension Day, Christmas, and Old Christmas.

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**Tips for Staff — Care of Amish Patients**

• **Medical Treatment:** While the Amish faith does not prohibit the use of modern medicine or the services of doctors and hospitals, the Amish tend to prefer chiropractic, homeopathic, or other alternative medical treatments over high-risk or expensive medical treatments. The use of modern medicine depends on the individual and varies greatly from family to family and group to group.

• **Gender and Privacy Issues:** Both Amish men and women avoid situations in which they are alone with unrelated members of the opposite sex, including health care staff. They greatly prefer the presence of their spouse or another member of the same sex.

• **Decision Making:** Women in the Amish church are submissive to their husbands and usually consult with their husbands before making a decision.

• **Need for Clergy:** Both baptism and Communion, which are key Amish practices, can be performed only by authorized clergy.

• **Dying and Death:** Many Amish prefer to die at home rather than in a hospital. Burial is preferred. Autopsy is permitted only by legal inquiry.

• **Organ Donation:** The Amish may consent to organ donation if they are certain that it is for the health and welfare of the recipient. They are reluctant if a successful outcome is questionable.
ASSEMBLIES OF GOD

Overview of the Assemblies of God Faith

The Assemblies of God began as a Christian revival movement in the late 1800s and underwent great expansion during the 20th century. In the United States, the movement got its start in 1901 at a prayer meeting in Topeka, Kan., and spread across the country. By 1914, the movement formed a cooperative fellowship called The General Council of the Assemblies of God. The Assemblies of God is a Pentecostal church, which means that it emphasizes the role of the Holy Spirit. Assemblies of God ministries have grown to promote the spreading of the message of Christ throughout the world. Today, the Assemblies of God has more than 50 million members worldwide.

Assemblies of God Beliefs and Practices

- **Core Beliefs:** The Assemblies of God believes that the one true God is a Trinity of Father, Son, and Holy Spirit; that Christ, who is both divine and human, makes salvation and eternal life possible through his death on the cross; that the Church has a mission to spread the message of Jesus Christ (evangelize); and that the Holy Spirit has a special role in the life of the believer. Members practice their faith through hearing preachers, studying the Bible, praying, and sharing their faith with others. The full statement of beliefs of the Assemblies of God is available at http://ag.org/top/Beliefs/Statement_of_Fundamental_Truths/sft_short.cfm.

- **Scriptures:** The Bible’s Old and New Testaments are believed to be inspired by God.

- **Worship:** Members of the Assemblies of God come together on Sundays for communal worship with spirited praise and music. The presence of the Holy Spirit is manifested through a kind of ecstatic prayer called “speaking in tongues.”

- **Clergy:** Assemblies of God clergy consists of ordained ministers, licensed ministers, and certified ministers. The primary spiritual leaders of congregations are called pastors, with deacons and elders assisting, especially with healing of the sick.
• **Important Rituals**

  - **Baptism:** The ordinance of baptism is performed by total body immersion in water. An individual of age who understands the mission of the Church may be baptized.

  - **Communion:** This ordinance is also called the Lord’s Supper or the Eucharist. It is a liturgy that reenacts the Last Supper and Christ’s redeeming sacrifice for sins on the cross by receiving bread or wafer and wine or grape juice.

  - **Anointing with oil and laying on of hands:** These rituals, which also include prayers and scripture readings, are performed by clergy or lay members of the church and are welcomed by the sick.

• **Dietary Practices:** The Assemblies of God has no dietary restrictions. Individual members may choose to fast to encourage their personal spiritual growth.

**Tips for Staff — Care of Assemblies of God Patients**

• **Medical Treatment:** The Assemblies of God believes that God is the “great physician” who is healer of the sick. At the same time, use of modern medical procedures also is accepted. However, the Assemblies of God strongly disapproves of abortion, stem cell treatments from embryonic harvested sources for therapies, and reproductive cloning. However, if a mother’s life is threatened by childbirth, abortion may be accepted as a last-option emergency medical treatment for the welfare of the mother. There is no official stance on contraception, in vitro fertilization, blood transfusions, or removal or withholding of life support.

• **Dietary Requirements:** Assemblies of God patients have no required dietary practices. Patients who choose to fast should be allowed to do so if it would not be harmful to their health or interfere with their treatment.

• **Gender and Privacy Issues:** Patients of certain ethnic backgrounds might have some requirements that are unrelated to their religious faith.
• **Need for Clergy:** Assemblies of God clergy usually are needed to perform the tasks associated with the ordinances of Communion and baptism. Patients may ask to receive Communion in the hospital. More rarely, a patient old enough to understand the responsibility associated with the faith may request baptism. Patients also may wish to consult with their clergy for spiritual advice. Hospital chaplains are welcome to anoint and pray for healing of Assemblies of God patients. In the absence of an Assemblies of God pastor, chaplains who are aware of Assemblies of God guidelines for profession of faith also may baptize.

• **Dying and Death:** The family and a member of the clergy may request to pray or read Scripture at the bedside of a terminally ill patient. At the time of death especially, clergy and family members may request to see the body. These wishes should be accommodated when possible. Both cremation and burial are accepted and are a personal choice of the patient and family. Autopsy is permitted and is a personal choice of the patient or family.

• **Organ Donation:** Organ and tissue donation are permitted as a personal choice of the patient and the family. Transplantation is permitted by the individual patient’s choice. A chaplain and nurse can be consulted for any questions that a patient may have about these issues.
BAHA’I

Overview of the Baha’i Faith

The Baha’i faith was founded by Baha’u’llah in 19th century Persia. This religion is focused on spreading a message of unity to all peoples of the world because all peoples belong to the one single human race. The Bab (which means “the Gate”) was the title given to a Persian prophet who preceded Baha’u’llah. His teachings formed the basis of the Baha’i faith. Baha’u’llah, the founder of Baha’i, later built upon the teachings of the Bab. The progressive nature of the Baha’i faith gives it flexibility to continue to develop as humanity evolves and changes. Baha’i is multiethnic and multicultural. Currently, 5 million followers live in more than 200 countries and territories worldwide.

Baha’i Beliefs and Practices

- **Core Beliefs:** Baha’i is monotheistic — it holds that there is only one divine being and accepts all religions as originating from that single source. Baha’i accepts a lineage of prophets stretching back through time, including the founders of all the major world religions. Some of these are Abraham, Christ, Muhammad, Krishna, and Buddha. Baha’i teaches that each religion is meant to educate humans on the nature of that single divine being and that all humans belong to one single race. The key belief of the Baha’i faith is the establishment of world unity, peace, and justice.

- **Scriptures:** The sacred texts of Baha’i include the revelations by the Bab and Baha’u’llah; writings by Abdu’l-Baha, the son of Baha’u’llah; the Book of Laws (Kitab-i-Aqdas); and 100 other texts.

- **Clergy:** The Baha’i faith has no clergy. On the local and national levels, nine members are elected from the community to serve one-year terms on spiritual assemblies that take care of clerical and administrative functions. Members have no authority individually. The Universal House of Justice is an assembly of nine members elected to five-year terms. The local body, called the Spiritual Assembly of Pittsburgh, can be contacted at http://bci.org/pittsburghbahai/.

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• **Important Rituals:** Baha’is practice daily prayer and meditation individually. They gather regularly in homes and communities for devotional worship together.

• **Important Holidays:** Baha’is recognize 11 major holy days during the year. Many of these holy days commemorate the birth, life, and revelations of the Bab and Baha’u’llah, the prophets unique to Baha’i.

  Most significant of the holy days are Naw-Ruz, which is the New Year on March 21, and Ridvan, which commemorates when Baha’u’llah’s role as the leader was revealed to him, as prophesized by the Bab. On nine of the holy days, Baha’is suspend work and join together for respectful worship and penance.

• **Religious Items:** A Baha’i burial ring is placed on the body of the deceased.

• **Dietary Practices:** During the last month of the Baha’i calendar, called Ala, followers who are ages 15 to 70 abstain from food and drink during daylight hours. This practice is suspended for those who are pregnant, ill, traveling, or enduring hard labor. Many Baha’is are vegetarians by choice.

**Tips for Staff — Care of Baha’i Patients**

• **Medical Treatment:** Baha’is believe that the healing process must include both physical and spiritual treatments. Therefore, the practice of prayer is very common for the ill and disabled. Baha’i patients may choose from among many prayers to perform for restoration of their health. Prayers may be read by anyone on behalf on the patient. These prayers are available at www.bahaiprayes.org/index.htm.

• **Dietary Restrictions:** Alcohol is forbidden unless used for medicinal purposes. Able Baha’i patients may choose to follow the yearly fast of Ala, unless the practice interferes with their treatment or healing process.

• **Gender and Privacy Issues:** Modesty is encouraged.
- **Need for Clergy:** The Baha’i faith does not have a clergy. All Baha’i members are equal in status.

- **Dying and Death:** While different traditions may be practiced among Baha’is, a required practice for all of the deceased is the Baha’i Prayer for the Dead. The Prayer for the Dead must be recited — any individual may recite it — as others stand respectfully and silently nearby. Tradition requires that the bodies of the dead not be transported farther than one mile and not be cremated. Autopsy is permitted, but the body should be left intact as much as possible.

- **Organ Donation:** Organ donation and transplantation are permitted.
BAPTIST

Overview of the Baptist Faith

The Baptist tradition of Christianity grew out of the Protestant Reformation in Europe. The Baptist movement rose in the United States in the 17th century as Baptists emigrated from England. Roger Williams and John Clarke planted the Baptist faith in New England. In the South, William Screven, Robert Norden, and Paul Palmer founded Baptist churches, the first of which was First Baptist Church of Charleston, South Carolina, established in 1682. The Baptist faith flourished in the South and by 1845 separated from the Northern Baptist Association, calling itself the Southern Baptist Convention (SBC). The SBC currently is the largest body in the Baptist tradition, claiming 16.6 million members and a worldwide ministry.

Today, the Baptist faith tradition includes numerous other Baptist denominations and independent Baptist churches, with 43 million Baptists worldwide. The information in this section should accommodate the needs of most Baptist patients and families for care and support.

Baptist Beliefs and Practices

- Core Beliefs: The core beliefs of Baptists are the authority of the Bible; one God, who is a Trinity of Father, Son, and Holy Spirit; Jesus Christ, who is the Son of God and redeemer; the need of the human race for salvation and grace; the role of the Church and sacraments; and the duty to work for the coming of the Kingdom of God and to spread the message of Christ (evangelization).

