



Chapter 10

Disability, Asian Religions, and Spirituality: Partnering with Faith-Based Organizations





The importance of spiritual connections.

Asians are quite diverse in terms of the traditional cultures and religions practiced in their home countries and the United States. Religion strongly influences most Asian people's attitudes and beliefs about their life course and shapes their cultural values and traditional practices. It is difficult to separate Asian religions from Asian cultures because they are closely intertwined. The same is true in the context of disability.

Faith plays a significant role in how Asian people view those with disabilities and disability in general. This chapter introduces the links between Asian religions and disability and how that affects access to DRS-VR services for AAWDs in Illinois.

The goal is not to present the differences between cultural practices and religious practices but rather to heighten awareness of the religious aspects of disability. Some aspects may seem cultural, but this is to be expected as religion and culture are so closely tied.

"Today, more faith-based and community organizations are partnering with the federal government," said Jedd Medefind, former director of the Center for Faith-Based and Neighborhood Partnerships. "As a result, they are serving more people with disabilities." From

<http://www.standardnewswire.com/news/65729894.html>

According to Johnstone et al. (2006), religion can be defined as a formal and systematic construct with moral codes, beliefs, and worship systems and traditions. Spirituality is more of an individualized view of purpose and meaning.

Within a particular religion, “Individuals may cope with disability and promote self-esteem by providing rationalizations for their inability to perform some activity, or they may attempt to direct themselves and others away from problematic situations that lead to positive outcomes and decrease emphasis on physical attributes” (Johnstone, Glass, & Oliver, 2006, p. 1155).

It should be noted that although the views in the previous paragraph are general, they can provide a basis for understanding numerous religions’ views of disability. The main Asian religions discussed in this chapter are Islam, Buddhism, Hinduism, Confucianism, Taoism, Jainism, and Sikhism.

Why Is a Dialogue on Disability and Religion Necessary?

An American professor of physical medicine and rehabilitation, who was born with spinal muscular dystrophy, was the first to voice the need to address spiritual beliefs in the process of rehabilitation (Miles, 2011). Although many people believe that spirituality and religion are interchangeable, religion is a formal and systematic set of moral codes, beliefs, and traditions, whereas spirituality is a more individual view of purpose and meaning.

Common to both are beliefs and practices that influence help-seeking behaviors. Beliefs and practices are mostly shaped by culture, which for many Asians is highly influenced by religion and faith. Both personal and social understanding of disability may be shaped by an individual’s level of devotion and interpretations (Gaventa & Newell, 2005). Because religion so often influences a person’s tendency to seek or resist outside help, it is critical for DRS professionals to think about how to offer options to people who could benefit from the system’s services and resources. An interview with a Korean American man who is blind illustrates his perspective on religion and spirituality and its many variations among family members.

Interviewer: I'm curious, when it comes to coping and your journey professionally, personally, spiritually...how does religion play a role?

Korean Man: I've kind of over the years developed my own faith—I guess my own relationship with God. Over the years—parts of high school, parts of college, and here and there—I've attempted different churches and different faiths. In a lot of established religions and established faiths and established churches, I've always found a contradiction between what was preached and the great messages of compassion and empathy and inclusion and love and actual practice.

In some cases I walked away thinking it was really hypocritical, how these people, after an hour's sermon of talking about welcoming and connecting and forgiveness... as small talk, what happens is all this outrage about... sexual orientation or minorities... I couldn't reconcile being part of an established faith, that just seemed very limiting.

So between some of the stuff that I've read and my own wanderings over it and conversations with my friends and all the different churches and congregations and sermons that I've attended, I came to a realization and understanding that I do believe in God or a higher power... I talk to him or her or it or whoever that may be.

And I do get comfort in both appreciating whatever guidance I get and the benefits I'm grateful for, as well as when things are going not so well and just having a sense of comfort in praying in my own way. It's odd, my prayers or conversations with my God are everything from saying "hi" down the street when I walk to sitting and having conversations in my head.

Interviewer: Did your parents have a faith that they affiliated with?

Korean Man: No, not growing up, they really didn't. As a family we really didn't talk about it. Now since they're in their 70s, they go to a Buddhist temple monthly.

Interviewer: Have you ever joined them?

