

Possible responses to class questions / exercises might include the following.

What does Interfaith mean to you?

- Cooperation and friendship between different faith traditions
- Learning about other beliefs and respecting them, If not believing their claims ourselves
- Recognising that this more in common in the teachings of different things than what divides them, and that this can inform our own understanding of our own faith

What is it not?

- A single religion's views (although it's possible to follow the perennial tradition)
- An attempt to convert others to our own faith
- Just about different denominations from a single tradition coming together

Challenges and advantages. What might challenge you when hearing others talk about their faith? Why do you think you would be challenged?

- I have a tendency to love to disagree and debate
- I want to convert someone to something I believe passionately about that I believe they get wrong or miss
- The language and names of God others may use feel to me to be unholy or dishonouring
- My strong convictions about my faith get triggered and inflame my passion to defend my God

How might you respond?

- Being mindful that we have different names for God
- Being mindful of my zealousness and checking this, knowing my own faith stands strong and remembering that it is usually best to build relationships before trying to convert others– loving your neighbour first–it's unlikely we will win them over through an argument
- Being mindful that I don't know all about my own faith – I have much to learn and understand as I grow

Why might it be important or valuable to encourage interfaith dialogue? The beauty and benefits variety and difference?

- Learning about something I know little about. We can learn and find out around faith is informed through different perspectives, stories, teachings of others
- Breaks down possible false ideas about others, reduces suspicion and a tendency to keep a distance from them–possibly even relationships marked by friction or conflict
- Opens up opportunities for working in the community together where more hands can be involved– where the wider community can feel a part of the whole, irrespective of their faith
- Introduces us to different perspectives and the colour, vibrancy and mystery of different lifestyles and ways of connecting with and experiencing the world

How would you describe your faith in a little pitch with a stranger?

- I'm a believer in the perennial tradition, coming from a Christian background. That is, I believe that there is an almighty, gracious and loving God who is accessible to everyone and Who teaches common truths, such is to love each other and to love our creator.

What do words like hospitable, compassion, friendliness mean to you? Ways of expressing these?

- All overlap to some extent and require a similar attitude, or rather “heart-set”
- Hospitable–being a good host, welcoming, preparing a place of comfort (eg the hearth for rest), opening ourselves and our home to others
- Compassion –willing freedom from suffering, desire for others to be happy and well
- Friendliness –desire to get on with, listen to, enjoy the company and cooperate with others
- Expressed by–listening and showing interest, not criticising or attacking, opening ourselves and our homes, sharing food and what we have, expressing gratitude for others, welcoming and actively pursuing contact when opportunities arise

What form might Interfaith dialogue and cooperation take?

- Planned activities, e.g. umaganda, in which everyone can enjoy each other's company
- Inviting each other to talks in our communities or to attend worship services
- Focusing corporation in community, remembering our shared beliefs are
- Respecting difference of views, even if we don't believe the other side is right
- Not being overzealous to change them right away

What do we understand my Worship? Prayer? Spiritual practice? Ministry and helping others in the community? Co-created ceremony?

- Worship—celebrating and giving thanks to God through coming together in song, prayer, and fellowship
- Prayer—talking with God— making requests and receiving answers
- Spiritual practice—regular activity aimed at developing a relationship with God
- Co-created ceremony—sharing ideas on how to mark or honour the “sacred”, in ways that we can each feel a connection with
- Ministry—a service that honours the teachings of our faith and how to live e, may be by showing love and hospitality to another, such as a family member, or performing some work in the community, teaching and otherwise. It Is not just about being a religious minister or priest.