World Religions in Boston
A Guide to Communities and Resources

THE PLURALISM PROJECT
Harvard University

Edited by Diana L. Eck, Elinor J. Pierce, and Alan G. Wagner
This book is dedicated to the religious communities of Boston, without whose generous help the production of this guide would not be possible.

To learn more about America's changing religious landscape, visit the Pluralism Project website at
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Contents

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS ....................................................................................................................... 1
INTRODUCTION ................................................................................................................................. 3
THE BAHÁ’Í TRADITION ................................................................................................................... 6
    Baha’i Community of Greater Boston ....................................................................................... 7
BUDDHISM ........................................................................................................................................... 8
    American Buddhist Shim Gum Do .............................................................................................. 14
    Bean Town Sangha ...................................................................................................................... 15
    Boston Dharma Center/Shambhala Meditation Center ................................................................. 16
    Cambridge Buddhist Association ............................................................................................... 17
    Cambridge Insight Meditation Center ....................................................................................... 18
    Cambridge Zen Center ................................................................................................................. 19
    Chua Luc Hoa: Boston Buddhist Culture Center ....................................................................... 20
    Dzogchen Foundation ................................................................................................................... 21
    Glory Buddhist Temple/Bunlieu Buddha Cakra ......................................................................... 22
    International Buddhist Progress Society – Boston ................................................................. 23
    Kurukulla Center for Tibetan Buddhist Studies ......................................................................... 24
    Massachusetts Buddhist Association ......................................................................................... 25
    Massachusetts Budhi Siksa Society Inc. Thousand Buddha Temple ........................................... 26
    Mun Su Sah .................................................................................................................................. 27
    Sakya Institute ............................................................................................................................. 28
    Sanghikaram Wat Khmer ............................................................................................................. 29
    Soka Gakkai International -- New England ............................................................................... 30
    Sounsa Buddhist Temple .............................................................................................................. 31
    Temple Vietnam ......................................................................................................................... 32
    Triratna Temple ........................................................................................................................... 33
    Universal Buddhist Congregation ............................................................................................. 34
CHRISTIANITY ............................................................................................................................... 35
    Annunciation Greek Orthodox Cathedral of New England ......................................................... 41
    The Boston Society of the New Jerusalem (Swedenborgian Church of Boston) ......................... 42
    Cambridgeport Baptist Church/Iglesia Bautista Central .............................................................. 43
    Church of the Covenant ............................................................................................................... 44
    The First Church of Christ, Scientist ........................................................................................ 45
    Friends Meeting at Cambridge .................................................................................................. 46
    Harvard-Epworth Church ......................................................................................................... 47
    King’s Chapel ............................................................................................................................. 48
    Park Street Church ..................................................................................................................... 49
    Resurrection Lutheran Church ................................................................................................ 50
    St. James the Greater in Chinatown ........................................................................................... 51
    St. Leonard’s of Port Maurice Church ....................................................................................... 52
    St. Mary’s Orthodox Church ...................................................................................................... 53
    St. Stephen’s Armenian Apostolic Church of Greater Boston ..................................................... 54
    Tremont Temple Baptist Church ............................................................................................... 55
    Trinity Church .............................................................................................................................. 56
    Twelfth Baptist Church .............................................................................................................. 57
HINDUISM ......................................................................................................................................... 58
    Boston Satsang Group Center for Mata Amritanandamayi .......................................................... 64
    Cohasset Vedanta Centre ............................................................................................................ 65
    Ganeshe Temple ........................................................................................................................ 66
    International Society for Krishna Consciousness of New England ............................................. 67
    Ramakrishna Vedanta Society .................................................................................................... 68
    Sri Akshar Puroshottam Swaminarayan Hindu Temple .............................................................. 69
    Sri Lakshmi Temple, New England Hindu Temple Inc. .............................................................. 70
    Swaminarayan Temple ............................................................................................................... 71
ISLAM .......................................................................................................................... 72
  Bawa Muhaiyaddeen Fellowship ................................................................. 76
  Boston Nizari Ismaili Cultural Center ............................................................ 77
  Boston Sufi Order .............................................................................................. 78
  Islamic Center of Boston .................................................................................... 79
  Islamic Center of New England (Quincy) .......................................................... 80
  Islamic Center of New England (Sharon) .......................................................... 81
  Islamic Council of New England ...................................................................... 82
  Islamic Society of Boston ................................................................................... 83
  Islamic Society of Greater Worcester .............................................................. 84
  Masjid Al-Qur’an ................................................................................................. 85
JAINISM..................................................................................................................... 86
  The Jain Center of Greater Boston ...................................................................... 87
JUDAISM ..................................................................................................................... 88
  Beth David of the South Shore ........................................................................... 93
  Congregation Beth El of the Sudbury River Valley ............................................. 94
  Congregation Beth Pinchas Bostoner Rebbe’s .................................................... 95
  Congregation Mishkan Tefila ............................................................................. 96
  Havurat Shalom ................................................................................................. 97
  Kehillath Israel .................................................................................................... 98
  Temple Beth Shalom Tremont Street Shul ......................................................... 99
  Temple Israel -- Adath Israel ............................................................................. 100
  Young Israel ........................................................................................................ 101
NATIVE AMERICAN TRADITIONS ............................................................................ 102
  Commission on Indian Affairs ........................................................................... 106
  Massachusetts Center for Native American Awareness, Inc. ............................. 107
  Nipmuc Tribal Council -- Hassanamisco ............................................................ 108
  North American Indian Center of Boston ......................................................... 109
  Wampanoag Tribe of Gay Head ........................................................................... 110
OTHER TRADITIONS OF INDIA ................................................................................. 111
  The Brahma Kumari World Spiritual Organization ............................................ 112
  Dhyanyoga Center ............................................................................................. 113
  Siddha Yoga Meditation Center of Greater Boston .......................................... 114
PAGAN TRADITIONS ................................................................................................ 115
  Covenant of Unitarian Universalist Pagans ....................................................... 116
  EarthSpirit Community ...................................................................................... 117
SIKHISM ................................................................................................................... 118
  Guru Ram Das Ashram ..................................................................................... 119
  New England Sikh Study Circle ........................................................................ 120
TAOISM ..................................................................................................................... 121
  Center of Traditional Taoist Studies ................................................................. 122
ZOROASTRIANISM .................................................................................................. 123
  Zoroastrian Association of the Greater Boston Area ........................................... 124
RESOURCES.............................................................................................................. 125
  Religious ................................................................................................................ 137
  Cultural .................................................................................................................. 145
BIBLIOGRAPHY .................................................................................................... 148
INDEX ..................................................................................................................... 152
Acknowledgments

This book is an orientation to the religious communities of the Boston area. It began with a seminar at Harvard University in the fall of 1991, when some twenty-five students joined me to study “World Religions in New England.” Fieldwork was the heart of the seminar. Each week, the class would divide into teams to visit religious communities in the Boston area and then meet to discuss what we had learned. We visited mosques, temples, meditation centers, synagogues, and churches -- an “on the ground” introduction to the religious traditions of the world, right here in Boston. This seminar was supported with help from the American Express Fund of the Center for Ethics and the Professions at Harvard University.

The Pluralism Project, based in the Committee on the Study of Religion at Harvard University, has continued and extended this work with grants from the Ford Foundation, the Lilly Endowment Inc., the Milton Fund, the National Endowment for the Humanities, the North Star Fund, Pew Charitable Trusts, the Rockefeller Foundation, and the Templeton Foundation. Based on our findings in Boston, we set out to investigate more broadly the changing religious landscape of other American cities, and to consider the implications of this more complex religious landscape for American public life. But mere diversity alone does not constitute pluralism. Pluralism requires a degree of engagement with our diversity and a knowledge -- both of others and of ourselves -- that such engagement brings.

During the summers of 1991 to 1993, the Pluralism Project engaged the best energies of Harvard students from both the Faculty of Arts and Sciences and the Divinity School in “hometown” research in such cities as Denver, Houston, and Minneapolis. Some had a more specific focus: Hindu summer camps in Pennsylvania, Vietnamese Buddhist struggles with zoning laws in California, the annual convention of the Islamic Society of North America in Kansas City, or the history of the Interfaith Conference of Metropolitan Washington, D.C. Each year, during the subsequent fall semester, the researchers presented their work at a Pluralism Project fall conference. And for one semester each year, all the researchers participated in a working seminar to revise their research into substantial papers.

In 1994, the Pluralism Project began working toward the production of a multimedia CD-ROM to present some of the range of work that had emerged from three years’ research. The CD-ROM necessitated further research as well as an expansion of the scope of our work to include the many other religious traditions of the United States, especially the Native American, Christian, and Jewish traditions. In 1997, the Pluralism Project produced On Common Ground: World Religions in America. This CD-ROM, published by Columbia University Press, makes the findings and insights of the Pluralism Project available to teachers, students, researchers and
religious leaders in the United States and elsewhere in a dynamic, informative, inviting, and data-rich multimedia format.

Many Harvard students have contributed to the work of this book. Their papers on communities in the Boston area are listed in the Bibliography. In addition, a deep debt of gratitude is owed to those who have worked on the compilation of this guide.

The fourth edition of this book was designed by Alan Wagner and coordinated by Elinor Pierce, with new entries and research by Brydie Andrews, Stuart Chandler, Grove Harris, Amy Moulton, Matthew Ozug, Victoria Purvis, Amy Rowe and Christopher Stawski. Each edition builds on the work of previous researchers and contributors, including the fine work of Rachel Antell, Georgia Bellas, Christopher Coble, Geri Engberg, Rachel Glick, Courtney Goto, Megan Hanna, Samuel Herring, Richard Higgins, Andrea Hollis, Lance Laird, Jonathan Lawson, Rebecca Lesses, Jerrold Mitchell, Kesa Noda, Julie Petrarca, Teena Purohit, Christopher Queen, Colleen Rost, Than Saffel, Susan Schomburg, Holly Seeling, Susan Shumaker, Jennie Song, and Duncan Williams. Finally, the local religious communities which are profiled in the following pages played a crucial role in the process of updating *World Religions in Boston*. Both religious leaders and community members gave generously of their time and energy, contributing comments, corrections, and in some cases, photographs.

The production of this guide was made possible by a grant from the Ford Foundation. The Pluralism Project, and all of us who have worked on *World Religions in Boston* are grateful for their generous support. It is our hope that those who make use of this guide will find the growing diversity of the communities of Boston as engaging and interesting as we have.

Diana L. Eck
Introduction

In the past thirty-five years, Boston, like other major cities in the United States, has seen some remarkable changes. In the years since the 1965 Immigration Act reformed a very restrictive quota system, immigrants from all over the world have come to make Boston their home. Of course, the Boston area has long received immigrants, from the arrival of the Mayflower and the colony of John Winthrop to the present. In the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, most of the newcomers were from England. In the nineteenth century, immigrants from southern and eastern Europe brought rich Jewish, Catholic, and Eastern Orthodox traditions.

The new immigrants of the late twentieth century, however, have come from Asia, Africa, Latin America, and the Middle East as well as from European countries. In the ten years between 1980 and 1990, the Asian-American population of Boston doubled to 5.3 percent of the total and the Hispanic population increased to 10.8 percent. The African American population increased only slightly to 25.6 percent, while Boston’s white population fell by 8 percent to 62.8 percent, even though the fast-growing Hispanic population is included in this group. Native Americans and people of other races comprise 6.2 percent of the population. Although these figures include only the city of Boston itself, a view of the wider Boston area would reveal similar changes. No matter how you look at it, the Boston of today represents a radically new racial, ethnic, and cultural reality.

With these immigrants have come religious traditions that have made the religious life of Boston far more complex and textured than ever before. These immigrants are Vietnamese, Cambodian, Chinese, and Korean, both Buddhist and Christian. There are South Asian immigrants -- Hindu, Muslim, Jain, Sikh, Zoroastrian, and Christian. In addition, there are Arab immigrants, some of them adherents of the Muslim faith and others Christians, largely Syrian Orthodox. There are many immigrants from the Caribbean and Latin America, and there are new, energetic Hispanic Catholic and Pentecostal churches. There are Afro-Caribbean practitioners of Vodou and Santeria. And there are new Jewish immigrants from Russia and the Ukraine.

How we encounter religious and cultural difference is certainly one of the most important questions our society faces in the late twentieth century. The story of such encounters is really the history of New England, beginning in the seventeenth century when the Puritans and Pilgrims encountered the Native peoples of this area, the Wampanoag, the Nipmuc, and the Narraganset. There were meetings, feasts, and the translation of the Bible into Algonquin. But by the 1670s, the wars that would lead to the decimation of the Native population began. The first chapter in the history of cultural encounter was not an exemplary one.
In the 1600s, religious diversity was unacceptable in the Puritan commonwealth. Indeed, the occasional Quaker, Baptist, or Jew was “warned out” of Boston. Between 1659 and 1661, four Quakers were hung on Boston Common. Fortunately, there was a reaction against banishing and hanging those with divergent views. In the period of the Revolution and the framing of principles for a new American republic, a consensus began to emerge which built religious freedom into the heart of the Constitution and its Bill of Rights. The First Amendment to the Constitution stipulated that “Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof.” This principle became the very foundation of religious pluralism: No one religion is to be established by the state, and free exercise of religion is protected. Of course, at that time religious freedom would have been imagined largely within the denominational spectrum of Christianity. But the principles of non-establishment and free exercise have been tested, affirmed, interpreted, and reinterpreted for two hundred years in contexts of ever-increasing religious diversity.

By the nineteenth century, the Protestant tradition of Boston, now at home with its own diversity, was challenged by the new and growing presence of Catholics and Jews who came as immigrants from eastern and southern Europe. Gone were the days when people of different beliefs could be “warned out” of town, but prejudice and nativism continued to operate in subtle and overt ways to perpetuate tribalization and division. After more than a century, Boston’s Catholic and Jewish communities are now very much part of the Boston mainstream, but the challenges of living in a society of religious, racial, and ethnic diversity have multiplied and are still very much on the agenda of Boston and other major cities.

When New England’s first mosque was built in Quincy Point in the shadow of the great cranes of the shipyard, it was the only gathering place for the Islamic community. Now there are over thirty Islamic centers and masajid in the Islamic Council of New England, one of which is located in a storefront next to a Chinese restaurant in Pawtucket, Rhode Island. There are Muslim communities in Dorchester and Wayland, in Worcester and Sharon; even the basement of a Harvard Yard dormitory serves as an Islamic center and prayer room for the university’s growing Muslim population. As of June 2000, the Islamic Society of Boston is planning to build a new mosque in Roxbury that will accommodate 1600 people for prayers.

Religious traditions with roots in India are also growing in Boston. The Jain Center of Greater Boston has been established for over fifteen years in a former Swedish Lutheran Church on Cedar Street in Norwood. The Jains, who trace their religious tradition back to teachers in India more than 2,500 years ago, are part of a growing number of Indian Americans who have immigrated in the past twenty-five years. In Ashland, the Sri Lakshmi Temple on Route 135 stands not far from the starting point of the Boston marathon. It is a traditional Hindu temple, designed by ritual temple architects according to traditional measurements and built by a Wellesley engineering firm. Its consecration in May 1990 attracted thousands of Hindus from the
Indian-American community in the Boston area. Water from the Ganges River was poured over the temple’s towers at its consecration -- along with waters from the Merrimac, the Mississippi, the Ohio, and the Colorado. While the Sri Lakshmi Temple is surely New England’s largest, there are Hindu temples in Dorchester, Lowell, and Stow, and there are a dozen other Indian-American regional groups that gather for Hindu religious holidays.

There are over twenty Buddhist communities in the Boston area. Some of them are attended by Euro-American Buddhists, whose heritage in Boston goes back to the 1890s and the early “Boston Buddhists,” William Sturgis Bigelow and Ernest Fenollosa, who were initiated into Buddhist practice in Japan. Today there are Zen centers in Cambridge and Providence, Vipassana meditation centers in Cambridge and Barre, Tibetan centers in Cambridge and Brookline. And there are new immigrant Buddhist communities, including three Cambodian Buddhist temples in Lowell and Lynn, Vietnamese temple communities in Roslindale, Dorchester, and East Boston, and Chinese temples in Quincy and Lexington.

The list goes on. There are Sikh gurdwaras in Milford and Millis; a Zoroastrian Association of Greater Boston; Baha’i Centers and Vedanta Centers. There are Wiccan groups, an EarthSpirit community, and practitioners of Afro-Caribbean Santeria. And in response to this new religious reality, there are a growing number of interfaith initiatives, such as the Boston Clergy and Religious Leaders Group for Interfaith Dialogue, the Interfaith AIDS Ministry, the Brockton Interfaith Community, the Needham Interfaith Committee on Social Concerns, and the Greater Boston Interfaith Organization.

Religions are not fixed and packaged, passed along like boxes of treasures from generation to generation. They are more like rivers, dynamic and changing, bearing the heritage of the past to water the fields of the present. As traditions of faith from many parts of the world move into the American context, they will inevitably adjust and change, as will the communities and congregations who now find themselves encountering new neighbors. This process of encounter, dialogue, and transformation is critically important today as American cities begin to appropriate a new multi-religious reality.

This is a work-in-progress. It is necessarily a very selective portrait, especially of the Native American, Christian, and Jewish traditions. Only a small sample of churches, synagogues, and Native groups could be included here. Even this small sample suggests to new Bostonians, unfamiliar with these traditions, something of their diversity in the metropolitan area. Because Boston’s religious traditions are also “works-in-progress,” we hope to hear of new developments and changes, to hear of our errors and omissions, and to invite your participation in the work of the Pluralism Project.
The Baha’i Tradition in Boston

The Baha’i Faith is an independent world religion with several million adherents worldwide, representing almost all nationalities, ethnic groups, classes, professions, and religious backgrounds. The writings that guide the life of the Baha’i community include works by Baha’u’llah (1817-1892), the prophet-founder of the Baha’i Faith, and interpretations by his son Abdu’l-Baha (1844-1921), and his great-grandson Shoghi Effendi (1897-1957). Baha’i literature can be read in over 800 languages today.

Central to the Baha’i Faith are the oneness of God, the oneness of religion, and the oneness of the human race. Baha’u’llah taught that divine revelation is a continuous and progressive process and that the missions of the messengers of God represent successive stages in the spiritual evolution of human society. Baha’u’llah’s mission, Baha’is believe, is the culmination of the work of Buddha, Christ, Muhammad, and other great religious teachers and messengers.

The Baha’i Faith was founded in Iran in the 19th century when Baha’u’llah was declared to be the new messenger prophesied by Mirza Ali-Muhammad (1819-1850), also known as the Bab, or the “Gate.” Such claims aroused the hostility of the Shi’ite clergy and Persian authorities. The Bab was executed, and Baha’u’llah, because he openly declared his mission as messenger of God, was exiled from Iran and imprisoned. In prison, he wrote more than 100 volumes on the dawning of a new age and the need for new spiritual principles. He died in 1892. The 100th anniversary of the passing of Baha’u’llah was marked in New York in November 1992 with a world congress that drew 30,000 Baha’i members.

Today the affairs of the worldwide Baha’i community are administered by the Universal House of Justice in Haifa, Israel, the elected international governing council of the Baha’i community. There are also National and Local Spiritual Assemblies. Establishing a global framework for collective security and world peace is central to the Baha’i vision, as is the eradication of racial bigotry and religious intolerance, the achievement of full equality of the sexes, the establishment of universal education, and the elimination of the extremes of wealth and poverty. The Baha’i community encourages the independent investigation of truth by each individual and the open exchange of viewpoints in an atmosphere of friendship and fellowship.
Baha’i Community of Greater Boston

Boston Baha’i Center
595 Albany Street
Boston, MA 02118
(617) 695-3500

The first Baha’i group in Boston was founded in 1899. In 1912, the son of Baha’u’llah, Abdu’l-Baha visited the United States and stopped in Boston on his tour. Today there are local Baha’i communities gathering in such localities as Boston, Brookline, Cambridge, Malden, Medford, Newton, Somerville, Waltham, and Watertown. There are Baha’i College Clubs at several local colleges and universities, including Northeastern, Harvard-Radcliffe, Boston University, Berklee School of Music, Tufts, M.I.T., Brandeis, and Wellesley.

A community-wide Baha’i Center was established in Boston in the 1980s. The Boston center houses a social and economic development project -- The Tahirih Peace Institute -- which offers free English as a Second Language classes as well as job and family skills as a public service. The Boston Baha’i community hosts the Boston Baha’i Youth Workshop, a youth arts and service group which uses the performing and visual arts to address social issues such as racism, sexism and violence. On Friday evenings there are regular devotional/arts gatherings which foster artistic expression and conversation about current issues and Baha’i teachings, and are highlighted by the musical participation of the One Human Family Gospel Choir. The Center houses a bookstore and a lending library.

Boston area Baha’is sponsor community dialogues to address individual and institutional racism and to work toward a vision of racial unity. On Wednesday evenings, the community hosts a lecture and discussion series at the Baha’i Center on a different topic every week. The community participates actively in interfaith events.

Contact: Farhad Majzoubi
Membership: 270 in greater Boston area
Composition: Multi-cultural, multi-ethnic
Meetings: Friday Informal devotional/arts meeting open to the public: 7:30 P.M.; Sunday Baha’i Community School: 10 A.M.-12 P.M.; Wednesday Lecture and Discussion Series: 7:30 P.M.; Baha’i Youth Workshop: Sundays 1-4 P.M.
Buddhism in Boston

On a Wednesday night at the Cambridge Insight Meditation Center, more than 100 people, mostly professionals in their thirties and forties, sit in utter stillness for an hour, straight-backed, eyes closed, on rows of green mats and cushions, facing a golden image of the Buddha. At the end of the hour, they will rise at the bell and walk quietly down the stairs to gather in the carpeted basement meditation room for a “dharma talk” on some aspect of the teachings of the Buddha. In Revere, in the modest second-floor apartment of a family of Buddhist immigrants from Cambodia, a young woman lights a stick of incense and places it reverently on the altar in the alcove of the living room, which has been set aside as a prayer room. On the altar are images of the Buddha and photos of parents and grandparents, now deceased. In a former church converted into the Korean Shim Gum Do Buddhist temple on Chestnut Hill Avenue in Brighton, a Korean-American teacher in a loose-fitting gray robe challenges his students with traditional Zen sword-practice. At Harvard University, over fifty members of the Harvard Buddhist Community gather in a large wood-paneled common room to observe the Enlightenment Day of the Buddha, chanting their prayers in Vietnamese, Pali, Chinese, Tibetan, Japanese, and English. All of this is representative in one way or another of the Buddhist tradition in Boston. Today there are more than twenty Buddhist temples and centers in the immediate Boston area. They represent the many streams of the Buddhist tradition, all of which now exist in the United States.

The Buddhist tradition has found its home in many cultures, both transforming and being transformed by each culture it has encountered. The tradition traces its origins to India in the sixth century BCE and the teacher Siddhartha Gautama, known as the Buddha, the Awakened One. His deep insight into human suffering, the causes of suffering, and the way out of suffering shaped a large body of teaching and practice that spread from India to China, Korea, and Japan, and other parts of South and Southeast Asia. In each case, the tradition found a vocabulary to bear and extend the power of the Buddha’s message. And so it is in America today, where new and old immigrant Buddhist communities have sunk roots into American soil and are giving rise to new forms of community and practice. In addition, there are the many “home-grown” Buddhists, whom some call “new Buddhists,” the many Euro-Americans drawn to Buddhist practice. Today the United States is giving birth to a distinctively “American” Buddhism.

The history of Buddhism in Boston begins in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries with the first Chinese presence in the city. Because Chinese religious life often weaves and blends strands of Buddhist, Confucian, Taoist, and other traditions, one could not say that the early Chinese Bostonians were simply Buddhist. Indeed, many who settled in the United States, both then and now, became Christians. Nonetheless, it would have been the Chinese who first brought to
Boston an image of, or prayer to, the Buddha. Perhaps the first was a nineteen-year-old Chinese sailor who died here in 1798, after falling from the mast of a ship in Boston Harbor. His captain buried him in the Central Burying Ground and erected a stone in his memory. And perhaps the Chinese merchant, Oong Ar-showe, who opened a tea and coffee shop at 25 Union Street in the 1850s, kept an altar at home. He eventually married an American woman, raised a family in Boston, and returned to China in his old age after his wife had died.

There were only a few Chinese in Boston in the 1850s, but on the West coast tens of thousands of Chinese arrived seeking work and profit. Some came for the rumored fortunes of the gold rush; others labored on the transcontinental and coastal railroads; others found a niche in farming, fishing, and business. By 1860, one out of every ten Californians was Chinese. The first Buddhist temple in San Francisco’s Chinatown was built in 1853 and by the end of the century there were more than 400 temples on the west coast and in the Rocky Mountain frontier states.

It was in 1870 that about 150 Chinese workers came to Massachusetts, where they were hired to take the place of striking shoe factory workers in North Adams. In 1875, some of them moved to Boston to work on building the Pearl Street Telephone Exchange. The streets where they lived near South Station eventually became a part of what is now Chinatown, although throughout most of the latter part of the nineteenth century this neighborhood was settled primarily by new immigrants from Ireland, Central Europe, and Syria. Looking at the growing intellectual interest in Asia during this period, one would have to note the first Chinese professor at Harvard, Ko Kua-hua, a “Confucian scholar-aristocrat,” hired in 1879 to teach Mandarin Chinese. His photograph, taken in long silk robes, hangs today in the second-floor hall of the Harvard Faculty Club.

A nativist backlash against the Chinese workers began in the 1870s and generated the rhetoric that led to the Chinese Exclusion Act of 1882. That exclusion policy was reaffirmed and expanded to include other “Asiatics” by the end of the century. Not only were workers prohibited, but Chinese women who might enable the workers already here to settle down to a family life were also excluded. The Chinese population dwindled, and many Chinese workers, unable to afford the return to China were stranded thousands of miles from their families. From 1920 to 1950, the population of Boston’s Chinatown grew from 1,000 to just 1,600. Nevertheless, the Chinese started a number of community organizations during this time, including the first Buddhist temples of the area, consisting of small home altars and family shrines. It was not until 1943 that the Chinese Exclusion Act was repealed. Today, Chinatown is a vibrant urban center, still attracting suburban Chinese into the city with its restaurants and stores. Chinese cultural activities include the annual Autumn Moon Festival and the Dragon Boat Festival.
Another stream of Boston’s Buddhist history begins with the transcendentalists’ intellectual and literary interest in Buddhism in the mid-1800s. In addition to his readings in Hindu scriptures, Henry David Thoreau was interested in Buddhism. He is said to have translated part of the Lotus Sutra from French into English. His book, *A Week on the Concord and Merrimac*, leads us to imagine that the Buddha was very much in his thoughts, writing, “I know that some will have hard thoughts of me, when they hear their Christ named beside my Buddha, yet I am sure that I am willing they should love their Christ more than my Buddha, for the love is the main thing.”

In the 1870s, Edwin Arnold’s famous rendition of the life of the Buddha, *The Light of Asia*, crossed the Atlantic and became the first Buddhist bestseller in America. Another stream of Boston’s Buddhist history begins in the late 1870s when Edward Morse, a professor of Comparative Anatomy and Zoology at Bowdoin College, went to the Imperial University of Tokyo to organize a department of zoology. Before long, he recruited to the Imperial University another Boston man, Ernest Fenollosa, who had studied philosophy at Harvard and attended Harvard Divinity School. Both Morse and Fenollosa became avidly interested in Japanese culture and arts, especially pottery and prints. In the winter of 1881-82, the year the Chinese Exclusion Act was passed, Morse gave a series of lectures on Japan at the Lowell Institute in Boston. The lectures captivated the interest of many Bostonians, including both Isabella Stewart Gardner and William Sturgis Bigelow, both of whom eventually visited Japan.

In Japan, Bigelow and Fenollosa cultivated a deepening interest in both Buddhism and Japanese art. Fenollosa was a tireless art collector; Bigelow was a cultured financier. Bigelow had been a doctor affiliated with Harvard Medical School, but his imagination was seized by Japanese culture and arts, and especially by Buddhism. In 1885, both Fenollosa and Bigelow received the precepts, the formal initiation into Buddhist life, practice, and ethics.

In the late 1880s, quite a number of Bostonians visited Japan and gained some insight into Buddhism through the hospitality of Fenollosa and Bigelow, including Isabella Stewart Gardner (whose home later became the Gardner Museum), the writer Henry Adams, the artist John LaFarge, and Bishop Phillips Brooks of Trinity Church. In 1890 when both Bigelow and Fenollosa returned to Boston, much of the Japanese art they had collected became the core of the Museum of Fine Arts’ Far Eastern art collection, and Fenollosa became its first curator. In 1904, Okakura Kakuzo, who had worked with Fenollosa in Japan, became assistant curator of the collection. Okakura wrote *The Book of Tea*, an appreciation and interpretation of the Japanese tea ceremony and its aesthetic, and became part of Gardner’s circle. Their correspondence can be seen on the ground floor of the Gardner Museum by peeking under the velvet covers into the glass display cases.

Both Fenollosa and Bigelow, sometimes called the “Boston Buddhists,” contributed to the intellectual and spiritual encounter of the West with the Buddhist tradition. In 1892, Fenollosa
was the Phi Beta Kappa poet at Harvard and read a poem called “East and West” in which he imagines the harmonious blending of Eastern spirituality and Western science. In 1908, Bigelow, after another long stay in Japan, was appointed Lecturer in Buddhist Doctrine at Harvard. He delivered the Ingersoll Lectures at Harvard Divinity School on the subject “Buddhism and Immortality.” In his bequest, Bigelow left a fund to Harvard University for the advancement of Buddhist studies, stipulating, “I feel strongly the more Buddhism is taught at Harvard the better.”

From Bigelow’s letters and papers in the Houghton Library at Harvard, it is clear that Bigelow experienced a certain spiritual isolation, living as he did in the world of Boston clubs and Back Bay Episcopalians for whom his Buddhist meditation practice was eccentric and incomprehensible. When Bigelow died in 1926, his body is said to have been laid in state in his Buddhist robes in his apartment at 56 Beacon Street in Back Bay. His funeral took place at Trinity Church, and his ashes were then divided: half to be buried in Mt. Auburn Cemetery in Cambridge and half at Homyoin Temple in Japan, the site of his initiation.

In this century, the growing intellectual interest in Buddhism at Harvard has brought many Buddhist professors and teachers to the Boston area. For the most part, they have continued the special link between Boston and Japan. Between 1913 and 1915, Masaharu Anesaki taught courses on Japanese Buddhism and was followed in 1915-16 by Professor Umokichi Hattori, a scholar of Japanese Confucianism. In 1957-58 Shinichi Hisamatsu, a Rinzai Zen teacher, taught at Harvard Divinity School and became the first meditation teacher at the newly formed Cambridge Buddhist Association. In 1959 a professorship in Buddhist studies was established, and Dr. Masatoshi Nagatomi, a Jodo Shinshu Buddhist and a scholar of Indian Mahayana Buddhist thought, was appointed to fill the position. In the 1980s, a visiting Numata Professorship was established to bring distinguished professors of Buddhist studies to Harvard on a yearly basis.