- Scriptures: With other Christians, Baptists use the Old and New Testaments of the Bible as the religious text of their faith.

- Clergy: Religious leaders of local Baptist congregations are pastors and deacons; some congregations may have elders or bishops.
- **Worship:** Baptists form congregations of baptized church members. People of all ethnic, linguistic, and racial backgrounds are welcome in Baptist congregations. The weekly day of worship is Sunday.

- **Important Rituals:**
  - Two ordinances are central to the Baptist faith:
    - **Baptism:** This ordinance involves total body immersion in water in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. This act precedes a member’s invitation to partake in the Lord’s Supper and become a church member.
    - **The Lord’s Supper:** This ordinance is ordained by the Bible as an act of partaking of bread and juice or wine, in remembrance of the life and death of Jesus Christ, the Savior, and his anticipated second coming.
  - Two symbols are central for Baptists: the Bible, which is the text of the Christian faith, and the Cross, which symbolizes the death of Christ and redemption of the believer. The Baptist cross uses no image as a symbol of a risen savior.

- **Important Holidays:** With respect to God and country, Christmas, Easter, and national holidays are observed.

- **Dietary Practices:** The Baptist faith has no dietary restrictions. Dietary practices are left to the individual Baptist’s preference.

**Tips for Staff — Care of Baptist Patients**

- **Medical Treatment:** Baptists believe that life is a gift of God and accept all medical treatments to restore health, with the exception of any treatment involving embryonic stem cells. Baptists may want to withdraw extreme care, trusting in the mercy of God for eternal life.
- **Need for Clergy:** A patient may turn to a Baptist pastor, deacon, or elder for support during times of emotional or physical troubles. In addition, because Baptists believe in the “priesthood of all believers,” a patient also may turn to fellow Baptists for religious answers and consolation. The patient should be given an opportunity to request help from any individual. Only clergy can administer the two ordinances of baptism and the Lord’s Supper.

- **Dying and Death:** Baptists have no specific traditions that must be followed for the dying and at death. Frequently, prayers are read for God’s will to be done and Bible verses relating to hope are read, especially Psalms. The Baptist faith has no stance on autopsy.

- **Organ Donation:** The Baptist faith has no specific policies on organ donation and transplantation. The choice of donation and transplantation depends on the donor’s or the family’s personal beliefs.
BUDDHIST

Overview of the Buddhist Faith

Buddhism originated in India more than 2,500 years ago with Siddhartha Gautama. Witnessing an elderly man, a sick person, and a corpse, Siddhartha realized the inexhaustible nature of suffering, dissatisfaction, and uneasiness (dukkha). Searching for a solution, he decided to seat himself in meditation under a Bodhi tree and eventually came to realize his original nature. At age 35, Siddartha became the awakened or enlightened one (the Buddha) and spent the next 45 years teaching those who came to him. The foundation of the Buddha’s teaching was the realization of how to end suffering. His teachings slowly spread throughout Afghanistan, Tibet, China, Korea, Japan, and Southeast Asia.

Buddhist Beliefs and Practices

- **Core Beliefs:** Buddhism recognizes Four Noble Truths:
  - Human life is characterized by suffering (dukkha).
  - The causes of suffering are greed, aversion, and ignorance.
  - Suffering can end.
  - Release from suffering is through the Eightfold Noble Path.

- **Key Practices:** The Eightfold Noble Path asks individuals to practice right understanding, right thought, right speech, right action, right livelihood, right effort, right mindfulness, and right meditation.

- **Precepts:** Buddhists believe that an individual should do no evil, do good, and live to benefit all beings. Buddhists follow a strict ethical code of precepts arising from understanding the causes of suffering. Restrictions include not killing, stealing, misusing sexuality, lying, intoxicating one’s self, slandering, extolling one’s self or demeaning others, attaching one’s self to anything, harboring ill will, and turning away from the Three Treasures: teacher (Buddha), teaching (dharma), and community (sangha).
• **Important Holidays:** Religious holidays vary according to the country where they are celebrated, but the main holidays are for Buddha’s birthday, for his enlightenment, and in memory of his death. Founders or respected teachers of particular forms of Buddhism also may have holidays celebrating their birthdays and memorial days. Many sects have memorial services for a particular family’s ancestors.

• **Dietary Practices:** Buddhists typically follow a diet that is vegetarian or semi-vegetarian.

**Tips for Staff — Care of Buddhist Patients**

• **Medical Treatment:** Buddhism does not prohibit any particular medical treatment. Doing what is best for all concerned is advised.

• **Dietary Requirements:** Buddhists usually are either vegetarians or semi-vegetarians. It is best to discuss dietary requirements with a Buddhist patient or with the family.

• **Gender and Privacy Issues:** It is important to show respect, especially for elderly patients.

• **Need for Clergy:** Staff should ask a Buddhist patient if the staff can inform the local Buddhist temple or center of the patient’s illness. Many Buddhist centers maintain a prayer list, and members will visit patients in the hospital.

• **Dying:** When a Buddhist patient is seriously ill or near death, the family may ask to be at the bedside. They may bring a statue of Buddha, flowers, incense, and a book of sutras (scriptures) to be chanted.
• **Death**: Buddhism holds that we are interconnected with all beings and do not exist separately from the universe. Dying does not interrupt that process; it is a moment that has arisen from causes and conditions. The Buddhist asks, “Who dies?” Perhaps a Zen Master would say, “No birth, no death.”

After death, the body should be covered only by a sheet and allowed to rest as long as possible. A deathbed ceremony may be performed by family, friends, or a local temple priest. The body may be ceremoniously bathed and dressed. Most Buddhists believe that the body should not be left alone until the cremation is complete. Traditionally, the body first is held for three days at the family home or at the temple. However, in America, the cremation often takes place as soon as possible after death. Autopsy is not prohibited, but the family should be consulted first.

• **Organ Donation**: Buddhism encourages the practice of organ donation and transplantation for restoration of health. The decision should be made by the patient or the family.
CHRISTIAN & MISSIONARY ALLIANCE

Overview of the Christian & Missionary Alliance Faith

The Christian and Missionary Alliance (C&MA) began as a movement that became a Protestant denomination. The movement started in 1887 under the guidance of Dr. Albert B. Simpson, who wanted to mobilize lay Christians as a resource to help “take the whole Bible to the whole world.” The C&MA encourages its members to have an intimate relationship with Jesus Christ and to spread the gospel of Jesus Christ to all groups of people throughout the world.

Christian & Missionary Alliance Beliefs and Practices

- **Core Beliefs:** The C&MA is a Christian denomination based on classical Biblical theology, with a formal statement of faith. Following are C&MA beliefs in brief:
  - one God in three persons: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit
  - Jesus Christ, the Son of God, both human and divine
  - Holy Spirit, the divine sanctifier, teacher, and guide
  - salvation of fallen mankind by repentance and belief in Jesus Christ
  - the church, which is commissioned by Jesus Christ to preach the gospel
  - resurrection of the dead, final judgment, and second coming of Christ

- **Scriptures:** The Old and New Testaments of the Bible are held to be divinely inspired by God.

- **Clergy:** A pastor and a board of elders head C&MA churches. Administration is through district and national offices.

- **Worship:** C&MA members meet in local churches and homes as sites of worship.
Important Rituals: Pastors and church elders perform the ordinances of baptism by immersion in water and the Lord’s Supper (Communion), as well as the practice of anointing the sick with oil.

Important Holidays: C&MA observe all the traditional Christian holidays, including Christmas, Palm Sunday, and Easter.

Dietary Practices: The C&MA has no dietary restrictions or requirements.

Tips for Staff — Care of C&MA Patients

Medical Treatment: C&MA members accept medical treatment, but also have faith in the power of prayer and anointing with oil for healing of the body.

Need for Clergy: The pastors and church elders can perform baptisms, Communion, and anointing of the sick with oil. The board of elders and the pastor also can empower godly members of the church to perform these acts.

Dying and Death: Based on their understanding of Biblical teaching, members of the C&MA form their own views on how to handle the body.

Organ Donation: The C&MA tradition does not take an official stance on the subject of organ donation. Members form their own convictions based on their understanding of Biblical teaching.
EPISCOPAL/ANGLICAN

Overview of the Episcopal/Anglican Faith

The Episcopal/Anglican faith is rooted in the 16th century English Reformation. Today the Anglican Communion of churches is worldwide and includes both the Episcopal Church of the United States of America and the Anglican Church of North America. The Episcopal/Anglican Churches share many theological viewpoints with other churches that formed during the Protestant Reformation. The sacraments and other rituals of the Episcopal/Anglican Churches resemble those of the Roman Catholic Church.

Episcopal/Anglican Beliefs and Practices

- **Core Beliefs:** Episcopalians/Anglicans hold the basic beliefs of Christianity. They believe in a triune God of Father, Son, and Holy Spirit; salvation through the death of Jesus Christ, the Son of God, on the cross; the sacredness of human life and the body, made in God’s image; and the resurrection of the body to eternal life. Sunday is the weekly holy day.

- **Scriptures:** Episcopalians/Anglicans use the Old and New Testaments of the Bible and the Book of Common Prayer as devotional resources in their faith.

- **Authority:** The basic governing unit of the Episcopal/Anglican Churches is the diocese overseen by a bishop. The central authority of governance consists of clergy and lay deputies elected to the general convention, which occurs every three years. Churches are members of the Anglican Communion by following a set of beliefs and requirements that have been adopted by consensus.
• **Clergy:** The clergy in the Episcopal/Anglican Churches are divided into priests, deacons, lay Eucharistic ministers, and hospital chaplains. Priests are ordained ministers who perform the sacraments and other rites and the duties associated with them. Deacons are ordained ministers who form the bridge between the church and the world. Deacons can offer prayer, Communion, anointing, and pastoral care. Lay Eucharistic ministers assist with Communion and can bring Communion directly from the church to the sick.

• **Important Rituals**
  
  • **Sacraments:** Baptism and Communion
    
    – **Baptism:** The act of baptism marks the adoption of a child into the Christian community, which is the “Church.” Infants are baptized when the parents or godparents make a commitment on the infant’s behalf. Pouring of water on the head marks baptism. Full immersion in water is not required. Although a member of the clergy usually performs baptism, a baptized person of the church may baptize in an emergency if clergy is not available. Water is poured on the person’s head with the words “[person’s name], I baptize you in the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.” Baptism can be performed on any adult or child who has not already been baptized.