Korean Man: Not yet. It's a Korean-speaking temple and I don't speak Korean. The temple is in Chicago, so they drive in. Our routine is they either go to temple, then swing by and stop for a visit, or they stop by and visit and then go to temple.

The purpose of this chapter is to provide information about the roles of Asian religions in shaping perspectives on disability, people with disabilities, and the entire mechanism of accessing services. We introduce the major religions practiced in Asia, set up relationships between these religions and disability, and explain how these relationships can affect service use by AAWDs. Customizing rehabilitation needs and services to clients' beliefs can be very difficult for DRS, given the diversity of beliefs and practices in different faiths, so we recommend that DRS develop relationships with faith-based entities as a way to improve service delivery practices and outcomes for pan-Asian communities. Hasnain, Cohen, and Shanawani (2008) emphasize that individuals and families may link disability to "religious or folk explanations" or to medical explanations, depending on their level of acculturation and experience with disability.

Involving a spiritual or faith-based healer may help to integrate cultural elements into the VR process. Because developing cultural competency among VR and related disability professionals is important, DRS staff must learn to ask the right kinds of questions: "To better serve diverse populations, it is imperative that we understand the cultural beliefs and attitudes that determine behaviors, guide decisions, and affect interactions between a provider and a client and a family" (Hasnain et al., 2008, p. 8).

Integration of traditional faith healers into service sectors such as VR could help to achieve successful VR outcomes. The information in this chapter, however, is limited and must be supplemented with additional consultations and sources. The information provided here on religious traditions is meant to help DRS understand the variations and commonalities in Asians' religious practices.

Providers are cautioned not to over-generalize or to characterize all members of a religious group as being alike. Factors to be considered in assessing a person's spiritual identity, practice, and beliefs include, age, sex, ethnic group, faith community, life experiences, and individual characteristics. The following questions can help to determine the spiritual needs and beliefs of VR customers:

- Is your religion or spirituality important to you?
- Do you have a particular religious tradition?
- Are there religious customs or spiritual practices that are important to you that are likely to be disrupted during your rehabilitation?
- Are there ways we can help maintain your spiritual strength or routine during your VR process (e.g., providing prayer rugs, workshop opportunities, kosher or halal meals, baptism, communion, etc.)?

If a customer says that religion or spirituality is not important, it may be useful to ask and document the following types of questions:

- Do you find strength and support in other areas of your life?
- Are there ways we can help connect you and your family to VR services and supports?

Faith-Based Organizations and Their Roles in Addressing Disability



St. Therese Chinese Catholic Church in Chinatown, Chicago.

Besides working with community-based organizations (CBOs) that serve Asian Americans, DRS can try to build connections with local faith-based organizations (FBOs). FBOs provide important community services grounded in spiritual or religious premises. Although no legal or federal definition clearly defines a “faith-based” entity, the religious aspect may pose difficulties in qualifying for government funding. The U.S. Department of Labor is one of many government agencies that provide grant funding for FBOs.

FBOs are grassroots and can be useful resources for DRS in collaborations with various pan-Asian networks. Because FBOs such as churches, temples, synagogues, and mosques often provide general support services for their members, they can be influential in addressing disability issues and facilitating VR service access to AAWDs and their families. In today’s political climate, many people are concerned that taxpayer dollars will be used to fund religious activities. Therefore, it is important to know that FBOs cannot use direct federal grants to fund religious worship, instruction, or proselytizing.

Recommended Strategies

Approaching FBOs can be an effective way to connect with hard-to-reach populations like Asian Americans. Regardless of their size, these entities understand the needs of their communities and have gained the trust of individuals and families who may be reluctant to access mainstream services. When FBOs and mainstream disability organizations such as DRS develop partnerships, both groups gain unique opportunities to serve individuals from diverse backgrounds who also have disabilities. For disability and workforce organizations, the first step is to identify the FBOs in your community. This step is often the most challenging. Don't be afraid to approach FBOs: just introduce yourself and your agency. After the initial contact, taking time to get to know one another is essential to develop credibility. We recommend that you reach out and develop relationships with FBOs and associations (please see Appendix I for a listing of Asian FBOs in the Chicago area). In addition, it is important to gain a basic understanding of the major Asian religions.