Among the many Buddhist associations, centers, and temples in the Boston area today, the oldest is the Cambridge Buddhist Association at 75 Sparks Street in the Brattle Street area of Cambridge. Founded in 1957 by Elsie and John Mitchell and initially led by Shinichi Hisamatsu, the association was intended to be a non-sectarian center for Buddhist study and practice. Indeed, its first board of directors included members of both the Rinzai and Soto Zen schools, the Shingon tradition, and the Jodo Shinshu tradition. D.T. Suzuki, the first important cultural translator of Zen to the West, was the first president of the Cambridge Buddhist Association. In the 1980s its resident teacher was Rinzai Zen teacher Maurine Stuart Roshi. The present teacher, George Bowman, has an eclectic Buddhist background, including the teaching transmission from Korean Zen Master Seung Sahn.

There are many Buddhist centers that are anchored in a particular teaching tradition or meditation practice. The Cambridge Zen Center is one of the many centers of the Kwan Um
Korean tradition of Zen first brought to the United States by Zen Master Seung Sahn. It is closely affiliated with the Providence Zen Center, a large retreat center in Cumberland, Rhode Island, which attracts Buddhist meditators from throughout the country. Similarly, the Insight Meditation Society in Barre, Massachusetts, is the first and largest of the American centers for vipassana or “insight” meditation, which follows the traditions of practice developed in Burma and Thailand. Housed in a former Catholic monastery, the Insight Meditation Society has short- and long-term meditation retreats throughout the year. Near Boston, one can practice vipassana meditation at the Cambridge Insight Meditation Center, an “urban forest retreat” in an old Victorian house in Cambridge, and on the North Shore at the Insight Meditation Center in Newburyport.

The Tibetan Buddhist tradition in the United States also dates to the 1970s with the arrival of Chogyam Trungpa Rimpoche, who built an interpretive bridge between Tibetan Buddhist thought and the psychologically-minded young professionals. The first Tibetan Dharmadhatu centers grew in rural Barnet, Vermont and in Boulder, Colorado. During its twenty year history here in Boston, the Dharmadhatu center has moved from residential Upland Road in Cambridge, to a spacious temple above a set of shops on busy Boylston Street in Boston, to an imposing former Orthodox Church on Center Street in Newton, and finally, to its present location on Brookline Street in suburban Brookline. It is the largest of several Tibetan centers in this area, perhaps the smallest being the Sakya Center in Cambridge, which consists of a cluster of twenty students who gather in a small apartment-temple to study with Lama Migmar. Since 1991, Boston has also been a “cluster site” for the Tibetan Resettlement Project. A group of some fifty Tibetans have now settled in the Boston area, living at first in two group homes in Somerville while they looked for apartments and jobs. The Euro-American meditation practitioners and the new immigrant Tibetan Buddhists are now meeting one another for the first time.

In the middle and late 1970s, in the wake of the Vietnam war, tens of thousands of people fled from Vietnam and Cambodia and came to the United States as refugees. Some of them have now settled in New England. The Vietnamese community has temples in Roslindale, East Boston, and Dorchester. The Lowell and Lawrence area north of Boston has the second highest Cambodian population density in the U.S., after Long Beach, California.

The leader of the Cambodian community in New England and, indeed, the Supreme Patriarch of the Cambodian Buddhist community throughout the world, is the Providence-based monk Mahaghosananda. He is an important and reassuring presence for the Cambodian communities in Lowell, Lynn, Revere, East Boston, Amherst, Providence, Portland, and throughout New England. When the survivors of the brutal “Killing Fields” of the Khmer Rouge poured across the border into the refugee camps of Thailand, Mahaghosananda was there to meet them and has worked tirelessly to nurture a spirit of compassion, non-violence, and forgiveness -- even toward the oppressors of his people. He has had a role in the establishment of some thirty Cambodian
Buddhist temples in the United States and Canada. There are at least three such Cambodian Buddhist temples in the Boston area -- two in Lowell and one in Lynn.

In Southeast Asia, the resident monks ordinarily live in or next to the temple and are supported by the offerings of the laity. It is also common for men to become monks for at least a short time during their lives, perhaps at the time of the death of a parent. Here that practice is unusual, and the community of monks is small compared to the large number of laity. In addition, the monks in the United States are largely Khmer and Vietnamese speaking, while the second-generation teenagers have English as their first language. As with many immigrant communities, the need to establish some forms of religious and cultural education for the American-born young Cambodians and Vietnamese is felt with some urgency, but human and financial resources are scarce. Within the Cambodian community there is also tension as to whether scarce resources should go to the rebuilding of Cambodia or to the strengthening of American Buddhist institutions.

Finally, we come full circle to the Chinese, who began coming to the Boston area again in the 1970s and 1980s as a result of political turmoil in China. The Samantabhadra Society was formed in Lowell in 1985, largely by students from Taiwan, and was reorganized as the Massachusetts Buddhist Association when it acquired a center in Lexington in 1992. Also in the early 1990s, a small apartment temple was formed in Boston’s Chinatown, and a temple led by a nun from Hong Kong was established in a residential area of Quincy, where most of the participants in temple activities are Cantonese-speaking women from the area.

There is a spirit of understanding that links the Buddhist and American approaches to life. The image of crossing the waters of turbulence to the “far shore” of freedom is one both Buddhists and Boston’s founding Puritans share. A Chinese Buddhist teacher, C.T. Shen, put it clearly in his well-known “Mayflower” speech, given at a July 4th Celebration in 1976, linking the Buddhist image of the “far shore” as the goal of one’s spiritual quest with the American image of the Mayflower crossing.

May we Americans, in this Bicentennial year, reaffirm the dedication of our ancestors and raise our Mayflower flag to sail across the vast ocean of hatred, discrimination, selfishness, and arrive on the other shore of loving-kindness, compassion, joy, and equanimity.
American Buddhist Shim Gum Do Association, Inc.

*Zen Buddhism*

203 Chestnut Hill Avenue
Brighton, MA 02135
(617) 787-1506

The Founding Master of Shim Gum Do, Zen Master Chang Sik Kim, began his formal training in the Chogye Order of Zen Buddhism in 1957 under Zen Master Seung Sahn (founder of the Kwan Um School of Zen). In 1965, Zen Master Kim underwent a retreat on Sam Gak Mountain in Korea and attained Mind Sword enlightenment. During this retreat, the Zen “martial art” of Shim Gum Do (which translates to “Mind Sword Path”) was revealed to him. In 1971, Shim Gum Do was formally proclaimed as a form of Zen Buddhism at the Hwa Gye Temple in Seoul, Korea.

American Buddhist Shim Gum Do Association was formally incorporated in 1978. In 1981, American Buddhist Shim Gum Do Association’s central temple, Shim Gwang Sa (the “Mind Light Temple”) was established in Brighton, Massachusetts, where Zen Master Sik Kim resides and teaches. Activities at the center include: action meditation through the “martial art” forms of Shim Gum Do; sitting meditation; bowing; chanting; Dharma talks; retreats and residential life in a Zen temple. There is also a monthly meditation class and Dharma talk open to the general public. Students interested in beginning practice should call the center.

**Contact:** Mary Stackhouse, Abbot
**Membership:** 150 locally
**Composition:** 80% Euro-Americans; 10% Asian-Americans; 10% Other
**Meetings:** Public meetings are held on the first Friday of each month from 6:00-7:30 P.M.
Bean Town Sangha

*Japanese Soto Zen Buddhism*

P.O. Box 349

Arlington, MA 02476-0004

(617) 484-2735

The Bean Town Sangha started in March of 1990, meeting at Unicorn Books in Arlington, but presently meets in a private residence.

The religious leader and founder of the Bean Town Sangha, Eishin Ikeda, trained under the guidance of Uchiyama Roshi at Antaiji Temple in Kyoto, and was ordained in the Soto Zen School. He came to the United States in 1975, resided at the Pioneer Valley Zendo in Charlemont until 1978, and began teaching the Dharma in 1990. Today the Sangha continues to be affiliated loosely with the Pioneer Valley Zendo.

There are three main activities of the Bean Town Sangha: study of Buddha Dharma using various sutras; Zen meditation; and sesshin (a more intensive Zazen retreat). Clarifying and practicing Buddha Dharma is the central focus of the group. A study group meets weekly on Thursdays; Zen meditation sessions are held on weekends two or three times a month. Sesshin takes place three or four times a year. The group also publishes an occasional newsletter.

**Contact:** Eishin Ikeda

**Membership:** 5-10 in regular attendance

**Composition:** Japanese & Euro-American lay practitioners

**Meetings:** Thursday at 7:30 P.M., call for location.
Boston Dharmadhatu/Shambhala Meditation Center
*Tibetan Buddhism, Karma Kagyu and Nyingma*
646 Brookline Avenue
Brookline, MA 02146
(617) 734-1498
http://www.shambhala.org/center/boston

Founded in the mid-1970s by the Vidyadhara, the Venerable Chogyam Trungpa Rinpoche, the Boston Dharmadhatu/Shambhala Meditation Center is a member of Vajradhatu International/USA. Responsible for the formation of Vajradhatu centers throughout the United States, Trungpa Rinpoche began Boston Dharmadhatu as “a vehicle for those interested in contemplative training while maintaining a secular background.” Vajradhatu is now under the spiritual leadership of Trungpa’s son, Sakyong Mipham Rinpoche.

The center, recently relocated in Brookline, was created as a practice center for the Tibetan Vajrayana Buddhist tradition. Facilities include a large meditation hall, classrooms, offices and a community room. Boston Dharmadhatu holds group meditation, offers free meditation instruction, and hosts visiting lamas and teachers. During open house every Thursday, an hour of meditation is followed by an 8:15 P.M. talk. Subjects include Buddhist philosophy, Shambhala meditation training, and other topics. The center also offers classes on Buddhism, Shambhala teaching, and Dharma Art, as well as hosting other contemplative and contemporary art events and special programs for children.

Among the special celebrations are the Midsummer’s Day (summer solstice) celebration, Shambhala Day (the Tibetan New Year Celebration) in February, and Children’s Day in December. These events are open to the general public.

**Contact:** please leave a message, or email mslang@aol.com
**Membership:** approximately 175 members
**Composition:** primarily Euro-American
**Meetings:** Sunday: Nyinthun Meditation 9:00 A.M.-Noon; Thursday: 7:00-9:00 P.M.
The Cambridge Buddhist Association is a nondenominational organization founded by Dr. Shinichi Hisamatsu, D. T. Suzuki, Stewart Holmes, and John and Elsie Mitchell in 1957. The current resident director is the Ven. Dharman Stortz, a Zen monk with 30 years of experience in Buddhist meditation practices. The Association conducts a regular schedule of zazen (Zen meditation), retreats, introductory periods for beginners, and Buddhist services at its temple at 75 Sparks Street and also maintains a large library. In addition, the CBA provides facilities for other Buddhist groups in the Boston area, which currently include the Community of Interbeing and the Sakya Institute. A quarterly schedule and newsletter is available on request.

**Contact:** Ven. Dharman Stortz  
**Membership:** Formal Membership is not required for participation in CBA activities  
**Composition:** Multi-ethnic  
**Meetings:** A regular schedule of Zazen, retreats, introductory periods, and Buddhist services. A quarterly schedule is available on request.
Cambridge Insight Meditation Center

Vipassana Meditation
331 Broadway
Cambridge, MA 02139
(617) 491-5070 (24-hour information line)
(617) 441-9038 Office
http://world.std.com/~cimc

Cambridge Insight Meditation Center (CIMC) was established by Larry Rosenberg in 1985 as a non-profit, non-residential urban center for the practice of insight meditation. Facilities at the CIMC include a meditation hall, space for walking meditation, an interview room, library, and kitchen. The Center has a parking lot and is easily accessible by public transportation. There are three full-time teachers: Larry Rosenberg, Narayan Liebenson Grady, and Michael Liebenson Grady.

The core of insight meditation is the practice of mindfulness, a quality of awareness which sees without judgment. Mindfulness is developed and strengthened through sitting and walking meditation. CIMC considers the challenges of daily life to be a part of meditation practice; such challenges offer an opportunity for practitioners to develop the art of mindful living.

All are invited to join in any of the public sittings and Wednesday evening dharma talks. CIMC offers many opportunities for meditation instruction for beginners, including classes, workshops and drop-in practice groups. A variety of non-residential retreats (mostly one-, two-, and three-day) are offered throughout the year.

Note: The Insight Meditation Society in Barre, MA 01005-9701 provides a full schedule of residential Vipassana retreats throughout the year. Call (978) 355-4378 for more information.

Contact: Colette R. Bourassa, Director; Pash Voynow, Asst. Director
Membership: 320 members; many non-members attend regularly
Composition: Multi-cultural
Meetings: Monday - Friday Group Meditation: 7:00-8:00 A.M.; Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, Friday Group Meditation: 6:00-7:00 P.M.; Wednesday Meditation: 6:45-7:30 P.M., Dharma Talk and Tea: 7:30-9:00 P.M. Check the schedule on-line or call 24 hours a day for updates.
One of more than fifty Kwan Um Zen Centers nationwide, the Cambridge Zen Center was founded in 1973 by Zen Master Seung Sahn. The center is located three blocks south of Central Square. It is currently under the guidance of Zen Master Bon Haeng (Mark Houghton) and Zen Master Bon Yeon (Jane McLaughlin-Dobisz), both of whom have received Dharma Transmission from Zen Master Seung Sahn.

Cambridge Zen Center has a strong emphasis on Zen practice, programs, and teaching. The residential training program currently houses 40 residents from countries spanning three continents. The Center welcomes visitors. Beginners should attend orientation at 7:00 P.M. Monday nights or arrive 15-30 minutes before practice. Note: The Providence Zen Center, 528 Pound Road, Cumberland, RI 02864, is a large, rural retreat center of the Kwan Um School.

Contact: Ji Hyang Sunim (CZC Abbot) or other staff
Membership: 40 residents, 70-100 members
Composition: Primarily Euro-American lay practitioners
Meetings: Daily Meditation: 5:15 A.M. & 7:00 P.M.; Thursday Public Talk: 7:30 P.M.
Chua Luc Hoa:
Boston Buddhist Culture Center
Vietnamese Buddhism
7 Greenwood Park
Dorchester, MA 02122
(617) 436-6084

Just off historic Dorchester Avenue, where Vietnamese markets alternate with Irish pubs, Chua Luc Hoa dominates the residential streets of Greenwood and Park with its impressive garden and towering statue of Kuan Yin. The center offers services in Vietnamese each Sunday at 11 A.M. for Dorchester’s growing Vietnamese population and for a small number of Chinese, Laotian, and Cambodian Buddhists from around Boston.

Bao Truong serves as the spiritual director of the center. Although not trained as a monk, Bao lived in a temple in Vietnam from age 3 to age 20. Shortly after arriving in the United States, Bao began organizing this temple under the guidance of Thic Giac Duc -- a Vietnamese monk, Professor at UMass Boston, and President of the Vietnamese American Buddhist Congress. Their vision is to “positively change the nature of the neighborhood through Buddhism.”

Although the triple-decker suffered a major fire before the community purchased it in 1994, it has been renovated and now includes a main temple/meditation hall, a kitchen, dining and office space, bedrooms, and an altar honoring deceased relatives. The community plans to expand the temple with a permanent for outdoor services. Summertime celebrations, such as Vietnamese Mother’s Day, draw hundreds of people and overflow the center. For larger ceremonies, the community has invited monks from California and India to worship with them.

According to Thich Giac Duc, Vietnamese temples are unique in their attempt to blend elements of Theravada and Mahayana Buddhism. Sunday services at the Dorchester temple may include Zen meditation, chanting from Pure Land Buddhism, and elements of Tibetan Buddhism. In addition to the Sunday service, Chua Luc Hoa also offers a children’s class in Vietnamese language and culture at 1 P.M. each Sunday attended by 30-40 children. Daily offerings of rice soup to the ancestors of the community begin at 5 P.M. and last about half an hour.

Contact: Bao Truong
Membership: 30-40; 200-400 in attendance at large ceremonies
Composition: Predominantly Vietnamese; 20% Caucasian spouses, Chinese, Laotians, and Cambodians
Meetings: Sunday: 11:00 A.M.; Weekends: Center is open for meditation.
Dzogchen Foundation

Tibetan Buddhism
PO Box 734
Cambridge, MA 02140
(617) 628-1702
Email: foundation@dzogchen.org
http://www.cambridgedzogchen.org

Dzogchen, the “Natural Great Perfection,” is considered the most immediate practice vehicle of Tibetan Buddhism, a non-dual teaching that points directly to the primordial nature of mind. It is understood as the self-recognition of the inner Buddha: pure, naked, sky-like awareness beyond solidifying habits of thought, the primordial ground of unconditional compassion.

The Dzogchen Foundation was established in 1991 by American Lama Surya Das who has inherited the Dharma from the Venerable Nyoshul Khenpo Rinpoche. Under his direction, the Dzogchen Foundation translates traditional Tibetan practices into accessible forms to bring the teachings of the non-sectarian Tibetan practice lineages to the West. The Dzogchen Foundation conducts meditation retreats of varying lengths at different locations in Europe and the United States.

The Cambridge Sangha was formed in 1992 by practitioners interested in Dzogchen and the teachings of Lama Surya Das. The sangha holds weekly sittings appropriate for anyone curious about or on a personal spiritual path. Participants include Buddhists and non-Buddhists alike, beginners and experienced practitioners, and those of all ages and walks of life. The sangha also hosts teachings and day-long retreats with Lama Surya Das, and monthly Vajrayana and Mahayana practice sessions with his associate teacher John Makransky, as well as community service and social events. Currently, the Cambridge Dzogchen Sangha holds group sittings Monday evenings at the Friends Meeting House in Cambridge and at other locations on Saturday mornings for Vajrayana and Mahayana trainings. Interested persons are welcome to attend any of these sessions and to join the Dzogchen Foundation mailing list for a schedule of retreats.

Contact: Mike Ryan (617) 623-9866
Membership: 150 locally, 2,000 nationally
Composition: Primarily Euro-American
Meetings: Monday: 7:30 P.M.-9:00 P.M. at 5 Longfellow Park in Cambridge.
Glory Buddhist Temple/ 
Bunlieu Buddha Cakra 
Khmer Theravada Buddhism 
24 Cambridge Street 
Lowell, MA 01852 
(978) 458-0498

Glory Buddhist Temple was formed in 1989 in Lowell’s Lower Highlands neighborhood, the heart of the city’s Cambodian community. It is a sister temple to the larger Triratanaram Temple in North Chelmsford founded in 1985, but unlike Triratanaram it is within walking distance for most of the 25,000 Khmer residents in the Lowell area. Glory Buddhist, which has two regular daily practices, is located in a former office building on Cambridge Street.

In the temple room, adjoining altars bear incense, candles, flowers, and small images of the Buddha. A prominent mural depicts the Buddha seated in the lotus position. While the temple is devoted to Theravada Buddhism, which is more monastically-oriented than Mahayana Buddhism, members of Glory Buddhist say the temple practices a flexible Buddhism that “peacefully co-exists” with traditional Khmer folk traditions, such as animism, and even with elements of Hinduism.

As a symbol of the purity of giving away something of value, temple participants make a daily offering of specially prepared food for the monks, followed by chanting and meditation, between 11 A.M. and noon. There is also meditation at 7 P.M. The temple offers occasional dharma talks and has a strong youth program. In recent years it has had more visits from, and contacts with, Buddhist institutions in Cambodia. Glory Buddhist Temple has one resident monk, the Ven. Ly Von.

Contact: Sokha Sao, President
Membership: Variable, about 50 regular participants, 200-300 for special services
Composition: 85% Cambodian, plus Vietnamese-, Laotian- and Thai-Americans
Meetings: Open daily 7:00 A.M. to 6:00 P.M.; Daily food offering and Service at 11:00 A.M.; Daily chanting and meditation at 7:00 P.M.
International Buddhist Progress Society -- Boston

Buddhism
950 Massachusetts Avenue, C-1
Cambridge, MA 02138
(617) 547-6670
Fax: (617) 547-9948
Email: ibpsbstn@Concentric.net

International Buddhist Progress Society Boston (IBPSB) is the local chapter of Fo Guang Shan, an international organization founded 32 years ago in Taiwan by Grand Master Ven. Hsing Yun. The society’s emphasis is on Humanistic Buddhism and building a pure land. Its lay organization, known as Buddha’s Light International Association, has over three hundred chapters worldwide, more than twenty-five of which are in the United States. IBPSB was founded by Ven. Yung Dong with the blessing of her master in 1998. The temple is located among businesses and retail stores on Massachusetts Avenue, between Harvard and Central Squares.

Once inside the IBPSB and away from the hustle and bustle of the street, one finds a peaceful respite, complete with a shrine, meditation room, gift shop, book store, library, and tea room. The meditation room is always free and open to the public; use of the library is restricted to members. Membership is $45 the first year, and $25 each additional year; membership also allows discounts on classes and is valid worldwide.

IBPSB offers regular classes for small donations. The classes cover topics such as well-being, sutra study, flower arrangement, and vegetarian cooking. The worldwide organization is heavily committed to charitable endeavors and operates orphanages, nursing homes, and a university in Taiwan. The local Boston chapter also works towards cultural exchange and education.

Contact: anyone at IBPSB
Membership: 2 nuns live in the monastic community; 200 members in the Boston chapter
Composition: multi-ethnic
Meetings: Meditation Hall is open daily 10 A.M.-6 P.M. Monday through Saturday, Sunday 12-6 P.M. Use of the space is free and open to the public. Seminars and lectures are offered regularly; call for schedules or stop by the center and put your name on the mailing list. All lectures are free, but donations are accepted.
The Kurukulla Center for Tibetan Buddhist Studies was founded in 1989 by Lama Thubten Zopa Rinpoche, and maintains close ties with the Milarepa Center in Vermont and the Kadompa Center in North Carolina. It is also a member of the Foundation for the Preservation of Mahayana Tradition.

The center’s resident teacher is Tibetan Geshe Tsulga (Tsultrim Chopel), who gives regular weekly classes on Tibetan Buddhism in the Gelug tradition.

The center also hosts visiting teachers on a regular basis, including the spiritual founder Lama Zopa Rinpoche.

Contact: Jennifer Campanelli or Suzanne Persyn
Membership: Approximately 70; 25-30 in regular attendance
Composition: Euro-American & British lay practitioners
Meetings: Sunday and Wednesday evening: Teachings and Meditation. Call center for current schedule.
Massachusetts Buddhist Association  
*Non-sectarian Chinese Buddhism*  
319 Lowell Street  
Lexington, MA 02173  
(781) 863-1936

The largest Chinese lay Buddhist organization in the state, the Massachusetts Buddhist Association was founded in 1985 by four scientists from Taiwan, and is housed in a former Protestant church. Based on a democratic organization, rejecting sectarianism and hierarchy, the Association follows a distinctive individual approach to practice and embraces all Buddhist traditions. Most of its 150 members come from Taiwan, some from Hong Kong, and virtually all became practicing Buddhists only after their arrival in the United States.

The Association offers programs, classes and lectures in meditation and chanting. It celebrates major Buddhist festivals such as the birthday of the Buddha and Guan-Yin.

**Contact:** Alice Hwang, President; K.C. Lin, Director  
**Membership:** Approximately 150  
**Composition:** Predominantly Taiwanese; some Buddhists from Hong Kong & mainland China  
**Meetings:** Sunday Meditation: 9:30 A.M.- 4:30 P.M.
The Thousand Buddha Temple is among the few Chinese Buddhist temples in the Boston area. The M.B.S.S.I. was founded in 1989. Rev. Sik Kuan Yen was appointed by Rev. Sink Wing Sing, the abbot of the temple, to take charge of the daily operations. M.B.S.S.I. has a few hundred members, mostly Chinese from different parts of the world. Temple activities take place in a large, new building opened in 1996. The architecture is traditional Chinese in form and stands in contrast to the neighboring buildings.

The temple belongs to the Pure Land school, which emphasizes faith and devotion to Amida Buddha with the goal of being reborn in the Pure Land. The religious life of the temple includes chanting, meditation, Dharma lectures and major festivals such as the birthdays of Buddha, Guan-Yin and Amida Buddha, and the Yu-lan-Pen festival.

**Contact:** Rev. Sik Kuan Yen  
**Membership:** 40 people in regular attendance; as many as 200 on holidays  
**Composition:** Predominantly Ethnic Chinese  
**Meetings:** Sunday: 10:00 A.M.-Noon.
Mun Su Sah

*Korean Pure Land Buddhism, Chogye Order*

231 Salem Street

Wakefield, MA 01880

(781) 224-0670

Fax: (781) 224-1087

Mun Su Sah was founded in early 1992 in an effort to spread the Buddha’s teachings to both first and second generation Korean Americans. Because the abbot does not speak English, the worship services are held in Korean with an English translation provided.

The temple is located in a former bank, and its facilities include a Dharma room, monastic living quarters, and dining hall. Activities include Sunday devotional services of chanting and bowing and the celebration of several religious holidays, including the Buddha’s Birthday in April and the day of Buddha’s Enlightenment in December.

**Contact:** Ven. Do-Bhum Sunim (Head Master), Ven. Ji-Kwang Sunim (Assistant)

**Membership:** 90; 60-70 in regular attendance

**Composition:** Predominantly Korean & some Euro-Americans

**Meetings:** Sunday Meditation and Services: 11:00 A.M.; Saturday Meditation only: 4:00-8:00 P.M.
Sakya Institute
_Tibetan Vajrayana, Mahayana, Sakya Order_
P.O. Box 391042
Cambridge, MA 02139
(617) 492-2614

Sakya Institute was founded in Cambridge in 1990 by Lama Migmar. Offering both beginning and advanced courses, Lama Migmar has taught Abhidharma, Madhyamika, and Mind-Training, such as Parting from the Four Attachments, Wheel of Sharp Weapons, Seven Points of Mind-Training, as well as classic Sutra texts such as the Dhammapada.

Other affiliated centers include the Sakya Retreat Center in Barre, where students have completed solitary retreats up to three and a half years in length, and the Sakya Manjushri Temple in Shrewsbury, where an ongoing program of weekly ritual services is held.

The practice taught at Sakya Institute and its affiliates is based on the classic gradual approach, beginning with mind-training and concluding with advanced Vajrayana deity practice.

**Contact:** Archarya Lama Migmar Tseten  
**Membership:** Variable  
**Composition:** Primarily Euro-American  
**Meetings:** Tuesday and Wednesday: 7:30 P.M.
Sanghikaram Wat Khmer
Khmer Theravada Buddhism
109-110 Chestnut Street and 10 Story Avenue
Lynn, MA 01902
Chestnut Street (781) 581-7266 or (781) 595-7907
Story Avenue (781) 593-4987

With more than 4,000 Cambodians, Lynn is a North Shore center for the region’s Cambodian community. Many came to Lynn between 1975 and 1979 and in the early 1980s. In 1984, the newly-arrived residents began to raise money for a temple, and in 1985 the group acquired a former church, Calvary Baptist, which is located in the middle of the city’s Cambodian community, and converted it into a temple.

The temple has since acquired a house across the street that is now a monastery residence for three monks. This year, three monks live at the temple as well. The monks officiate at ceremonies and celebrations of the temple, such as the Buddha’s birthday, the New Year’s celebration in the spring, the beginning and end of the rainy season retreat, and the annual fall robe-offering ceremony in which laity express their support of the monks by presenting new robes.

Contact: Poli Podhi (English-speaking monk who resides at the temple)
Membership: Variable; 50-60 regular participants, 300 for large ceremonies
Composition: Primarily Cambodian
Meetings: Daily: 5:00 A.M. & 8:00 P.M.
Soka Gakkai International -- New England

*Nichiren Buddhism*

545 Main Street
Waltham, MA 02452
(781) 642-8887
http://www.sgi-usa.org

With members in 128 countries, Soka Gakkai International (SGI) is a worldwide association whose members are “Buddhist practitioners active in peace work, cultural exchange, and grassroots education.” The activities of SGI are based on the religious philosophy of Nichiren Daishonin (1222-1282 CE) who emphasized the sanctity of human life and the goal of world peace through self-transformation, achieved through a Lotus Sutra-based practice and the chanting of *Nam-Myoho-Renge-Kyo*.

Every weeknight, the recitation of two chapters of the Lotus Sutra and the chanting of the *Nam-Myoho-Renge-Kyo* takes place at the local SGI-New England Culture Center, beginning at 7:00 P.M. Members and guests are welcome to come and experience this Buddhist practice, and to visit the bookstore (open Saturday and Sunday 12-2 P.M., Tuesday 7:45 A.M.-9:00 P.M.).

Throughout New England, the main forum for learning the philosophy and practice of Nichiren Buddhism are monthly discussion meetings, which are held at the homes of SGI members, and visitors are welcome to attend.

Schedules do change so please call for more information.

**Contact:** Steve Potoff, Executive Director  
**Membership:** Approximately 3,000 in New England  
**Composition:** Diverse  
**Meetings:** Monthly: World Peace Prayers; Monday - Friday: Chanting begins at 7:00 P.M.; Saturday and Sunday: 9:00 A.M. to 6:00 P.M.
Sounsa Buddhist Temple
*Korean Buddhism, Chogye Order*
10 North Main Street
Upton, MA 01568
(508) 529-3224

Sounsa Buddhist Temple was founded in 1985 to provide informal worship, Dhamma teaching, and individual counseling for Korean immigrants, their families, and Korean national students. The original members took turns hosting services in their homes, but in 1989 the community converted a residential home in Upton to a Korean Buddhist temple. The temple now includes a Dhamma hall, monks’ living quarters, a personal meditation room, a tea room, and a study/library room containing Korean and English texts as well as an Internet connection through a multimedia PC workstation.

Sunday devotional services, consisting of bowing, chanting, and meditation, are held in Hangul (the Korean language) for a congregation of Korean Americans, as well as other interested lay people. Sounsa also serves as an “island” of Korean culture where 2,500 year old Buddhist philosophy, Korean language, and Korean food provide the first and second generation Korean members with a familiar environment in which to meet and interact. Leaders of the temple write, “non-Korean members also cherish the civility and wisdom offered by a culture that predates their own by many hundreds of years.”

**Contact:** Seo Gwang (Ju-Jee Sunim), Resident Monk  
**Membership:** 10 - 20 people in regular attendance  
**Composition:** Primarily Korean  
**Meetings:** Sunday: 11:00 A.M.
Temple Vietnam was founded in 1986 when a group of 25-30 Vietnamese people from the Boston area met weekly for prayer in one another’s homes. It opened at its present site in 1991 and maintains ties with other Vietnamese temples in the state and with the international Vietnamese Zen Master Thich Nhat Hanh. Although the temple does not have a resident monk, the spiritual leader is Thich Nguyen Hanh of Houston, Texas. The temple observes a form of Mahayana Buddhism that seeks to combine aspects of Pure Land Buddhism with the Zen tradition, according to one of its founders, Dr. Chi Nguyen.