    – **Communion (Eucharist):** This sacrament is the receiving of both bread (as a wafer) and wine. A priest or a deacon usually offers Communion in a ceremony with prayers and scripture. A lay Eucharistic minister can also take priest-consecrated Communion from a Sunday service to hospital patients or shut-ins.

  • **Rite:** The Rite of Confession, also called Reconciliation of a Penitent, is practiced by some Episcopalians/Anglicans. This rite is an opportunity to confess sins to a priest and receive forgiveness and the grace of absolution. Confession is not required; however, many consider it a meaningful part of their spiritual experience.
Important Holidays: The calendar of the Episcopal/Anglican Churches is similar to the Roman Catholic calendar. While the Episcopal/Anglican Churches do not have holy days of obligation, nearly all Episcopalians/Anglicans receive Communion during Christmas and Easter.

- **Advent and Christmas:** Christmas celebrates the birth of Jesus Christ. Advent is the season of spiritual preparation that precedes Christmas.

- **Lent and Easter:** Easter celebrates the resurrection of Jesus Christ. Preceding Easter, the season of Lent is a time for spiritual disciplines such as prayer and abstinence from specific foods, for example, abstaining from meat on Fridays.

Dietary Practices: The Episcopal/Anglican Churches have no dietary requirements or restrictions. Members may voluntarily follow particular dietary restrictions during the seasons of Lent and Advent.

Tips for Staff — Care of Episcopalian/Anglican Patients

- **Medical Treatment:** The Episcopal/Anglican tradition supports the use of faith and spirituality in combination with medicine to restore health. During illness, Episcopalians/Anglicans use the services of their clergy and other religious resources for prayer, scripture, and sacraments.

- **Dietary Requirements:** Some Episcopalians/Anglicans may choose to abstain from meat on Fridays. These patients may opt for a meatless or vegetarian diet or fast on holy days. These are individual choices.

- **Decision Making:** The Episcopal/Anglican Churches do not make definitive statements or policies about ethical issues, but encourage members to use their faith as a guide when considering certain issues.
• **Need for Clergy:** A priest, a deacon, or a lay Eucharistic minister can bring Communion to patients. Patients may want to receive Communion before surgery, before a high-risk medical treatment, or on a holy day, such as Easter and Christmas. Patients also may request confession at these times. The laying on of hands is an ancient spiritual practice for healing during which prayers are recited while hands are placed on the patient’s head. Unction, which is anointing of the patient’s head with oil in the sign of the cross, is a rite of healing of mind, spirit, and body. Unction is not limited to times of imminent death. Most members of the Episcopal/Anglican tradition are open to pastoral care from chaplains of other religious denominations.

• **Dying and Death:** Episcopalians/Anglicans often turn to religious texts as a patient nears death. The Book of Common Prayer has helpful prayers for this time. Family members usually will want to be at the patient’s bedside. Health care staff should allow for uninterrupted prayer at this time, when possible.

When death is imminent, clergy often are called. When conscious, many patients will request confession or Communion. Anointing is commonly done, but not required. A priest offers prayers for the dying individual before death and often asks for strength and support for the survivors. Burial and cremation are equally valid methods of preparing the body after death. Autopsy is permitted by the Episcopal/Anglican Churches.

• **Organ Donation:** The Episcopal/Anglican Churches affirm organ and tissue donation for research, health, or medical education purposes. Transplantation also is encouraged.
HINDU

Overview of the Hindu Faith

Hinduism is the third most practiced religion in the world today. It is one of the world’s oldest organized religious systems. Members of the Hindu religion often describe their faith as Sanatana Dharma, or “eternal faith.” Hindus do not use the term Hinduism, which is actually a foreign term. The ancient Persians first used the word Hindu to describe the religions and practices of the peoples who lived beyond the Indus River.

Unlike many other major religions, Hinduism has no single founder or central authority. Hinduism finds its sources in the holy texts of the Vedas and in the various regional religious practices on the Indian subcontinent. The Rig Veda, the oldest of the four Vedas, is believed to date to the 10th century BCE. The religions of pre-Vedic cultures, such as the Indus Valley civilization, most likely influenced Hinduism.

Hindu Beliefs and Practices

- **Core Beliefs:** Hinduism is an umbrella term that covers an enormous array of beliefs, practices, and sects, ranging from monotheism (one god) and monism (one reality) to polytheism (many gods). However, Hinduism is often mistaken to be a religion that is mainly polytheistic, a term that many Hindus find offensive and degrading. The fact is the vast majority of Hindus believe in a single, formless higher entity, called “Brahman,” that permeates all things. Many Hindus believe in reincarnation (cycles of rebirth) and have great tolerance for all forms of life.

- **Scriptures:** The Hindu scriptures encourage individual interpretation and understanding of ultimate things. Not all Hindu texts are accepted as valid by all Hindu sects. Most schools revere the Vedas, even though they are not central to the daily practices and faith of most Hindus. Many Hindus use epic poems such as the Mahabharata and the Ramayana for inspiration. Woven into the Mahabharata is the Bhagavad Gita, or “Song of the Lord,” which is revered by many modern Hindus.
- **Worship:** Worship can occur either in the home or at a temple. At home, individuals keep religious icons (pictures) and statues and make offerings. Worship may involve reciting scriptures, singing, or chanting. Even when not at home, Hindus may want to have several icons with them, for example, in a hospital room. Worship can be done in private, in a group worship with lay individuals (bhajans), or presided over by a priest (puja). Usually worship is performed after bathing. Frequently, Hindus worship before a difficult endeavor or serious medical treatment.

- **Important Rituals:** Hinduism has hundreds of holidays. Celebration of holidays varies according to Hindu sect and geographic region. Ceremonies surrounding the birth, naming, coming-of-age, marriage, and death of an individual are of particular importance. These often are presided over by a family priest.

- **Important Holidays:** Several holidays of importance are Deepavali/Divali, Holi, Janmashtami, Ugadi, Pongal/Makar Sankranthi, Shivaratri, Navaratri, Durga Puja, Ganesh Chaturthi, and Rama Navami. The dates for these holidays vary according to the Hindu calendar.

- **Dietary Practices:** Many Hindus practice vegetarianism or semi-vegetarianism.

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**Tips for Staff — Care of Hindu Patients**

- **Medical Treatment:** Hindus tend to be open to all forms of treatment, whether it involves traditional medical treatment, alternative medicine, or spiritual techniques.

- **Dietary Requirements:** Before serving any food, it is important to consult Hindus about their dietary restrictions.
  - Many Hindus eat a vegetarian or semi-vegetarian diet.
  - Most Hindus avoid beef. Some individuals and certain subsects may choose to consume it.
• In general, Hindus do not eat meat during holidays or on a particular day of the week, depending on their sect.

• Some Hindus may also abstain from certain foods deemed to be “tamasic,” which means mind-harming. Some of these foods are meats, fish, eggs, onion, scallions, leeks, mushrooms, garlic, alcohol, tobacco, and stale food.

• **Gender and Privacy Issues:** Many conservative Hindu patients prefer same-gender caregivers, especially women. For these patients, it is important to respect the patient’s modesty. Jewelry, cloth, and holy threads may have spiritual significance and should not be removed unless necessary, and only after consulting the patient and family.

• **Decision Making:** Most Hindus turn to family members for spiritual, ethical, and emotional advice. Often the surrogate decision-maker is the father or eldest son.

• **Need for Clergy:** Most worship in Hinduism is personal and does not require assistance by the clergy. A family member may step in for a priest when necessary; however, a local priest may be contacted to provide pastoral care for a hospital patient. When a patient is dying, a local priest may be consulted for more personalized care and to help perform final duties.

• **Dying and Death:** A patient should be informed of terminal illness by the family. Most Hindus view death as an integral part of a cycle of existence and so do not fear it. After death, the body is ritually washed by the family and then cremated or buried in line with the customs of the family. Autopsy is not prohibited by Hindu religion and is a matter for the family’s personal preference.

• **Organ Donation:** Hinduism does not prohibit donating organs and is a matter for the patient’s or the family’s personal preference.
INDEPENDENT CHRISTIAN CHURCHES

Apostolic, Charismatic, Communion, Community, Evangelical, Fellowships, Holiness, Holy Spirit, Messianic, Pentecostal, Tabernacle, and Temple churches

Overview of Independent Christian Churches Faith

Many independent Christian churches have their historical roots in mainline Christian denominations but have separated from them. Denominations are large groups of churches with the same name, founder, governance, and teaching. Major denominations include Lutheran, Presbyterian, Anglican, Episcopal, Methodist, Baptist, and others. Independent churches, in contrast, often are called non-denominational. Separation was frequently the result of disagreement with various trends in the denominations. Some independent churches are even anti-denominational — they avoid any appearance of similarity to the denominations, for example, by avoiding the same religious terms and expressions.

Independent Christian churches also may see themselves as part of the Restoration Movement in a return to early Christian teaching. Some independent churches have elements of mainline Christian rituals, but others have none. Independent churches usually have no formal creed, but rather hold to the text of the Bible alone. Most of these local churches are completely autonomous, but some affiliate with like-minded independent churches in order to share resources.

Independent Christian Churches Beliefs and Practices

- Core Beliefs: Independent Christian churches share a core belief that God as Jesus came to demonstrate his love of mankind and be crucified for the sins of the world. They believe that Jesus Christ is the divine Son of God and Lord. Most believe strongly in the power of God’s Holy Spirit to impact the lives of followers of Christ. They seek unity in essentials among all believers.
• **Scriptures:** The Bible is accepted as God’s inspired Word. Most independent Christian churches follow the New Testament as their all-sufficient rule of faith and practice. Some independent churches also embrace the Jewish roots of Christianity, emphasizing the Old Testament as well.

• **Organization:** Independent Christian churches emphasize the autonomy of local congregations. However, many have affiliations with each other by sharing resources through their Bible colleges, seminaries, and “para-ministries” (such as youth programs, social services, and community events).

• **Worship:** The focal point of weekly worship in independent Christian churches is a Sunday or Saturday preaching, praise, and prayer service. Churches vary in their styles of worship and music.

