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Message from the President

At this special time of Thanksgiving, may we reflect on the many blessings we enjoy as individuals and communities. May our diversity continue to enrich our shared experiences, strengthen our understanding of one another, and inspire us to work together for greater unity and the common good.

I am deeply grateful for the opportunity to work alongside such thoughtful and talented individuals who give generously of their time, wisdom, and compassion. Together, through dialogue, understanding, and service, we continue to build a more welcoming and caring community for all.

Wishing everyone a meaningful and happy Thanksgiving.

Christine Baronins,
President
Manitoba Multifaith Council



THE MANITOBA MULTIFAITH COUNCIL
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We are also looking for individuals who are interested in interfaith work and would like to serve on one of our four working committees:

Corrections Committee: To execute the purposes of the Council relative to the corrections system in Manitoba.

Spiritual Health Committee: To work with health organizations to improve the wellness of Manitobans and bring faith groups and practitioners together to serve the community.

Education and Interfaith Network Committee: To generate multi-faith education programs in Manitoba communities and to foster networking among the various interfaith organizations.

Community Relations Committee: To strengthen relationships between the Manitoba Multifaith

Council and Faith communities, Community organizations, and Government and civic leaders

For more information contact us at:
info.manitobamultifaith@gmail.com

Important Dates in October

October 1

Christian Harvest Festival (Christianity)

A harvest celebration in which produce from the harvest is traditionally displayed in church.

October 2

Gandhi Jayanti (Hinduism)

Commemorates the birthday of Mahatma Gandhi.

October 3

Shemini Atzeret (Judaism)

Jewish festival marking the beginning of the rainy season in Israel, traditionally observed with festive meals and celebration. The annual Torah-reading cycle restarts.

October 3

Simchat Torah (Judaism)

Celebrates the Torah and completion of the annual reading cycle, moving from the end of Deuteronomy back to the beginning of Genesis.

October 5

Confucius' Birthday (Confucianism)

Commemorates the birth of Confucius.

October 9

Guru Ram Das's Gurburab / Prakesh (Sikhism)

Celebrates the birth of Guru Ram Das, the fourth Sikh Guru.

October 16

Feast of 'Ilm (Knowledge) (Bahá'í)

Description: A Bahá'í observance associated with 'Ilm, meaning "Knowledge."

October 20

Gurgadi Divas of Siri Guru Granth Sahib (Sikhism)

Commemorates the Guruship of the Guru Granth Sahib.

October 20

Birth of the Báb (Bahá'í)

Description: Celebrates the birth of the Báb, who foretold the coming of Bahá'u'lláh.

October 20

Harkrishan Becomes the 8th Guru (Sikhism)

Guru Granth Sahib Becomes the 11th and Final Guru (Sikhism)

October 21
Guru Har Rai's Jyoti Jot (Sikhism)
Guru Gobind Singh's Jyoti Jot (Sikhism)
Commemorates the death of Guru Har Rai, the seventh Sikh Guru and the death of Guru Gobind Singh, the tenth Sikh Guru.



A tribute to Brenda Suderman by John Longhurst

I first met Brenda Suderman in the late 1980s when she was writing for the *Mennonite Distorter*, a satirical publication that made fun of denominational leaders and bureaucracy, theological disputes and the Mennonite tendency toward earnestness.

It was famous for the first question its reporters asked everyone they interviewed: "So, where do you get off, anyway?"

I don't recall what I told her. But I do recall many more meetings with her over the next 40 or so years as we both pursued careers that overlapped and then merged—me in communications for various non-profits and she as a journalist who sometimes interviewed me.

In 2019, we found ourselves working as freelance religion reporters at the Winnipeg Free Press when she joined my Religion in the News project at the newspaper.

I mention this because on Sept. 19, Brenda passed away. Her death has prompted a time of remembrance and reflection.

Raised in Winkler, Brenda graduated from Carleton University's journalism program in 1988 and worked for newspapers in Fort Smith, NWT, Portage la Prairie, MB, and Saskatoon, SK, as well as freelancing for various publications.

I started writing for the Free Press as a religion columnist in 2003; Brenda started in 2006, writing general news and features along with religion. She continued doing that until 2023, when she retired.

We worked together for four of those years, from 2019-23. We found ourselves touching base frequently during that time, checking in to see who would cover what story.

When she signed off three years ago, she wrote in the Free Press about what that reporting had meant to her—the people and the places she had got to know and visit, and how they impacted her life.

We never did talk about AI and writing, so I don't know what she would think of my asking it about her reporting. Here's what it said:

Brenda Suderman's Winnipeg Free Press work is best described as empathetic community journalism: carefully reported, warmly written stories about faith, immigration, memory, neighbourhood life, cultural institutions and the ordinary people who sustain them.

She was not primarily a confrontational or investigative reporter. Her strength was to enter a community respectfully, find a human story within it, and explain why that story matters beyond the individuals involved.