Occupying a former day-care center located between Jamaica Plain’s Forest Hills section and Roslindale Square, this temple is the first permanent place of worship for the area’s Vietnamese Buddhists. It was remodeled in 1993 and now includes a temple/meditation room, a function room, a garden, and a parking area. About 50 people come to the weekly services, but for larger celebrations, the temple accommodates 300-500 people. The temple’s members, about 10 percent of whom are ethnic Chinese from Vietnam, come from across the greater Boston area. The temple is governed by a six-member board of directors and its president, Mrs. Bich Nguyen.

Temple Vietnam offers bilingual services on the first Sunday of the month, meditation and Dharma talks, occasional Saturday meditation retreats, and, on Sunday afternoon, classes in which children learn the Vietnamese language, history, geography and tradition. Dr. Nguyen says that all forms of meditation are welcome. “What matters is not the method but if they bring you back to your true self.” All activities are open to the public.

Contact: Mrs. Bich Nguyen
Membership: Active membership: 50; 300-500 in attendance at large ceremonies
Composition: Predominantly Vietnamese; roughly 10% ethnic Chinese
Meetings: Sunday: 11:00 A.M.
Triratanaram Temple  
*Khmer Theravada Buddhism*
21 Quigley Avenue  
North Chelmsford, MA 01863  
(978) 251-1198

The Cambodian Buddhist Society began meeting in an apartment in North Chelmsford in the early 1980s. The present temple was founded in 1985 by the Ven. Sao Khon, under the sponsorship of the Ven. Maha Ghosananda. Triratanaram is one of two Khmer Buddhist temples serving the estimated 25,000 Cambodians in the Lowell area. The temple, housed in a former Knights of Columbus Hall, has recently been upgraded and now has a large temple room, a kitchen and dining room, a library, and a monks’ residence, as well as a stage for open-air worship and a playground. The name of the temple refers to the “three jewels” of Buddhism: the Buddha, the Dharma (teachings), and the Sangha (community of monks).

In addition to its two permanent monks, the Ven. Sao Khon and the Ven. Seng Savann, six monks from Cambodia are currently on a long-term visit. Their presence signals the forging of stronger links between the temple and Buddhist institutions in Cambodia. The language of worship is Khmer, with formal prayers often in Pali. The temple maintains ties with other Cambodian Buddhist temples in the region, and with Protestant and Catholic churches in Lowell. Every day before lunch, around 11 A.M., there is chanting, prayer, and the offering of food to the monks, who are supported by the laity. There is also a daily session of chanting alternating with meditation that begins at 7 P.M. Special services, such as for the Buddha’s Birthday or to celebrate the New Year, are held four to five times throughout the year, and draw as many as 600 people.

**Contact:** Sieng Sak, President  
**Membership:** Variable; 100 regular participants, 500-600 for special services  
**Composition:** 85% Cambodian, plus Vietnamese-, Laotian- and Thai-Americans  
**Meetings:** Open daily 7:00 A.M. to 6:00 P.M.; Daily food offering and Service at 11:00 A.M.; Daily chanting and meditation at 7:00 P.M.
The Universal Buddhist Congregation (UBC), which meets in East Boston, was started in 1985 by Rev. Thich Giac Duc, who is the spiritual leader of the community. The extended community consists of between 2,000 and 3,000 people, with 50 attending services on an average day. Young people are a focus of this community, and it is not unusual for half of those gathered to be children and teenagers. Youth activities are held after the Sunday services, and the UBC is affiliated with the International Buddhist Youth, an organization started in the 1930s, which has over 20,000 members in the U.S. and three million around the world.

The Universal Buddhist Congregation is unique in that the monks are allowed to marry. They observe the same vows as other monks, except that abstention from sex becomes fidelity in marriage. The UBC believes that married monks can be closer to the people, that sexual desires can be overcome with meditation and do not preclude marriage, and that marriage and procreation are important for some monks as well as for lay people.

The Congregation meets in a former Catholic church, which they purchased in 1987 and have extensively renovated. Mostly volunteer labor has supported the installation of electricity, heat, flooring, a new roof, and the large worship space on the second floor, which includes a large altar with illuminated images and another altar for ancestors. Exterior renovations of the building have not been a priority. Instead, the congregation tithes money to the poor in Vietnam, without regard to their religious affiliation. This Vietnamese tradition draws on many strands of Buddhism, including Mahayana, Theravada, Tibetan, and Zen Pure Land. The services are conducted in Vietnamese; visitors are welcome. Major events at the UBC include: the celebration of the Buddha’s Birthday in April, Vietnamese Mothers’ Day in July, and the Ceremony for the Buddha’s Enlightenment in December. In January, over 500 people gather to pray for the coming year.

Contact: Mr. Tan Nguyen on Sunday between 10:00 A.M. and 2:00 P.M.
Membership: 200; 500-1000 in attendance at larger ceremonies
Composition: Predominantly Vietnamese
Meetings: Sunday: 12 Noon.
Christianity in Boston

If the Puritan founders of Boston could return today for a Sunday morning tour of some of Boston’s churches, they would be astounded by the variety of Christian forms and traditions. At an African-American Pentecostal church on Highland Avenue in Somerville, women in hats and white gloves greet worshippers for a service that lasts at least two hours and includes an altar call and perhaps a baptism with full immersion. At the Holy Trinity Armenian Apostolic Church on Brattle Street in Cambridge, the Divine Liturgy is conducted by three Orthodox priests wearing brocaded vestments in a large, elegant church built by Armenian immigrants. At the Park Street Church in downtown Boston, worshippers and tourists stream up the stairs into the vestibule and on up to the second-floor sanctuary for a traditional Protestant Sunday morning worship service. In the afternoon, Park Street’s Chinese, Japanese, and Indonesian Christian fellowship groups meet in the church. In Chinatown, the Chinese Evangelical Church has an early service with old-fashioned Protestant hymns sung in Cantonese and a second service in English with new Christian “soft-rock” music and instrumentation. At St. Paul’s, the Episcopal cathedral church facing Boston Common, an African-American woman bishop leads the service. And Arlington Street Church, at the other end of the Common, has a thriving lesbian and gay ministry. Our Puritan visitors would be hard pressed to find a single church that closely resembles the traditions of worship they brought to the shores of New England more than 350 years ago.

The Christian tradition has 2,000 years of history and many streams of tradition. In terms of church families, there are the Catholic, Protestant, and Eastern Orthodox traditions, all of which have a firm presence in the Boston area. In cultural terms, Christianity is found in every part of the world and now, in the late twentieth century, there are more Christians in the Southern Hemisphere, with the burgeoning churches of Latin America and Africa, than in the Northern. Some of Christianity’s cultural diversity has also become visible in the Boston area. There are Chinese churches, like the Chinese Evangelical Church and St. James Catholic Church, both in Chinatown. The Roman Catholic church also has Italian, Irish, Mexican, and Vietnamese congregations. There are African-American churches, like the vibrant Twelfth Baptist in Roxbury and St. Paul’s African-American Methodist Church in Cambridge. Iglésia Bautista Central in Cambridge is one of more than forty Hispanic Pentecostal churches in the Boston area. Boston’s Orthodox churches include Coptic, Ethiopian Orthodox, Russian Orthodox, Syrian Orthodox, and Armenian Orthodox congregations. Among the most recent Christian communities are Indian immigrant congregations. A Syrian Orthodox church of Indian immigrants bought a building in Maynard. The Mar Thoma Church, a reform group that broke away from India’s Syrian Orthodox in the nineteenth century, has a congregation that meets in an Episcopal church in Burlington, while a congregation of the Church of South India meets in the Good Shepherd Episcopal Church in Waban.
For all the Christian diversity we see in the late twentieth century, it was a very particular group of Protestants, the Puritans, who first settled this part of the New England coast. The Pilgrims, a smaller “separatist” group that had broken with the Church of England, landed in 1620 and established Plymouth Colony. But it was John Winthrop and the Puritans, so named because of their original intention not to separate from but to purify the Church of England, who settled in 1630 on the site of what became Boston. They were dissidents and reformers in England; in New England, they became the Christian “establishment.” In 1629 in Salem the first congregational body was called into being by covenant. The First Congregational Society of Salem, today a Unitarian-Universalist church, stands on that site.

In 1636 Harvard College was founded at Newtown, now Cambridge. The well-known words from *New England’s First Fruits* describe the priorities of the first sixteen years and the purpose for which the college was envisioned: “After God had carried us safe to New England, and we had builded our houses, provided necessaries for our livelihood, reared convenient places for God’s worship, and settled the civil government, one of the next things we longed for and looked after was to advance learning and perpetuate it to posterity; dreading to leave an illiterate ministry to the churches, when our present ministers shall lie in the dust.” The oldest endowed chair at Harvard is the Hollis professor of Divinity and half of those who graduated from the college in the 17th century did indeed become ministers. Biblical languages and daily prayers were required until well into the 19th century. Though not required today, the tradition of daily morning prayers continues at Harvard’s Memorial Church, and is considered the oldest regularly-meeting prayer service in North America. It is important to remember that these early Puritans envisioned a new world in which Christianity would decisively shape a whole civilization. They spoke of a “Biblical Commonwealth” in which church and state would be one, working together with zeal and discipline to the glory of God. Religion -- and that meant Puritan Christianity -- pervaded every aspect of life. The idea that the state and the church should be entirely separate was still unheard of in Europe. It was no different in New England -- except that the “established religion” was not the Church of England, as in England or in Virginia, but the Puritan Standing Order, with its particular congregationalist polity. The Cambridge Platform of 1648 spelled out some of the implications of the vision of a new Zion in America. While it was not quite a theocracy, the civil authorities were to rule by the law of the Bible. “Blasphemy, Heresie . . . open contempt of the Word preached, Profanation of the Lord’s Day” were deemed punishable civil offenses.

There were early dissenters, however, including people of non-established churches as well as people who did not believe in the establishment of religion. Roger Williams was banished from the Massachusetts Bay Colony in 1635 for his critique of Governor Winthrop’s colony and his views on freedom of belief. He then settled in what is now Providence, Rhode Island. In 1637, Anne Hutchinson was found to be “disrupting the peace of the Commonwealth and the churches,” and was tried for the heresy of a radical “covenant of grace” over and above any
reliance on “works” and for having the audacity to teach her views, quote the Bible to support them, and claim divine inspiration. She was banished from Boston and took refuge in Rhode Island. Her friend Mary Dyer, a Quaker, was also run out of the Bay Colony as a dissenter. Refusing to accept expulsion, she returned repeatedly to press for her religious freedom until she was finally hung on Boston Common in 1660.

The 1700s brought a change in spirit in two distinct ways. First, the rationalism and humanism of the Enlightenment began to influence the “natural religion” of public Deist leaders such as Benjamin Franklin and Thomas Jefferson, who spoke of a universal God and emphasized the enlightenment of reason. Another challenge to the “establishment” was from a very different movement beginning in the 1730s and 1740s: the sweeping religious fervor and pietism of the Great Awakening. The formality of establishment churches was too restrictive for these new winds of spirituality. The bell of awakening resounded from the pulpits of powerful preachers like Jonathan Edwards in Northampton and George Whitefield, whose Boston circuit in 1740 included sermons at King’s Chapel, South Church, and Harvard College. Whitefield denounced the dreary dryness of the churches and their preachers, saying: “I am verily persuaded, the generality of preachers talk of an unknown, unfelt Christ. And the reason why congregations have been so dead is because dead Men preach to them!”

When British troops pulled out of Boston on March 17, 1776, a day still observed in Boston as “Evacuation Day,” the rector of the Anglican King’s Chapel in downtown Boston went with them out of loyalty to the crown. When that pulpit was filled by James Freeman, a new liberal tradition of interpretation and preaching began to develop at King’s Chapel. Thus was the Unitarian movement born. As American historian Sydney Ahlstrom put it, “The first Episcopal Church in New England became the first Unitarian Church in America.” Unitarianism, born in the new spirit of the Enlightenment with its confidence in human rationality, responsibility, and virtue, developed a more humanitarian view of Christ and a less exclusivist and more universal view of God and God’s dealings with humanity. The quip of the day was that the Unitarians believed in “the fatherhood of God, the brotherhood of Man, and the neighborhood of Boston.”

This new liberalism was strongly skeptical of the populist piety of the Great Awakening. Indeed, the Harvard faculty denounced the charismatic preachers who had “taken people from their work and business, to attend their lectures and exhortations, always fraught with enthusiasm and other pernicious errors.” In the early 19th century liberal thinking got a firm foothold at Harvard with the appointment of Henry Ware as Hollis Professor of Divinity, and Harvard became one of the primary battlegrounds in the conflict between old Puritan congregationalists and the new thinking that became Unitarianism. By the mid-nineteenth century, Harvard had become one of the unmistakable standard bearers of Unitarian liberalism. Ralph Waldo Emerson and the Transcendentalists carried this thinking to its logical conclusion, moving beyond the spiritual, intellectual, and institutional arena of Christianity with an interest in Asian religions and in a new spirit of universalism.
The relations of “church” and “state” changed radically in the period after the revolution, with the negotiation of a new federal union and the writing of the American Constitution. The emerging American consensus prevented the “establishment” of any state religion while protecting the “free exercise” of all religions. At the state level, however, “disestablishment” did not become a reality in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts until 1833, when state support of churches entirely ceased. Churches became wholly voluntary associations, supported by the donations and energies of their constituencies, a pattern which is being adopted now, in the late twentieth century, by such diverse traditions as Hinduism and Islam as they take root in American soil. In the 1800s the whole range of Christian churches and denominations developed in Boston -- Presbyterians and Congregationalists, Methodists and Baptists, Lutherans and Swedenborgians, Roman Catholics and Eastern Orthodox.

Among the many landmarks of Protestant Boston are early black churches. African slaves were brought to New England in the seventeenth century, but in 1783, in the wake of the American Revolution, the Commonwealth of Massachusetts made slavery illegal. Social equality was something else, however, and even the churches directed blacks to seats at the back of the balconies where they would not be seen. In the first decade of the 1800s the First African Baptist Church was formed. The congregation built a church, consecrated in 1806 on a street now called Smith Court on Beacon Hill. This meeting house, sometimes referred to as “the Black Faneuil Hall,” resounded for ninety years with the voices of freedom and reform -- from William Lloyd Garrison to Frederick Douglass. In 1898, the African American congregation outgrew the building and sold it to an Eastern European Hassidic Jewish congregation, Anshe Lubavitch, which met there for many decades until the building was purchased as an historical landmark of African American history. Indeed, it is still the oldest Black meeting house in the country.

In the first decade of the 19th century, a French cleric, John Cheverus, became the first Catholic Bishop in charge of the Boston diocese of the Roman Catholic Church. He remained in Boston as a beloved leader of what was a rather small Catholic community until 1830. The first Roman Catholic church was Holy Cross Cathedral in Franklin Square, built from 1801-03. By 1820, the immigrations that would change the face of religious Boston had begun. First, there was a massive exodus from Ireland, bringing as many as 200,000 Irish immigrants a year, totaling four and a half million Irish between 1820 and 1920. Their religious world was very different from that of the Christian and Unitarian religious liberals of Boston and from the rationalism and free inquiry of the German Enlightenment. They came from a rural Irish milieu, shaped by a climate of scarcity, famine, and pessimism, and dominated by a conservative Catholic Church. As Oscar Handlin put it, “Irish Catholics could not think like their neighbors without a complete change in way of life.” In the 1830s the Boston Pilot was launched, the Catholic periodical named for a journal in Dublin. In the 1840s and 50s, more than a dozen Catholic churches were founded.

In the late 1800s, Italian immigrants arrived and, for a few decades, shared the North End with Eastern European Jews. The first Italian Catholic church was St. Leonard’s on Hanover Street.
Eventually, further down Hanover Street, the early-19th century New North Meeting House designed by Bulfinch was transformed from a congregationalist meeting house to St. Stephen’s Roman Catholic Church. A multitude of smaller shrines appeared in the North End and today this area still provides the energy for many summer festivals or festas -- St. Jude, St. Rosalie, St. Agrippina, Madonna Della Cava, and St. Anthony -- each with its own procession and street fair.

Immigration from Greece began in the 1890s. In 1895, a Greek Orthodox priest passing through Boston on his way to Georgia found enough Greek Orthodox faithful to hold what must have been the first services in Boston. By 1899, the Greek community in Boston had both a priest and regular services in a rented hall at the corner of Stuart and Tyler Streets. In 1905, the “Hellenic Association of Boston” was formed to “establish a school for teaching Greek,” and in 1906, the Association purchased land and built its first church on Winchester Street. The Church of the Annunciation was consecrated on February 12, 1907. It served the community for seventeen years until Christmas Day, 1924, when the community moved to a fine new cathedral near the Museum of Fine Arts on Parker Street, where the Cathedral church remains.

Syrian immigration also began in the 1880s, the term “Syria” here referring to a larger area of the Middle East including what is now Lebanon. Nearly half were Orthodox Christians under the Patriarchy of Antioch. Of the Antiochean Orthodox churches, St. George’s in Boston is the oldest, founded at the turn of the century. St. John of Damascus began on Hudson Street in Boston in 1907, and in the 1930s a group of congregants from this parish began St. Mary’s on Inman Street in Cambridge, next to Cambridge City Hall, the most “Americanized” of the Antiochean Orthodox churches in Boston. In addition to Orthodox churches, Syrian Christians established other distinctive congregations in Boston -- the Melkite Catholic Church of the Annunciation on the VFW Parkway, a Maronite Church called Our Lady of the Cedars of Lebanon near Jamaica Pond, and an Arabic Evangelical Church in West Roxbury.

There are many other Orthodox Churches in the Boston area, with ethnic roots in all parts of the Eastern Orthodox world. There are Armenian Orthodox churches in Cambridge, Watertown, and Boston. While Armenians began to settle in Boston in the 1880s, the first church was not consecrated until 1923. The large Armenian Apostolic church at 145 Brattle Street in Cambridge was built in the late 1950s and consecrated in September of 1961. The first Russian Orthodox parish began in Roxbury in 1951 and moved to its present home in Roslindale in 1969. There is the striking new Holy Trinity Russian Orthodox cathedral on the Fenway at 165 Park Drive, now part of the Orthodox Church of America. More recently, there are a number of smaller orthodox congregations from Ethiopia and India.

Boston’s churches provide living testimony to the history of Christianity in America. The Old Ship Church in Hingham, its roof constructed like the hull of a great ship, was built in 1681 and is the oldest continuously used house of worship in the United States. The Old South Church (Third Congregational) served as a colonial meeting house where protest and revolution were
discussed. In 1775 in the bell tower of the Old North Church the sexton hung two lanterns to signal the movements of the British to Paul Revere. In Park Street Church at one corner of the Boston Common, William Lloyd Garrison gave his first major anti-slavery speech in 1829. The Y.M.C.A. movement was born in Boston in 1854. In 1879, the First Church of Christ Scientist was gathered by Mary Baker Eddy and before long its first building, the “Mother Church,” became the headquarters of the international Christian Science movement.

The churches of Boston have also given visible evidence of the increasing diversity of the Christian tradition in New England. Especially in the past twenty years, this diversity has become evident in the great number of multi-congregational churches. It is this that would perhaps astound our Puritan visitors most -- the growing number of diverse ministries and congregations sharing a common church space. For example, at Tremont Baptist Temple downtown there are Cambodian, Ethiopian, and Hispanic ministries. In the city of Cambridge, the Cambridgeport Baptist Church shares its old brick building with the Iglésia Bautista Central, an Hispanic Pentecostal congregation. The North Prospect United Church of Christ on Massachusetts Avenue near Porter Square shares its building with a Korean congregation, the Harvard Korean United Church of Christ. And in the heart of Central Square on Franklin Street, the signboard of the Cambridge Church of the Nazarene gives clear testimony to the new face of Christianity in Boston:

**English Congregation**
Sunday Services  
Sunday School 9:45  
AM Worship 10:45  

**Haitian Congregation**  
Sunday School 10:00  
AM Worship 11:00  
CCFC Afternoon Worship 1:45  
Portuguese Congregation 5:30  
Chinese Bible Study Friday Evenings 7:00

By the late 19th century there were so many churches in Boston that inter-church cooperation became a necessity. Today Boston can look back upon a long history of ecumenical relations among the churches, relations given institutional expression today in the active work of the Massachusetts Council of Churches. And now in the last decade of the 20th century, as Boston becomes increasingly multireligious, local clergy councils and councils of churches throughout the Boston area are grappling with how to reconfigure themselves to take into account the new religious reality of their communities.
The Annunciation Greek Orthodox Cathedral, appropriately referred to as the “Mother Church” for the Greek Orthodox of New England, is the seat of the Diocese of Boston and its Bishop Methodios. It is one of the oldest Greek churches in the United States, a Boston landmark, and is listed in the National Register of Historic Places.

The architecture of the Cathedral, built between 1892-1927, is in the Byzantine style with a large central dome surrounded by four smaller domes. The interior architecture features soaring arches supported by immense piers capped with classic Greek design. A Greek artist was commissioned in 1927 to decorate the church with Byzantine iconography. The radiant stained glass windows and large crystal chandeliers also add to the visual majesty of the church’s interior.

Cathedral organizations include: the Greek School, which teaches Greek language, Hellenic history, geography, religion and culture for grades 1-7; the Cathedral Sunday School, which teaches Greek Orthodox religion from nursery school to grade 12; the Greek Orthodox Youth Association; the Cathedral Choir; the Senior Guild; and the Philoptochos Society, a benevolent organization.

**Contact:** Priest Constantine Xanthakis  
**Membership:** 850-900 members  
**Composition:** Primarily Greek; some Ethiopian  
**Meetings:** Sunday: Matins 8:45 A.M., Divine Liturgy 10:00-11:30 A.M.; Monday, Wednesday & Friday: 7:00 P.M.
The historical roots of this church can be traced to the Green Dragon Tavern in Boston in 1784. Admirers of the philosophy of Swedenborg gathered in a theosophical group that eventually organized the church in the city of Boston in 1818. Chartered in 1823, the church met in several locations before finally settling in its present location atop Beacon Hill, in the heart of the city, in 1845. As the first Swedenborgian Church in Massachusetts, this church was thought of as the Mother Church by other forming Swedenborgian congregations in the area. Among its members the church has included the noted Timothy Harrington Carter, founder of the Old Corner Book Store; Sampson Reed, mentor of R. W. Emerson; Lydia Maria Child, abolitionist; Clarence Barron, financier/editor of the Wall Street Journal; George James Webb, hymnologist; and The Honorable Mayor M. Nichols of Boston.

A beautiful gothic structure served the membership until the mid-1960s when it was replaced with an eighteen story high-rise apartment. The street level on Bowdoin Street opens to the main sanctuary, with facilities on the second floor. The church is open to peoples of all faiths and sponsors at an interreligious level the monthly gatherings of the Boston Clergy and Religious Leaders Group for Interfaith Dialogue. It serves as a place of worship and gathering for the Muslim community in Boston, and other faith based communities. Monthly senior luncheons, operas, theatricals, musicals, and concerts are also offered. The use of its facility is also extended to several human service and outreach organizations.

**Contact:** Brenda Ellis, Administrator  
**Membership:** Approximately 100  
**Composition:** Multi-ethnic  
**Meetings:** Sunday: Worship Service 11:00 A.M., Bible Study 10:00 A.M. Contact the office about Sunday School, educational programs and workshops, special and seasonal functions, and the Coffee House.
Cambridgeport Baptist Church
Iglésia Bautista Central

_Baptist_

459 Putnam Avenue
Cambridge, MA 02139
(617) 547-7159

This Baptist church is perhaps typical of many urban churches that have had to change markedly in order to find new life in late-20th-century America.Founded in the 1800’s as Emmanuel Baptist Church, the congregation began dwindling in the 1980’s. The church building was then purchased by two separate congregations, Cambridgeport Baptist Church (CBC) and Iglésia Bautista Central (IBC) who today share the worship space on Sunday and throughout the week. The membership of CBC is primarily Euro-American and Asian American; the membership of IBC is primarily Latin American.

Iglésia Bautista Central is booming with hundreds of people at its Sunday worship service which is filled with the song and prayer of the “Pentecostal” movement.IBC’s pastor, Roberto Miranda, is from the Dominican Republic and has a Ph.D. in Romance languages from Harvard.

Cambridgeport Baptist attracts a growing congregation to a faith that describes itself as “evangelical,” and is committed to outreach and service in the Cambridgeport area. CBC’s pastor, Todd Lake, shares a joint ministry with his wife Joy. Their ministries include a Clothes Closet and Food Pantry for low-income families, and monthly services in the Cambridge Jail and the Cantabridgia Nursing Home.

**Contact:** CBC: Pastor Todd Lake, Pastor Joy Jordan-Lake; IBC: Pastor Roberto Miranda

**Membership:** CBC: 200 members; IBC: 350 members

**Composition:** Primarily Euro-American, Asian American, and Latin American

**Meetings:** Sunday Worship Services: 10:00 A.M. (CBC), 11:30 A.M. (IBC); Home Bible Study Groups.
Church of the Covenant

*UCC/Presbyterian*

67 Newbury Street
Boston, MA 02116
(617) 266-7480
Fax: (617) 266-9532
Email: cotcbos@hotmail.com
http://www.churchofthecovenant.org

The Central Congregational Church, founded in 1835, laid a cornerstone for its new building on Newbury Street in Boston in 1865. Designed by Richard M. Upjohn, a prominent architect of the time, the building was one of the earliest churches to be built in Boston’s new Back Bay. The church merged with the First Presbyterian Church in 1932 to create the Church of the Covenant, now affiliated with both the Presbyterian Church (USA) and the United Church of Christ.

Worship is the heart and soul of Church of the Covenant. Sunday services are held at 10:00 A.M., and are characterized by an attitude of service and joy (punctuated by music from the church’s Welte-Tripp organ). A wide range of Christian education activities are offered for young people and adults, such as Sunday School and Bible studies, sessions on contemporary theologies and issues, and inter-generational retreats on various topics. One very successful program sponsored by the church is the Weekend Emergency Food Cupboard which distributes food to the needy when many other agencies are closed. Church of the Covenant advocates for justice in Central America and, as a “More Light” church, welcomes gay and lesbian congregants.

**Contact:** Co-Pastors Richard Spalding and rose ann olmstead (Available Tuesday - Friday, 9:30-12:30 A.M.)

**Membership:** 200 members

**Composition:** Primarily Euro-American

**Meetings:** Sunday Worship Service: 10:00 A.M.
The world headquarters of the Church of Christ Scientist is located in Boston, bordered by Massachusetts and Huntington Avenues. The church represents not only the denomination’s historical beginnings, but also the focal point of its widespread activities. Founded in 1879 by Mary Baker Eddy as “a church designed to commemorate the word and works of our Master, which should reinstate primitive Christianity and its lost element of healing,” the church’s activities today “respond to humanity’s growing hunger for spiritual answers” and include publication and distribution of Mrs. Eddy’s writings, recognition of new branch churches worldwide, and publication of the Church’s well-respected daily newspaper, *The Christian Science Monitor*.

Despite wide variances in composition of membership, branch churches share common forms of worship services. Selections from the Scriptures with related passages from Mrs. Eddy’s *Science and Health with Key to the Scriptures* form the centerpiece for all services. On Sundays, citations outlined in advance in the *Christian Science Quarterly Bible Lessons* are read by two “readers” elected from the membership (the church has no ordained clergy). On Wednesdays, in addition to readings from the Bible and *Science and Health*, testimonies of healing are shared by those in the congregation.

**Contact:** Mr. Gary A. Jones  
**Membership:** Approximately 2,200 branch churches in some 74 countries  
**Composition:** All nationalities and ethnicities  
**Meetings:** Sunday Worship Services: 10:00 A.M., 7:00-8:00 P.M. (Except July and August); Sunday School Classes 10:00 A.M., 7:00 P.M.; Wednesday Testimony Meetings: 7:30 P.M.
Friends Meeting at Cambridge  
Society of Friends (Quaker)  
5 Longfellow Park  
Cambridge, MA 02138  
(617) 876-6883

The first Cambridge congregation of the Religious Society of Friends, also called Quakers, gathered in 1914 at Phillips Brooks House in Harvard Yard. Since 1937, the community has had its Meeting House in Longfellow Park, a quiet strip of green on Brattle Street near Harvard Square. The Meeting Center is the venue for the Society’s committees and programs, while weekly services take place at the Meeting House, linked to the Center via a short walkway.

The Meeting House is a long room with several rows of pews, all facing the center of the room. Worship is based on silent meditation and prayer, what Friends speak of as the “ministry of silence.” Generally, the first twenty minutes are spent in complete silence, and beyond that time no one speaks until they feel moved by God to do so.

The Friends, in keeping with a long pacifist heritage, have an active Peace and Social Concerns Committee and are engaged in vigils, conflict resolution efforts, educational programs, and legislative efforts to reduce violence and international tension. There are also many smaller groups, including a Young Adults Group and a Friends for Racial Justice Group.

Contact: Hugh Barbour, Resident Friend  
Membership: 300 active adult members  
Composition: Multi-ethnic  
Meetings: Sunday: 10:30 A.M. and 5:00 P.M.; Summer schedule: Sunday: 10:00 A.M.
Harvard-Epworth Church

*United Methodist*

1555 Massachusetts Avenue
Cambridge, MA 02138
(617) 354-0837
Fax: (617) 876-5786
Email: harvardep@juno.com
http://www.gbgm-umc.org/harepumc/

This Methodist congregation began in Cambridgeport in 1835, meeting in a private home. The congregation built its own church building in 1842 at 239 Harvard Street near Central Square. A mission society of the congregation then established a church in “Old Cambridge” near Harvard Square in 1867. It was called Epworth Church after the town in England where John Wesley was born. The present building, a combination of Romanesque and Victorian Gothic architectural styles, was built with the substantial help of Cambridge philanthropist Frederick Rindge, and dedicated in 1893. In the 1940s the original Harvard Street congregation merged with this church to become Harvard-Epworth.

The church has an active and committed membership and is involved in both student ministry and community outreach. In addition to its religious activities, Harvard-Epworth is well-known as a setting for a broad range of outstanding concerts. For a calendar of events, check their website weekly.

**Contact:** Rev. Scott Campbell

**Membership:** Approximately 400

**Composition:** Multi-ethnic; mix of urban and student members

**Meetings:** Sunday: Communion 9:00 A.M., Christian Education 10:00 A.M., Worship Service 11:00 A.M.
   (Summer: Sunday morning Service 10:00 A.M.)
King’s Chapel

Unitarian Universalist Christian
64 Beacon Street
Boston, MA 02108
(617) 227-2155
http://www.tneorg.com/kingschapel/

King’s Chapel is an independent church: congregational in governance, Unitarian Universalist Christian in theology and Anglican in liturgy. The Chapel was founded in 1686, the first Anglican church established in New England. The church building (located at the corner of Tremont and School Streets) was finished in 1757 and is generally considered the finest Georgian church building in America. Following the Revolution, the parish hired Harvard divinity student James Freeman to read services. With the consent of the parish leadership and influenced by radical English Unitarian theology, Freeman revised the Anglican Book of Common Prayer to reflect Unitarian usage. When the bishop of the Episcopal Church refused to ordain him, the parish ordained Freeman themselves. Thus, in 1787, King’s Chapel became the first Unitarian Church in America.