• **Important Rituals:**
  - **Believers’ baptism:** Those who personally accept Christ are baptized into Christ’s name for the forgiveness of sins by profession of faith and bodily immersion in water.
  - **Communion (the Lord’s Supper):** Independent Christian churches vary in their observance of the Lord’s Supper, ranging from weekly to annually, and vary in their beliefs as to the sacredness of the elements (bread and wine or grape juice).

• **Important Holidays:** Many independent Christian churches observe Christmas, Palm Sunday, Good Friday, and Easter.

• **Dietary Practices:** Most have no dietary restrictions. Some may include times of fasting and prayer.
Tips for Staff — Care of Independent Christian Patients

- **Diversity in Practices:** Great diversity exists among the independent Christian churches. It is best for health care staff to ask patients or their families about their particular religious and spiritual requirements. Hospital chaplains can provide assistance in meeting these needs.

- **Dietary Requirements:** Usually there are no requirements. Consult the patient.

- **Gender and Privacy Issues:** Most independent Christian churches do not require same-gender caregivers.

- **Need for Clergy:** Members of independent Christian churches welcome prayers by family, friends, health care staff, personal clergy, and hospital chaplains.

- **Dying and Death:** The patient or family may choose to pray and read from the Bible. They also may request a visit from the family clergy as a comfort measure. Many independent Christian churches recognize anointing with oil for healing and the laying on of hands by family, friends, personal clergy, or hospital chaplain to comfort the patient, family, and staff. Autopsy, burial, and cremation are the personal choice of the patient or family. The staff should ask the patient or family about their preferences.

- **Organ Donation:** Organ donation and organ transplantation are the patient’s or family’s choice. The staff should ask the individual patient or family about their preferences.
ISLAMIC/MUSLIM

Overview of the Islamic Faith

Islam is the second most-practiced religion in the world. “Islam” is an Arabic word that means “the path of submission.” It is the name God gave His final message to mankind through a prophetic tradition that began with Adam and continued down until Muhammad in the sixth century. Muslims believe that through the angel Gabriel, God revealed to Muhammad the doctrines of faith that Muslims still practice today as recorded in the Quran.

Islamic Beliefs and Practices

- **Core Beliefs:** Muslims have seven beliefs. They believe:
  - in one God known by many names
  - that God has sent many books — the Torah, the Gospel, others, and the last, the Holy Quran
  - in all the prophets, Adam, Moses, Abraham, Isaac, Ismail, Jesus, many others, and finally Muhammad
  - in angels and the unseen world
  - in the day of judgment
  - that we will be rewarded or punished for our actions while on earth
  - that God has ordained all events before one is born, and only God knows the outcome of all situations

- **Key Practices:** The five practices (the “five pillars”) are the key to help identify an individual as a Muslim. Muslims observe these practices with great care.
  - **Prayer:** Muslims worship five times a day facing Mecca to strengthen their resolve to obey God’s orders and avoid what is forbidden.
- **Fasting:** During the holy month of Ramadan, Muslims abstain from food and drink from sunrise until sunset, as ordered in the Quran.

- **Pilgrimage or Hajj:** If they are able, Muslims make one trip to the holy city of Mecca as a rehearsal for the Day of Judgment.

- **Charity:** Muslims pay a portion of their earnings to the less fortunate.

- **Testifying:** Muslims testify that “There is no God but God, and Mohammad is the last Prophet and messenger of God.” They live according to this creed in their words and actions.

- **Scriptures:** The Quran is believed to be the Word of God and is highly revered by all Muslims. Prayer often includes reciting verses from the Quran in the original Arabic language. When not in use, the Quran is placed in a safe, clean, elevated location and treated in a respectful manner. Recordings of verses from the Quran are often played for comfort and spiritual healing of the sick.

- **Worship:** The first designated worship of the day is before sunrise, and the final one is before bedtime. Specific times vary on a daily basis and can be adjusted to fit work schedules and other commitments. Muslims often place rugs or clean towels beneath them during prayers to maintain cleanliness. Postures for prayer involve standing, bowing, and kneeling head to floor. Out of respect for God, a person’s name is not said in prayer. Prayers can be done in a private setting, in group settings at mosques, or even in public areas. Friday is the weekly holy day.

- **Cleanliness:** Cleanliness is a deeply honored value in Islam. Before prayer, Muslims perform ablutions, which is ritual rinsing of their face and limbs.

- **Modesty:** Modesty is highly valued. Women dress from head to toe in loose-fitting clothing during worship.
• **Important Holidays:** The word “Eid” means celebration.

  - **Eid ul-Fitr:** This festival of occurs three days after the end of Ramadan, the month of fasting. It is a joyous holiday characterized by feasts, games, and exchanging of gifts.

  - **Eid al-Adha:** This important holiday occurs on the 10th day of the month of Hajj. It commemorates the day that Ibrahim willingly took his son to be sacrificed and was blessed by God for his faith.

• **Dietary Practices:**

  - **Halal:** Muslims eat “halal” meats, which are prepared by other Muslims according to Islamic law. Many Muslims also eat meats that are “kashrout,” that is, prepared in kosher kitchens. Muslims are strictly forbidden to eat pork, and they avoid any products derived from pork.

  - **Alcohol:** Alcohol and all its byproducts are forbidden.

**Tips for Staff — Care of Muslim Patients**

• **Correct Term:** Followers of the Islamic faith never refer to themselves as Muhammadans, which gives the incorrect notion that Muslims worship Muhammad. It is best to refer to followers as Muslims and to the faith as Islam.

• **Medical Treatment:** Doctors should be careful to not use any pig-derived medicines or treatments for Muslim patients. Two examples are heart valves or stitches derived from pigs.

• **Dietary Requirements:** Pork and any products derived from pork are strictly forbidden to Muslims. In the hospital, Muslims may order a kosher diet or a vegetarian diet. It is important to consult Muslim patients about their diets.

• **Gender and Privacy Issues:** Muslim patients prefer treatment from staff of the same gender. This is especially true for women who choose to wear the veil. Privacy and respect should be given to patients during their prayer times. Prayer should not be interrupted unless there is an emergency.
**Practices:** Illness relaxes religious obligations. If a Muslim patient has a conflict with medical treatment, staff should consult the family or a Muslim imam.

- **Prayer:** In the hospital, many Muslim patients will worship at the designated and may use the postures of prayer (standing, bowing, and kneeling head to floor). If extremely ill, they will recite the prayers from their bed. Patients may wish to use a rug or clean towel beneath them during prayers to maintain their cleanliness. To show respect for God, the patient’s name is not said in prayer.

- **Ablutions:** Before prayer and eating, Muslims perform ablutions, which is ritual rinsing of their face and limbs. Because ablutions are part of worship, Muslim patients may request water frequently.

- **Right/Left hand:** Muslims tend to use their right hand for most activities and restrict the left hand for unclean tasks. In general, when offering food or other items, it is offensive to use the left hand. This practice is not followed as strictly by Muslims raised in Western society.

**Decision Making:** In many families, men act as decision makers; however, women are often involved with the decision-making process. When dealing with spiritual decisions, the family should be notified as soon as possible. If the patient is alone, contact the local mosque.

**Need for Clergy:** The concept of clergy does not exist within Islam. Instead, each Muslim has a personal responsibility to develop a relationship with God. Imams are males who lead others in worship, but they do not act as priests or authority figures. If the patient is alone and the family is not available to assist with spiritual decisions, the local mosque should be called.

**Dying and Death:** Death is viewed as a transition to eternity. The patient may want to lie or sit facing Mecca and may want to perform ablutions for purification. The family may recite or play verses from the Quran. The family decides removal of life support. After death, the entire body should be kept covered. Muslims often choose to have a Muslim who knows the culture and traditions prepare the body. Cremation is not permitted. Muslims avoid autopsy wherever possible so that the deceased will not be dishonored.

**Organ Donation:** Organ donation is a personal choice for Muslim patients. Decisions about donation vary, depending on personal beliefs.
JEHOVAH’S WITNESSES

Overview of Jehovah’s Witnesses Faith

The Jehovah’s Witnesses religion is rooted in the belief that Christ acted as the greatest witness for Jehovah (God) in history, leading Israel toward him. However, many other individuals before and after Christ also have made the choice to act as witnesses for Jehovah. In late 19th century Pittsburgh, Charles Taze Russell was a key figure who helped to organize these witnesses into a single religious unit that became known as Jehovah’s Witnesses. Authority resides today in the Watchtower Tract and Bible Society.

Jehovah’s Witnesses Beliefs and Practices

- **Core Beliefs:** The single true God is Jehovah. Jesus Christ is the only begotten son of God, the single entity created directly from God. The sacrifice of Jesus’ perfect human life made everlasting life possible. At the resurrection of the dead, 144,000 apostles will rise into heaven. The governments of mankind then will be replaced by the Kingdom of God under Christ, unifying humanity. Satan, who is alienated from God, will act as an invisible ruler of the world until then.

- **Scriptures:** Jehovah’s Witnesses maintain the sacredness of the Old and New Testaments of the Bible as the holy Word inspired by God. Based on Biblical teaching, Jehovah’s Witnesses hold life, marriage, the family, and blood to be highly sacred. The books of Genesis, Leviticus, Deuteronomy, and Acts of the Apostles emphasize the role of blood. This teaching is interpreted as a prohibition against consuming whole blood or major components of red or white blood cells, platelets, or plasma. This means a restriction on medical treatment by intravenous injection or transfusion of these blood components. It also involves some dietary restrictions.
- **Worship:** Jehovah’s Witnesses have communal worship three times a week in Kingdom Halls, which act as centers for worship, instruction, and fellowship. In addition, Jehovah’s Witnesses believe that following the moral guidelines set by Jehovah, prayer, preaching, and acts of kindness should pervade every aspect of an individual’s life. Jehovah’s Witnesses do not use Christian images or symbols.

- **Clergy:** The Jehovah’s Witnesses faith is centered on a congregation that is led by several men called elders, who act as teachers and shepherds for the community. While the elders are often contacted in situations of spiritual need, individuals make personal decisions based on their relationship with God and their understanding of the teachings in the Bible.

- **Nonpolitical:** Jehovah’s Witnesses are politically neutral. They also reject the concept of nationalism, because they believe it opposes international unity and the oneness of humanity.

