

Scottish Interfaith Week

8-15 November 2026

Guided Interfaith Meditation



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This guided interfaith meditation takes inspiration from prayers and meditations in different faiths.

This meditation was written by Zainab Alshaber, former member of the National Interfaith Youth Board, for Interfaith Scotland's retreat on Holy Isle in 2023.

Breath awareness warm-up

Let's take a few moments to prepare ourselves for the guided meditation. Find a comfortable seated position or lie down on your back, with your palms facing upward. Gently close your eyes and take a deep breath in through your nose and exhale slowly through your mouth. Let's do this a few more times together.

(Inhale and exhale a few times)

Now, place one hand on your chest and the other on your belly. Continue to breathe naturally, and as you do, pay attention to the movement of your hands with each breath. Notice the rising and falling of your chest and belly as you breathe in and out.

As you focus on your breath, allow your mind to settle, bringing your awareness to this present moment. Let go of any thoughts or distractions and simply observe your breath. There's no need to control or force your breath; just allow it to flow naturally.

Take a moment to become fully present in this breath awareness practice. Feel the sensation of the breath entering and leaving your body. Let your breath anchor you to the present moment, releasing any tension or stress.

(Brief pause)

Now, as we approach the guided meditation, gently let go of any remaining thoughts or worries. Bring your attention fully to the present moment and the experience that awaits you. Trust that this time will be for your wellbeing and inner peace.

(Brief pause)

When you're ready, slowly open your eyes, feeling refreshed and grounded. Take a final deep breath in and out, and let's begin our guided meditation journey together.

Guided meditation begins

We start by taking a few slow, deep breaths to bring our focus inward. As our breathing slows, we let go of any worries or distractions from the outside world. Today we'll use different spiritual practices from various faiths to cultivate peace within.

Pause (30 seconds)

Take a moment to centre yourself and find a comfortable position. Allow yourself to be present in this space, ready to embrace the wisdom and love from each faith practice.

Muslim Sajdah (2 minutes)

From the Islamic tradition of prayer, come to a kneeling position on your prayer mat, known as Sajdah. As you bow low in humility and gratitude, think of all that you have been gifted in life. Be thankful for the basic comforts that allow you to be here now - food, shelter, family, friends. Embrace this posture of Sajdah, symbolizing surrender and devotion, as you open your heart to the blessings bestowed upon you. In this position, we express our submission to the Divine and our gratitude for the abundance in our lives.

Pause (15 seconds)

Reflect on the gratitude you feel for the blessings in your life. Take a deep breath and let that gratitude fill your heart. When was the last time you expressed gratitude to someone for the simple things they do? Maybe you thanked a colleague for covering your shift, or appreciated a friend's words of encouragement.

Hindu Anjali Mudra (2 minutes)

Drawing from Hindu traditions, rise and bring your hands to your heart, forming the Anjali Mudra. Close your eyes and call to mind where you carry tension in your body. Send lovingkindness to those tight places, wishing them ease. Repeat the mantra "May I be free from stress. May joy and peace fill every cell," envisioning any discomfort dissolving away. In the gesture of Anjali Mudra, you connect with your inner essence, honouring the divine spark within you and all living beings. This position represents unity, acknowledging the interconnectedness of all beings and the divine presence within each of us.

Pause (15 seconds)

Feel the loving energy flowing through you as you release tension and embrace lovingkindness. Allow this warmth to envelop your being. How can you extend this lovingkindness to those around

you? Perhaps you can offer a kind word to a friend or family member, or even share a smile with a stranger.

Jewish Tefillah (2 minutes)

Now, lift your hands upward, drawing from Jewish customs of prayer in Tefillah. Imagine the light of Divine love pouring into your open palms. Feel the warmth and glow spreading through every part of you, assuring you of your sacred worth. Whisper, "I am beloved. I am enough, just as I am." Bathe in this radiant truth. As you hold the Tefillah position, you connect with the infinite source of love and reaffirm your inherent value as a cherished creation. In this position, we embrace our divine connection and express gratitude for the blessings of love and self-worth.

Pause (15 seconds)

Connect with the sense of divine love and worthiness within you. Let it fill your heart with a deep sense of peace. How can you spread this sense of worthiness and love to others? Consider complimenting someone sincerely or acknowledging their efforts.

