

Comparative Religions

Led by Terry McIntyre

For Sunday, December 20 at 11:15 am

Important- Our next session is **Sunday, December 20**. The third session will be **Sunday, January 3**, and the final session has changed to **Sunday, January 10**. If you were not present for the first session, check the [First Pres website](#) in the “Where is God...? Track” section for a link to the recording.

For Sunday, December 20...please consider what it means to *cross over*, to enter into another language, culture, religious tradition. This term is used by scholars of comparative religions, and, interestingly, also describes a biological phenomenon relating to the exchange of chromosomes. One result is cultural diversity.

[Crossing Over - National Human Genome Research Institute](#)

For our discussion, see two examples below. And, for those who have worked internationally, traveled extensively, in the U.S., on this continent, and overseas. Please reflect on and share, if you wish

- √ what you knew prior to these experiences
- √ what it was like to encounter different language, weather, dress, driving, food, worship
- √ what made you uncomfortable, how you addressed discomfort, what you appreciated

1st example-Tolstoy influences Gandhi influences M.L. King and Gandhi and John Lewis and untold others.

satyagraha- compound of two Sanskrit nouns, Satya-truth and Agraha-grasp. Think *hold truth, then live it*. Gandhi's truth was not limited to non-violent peaceful resistance. His movement that resulted in India gaining independence centered on his understanding of what Jesus taught in (Matthew 5:39 and Luke 6:29-30) My take is that those teachings go far deeper than merely turning a cheek.

Furthermore, a direct quote from the Harvard *Crimson* January 11, 1927. A Swarthmore College Professor of Philosophy who toured the world (a Quaker), spent time in India...which included speaking at the All-Indian Congress (only Westerner) and having several conversations with Gandhi. He wrote, “For Gandhi the ultimate goal in life was the realization of the Truth – seeing God face to face.” And from the *Mahatma (a person to be revered for high-mindedness, wisdom, and selflessness, a person of great prestige in a field of endeavor)*-(from m-w.com, Merriam-Webster online dictionary) himself, written earlier, in 1921, “I do not want my house to be walled in on all sides and my windows to be stuffed. I want the cultures of all lands to be blown about my house as freely as possible. But I refuse to be blown off my feet by any.”

2nd example-The Rev. Dr. Bob Worley, one of two other pastors who invited me to a marvelous opportunity in late 2013...to join with a music professor in a book group focusing on 20th century theological classics. Bob emphasized experiential education—you are who you are because of your experiences. Vice President for Academic Affairs at McCormick Theological Seminary, he was pivotal in the creation of cross-cultural ministry programs: Hispanic, Korean-American, the African American Leadership Partnership Program, and the Language Resource and Writing Center. He taught regularly at the Near East School of Theology in Beirut, Lebanon, preached and taught on many occasions in South Korea and led many groups from the Chicago Presbytery to the Middle East. As our group of four read for several months, he frequently reminded us that *all theological is contextual*.

First two Asian religions-please begin with the *overview* and *general introduction* sections from Britannica.com and then look at religioustolerance.org, links on the [next](#) page. You will also find two short videos about major religious holidays in both traditions. As your time permits read further on any topic of special interest within each tradition and email with questions (tmcint@gmail.com).

[Hinduism | Origin, History, Beliefs, Gods, & Facts | Britannica](#)

[Diwali: Festival of Lights - National Geographic Video](#)

video.nationalgeographic.com › [video](#)



[3:05](#)

In India, one of the most significant festivals is *Diwali*, or the Festival of Lights. It's a five-day celebration that

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Oct 26, 2011 · Uploaded by National Geographic

[Hinduism - ReligiousTolerance.org](#)

[Buddhism | Foundations, History, Systems ... - Britannica](#)

[India: The Land of Buddha Celebrating Buddha ... - YouTube](#)

www.youtube.com › [watch](#)



[4:34](#)

India: The Land of Buddha *Celebrating* Buddha Purnima (*Vesak*). 49,417 views49K views. • Jan 6, 2016.

Jan 7, 2016 · Uploaded by Indian Diplomacy

[The religion of Buddhism - ReligiousTolerance.org](#)