A stop on the Freedom Trail, the Chapel welcomes over 100,000 visitors each year. There is an active church school for children and three parish committees carry out the Chapel’s commitment to charitable works and social action, including a relationship with a sister church in Romania, a program for homeless women, and a meals program.

Contact: Carl Scovel, Senior Minister
Membership: 400 members
Composition: Multi-ethnic
Meetings: Sunday Worship Service: 11:00 A.M.; Wednesday Worship Service: 12:00 P.M.
Since its founding in 1809 on the site of Boston’s Old Granary Building, Park Street Church has been the site of many important events. In 1829, William Lloyd Garrison delivered his first major anti-slavery speech at Park Street and in 1910, the Boston Chapter of the N.A.A.C.P. was founded here. On the musical front, the Handel and Haydn Society of Boston, America’s oldest oratorio society, was first organized here in 1815. “America” (My Country ‘Tis of Thee) was first sung here on July 4, 1831, by the children’s choir. In addition, the American Temperance Society was organized here in 1826 and the Animal Rescue League in 1889.

Park Street Church today is a vibrant multi-ethnic congregation. The church has an active program for international students called FOCUS (Friendship for Overseas College and University Students) which sponsors Bible Study and Christian fellowship programs in Chinese, Japanese, and Indonesian, as well as English conversation classes, outings, and hospitality programs. Other church activities include City Works, an urban outreach program which seeks to involve Park Street members in tutoring, medical advocacy, and hunger ministry.

Contact: Dr. Gordon P. Hugenberger  
Membership: Approximately 1800 in attendance at Sunday services  
Composition: Multi-ethnic  
Meetings: Sunday Worship Services: 8:30 A.M., 11:00 A.M., and 5:30 P.M.
Established in the South End in 1874, Resurrection Lutheran Church moved to the Dudley Square area of Roxbury in 1923. Today, the church is one of the anchors to a reviving Roxbury community. While growing at nearly 100 percent per year since 1994, the congregation has become more and more of a “public church,” strategically engaged in services to the Roxbury community and in the emerging Greater Boston Interfaith Organization.

Current programs of the congregation include: offering mentoring programs for young men and women; teaching fatherhood skills to young fathers on probation at Roxbury Court; providing permanent housing for men and women with histories of mental illness; offering job linkages in Boston and, via van services, to suburban employers; holding prayer dinners for persons living with HIV/AIDS and their families; sponsoring various feeding and food distribution programs; offering an African American cultural program; providing full-day programming for five weeks during the summer, as well as an after-school center and a child care center.

Resurrection is a member of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, and is that body’s largest congregation in Boston. Its relatively young membership worships each Sunday in both contemporary (9:00 A.M.) and traditional (11:00 A.M.) styles. The church endeavors to be faithful in its worship to both African American and Lutheran heritages.

**Contact:** Pastor John Heinemeier

**Membership:** Worship attendance of 130

**Composition:** 85% African-American, 15% Other

**Meetings:** Sunday Worship Services: 9:00 A.M. and 11:00 A.M.; Services on Holy Days: 7:30 P.M.
St. James the Greater in Chinatown

Roman Catholic
125 Harrison Avenue
Boston, MA 02111
(617) 542-8498

Located in the heart of Chinatown, St. James the Greater was established in 1854 in order to accommodate the rapidly growing Irish Catholic immigrant community in downtown Boston. Today, Irish Americans still constitute a part of church membership; however, with the influx of Chinese immigrants into the Boston area in the early and mid-twentieth century, St. James expanded in order to integrate its new Asian neighbors. In 1946, Archbishop Cushing invited the Maryknoll Sisters, the first American Catholic foreign mission society, to St. James in order to facilitate missionary and community work among the Asian immigrant community. Many of the sisters had done missionary work in Guangdong province, and were therefore familiar with Chinese customs and fluent in Cantonese. Today, the Chinese Catholic Pastoral Center continues their legacy at St. James, doing missionary work and providing social services to community members.

There are numerous activities offered throughout the week at St. James. For further information, please call the church office.

Contact: Fr. Hugh O’Regan
Membership: Cantonese: approximately 200; Mandarin: approximately 70; Non-Asian: approximately 150
Composition: Primarily Chinese and Euro-American
Meetings: Services in English: Monday - Friday 7:30 A.M., 12:10 P.M.; Saturday: 4:30 P.M.; Sunday: 7:30, 8:30 & 11:30 A.M., 5:00 P.M. Services in Cantonese: Sunday at 10:00 A.M. Services in Mandarin: First Saturday of the month at 6:00 P.M.
St. Leonard’s Church, founded in 1873, is the first Roman Catholic Church in New England built by Italian immigrants. Located in the historic North End of Boston, the church building sits at the corner of Hanover and Prince Streets on the second loop of Boston’s Freedom Trail. St. Leonard’s is known to many visitors for its Saint Anthony shrine located in the downstairs church, the oldest shrine dedicated to the saint in Boston. The beautiful Peace Garden adjoining the church provides a serene haven in which visitors can escape the bustle of Hanover Street.

Saint Leonard’s has an active devotional schedule, including a number of weekend and weekday masses in both Italian and English, weekly St. Anthony Devotions, weekly confessions, and a radio ministry every Tuesday on Boston station WUNR (1600 AM). In addition, Saint Leonard’s parish sponsors an annual Saint Anthony festival in the North End, held on the weekend of the second Sunday in June. Please call or visit the parish office at 14 North Bennet Street in the North End for more information.

**Contact:** Fr. Michael J. Nappo, O.F.M.

**Membership:** Approximately 2,000 members

**Composition:** Primarily Italian American

**Meetings:** Services in Italian: Monday - Saturday 9:00 A.M.; Sunday 10:15 A.M.; Services in English: Monday - Friday 12:05 P.M.; Saturday 5:00 P.M.; Sunday 9:00 A.M., 12:00 P.M.
St. Mary’s Orthodox Church

*Eastern Orthodox*

8 Inman Street
Cambridge, MA 02139
(617) 547-1234

On Inman Street in Cambridge, St. Mary’s Orthodox Church is an intriguing and complex religious institution. The community is characterized by an acceptance of diversity and eclecticism, an emphasis on the notion of the congregation as a family, and a deep commitment to the act of devotion. Its religious tradition is of the Antiochian strand of Eastern Orthodoxy, but it is a pan-Orthodox church with an English language liturgy and a congregation comprised of Syrians, Lebanese, Ethiopians, Greeks, Russians, Eritreans, Ukrainians, Romanians, Bulgarians, Koreans, Latinos, and American-born converts. Father Anthony, Saint Mary’s priest, was himself a Southern Baptist who converted to Orthodoxy while studying at Oral Roberts University.

This Orthodox congregation worships in a white clapboard New England-style meeting house built in 1821, formerly a Unitarian church. Its fifteen spectacular stained glass windows constitute the largest collection of Civil War stained glass in the Northeast. Activities at the church include adult and youth education classes, fundraising for international Orthodox charities, a grocery voucher and food distribution program for the hungry, a parish council, a chancel choir, and the Boston Byzantine Choir.

**Contact:** Fr. Anthony Hughes  
**Membership:** Approximately 160 families  
**Composition:** Multi-ethnic  
**Meetings:** Sunday: Matins 8:45 A.M., Divine Liturgy 10:00 A.M.; Saturday: The Ninth Hour and Great Vespers 5:00 P.M. Please call the church office for information on the summer schedule.
St. Stephen’s Armenian Apostolic Church of Greater Boston

Armenian Orthodox
38 Elton Avenue
Watertown, MA 02472
(617) 924-7562
Fax: (617) 924-6809

St. Stephen’s Armenian Apostolic Church is located in the heart of the Armenian community in Watertown, which is one of the centers of the Armenian community in America. St. Stephen’s serves a wide-ranging Armenian population and seeks to preserve the Armenian cultural tradition and faith. While the St. Stephen’s community first worshipped in a rented church on Berkeley Street in Boston from 1933-1942, financial and community resources were secured to construct a church in Watertown. The ground-breaking ceremony was held in 1956 and the church first opened on October 20, 1957. St. Stephen’s is affiliated with the Armenian Cultural Education Center in Watertown and is primarily comprised of Armenians hailing from Lebanon, Syria, Iran, Romania, Bulgaria, and Armenia. Services are conducted in Armenian, but English translation books are readily available.

St. Stephen’s offers a Bible Study for adults and operates three schools: a daily, bilingual preschool that is affiliated with the St. Stephen’s Armenian Elementary school; a Sunday School for students up through 12th grade; and a weekly Saturday School for late middle school and high school students that teaches Armenian history, language, and literature. The Church Hall is the site of many cultural activities and plays a pivotal role in the community as meeting space for several organizations.

St. Stephen’s also publishes a bi-monthly newsletter to inform the Armenian community of church news and cultural events -- the mailing list is comprised of over 1,000 families. An annual picnic is held on the second Sunday in August and the annual bazaar is held on the first Friday and Saturday in November. In addition, a Youth Group is being formed for late high school and college age students.

Contact: Rev. Fr. Antranig Baljian
Membership: Approximately 750 members
Composition: Multi-ethnic Armenians
Meetings: Sunday 9:30 A.M., Divine Liturgy 10:00 A.M. Please call the church office for information on the summer schedule.
Tremont Temple Baptist Church

*American Baptist*

88 Tremont Street
Boston, MA 02108
(617) 523-7320
Fax: (617) 523-7594

Tremont Temple Baptist Church was established in 1839 as “a church with free seats, where everyone, rich or poor, black or white, should be on the same religious level” and as “the sabbath home for the stranger and the traveler.” Its present building, situated in the heart of downtown Boston, was designed by C. H. Blackwell and completed in 1894. It has a large second-floor sanctuary with 1,850 plush seats.

Tremont Temple has had a long ministry of inspirational music and preaching. The pulpit of the church has been occupied by preachers and evangelists such as Dwight Moody, Evangeline Booth, Billy Sunday, Gypsy Smith, and Billy Graham. On his last visit to the U.S., Charles Dickens gave one of his famous readings at Tremont Temple, and Abraham Lincoln gave an address here before he was elected President.

The congregation of Tremont Temple today is multi-ethnic and multi-cultural, with “an active and Christ-centered ministry.” Bible teaching, missions, fellowship, and service are all vital parts of the church life. The church has local ministries to Filipinos and Cambodians, and offers a Cambodian worship service on Sunday at 11 A.M. The church is home to several other congregations, including New Covenant Presbyterian Church, Korean (Sunday at 9:30 A.M.), Ethiopian Evangelical Church (Sunday at 4:00 P.M.), and Iglesia Bautista Hispano-Americana (Sunday at 11:00 A.M.). The church is also home to the Boston Christian Counseling Center, a training and service center accredited by the American Association of Pastoral Counselors.

**Contact:** Dr. Ronald Mansdoerfer and Rev. Eleftheria Sidiropoulou

**Membership:** “Countless thousands”

**Composition:** Multi-ethnic and multi-cultural

**Meetings:** Sunday: Bible Classes 9:30 A.M., Worship Services 11:00 A.M. and 6:00 P.M.; Wednesday: Chapel Service 12:10 P.M., Bible Study and Prayer Meeting 7:15 P.M. Boston Christian Counseling Center: call (617) 523-1543 for more information.
Since 1733, Trinity Church has been an important force in Boston’s Christian community. The most prominent evidence of this strength is the very building in which weekly worship is conducted. The present church building was designed by H.H. Richardson and constructed in 1877. It is considered by many to be a masterpiece of American church architecture.

Through the years, Trinity has attracted many outstanding clergy. The Rectors have been some of the leading Christian religious thinkers of their eras. Phillips Brooks, Rector from 1869-1891 (whose faith and leadership made him the human cornerstone of the church as it is known today) was universally known as a preacher and Christian leader, as well as the composer of the Christmas Carol “O Little Town of Bethlehem.” The Presiding Bishop Henry Knox Sherrill served as Rector from 1923-1930. Theodore Parker Ferris, Rector from 1942-1972, was considered by many to be one of the leading orators and religious thinkers of his generation. But, as present church leaders write, “the history of Trinity Church is not so much a story of a building, or of great speakers and events, but rather, a story of its parishioners.”

Today, the church is guided by Rector Samuel T. Lloyd and an Associate Clergy team. The parish sees its foundation to be “small groups of empowered Christians spreading the word of God throughout the city, state, and nation by living the word of God.” A variety of offerings support this vision, particularly in the areas of worship and music, outreach, education, pastoral care, and parish life.

Contact: Samuel T. Lloyd, Rector
Membership: Approximately 4,000 members
Composition: Multi-ethnic
Meetings: Sunday: 8:00 A.M., 9:00 A.M., 11:00 A.M., and 6:00 P.M.; Monday - Friday: 7:30 A.M., 12:10 P.M., 5:30 P.M. (September through June); Tuesday: 5:30 P.M. (July and August). Parish Office Hours: 9:30 A.M.-5:00 P.M.; Church Open: 7:30 A.M.-6:00 P.M.
Twelfth Baptist Church

*American Baptist*

160 Warren Street
Roxbury, MA 02119
(617) 442-7855
http://www.tbcboston.org

Located within walking distance of Dudley Station near the corner of Moreland Street, Twelfth Baptist Church is one of the largest and most active African-American churches in the Boston area. Led by its charismatic presiding minister, Rev. Michael E. Haynes, this strong, powerful church was the spiritual home of the young Martin Luther King, and continues to attract people interested in public service and community outreach.

A direct descendent of the First African Meeting House (founded in July, 1805), Twelfth Baptist Church was originally located on Phillips Street in Beacon Hill, where its cornerstone was laid in 1840. They later relocated to Shawmut Avenue, but the church building was destroyed. The community then moved to its present location on Warren Street.

Twelfth Baptist is characterized by numerous community and church activities. Music is a strong element in weekly services, with no less than five choirs comprising the church’s “music ministry.” Educational services include a popular Bible School, Sunday School classes for all ages, tutorial services, and Christian Pre-School. Other activities include an active counseling program for individuals, couples, and families; a visiting service for the sick and elderly; and a vibrant youth ministry. The church is globally active, supporting mission efforts in Africa and the West Indies as well as the growth of a Liberian Fellowship within the parish.

**Contact:** Rev. Michael Haynes  
**Membership:** Approximately 1,000 members  
**Composition:** Primarily African-American  
**Meetings:** Sunday Worship Services: 11:00 A.M. (Summer: 10:00 A.M.); Friday Prayer Meeting: 8:00 P.M.
Hinduism in Boston

In May 1990, the first major Hindu temple ever constructed in New England was consecrated in the Boston suburb of Ashland. Inside the central sanctuary is the image of Sri Lakshmi, the auspicious goddess of wealth and blessings. To the right is a shrine housing the image of Vishnu, the transcendent Lord, and to the left is a shrine housing the image of Ganesha, the ever-popular elephant-headed remover of obstacles. These granite images were crafted by ritual artists, shipped from India, and consecrated during an entire week of ceremonies in Ashland. They were “bathed” in tubs of flowers, grains, and water, and by countless Sanskrit hymns. Their eyes were ritually opened, their breath ritually activated, and these Hindu deities became the divine residents of suburban Boston. On the final day of the consecration rites, more than 3,000 Boston area Hindus, all in a festive spirit, circled the temple in a colorful procession, following twelve Hindu priests each bearing on his head a large pot of consecrated water. The waters used for this ceremony were brought to Ashland from the Ganges River in India -- and from the Mississippi, the Missouri, the Merrimac, and the Colorado rivers in the U.S. A hydraulic hoist lifted the priests to the roof of the temple where they poured the water over the temple towers, elaborately carved with images of the Hindu deities. With the opening of this large temple, the Hindu community of New England has, for the first time, a new home and a significant architectural presence.

The story of the growth of the Sri Lakshmi Temple is typical of that of many U.S. Hindu communities. In the 1970s, new Indian immigrants, most of them professionals, began to have children and put down roots in their new American communities. As they looked toward the future, they realized that their children would have no cultural or religious foundation unless they took action to create a temple. Here in Boston, a group of Tamil families from South India met for puja and festivals in one another’s homes. In 1978 they incorporated as the New England Hindu Temple, Inc. and held their first public event, a Divali or Lakshmi Puja, at the Knights of Columbus Hall in Melrose. For the next eight years, the New England Hindu Temple met regularly in the Needham Village Club. As one member recalled, “We used to go there once a month on a Sunday morning, clean up the whole place, rearrange the chairs, arrange the deities, and worship from about ten to two. Then we would eat together, clean up the place, and go.” That pattern lasted until 1986 when land was purchased in Ashland for the temple. Today the Sri Lakshmi Temple provides a focal point for many diverse communities of Hindu immigrants in the Boston area. It is still South Indian in spirit, but seeks to attract a wider, more “ecumenical” congregation of Hindus. The membership is comprised of Indian immigrants from both the Vaishnava and Shaiva traditions from throughout New England. The community has continued to make additions to the temple and in 1996 consecrated the rajgopuram, the ornate “royal tower gateway” built at the entry of the temple complex, signaling the completion of the whole temple.
The ideas and the culture of India have had an impact on New England for well over 100 years. The history of relations between India and Boston probably began with the trading ships that sailed back and forth from Salem and Boston to India in the early nineteenth century. Often it was “missionaries and ice” on the outbound journey. In 1841, for example, John Christian Frederick Heyer and three missionary couples sailed from Boston bound for Columbo, Sri Lanka, on a freighter with a cargo of 260 tons of ice packed in sawdust. By mid-century, there were reports of Hindus participating in Salem’s Fourth of July parade. The Peabody Museum in Salem today houses a rich collection of Indian arts and artifacts expressive of a rich period of commerce between India and New England.

Hindu texts and ideas became a lively part of the intellectual life of New England’s most famous transcendentalists, Ralph Waldo Emerson and Henry David Thoreau. As early as the 1820s Emerson began to write of India in his journals. He was introduced to Hindu literature by his aunt, Mary Moody Emerson. By the 1830s he had copies of the Bhagavad Gita and the Laws of Manu, and by the 1840s he began to publish excerpts from “Ethnical Scriptures” in the transcendentalist journal The Dial. Thoreau clearly had the Bhagavad Gita with him during his sojourn at Walden. “In the morning,” he wrote, “I bathe my intellect in the stupendous and cosmogonic philosophy of the Bhagvat-Geeta . . . in comparison with which our modern world and its literature seem puny and trivial.” In the winter, he marveled at both the physical and mystical connection between the land of the holy Ganges and his beloved Walden. As he contemplated the Bhagavad Gita from his hut, big ice-blocks of the pond he called “God’s drop” were cut to be sent by rail to Boston and thence by ship to India. In 1855, these Concord philosophers received from a British friend what must then have been America’s largest trove of the wisdom of India -- including the Rig Veda, the Mandukya Upanishad, the Laws of Manu, the Sankhya Karikas, and Hardy’s Manual of Buddhism.

Many New Englanders, especially those of the liberal Unitarian tradition, were drawn to what they learned of India’s religious ideas: its insistence on the oneness of the divine and its capacity to point to the transcendent unity of diverse paths and ways. Indeed, the connections between the Unitarians of Boston and some of the reformist “Hindu renaissance” movements in Bengal have been well documented, and the literary legacy of this relation is collected in the Andover-Harvard Library of Harvard Divinity School. Rammohan Roy in particular was admired for his Vedanta idealism and his critique of Hindu polytheism in favor of what seemed for all the world a Unitarian perspective. However, despite more than fifty years of interest in Indian thought, few New Englanders had met a Hindu. So in the late summer of 1893, when a handsome young Hindu reformer, Swami Vivekananda, arrived in Boston for a month’s stay before the opening of the World’s Parliament of Religions in Chicago, he attracted a great deal of attention. He was surely the first Hindu many in New England ever heard speak about his own religious tradition.
Vivekananda had taken a ship from Calcutta to Vancouver and then traveled by train to Chicago, arriving more than a month early for the Parliament. He quickly ran out of money. Fortunately, on the train from the West coast he met a Boston woman, Kate Sanborn, who graciously invited him to her house in the countryside outside Boston -- in Metcalf, not far from where the Sri Lakshmi Temple stands today. Ms. Sanborn, a writer, had been a professor of literature at Smith College. It was at her estate, Breezy Meadows, that Swami Vivekananda was introduced to a number of Bostonians, including Harvard Classics professor J.H. Wright. At Professor Wright’s invitation, Vivekananda came to Annisquam on the North Shore, where he delivered his first public lecture at the Unitarian Church. He subsequently spoke at Wesley Chapel in Salem and caused a stir wherever he appeared on the North Shore in his silk tunic and turban.

At the Parliament, Vivekananda was received with enthusiasm, as he called for a universal religion “which would have no place for persecution or intolerance in its polity, and would recognize a divinity in every man or woman, and whose whole scope, whose whole force would be centered in aiding humanity to realize its Divine nature.” In the two years following the Parliament, Vivekananda returned to Boston many times. He spoke at the Methodist church in Lynn, at the North Shore Club, at Radcliffe College, and at the Procopeia Club on St. Botolph Street. During the summer of 1894 he spent time at Sarah Farmer’s rural home in Eliot, Maine -- a place called Green Acre -- where she invited the serious study of religious ideas and where the Swami taught Vedanta to a summer encampment of transcendentalists and seekers. The local paper reported, “Each morning he meets a company of men and women under a large pine tree in the woods, and sitting cross-legged, discourses to them of the things of the soul.”

During Vivekananda’s 1894 and 1896 visits, he seems to have made his headquarters in Cambridge at the 168 Brattle Street residence of Mrs. Ole Bull (Sara Bull), where a lively circle of people gathered to discuss everything from spirituality to women’s suffrage. There he developed a friendship with William James and later had lunch with him at his home on Irving Street. He lectured twice at Harvard, in May of 1894 at Sever Hall and in 1896 to the Harvard Philosophical Society.

In the years following Vivekananda’s early visits to Boston, monks of the Ramakrishna order in India regularly followed in his footsteps. In 1896, Swami Saradananda made the rounds of Green Acre and 168 Brattle Street. Then came Swami Abhedananda, who met William James and Harvard Sanskritist Charles Lanman at Sara Bull’s home. Swami Paramananda followed and in 1909 established the first home of the Boston Vedanta Society on St. Botolph Street and a Vedanta Society retreat center in Cohasset. After Paramananda’s death in 1940, the Cohasset center continued independently under the leadership of Sister Gayatri Devi. In 1941, Swami Akhilananda of the Providence Vedanta Center established a permanent center in Boston at 687 Boylston Street. Shortly thereafter, the present building at 58 Deerfield Street in the Back Bay was donated as the center for the Ramakrishna Vedanta Society of Boston. Swami Akhilananda had a long and vigorous ministry of nearly twenty years lecturing, counseling, and dining with
both ministers and professors. Since 1962, Swami Sarvagatananda has been resident in Boston, continuing a century long tradition of Hindu Vedanta presence in this area.

Another Hindu teacher who, like Vivekananda, came to America for a conference and stayed to found a religious movement was Paramahamsa Yogananda. This Bengali religious leader came to a meeting of the International Congress of Religious Liberals held in Boston in 1920. This was the beginning of an American sojourn that would lead to the formation of the Self Realization Fellowship (SRF) which is still in existence today. Its headquarters is in Los Angeles, but here in Boston there is an SRF group that still meets in the tradition of Yogananda.

In the late 1960s and 1970s new streams of Hindu religious life came to Boston, including gurus and swamis and the groups of seekers and followers they attracted. One of the most durable groups was the International Society for Krishna Consciousness or ISKCON, known more popularly as “Hare Krishna” for its public chanting of “Hare Krishna, Hare Rama!” on Boston Common and in Harvard Square. This distinctively devotional style of Hinduism was brought to the U.S. by an Indian teacher, A.C. Bhaktivedanta Prabhupada, who began singing Lord Krishna’s name in a storefront on the lower East Side in New York. Such a fervent piety did not, at first, seem a likely magnet for young Americans in the turmoil of the 1960s, but, astonishingly enough, it attracted a dedicated group of young people. In 1968, the first Krishna temple in the Boston area opened in an old house in Allston. After a few years, the community moved to a brownstone at 72 Commonwealth Avenue, where it continues today with a daily round of *pujas* in which the images of Lord Krishna and his beloved Radha are honored with incense and bells, oil lamps and flowers.

In this same period, students and professionals from India were attracted to the Boston area by its many universities. Since the worship and rituals of the Hindu tradition are performed largely at home, the small altars of their homes and apartments were surely the places where Shiva, Vishnu, Ganesha, and Devi were first worshipped in Boston. Even today, home altars are important in the ritual life of a Hindu family. As for temple worship traditions and the sense of community and festivity the temple setting provides, the “Hare Krishna” temple on Commonwealth Avenue, with its largely Euro-American resident community, became a welcome temporary home for newly arrived Boston immigrant Hindus.

At the same time, groups of Indian Americans began to form cultural societies to celebrate festivals distinctive to their region and to provide a context in which language, dance, and music might be introduced to their children. During the 1970s more than a dozen new cultural societies were born. The Marathi Mandal gathers people to celebrate Maharashtrian holidays. The Gujarati Association of New England brings Gujaratis together to celebrate Divali, the Festival of Lights, and to participate in the folk-dancing event called Garba. The Telugu Association gathers about three times a year -- for the New Year called Ugade which usually falls in April, for a park picnic during the summer, and for a fall celebration of Divali. The Kerala Association brings both
Hindus and Christians from Kerala together for Onam, the harvest festival in September. Prabasi, founded to promote Bengali language, culture, and arts, celebrates Durga Puja, the festival of the Goddess, in the fall. The Kannada Koota, formed by immigrants from Karnataka, observes Ganesh Puja in the late summer, Sankranti in January, and the New Year in the spring. The Orissa Association promotes dance and music from Orissa and has traditionally rented the Good Shepherd Church in Acton for its Ganesha Puja and Sarasvati Puja. There are also some all-India cultural and religious organizations. The Indian Association of Greater Boston observes “India Day” on August 15, sometimes with a parade and cultural performances at the Hatch Shell on the banks of the Charles River.

In 1978, a center called Shishu Bharati was formed to provide weekend education for children of Indian immigrants. It was started by a small group of parents who were concerned lest their children grow up in the United States with no real sense of Indian culture or languages. The school meets Sundays from 10:00 A.M. to 12:15 P.M. in the Marshall Simond Middle School in Burlington, MA. Students learn songs, have classes in a variety of Indian languages, and learn something of Indian history, geography, religion, and culture. There are yoga classes for the parents and a yearly fall celebration of Divali. Concern for the next generation is also one of the primary concerns of the Vishwa Hindu Parishad of America (VHP), which has a Boston office. In the Boston area, the group sponsors a Bal Vihar for children to meet and to learn stories, songs, and rituals. The VHP-linked Hindu Students Council, based at M.I.T., brings Hindu students together from area colleges.

While the Sri Lakshmi temple attracts Hindus from throughout New England, something of the variety of the Hindu tradition is also present in the Boston area. The Ganeshe Temple in Dorchester serves as a meeting place for Hindus from Trinidad and Tobago, Guyana, and Suriname. The Swaminarayan Hindu Temple in Stow combines an active and committed lay leadership with the strong spiritual presence of a living teacher, Pramukh Swami, who visits the United States every few years. Another lineage of the Swaminarayan movement has a temple in Lowell. The Chinmaya Mission has had a long tradition of bringing teachers to the Boston area, and Swami Chinmayananda lectured here often during his lifetime. His week-long summer lecture series held at Harvard or M.I.T. would attract hundreds of area Hindus each evening. Since Swami Chinmayananda’s death in 1993, Swami Tejomayananda has continued the summer camp and lecture circuit of the Chinmaya Mission. A number of smaller satsangs or groups that gather for meditation, song, and study follow other Hindu teachers, such as Mata Amritanandamayi, also known as Ammachi. Ammachi’s international tours attract hundreds of devotees when she stops for a few days in Boston.

If Swami Vivekananda were to visit Boston again today, he would find active yoga and meditation groups, Bengali summer picnics, practitioners of Ayurvedic medicine, a temple youth choir learning Sanskrit chants and Hindi devotional songs, a group that gathers to sing the Hindi
Ramayana straight through, and a week’s lectures on the seventh chapter of the Bhagavad Gita at M.I.T. And had he managed to return to Harvard during commencement week in 1993, he would have heard American-born Hindus, children of the first generation of Hindu immigrants, chanting from the Vedas at Harvard’s baccalaureate service!
Ammachi, also known as Mata Amritanandamayi, is an international spiritual teacher from Kerala, India. She is “the embodiment of unconditional love, devoted to the service of all humanity.” People from all walks of life seek out the Mother, as she is affectionately called. Her ashram in India combines a routine of daily meditation, devotional worship, and selfless service. In the United States her primary center, established in 1989, is a residential ashram in the hills west of San Francisco in San Ramon, California. Here in Boston, a group of devotees have been holding weekly devotional programs since Ammachi’s first visit to Boston in 1987. In addition to meditation and prayer, devotional songs called *bhajans* and the recitation of the 1,108 holy names to the divine are central to the spiritual life of the community. Visitors are welcome and encouraged to call in advance to confirm the schedule. The Satsang Group plans to establish a home satsang center in the year 2000 for community living, charitable activities, and weekly programs.

Ammachi is expected to hold public programs for the Boston area on July 18, 2000. The Boston Satsang Group organizes Ammachi’s annual visit to Boston and celebrates Ammachi’s birthday in September, some Hindu festivals, and other holidays such as Christmas, New Year’s Eve, and Thanksgiving. In addition, the Satsang Group sponsors charitable projects such as “Amma’s Kitchen” and “Books for Inmates” as opportunities to practice selfless service and compassion for those in need. To receive an updated calendar of events and the current Satsang locations, please call Ammachi’s Boston Area Satsang Group. Please note that the name Ammachi in all of its forms is copyrighted by the MA Center who granted permission to the Boston Area Satsang Group for its use.

**Contact:** Chinmayi  
**Membership:** 40-50 regular participants, no formal membership  
**Composition:** Multi-cultural  
**Meetings:** Every other Sunday Satsang Program 10:00 A.M.-12:30 P.M.; Every other Saturday Archana Program 6:45-9:00 P.M. at the Yoga for Life & Healing Essence Center in West Concord and at devotee homes. Contact Chinamayi for a schedule.
The Vedanta Centre in Cohasset was founded by Swami Paramananda, Swami Vivekananda’s youngest monastic disciple. He was sent to America in 1906 and established the Boston Vedanta Centre in 1909. In 1923, he founded Ananda Ashrama in La Crescenta, CA and then opened the Cohasset Vedanta Centre in 1929 as an extension of the Boston Vedanta Centre. After Swami Paramananda’s death, Reverend Mother Gayatri Devi was the spiritual leader of the Ashramas from 1940-1995. She began teaching Vedanta in 1926, and was the first Indian woman ordained as a minister to teach Vedanta in America.