It went on to say that, in her reporting, Brenda put people first; that she had strong observational detail; that she had a narrative rather than an argumentative structure; she held a generous view of her subjects; and her writing was accessible without excessive simplification.

It commended her broad and ecumenical faith coverage, seeing faith not just as something that happens in places of worship, but as part of civic and social life.

In one sentence, it said she was a "patient, observant and humane feature journalist who turns Winnipeg's religious, cultural and community life into accessible human narratives—less interested in exposing people than in helping readers understand them."

I echo all of that.

Over the time we knew each other, we didn't always see eye-to-eye on things. Sometimes we frustrated each other. But I respected her as a journalist and counted her as a friend.

Free Press story can be found at this link:

<https://www.winnipegfreepress.com/arts-and-life/life/2026/10/10/faith-and-works>

A Look Back at September



Manitoba Multifaith Council Annual General Meeting

The Manitoba Multifaith Council held its Annual General Meeting in September, bringing together board members and representatives from Manitoba's diverse faith communities to reflect on the Council's work over the past year and look ahead to the coming year. Reports highlighted MMC's continuing efforts to strengthen relationships among faith communities through education, dialogue, community engagement and service. The meeting also provided an opportunity to recognize the contributions of members and volunteers, review the work of MMC's committees and initiatives, and reaffirm





commitment and resources, and reaffirm the Council's commitment to building understanding, cooperation and stronger communities throughout Manitoba



This year's Annual General Meeting marked both change and growth for the Manitoba Multifaith Council. The Council announced the retirement of Ron Long, following an extraordinary 40 years of service on the MMC Board, and recognized Ray Harris, who is stepping down as Executive Secretary after more than a decade in that role. Ray will continue to serve as a member of the Board in the coming year. Ruth Ashrafi was elected to serve as Executive Secretary, succeeding Ray in this important role.

The Council also recognized Ken Kuhn, who is stepping down as Chair of the Justice and Corrections Committee and concluding his service on the MMC Board. We are grateful to Ken for his leadership and his contribution to the important work of the Council. Peter Rempel has taken on the role of Chair of the Justice and Corrections Committee, continuing the committee's work in the coming year.

The Board expresses its deep gratitude to Ron, Ray and Ken for their dedicated service and significant contributions to interfaith understanding, cooperation and community service in Manitoba. At the same time, MMC





We were also pleased to welcome Janice Lukes as our guest speaker, who shared thoughtful insights from her experience in government service and spoke about the important role of community-building in public life. Her remarks provided a fitting complement to MMC's own commitment to strengthening relationships and building more connected communities throughout Manitoba.

UPCOMING EVENTS

An Introduction to Secular Humanism

October 27, 2026, 7pm

First Unitarian Universalist Church of Winnipeg
603 Wellington Crescent, Winnipeg



MANITOBA
MULTIFAITH
COUNCIL

Presenter:

Daniel S. Dacombe MSc, MPhil, PhD(c)

Event Description:

As of 2021, more than a third of Canadians now identify as atheist, agnostic, or otherwise nonreligious. What does becoming an increasingly secular nation mean for Canada, and how do nonreligious individuals find meaning and purpose in their lives? Join the Manitoba Multifaith Council for an educational event exploring secular humanism as a life stance for nonreligious people. Participants will learn about the history, values, and practices of humanism, and will walk away informed on how humanist activists in Canada and around the world are working to create safe and pluralistic societies.

About the Presenter:

Daniel Dacombe is a secular humanist, writer, public speaker, and PhD candidate studying religious deconversion and deidentification. Since 2020 he has been an active member and volunteer at Humanist Canada, and for the past two years has been a host of The Voice of Canadian Humanism podcast. In 2026 he was a speaker at the World Humanist Congress in Ottawa, Canada, an event that brought together 500 delegates from over 40 countries. His background as a former seminary student, ministry professional, and Christian speaker gives him a unique perspective on religious belief

professional, and Christian speaker gives him a unique perspective on religious belief and behaviour and informs his work with academics, advocates, and other experts in the fields of religion and secularism. He is passionate about interfaith dialogue with people who share values with humanism and are willing to work together for the benefit of humanity's shared future.

To help the organizers, please RSVP with me at phone #, 416 832 8307, or at this email Labeed.ahmed@ahmadiyya.ca . But still feel welcome to join in the case you could not RSVP in time.



*15th Annual
Lieutenant Governor's
Award*

for
the Advancement of Interreligious
Understanding

CALL FOR NOMINATIONS

for individual members of a Manitoba religious
community whose volunteer efforts
demonstrate a commitment to fostering
dialogue and harmony among the various
religious communities in Manitoba and
beyond.

Go to the web page of

Go to the web page of
the Manitoba Lieutenant Governor
for submission requirements



DEADLINE FOR SUBMISSIONS: OCTOBER 30, 2026

We rely on word of mouth referrals for much of our activities. If you enjoyed your experience with us, please tell your friends by sharing this email on your social networks or forwarding to their email address. We appreciate your support!

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