- **Important Rituals and Holidays:**
  - **Memorial of Christ’s Death:** Jehovah’s Witnesses celebrate the anniversary of the death of Christ, also called the Lord’s Evening Meal or Communion. The symbolic meal represents the calling of Christ to all Christians. The memorial celebration occurs annually on the first full moon following the spring equinox.

  - Jehovah’s Witnesses abstain from many Christian customs and holiday celebrations that they believe to spring from pre-Christian, pagan religions. Examples are Christmas, Easter, and personal birthdays.

**Tips for Staff — Care of Jehovah’s Witnesses Patients**

- **Correct Term:** The patient should be referred to as a member of the Jehovah’s Witnesses (not a “Jehovah” and not a “Jehovah’s Witness”).
Medical Treatment: Jehovah’s Witnesses patients cannot consume any major component of blood orally, intravenously, or in other ways. Blood transfusions are not permitted. Preoperative collection, storage, and later reinfusion of blood are forbidden. Abortion is rejected due to reverence for human life.

However, individuals may opt to receive minor fractions, such as albumin, immunoglobulins, vaccines derived from blood, and hemophiliac preparations. Auto-transfusion methods sometimes are accepted. It is permitted to donate and receive organs, tissues, and bone marrow. Amputations and limb disposal are permitted. Blood tests generally are permitted because the blood is not reintroduced into the body.

Most Jehovah’s Witnesses have a durable power of attorney for health care.

Medical Needs: Medical authorities are expected to act quickly and aggressively to help patients receive proper medical treatment by bloodless methods so that Jehovah’s Witnesses can maintain religious integrity. Jehovah’s Witnesses respect and accept medical treatment. Even though faith has healing powers, they believe that miraculous healings occurred only during the lifetime of Christ.

Dietary Requirements: Because Jehovah’s Witnesses cannot consume whole blood or blood components, foods containing any blood or blood products are not acceptable. It is important to consult with Jehovah’s Witnesses patients before serving food.

Gender and Privacy Issues: Some Jehovah’s Witnesses may request same-sex medical treatment, although not required by the faith. Jehovah’s Witnesses revere cleanliness and modesty.

Need for Clergy: Most Jehovah’s Witnesses are deeply religious and often ask an elder or a fellow member to pray for them. Elders also may be called upon for baptisms or funerals. For spiritual, religious, or medical issues and concerns, the Hospital Liaison Committee for Jehovah’s Witnesses may be consulted.
**Dying:** Jehovah’s Witnesses do not have a specialized system of rites for the dying. While life is sacred, they understand that difficult and painful treatments to prolong life are not required. This understanding is not a universal code, but is applied to the individual situation, in consideration of religious and civil laws.

**Death:** Jehovah’s Witnesses may choose cremation because their Scriptures do not prohibit it. Jehovah’s Witnesses often prefer that autopsies not be done. Next-of-kin may allow an autopsy if cause of death must be determined or if information obtained by autopsy may contribute to medical treatment for others.

**Organ Donation:** Jehovah’s Witnesses are permitted to donate organs, tissue, and bone marrow and to receive transplants.
JEISH

Overview of Judaism

Judaism is several thousand years old, tracing itself to the Biblical times of Abraham and particularly Moses, who led the Israelites out of Egypt. Both a religion and a way of life, Judaism thrives on interconnectedness. The community of Jewish individuals throughout the world includes both those who practice the Jewish faith and those who practice only its cultural traditions.

Religious observances and traditions revolve around the family and community, with many religious celebrations held where family and friends gather, not only in synagogue settings. Some Jewish people live their Jewish commitment with a focus on community service rather than religious observance. This Jewish commitment to the betterment of humanity is referred to as “repairing or mending the world.”

Jewish Beliefs and Practices

- **Core Beliefs:** At its core, Judaism believes that one God created the universe and teaches that all are called to be God’s co-partners in the daily re-creation of the world. Co-partnering with God manifests itself as people assume responsibilities or dedicate themselves to the betterment of society.

- **Scriptures:** The Jewish Bible has three sections: the Torah (the first five books), the prophets, and the historical writings (such as Psalms). The Torah — Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, and Deuteronomy — is the basis of religious practice and law. Orthodox and Hassidic Jews accept the Torah as given by God to Moses at Sinai. Other Jews view the Torah as divinely inspired but written over the course of centuries. “Tanakh” is an abbreviation referring to all three sections.
Five Movements: Judaism has five major movements (denominations) ranging from very traditional to very liberal, as follows:

- **Orthodox**: Maintains a high level of commitment and adherence to the commandments, practices, and laws contained in the Torah, as set forth in the Jewish scriptures and interpreted by ancient and modern Orthodox rabbis.

- **Hassidic**: Similar to Orthodox in the “living out” of Jewish practice, rituals, and worship, but also emphasizes joyful singing in worship and the mystical aspects of life.

- **Conservative**: Believes Judaism should respond to society’s changing needs while remaining committed to essential Jewish practices. It accepts traditional and modern scholarship of religious texts and accepts both sacred and secular texts for inspiration and change.

- **Reconstructionist**: Views Judaism as an evolving religious civilization, each generation subtly reshaping Jewish faith and traditions. It recognizes the diversity of Jewish religious ideology and practice.

- **Reform**: Seeks to reform Jewish belief and practice, holding that no particular principle of faith is binding. It employs both traditional and modern methods to learn from the Jewish Bible and rabbinic literature.

Halacha and Rabbinic Teachings: Halacha (ha-lah-KHA) is a term applied to all of the Jewish law that governs social and religious activities within the Jewish faith. Many Jewish people turn to their rabbis, who are scholars and experts in halacha, for advice in social, health care, and religious matters. The halacha has evolved over centuries and is based on the Talmud, which is 63 volumes of the thoughts, guidance, teachings, and legal rulings of ancient rabbis.

Important Rituals and Holidays: The Jewish calendar uses the lunar (not solar) cycle. Jewish holidays and the weekly Sabbath start at sunset and end on the following day(s) at night, according to the season. On the Shabbat and major Jewish holidays, Orthodox and more traditional Jewish people do not use electronic devices or perform business transactions.
- **Sabbath, Shabbat** (sha-BAHT), or **Shabbos** (SHA-boss): The “Day of Rest” begins each week on Friday at sunset and ends Saturday night at dark. It is a 25-hour period for people to spend quality time with family and friends.

- **Rosh Hashanah**: The “Head of the Year” begins the Jewish New Year’s High Holy Days each fall, dedicated to self-evaluation and reflection on life. Rosh Hashanah lasts for two days. During synagogue worship, a ram’s horn (shofar) sounds the call to repentance and reconciliation. Jewish groups may visit hospital patients to sound the shofar.

- **Yom Kippur**: The “Day of Atonement” comes 10 days after Rosh Hashanah each fall and continues the same themes. It is a somber 25-hour period of fasting in which traditionally no food or liquids are taken. The sick should not fast, and those routinely taking medication should modify their fast.

- **Succot**: The “Festival of the Booths,” which occurs four days after Yom Kippur in the fall, ends the High Holy Days. For nine days, temporary structures (succahs) commemorate the temporary shelters of the Israelites in the desert. Many meals are eaten in the succah as part of the festival.

- **Chanukah**: Chanukah occurs in early or late winter for eight days. It commemorates the rededication of the Jerusalem Temple in 165 BCE, when oil for one day lit the lamp of the eternal flame for eight days. Each night of the holiday, successive candles are lit on the eight-branched menorah. Traditional foods are prepared in oil, and children play with spinning tops (dreidels) inscribed in Hebrew, “A great miracle happened there.”

- **Purim**: In midwinter, this festival celebrates the events of the Book of Esther, when Queen Esther saved the Persian Jewish population from annihilation. The book is read on this day and a three-cornered pastry (homontasch) is eaten. Distributing food to the needy is part of the celebration.

- **Passover/Pesach**: Each spring, Passover commemorates the Exodus from Egypt under the leadership of Moses. It lasts eight days during which unleavened bread (matzah) is eaten. A special home meal called a seder retells the story of the Exodus.
Shavuot: This festival occurs in early summer for two days to celebrate Moses’ and the Israelites’ receiving the Torah and Ten Commandments at Mount Sinai. Often dairy products are eaten to symbolize the rebirth of the Israelites.

Religious Items

- **Kipah or yarmulke**: A Jewish head covering for men that denotes awareness that God is over and around us. Some men wear it at all times, and others only during worship and meals. Any head covering (hats, scrub caps) may be worn as a substitute.
- **Prayer books**: Traditional morning, afternoon, and evening prayers are contained in a Jewish prayer book called a siddur.
- **Yahrzeit candle**: A candle is lit in memory of a loved one’s death anniversary. An electric yahrzeit candle may be used.
- **Sabbath candles**: Two candles are lit to celebrate the Sabbath or a holiday. Electric or battery powered candles may be used.
- **Jewish books and items**: Jewish books and items may be found by phone at 1-800-JUDAISM (583-2476) or on the Web at www.Judaism.com.

Dietary Practices: Some Jewish people adhere to series of strict dietary practices known as kashrout or “keeping kosher.” This prohibits the eating of pork, pork byproducts, shell fish, and crustaceans. Poultry and various meat products are allowed if prepared from slaughter to food stage following stringent guidelines. Meat products and poultry are never served with dairy products and kept completely separate, including separation of preparation and eating utensils.
Tips for Staff — Care of Jewish Patients

- **Medical Treatment:** Some Jewish patients and family members may want to consult their rabbi about certain aspects of medical treatment that may conflict with Jewish law and practice. Staff members should involve the rabbi with such matters to avoid misunderstanding or conflict.

- **Gender and Privacy Issues:** Some patients may request care by same-gender medical staff. Staff should be aware and considerate toward these requests.

- **Need for Clergy:** In addition to consultation about medical treatments, consulting with the family’s rabbi may be helpful regarding the use of telephones, elevators, automatic opening doors, electrical appliances, light switches, and driving or being driven in vehicles during the Sabbath and holidays, such as Rosh Hashanah, Yom Kippur, the first two and last two days of Passover and Succot, and the two days of Shavuot. The family should be encouraged to speak about these issues with their own rabbi or with a local rabbi if they are from out of town.

- **Life Support:** Jewish law has differing views on the topic of life support. Stringent stance states that a patient cannot be withdrawn from a ventilator, while more moderate stances accept that if a ventilator is only delaying definite death, the patient can be withdrawn. The family, the family’s rabbi or a rabbi the family is comfortable with, and the staff should come together to discuss the specifics of the situation.