The Vedanta Centre celebrates special Hindu, Christian and Buddhist holy days. Facilities include the Temple of the Universal Spirit (Viswamandir) and a lending library. The Vedanta Centre also accommodates individual retreats by members of the congregation.

The Vedanta Centre of Cohasset is currently under the direction of Reverend Mother Sudha Puri, who is also the spiritual leader of Ananda Ashrama in La Crescenta, California and Sree Ramakrishna Ananda Ashramas in Naktala and Bon Hooghly in Calcutta, India.

Contact: Reverend Mother Sudha Puri
Membership: Several hundred, no formal membership
Composition: Primarily American
Meetings: Sunday Worship Service: 11:00 A.M.; Thursday Meditation & Study Class: 7:00 P.M.
The Ganeshe Temple, situated in a white two-story home, is simple and plain, yet the story of the community who founded the small temple is complex and vibrant. Established in 1992, it serves as a religious center for Hindus from the Caribbean: most members are immigrants from the island nation of Trinidad and Tobago, with a smaller number from the South American countries of Guyana and Suriname.

In Boston, beginning in the early 1970s, a community of primarily Trinidadian Hindus gathered in private homes. Connections were soon formed among Hindus from Guyana and Suriname, as well as larger communities from India. By the late 1980s, a small group decided to form a more permanent religious society in Boston under the leadership of a part-time priest, Pandit Dube. In 1989, the community began meeting in a garage on Dorchester Avenue, and within a year the group established themselves as a religious non-profit organization. The house on Edson Street was purchased in 1992, and that summer, the community renovated the building to become a temple.

The temple was named in honor of Lord Ganesh, the god of auspicious beginnings and the remover of obstacles, as this would be the first temple of its kind in Boston. In October of 1992, the first religious ceremony was observed at the temple with an elaborate Divali celebration. Today, the community meets monthly for puja at the temple, and gathers for major religious holidays. For a community that maintains multiple identities -- Indian, Hindu, Trinidadian -- the next generation raises new concerns and complexities. But the community looks to the future with confidence: the Pandit’s teenage son is now in training to become a priest, and the temple recently purchased a tract of land next door, should there be an occasion for future expansion.

**Contact:** Pandit Dube, Temple Priest  
**Membership:** Approximately 100 members  
**Composition:** Primarily Trinidadian and Guyanese of Indian descent  
**Meetings:** Second Sunday of each month: 9 A.M.
The Boston International Society for Krishna Consciousness (ISKCON) was founded in 1968 by the world-wide founder and spiritual leader of the movement, A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada. After a few years in a temple in Allston the community moved to its present Commonwealth Avenue brownstone, ISKCON’s home for over twenty years.

Today there are twenty residents at the temple, and about 200 devotees attend weekly services. Many more attend ISKCON’s celebrations and festivals including the birthdays of Rama and Krishna.

Most members of ISKCON are Euro-American, although many South Asians living in the Boston area also attend services at the temple. Gatherings are held on Sundays and Wednesdays, which include chanting, a lecture, and a free vegetarian meal. Devotional service to the deities and Bhagavad Gita classes are held daily. All events are open to the public.

**Contact:** Sadhusangananda Das, President  
**Membership:** 200 people in regular attendance; 20 residents  
**Composition:** Euro-American & South Asian  
**Meetings:** Sunday Worship Service: 4:15 P.M.; Wednesday Worship Service: 6:30 P.M.; Daily Worship Service: 7:00 A.M.
The Ramakrishna Vedanta Society has been in Boston since 1909, although the present organization has only been in existence since 1941. This religious movement began in India around 1887, and was brought to the United States in 1893 by Swami Vivekananda, who believed that Truth is one and that it can be found in all religions.

The Ramakrishna Vedanta Society of Boston offers classes and discourses which are open to the public but visitors should call in advance. Please call Swami Sarvagatananda, who is also a member of the United Ministry at Harvard-Radcliffe, or Swami Tyagananda for more information.

During the academic year, Sunday and Thursday worship services are held at the Society’s large brick house off of Kenmore Square. Friday discourses on Karma-Yoga and the Bhagavad Gita are held at the M.I.T. Chapel.

An active summer program is held at Sri Sarada Ashrama in Marshfield, Massachusetts where there is a weekly retreat on the Bhagavad Gita. There is also a summer program for children, and the birthday of Sri Krishna is observed with guest speakers.

Contact: Swamis Sarvagatananda and Tyagananda
Membership: Approximately 400 participants
Composition: Primarily Euro-American & South Asian
Meetings: Sunday Worship Services: 11:00 A.M.; Thursday Worship Services: 7:30 P.M.; Friday Classes: 5:15 P.M. (at M.I.T. Chapel).
The Bochasanwasi Temple, opened on July 14, 1990 and located an hour’s drive west of Boston in Stow, Massachusetts, is housed in a former Congregational Church. Within the structure, the Hindu appropriation of the building is more readily visible, with brightly colored pink and purple scalloped carvings around the windows and the traditional Hindu shrines which are the center of congregational worship. The central altar contains three large and two smaller gold-framed portraits of Lord Swaminarayan and his successors, along with images of the Hindu gods Krishna and Ganesha.

The Bochasanwasi believe that Swaminarayan, a Hindu holy man living in India at the turn of the 18th century, was the earthly manifestation of Lord Vishnu, the Supreme God and Eternal Principle. Through his series of successors, Swaminarayan (and, thus, Vishnu) is continuously manifest in the world. Pramukh Swami, the present manifestation, is considered, “the abode of god.” Typical worship services consist of prayers, sermons and bhajans, along with the performance of pujas in which various offerings are made to the deities and swamis. Prayer meetings are followed by a prasad (dinner).

Contact: V.C. Patel  
Membership: 100-120 people weekly; hundreds on holidays  
Composition: Primarily South Asians from Gujarat  
Meetings: Sunday Worship Service: 3:00-5:00 P.M.; Saturdays (when there is a festival): 3:00-5:00 P.M.; Temple hours: 6:00 A.M.-Noon and 4:00-8:00 P.M.
Located in Ashland, Sri Lakshmi Temple, formally consecrated in May 1990, is the first authentic Hindu temple in New England. It is adorned with traditional carved cupolas directly over the four shrines located within. Each shrine is dedicated to and graced by the image of a specific Hindu deity. The central shrine is dedicated to Lakshmi, the auspicious goddess of prosperity.

The New England Hindu Temple was incorporated in 1978 and met in the Needham Village Club for eight years until 1986 when the first room of the new temple in Ashland was ready. Today, the membership is comprised of Indian immigrants from throughout New England.

In addition to its two resident priests, the temple has a large number of volunteer workers. It also has a youth group and a stotra (hymns) class for youngsters.

The temple is open to the public during temple hours. Generally, there is a puja every evening from 6:30 to 7:30 P.M. The temple celebrates major Hindu holidays. Call the temple for current activities.

Contact: Temple Office
Membership: 250 families
Composition: Primarily South Asian
Meetings: Temple Hours: Monday - Friday: 9:00 A.M.-Noon; 5:00-9:00 P.M.; Weekends: 9:00 A.M.-9:00 P.M. During the winter the temple closes one hour earlier.
Swaminarayan Temple  
*Gujarati Vaishnavi Hinduism*  
403 Andover Street  
Lowell, MA 01852  
(978) 934-9390

The Swaminarayan Temple, located in a former church off Route 133 on the Lowell/Tewksbury line, was inaugurated on September 1, 1990. The temple belongs to the International Swaminarayan Satsang Organization (ISSO), an umbrella organization with over thirty chapters around the world. The Boston chapter of ISSO was established in May 1987. The Swaminarayan community practices a form of Hindu Vaishnavism focused on devotion to Lord Vishnu. Lord Swaminarayan, who lived in the 18th century, is understood to be a manifestation of Vishnu, and thus deserving of worship and devotion.

Inside the Lowell temple, there are images of Lord Swaminarayan, as well as Naranarayan, Radha-Krishna, Hanuman, and Ganesha. The temple is open daily from 8:00 A.M. to 12:00 P.M. and from 4:00 P.M. to 8:30 P.M. Worship services, held on Saturdays, include *bhajans*, prayers, and *pujas*. The temple also holds classes for children on Saturdays.

**Contact:** Chandresh Patel  
**Membership:** 200 people  
**Composition:** Primarily South Asians from Gujarat  
**Meetings:** Saturday: 5:30 P.M.
Islam in Boston

In Malcolm X Park in Dorchester on the morning of Eid al-Adha, the great festival held during the time of the pilgrimage to Makkah, nearly 1,000 Muslims from all over Boston gather for prayers, food, and celebration. There are women in traditional dress from East and West Africa, South Asia, and Malaysia. Fathers hold the hands of young sons dressed in little suits and bow ties. Teenage boys gather around a table with a large trophy in the center announcing a soccer league for Muslim youth. A group of men and women are busy arranging a table with literature detailing the plight of Bosnian Muslims. At another table, entrepreneurs are stacking books and tapes on Islam for sale along with Islamic insignia T-shirts. The organizers are setting up drink coolers, sweet cakes, and cookies for the breakfast which will follow prayers.

A huge plastic covering is stretched over most of center and left field, oriented toward Makkah where, on this day, Muslims from all over the world have converged as well. Students in jeans and sports shirts take off their shoes and walk onto this baseball field now marked for prayer. A high school teacher in a long white tunic greets people with “Assalamu ‘alaykum,” “Peace be with you.” He hands out sheets printed with traditional Eid prayers transliterated from Arabic. People line up in straight rows as the prayers begin. A young Pakistani immigrant accountant is trying to teach his two little boys, flanking him on either side, the rituals of prayer. Beside him are an Euro-American convert to Islam and his Nigerian friend who work for the same computer company. Women in full hijab and teenage girls in jeans, scarves covering their heads, line up in the back section of the field for the cycles of prayers, kneeling and bowing fully to the ground. “We are not second-class citizens in Islam,” one woman explains. “We are just modest, don’t want to distract the men, and prefer to be at the back when we bow to the ground for our prayers.”

It is currently estimated that there are over 10,000 Muslims actively participating in Islamic centers in the greater Boston area. This number includes “indigenous” Muslims of African-American or Euro-American descent, and “immigrant” Muslims who have come to the U.S. from other parts of the world. For events such as this Eid celebration in Malcolm X Park, Muslims from across the whole racial and cultural spectrum come together, visibly demonstrating the commitment to racial equality emphasized in Islam.

For African-Americans, Islam is part of the spiritual heritage of African ancestors brought as slaves. The faith identity of these slaves was largely, but not completely, suppressed until some Islamic traditions were said to have been “rediscovered,” first by Noble Drew Ali, who started the Moorish Science Temple in 1913 and subsequently by W.D. Fard and Elijah Muhammad who launched the Nation of Islam in the 1930s. After the death of Elijah Muhammad in 1975, his son, Wallace (Warith) Deen Mohammed, led the majority of the Black Muslims along the path
initiated by Malcolm X -- away from the separatism of Elijah Muhammad and toward closer relations with the larger international body of mainstream Muslims. Many of the Nation of Islam temples became Sunni mosques or Islamic centers, like the Masjid Al-Qur’an in Dorchester. Another group of indigenous Muslims is made up of a growing number of Euro-American converts to Islam. Indeed, a century ago it was a New England convert to Islam, Mohammed Russell Alexander Webb, who addressed the World’s Parliament of Religions in Chicago on the subject of Islam.

The immigration of Muslims to the United States began in the late nineteenth century. Most came from Lebanon and Syria and some of these immigrants, both Christian and Muslim, settled in the Boston area in the early 1900s. There were seven Muslim families who settled in Quincy Point and worked to maintain their Islamic faith and practice in Quincy. In 1934, these seven families joined with other Arabic-speaking Muslims in the area to form a cultural, social, and charitable organization called “The Arab American Banner Society.” From 1937 to 1952, they met in an old house at 470 South Street in Quincy. Realizing that the second generation was growing up with little Islamic identity, the Society began organizing informal religious lessons as well as Jum’ah prayers on Friday noon and Eid prayers on the two big feast days. In 1962, the leaders decided to build a mosque, right there on South Street. The building was completed in 1964 and was served by Mohammed Omar Awad, a first-generation immigrant and self-taught imam. During these years, the officers of the Quincy mosque took on national leadership roles in the Federation of Islamic Associations and helped other communities to organize and build mosques.

The growth of the Muslim community in the Boston area called for the employment of a full-time, officially trained religious director and imam. In 1982, Talal Eid, educated in Lebanon and at the al-Azhar University in Cairo, came to Quincy, jointly sponsored by the mosque community and the Muslim World League. He has led the Islamic community in Quincy for over a decade, and is now leading the community in Sharon as well. He stimulated the growth of a religious education program which today has more than 300 children enrolled in weekend school programs. He has been active in Islamic affairs in the wider New England area as well as in interfaith dialogue and cooperation.

In 1965, a young African American convert to Islam, Shakir Mahmoud, came to the Quincy mosque to learn more about “orthodox” Islam. He had grown dissatisfied with the teachings of the Nation of Islam, especially after Malcolm X’s break with the movement. When W.D. Mohammed began the process of steering the largely separatist Nation of Islam toward a more mainstream Islamic path, Shakir was called to teach Islamic studies at Temple #11 in Dorchester, which had once been led by Malcolm X and, later, by Minister Louis X, now Louis Farrakhan. Shakir became imam of the Dorchester mosque in 1977. Under his leadership, the community moved gradually toward the moderate and mainstream Islam espoused by W.D. Mohammed. In
1984, the name of the center was changed from Temple #11 to Masjid Al-Qur’an. Today, the mosque attracts Muslims from all parts of the world in addition to its core African American constituency.

Students organized the first nationwide Islamic organization, the Muslim Students Association, in 1963. Since then many of those same young Muslims settled permanently in the U.S. after their professional or graduate education and started another nationwide organization, the Islamic Society of North America, now based in Plainfield, Indiana. During the 1960s, Boston witnessed an influx of students from predominantly Muslim countries. The Harvard Islamic Society was organized in 1958 by three students: an African American, a Sudanese, and a Palestinian. Today there are university Islamic societies active at Harvard, M.I.T., Boston University, Northeastern, Wentworth Institute, Suffolk, and Tufts. The Islamic Society of Boston was organized in 1982 as a loose association of the independent student Islamic societies to assist them in sponsoring lectures on the political, economic, and social aspects of their religious life. Their mosque, located in a recently-renovated Knights of Columbus Hall on Prospect Street in Cambridge, is today a striking and beautiful addition to the religious architecture of Greater Boston.

The 1970s and 1980s saw the establishment of many Islamic centers in the area. Sensing the need for an Islamic center more accessible to the immigrant professionals living in the western suburbs, Boston Muslims founded the Islamic Center of Boston in 1979 and purchased a house and acreage in Wayland in 1987. In 1992, the group opened a community center with a social hall and eight classrooms. The Islamic Society of Greater Worcester also organized in 1979 and eventually purchased a former Catholic church. Throughout New England this was a period of Islamic growth.

Now there are a number of active Islamic organizations in the New England area, bringing together Muslims from these various centers. The Islamic Council of New England, founded in 1984 and now including more than thirty centers, sponsors an annual conference on some aspect of Islamic life in the United States. Imam Eid of the Quincy mosque heads the New England Majlis as-Shura, a council made up of imams and other knowledgeable leaders from each local center which makes decisions about certain Islamic legal matters. The Council also provides materials for Islamic training and children’s education, conducts youth programs, summer camps, and sports activities, and participates in interfaith dialogue events with the Massachusetts Council of Churches and the National Conference of Christians and Jews.

The New England Muslim Sisters Association (NEMSA) was formed in 1985 to promote “Islamic rights for women in political, economic, social and educational fields.” NEMSA sponsors an annual conference to exchange information and resources among Muslim women in the region and assists in organizing women’s events at the local level. The group also seeks to distribute accurate information about Islam and to respond to inaccurate representations of Muslims in the media.
The Islamic Council developed the Muslim Youth of New England program in 1990 in order to provide more educational and social opportunities for Muslim youth to interact with one another and to stay in touch with their religious and cultural base. Today teenagers whose parents were 1960s immigrants need structures such as summer camps and weekend conferences to enable them to meet other young Muslims and to learn the history and fundamental tenets of Islam. This emphasis on the education of the next generation has been the impulse for most of the creative organization in the Muslim community over the past three decades. The Muslim community is hopeful that they and their children can make a positive, valuable impact on American society.

The history of Islam in New England has not been without its setbacks. In March 1990, a three-alarm fire swept through the Quincy mosque causing an estimated $500,000 worth of damage. The investigation was inconclusive, but the experience was unsettling for the community. Within a year, the Islamic community had poured energy, time, and money into the complete restoration of the mosque. Even before the fire, the Quincy community had outgrown its facility and was looking for a larger home. In 1991, the leadership of the Islamic Center of New England negotiated for the purchase of a 7.25 acre property owned by a Roman Catholic religious order in Milton. Within a few months, however, as the Islamic community was finalizing its mortgage arrangements, a group of Milton residents purchased the property, locking the Muslims out. This again was a blow to the Islamic community. However, Muslim leaders made the critical decision not to raise an uproar over the lost opportunity in Milton, but rather to look toward the future and seek another property. Happily, the opportunity came to purchase a former horse-farm in Sharon, a small town of 15,500 residents, more than half of whom are Jewish. Dr. Mian Ashraf of the Islamic Center of New England first approached the residents of Sharon through the Sharon Clergy Association and found a spirit of openness and welcome. When the community broke ground for a new Islamic Center in Sharon in the spring of 1992, there were many rabbis, priests, and other representatives of the Jewish and Christian communities present to lift a shovel for the event.

The story of the Muslim community in the Boston area continues to unfold. A fellowship of Sufi followers of Pir Bawa Muhaiyaddeen meets regularly in Cambridge, an Ismaili community gathers in an office building in Allston, and a Tabligh Jamaat group meets each weekend at M.I.T. The Islamic Society of Boston is planning to build a large Masjid in Roxbury which will accommodate some 1600 worshippers. There are nascent political, professional, and social groups which meet virtually every night of the week. While each organization has its particular emphasis and goals, each recognizes that most important is daily prayer and Islamic practice.

Five times a day -- in private living rooms, in business offices, in dormitories, and in Islamic centers fashioned from remodeled churches and transformed U-Haul dealerships -- the Muslims of New England bow in prayer. They face Makkah, but the path of shariah, the “straight path” of Islam, leads them day by day through the streets of Boston.
At the invitation of some American seekers, the Fellowship’s founder, Bawa Muhaiyaddeen, first came to the United States in 1971 from Sri Lanka, where he had publicly taught Sufism for four decades. Members write, “To those who sought wisdom, Bawa offered a shining example of compassion, faith, integrity, peacefulness, and equality.”

Before Bawa’s death in 1986, the Fellowship that formed around him recorded more than 10,000 hours of his spontaneous talks, stories, question-and-answer sessions, prayers and songs in praise of God. Those who attend the weekly meetings of the Boston Branch of the Bawa Muhaiyaddeen Fellowship share in this treasury of knowledge.

Members of the Bawa Muhaiyaddeen Fellowship describe the mission of the group as “showing a way for human beings to attain peace and tranquillity in life. It accepts that there is one comity of mankind, and one God. Members are learning to live as one people, to treat other lives as their own, to regard the sorrows and hunger of others as their own.”

Contact: David Freudberg
Membership: 15-20 in regular attendance
Composition: Diverse
Meetings: Sunday: 10:00 A.M.-12:00 P.M.
Ismailis are a minority within the Islamic tradition, representing 10% of the general Shiite Muslim community. Their emphasis on the esoteric interpretation of Islam has set them apart from the larger Muslim population.

Founded in 1973, the Boston Nizari Ismaili Cultural Center began with students gathering at MIT, then at Harvard. In 1990, the community relocated to its present facility, which houses the jamat khana (house of congregation) and two small classrooms where religious education classes are held. With an abundance of floor space for people to sit, the jamat khana may resemble other Muslim prayer rooms, but in the Ismaili tradition women pray side by side with the men and play a central role in religious services. On either side of the prayer room are two pictures of the Aga Khan, the community’s religious leader. Encircling the room a band of small, blue and white tiles bear the names Allah, Muhammad, and Ali in stylized Arabic calligraphy. The physical setting reflects the interior focus of the worshippers.

Contact: Written inquiries only
Membership: 100-200 attending services
Composition: Primarily immigrants from India, Pakistan, East Africa, Iran, and Tajikistan
Meetings: Not open to the public.
While the Sufi mystical tradition is ordinarily associated with Islam, the Sufi Order of Boston, a local chapter of the Sufi Order International, describes itself as “an interfaith approach to spiritual growth.” Hazrat Inayat Khan, who founded the Sufi Order International in 1910, describes Sufism as “the religion of the heart, the religion in which the thing of primary importance is to seek God in the heart of humankind.” Today the worldwide movement, led by his son and successor Pir Vilayat Inayat Khan, has 97 centers in the U.S. alone.

The Sufi community in the Boston area, founded in the early 1970s, is small but active. In addition to Universal Worship Services held once a month, representatives of the Sufi Order offer classes on Sufi teachings every Thursday night at 7:30 P.M. in Jamaica Plain. Dances of Universal Peace are held in Cambridge on the first and third Fridays of every month from September through May.

The Boston Sufi Order is not concerned with “conversion” and one may continue practicing one’s own religion after joining. Interested students are welcome to attend the services and classes in Jamaica Plain or to call the Sufi Order for further information.

**Contact:** Auliya Westcott (617) 776-5767
**Membership:** 30-40 active members; 150-200 people attend seminars
**Composition:** Euro-American
**Meetings:** Third Sunday of the month, Universal Worship: 11:00 A.M.; Weekly Classes, Thursday: 7:30 P.M. in Jamaica Plain; Dances of Universal Peace: First Friday of the month: 7:30-9:30 P.M. at Friends Meeting in Cambridge; Third Friday of every month: 8:00-10:00 P.M. at 11 Garden Street in Cambridge.
Located just outside of the center of Wayland, the Islamic Center of Boston owns a small white house and a modern building capped with short white pyramids. The community purchased the land in 1987 and completed construction of the present building in 1992. Back in 1979, when they were a small group of immigrant professionals concerned about their children’s Islamic education, the community met in a classroom at the Martin Luther King School in Cambridge.

Today, the Center’s facilities include a prayer room, social hall, kitchen, and classrooms. In addition to Friday community prayers and Eid celebrations, the Center has a regular schedule of educational programs. Sunday school meets from 10:00 A.M. to 12:30 P.M. Adults gather the last Friday of every month for Qur’an reading, commentary and discussion. The imam teaches the teenagers to recite the Qur’an, while volunteers teach language and Islamic values to younger children.

**Contact:** Dr. A. Cader Asmal (781) 444-7995  
**Membership:** Approximately 300 families  
**Composition:** Primarily South Asian and Middle Eastern  
**Meetings:** Friday: Jum’ah Prayer 1:00 P.M.; Sunday: Sunday School 10:00 A.M., Prayer 12:30 P.M.
Muslim immigrants began meeting in the 1930s on South Street in Quincy. In 1962 the community had grown sufficiently to begin building an Islamic center. The Center has been a fixture in suburban Quincy since its completion in 1964.

Today, up to 5,000 people participate in the two major feast days, Eid al-Fitr at the end of the month of Ramadan and Eid al-Adha at the time of the annual pilgrimage to Makkah. The membership of the Center is approximately 600, with 75-100 attending regular services. As the oldest Islamic center in New England, it embraces all Islamic traditions: its members hail from 24 nations around the world.

The Center has developed a rich program of activities. Prayer is held at 12:45 P.M. on Fridays and at 1:00 P.M. on Sundays. Visitors are welcome but should call in advance. Before prayer on Sundays, the Center holds its educational program, which includes seven levels of instruction to more than 160 registered students. The Center also sponsors public lectures, participates in interfaith regional and national religious organizations, and publishes a quarterly newsletter.

**Contact:** Imam Talal Eid, Religious Director  
**Membership:** Approximately 600  
**Composition:** Multi-ethnic (representing 24 nations)  
**Meetings:** Friday: Jum’ah Prayer 12:45 P.M.; Daily Prayer; Saturday night educational gathering.
The Islamic Center of New England in Sharon was founded in 1993 as an extension of the existing center in Quincy. On April 2, 1993, the ground was first broken on 55 acres of property in Sharon on what used to be a horse farm. Participating in the ground-breaking were more than twenty priests, pastors, and rabbis from the Christian and Jewish communities of the Boston area.

Community building and education are priorities for the Sharon center. The first building, dedicated at the end of the month of Ramadan in March 1993, is a social hall large enough to accommodate 500 people. The structure also houses a weekend school; classes commenced in the fall of 1994. Eventually, the community envisions an Islamic Center with a full-time school and library.

Currently, Imam Talal Eid is the Religious Director for both the Quincy and Sharon centers. Dr. Mian Ashraf, whose leadership was crucial to the development of the Sharon center, sees education and dialogue with people of other faiths in the Boston area as important initiatives for the Islamic Center of New England.

**Contact:** Imam Talal Eid, Religious Director  
**Membership:** Over 1,000 members  
**Composition:** 24 countries are represented  
**Meetings:** Friday: Jum’ah prayer 12:45 P.M.; Sunday: Sunday School Classes: 9:30 A.M., Adult discussion and Qur’an class 12:00 P.M., Prayer 1:00 P.M.; Daily Prayer; Friday night educational gathering.
Islamic Council of New England  
*Sunni Islam*

470 South Street  
Quincy, MA 02169  
(617) 479-8341  
Fax: (617) 471-9526

The Islamic Council of New England was established in 1984 as a non-profit, tax-exempt religious organization to serve as an umbrella for all Islamic centers and masajid in New England. The Islamic Council now has a membership of 17 centers. Attendance at the annual fall conference, hosted by a different center each year, varies between 700 and 1000 people.

Active in interfaith dialogue throughout the Northeast, the Islamic Council is broadening its scope and programs for the betterment of the Muslim community in the context of American society. Projects and new resources are currently being developed to improve Islamic education in America. One such project is the development of Islamic education materials for middle school history and social studies teachers.

The Council, consisting of representatives from each Muslim center and society in New England, meets four times each year. Members of the Board of Directors and council officers are elected annually. The Council publishes a newsletter, *The Islamic Forum*.

**Contact:** M. Saleem Bajwa, Executive Director  
**Membership:** Variable  
**Composition:** Multi-ethnic  
**Meetings:** Not applicable.
The Islamic Society of Boston (ISB) was organized in 1981 as a loose association of Muslim student organizations at Harvard, Boston University, Massachusetts Institute of Technology, Northeastern University, Wentworth Institute, Suffolk University, and Tufts University. The Society assists these groups in sponsoring lectures on political, economic, and social aspects of Islamic life. In addition, the ISB plans social gatherings, gathers money for the needy in the Muslim community, provides a marriage arrangement service, and plans Eid celebrations with Masjid al-Qur’an and the Society for Islamic Brotherhood. The ISB also teaches Arabic, the Qur’an, and Islamic manners to school children ages 5 and up every Saturday at the Harrington Elementary School.

In 1991, ISB purchased a duplex at 140-142 Prospect Street to become a center for the growing community, and in 1993, the Society purchased and began renovating a former Knights of Columbus Hall at 204 Prospect Street. This striking and beautiful mosque facility opened in 1994. It attracts Muslims from throughout the Boston-Cambridge area for prayers, religious education and annual observances. Between 70 and 100 people visit the mosque daily, with nearly 1,000 in attendance at Friday prayers, which often spill into the parking lot in the back. The Society is now planning for a new Islamic Center in Roxbury near Northeastern University and Roxbury Community College. It arranged for the purchase of a tract of land from the city of Boston and is planning a facility that will accommodate 1200 men and 400 women in prayer rooms. The ISB is actively promoting interfaith understanding by participating in interfaith committees, is assisting Kosovo refugees, and is printing a weekly newsletter highlighting Society classes and local events.

**Contact:** Imam Basyouny Nehela  
**Membership:** 600-700 students and young professionals  
**Composition:** Various nationalities  
**Meetings:** Friday: Social & Educational Program 8:30 P.M., Prayers 1-2 P.M.; Five Daily Prayers.
Islamic Society of Greater Worcester

_Sunni Islam_

57 Laurel Street
Worcester, MA 01605
(508) 752-4377
http://members.aol.com/khananis

The Worcester Islamic community began to gather in the early 1970s. In 1979, the community purchased a Catholic church and renovated it for use as an Islamic center. Today, the Islamic Society of Greater Worcester provides the Muslim community with an environment conducive to the development of Islamic values and practices here in America. With close ties to the Muslim Students’ Associations at Worcester Polytechnic Institute and Clark University, the Islamic Society has placed great emphasis on the education of its youth since its founding in the late 1970s.

Over 100 children participate in the Sunday Islamic education program. There are classes in Qur’anic recitation, the Arabic language, and Islamic teachings. A full-time Islamic School, Alhamra Academy, was founded in 1994 and now has over sixty students enrolled. The Islamic Society sends a representative to the Worcester County Ecumenical Council.

Visitors are welcome to attend the Friday and Sunday activities, which include prayer, Qur’anic recitation, and discussions of the traditions of the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH).

**Contact:** Dr. Mohammed Lazzouni (508) 393-4324  
**Membership:** 350 families  
**Composition:** Diverse  
**Meetings:** Friday: Jum’ah Prayer 1:00 P.M.; Sunday: Classes 10:30 A.M.-1:30 P.M.; Five Daily Prayers.
Masjid Al-Qur’an

Al-Islam
35 Intervale Street
Dorchester, MA 02121
(617) 445-8070

The community of Masjid Al-Qur’an was founded in the 1930s in Boston’s South End. Temple 11 of Elijah Muhammad’s Nation of Islam moved to its present location in Dorchester in 1958. Malcolm X (who later took the name El-Hajj Malik El-Shabazz) became a member of the Nation of Islam in 1951 and later taught at this Masjid as did Louis X (now Minister Louis Farrakhan). In 1975, Imam W.D. Mohammed, son of Elijah Mohammed, was elected the leader of the Nation of Islam and transformed the community to follow the teachings of the Qur’an and the example of the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH).

With its distinctive green awning, the red brick building easily accommodates the 150-200 men and women who gather for prayer every Friday at 1:00 P.M. Worshippers and visitors enter the prayer hall through ablution rooms via a central narthex. The congregation sits on the carpeted floor facing the holy city of Makkah. In addition to Friday community prayers, Masjid Al-Qur’an has an extensive array of educational and social activities including Islamic education classes.

Contact: Imam Taalib J. Mahdee
Membership: Variable
Composition: Primarily African-American
Meetings: Friday: Jum’ah Prayer 1:00 P.M.
Jainism in Boston

The ancient Jain tradition traces its spiritual heritage to a series of teachers called *tirthankaras* or “ford-makers,” those who spiritually crossed the river of this ever-changing life to become fully realized and liberated beings. One of the most important of the *tirthankaras*, Mahavira, lived in India at about the time of the Buddha in the 6th century BCE. Because each soul may become liberated, the Jains have always had a strong ethic of non-violence which extends to a positive respect for all forms of life, including animal life.

