



Christianity

Disclaimer

This resource has been prepared to help staff and students in raising awareness, increasing knowledge and to assist their work at MMU.

The resource has been prepared according to the Faith Communities Navigator' published in 2007 by the Faith Regen Foundation and guidance from

MMU Chaplains. The interpretation of the faith, observances and representation of standards etc. are part of this professional judgement and should not be construed as an authorised or official interpretation. MMU has sought to acknowledge the use of any published material in the text of this resource. Any inadvertent omissions deemed necessary will be corrected upon notification of this error.

Key beliefs

There are over 1 billion Christians in the world today, making it the world's largest religion. Christianity originated in the Middle East and is now over 2000 years old. Christians believe in one God and that God revealed Himself to mankind as Father, Son and Holy Spirit. It is also believed that he has revealed Himself through the Bible and through his Son, Jesus Christ.

Christianity is divided into four principal families: Orthodox, Protestant, Roman Catholic and Independent or Pentecostal. However, all Christians believe that Jesus of Nazareth is the Son of God who lived on earth as a human being, was crucified as part of God's plan for redeeming the sins of mankind, and then rose from the dead. For Christians, Jesus is the saviour of the human race.

Worship elements

Holy Communion - also referred to as the Mass, the Eucharist and the Lord's Supper - is a pivotal aspect of Christian worship for most groups. Worshippers consume bread and wine as a token of the body and blood of Christ sacrificed for human sin.

The Christian in the workplace

The standard working week and public holidays have been influenced by the traditions and religious observances of Christianity.

Festivals and days of worship

Different forms of Christianity celebrate different festivals and observe different holy days, but all forms observe the following six holy days (though might not celebrate them in the same way):

Christmas - 25 December. Marks the birth of Jesus Christ.

Epiphany - 6 January. Marks the Journey of the Three Kings to worship Jesus in Bethlehem.

Good Friday - The Friday before Easter (March/April, time varies), it commemorates Jesus' passion or suffering on the cross (crucifixion).

Easter Day - (March/April, time varies) marks the resurrection of Jesus from the tomb.

Ascension - Forty days after Easter, the ascension of Christ to heaven is commemorated.

Pentecost - Fifty days after Easter. It marks the descent of the Holy Spirit upon the apostles, which began the work of the Church.

Food and Drink

Christian dietary habits tend to be culturally rather than religiously determined. Some Christians do not eat meat on Fridays and some will abstain from food and drink before taking Holy Communion. Many people observe some form of fasting during Lent (the 40 days of preparation for Easter). In the Roman Catholic Church, Ash Wednesday and Good Friday are days when meat is avoided and only one meal and two lighter snacks are taken. Fasting is a recognised part of an Orthodox Christian's life.

Dress

There are no religious laws governing dress code. Christians will wear clothes according to their cultural or national origin. As a result, it would not be out of the ordinary to see a South Asian Christian woman wearing a shalwar kameez or sari.

Bereavement

No special requirement beyond normal compassionate leave.

The diversity calendar can be found at www.mmu.ac.uk/humanresources/equalities

This fact sheet has been produced using information found in the 'Faith Communities Navigator' published in 2007 by the Faith Regen Foundation and www.bbc.co.uk/religion/religions/zoroastrian with guidance from MMU Chaplains.