- **Dying and Death:** At the time of death, family members and friends will sometimes recite Psalms from the Jewish Bible and traditional prayers. A rabbi may be present to lead these prayers, but is not necessary. At the time of death, a white sheet usually should cover over the body, and the eyes and mouth should be closed. Some families do not leave the deceased alone from the time of death to burial. A family member or friend may request to stay with the deceased until the funeral home staff arrives. This individual is called a shomer (guardian).
Burial: Burial of the deceased usually occurs within 24 hours of death. The family may request that necessary documentation be prepared quickly and the transport of the body be expedited to fulfill these requirements. In unusual circumstances, a burial can be delayed up to 72 hours after death. Burial of amputated limbs or excised organs along with the body may be requested as specified by Jewish law. However, not all Jewish people follow this practice. Autopsy is discouraged by traditional Jewish practices. Some rabbinic authorities permit autopsy for genetic disorders to benefit the family’s well-being or science. The family is encouraged to discuss options with their rabbi and medical staff.

Organ Donation: Both the Conservative and the Reform movements endorse organ donation. The Orthodox movement endorses it in certain conditions, such as immediate need.
NAZARENE

Overview of the Church of the Nazarene Faith

The Church of the Nazarene is one of several Protestant denominations that sprang up in the United States after the Civil War. Officially founded in 1908, the ideology of the Church of the Nazarene goes back to the 1880s and the Wesleyan (Methodist) tradition of Protestantism. The Church of the Nazarene does not have a single founder, but a group of founders in various parts of the country who came together to form the Church of the Nazarene movement. They shared a common doctrine, missionary vision, and commitment to make Christ-like disciples of the nations. Currently, 1.5 million members, who are called Nazarenes, do missionary work in 150 countries throughout the world.

Church of the Nazarene Beliefs and Practices

- **Core Beliefs:** Nazarenes believe in the classical Christian view of God as a Trinity of Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. Nazarenes are encouraged to form a redemptive relationship with Jesus Christ and to live a Christ-like life through prayer, Bible reading, and a readiness to share their faith with others. They strive to respect and love others and welcome the same courtesy from them.

- **Scriptures:** The practices and doctrines emphasized by the Old and New Testaments of the Bible are the basis of Nazarene theology. Where the Bible is silent, Nazarenes use Biblical principles, common sense, and love and respect to help resolve issues. Nazarenes are free to choose from among the various translations of the Bible.

- **Worship:** Nazarenes worship in congregations at local churches. Worship may take place in homes, multisites, mega churches, or cell churches.

- **Clergy:** Nazarenes turn to a local pastor for spiritual concerns. Although Nazarenes may not be part of a local congregation, they may consider advice from the local Nazarene pastor. Nazarenes accept the tradition of female clergy.
• **Important Rituals:** Baptism and the Lord’s Supper (Communion) must be performed by a member of the clergy.
  - **Baptism:** Baptism signifies acceptance of the benefits of the atonement of Jesus Christ and is administered by sprinkling, pouring, or immersion. Young children may be baptized when parents or guardians assure their Christian training.
  - **The Lord’s Supper:** This Memorial and Communion Supper is open to all Christian believers prepared for reverent appreciation of its meaning.

• **Important Holidays:** The Church of the Nazarene observes all the traditional Christian holy days and holidays, such as Christmas, Good Friday, and Easter.

• **Dietary Practices:** Nazarenes have no dietary requirements or restrictions, regardless of the specific day or religious celebration.

**Tips for Staff — Care of Nazarene Patients**

• **Medical Treatment:** Nazarenes are not restricted in the use of medical care and technology. Members are free to choose the level of medical care they desire. At the same time, Nazarenes believe that instant, supernatural, and miraculous healing can occur if God wills it. Nazarenes respect the life of the unborn child and do not discuss the option of abortion. Nazarenes do not approve of swearing or profanity in their presence, especially if done in the name of God.

• **Decision Making:** Nazarenes are encouraged to take the initiative to seek assistance from medical professionals and local clergy in making difficult medical decisions. An example is end-of-life care for a patient with terminal illness.

• **Need for Clergy:** Baptism and Communion are the only two sacraments that must be performed by a member of the clergy. However, clergy need not be a member of the Church of the Nazarene. Clergy familiar with and respectful of the Nazarene faith tradition are welcome to perform specific duties if a Nazarene clergy member is not available. Hospital chaplains may minister to Nazarene patients. Local Nazarene clergy can be located by e-mail at pghdistnaz@zoominternet.net.
- **Dying and Death:** The Church of the Nazarene does not accept euthanasia. Patients and family members are encouraged to talk with medical professionals and local pastors for advice on specific situations. Autopsy is permitted in consultation with the family.

- **Organ Donation:** Organ donation and transplantation are an individual choice made with the family.
ORTHODOX CHRISTIAN

Overview of Orthodox Christianity

The Orthodox Church traces itself to the time of Christ. It is one of the main branches of Christianity, which first divided when the Orthodox Church and the Church of Rome split in 1054 CE. Throughout its history, the Orthodox Church has remained united in faith, with only some differences of language and cultural traditions in the various regions of the world where it is practiced. Concentrated mostly in Asia Minor and Eastern Europe, the various Orthodox Churches of the world (such as Greek, Russian, Coptic, Syrian, American, and others) share a common doctrine, worship, and sacraments.

Orthodox Christian Beliefs and Practices

- **Core Beliefs:** Orthodox Tradition is the deposit of faith passed down from the time of Christ to the present and consists of various writings, the canons and decrees of the councils, the lives of the saints, and liturgical art, architecture, and iconography. Orthodox Tradition reveres the Old and New Testaments of the Bible as God’s revelation to man.
  - Orthodox Christians confess belief in One God, Triune in Being, One in Essence, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit.
  - Orthodox Christians venerate (honor) the Virgin Mary as the Mother of God (Theotokos). They use various holy icons (pictures) and relics, but these items are treated with reverence, not worshipped.

- **Scriptures:** Holy Scripture is the Old and New Testaments of the Bible.

- **Important Rituals:** Orthodox Christians recognize a number of sacraments (called mysteries), which only an Orthodox priest can perform.
  - **Baptism and Chrismation (confirmation):** admission to the church
  - **Eucharist (Communion):** partaking of the body and blood of Christ under form of bread and wine
• **Confession**: the forgiveness of sins

• **Marriage**: unification of man and woman in Christ

• **Ordination**: conferring of priesthood

• **Unction**: anointing with oil for healing of the sick

• **Important Holidays**: The important holy days of the Orthodox faith include Palm Sunday, Holy Thursday and Holy Friday, Holy Pascha (Easter), Ascension, Pentecost, Nativity of the Virgin Mary, and the Nativity of the Lord Jesus Christ. The dates for these holy days depend on which calendar is used — the old Julian calendar or the modified Julian calendar. There is a 13-day gap between these calendars.

• **Dietary Practices**: Orthodox Christians practice fasting often throughout the year to grow spiritually. They fast every week on Wednesday and Friday. They also do the Lenten fast leading up to Holy Week, the Apostles Fast from the Sunday after Pentecost to June 29, and the Nativity Fast from Nov. 14 to the Nativity of the Lord. There are several periods during the year when Orthodox Christians celebrate but do not fast.

**Tips for Staff — Care of Orthodox Christian Patients**

• **Medical Treatment**: The Orthodox Church welcomes the use of medical treatment along with spiritual healing for the betterment of the sick and dying. In most circumstances, Orthodox patients are open to various medical procedures.

  • Procedures such as vasectomy should not be performed on a patient except in life-threatening circumstances. The body should be kept in a natural state as much as possible.

  • In line with its views on the sanctity of life, the Orthodox Church opposes the practice of mercy killing and abortion.
- **Need for Clergy:** An Orthodox priest is needed for the sacraments. Communion should be received before all surgeries. Uction is for sick patients and for dying patients. It is given after confession and Communion.

- **Dying and Death:** An Orthodox priest must say prayers over the dying. When a patient becomes critical or has sudden death, the priest should be called immediately. Individuals in the Orthodox Faith are always buried. Cremated individuals cannot receive a church funeral or memorial services after their passing. The Orthodox Church recognizes the need for autopsy for the benefit of the health of survivors or those afflicted by the same disease. However, in respect for the human body, the Orthodox Church requests medical staff to treat the deceased body with utmost respect and to bury the body afterwards.

- **Organ Donation:** The Orthodox Church welcomes the use of organ donation for the direct benefit of a sick person, but not for research purposes or otherwise. However, the Orthodox Church in general feels that there should be no transplantation of the heart or the brain under any circumstance because these organs affect the intellect and life of the individual who receives the organ.
PENTECOSTAL

Overview of the Pentecostal Movement

The modern Pentecostal movement began in the first decade of the 20th century during a Christian revival on Azusa Street in Los Angeles. Pentecostalism is based on the events described in the Acts of the Apostles of the Bible’s New Testament. As Jesus had commanded and promised, his disciples waited in Jerusalem and were filled with the power of God’s Holy Spirit on the day of Pentecost. Over the course of the 20th century, the Pentecostal movement developed into a worldwide phenomenon, with Pentecostal groups all over the world. Many independent Christian churches hold firmly to the Pentecostal movement’s teaching on the gifts of the Holy Spirit.

Pentecostal Beliefs and Practices

- **Core Beliefs:** Pentecostalism is a strictly Christian movement holding to basic Christian teaching. Pentecostals believe in one God as a Trinity of Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. They stress the divinity of Jesus Christ, salvation and eternal life through conversion to Christ, and the baptism of the Holy Spirit in the name of Christ, which bestows spiritual gifts for service.

- **Scripture:** The Bible is treated with great reverence as the Word of God and viewed as the means by which God communicates with the world.

- **Governance:** No central organization or church oversees the Pentecostal movement. The Pentecostal movement includes a range of theologies, churches, and organizations.

- **Membership:** Some individuals belong to one of the independent Pentecostal Christian churches, such as the Assemblies of God, and have their own Pentecostal clergy. Other individuals belong to a Pentecostal prayer group and also to one of the main Protestant, Catholic, or Orthodox churches, which are not Pentecostal. Some Pentecostals also identify with a movement called the Charismatic movement, and some do not.
• **Worship:** Pentecostals usually meet for group worship in churches, but they believe worship can take place in any location. Pentecostals believe that faith gives them direct access to God, who will intervene in some way wherever they are. The Pentecostal style of worship often involves praise with music and a kind of ecstatic prayer called “speaking in tongues.” These elements are important aspects of both public and private prayer.

