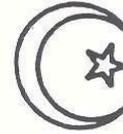


ISLAM

BASIC BELIEF Muslims believe in the Oneness of God/Alaah, His Angels, Divine Books, Prophets and Messenger, i.e. Adam, Abraham, Moses, Jesus and Muhammad (peace be unto them), in Judgment Day, in God's Omniscience and in life after death. Muslims follow the teachings of two sources only: **Al-Quraan**, God's exact words, revealed to Muhammad (peace be unto him) through the angel Gabriel and **Al-Hadeeth**, the personal statements and practices of the Prophet (pbuh). The Symbol crescent and star reflect the start of each of the 12 lunar months.



BACKGROUND Islam means in Arabic peaceful submission to the will of Allaah. It is the original way of life with Allah since Creation, finalized with the prophethood of Muhammad (pbuh). Islam teaches that God chose Muhammad (pbuh) to guide humanity back to His original teachings. **Major Milestones** 610 CE - Start of the Divine revelation of Al-Quraan to Muhammad (pbuh). 621 CE Al-Israa' and Al-Mi'raaj,

Muhammad's night journey from Makkah to Jerusalem, up to the 7th Heaven, down to Jerusalem and back to Makkah. 622 CE - Al-Hijra, persecution of Muslims and migration from Makkah to Al-Madina. This is the start of the Islamic calendar. World Muslim population: 1.5 billion.

CUSTOMS AND PEOPLE Muslims base their life on the **5 Pillars**: **Ash-Shahadaa** - statement of creed, **Al-Salaat** - daily prayers, **Al-Zakaat** - sharing wealth with needy, **Al-Sawm** - yearly fast, **Al-Hajj** - pilgrimage to Makkah. They strive to live a life of honesty, goods thusly obtained are called **Halaal** (lawful), those obtained through dishonesty are called **Haraam** (unlawful). Pork, intoxicants, carnivorous animals and

animals not specifically slaughtered for food, are **Haraam**. **Famous Muslims** include Ibn Rushd (Averroes) - philosopher, Ibn Khaldoun, Ibn Sina (Avicenna). **On LI Muslims** work on environmental issues and provide free medical consultation at The Islamic Center.

STRUCTURE Islam does not recognize any spiritual intermediary between humans and Allaah, therefore there is no religious clerical hierarchy. Scholars who have studied the injunctions of the faith could be hired or volunteer to become the **Imaam** (clergy). He could lead the five daily prayers, teach, advise, counsel, interpret the religion and perform life cycle ceremonies. Consensus of the scholars have the final say in

religious matters. The affairs of the LI Islamic Centers are administered by an elected board also called **Majlis Ash-Shura**, whose members manage the daily functions. Funds to support the **masajid** (mosque) come from voluntary contributions and fundraising events.

MAJOR HOLY DAYS **'Id-ul-Fitr**, the feast of breaking the fast of Ramadhaan. This day is commemorated with an additional prayer in midmorning and is celebrated with gifts, visitations and family gatherings. The needy are given charity before 'Id-ul-Fitr prayer to enable them to celebrate the auspicious occasion. **'Id-ul-Adha** is the festival of sacrifice upon the conclusion of Al-Hajj. Muslims commemorate the attempt of Prophet Ibrahim

to sacrifice his son Isma'il in obedience to Allaah's command. Feast starts with an additional prayer, after which part of the meat of a sacrificed lamb is offered to the needy. The day is spent with family gatherings, gift giving and rejoicing.

WORSHIP The **masjid** (mosque) is the Muslim house of worship. It is devoid of furniture; floors are covered with carpets and mats. The place must evoke peace and tranquility, hence it is austere. The **mihrab**, a specific niche in a wall, points towards Makkah. Muslims have 5 obligatory daily prayers called **Al-Salaat**. On Fridays, in addition to Al-Salaat, there is also a **Khuthba**, a theological address delivered by the

Imam. The service consists of prayers from Al-Qur'aan, recited in Arabic. Visitors are welcome but must be fully covered; women must wear a scarf on their heads and all must remove their shoes before entering the worship area.

SAYINGS OF THE FAITH

Our Lord, grant us in our spouses and children comfort to our eyes. And make us exemplary to the God-fearing.

Let one who believes in God and the Last Day be good to his/her neighbor. *Al-Qur'aan*
 Let one who believes in God and the Last Day be generous to his/her guest. Let one who believes in God and the Last Day say what is good or keep silent. *Prophet Muhammad (pbuh)*