

Scientology joined other religions in Geneva to celebrate Christmas

Eight representatives of religions and spiritual movements gathered to create together a moment of sharing around the Christmas Party

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EINPresswire.com/ -- While Christmas may be the most important holiday for denominations within Christianity, it is also celebrated by religions with other roots, and even by people with no religion, and this is so in the international city of Geneva.

Geneva has welcomed a population of diverse faiths and nationalities, so it is no surprise that eight of the world's religions celebrate this joyous holiday together to share stories, situations, beliefs and plans to achieve world Peace, starting in Geneva.

On this occasion, the CLIMS (Centre de Liaison et d'Informations sur les

Mouvements Spirituels) in coordination with the Church of [Scientology](#) of Geneva and Rev. William McComish, organized a special event under the theme: Christmas: Time to Rise Spiritually.

Among the guests at that event were the Protestants, Scientologists, Muslims, Jewish, Hindus, Sukyo Mahikari Movement, and the Universal Peace Federation. Each of them made a presentation of their basic tenets and how they link to the actual spirit of Christmas, something that becomes more than evident when listening to the messages of these 8 religious leaders.



Interfaith Christmas celebration in Geneva



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The celebration included musical interludes, sung magnificently by Catherine Michel, who “gave emotion and admiration to an audience equally representative of each of the spiritualities represented” said Francine Bielawski, one of the organizers and representative for the Church of Scientology in Geneva.

As it is common at almost every good celebration, there is a culinary element that allows people and cultures to share their differences as a rich present for everyone around, so “The friendship buffet” was charged with closing the evening around a spiritual, hopeful and peaceful networking took place committing each other to further create and work on peace, respect, listening and sharing.

Christianity is the predominant religion in Geneva, so it makes sense that the largest population of people celebrates a traditional Christmas. Catholic churches in Geneva give Midnight Mass services on Christmas Eve and Christmas Day services throughout the morning. Buildings are ornately decorated on the outside to greet people and worshippers may gather to sing well-known carols and listen to sermons. Special services and traditions exist to enrich the worshipping experience, from the Solemnity of Mary to the lighting of the Yahrzeit candle.

Islam is also a major component of Geneva’s population, with 5% of its residents claiming to follow Islam as their faith. And although Christmas is not usually a celebrated holiday for Muslims, many mosques in the area will offer special services around the time of the holiday to share and show respect for all neighbours. They might include talks about the significance of Jesus and Mary in the Quran and prayers for peace in the world.

Judaism, with 4% of the population having identified themselves as Jewish in 2018, is also present on Christmas days to celebrate the Jewish holiday of Hanukkah, which falls at about the same time as Christmas each year. Synagogues around Geneva will usually provide special Hanukkah services and teach about the symbolism behind the holiday. It can involve the lighting of the menorah for each night of the eight-day celebration, so worshippers can learn about the importance of this ancient Jewish holiday.

Hindus, Sukyo Mahikari Movement, and the Universal Peace Federation always join their brothers and sisters of all religions, and those of none such as secular humanists, who use the increased moods of goodness and hope to share light on the need for education, healthcare and solidarity for all and other social issues. Some may go carolling in their town while others might organize charity drives to benefit those in need. Buddhist congregations in Geneva might offer special services and donations to the local people at the time of Christmas.

As to Scientology, which got established in Switzerland in 1974, Christmas is also celebrated by most of its members. Scientologists view Jesus as a great philosopher, teacher, and religious leader. However, while respecting the traditions, Scientologists make extra efforts to reinforce the spirit generated by the magic of Christmas, with more community services to help create a better society for all, everywhere, and often joining the programs of any other religion, as a

helping hand. As explained on the official website, Mr [L. Ron Hubbard](#) honoured the great religious leaders of the past for the wisdom they brought to the world, writing that Scientology shares “the goals set for Man by Christ, which are wisdom, good health and immortality.” It is in this spirit that Scientologists celebrate the holiday season, whether Christmas, Hanukah, Kwanzaa or any other religious or cultural tradition.

[Ivan Arjona](#), the representative for Scientology in Europe and the UN, told in a media interview that “there is a code in the Scientology doctrines, and which Scientologists adhere to, in which it says: ‘To use the best I know of Scientology to the best of my ability to help my family, friends, groups and the world.’ And because of this, during the holiday season, Scientologists are especially active in this respect, putting volunteer hours in a wide range of activities to improve the lives of individuals and the community, while at the same time bringing joy to those who may need assistance” concluded Arjona.

Christmas is a joyous and meaningful time for those of many religions in Geneva and the world. The residents learn from their neighbours’ celebrations how to appreciate the season and benefit from the various interpretations of Christmas in the world. “And what is most important,” said Francine Bielawski “even with our differences, we come together to commemorate this happy occasion.”

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