Major Asian Religions

Because Asia is the largest continent and the world's most populous region, each of the world's religions, major and minor, is represented by significant population. Because it is not possible to discuss them all here, we consider Islam, Hinduism, Buddhism, Confucianism, Taoism, Jainism, and Sikhism.

Islam is the majority religion in Southwest Asia (e.g., Saudi Arabia, Iran, Iraq, Turkey), South Asia (e.g., Pakistan, Afghanistan, India, Bangladesh, Maldives), and Southeast Asia (e.g., Indonesia, Malaysia, Brunei). Southeast and South Asia, which are more religiously diverse, include Hinduism and Buddhism as well. Sects of Hinduism include Jainism, Shivapranami, and Baishnav. Buddhism is divided into sects (e.g., Theraveda and Mahayana), each of which has further subsects. Jainism, Sikhism, Confucianism, Taoism, Judaism, and Christianity have limited geographic coverage but are highly influential in particular areas.



Sculpture of a Chinese Zodiac rabbit in Chinatown Square

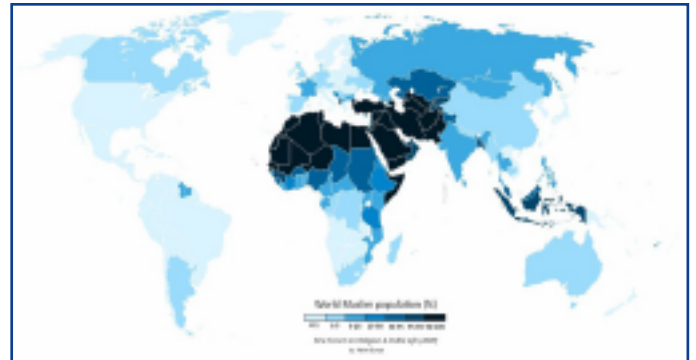
Gaventa and Newell (2005) argue that “most faith traditions envision the divine in charge of events in life and mostly have understood disability as a misfortune. [A] central thread in many faith traditions is that disability is a sign of punishment, moral deviance, or some kind of fallen state.”

- In general, most Asian religions see disability as a reason for charity, but it is important to note that not all Asians have such beliefs. In addition, they may not know their options in the U.S. unless they have been informed of their rights and choices.
- In communities that believe disability merits only charity, people who have disabilities may resist actively seeking out disability services because they believe that they have no right to work or to obtain VR support. It is vitally important for DRS to help such people realize they have the option to pursue life in the U.S. just like anyone else.

Islam

Islam strongly focuses on service and helping others. People with disabilities are seen as deserving recipients of charitable services (Coleridge, 1999). Islam requires its followers to prostrate themselves in prayer five times a day, but the Quran (holy book) allows people who find this requirement challenging to pray in postures that are convenient for them (for example, while sitting or standing).

Although stigma and negative attitudes about disability may be common in some Muslim communities, the Islamic emphasis on social responsibility and collective well-being also means that there is a strongly held common belief that people who are able to do so must take care of the sick, the aged, and the disabled (Coleridge, 1999). Disabled people are sometimes thought to be unable to contribute to their family financially or in other ways. In addition, people whose disabilities preclude marriage have reduced status.



Map of countries with high Muslim densities.



Muslim men and women walking along Devon Avenue, Chicago.

The general Muslim treatment of people with disabilities can be compared to the orthodox Muslim treatment of women, who are required to cover their faces and bodies with veils and robes. When families similarly overprotect disabled relatives, they may become under-engaged or even isolated. Disabled Muslims who live in such situations and want to access services to optimize their skills or treat their conditions thus face increased challenges. Hyperprotective attitudes toward women and the disabled may also create problems for those trying to work with families to access assistive services. According to Coleridge (1999), some families may appear to be neglecting their disabled children, but such situations are primarily due to overprotection, understimulation, and/or ignorance.

Islam, like Judaism and Christianity, is monotheistic (it acknowledges One God). Christianity is seen in almost all Asian countries but particularly in the Philippines, the northern region of Kazakhstan, and Taiwan. Outside of Israel, Jewish populations are very small across Asia and may be nonexistent in some countries, such as Saudi Arabia. As is the case in Israel, many Asian countries (e.g., India, Korea, China, and Indonesia) contain multiple religions. These countries are typically more religiously diverse than those of the Middle East, which, except for Israel, is predominantly Muslim. Many areas of Eastern Asia contain six major religions: Hinduism, Buddhism, Confucianism, Taoism, Jainism and Sikhism.