Not surprisingly, the Jains who have immigrated to the United States have become an important voice in discussions of vegetarianism and animal rights. The Jain community in America began only in the late 1960s as a response to the Immigration Act of 1965, which opened the door to wider immigration from Asia and especially encouraged the immigration of “members of professions of exceptional ability and their spouses and children.” Many young Jains studying at American universities have decided to take up residence in the United States. Later, political turmoil in East African states forced a second migration of a number of Indians. In the early 1990s, the World Jain Congress estimated that there are approximately 25,000 Jains in the United States.

It was in the 1970s that the Jain community, consisting largely of Gujarati-speaking immigrants from Western India, began to form in the Boston area. For nearly ten years, the community met in each other’s homes. In 1981, the community established a temple in a former Swedish Lutheran church on a quiet street in Norwood. Today, the Jain Community of Greater Boston meets monthly and observes annual festivals.
The Jain Center of Greater Boston

_Svetambar and Digambar Jainism_

15 Cedar Street
Norwood, MA 02068
(781) 762-9490

Founded by the Jain immigrant community in 1973, the Jain Center of Greater Boston is located today in a former Swedish Lutheran church on a quiet street in Norwood. In the spacious sanctuary, the community gathers for song, teaching and study, and to honor the _tirthankaras_, the ancient “ford-makers” or spiritual pathfinders. Although independent, the center maintains close ties with Siddhachalam, the Jain ashram in Blairstown, New Jersey.

Activities include monthly meetings and services, and the observance of annual festivals. Festivals include: Mahavir Jayanti, the observance of the birth of Mahavira some 2,500 years ago; Diwali, the festival of lights; and Paryushan Parv, a celebration at the end of the annual period of fasting and special religious observances. The center also offers regular children’s classes, youth activities, and study groups. All events are open to the public, but visitors are asked to call in advance.

The center publishes the Jain Directory of North America, The Jain Study Circular, Jain Prayers and Essentials of Jainism.

**Contact:** Pradip Gosalia, President (508) 473-1072

**Membership:** 275 families

**Composition:** North Indian, primarily Gujarati

**Meetings:** Please call for current schedule.
Judaism in Boston

The early history of the Jewish tradition in Boston is the history of individuals. It begins with a Sephardic Jew named Solomon Franco, a merchant who is said to have arrived in 1649. The court pronounced it would “allow the said Solomon Franco, the Ye Jew, six shillings per week out of the treasury for ten weeks for his subsistence till he could get his passage into Holland.” It seems he was invited to leave the Puritan colony! On the whole, strangers were “warned out” of Puritan Boston; this included Baptists and Quakers as well as Jews. There is evidence of a few other Jews in colonial Boston, the most well known of whom was Judah Monis, an Italian Jew who settled in Cambridge and published *A Grammer of the Hebrew Tongue* “for the use of the students at Harvard College at Cambridge, in New England.” For this work, Monis received an MA from Harvard in 1720 and was hired to teach Hebrew in 1722, apparently shortly after his public conversion to Christianity in the Common Hall of Harvard. While the relationship of his conversion to his employment is not clear, according to New England’s first “comparative religion” writer, Hannah Adams writing in 1817, “Before he could be admitted (to teach) it was rendered necessary by the statutes that he change his religion.” The pamphlet, published on the occasion of his baptism, states that Monis delivered an address at the event entitled, “The Truth, the Whole Truth, and, Nothing but the Truth.” Whatever he thought of the “truth,” Monis continued to observe Sabbath on Saturday for the rest of his life.

In the late eighteenth and early nineteenth century there were a number of prominent individual Jewish citizens of Boston. For example, Moses Michael Hays (1729-1805), a Portuguese Jew, lived on Hanover Street, was a neighbor of Paul Revere, and would have occasionally had a minyan -- a group of at least ten Jewish men -- for prayer at his home. His nephews, Abraham and Judah Touro, were prominent Boston philanthropists, making substantial donations to the Massachusetts General Hospital, the Bunker Hill monument, and many other charitable institutions.

It was with the German immigration of the 1840s that Boston gathered a Jewish community large enough to give rise to Jewish religious institutions. The high holy day services of Rosh Hashanah were observed in 1842, meeting at the home of Peter Spitz, at 5 Wendell Street in Cambridge. In 1843, the minyan at Spitz’ home organized Ohabei Shalom, “Lovers of Peace,” Boston’s first Jewish congregation. The first Jewish burial place was secured in 1844 in East Boston. In 1852, the members of Ohabei Shalom built the first synagogue on Warren (now Warrenton) Street, in downtown Boston. The synagogue eventually became three congregations. When a group of Polish immigrants arrived, dissension arose in the congregation, perhaps more social than ideological, and a small group of the original group broke away to form another
congregation. Both synagogues then had the name Ohabei Shalom, at least until 1854 when Judah Touro died in New Orleans, leaving $5,000 in his will to Ohabei Shalom. When both congregations claimed the donation, a judge awarded it to the original congregation, and the splinter group took the name Adath Israel. In 1858, some of the new Polish families left Ohabei Shalom and started Mishkan Israel, the successor of which is today’s Conservative temple, Mishkan Tefila in Chestnut Hill.

All three temples continued to grow and flourish and, indeed, are landmarks in Jewish Boston today. In 1863, the “original” Ohabei Shalom purchased a church building on Warren Street which it occupied for 23 years. When the congregation finally outgrew this building, moving to Union Park Street in 1887, the old “Warren Street Shul” building remained and is now the Charles Playhouse. In the late 1920s Ohabei Shalom moved from Union Park Street to its present site on Beacon Street in Brookline, an imposing building seating some 2,000 people.

Adath Israel, founded by German Jews in the first breakaway group, held services on Pleasant Street in the South End, where in the 1870s the famous Rabbi Solomon Schindler struck out on a path of innovation and liberalization that was part of the emerging Reform Judaism. Schindler’s changes included mixed seating of men and women, a choir and organ, and English language worship -- even on Sundays. Schindler breathed the air of Boston’s liberals and Unitarians, but was too liberal for his own congregation and was replaced by Charles Fleischer in 1893. In 1907, this congregation moved to a fine domed and pillared building on Commonwealth Avenue, a building which is now Morse Auditorium of Boston University. When the congregation moved again in 1928, it was to a new property on the Riverway where Temple Adath Israel stands today, with its striking sanctuary built in 1973.

Meanwhile Mishkan Tefila moved to Oswego Street in the South End and, after several moves and incorporation of many Eastern European Jews, built Temple Mishkan Tefila on Elm Hill Avenue in Roxbury in 1925. This granite building, with its broad staircase and columned portico, provided a truly monumental anchor for the large Conservative Jewish community in Roxbury and Mattapan for over twenty years. When the congregation began to move to the Newton and Chestnut Hill area, a new modern synagogue was built on Hammond Park Parkway in Chestnut Hill.

The Reform movement had its roots in Germany and took its distinctive form in the German Jewish population in the United States, emphasizing assimilation and change in response to the times. Among its strongest leaders was Rabbi Isaac Meyer Wise, whose call for an English-language American prayer book led to his Minhag America (1857) and eventually the Union Prayer Book (1894). His vision of a college for training American rabbis led to the founding of Hebrew Union College in Cincinnati (1875).
In the 1880s this largely German Reform population, well on its way to assimilation in Boston, met with a major challenge. The pogroms in Russia and Poland sent another great movement of Jewish immigrants toward the United States. During these years, Boston’s Jewish population leapt from 3,000 in 1875 to about 20,000 in 1895. The Russian Jews who arrived in the United States in the late 19th century scarcely recognized the Reform Judaism they encountered in America as Judaism at all. And liberal leaning “Yankee” Jews who loved Emerson as much as Maimonides were put off by the old-world Judaism brought by the immigrants. There was suspicion and rejection on both sides. In 1882 one boatload of Russian Jews was sent back to Russia and another group landed in the “poorhouse” for lack of any support by the local Jewish community. Finally the successful and, by now, largely assimilated community of German Jews faced the reality and needs of the new Jewish immigrants and organized the American Federation of Jewish Charities to assist their new Jewish cousins in the process of settling and flourishing in the United States.

By the late 1920s, 80 percent of American Jews were from Eastern Europe. The Judaism these immigrants knew and brought with them was from a culture and era very different from that of post-Enlightenment Germany and America. In contrast to Reform, their traditions were Orthodox. When some of these immigrants in the first and second generation began to move away from the Old-World orthodoxy, they did not move as far as the Reform tradition, but generated a middle-way that became known as Conservative Judaism, which today constitutes the majority of the American Jewish community.

Of the many neighborhood synagogues where Orthodox congregations from Eastern Europe gathered, the most venerable survivor is the Vilna Shul on Phillips Street on Beacon Hill. As in other synagogues or shuls, people often gathered from their old-country region or city, in this case the city of Vilna, Lithuania. They formed an informal group in 1898, bought a former Baptist church for a meeting house around the turn of the century, and then purchased the Phillips Street property in 1919 to build what became known as the Vilna Shul, a fine brick building with an outstanding stained-glass Star of David. By the 1980s the old Vilna Shul congregation had virtually disappeared, but a non-profit corporation, the Vilna Center for Jewish Heritage, began working to preserve the building as a tribute to the rich heritage of Boston’s early Eastern European Jewish immigrants.

At the turn of the century, the North End was a lively mixture of both Jews and Italians. The year 1905 saw the founding of the Jewish Advocate, a publication which continues today. By 1910, there were 80,000 Jews in Boston and seven Yiddish newspapers. By the 1920s, the growing Jewish population had gradually moved out of the North End to Roxbury, Dorchester, and Mattapan, where “triple-deckers” housed their burgeoning numbers. Blue Hill Avenue in Mattapan was the center of Jewish Boston for fifty years until the “flight” to affluent suburbs began in the 1960s. The period from 1968 to 1972 was a time of turbulence and tension in
Mattapan, as the African-American population rose dramatically with low-interest loans designated for African-American home-ownership. The still testy relations of African-Americans and Jews in Boston were forged in the heat of these years. By the late 1970s, the majority of Jews had moved to Brookline, where today the strip between Beacon and Commonwealth Avenues on Harvard Street provides something of a center for Jewish Boston, but nothing like Blue Hill Avenue in Mattapan had been. And that imposing granite structure of Temple Mishkan Tefila was given by the Conservative Jewish community to the Elma Lewis School for the arts.

Boston’s Jewish community includes the whole range of the tradition from Orthodox and Hassidic congregations to the many more informal Havurot, including Havurat Shalom in Somerville and Am Tikva, a gay and lesbian Havurah. Boston’s Reform synagogues include the still-thriving heirs of Ohabei Shalom and Temple Israel as well as newer congregations such as Temple Beth El of the Sudbury River Valley and Temple Beth David of Canton. The oldest Conservative congregation is, of course, Temple Mishkan Tefila, now in Chestnut Hill. Other conservative congregations include Kehillath Israel on Harvard Street in Brookline and Temple Beth Shalom on Tremont Street in Cambridge. Orthodox congregations include the Bostoner Rebbe’s Congregation Beth Pinchas and the Talner Rebbe’s Beth David, both in Brookline.

The Jewish life of Boston includes a wide variety of political, educational, cultural, and social groups: the New Jewish Agenda, a leftist, progressive political organization; the Workmen’s Circle, a socialist-oriented Yiddish culture group; “One Generation After,” for the children of Holocaust survivors; and the Zamir Chorale, a singing group, to name a few. Brandeis University, the first Jewish-sponsored university in the country, was founded in 1948 and named in memory of Justice Louis Brandeis, the Boston lawyer who, in 1916, became the first Jew appointed to the bench of the Supreme Court. The Brandeis campus is also home to the American Jewish Historical Society which chronicles the Jewish experience in the United States.

Educational institutions have reflected the growth in the Jewish community in Boston over the past century and a half. During the initial growth of Boston’s German Jewish community, Harvard University admitted its first Jewish students. By the time of the 250th anniversary of the College in 1886, it is estimated that there had been only about a dozen Jewish graduates. However, the burgeoning diversity of late-nineteenth-century immigration, especially the large numbers of Catholics and Jews, had an impact in university enrollments in the early-twentieth-century. For example, by the beginning of the twentieth century, with the arrival of Russian Jewish students, a Menorah Society was formed at Harvard University. One of the founders was Horace Kallen, who became well known for his incisive writings on cultural pluralism. Yet a climate increasingly hostile toward immigration threatened Jewish advances in American universities. Culminating with the federal immigration quotas in the 1920s, anti-immigrant fervor spread to universities like Harvard, where many were concerned that “American boys” were losing out to Jewish immigrants in admissions. The Jewish percentage of the freshman
class had risen from 7 percent in 1900 to 21.5 percent in 1920. In the early 1920s faculty and student debate raged over a proposal by President Abbott Lawrence Lowell to limit the number of Jews at Harvard. To its credit, the faculty soundly rejected the plan, but a new application form, more explicit about ethnicity, was introduced giving rise to suspicions of a de facto quota.

Through the last thirty years, however, Jewish life at Harvard has been vibrant and growing. Today it reflects the full spectrum of Jewish tradition and practice. Harvard Hillel had its first informal meetings in Phillips Brooks House in the 1940s, until a home was purchased in 1947 at 5 Bryant Street in the Francis Avenue area of Cambridge. Here Hillel flourished for over thirty years. In 1979, a procession led by the Torah scrolls and Rabbi Ben Zion Gold marked the official move to new quarters closer to the center of University life -- the new Reisman Center on Mt. Auburn Street. In 1994, the old Puritan university where Judah Monis converted to Christianity saw the dedication of a striking new center for Jewish life: the Rosovsky Center, named for Harvard’s eminent Dean of the Faculty of Arts and Sciences, Henry Rosovsky.
Beth David of the South Shore

Reform Judaism

1060 Randolph Street
Canton, MA 02021
(781) 828-2275
Fax: (781) 821-3999
http://www.templebethdavid.com

Temple Beth David was founded in the early 1960s by second and third generation American Jews living on the South Shore. The temple building, which is handicap accessible, includes a sanctuary, classroom facilities, a library and a social hall.

Temple Beth David is unique in its role as a center for service to the Jewish deaf, including working with a number of deaf and hearing impaired students at the school. The temple, which is equipped with a TTY machine, offers an ASL-interpreted family service on the first Friday of each month as well as all holidays.

Educationally, Beth David offers a Hebrew and religious school for children, family education, and a wide variety of adult education classes in topics such as Bible Study, Jewish Tradition and Literature, and World Religions. There are also several committees and discussion groups, including an ongoing discussion for intermarried couples.

Contact: Rabbi Daniel Judson or Temple President Marcia Dreyfus
Membership: 155 households
Composition: Primarily Euro-American
Meetings: Friday Shabbat Service: 8:00 P.M. (7:30 P.M. on the first Friday of the month); Saturday Shabbat Service: 10:30 A.M. Please call the synagogue for holiday service information.
Congregation Beth El of the Sudbury
River Valley
Reform Judaism
105 Hudson Road
Sudbury, MA 01776
(978) 443-9622
http://www.bethelsudbury.org/index.htm

Built and dedicated in November of 1969, Beth El is a young congregation providing non-traditional Jewish services for residents of the Sudbury River Valley and the greater Boston areas. Their facilities include a sanctuary, entrance lounge, interior courtyard, and library.

A radically progressive community which developed its own non-sexist prayer book, Beth El provides inclusive, education-oriented services and activities to worshippers and maintains a strong commitment to social action. There are special Scholar-in-Residence weekends as well. Shabbat services at Beth El are unique in that community members sit around a large table facing each other, sharing Shabbat candles, wine, and challah at the start of the service. The tone is informal and children are welcome.

Contact: Anyone at the temple
Membership: 450 households
Meetings: Friday Shabbat Service: 8:30 P.M.; Saturday Torah Study: 9:00 A.M.; Saturday Shabbat Service: 10:30 A.M. Please contact the synagogue for times of holiday services.
Located in Brookline, Congregation Beth Pinchas is led by one of America’s most renowned Jewish leaders, the Bostoner Rebbe -- the first Hasidic Rebbe born in the United States. The Grand Rabbi Levi Yitzchak Horowitz is also assisted by Rabbi Naftali Horowitz. The building includes a temple and a men’s mikvah. A highly orthodox religious community, Beth Pinchas is characterized by the emphasis it places on community, and special occasions such as weddings and Bar Mitzvahs, which are especially festive.

Special services at the shul include services, lectures and Shabbatons, Daf Yomi at 7 A.M., Amud Yomi at 7 P.M. (daily Talmud portion), and a women’s lecture at 4 P.M. on Saturdays. Please call the synagogue for specific information about holiday services.

Contact: Rabbi N. Horowitz
Membership: Approximately 250 people
Meetings: Monday - Friday Morning Services: 6:15, 7:00, and 8:30 A.M.; Ma’ariv (evening) Services: 15 minutes before sundown, 8:00 P.M. (winter only); Saturday Shabbos Services: 7:00 A.M. and 8:45 A.M. Please contact the synagogue for times of holiday services.
Founded in 1858, Congregation Mishkan Tefila is the oldest conservative synagogue in the Boston area. After having moved several times over the past century and a half, the synagogue has found a comfortable home on 26 acres of land in Newton with five buildings, including a sanctuary, a chapel, two social halls, a religious school/administrative building, and a nursery/youth center. The congregation has a library and a museum of Judaica, which houses artifacts the synagogue has been collecting for over 70 years.

In addition to daily, Sabbath, and holiday services, Mishkan Tefila has a religious school, a nursery school, a Brotherhood/Sisterhood, a United Synagogue Youth group, and a wide range of adult education classes.

Contact: Rabbi Michael Menitoff
Membership: 900 families
Meetings: Friday Shabbat Service: 6:15 P.M.; Saturday Shabbat Service: 9:30 A.M., sunset; Weekday Minyan: 7:00 A.M. and 7:00 P.M.; Sunday Minyan: 8:00 A.M. and 7:00 P.M. Please contact the synagogue for times of holiday services.
Havurat Shalom
Non-Affiliated Judaism
113 College Avenue
Somerville, MA 02144
(617) 623-3376
http://www.world.std.com/~alevin/havhome.html

Located in a three-story frame house between Davis Square and Powderhouse Circle, Havurat Shalom is a traditional, egalitarian Jewish community committed to creative, inclusive, spiritual Judaism. Founded in 1968, Havurat Shalom has continued to grow, continually adding new classes, activities and rewritten liturgies to its offerings. As the Havurah operates without a rabbi, all services are created and led by members of the community, encouraging a deep level of involvement and commitment amongst congregants.

On the first Saturday of each month there is an intergenerational service and a dairy, potluck brunch. Two Fridays later, an informal, vegetarian potluck dinner is held. Newcomers are always welcome.

Contact: Anyone at the Havurah
Membership: Variable
Meetings: Friday Shabbat Service: 7:00 P.M. (6:30 P.M. during Daylight Savings Time); Saturday Shabbat Service: 10:00 A.M. Please contact the synagogue for times of holiday services.
Kehillath Israel

Conservative Judaism

384 Harvard Street
Brookline, MA 02446
(617) 277-9155
Fax: (617) 277-2919
email: Congki@aol.com
http://www.geocities.com/Heartland/3165

Founded in 1917, Congregation Kehillath Israel (K.I.) is now under the leadership of Rabbi William G. Hamilton. The Synagogue maintains several parallel Sabbath Services. The main sanctuary services are fully egalitarian and there are parallel satellite services with more limited participation of women. Kehillath Israel also provides a home to other area Minyanim and Havuroth.

The Sabbath experience provides many learning opportunities, such as scholar-in-residence programs and lunch-and-learn discussions after Kiddush, as well as Torah study in the Beit Midrash between Mincha and Maariv. K.I. also offers children’s Shabbat Services according to age group, including pre-school services.

Other activities at the Synagogue include a Hebrew School, Nursery School, Sisterhood meetings, Couples Club, and cultural activities. K.I. also hosts several community service programs such as Family Table and Tikun Ha-Ir, which serve the community at large.

For information on the schedule of services and educational opportunities for children and adults, call the Synagogue office. High Holiday seats are reserved, but all are welcome to inquire about non-member ticket availability.

Contact: William Hamilton, Rabbi or Shirley Kamarowski, President
Membership: Variable
Meetings: Saturday: Main Sanctuary and Beit Midrash Minyan - Rabb Chapel, 8:45 A.M.; Sunday: 8:00 A.M.;
Weekdays: Morning Services: 7:00 A.M.; Mincha (evening) Services: approximately 1/2 hour before sunset; Maariv: about 15 minutes after Mincha.
Reflecting the diverse population of Cambridge, Temple Beth Shalom represents a unique, creatively traditional approach to Judaism. The eternal values of worship, study, and social relationships are emphasized, allowing everyone to participate in whatever way feels comfortable. Programs include regular religious services, children’s services, family programs, community dinners, and adult and family education. A Traditional Minyan meets Friday evenings, Shabbat, and three weekday mornings. The Egalitarian Minyan meets every Saturday morning. The two come together for Musaf and a sit-down Kiddush. All holidays are celebrated with services and appropriate observances.

A unique event at Beth Shalom is the famous Simchat Torah Celebration which, for many years has drawn as many as 1,000 or more people. Part of the fun-filled service is the Hakafot which takes the congregation out onto Tremont Street for singing and dancing well into the night. Traditionally this service has included a wide cross-section of the Greater Boston community, including special participation of local college Hillels.

**Contact:** Miriam Klapper, Executive Director  
**Membership:** Approximately 180 members  
**Meetings:** Friday Shabbat Service: 6:30 P.M.; Saturday Shabbat Service: 9:00 A.M.; Sunday Worship Service: 8:30 A.M.; Monday - Thursday Worship Service: 7:00 A.M.
Congregation Adath Israel was founded in the 1850s by twenty-five Jewish families of German origin who separated from Ohabei Shalom, Boston’s first synagogue. Today, Temple Israel represents a mixture of people from diverse backgrounds, lifestyles and occupations. Services at Temple Israel, conducted in both Hebrew and English, are characterized by an atmosphere of inclusiveness, with members of both sexes and all age groups actively participating. Services are led by Rabbis Bernard H. Mehlman, Ronne Friedman, Jonah Pesner, Elaine S. Zecher, and Cantor Roy B. Einhorn.

There are over 30 committees open to Temple Israel congregants which serve a variety of interests for all age groups including preschool. Wheelchair accessible, Adath Israel’s facilities include a school, library, chapel, auditorium, atrium, and temple. The temple also offers adult education classes which are open to the public, and a Hebrew School. Services are signed for the hearing impaired monthly, on the High Holidays, and for the Passover Seder.

Contact: Anyone at the temple  
Membership: 1,800 families (largest Jewish congregation in New England)  
Meetings: Friday Shabbat Service: 5:45 P.M.; Saturday Shabbat Service: 10:30 A.M. Please contact the synagogue for times of holiday services.
The largest orthodox congregation in New England, Young Israel of Brookline is under the leadership of Rabbi Dr. Gershon C. Gewirtz. The congregation was founded in 1953, and the first synagogue was completed in 1964. After an electrical fire destroyed the synagogue building on January 11, 1994, the community continued to thrive as their services and programs were held in a temporary facility. The striking new synagogue building, designed by the world-renowned architect Graham Gund, was dedicated on November 19, 1996. The new facility includes a main sanctuary, Beit Midrash and Judaica library, classrooms, offices, kosher catering facilities, banquet hall, bridal room, and keilim mikveh.

In addition to the regular services, the synagogue offers a summer Kollel program for advanced Talmud study, Shabbatonim, Oneg Shabbat, Community Forum Discussions, and a variety of adult education classes. In addition, there are programs for all age groups, including youth, adults, and seniors, and an active group for singles.

Please call the synagogue for information about any of the above programs.

Contact: Anyone at the synagogue
Membership: Approximately 350 families
Native American Traditions in Boston

At the time Europeans began settling in what is now the state of Massachusetts in the late 16th and early 17th century, the land was home to tens of thousands of Native Peoples from many tribes. These included the Pawtucket (or Penacook), the Massachusett, the Pokantoket (or Wampanoag), and several other smaller bands including the Nipmuck and Pocumtuck. To the south, in what is now Rhode Island and Connecticut, there were bands of Pequot-Mohegans, Narragansetts, Western and Eastern Niantic, Quirpi, Tunxis and Podunk Indians. Although it is much disputed exactly how long the ancestors of these peoples had been living in this area, it is generally agreed that some have been here for at least 12,000 years. Indian paths and campsites, located in the 6,500-acre Blue Hills Reservation near Boston, are thought to be approximately 10,000 years old.

At the time of contact with the Europeans, Native tribes had rich and complex spiritual traditions. The concept of Native American “religion” is problematic in two ways. First, in no Native American language is there a single word equivalent to the English word “religion.” Religion does not exist as a separate category of activity or experience; rather, it is pervasive and interconnected with all aspects of Native Peoples’ life-ways. Second, there is not a single American Indian religious tradition or spirituality, but rather a great diversity of traditions, beliefs, practices, and cultural forms.

Despite this diversity, however, there are certain principles fundamental to most Native Peoples which are important to understand as we look at what has happened to Native beliefs and spiritual practices in Massachusetts. First, in Native traditions, there is a special quality and intensity of interrelationship with the forms and forces of the natural environment. Detailed knowledge of all aspects of their immediate habitat led Native Peoples of this area to accumulate lore that integrated the pragmatic with the sacred. Second, in Native traditions, time is not understood as linear, but is thought of as cyclical and reciprocal. The seasons and the span of life are understood in terms of a circle and are expressed again and again through ceremonial forms and acts. Third, for Native Peoples words have a special potency that is integral to their specific sounds, and therefore what is named is understood to be present. Thus, recitation of myth is understood to be a reenactment of primordial events. Finally, “arts and crafts” are imbued with sacred meaning and power. Similar to the power of breath and words, the natural materials and the finished forms created by Native peoples are understood to be manifestations, rather than representations, of sacred power.

At the time of contact with non-Indians, these traditions of belief and practice were still very much alive and dynamic, since Native traditions are oral rather than written and are fluid and
always expanding. From the early 17th century onward, ever-increasing contact with European settlers led to tumultuous change. Entire tribal groups and linguistic families became extinct. Others lost much of their population through violence perpetrated by the settlers and, even more, through a series of disastrous epidemics of diseases to which the Indians had no natural immunities. It is estimated that 90 percent of the Native population of the New England area had died by 1650. Many of those that survived tried, in varying degrees, to integrate into white culture.

In the late 1600s, growing ill-treatment by the settlers and their continued encroachment on the land led “King Philip” (as the colonists referred to Metacom, the son of Massasoit, chief of the Wampanoags) to join with all the Indians from the Merrimac River to the Thames to force out the settlers. King Philip’s War, which lasted from 1675-1677 was the most disastrous period in the history of New England for the Indians. Philip and the leading chiefs were killed and the Wampanoags and Narragansetts were practically exterminated. Of 52 Wampanoag tribes that were living in this area in the mid-1600s, only four tribes survive today. Most of the survivors fled west to the interior and many of those who surrendered were sold into slavery.

In the mid-1600s, Harvard’s John Eliot launched a mission to convert Indians to Christianity, translating the Bible into the Algonquin language and establishing “Indian Praying Towns” for Native converts. Those who agreed or were coerced into this situation, however, found themselves under suspicion from both other Native groups as well as from the colonists. There were originally 14 praying towns in the Massachusetts Bay Colony, but by 1684, only four of these remained: Natick, Ponkapoag area (the area of the Blue Hills Reservation), Wamesit (Lowell), and Chabanakongkomun. There were ten communities of Christian Indians in Plymouth Colony, ten on Martha’s Vineyard, and five on Nantucket. Farther west, Christian influence and acculturation was less strong, however, as there had been no missions in the western two-thirds of Massachusetts before King Philip’s War.

The 18th and 19th centuries were years of slow and painful acculturation, during which the surviving Massachusetts Indians struggled to keep their economic, cultural, and religious traditions alive. Different reservations were given to and taken from the tribes as the settlers’ needs changed. As new waves of missionaries came and went, Praying Towns and Christian Missionary schools for Indians were founded and disbanded. Missions founded in the 17th century were hard hit by King Philip’s War, but the religious fervor of the Great Awakening in the 1740s rekindled Christian missionary outreach and conversion.

Despite the heavy missionization in much of the Natives’ territory, most surviving groups showed remarkable ability to cope with change and cultural deprivation by adapting and borrowing from the non-Indian world with pragmatic yet cautious selectivity. This ability exists to the present day. Indian relations with Roman Catholic and Protestant denominations of
Christianity spans two extremes: those who have embraced Christianity fully and have denounced their traditional belief systems, to those who have embraced sacred native ways and rejected Christianity. Most Natives embrace a system of belief and practice which falls somewhere between the two, however, achieving a syncretism in which neither negates the other. As Joseph Epes Brown puts it in the *Spiritual Legacy of the American Indian*, “The historical phenomenon is thus not conversion as understood in an exclusivistic manner by the bearers of Christianity, but rather a continuation of the people’s ancient and traditional facility for what may be termed nonexclusive cumulative adhesion.”

For the Native Peoples living in Massachusetts today, this concept of “nonexclusive cumulative adhesion” is not an abstraction but a way of life. Although many Natives do have some Christian practice and many self-identify as Christians, many also take part in traditional annual celebrations which acknowledge the cycles of the earth, moon, and sun, and the agricultural seasons. Some of the most important of these include the Planting Ceremony in the Spring, the New Year’s celebration at the end of April, the Harvest (Green Corn) Ceremony in the Fall, the changing of the seasons, and the equinoxes and solstices. In addition, there are the Four Directions Ceremonies, Sweat Lodge Ceremonies, and Color Ceremonies. For large gatherings, a farm, reservation land, or a public building is usually used; for smaller ceremonies, however, people may gather at a certain oak tree, or by a lake or river that has special meaning to the people involved. These ceremonies may attract anywhere from a handful of people to several hundred. Also significant are the many pow-wows that take place in Massachusetts each year, which include gatherings in Middleboro, Topsfield, Marshfield, Westford, Haverhill, Concord, Braintree, and Leominster.

The role of the Medicine Man (or less frequently the Medicine Woman) is also very important in local Native culture. In New England there are several prominent Medicine Men and Women. In Massachusetts each tribe has its own Medicine Man who is responsible for leading the seasonal ceremonials and acts as spiritual advisor to his people. One whose work spanned far beyond his own community and who was a well respected member of the Native community at large is Cjegkitoonuppa (Slow Turtle), of the Mashpee Wampanoags. Although a Wampanoag, Slow Turtle served the entire Native community in the area and even did spiritual work with some non-Native peoples, including prison ministry. His role in the community was to counsel, lead ceremonies, give advice, and keep alive the sacred ways that are tens of thousands of years old.

The metropolitan Boston area is currently home to approximately 5,250 Native Americans, according to the 1990 Census. Typical of urban Native areas, the Boston Indian community is comprised of people from a wide array of tribes, both from New England and the rest of the country. Significant numbers of New England Wabanaki peoples are represented in the population; these are primarily Micmac, but also include Abenaki, Maliseet, Passamaquoddy and Penobscot. There are also many southern New England tribes including Wampanoag, Nipmuck,
Narragansett and Mohecan. Overall, more than thirty tribes, bands, and nations are represented. Organizations such as the North American Indian Center of Boston and the Commission on Indian Affairs attempt to address the most severe challenges facing the Native community, including poverty and limited educational opportunities.

