Core Sikh Beliefs

- A single Creator sustains people of all faiths. All are free to practice their beliefs freely.

- Every human being is equal in the eyes of God. All positions of authority in Sikh religious and political life are open to both women and men.

- Sikhs are guided by three daily principles:
  - Work hard and honestly.
  - Always share your bounty with the less fortunate.
  - Remember God in everything you do.

- Sikhism seeks to create a just society. All Sikhs are required to contribute to the welfare of humanity.

- The Sikh religion does not have a clergy. Each individual is personally capable of experiencing the Creator.

- The Sikh faith rejects polytheism, idol worship, superstitions and blind rituals.

- Sikhism considers no place, day or time more holy than any other.

Gurdwara

The gurdwara is the Sikh place of learning and worship where the Guru Granth Sahib is installed. Visitors of any background can seek shelter, comfort, and food through the institution of langar, a free community kitchen open to all. Because the Sikh faith does not have an ordained clergy, any woman or man from the congregation may lead religious services.
About 25 million people around the world practice Sikhism, the fifth largest religion in the world after Christianity, Islam, Buddhism, and Hinduism. The religion originated in the Punjab region in the northern part of the Indian subcontinent. Sikhs believe that all human beings have the potential to realize God through loving devotion, truthful living and service to humanity.

**Scripture Guru Granth Sahib**
The Guru Granth Sahib is a collection of revelations that offer direction on living an ethical life that brings us closer to God. The compositions in the scripture include the poetry of the Sikh Gurus, as well as writings of non-Sikhs, and are sung as hymns to local classical music. The fifth Guru personally oversaw the compilation of this universal scripture in the year 1604.

![A Sikh reading from the Guru Granth Sahib. He holds a whisk which is waved over the scripture as a mark of respect.](image1)

**Articles of Faith Kakaar**
Sikhs display commitment to their religion by wearing five articles of faith that signify their outward commitment to living by Sikh principles of honor, justice and love for humanity. These are:

1. **Kes** - Uncut hair, covered by men with a turban which is optional for women who generally wear a scarf instead
2. **Kanga** - A small comb often placed within one’s hair
3. **Kachera** - Soldier shorts worn traditionally as an undergarment
4. **Kirpan** - A sword worn with a shoulder strap
5. **Kara** - A bracelet worn on the wrist

**Sikh Gurus**
The Sikh Gurus were prophets who preached a new revolutionary message to improve life on earth and to enable human beings to come closer to God. There were ten Gurus. The first, Guru Nanak, was born in 1469 and spread a message of love of God, social justice for humanity and freedom from superstitions and rituals. His nine successors advanced his message and institutionalized the Sikh religion.

Instead of assigning a person as a successor, the tenth Guru gave authority to two entities: the Guru Granth Sahib (Sikh scripture) and the Guru Khalsa Panth (community of initiated Sikhs).

**Initiated Community Guru Khalsa Panth**
In 1699, the tenth Sikh Guru founded the Guru Khalsa Panth, a community of Sikhs committed to the basic Sikh values of truth, productive labor, and spirituality. The Khalsa is expected to serve society, defend the oppressed, and provide leadership for the larger Sikh community. Sikhs initiated into the Guru Khalsa Panth can be identified by their articles of faith.