• **Important Rituals:** Key rituals in the Pentecostal churches are:
  - **Baptism:** with water in the name of Jesus
  - **Communion:** celebrated with bread and the fruit of the vine (wine or juice)
  - **Prayer for healing:** by anointing with oil

• **Important Holidays:** For Pentecostals, Easter, Pentecost, and Christmas are the most important holidays. Many observe national holidays with prayer to God and fellowship with one another.

• **Modesty:** Pentecostals live a life of holiness through modesty and gender distinction in dress.

• **Dietary Practices:** Pentecostals may choose to fast voluntarily when seeking God’s intervention in their lives, when making intercession for others, and at their own discretion.

**Tips for Staff — Care of Pentecostal Patients**

• **Medical Treatment:** While Pentecostals accept medical treatment, they also believe strongly in divine healing and use worship as a treatment method until the end of illness or the end of life. Family members and clergy may sing spiritual songs and also “pray in tongues” around the patient’s bedside.
- **Gender and Privacy Issues:** Treating patients with dignity and respect is a priority. Most Pentecostal churches are not sensitive to the gender of caregivers. Some individuals may have a preference for caregivers of the same gender.

- **Need for Clergy:** No traditions require specifically authorized clergy, except for baptism and Communion in some churches. Patients may request a visit by their church’s clergy. Hospital chaplains are welcome to pray with Pentecostal patients.

- **Dying and Death:** Pentecostals usually bury their dead, but cremation is not forbidden. Autopsy is a personal decision of conscience made by the individual before death or by the family.

- **Organ Donation:** Organ donation and transplantation surgery are by personal choice.
ROMAN CATHOLIC

Overview of the Catholic Faith

The Roman Catholic Church traces itself to the time of Christ and has been united under the pope in Rome since its founding. Catholicism is one of the main branches of Christianity and is also the largest, with members worldwide. Catholic rituals and traditions have influenced various other Christian churches.

Catholic Beliefs and Practices

- **Core Beliefs:** Catholics believe in one God as a Trinity of Father, Son, and Holy Spirit and in salvation and eternal life through the death on the cross of Jesus Christ, the Son of God.

- **Scriptures:** Catholics believe that the Old and New Testaments of the Bible are the inspired Word of God.

- **Clergy:** The Catholic clergy is a hierarchy of the pope, bishops, and priests.

- **Important Rituals:** The main ritual of public worship for Catholics is the Mass, which centers on the sacrament of the Eucharist (Communion). There are seven sacraments: baptism, confirmation, penance (confession), Eucharist (Communion), matrimony, holy orders, and anointing of the sick. Practicing Catholics build a relationship with God by receiving the sacraments throughout their lives. A person’s salvation does not depend on the rituals, however, but on how a person has lived and on the relationship built with God.

  - **Baptism:** Baptism usually is performed in childhood but can be performed for adults. An adult who has never been baptized or who is choosing to join the Catholic Church can ask to be baptized.

  - **Penance (Confession):** Through the sacrament of reconciliation, also called penance or confession, Catholics seek to be reconciled with God by confessing sins. The information revealed in confession is strictly confidential and cannot be relayed by the priest to anyone.
• **Eucharist (Communion):** Catholics believe that the Eucharist (Communion) is the body and blood of Jesus Christ in the appearance of bread and wine. A one-hour fast from food is required before receiving Communion.

• **Anointing of the Sick:** The purpose of the sacrament of anointing of the sick is to pray for bodily healing and spiritual health. It involves being anointed with holy oil. Formerly called extreme unction or last rites, this sacrament in times past was only for people in immediate danger of death. Today, the sacrament of anointing is for any Roman Catholic who has serious illness, injury, or frailty, whether or not there is hope of recovery.

**Important Holy Days**

• **Weekly worship:** Sunday is the weekly day of worship. Attendance at Mass is required for practicing Catholics worldwide.

• **Holy days:** In the United States, there are an additional six holy days when practicing Catholics are obliged to attend Mass. These holy days are Christmas (Dec. 25), Mary, Mother of God (Jan. 1), Ascension (40 days after Easter), Assumption (Aug. 15), All Saints (Nov. 1), and Immaculate Conception (Dec. 8).

• **Seasons of the Church**
  
  – **Advent:** This is a season of spiritual preparation for approximately four weeks before Christmas. Some Catholics may follow spiritual practices, for example, abstaining from a certain food of their choice.

  – **Lent:** This is the season of spiritual preparation for Easter, lasting 40 days. On Ash Wednesday, the first day of Lent, many Catholics receive blessed ashes on their foreheads, as a sign of fasting and penance during Lent.

• **Religious Items:** Catholics use various religious articles such as Bibles, rosary beads, medals, prayer books, scapulars, and statues.
Dietary Practices

- During Lent, Catholics ages 18 to 59 are required to fast and abstain on Ash Wednesday and Good Friday. Fasting means consuming only one full meal and two partial meals. Abstaining, often referred to as abstinence, means not eating meat. On Fridays during Lent, Catholics must abstain from all meat. Some Catholics voluntarily abstain from meat every Friday of the year. Eastern European and Italian Catholics may abstain from meat on Christmas Eve. The sick are excused from these requirements.

- Before receiving Communion, a one-hour fast from food is required.

Tips for Staff — Care of Catholic Patients

- Medical Treatment: Catholics believe that life is sacred and all medical means should be taken to restore health and wellness. The Church also acknowledges that the individual reserves the right to stop extreme treatment to preserve life.

- Dietary Requirements: Catholic patients may try to follow fast and abstinence requirements. For example, some patients may eat less food throughout Lent or request meatless meals for Lenten Fridays. However, the sick are excused from required fast and abstinence.

- Need for Clergy: Roman Catholic patients who request the sacraments of penance (confession) or anointing of the sick can receive these only from a Roman Catholic priest. Communion can be received only from a Roman Catholic priest or Roman Catholic layperson who is a Eucharistic minister of Holy Communion. Sacraments require the patient’s consent to receive them. Catholic sisters (nuns) or fellow Catholics may offer non-sacramental prayers with or over the patient.

- Communion: Patients usually can receive Communion on days that are regularly scheduled at the hospital. For an hour before Communion, some patients may want to fast from food (water and other liquids are not part of the Communion fast).
• **Confession:** Before surgery or during a long hospital stay, patients may ask for the sacrament of penance (confession). Those in a semi-private room may prefer a private space to receive this sacrament. Some patients defer Communion until after confession.

• **Anointing of the Sick:** A patient can request the sacrament of anointing of the sick, whether or not there is hope of recovery. This sacrament is given only once per hospital stay (and not repeated even if life support is removed). To receive the sacrament, the patient must be physically awake and mentally alert (except in an emergency). The request must come from the patient. In an emergency, a family member who is the patient’s health care decision-maker can make the request and help the priest discern if the patient would have consented.

• **Holy days:** On Sundays or holy days of obligation, Catholic patients may request to attend Mass in the hospital chapel or to receive Communion in their patient room.

• **Dying and Death:** A dying Catholic patient may request “last rites.” This is a former term that refers to the sacraments of confession, Communion, and anointing of the sick if not yet received. A Roman Catholic priest should be called.

After death, however, a non-ordained chaplain, such as a Catholic sister (nun) or layperson, can lead in the prayers for the deceased because no sacrament needs to be given. The family may benefit from a chaplain who can help with their grief, remove false notions that “last rites” are necessary for salvation, and assist with tasks such as contacting a funeral director.

The Catholic Church does not permit euthanasia (“mercy killing”). Catholics are not obliged to use any extraordinary means to sustain life. Autopsy is permitted, especially for families to find out possible genetic causes of death.

• **Organ Donation:** Organ donation is encouraged as a great act of charity. Organ transplantation is permitted.
SALVATION ARMY

Overview of the Salvation Army Faith

The Salvation Army is a Christian church founded by William Booth in 1865 in London, England. Originally named the Christian Mission, the church later adopted a new name to reflect a more proactive, vigorous approach to provide charity for the destitute. The Salvation Army’s uniforms, flags, and ranks reflect its spirituality. Today the Salvation Army is a religious and charitable organization with operations all over the world, welcoming people from all cultures to join in worship.

Salvation Army Beliefs and Practices

- **Core Beliefs:** The Salvation Army has many beliefs in common with other mainstream Christian denominations. The Salvation Army has a formal statement of faith, which includes belief in one God as a Trinity of Father, Son, and Holy Spirit and belief in salvation through Jesus Christ, the Son of God. The official statement of the doctrines of the Salvation Army is available on its website at www.salvationarmyusa.org/usn/www_usn.nsf.

- **Scriptures:** The Old and New Testaments of the Bible are held to be the inspired Word of God.

- **Membership:** Members of the Salvation Army are called Salvationists. The Salvation Army has various degrees of membership and equal opportunity for women.

- **Dress Code:** Officers of the Salvation Army wear a uniform that consists of a black suit and white shirt. Officers are required to wear their uniform during Salvation Army activities. Salvationists do not have a dress code.
The Salvation Army clergy are known as Corps Officers. They are ordained and act as the spiritual leaders for the local congregation and community they serve. Officers baptize and offer Communion and prayers. The Salvation Army’s international headquarters in London has administrative territories that oversee local community centers.

Salvationists congregate for church meetings in their local community centers. Worship services often involve joyful music, both vocal and instrumental. The music serves to spiritually stimulate and bring together members of the community.

Salvationists usually follow the general holy days of mainstream Christianity, especially Christmas and Easter.

Members of the Salvation Army pledge to abstain from alcohol and tobacco. The Salvation Army has no other dietary restrictions or requirements.

**Tips for Staff — Care of Salvation Army Patients**

- **Medical Treatment:** Any health-restoring, life-saving treatment is permitted by the Salvation Army. Extreme treatments may be terminated by the individual’s choice.

- **Dietary Requirements:** Alcohol is not permitted. Any medications with addictive substances should be used within limits for the patient’s protection.

- **Need for Clergy:** Chaplains are available to minister to the needs of Salvationist patients in the hospital.