Another issue of exceptional importance is federal recognition. Of the tribes native to Massachusetts, only one -- the Wampanoag of Gay Head, on Martha’s Vineyard -- has received federal recognition. This status gives tribes the right to government land, money to build housing and administrative buildings, and the right to repatriation of stolen artifacts and human remains under the Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act. What follows is a sampling of the organizations and tribal councils which serve the Boston area’s more than 5,000 Natives.
The Commission on Indian Affairs was established in 1974 by the Massachusetts State Legislature to represent the major tribes of the Native American population located within the Commonwealth.

Housed in a state building, the Commission is a clearinghouse and resource center for cultural and Native rights issues, and serves as a liaison between the community and the state government. Officially, the Commission is charged with investigating problems common to American Indians and assisting tribal councils, Indian organizations, and individuals in their interactions with state and local government agencies. They also advocate for Native interests in social services, education, employment, health, housing, civil rights, legal aid, and treaties. Furthermore, the Commission is responsible for conducting a census of Indian residents in the Commonwealth.

The Commission consists of seven members (representing major local tribes) appointed by the governor for three-year terms. It is staffed by one full-time employee and one part-time employee.

Contact: The Commission
Membership: Not applicable
Composition: Native American
Meetings: Not applicable.
Massachusetts Center for Native American Awareness, Inc.

Native American Resource Center  
P.O. Box 5885
Boston, MA 02114  
(617) 884-4227  
http://www.wldwind.com/events.htm

The Massachusetts Center for Native American Awareness, Inc. was founded by Burne Stanley in 1989. The primary purpose of the Center is to provide cultural, spiritual, and social services to the Native American Peoples of Massachusetts. Secondly, the Center promotes and preserves the cultural and traditional ways of the Native Americans of this land.

In addition to providing many services for the Native American Peoples in Massachusetts, the Center also sponsors public workshops, seminars, and art exhibits to help educate the general public to Native American cultural, traditional, and spiritual ways of life. The Center holds an annual National Native American Heritage Day Pow-Wow and many other festivities. A pow-wow is a celebration of Native American peoples coming together to socialize, feast, and dance. It also provides an opportunity to dispel some of the stereotypes and myths about Native Americans. Most of the events are open to the public. For more information about the Center’s services and activities, or to find out about other Native American organizations in Massachusetts, please contact the Center directly.

Contact: Burne Stanley  
Membership: 4,200 members  
Composition: Open to the public  
Meetings: Not applicable.
Located in Grafton, Massachusetts, the Hassanamisco Indian Reservation is the third smallest reservation in the United States. In addition to its one resident, it is home to the Longhouse Museum which displays artifacts related to the Nipmuc nation. Tragically, the museum was broken into a few years ago, and many of the artifacts were stolen. As a result, the museum is currently closed, although there are hopes of reopening it in the future.

The council, which represents the tribe, is made up of twelve elected and appointed members who meet monthly and have the responsibility of maintaining tribal heritage and running the reservation. Along with other small tribes in the area, a primary concern for the past thirty years has been trying to gain recognition from the federal government.

An annual pow-wow is organized late each summer on the last Sunday in July and attracts Native Peoples from all over the area. In addition to this large gathering, the tribe has committees which organize speakers, cultural events, and sacred ceremonies which are only open to tribal members.

**Contact:** Chief Walter Vickers  
**Membership:** Approximately 170  
**Composition:** Hassanamisco Nipmuc  
**Meetings:** Please call for a seasonal schedule.
The North American Indian Center of Boston

*Native American Community Center*

105 South Huntington Avenue

Jamaica Plain, MA 02130

(617) 232-0343

Housed in a building which it currently leases from the state, the North American Indian Center of Boston (NAICOB) aims to develop and deliver programs and services to assist local Native Americans in achieving greater self-determination leading to an improved quality of life. It offers a range of services designed to impact the social, economic, cultural, linguistic, and health needs of the community to end the cycle of dependency and poverty too often found there.

Founded in 1991 as a non-profit corporation, the Center provides services to the over 5,000 Native Americans in the Boston area. Current programs include a Job Training Partnership Association, a Vocational Social Services program, a Community Health Plan, Tecumseh House (a drop-in counseling facility for Native Americans with substance abuse problems), and an Indian Youth Program. They also organize cultural events such as crafts festivals and evenings of drumming or dancing.

The Center networks with the Tribal Councils in Gayhead, Mashpee, Fort Devens, and Webster, as well as Urban Indian groups all along the East Coast.

**Contact:** Joanne Dunn, Executive Director

**Membership:** Not applicable

**Composition:** Between 25 and 30 tribes are represented

**Meetings:** Not applicable.
Wampanoag Tribe of Gay Head (Aquinnah)

Wampanoag (People of the first light)

20 Black Brook Road
Aquinnah, MA 02535
(508) 645-9265

In 1987, the Gay Head Wampanoags received federal recognition, the only tribe in Massachusetts to do so. Such recognition has been extremely important to the tribe, bringing with it the return of tribal lands, federal grants to build housing and administrative offices, and strengthening its rights to repatriate tribal property stolen from them.

The Tribal Council includes Tribal Chairperson Beverly Wright, Vice Chairperson Gladys Widdiss, Treasurer Stephanie White, Secretary Eleanor Hebert, Chief Running Deer Donald Malonson, Medicine Man Luther Madison, and seven other elected members. The Gay Head Wampanoags have several departments, including: Education, responsible for scholarships, assuring that Wampanoag history is taught accurately in schools, and running a reference library; Health, providing a clinic, contract health services, community health outreach and injury prevention programs; Human Services, which maintains child welfare, social worker services and elder services; Natural Resources; and Economic Development.

The tribe organizes an annual spring social, a pageant of the Legends of Moshup, and a Cranberry Day celebration is held on the second Tuesday of October.

Contact: Beverly M. Wright, Tribal Chairperson
Membership: 300 members on Martha’s Vineyard; approximately 900 total
Composition: Gay Head Wampanoags
Meetings: Please call for a seasonal schedule.
Other Indian Traditions in Boston

In Boston there are many movements generated from the spiritual ethos of Hindu India that do not take the name “Hindu” at all. There is a reluctance, even on the part of the Ramakrishna Vedanta Society, to use a name like “Hinduism,” which is far more a family of traditions than a “religion.” Many such movements, while Indian in origin, have become international movements with a distinctively “American” flavor in their New England contexts.

The Brahma Kumaris, for example, are part of a worldwide movement based at Mt. Abu in India. Its committed members are largely women, as is the international leader, Dadi Prakashmani. The Brahma Kumaris are a small community in Boston, focused on meditation and service.

The Siddha Yoga Dham also practices meditation, carrying forward a tradition brought to the U.S. by Swami Muktananda in the 1970s. Siddha Yoga meditation courses, workshops and lectures, and the celebration of holidays -- including Christmas and Easter, Divali and Shiva Ratri -- shape the religious life of the Shree Muktananda Ashram in South Fallsburg, New York and of the many local centers such as the one in Watertown. Since Swami Muktananda’s death, the movement has continued under the leadership of his spiritual heir, Chidvilasananda, also called Gurumayi.

The Dhyanyoga Center in Cambridge is affiliated with Dhyanyoga Centers, Inc., a non-profit organization headquartered in Antioch, California. The organization was founded to promote the teachings of the late Shri Dhyanyogi Madhusudandasji, who first came to the U.S. in 1976. His spiritual heir, Anandi Ma, now conducts yoga retreats and meditation programs across the country.

Transcendental Meditation movement, popularly known as TM came to the United States in the early 1960s and is still led by the Maharishi Mahesh Yogi, based in Rishikesh in India. TM has become widely known through its openness to investigation by the scientific and medical community. Boston doctor Herbert Benson’s well known book, The Relaxation Response, was based on his research with TM practitioners on the physiological effects meditation practice.
The Brahma Kumaris World Spiritual University (BKWSU) was founded in 1936 by Prajapita Brahma, and is today affiliated with the United Nations as a Non-Governmental Organization. BKWSU is the parent organization for some 2,000 centers world-wide, including the Brookline-based Brahma Kumaris World Spiritual Organization.

The main activity at this center is Raja Yoga meditation. In addition, there are ongoing introductory courses, which are available in a variety of formats. The basis of the introductory course is a spiritual understanding of oneself and the world around one. Aspects of the course include understanding our relationship with God, the philosophy of action, positive values and the need for spirituality in today’s world.

Members participate in a number of international projects designed to promote world peace. The BKWSU reports that their most recent project, in cooperation with UNICEF, focuses on working with the K-12 school systems to develop “a school ethos and a sense of community based on universal core values.”

While serving a membership and a public of both men and women equally the BKWSU is the only institution of its kind which, since its inception, has been administrated solely by women. In recognition of its contribution to world peace, the BKWSU has received six international Peace Messenger Awards from the United Nations in the last seven years. To ensure its accessibility to everyone, all activities of the Brahma Kumaris are totally free of charge.

Contact: Sharona Stillerman, Director of New England Region
Membership: Approximately 300 students, no formal membership
Composition: Multi-ethnic
Meetings: Sunday Meditation: 7:00 P.M.; Monthly meetings: First & second Monday & Wednesday; Foundation Course to Meditation: call for times.
Dhyanyoga Center
*Kundalini Maha Yoga*
5 St. Mary Road
Cambridge, MA 02139
(617) 491-4091
http://www.dyc.org

The Dhyanyoga Center was founded in 1976 by Dhyanyogi Madhusudandasji and is under the current spiritual leadership of Anandi Ma. Located in a single family home, the center publishes a monthly newsletter entitled “Shakti” and is affiliated with other Dhyanyoga Centers in the United States and India.

Meditation and chanting are the focus of the practice of Kundalini Maha Yoga which is a non-denominational spiritual discipline rather than a religion. The most important experience within the discipline is *shaktipat* initiation which is the awakening of the inner energy called Kundalini or *shakti* that “guarantees spiritual progress.”

The Dhyanyoga community meets weekly for meditation and chanting. Beginners are welcome at the weekly meeting. Guests are advised to wear comfortable clothing and bring a blanket on which to sit.

**Contact:** Ellen Balis or Doug McLeod  
**Membership:** 10-20 members in regular attendance  
**Composition:** Multi-cultural  
**Meetings:** Wednesday Meditation & Chanting: 7:30-9:00 P.M.
Siddha Yoga Meditation Center of Greater Boston

*Siddha Yoga*

75 North Beacon Street
Watertown, MA 02472
(617) 924-2023
http://www.syda.org

The Siddha Yoga Meditation Center of Greater Boston in new quarters just outside Watertown Square offers meditation and chanting programs, intensive weekend meditation workshops, hatha yoga courses, study groups and other Siddha Yoga courses.

Siddha Yoga comes from an ancient spiritual tradition of India passed on through a lineage of meditation masters known as Siddhas. It was first brought to the United States by Swami Muktananda in the 1970s.

Shortly before he passed away in 1982, Swami Muktananda appointed Gurumayi Chidvilasananda as his successor; she is now the spiritual head of the worldwide Siddha Yoga Community. The essence of Siddha Yoga meditation is the gift of *shaktipat*, a spiritual awakening that enables a seeker to embark on the sacred journey to know the inner self.

**Contact:** Please leave a message on the center voicemail

**Membership:** Approximately 300 participants, no formal membership, all are welcome

**Composition:** Multi-ethnic

**Meetings:** Thursday Meditation, Talks and Chant: 7:30-9:00 P.M.; Sunday Guru Gita Chant: 8:00-9:30 A.M.
Pagan Traditions in Boston

The term “pagan” derives from a term given by Christians to peasants; it literally means “of the country.” While many of today’s Pagans live in cities, it is toward the country, the earth, the cycles of nature, and the place of the human community in the larger natural ecology that their spiritual life is oriented. It is nature that provides the teaching and inspiration for this spirituality. And, of course, it is nature that provides the cycles of the sun, the moon, and the seasons that are observed and celebrated in Pagan communities. This devotion to nature leads many Pagans to environmental activism.

Paganism includes a wide range of practice and belief. Pagans are found in such places as chapters of an officially sanctioned independant affiliate of the Unitarian-Universalist Association, private homes, public rituals and meetings of other organizations. Some engage in practices such as Tarot card readings which are often labeled as “occult.” The word “occult” refers to that which is mysterious or hidden. Pagan rituals and worship circles may include song, dance, meditation, trance work, drumming, spiritual requests, giving thanks, and feasting. Gatherings range from large outdoor celebrations to small private rituals in backyards or living rooms.

Leaders in the Boston area estimate that there are over 6,000 Pagans here from more than a dozen Pagan traditions, including Wiccans, Druids, Dianic Witches, and eclectic Pagans. As in many faiths, Pagans have sects, denominations or traditions. While some Pagan groups, such as the Women’s Lodge, have a strong feminist orientation and are largely circles of women, others are comprised of both women and men, such as the EarthSpirit Community and the Covenant of Unitarian Universalist Pagans. There are festivals, circles of worship and ceremony, study groups, and bookstores. Some groups draw inspiration from a particular area of the ancient world. An example would be of the Lyceum of Venus of Healing in Ayer, which looks specifically to the ancient traditions of Egypt.

Many groups have strong social and political commitments and are involved in AIDS activism or religious and civil liberties issues. EarthSpirit is a regular participant in the Boston Interfaith Clergy breakfast meetings. Its annual Rites of Spring celebration around Memorial Day each year draws together a great variety of people for workshops and drumming, affinity groups and healing circles, the maypole and the circle dance, feasting, and celebration. EarthSpirit members write, “As we return year after year, reconnecting with old friends, and welcoming newcomers, we till a common ground in which new directions for Paganism and Nature Spirituality can take root and grow.”
The Covenant of Unitarian Universalist Pagans (CUUPS), founded in 1986, is an independent affiliate of the Unitarian Universalist Association. In the greater Boston area there are chapter contacts in Brewster, Cambridge, Falmouth, Martha’s Vineyard, New Bedford, Quincy, and Salem.

The organization provides networking among Pagan-identified UU’s, outreach of Unitarian Universalism to the broader Pagan Community, and educational materials on Paganism for Unitarian Universalist congregations and the general public. Chapters provide gatherings and rituals for their members. Seasonal celebrations and other activities sponsored by NSCUUPS follow the solar and lunar calendars.

CUUPS promotes Pagan and Jewish/Christian dialogue, the development of theo/alogical and liturgical materials based on Earth- and nature-centered religious and spiritual perspectives, and the greater use of music, dance, visual arts, poetry, story, and creative ritual in Unitarian Universalist worship and celebration. The continental organization prints a quarterly newsletter and publishes an annual journal called “Sacred Cosmos: A CUUPS Journal of Liberal Religious Paganism.” They also host events at the General Assembly of the Unitarian Universalist Association annually and a Continental Convocation each year for members and Pagan identified peoples.

For more information about the Covenant of Unitarian Universalist Pagans, Inc. you can write: 8190A Beechmont Avenue, PMB 335, Cincinnati, OH 45255-3154 or email: kishhilde@earthlink.net.

Contact: Jerrie Hildebrand or Glendon Mills, NSCUUPS Co-Coordinators
Membership: Over 700 members in U.S. & Canada and approximately 75 chapters
Composition: Multi-ethnic
Meetings: NSCUUPS generally meets on the first Friday and third Sunday each month. NSCUUPS welcomes all.
Founded by Andras Corban Arthen and Deirdre Pulgram Arthen in 1980, EarthSpirit serves Boston’s large community of Pagans and organizes seasonal religious observances which are open to the community at large. They publish *EarthSpirit*, a newsletter for members and for the Pagan community, and offer public seasonal celebrations, concerts, and monthly full moon rituals.

EarthSpirit also holds four large annual ecospiritual conferences in May, July, October, and January. Of these the Rites of Spring, a week-long conference in May, is one of the oldest and largest Pagan festivals in the country, drawing 500-700 participants. To educate the public about Paganism and Witchcraft, EarthSpirit offers a wide range of workshops, lectures, and classes, including a monthly study group. EarthSpirit also produces MotherTongue, a thirty-member ritual performance ensemble which includes choral singers, musicians, dancers, storytellers, poets, stage musicians, and visual arts. MotherTongue has produced several recordings and has performed nationally at various conferences and interfaith forums, including the Parliament of the World’s Religions in Chicago.

**Contact:** Andras Corban Arthen  
**Membership:** 1,200 local members, 4,200 national members  
**Composition:** Primarily Euro-American  
**Meetings:** Call for current activities.
Sikhism in Boston

The Sikh tradition began in India in the sixteenth century with the mystic and teacher Guru Nanak. He emphasized the oneness and ultimacy of God, who cannot be limited by temple, mosque, or tradition. In the United States, Sikhism has more than a century of history. The first Sikhs to settle in the United States became farmers in the Central and Imperial Valleys of California in the late 1800s. They established America’s first gurdwara in Stockton in 1912. The gurdwara is a place of congregation and worship; it houses the Guru Granth Sahib, the sacred Sikh scripture, which is both sung and honored.

In the Boston area, the first Sikh group met in the mid-1960s, when there were approximately twenty Sikh families in the area. They formed a Sikh Study Group and met monthly for a number of years, renting a hall for weddings and for festivals such as the birthdays of Guru Nanak and Guru Gobind Singh. It was not until 1988 that a growing Sikh community began looking for a place to found a more permanent home. Since the gurdwara would need to serve the wider New England area, they looked for a suburban location near major highways. In 1990, the community purchased a former Kingdom Hall in Milford and opened the gurdwara in 1991.

Sikh immigrants from India also found in New England a community of American-born Sikhs, followers of the Sikh Dharma International movement launched in the 1970s by Siri Singh Sahib Bhai Sahib Harbhajan Singh Khalsa Yogiji (popularly known as Yogi Bhajan). The communities of the 1970s were popularly called “3HO”: Happy, Healthy, and Holy. The group emphasizes the chanting and study of the Sikh scriptures along with yoga practice and meditation. This community was first visible in the Boston area during the 1980s when its members in white clothes and turbans ran a very successful business, the Golden Temple Emporium, in Harvard Square. Today the Guru Ram Das Ashram, located in Millis in a former Jewish summer resort, is a resident and working community of American Sikhs.
Guru Ram Das Ashram
*Sikh Dharma*
368 Village Street
Millis, MA 02054
(508) 376-4527
http://photon.bu.edu/~rajwi/sikhism/local/millis.html

The Guru Ram Das Ashram started in Dorchester in the 1970s. It was officially founded in 1981 as part of the national 3HO movement. The property, owned by the Sikh Dharma of Massachusetts, was once a Jewish summer resort. The Ashram’s facilities include private apartments, a Gurdwara, and a community langar room, often used for cultural and family events. There are over 50 adults living on the land and renting space from the Sikh Dharma of Massachusetts.

Guru Ram Das Ashram is under the leadership of Ek Ong Kar Singh Khalsa, Director of the Ashram. As with Sikh Dharma International ashrams and gurdwaras throughout the United States, the Millis community has recently undergone structural changes to make its operations more democratic. A board of legislators has been established which is run by 18 elected and appointed representatives.

In addition to the daily schedule, special events are held on Sikh holy days. The community also publishes a monthly newsletter, Inner Voice.

**Contact:** Dr. Sham Rang Singh Khalsa, Granthi  
**Membership:** Variable; 50 adults in residence  
**Composition:** Euro-American and Indian Sikhs  
**Meetings:** Daily: Yoga, Meditation, & Kirtan: 3:40-6:30 A.M.; Sunday Kirtan: 10:00 A.M.-Noon.
The New England Sikh Study Circle was founded in 1968 by Sikh families in the New England area as a place to gather for prayers and to see other members of the community. In 1990, the community purchased the present building, a former Kingdom Hall. Its facilities include a meeting hall and a large dining area. The congregation is composed of Punjabi Sikhs and many other devotees, and most prayers and lectures are delivered in Punjabi. Any member of the congregation can lead the prayers, including the children. There is time reserved for lectures and talks, which can be religious or political.

The Sunday program is an all-day event including the reading of prayers from the Guru Granth Sahib and a meal consisting of simple Punjabi dishes. All are welcome, and no donations are required. Loose and comfortable clothing are advisable because people sit on the floor. Everyone must cover their heads upon entering the Gurdwara. Men and women sit on opposite sides of the hall during the prayers, but families eat together at the community meal. After the meal, children play outside in the meeting hall, while adults gather to socialize. Each month, the community publishes a one-page bulletin.

Contact: Anyone at the center
Membership: 50 families in regular attendance, 250 families for special occasions
Composition: Indian, primarily Punjabi
Meetings: Sunday Kirtan: 7:00 A.M.-2:00 P.M. (Best for visitors to attend from 10:00 A.M.-Noon). Monthly programs are available by mail or email on request. Programs can also be downloaded from the website.
Taoism in Boston

Tao means the “way” and is understood to be the way of harmony that is the source and natural process of the whole universe. The Tao is expressed through the natural cyclical movements of creation that reveal the dynamic interrelation of opposites -- non-being and being, rest and motion, night and day, death and life. This dynamic interpenetration is expressed visually by the yin-yang symbol, which communicates the central insight that dualities contain and flow into one another and, indeed, cannot be apprehended apart from one another. This form of thinking, sometimes called “philosophical Taoism,” traces its roots to the writings of Lao Tzu (500 BCE) and Chuang Tzu (300 BCE).

Religious Taoism is also connected with this way of thinking but is oriented toward personal cultivation and ritual aimed at longevity and immortality. There have long been Taoist temples, monks, and nuns in China, though Taoism suffered along with other religious traditions during the Cultural Revolution (1966-76). More recently, however, many Taoist temples have been renovated and their religious life restored, such as the famous White Cloud Temple in Beijing, which underwent renovation in the 1980s and began offering courses in Taoism once again.

In North America, the most popular expressions of the Taoist tradition have been the forms of physical and inner cultivation called Tai Chi and Chi Kung, both of which strengthen the life-breath or inner energy called chi. Tai Chi is a system of exercise shaped in 12th century China. One teacher who has brought its practice to the West is Master Moy Lin Shin, who established centers in Toronto and Montreal in 1970 and the Taoist Tai Chi Society of the U.S.A., which is based in Denver, in 1981. Today there are over 200 branches of the Taoist Tai Chi Society in North America and around the world. Chi Kung practice also aims to cultivate, concentrate, and circulate chi through both static and dynamic postures of meditation. The emphasis here is on longevity and health.

There are many Tai Chi centers and practitioners in the Boston area. The Tai Chi Center of Brookline on Beacon Street, for example, has classes in Tai Chi and Chi Kung. The Center of Traditional Taoist Studies brings Taoism to Boston via a Russian emigré teacher trained in Moscow!
The Center of Traditional Taoist Studies was founded by Sifu Alex Anatole in 1979 as the New England Center of Tao and has been at its present location on Applecrest Road in Weston since 1985. Dr. Anatole began his studies of Taoism as a child in Moscow with the renowned Taoist Master Lu Yang Tai, with whom he worked for twenty years.

The Center, located in a residential area of Weston, includes a prayer and meditation area, a library, and offices. The Center offers teachings of Taoist philosophy (which originated as Shamanism) and emphasizes exercise, balance, health, and discipline of the body through classes in Tai Chi, Chi Kung, and Kung Fu.

The Center is dedicated to bringing the traditional Taoist system of health and healing to the West. The Center is the first and only recognized Taoist Temple in America by the Quan Shen Taoists of Shanghai. Dr. Anatole and the Board Members are all members of the Shanghai Chi Kung Research Association and represent the Shanghai University of Traditional Chinese Medicine here in America.

Members of the Center have traveled to China and have established a mutual relationship with the White Cloud Temple in Shanghai.

Contact: Sifu Alex Anatole
Membership: 80-100
Composition: Mainly Euro-Americans
Meetings: Saturday: Tai Chi, Chi Kung, Meditation, and Teachings of Taoism, 8:00 A.M.-Noon; Monday - Sunday: Tai Chi and Chi Kung, 6:15-7:15 P.M.
Zoroastrianism in Boston

The Zoroastrian tradition traces its history to the Prophet Zarathushtra, who lived sometime between 1,000 and 1,750 BCE in ancient Iran. Though Zoroastrians are small in numbers today, their tradition has had a significant role in the religious history of both Iran and India. Its strong imageless monotheism and its view of good and evil as contesting powers in creation have had an important influence in the evolving Jewish, Christian, and Muslim traditions of the West. The scripture of the tradition, which is called the Avesta, is related both in language and concept to the most ancient Indian literature, the Vedas. The Zoroastrian tradition flourished in Iran as the state religion of the Achaemenid kings in the 6th century BCE and was influential in Iran until the coming of Islam in the 6th century CE, when there was a large migration of Zoroastrians to India. Today about three-fourths of all Zoroastrians live in India, where they are known as the Parsis, a reference to their Persian origins. Nearly one quarter continue to live in Iran.

The Zoroastrian population of North America is growing and is estimated by the Federation of Zoroastrians in North America to be between 10,000 and 14,000. The Federation, known as FEZANA, was formed in 1987 to coordinate the life and concerns of the North American Zoroastrian community. The Zoroastrian community in the Boston area, like that of the rest of North America, is made up of immigrants from both India and Iran, though the majority are Indian immigrant Parsis.

The Zoroastrian Association of the Greater Boston Area (ZAGBA), formally founded in 1983, received encouragement and stimulus from two prominent Bombay Parsis -- Dr. Khojeste Mistree and Dr. Dastur Kotwal. Dr. Mistree, the director of Zoroastrian Studies at the community’s center in Bombay, visited Boston in 1978 and again in 1981 to offer encouragement to the small community. Dr. Kotwal spent a year at the Center for the Study of World Religions at Harvard in the late 1970s and was involved in a series of meetings leading to the formation of the Boston association.

Since the Zoroastrian tradition does not accept conversion, a common topic of discussion in the United States context is how such a tradition will continue to thrive, given the dwindling number of Zoroastrians and the fact of intermarriage. The Zoroastrian Association in Boston offers the possibility of non-Zoroastrian spouses becoming affiliated as members of ZAGBA, even though they cannot officially “convert.” However, at the annual conventions of FEZANA, and especially at its youth forums, the topics of conversion and intermarriage are high on the agenda as American Zoroastrians struggle with how to preserve an ancient faith in a modern multireligious society.
The Zoroastrian Association of Greater Boston (ZAGBA) was founded in 1983 by three Zoroastrian families, including Firoze and Khorsed Jungalwala who are still active in the association today. ZAGBA meets in members’ homes, as well as in halls rented in different towns. The Association sponsors lectures, children’s classes, adult discussion groups, and annual celebrations of Jamshidi NoRuz, a spring festival of the resurgence and renewal of life, and Papeti for the remembrance of the departed in August.

All events are open to the general public, but newcomers should call in advance for schedule and directions. Although there is no regular publication of materials, the Association does print a quarterly newsletter, and transcripts of lectures are available upon request. The Boston Gatha Group meets the first Sunday of every month to study the Gathas (Zoroastrian doctrines as revealed by Zarathushtra) at the Memorial Church at Harvard University.

In November of 1997, ZAGBA co-sponsored the First North American International Avesta Conference. Scholars, speakers, and participants from all over the world were in attendance.

ZAGBA is a member of FEZANA (Federation of Zoroastrian Associations in North America), and maintains close ties with ZAGNY (Zoroastrian Association of Greater New York) in New Rochelle, NY. ZAGBA is interested in having new members who have not been born in Zoroastrian families.

Contact: Mrs. Parastu Dubash, President (978) 481-6495, or Mrs. Khorsed Jungalwala (978) 443-6858
Membership: 82 members
Composition: Primarily Parsi and Iranian
Meetings: Monthly, held in Belmont, Framingham, Concord, or Arlington.
Religious Resources

INTERFAITH

Boston Clergy and Religious Leaders Group for Interfaith Dialogue
Boston Church of the New Jerusalem
140 Bowdoin Street
Boston, MA 02108
Contact: Dr. Jared Kass
Phone: (617) 349-8340

“In this city of many cultures and religions, we come together as partners in religion to create a welcoming and mutually supportive environment. We gather to foster those specific dialogues which will help us know each other, learn from and celebrate each other, and deepen our individual and collective spirituality. We seek to build a matrix of community which promotes peace and justice through civil and responsible discourse within our city.”

The Boston Clergy and Religious Leaders Group for Interfaith Dialogue meets monthly for networking, information sharing, and at times, to take action on specific issues. A typical meeting will include leaders from Protestant, Catholic, Orthodox, Jewish, Muslim, Hindu, and Buddhist faith traditions, as well as other religious movements. The Group is strongly committed to regular discussions of the ethical principles of religious organizations, and to discussion of these principles in an interfaith context.

Brockton Interfaith Community
65 West Elm Street
Brockton, MA 02301
Contact: Meir Lakein
Phone: (508) 587-9550

“The Brockton Interfaith Community (BIC), a coalition of 19 religious congregations, is a broad-based power organization rooted in faith values, working to make concrete improvements in the lives of families, congregations, and the city of Brockton. By identifying, training, and developing leaders and by organizing around concrete issues, BIC enables people to understand their own power and gives them the skills and allies necessary to use that power effectively.

BIC is multi-faith, multi-racial, multi-lingual, and strictly non-partisan. We are committed to a process of research, action, evaluation, and reflection. BIC organizes around issues such as youth, education, housing and development, healthcare, employment, and congregational
development. BIC is affiliated with the Organizing and Leadership Training Center, along with five sister organizations in Boston, Lynn, Fall River/New Bedford, Worcester, and Springfield.”

Cooperative Metropolitan Ministries
474 Centre Street
Newton, MA 02158
Contact: Claire Kashuck
Phone: (617) 244-3650
Fax: (617) 630-9172
Email: coopmet@aol.com

Cooperative Metropolitan Ministries (CMM) is an interfaith, interracial coalition of urban and suburban congregations in metropolitan Boston. Rooted in diverse traditions, they are united to confront social injustice. Their faith-based actions include education, networking, urban-suburban partnerships, and resource sharing. Since its founding in 1966, CMM has worked together with its member congregations to establish 1,450 units of affordable housing and one dozen anti-poverty organizations that now operate independently.

Framingham Interfaith Clergy Association
c/o Covener Carol Rockwood
2 Morse Road
Sherborn, MA 01770
Contact: Covener Carol Rockwood
Phone: (508) 651-1119

The Association’s primary emphasis is clergy fellowship and mutual education on the needs and concerns of the community. The Association promotes fellowship through ecumenical and interfaith dialogue, including a special interfaith service at Thanksgiving. It is organized to create interfaith statements when needed in response to situations arising in the community. Furthermore, a different member of the Association writes an Op-Ed piece for the local newspaper once a month. The Association is composed primarily of Christian congregations, but also includes two active Jewish synagogues, a Jewish school, and the Islamic Center of New England.