Christian Oratio Cordis (2 minutes)

Next, sit or stand with your hands over your heart, drawing from Christian practices of prayer in Oratio Cordis. Touch the stillness deep within, the part of you that is one with the Universe. From this place of oneness, let gratitude rise like a fountain. Give thanks for this life, this breath, this very moment. In Oratio Cordis, you embrace the silence that connects you to the divine presence and express gratitude for the gift of life and existence. This position reflects our devotion to God and the acknowledgment of the divine love that resides within us.

Pause (15 seconds)

Embrace the stillness within you and the profound connection you share with the Universe. Feel the power of gratitude resonating in your heart. How can you cultivate this sense of gratitude throughout your day? Perhaps by keeping a gratitude journal or taking a moment to appreciate the small pleasures in life.

Buddhist Prayer Wheel Mudra (2 minutes)

Now, slowly circle your hands, drawing inspiration from Buddhist practices of meditation and lovingkindness in the Prayer Wheel Mudra. Send lovingkindness to all beings. Visualize love and light radiating out from your heart to touch every soul. Repeat, "May all find peace and light on their path. May all be filled with joy." With the Prayer Wheel Mudra, you embody the boundless compassion of the Buddha, extending goodwill and harmony to all living beings. This position

symbolizes our aspiration for the wellbeing and happiness of all beings. Sprinkle kindness to the right and left.

Pause (15 seconds)

Send your loving intentions out to the world, embracing all beings with compassion. Feel the interconnectedness of all living things. How can you channel this compassion into your interactions with others? Maybe you can offer a helping hand to someone in need or lend a listening ear.

Sikh Ardaas (2 minutes)

Next, with hands in prayer at the heart, draw from Sikh traditions of Ardaas, a prayer of supplication and service. Acknowledge the interconnectedness of all beings. Offer gratitude for the guidance and protection throughout your journey, and seek the wisdom to be of service to others. Repeat, "May my actions align with the greater good. May I embody compassion and selflessness in all that I do." As you hold the Ardaas position, we open ourselves to the divine guidance, seeking alignment with the higher purpose of serving others. This position reflects our commitment to selfless service and being of help to those around us.

Pause (15 seconds)

Reflect on your intention to be of service and how it aligns with the interconnectedness of all beings. Let your heart be filled with love and compassion. How can you extend this intention into your daily interactions? Maybe you can perform a random act of kindness or volunteer your time for a cause you care about.

Pagan Connection (2 minutes)

Now, sit on the ground and draw inspiration from Pagan traditions that honour the Earth. Feel the earth beneath you, recognizing the connection to the land. Express gratitude for the abundance and beauty of nature, the elements that sustain life. Repeat, "May I honour and protect this sacred Earth. May I walk gently and with respect for all living beings." In this position, you connect with the Earth and its creatures, acknowledging your responsibility to cherish and protect the natural world. This position reflects our reverence for the Earth and our role as stewards of the environment.

Pause (15 seconds)

Connect with the Earth's energy and the wisdom of nature. Feel the profound connection to the web of life. How can you show more respect and care for the environment in your daily choices? Maybe you can reduce your use of single-use plastics or spend more time in nature, appreciating its beauty.

Jain Ahimsa (2 minutes)

Next, with palms open and facing upward, draw inspiration from Jain teachings of Ahimsa, non-violence towards all living creatures. Contemplate the principle of compassion and harmlessness. Extend your intention for compassion to all beings. Repeat, "May my thoughts, words, and actions be rooted in love and non-violence. May I contribute to a more peaceful world." As you embrace the Ahimsa Mudra, you embody the Jain philosophy of non-violence, cultivating compassion and harmlessness for all living beings. This position represents our commitment to loving-kindness and non-harming in all aspects of life.

Pause (15 seconds)

Embrace the principle of non-violence and compassion towards all living beings. Let it resonate in your heart. How can you practice compassion and non-violence in your interactions with others? Perhaps you can actively listen to someone without judgment or engage in a respectful dialogue even when you disagree.

Closing (1 minute)

Reflect on the profound insights gained from these diverse spiritual practices. As you prepare to transition back to the world around you, remember that each moment offers an opportunity for kindness and connection. How can you integrate the lessons of gratitude, compassion, and interconnectedness into your daily life? Allow the light within you to shine brightly, illuminating the path of peace and love for all.

Take a deep, cleansing breath, and when you are ready, gently open your eyes, carrying the essence of these teachings with you as you navigate the journey ahead.