- **Dying and Death:** The Salvation Army church does not forbid autopsy. Families are free to form their own opinions, and so the family should be consulted.

- **Organ Donation:** The Salvation Army church does not forbid organ donation. The patient or the family should be consulted regarding organ donation.
UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST

Overview of the Unitarian Universalist Faith

Unitarian Universalism emerged from the fusion of two different liberal Christian denominations that date to the early 19th century. Unitarianism affirmed the unity of God, the humanity of Jesus Christ, the potential for human spiritual and moral growth, and the use of reason in religion. Universalism affirmed universal salvation. In 1961, the Universalist Church of America and the American Unitarian Association consolidated to create the Unitarian Universalist Association.

Unitarian Universalism, in accord with its free-church heritage, has no rigid or structured creed, leaving members free to find religious insight and understanding by drawing from a variety of religious traditions and spiritual paths.

Unitarian Universalist Beliefs and Practices

- **Covenants:** Unitarian Universalism is a covenantal religion. Unity is expressed through affirmation of religious values and ethical standards rather than through agreement about specific theological statements.

- **Seven Principles:** All Unitarian Universalist Association congregations covenant with one another to affirm and promote the Seven Principles:
  - the inherent worth and dignity of every person
  - justice, equity, and compassion in human relations
  - acceptance of one another and encouragement to spiritual growth in congregations
  - a free and responsible search for truth and meaning
  - the right of conscience and use of the democratic process within congregations and in society at large
  - the goal of world community with peace, liberty, and justice for all
  - respect for the interdependent web of all existence of which we are a part
Unity in Diversity: Unitarian Universalists generally affirm the Seven Principles. At the same time, they appreciate that people sometimes come to different religious conclusions so that not all Unitarian Universalists will agree on every aspect of religious understanding. Most Unitarian Universalists are members of a local congregation, but some identify themselves with the faith without being members of a congregation.

Liberal and Progressive: Unitarian Universalists are usually theologically liberal and politically progressive. Many are active in social justice work and environmental stewardship. The Unitarian Universalist Association has a formal commitment to become more anti-racist, anti-oppressive, and multicultural.

Worship: Each Unitarian Universalist congregation holds its own style of religious services, typically on Sunday mornings, with hymns, chalice lighting (see next section), a sermon, prayers or meditations, readings, and instrumental or choral music. Sermons or readings by the minister or a lay leader may include topics such as current events, theological concepts, personal spiritual growth, justice and human rights, and reflections on holidays and seasons. Services often include announcements about congregational events and time for worshipers to share their personal joys and sorrows.

Important Rituals and Holidays

- Lighting of a Chalice: A common Unitarian Universalist worship practice is to light a candle that rests in a chalice (a wide-lipped cup with a stem). The chalice lighting usually takes place at the start of a worship service along with a brief reading or comment. Words that can be spoken during the chalice lighting are found in the “Singing the Living Tradition” hymnal.

- Flower Communion: Unique to Unitarian Universalism, this celebration of unity uses the flower as its main symbol. It is conducted in the spring.

- Christmas and Easter: These holidays are widely celebrated in Unitarian Universalist congregations.

Dietary Practices: None are required.
Tips for Staff — Care of Unitarian Universalist Patients

- **Dietary Requirements:** Some Unitarian Universalist patients may follow personal dietary requirements and restrictions. These may be based on other religious or spiritual traditions that they follow or on their own personal beliefs.

- **Gender and Privacy Issues:** Unitarian Universalist views on this topic can vary from patient to patient, based on other religious or spiritual traditions they follow or their own personal beliefs. Unitarian Universalists recognize same-sex marriages and welcome gay, lesbian, bisexual, and transgender people as members of their churches.

- **Hymnal:** Very useful for worship or for pastoral care in a hospital setting is the hymnal “Singing the Living Tradition.” Commonly used in Unitarian Universalist congregations, it includes not only hymns, but also readings, prayers, and other elements. The hymn “Spirit of Life” (no. 123) is widely sung and recognized by many Unitarian Universalists. The hymnal is available for purchase at the Unitarian Universalist Association Bookstore (www.uuabookstore.org), along with other books on pastoral concerns.

- **Need for Clergy:** No religious practices require Unitarian Universalist clergy. A patient may want to discuss spiritual concerns with a Unitarian Universalist minister, another Unitarian Universalist religious professional, or a Unitarian Universalist lay leader. Many Unitarian Universalist churches have lay pastoral care teams or committees. A listing of churches by location is available on the Web at www.uua.org/aboutus/findcongregation/index.php.

- **Dying and Death:** No formal rites for the dying are required. No official teachings or beliefs restrict autopsy or funeral arrangements. Individual preferences vary, based on other religious or spiritual traditions followed or on personal beliefs. Many Unitarian Universalists have specified their preferences regarding end-of-life medical treatment in living wills.

- **Organ Donation:** No official teachings or beliefs affect organ donation or organ transplantation. Individual views vary, based on other religious or spiritual traditions followed or on personal beliefs.
WICCAN

Overview of the Wiccan Faith

The Wiccan religion is a recent neo-pagan religion based on the Gardnerian Witchcraft faith founded in the United Kingdom in the 1940s. The roots of Wicca, however, are symbols, seasonal days of celebration, beliefs, and deities of ancient Celtic society dating to 800 B.C.E. From this point of view, Wicca also is an ancient religion, predating the Judeo-Christian tradition by thousands of years and relatively unchanged from its early practice.

A factor in Wicca’s rapid growth in Europe and North America is a reaction of young people against autocracy, paternalism, sexism, homophobia, and insensitivity to the environment. Another factor is a search by individuals of European descent to rediscover their ancestral heritage. Wicca, however, has appeal for individuals from all backgrounds. Wicca is multicultural and multiethnic.

Wiccan Beliefs and Practices

- Views of the Divine: Wiccan groups differ in their views of the nature of the divine. Monotheists recognize a single deity that they may call “the All” or “the One.” Duotheists (or bitheists) see the divine comprising two separate entities: female and male, which they may call “the Lady” and “the Lord.” Monotheists, in contrast, may recognize them as two aspects of the single deity. Polytheists may recognize various gods and goddesses of the Greek and Roman pantheons. Finally, atheists view gods and goddesses as symbolic and not as actual divine beings.

- Neo-Pagan and Pagan: Some Wiccans describe themselves as neo-Pagans. Neo-Paganism is an umbrella term used for religions attempting to reconstruct the extinct faiths of Europe and the Mediterranean. Examples are Druidism and Asatru. Other Wiccans describe themselves as Pagan. Both “neo-Pagan” and “Pagan” are terms that are highly charged from negative use. These words must not be applied carelessly to followers of the Wiccan faith.
Witchcraft: Wicca and Witchcraft do not always mean the same thing, but are often associated with each other. For some Wiccans, the terms are interchangeable. Others view Wicca as a religious tradition and view Witchcraft as the practice of “magick” that members of any religion can practice.

Worship: Wiccans meet in private covens to practice various rituals and traditions associated with the gods and goddesses of nature and human aspirations. Each coven maintains a group of its own rituals in a book called the Book of Shadows.

Covens: A coven consists of 13 individuals who share the same likes and philosophies. The need for covens is a remnant from crueller times. Covens formed to provide secrecy and privacy for Wiccans during periods of persecution. In modern times, the Wiccan faith has found more recognition, for example, acceptance from the U.S. military. Some Wiccans choose to practice without a coven, finding a deeper, more spiritual relationship with the divine through private practice.

Common Foundation: Individual covens and groups have different beliefs, traditions, and understandings of divinity, but a common foundation underlies nearly all Wiccan groups. It is belief in nonviolence toward all and belief in the ability of nature and worship to heal, renew, and revive. Unlike many other religious traditions, Wiccans reject the belief in Satan as an evil entity opposed to God. Wiccans believe that evil is rooted in mankind.

Important Holidays: Wiccans revere the various turning points of the seasons and solar year as important holidays. These include Imbolc (Feb. 2), Spring Equinox (March 21), Bealtaine (April 30), Mid-Summer (June 22), Lughnasadh (July 31), Autumn Equinox (Sept. 21), Samhein (Oct. 31), and Yule/Winter Solstice (Dec. 22).

Religious Items: The pentagram and candles are used as objects of religious focus. These objects are often incorporated into Wiccan rituals.

Dietary Practices: Many Wiccans are vegetarians out of deep reverence for nature and the environment.
Tips for Staff — Care of Wiccan Patients

- **Correct Terms:** It is important to use the correct terms to refer to Wiccan patients. Unless the patient specifies otherwise, usually the terms Wicca and Wiccan can be used. However, some Wiccans prefer the terms Witch and Witchcraft, and some prefer Pagan and Paganism. Other Wiccans reject these terms because of negative meanings that some people associate with them. In general, it is very inappropriate to describe Wiccans as “heathens.”

- **Medical Treatment:** Wiccans primarily prefer a holistic approach to health care that utilizes natural therapies. However, Wiccans may pursue whatever course of treatment they choose, and they may limit medical procedures they view as too risky or extreme. Medical treatment is the patient’s choice, influenced by her or his coven.

- **Dietary Requirements:** Many Wiccans are vegetarians. Before serving any food, all Wiccans should be consulted about their dietary restrictions.

- **Gender and Privacy Issues:** Wiccans tend to prefer privacy and quiet, especially during worship. Their wishes for a calm environment should be respected as much as possible.

- **Need for Clergy:** Religious rites for Wiccans must be performed by an individual of the Wiccan faith. However, a great diversity of beliefs exists from coven to coven. For this reason, the high priest or priestess of the patient’s own coven should be contacted to assist with emotional and spiritual concerns.

- **Dying and Death:** Autopsy, burial, and cremation are personal choices. Individual covens may vary in their approach to these issues.

- **Organ Donation:** Organ donation and transplantation are personal choices. Individual covens may vary in their approach to these issues.
UPMC is an equal opportunity employer. Policy prohibits discrimination or harassment on the basis of race, color, religion, national origin, ancestry, sex, age, marital status, familial status, sexual orientation, disability, or veteran status. Further, UPMC will continue to support and promote equal employment opportunity, human dignity, and racial, ethnic, and cultural diversity. This policy applies to admissions, employment, and access to and treatment in UPMC programs and activities. This commitment is made by UPMC in accordance with federal, state, and/or local laws and regulations.

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