Friends of the Homeless of the South Shore
8 Driftway
North Weymouth, MA 02191-2207
Contact: Dorothy Newell
Phone: (781) 331-9390
Fax: Call first (781) 335-8429
Email: UCB4U@mediaone.net
“Friends of the Homeless of the South Shore is dedicated to helping homeless families by providing shelter, advocacy, food, clothing, and furniture. We address a whole range of needs from physical to emotional, from personal to social, and from psychological to spiritual. Our goals are helping to build stronger individuals and families; helping to secure education and employment opportunities; helping to find safe affordable permanent housing; and working toward functional self-sufficiency.”

Friends of the Homeless consists of three faith-based programs. Hingham Interfaith Shelters house five to seven families per night in facilities made available by churches, businesses, and civic organizations. Faith Home-Share is a network of families who open their homes to give homeless families a place to live until they can find permanent housing. Friends of the Homeless Volunteers provide emotional support, information, transportation, child care, meals, special projects, and more to sheltered families.

**Greater Boston Interfaith Organization**

307 Bowdoin Street  
Dorchester, MA 02122  
Phone: (617) 825-5600, 822-1499  
Fax: (617) 265-7503  
http://www.gbio.org

The Greater Boston Interfaith Organization (GBIO) is committed to bringing together, training and organizing the faith communities of Greater Boston across all religious, racial, ethnic, class, and neighborhood lines for the public good. The GBIO has organized itself in with the professional assistance of the Industrial Areas Foundation and the Organizing and Leadership Training Center.

**Greater Lowell Interfaith Leadership Alliance**

37 Lee Street  
Lowell, MA 01852  
Contact: Father John Cox  
Phone: (978) 454-9769

The Alliance, composed of clergy and senior lay people, meets monthly to discuss a variety of community issues and concerns, and to offer mutual support. The group consists of 75 member congregations; approximately 30 members attend each meeting. Alliance members are primarily Jewish and Christian, although the group is currently reaching out to the local Buddhist and Hindu communities.
Institute for Dialogue Among Religious Traditions
Boston University
School of Theology
745 Commonwealth Avenue
Boston, MA 02215
Contact: Associate Dean John Berthrong
Phone: (617) 353-6136 or (617) 353-3050

The mission of the Institute for Dialogue Among Religious Traditions is to encourage interfaith relations within the context of the Boston University School of Theology. The programs of the Institute will enable academic, professional, and theological reflection on the diversities of contemporary pluralistic religious study, experience, and social life within various communities of faith. This task will be accomplished with careful attention to what it means to be a professional seminary dedicated to intellectual excellence and to the profound search for truth experienced when people of different faiths meet in open and honest dialogue. The goals of the Institute are:

1. To stimulate Christian reflection about the theological challenge of religious pluralism.
2. To encourage the practical exploration of interfaith relations, cooperation, and dialogue with individuals and authentic communities of faith.
3. To cooperate with other academic research institutes, religious and church agencies in achieving the first two goals.

Interfaith AIDS Ministry
60 Highland Street
West Newton, MA 02165
Contact: Rev. Edward Franks, Executive Director
Phone: (617) 969-8511

Interfaith AIDS Ministry provides emergency supplemental aid and pastoral care services 1,100 occasions annually to persons with AIDS at the request of hospitals, AIDS service organizations, clinics, Visiting Nurses Associations, and other organizations located in the seven eastern counties of Massachusetts. IAM partially funds two part-time chaplains to people with AIDS and has teams of volunteers to render practical assistance. IAM is funded primarily by the Episcopal, American Baptist, United Methodist, United Church of Christ, and Unitarian denominations with some Jewish, Roman Catholic, foundation, and individual support. IAM is a no-fee agency.
International Association for Religious Freedom/New England Branch
35 Riverdale Road
Wellesley, MA 02181-1625
Contact: Natalie W. Gulbrandsen
Phone: (781) 235-2679
Fax: (781) 235-7350

The International Association for Religious Freedom was founded in 1900 to confront religious intolerance. It seeks to be guided by the spirit of truth, which transcends time and place, race and creed, country and color, but is present in the religious traditions of the world. Today the Association includes religious groups from throughout the world, and sponsors interfaith community projects in places where there is internal ethnic and religious conflict, such as Bangladesh, India, Pakistan, Hungary, Romania, Northern Ireland, the Philippines, and Nigeria. The United States chapter based in Boston has branches in many areas including New York, California, Washington D.C., Washington state, and many others are starting. The local Boston branch works in small groups where people of many faiths talk with one another about their faith experiences, including the practice of those faiths, and the common ground that is shared between members of different faith traditions (home, family, education, recreation) as well as the differences that separate them.

Inter-Religious Dialogue Program
Boston Theological Institute
210 Herrick Road
Newton, MA 02159
Phone: (617) 527-4880

The Boston Theological Institute, a consortium of nine theological schools in the Boston area, offers the year-long Religious Neighbors program. The program, which explores a particular theme each year, promotes inter-religious dialogue by enabling people to visit various religious communities in the greater Boston area. These visits are supplemented with a lecture series, open to all.

Martha's Vineyard Neighborhood Convention
RR 3, Box 115
Vineyard Haven, MA 02568
Contact: Rev. Douglas Dorchester
Phone: (508) 693-4601
This organization is an interfaith gathering of laity and clergy committed to fellowship and service on Martha’s Vineyard. It is the oldest inter-denominational group on the island, founded November 13, 1894, as a “neighborly meeting” to promote better relationships among all the congregations.

MATCH-UP Interfaith Volunteers, Inc.
140 Clarendon Street, Suite 620
Boston, MA 02116
Contact: Janet Seckel-Cerrotti, Executive Director
Phone: (617) 536-3557
Fax: (617) 536-4170
Email: matchelders@aol.com

MATCH-UP Interfaith Volunteers, Inc. is in its fifteenth year of helping frail, isolated elders and disabled persons in the greater Boston area. Volunteers of all ages and backgrounds help fulfill this mission by becoming friendly visitors and by escorting elders to medical appointments. MATCH-UP also offers health communication and caregiving workshops for seniors, congregations, and organizations.

The National Conference for Community and Justice
15 Broad Street, Suite 505
Boston, MA 02109
Phone: (617) 227-9155
http://www.nccj.org

The National Conference for Community and Justice, founded in 1927 as The National Conference of Christians and Jews, is a human relations organization dedicated to fighting bias, bigotry, and racism in America. NCCJ promotes understanding and respect among all races, religions, and cultures through advocacy, conflict resolution, and education.

Needham Interfaith Committee on Social Concerns
22 Morton Street
Needham, MA 02194
Contact: Susan Fleming
Phone: (781) 449-1612

“It is the mission of the Interfaith Committee on Social Concerns to coordinate the diverse talents of all of Needham’s religious congregations in addressing and resolving common social
problems. The Committee wishes to enhance communication among congregations, to effectively enlist available resources, and to apprise members of opportunities for service throughout our community. The Committee serves as a conduit to the existing town committee, and seeks to marshal the spiritual and financial resources of Needham’s congregations to implement policies and programs for the betterment of the community. The Committee hopes to encourage thoughtful evaluation of crucial issues and to promote understanding and tolerance of our neighbors through prayerful and participatory endeavors.”

**Norwood Clergy Association**  
United Church of Norwood  
595 Washington Street  
Norwood, MA 02062  
Contact: Rev. William Christensen  
Phone: (781) 762-2589

“The Norwood Clergy Association gathers on the third Tuesday of most months for the purpose of increasing the spirit of collegiality and mutual support among Norwood’s clergy. The group is open to clergy of any faith expression. Our principal objectives are

1. To enable Norwood’s clergy to know and support one another.  
2. To determine how our churches may act together for the common good of the community.  
3. To sponsor certain services of worship and other events which give witness to our common mission.”

**The Peace Abbey**  
2 North Main Street  
Sherborn, MA 01770  
Phone: (508) 650-3659  
http://www.peaceabbey.org

“The Peace Abbey is dedicated to loving the ways that others love God. The mission of the Peace Abbey is to create innovative models for society that empower children and adults on the paths of non-violence, peacemaking and cruelty-free living. It encourages its members and visitors to discover within the world’s religious traditions that which will facilitate their journey as instruments of peace and examples of compassionate living. The Abbey operates America’s only Pacifist Memorial and in the spirit of the Jain religion, runs the Veganpeace Animal Sanctuary for food production animals that have escaped from slaughterhouses.”
Quincy Interfaith Sheltering Coalition “Father Bill’s Place”
38 Broad Street
Quincy, MA 02169
Contact: David Phillips, Executive Director
Phone: (617) 770-3314
Fax: (617) 376-0634
http://www.fatherbillsplace.org

The mission of the Coalition is to serve the adult homeless population in Quincy and the south shore area. The Coalition serves approximately 1,000 clients per year, of which about one-fourth are women. The Coalition seeks to find housing, employment, and substance abuse treatment for its clients. Coalition board membership consists of Catholics, Episcopalians, Lutherans, and Presbyterians. The Coalition is seeking to enhance the participation of the Muslim, Jewish, and Buddhist communities.

Religion Communicators Council
Massachusetts Bay Chapter
The First Church of Christ, Scientist
175 Huntington Avenue, A-221
Boston, MA 02115-3187
Contact: Dr. W. Michael Born
Phone: (617) 450-3628
Fax: (617) 450-7120

As the oldest public relations organization in the United States, the Religion Communicators Council (RCCC) will be celebrating its 70th anniversary in 1999. The RCC is an interfaith organization whose mission is to assist its members to communicate with the broader secular society through mass media. Through interaction between religious groups and the media, the organization facilitates important networking and relationship-building opportunities. Massachusetts Bay Chapter members include religious groups such as the Christian Scientists, Church of Scientology, Evangelicals, Hare Krishnas, Lutherans, Mormons, Roman Catholic Church, Unitarian Universalists Association, and United Methodists, among others.

Somerville Interfaith Group
College Avenue United Methodist Church
14 Chapel Street
West Somerville, MA 02144
Contact: Rev. Dr. C. Edward Deyton
Phone: (617) 776-4172
“While celebrating our diversity, we strive to be a unified presence of God’s liberating love in Somerville through spiritual life and congregation-based community action which brings to bear our religious perspectives. We engage in spiritual education and celebration, and community involvement.”

**Wellesley Interfaith Association**
Newton/Wellesley Hospital  
2014 Washington Street  
Newton, MA 02162  
Contact: Fred Livezey  
Phone: (781) 235-9423  
Email: livezey@mediaone.net

“Wellesley Interfaith Association is a representative group of members from Wellesley faith communities which gathers together monthly to support each other and encourage the diversity of expression found among us. Recognizing that honest differences of opinion do exist among us but believing that the community of Wellesley can be well served by our efforts together, we have committed ourselves to each other and to providing opportunities for the Wellesley community to worship together in ecumenical services whenever possible. The group has historically been comprised mainly of ordained clergy, but has recently moved to include members from the Society for Friends, the Christian Science Church, and lay Catholic women who are religious leaders in their communities though not ordained by a church body.”

**Westwood Interfaith Council**
P.O. Box 466  
Westwood, MA 02090

The primary goal of the Council is to foster relationships between religious communities through education and mutual support. The Council identifies the religious community’s response to the 1981 destruction of a Jewish synagogue by arson as the primary source of their commitment. At that time, various Christian congregations banded together to provide space and resources to support the Jewish congregation. Today, in addition to periodic “pulpit swaps,” the Council coordinates joint outreach efforts to the community.
Women’s Interfaith Institute in the Berkshires
P.O. Box 422
Housatonic, MA 01236
Contact: Rev. Dr. Allison Stokes
Phone: (413) 274-1340
Fax: (413) 274-1047
Email: astokes@bcn.net

The Women’s Interfaith Institute is a non-profit corporation founded in 1992 to provide continuing education and support for ordained and non-ordained women in ministry, and for women studying for ministry. The Institute’s mission is to encourage, enable and make visible the ministry of women of all faith communities in our pluralistic society and thereby become partners with God in God’s mission of mending all creation.

CHRISTIAN

Massachusetts Council of Churches
14 Beacon Street, Room 416
Boston, MA 02108
Phone: (617) 523-2771
Fax: (617) 523-1483
Email: council@masscouncilofchurches.org
http://www.masscouncilofchurches.org

Established in 1902, the Massachusetts Council of Churches is composed of fifteen Protestant denominations in an ecumenical movement to heal a divided church and a broken world.

HINDU

Vishwa Hindu Parishad of America
43 Valley Road
Needham, MA 02192
Contact: Mahesh Mehta
Phone: (781) 444-7313

Vishwa Hindu Parishad of America is part of the International Vishwa Hindu Parishad whose objectives are to unite Hindus, to cultivate just pride for Hindu way of life, and to create an awakening to the potential Hinduism holds for all humankind.
JEWISH

**American Jewish Committee**
126 High Street
Boston, MA 02110
Contact: Lawrence Lowenthal
Phone: (617) 457-8700

Established in 1906, the American Jewish Committee works to ensure the security of Jews in the United States and around the world, to safeguard the basic principles of American democracy that guarantee the equality of all, and to enrich the quality of Jewish life.

**American Jewish Congress**
126 High Street
Boston, MA 02110
Phone: (617) 457-8888
Fax: (617) 988-6246
http://www.ajcongress-ne.org

The American Jewish Congress is a national membership organization struggling for social and economic justice, religious freedom and human rights in the United States and abroad.

**American Jewish Historical Society**
2 Thornton Road
Waltham, MA 02453
Phone: (781) 891-8110
http://www.ajhs.org

Incorporated in 1892, the oldest national ethnic historical organization in the United States, the American Jewish Historical Society serves as the national archives of the Jewish people in America.

**Jewish Community Relations Council of Greater Boston**
126 High Street
Boston, MA 02110
Contact: Nancy Kaufman, Executive Director
Email: nkaufman@jcrcboston.org
Phone: (617) 457-8600
Fax: (617) 988-6255
The Jewish Community Relations Council (JCRC) of Greater Boston is the representative voice of the organized Jewish community. JCRC’s mission, rooted in Jewish values and informed by Jewish history, reflects the ideals of American democracy. The JCRC, composed of constituent organizations, serves as a catalyst for building a strong and vibrant Jewish community in Boston and around the world; advocates for a safe, secure, democratic state of Israel; promotes an American society which is democratic, pluralistic, and just. In pursuit of its goals, the JCRC facilitates dialogue and forges an action agenda by encouraging collaborative partnerships within the Jewish community and between the Jewish community and the broader society. To this end, the JCRC: educates, assists, and enables the Jewish community to pursue social justice; advocates on issues of Jewish communal concern; builds coalitions for effective action and opportunities for community involvement; convenes the community in times of crisis, celebration, and commemorations.

Rabbinical Council of Massachusetts
177 Tremont Street
Boston, MA 02111
Phone: (617) 426-2139

The Council administers the Rabbinic Court of Massachusetts to resolve religious questions, establishes kosher laws and provides kosher certification for products, and oversees ritual practices for the Jewish community.

PAGAN

The Society of Elder Faiths
P.O. Box 335
Boston University Station
Boston, MA 02215
Contact: Roger Powell
Phone: (508) 839-3457 (answering machine)
Email: sef@elderfaiths.org
http://www.elderfaiths.org/

“The Society of Elder Faiths (SEF) is a Pagan religious organization incorporated as a church under Massachusetts laws. The SEF was founded by elders of five Wiccan covens in order to provide services to the local Pagan community which require a larger, more formal structure than our individual covens can comfortably offer.

The SEF exists to worship the Goddess and the Old Gods, to teach the principles of our faith, to celebrate the rites of our religion, to realize fellowship and unity within our membership and among the elder faiths, to render loving service to the Earth and all Her inhabitants, to train and ordain clergy of our faith, and to promote the understanding of our faith.”
Cultural Resources

ASIAN AMERICAN

Asian American Resource Workshop
160 Kneeland Street, 2nd Floor
Boston, MA 02111-2715
Phone: (617) 426-5313
Email: aarw@datablast.net

The Asian American Resource Workshop (AARW) promotes the empowerment of the Asian American community through advocacy, education, and celebration of Asian American experience, culture, and art. The AARW publishes the Massachusetts Asian/Pacific Islander American Directory which contains a thorough listing of the many Asian-American resources in Boston and throughout the state. The most recent edition can be obtained from AARW for a modest charge.

Asian Task Force Against Domestic Violence
P.O. Box 120108
Boston, MA 02112-0108
Contact: Nanda Shewmangal
Phone: (617) 338-2350 office; (617) 338-2355 hotline
Fax: (617) 338-2354
Email: asiandv@atask.org
http://www.atask.org

The Asian Task Force Against Domestic Violence operates three programs to eliminate family violence and strengthen Asian families and communities: the Asian Shelter and Advocacy Project (ASAP) which maintains a 24-hour multilingual hotline, an emergency shelter, advocacy and counseling, support services for children, English as a Second Language tutoring, and immigrant survival skills workshops; Project Safe, a program that focuses on outreach, education, and prevention in Asian and mainstream communities; and the Lowell Asian Outreach Project which serves the Asian communities in Lowell.
Asian Outreach Program
Greater Boston Legal Services
197 Friend Street
Boston, MA 02114
Contact: Zenobia Lai
Phone: (617) 371-1270 x324
Fax: (617) 371-1222

Greater Boston Legal Services (GBLS) is a non-profit legal service which provides free representation in the areas of family, housing, immigration, public assistance and disability to people who are income-eligible. The Asian Outreach Program is specially catered to Asian clients who have a limited ability to communicate in English and therefore have a difficult time communicating with GBLS staff.

Institute for Asian American Studies
UMass Boston
100 Morrissey Boulevard
Boston, MA 02125-3393
Phone: (617) 287-5650
Fax: (617) 287-5656
Contact: Dr. Paul Watanabe
Email: asian_am@umbsky.cc.umb.edu

The Institute conducts applied research and policy analysis on the status and needs of Asian Americans in Massachusetts; it seeks to expand Asian American studies in the curriculum and to strengthen Asian American community development.

Massachusetts Asian American Commission
105 Chauncy Street
Boston, MA 02111
Phone: (617) 426-9492

The Massachusetts Asian American Commission actively promotes Asian American interests and concerns by organizing programs and engaging in cultural and economic affairs, as well as civil rights issues.
CAMBODIAN

Cambodian Community of Massachusetts, Inc.
191 North Common Street, 3rd Floor
Lynn, MA 01905
Phone: (781) 593-4222

The Cambodian Community of Massachusetts helps Cambodian refugees adjust to their new home by providing counseling, referral, translation, and other social services.

CHINESE

Chinese American Association of Greater Boston
38 Chauncy Street, Suite 812
Boston, MA 02111
Contact: Cindy Lam-Yee
Phone: (617) 865-4750

The Chinese American Association’s goals are to unite, educate, and mobilize the Chinese community in order to benefit and promote their interests.

Chinese Cultural Center
65 Harrison Avenue, 6th Floor
Boston, MA 02111
Contact: Hai-Lung Huang
Phone: (617) 482-3292

The Chinese Cultural Center has a Chinese library and several classrooms, a conference room, and a large hall for public and private use.

Chinese Culture Institute
276 Tremont Street
Boston, MA 02116
Contact: Dr. Doris Chu, President
Phone: (617) 542-4599
Fax: (617) 338-4274
Email: CCIBoston@yahoo.com
CCI promotes racial harmony through cultural understanding and cross-cultural collaboration. Its Tremont Theatre and Tremont Gallery showcase artists of excellence from diverse cultural backgrounds. Its Theatre Company Residency program is open to all eligible applicants.

**Chinese Historical Society of New England**
2 Boylston Street, Suite G-3
Boston, MA 02116
Phone: (617) 338-4339
Fax: (617) 338-4583
Contact: Stephanie Fan
http://yerkes.mit.edu/Chinatown/chsne.html

The mission of the Historical Society is to document, preserve, and promote the history and legacy of Chinese immigration and settlement in New England.

**HMONG**

**Hmong Lao Foundation**
405 Main Street
Fitchburg, MA 01420
Phone: (978) 342-1892

The Foundation provides a variety of services, including: interpretation and translation; public assistance, legal, health, and housing referral; as well as employment information and services.

**INDIAN (ASIAN)**

**Gujarati Gurjar Association of New England**
Contact: Mr. Chetan Shah, President
6 Skyview Terrace
North Andover, MA 01845
Phone: (978) 725-5550
Email: chetan1000@aol.com
http://www.gurjar.org

The Association promotes the Gujarati culture, organizes activities for the elderly, provides programs for youths, and sponsors many cultural events.
New England Kannada Koota
1 Michael Way #145
Andover, MA 01810
Contact: Dr. Sharanabasava B. Rajur
Phone: (508) 543-9155
Fax: (508) 698-1615
http://www.nekk.org

New England Kannada Koota is a cultural organization representing the Kannada speaking people from the Karnataka state in India who have settled in Boston and the New England region. It is one of the oldest organizations of its kind, and has been active in the area for the last 25 years. The organization’s purpose is to propagate Kannada language, culture, music, dance and drama, and in general to facilitate social and cultural activities among Kannada-speaking people. Check the website for a listing of the group’s events, and links to the national Kannada Koota organization, as well as related religious websites.

Kerala Association of New England
Contact and Phone: Elsie Marigoli, Secretary (781) 736-0913
George Tharisayi, President (978) 687-6404

The Kerala Association seeks to maintain both the Kerala culture and contact with other Kerala people living in the New England area.

Orissa Association
Contact: Budhinath Padhy
Phone: (508) 393-9362
Email: bpadhy@gis.net

The Association was founded by eight families for the purpose of promoting Oriya culture and fostering fellowship among people from Orissa. The Association hosts three major events every year which are open to the public.
Prabasi
58 Bittersweet Lane
Weston, MA 02193
Contact: Sujit Kumar
Phone: (781) 647-1451
Fax: (508) 467-6796

Prabasi promotes Bengali culture through cultural programs, and by teaching Bengali language, history, and music.

Shishu Bharati School of Languages and Cultures of India
Classes meet at:
Marshall Simond Middle School
Burlington, MA 01803
http://www.shishubharati.org

Shishu Bharati, a non-profit school, offers a broad spectrum of educational programs in the languages and cultures of India for students of all ages. The school’s objective is to develop a sense of well-informed cultural pride in the students by exposing them to Indian arts, customs, languages, religion, history, geography, and current events. The school has over 120 students, 40 teachers, and numerous volunteers from diverse backgrounds. Language programs offered include Gujarati, Hindi, Marathi, Sanskrit, Sindhi, Tamil, and Telegu. In addition, free Yoga classes are offered for adults. To supplement language and culture classes, Shishu Bharati has a library and extra-curricular activities that include performances by artists, field trips, and outdoor games.

Telugu Association of Greater Boston
Contact: Madhu Chary
Phone: (781) 273-4633

The Telugu Association seeks to promote the Telugu language and culture, and create a forum for Telugu speakers to meet one another.
JAPANESE

Japan Society of Boston, Inc.
1 Milk Street
Boston, MA 02109
Phone: (617) 451-0726
Fax: (617) 451-1191
Email: jsb@us-japan.org
http://www.us-japan.org/boston

Founded in 1904, the Japan Society provides language programs, symposia, exhibits, and The Guide To Japan In New England, a listing of Japan-related organizations and businesses in the New England area.

KOREAN

Korean American Society of New England, Inc.
109 Medway Street
Milford, MA 01757
Contact: Kyu Tael Seo
Phone: (508) 473-8310

The Korean American Society is a community of New England Koreans which seeks to promote the awareness of Korean culture and to sponsor social activities.

PAKISTANI

Pakistan Association of Greater Boston
396 Old Connecticut Path
Framingham, MA 01701
Phone: (617) 731-7168
Email: pagweb@mail.serve.com
http://www.serve.com/pagbweb

The Association is a non-political, social, and educational organization that promotes the culture of Pakistan; it also helps Pakistani immigrants to assimilate into the local culture.
VIETNAMESE

**Vietnamese American Civic Association**
1486 Dorchester Avenue
Boston, MA 02122
Phone: (617) 288-7344
Fax: (617) 288-4860

The Vietnamese American Civic Association facilitates the resettlement of Vietnamese immigrants and refugees to the Greater Boston area.

OTHER

**Boston Human Rights Commission**
Boston City Hall, Room 966
Boston, MA 02201
Phone: (617) 635-3562

The Boston Human Rights Commission investigates discrimination complaints and provides educational information about human and civil rights.

**East Boston Ecumenical Community Council**
Housing Justice Zone
28 Paris Street
East Boston, MA 02128
Contact: Silvanea Drumont
Phone: (617) 569-1134, 567-2750
Fax: (617) 569-5946

The East Boston Ecumenical Community Council works with tenants to prevent illegal rent increases, evictions, and ensures code violations are corrected.
The Asian American Policy Review
Harvard University
John F. Kennedy School of Government
79 John F. Kennedy Street
Cambridge, MA 02138
Phone: (617) 496-8655
Fax: (617) 496-9027
Email: aapr@harvard.edu
http://www.ksg.harvard.edu/~aapr/

The Asian American Policy Review was established to bridge the divide between academia and public policy by offering scholars, elected officials, policy analysts, and community leaders a forum to discuss contemporary issues and events affecting the Asian Pacific American community. As the first non-partisan, scholarly journal devoted to examining public policy issues affecting the APA community, the Review also trains future scholars and leaders. In doing so, the Review not only encourages greater dialogue on the impact of public policies on Asian Pacific Americans, but also promotes leadership within the Asian Pacific American community.

Boston Shinshu News
781 Somerville Avenue
Somerville, MA 02143

“Boston Shinshu News is the quarterly newsletter of the Boston Shinshu Buddhist Sangha in the Jodo-Shinshu tradition founded by Shinran Shonin.” To be put on the mailing list, contact Richard St. Clair, Editor, at the same address.

Cambodian Press
P.O. Box 1896
Lowell, MA 01853
Phone: (978) 453-1617
Fax: (978) 441-2054

Cambodian Press is a bilingual newspaper, published bimonthly, which covers local events in the Southeast Asian community.
The Jewish Advocate
15 School Street
Boston, MA 02108
Contact: Steven A. Rosenberg, Editor
Phone: (617) 367-9100
Fax: (617) 367-9310

Founded in 1902, The Jewish Advocate is the oldest and largest newspaper serving the region’s Jewish community. As such, it has a long, proud tradition of bringing its readers news and opinions about Jewish issues locally, nationally and internationally.

Korea Times
1140 Commonwealth Avenue
Boston, MA 02134
Phone: (617) 713-0010

A daily newspaper of Korea published in the United States with a special section on the Korean community in Boston.

Sampan
200 Tremont Street, Lower Level
Boston, MA 02116
Phone: (617) 426-9492
Fax: (617) 482-2316

Twice a month Chinese-English newspaper exploring local issues and cultural topics. Free of charge.

Thang Long Newspaper
P.O. Box 398
Boston, MA 02122
Phone: (617) 436-4036
Fax: (617) 822-3444
Email: Hviet21@ma.ultranet.com
http://www.conong.com

Provides news coverage for the Vietnamese community on Vietnamese culture, arts, and language.
**U.S.-China Review**  
U.S.-China Peoples Friendship Association New England  
720 Massachusetts Avenue  
Cambridge, MA 02139  
Phone: (617) 491-0577

Quarterly magazine in English covering cultural events in China and the United States to promote better U.S.-Chinese relations.
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Index of Centers

A
American Buddhist Shim Gum Do, 14
Annunciation Greek Orthodox Cathedral of New England, 41

B
Baha’i Community of Greater Boston, 7
Bawa Muhaiyaddeen Fellowship, 76
Bean Town Sangha, 15
Beth David of the South Shore, 93
Boston Dharmadhatu/Shambhala Meditation Center, 16
Boston Nizari Ismaili Cultural Center, 77
Boston Satsang Group Center for Mata Amritanandamayi, 64
Boston Society of the New Jerusalem (Swedenborgian Church of Boston), 42
Boston Sufi Order, 78
Brahma Kumaris World Spiritual Organization, 112

C
Cambridge Buddhist Association, 17
Cambridge Insight Meditation Center, 18
Cambridge Zen Center, 19
Cambridgeport Baptist Church, 43
Center of Traditional Taoist Studies, 122
Chua Luc Hoa: Boston Buddhist Culture Center, 20
Church of the Covenant, 44
Cohasset Vedanta Centre, 65
Commission on Indian Affairs, 106
Congregation Beth El of the Sudbury River Valley, 94
Congregation Beth Pinchas Bostoner Rebbe’s, 95
Congregation Mishkan Tefila, 96
Covenant of Unitarian Universalist Pagans, 116

D
Dhyanyoga Center, 113
Dzogchen Foundation, 21
E
EarthSpirit Community, 117

F
First Church of Christ, Scientist, 45
Friends Meeting at Cambridge, 46

G
Ganeshe Temple, 66
Glory Buddhist Temple/Bunlieu Buddha Cakra, 22
Guru Ram Das Ashram, 119

H
Harvard-Epworth Church, 47
Havurat Shalom, 97

I
Iglésia Bautista Central, 43
International Buddhist Progress Society -- Boston, 23
International Society for Krishna Consciousness of New England, 67
Islamic Center of Boston, 79
Islamic Center of New England (Quincy), 80
Islamic Center of New England (Sharon), 81
Islamic Council of New England, 82
Islamic Society of Boston, 83
Islamic Society of Greater Worcester, 84

J
Jain Center of Greater Boston, 87

K
Kehillath Israel, 98
King’s Chapel, 48
Kurukulla Center for Tibetan Buddhist Studies, 24
M
Masjid Al-Qur’an, 85
Massachusetts Buddhist Association, 25
Massachusetts Budhi Siksa Society Inc. Thousand Buddha Temple, 26
Massachusetts Center for Native American Awareness, Inc., 107
Mun Su Sah, 27

N
New England Sikh Study Circle, 120
Nipmuc Tribal Council -- Hassamamisco, 108
North American Indian Center of Boston, 109

P
Park Street Church, 49

R
Ramakrishna Vedanta Society, 68
Resurrection Lutheran Church, 50

S
Sakya Institute, 28
Sanghikaram Wat Khmer, 29
Siddha Yoga Meditation Center of Greater Boston, 114
Soka Gakkai International -- New England, 30
Sounsa Buddhist Temple, 31
Sri Akshar Puroshottam Swaminarayan Hindu Temple, 69
Sri Lakshmi Temple, New England Hindu Temple Inc., 70
St. James the Greater in Chinatown, 51
St. Leonard’s of Port Maurice Church, 52
St. Mary’s Orthodox Church, 53
St. Stephen’s Armenian Apostolic Church of Greater Boston, 54
Swaminarayan Temple, 71

T
Temple Beth Shalom Tremont Street Shul, 99
Temple Israel -- Adath Israel, 100
Temple Vietnam, 32
Tremont Temple Baptist Church, 55
Trinity Church, 56
Triratanaram Temple, 33
Twelfth Baptist Church, 57

U
Universal Buddhist Congregation, 34

W
Wampanoag Tribe of Gay Head, 110

Y
Young Israel, 101

Z
Zoroastrian Association of the Greater Boston Area, 124