Hinduism


Hinduism is the majority religion of India. Like other Southern and Eastern Asian religions, Hinduism views disability differently than Middle Eastern religions (Judaism and Islam) and Western European and American forms of Christianity. In Hinduism, many disabilities are viewed as punishment for behavior that has violated religious rules or rites. For example, the “Institute of Vishnu cross-lists several disabilities with the sin committed in a previous incarnation that resulted in each disability... one who steals a lamp, will be blind” (Baldwin, 2006, p. 37). Congenital disability may be seen as the result of parents’ poor choices or karma.

In Hinduism, restrictions are placed on disabled people that prohibit them from certain tasks, such as studying the Vedas, some of Hinduism’s most sacred texts (Baldwin, 2006). Hinduism also prohibits people with disabilities from becoming kings, priests, royal counselors, and monks because of inheritance laws and specific qualifications for these positions (Baldwin, 2006). It is important to note that Sikhs do not accept or acknowledge the Vedas.

Because the Hindu religion acknowledges many gods, religious views vary according to individual belief and practice. Often associated with Hinduism is **Jainism**, the second most common religion in India. Hinduism and Jainism are closely related but do have many differences. Those who practice Jainism do not believe in one God, but in a complex system of reincarnations and karma.



Buddhist temple of Chicago.



“It’s like I mentioned, one of the stigmas that we face has to do with some religious beliefs people carry about disability that keeps families from talking about their son or daughter or whoever it may be that has a disability. Part of our efforts is to just change that frame of mind so that they can accept our service, because before they wouldn’t accept anything. We had to convince them it was okay. Nobody was going to look down upon them because of it. No one’s going to cast you off anywhere. That does not exist here. . . And it’s just convincing, getting into these groups, getting into these religious organizations and trying to say it’s okay to have a disability.”

Asian American CBO/Staff in focus group discussion (FGD) (11-04-2010)

The third religion most commonly seen in India is **Sikhism**. This religion varies from the practices of Hinduism in many ways. Sikhism melds the concepts of incarnation and karma with belief in the Spirit of God. This central deity may be identified by many different names, which may be confusing for non-Sikhs who are trying to provide assistance or access to assistance. Sikhs follow the teachings of 10 gurus who have achieved supreme knowledge of the Sikhs’ sacred spiritual text, Guru Granth Sahib. These gurus teach that followers should understand themselves, their religion, and their purpose in life. Sikhism promotes the centrality of family and places a great deal of spiritual importance on it. It is important to realize that Sikhism has only one God, even though this central deity has many names and many gurus associated with it.

Buddhism

Buddhism is a set of doctrines rather than a “religion” as the term is understood by Westerners. Practicing Buddhists strive for enlightenment in nonmaterialistic ways, which means that at times their views of disability can be a bit pessimistic. Disabilities from birth are often believed to be punishment of the individual, parents or family that have been carried over from past lives (Chen, Jo, & Donnell, 2004). As in Hinduism, in Buddhism the idea of disability as a sort of punishment for past behavior can create stigma for disabled people and their families. Buddhist approaches to disability might be summarized as encouragement to focus on fulfilling one’s dharma [the law of nature] (Baldwin, 2006). This view, which interprets disability as a natural occurrence, may be a source of difficulty for a person trying to obtain disability resources because disability may be seen as something chosen for the individual by their deity in order for that individual to fulfill his or her destiny. Obtaining disability resources to better one’s life may be viewed by those who believe in dharma as going against dharmatic law. The concept of dharma is shared by Hinduism, Jainism, and Sikhism.

Belief in cause and effect, which is dominant in both Hinduism and Buddhism, has shaped their views of disability. Because Hindus and Buddhists believe in reincarnation, they may also believe disability is a divine punishment for bad behavior in a previous life or lives. The linkage between religious values and attitudes in both Hinduism and Buddhism may lead people to either pity disabled people or stigmatize them. When these attitudes are present, as they often are, people with disabilities become objects of charity driven by religious values (e.g., if you help disabled people, you will get dharma that leads to a better afterlife) or are kept isolated. Most Hindus and Buddhists don’t check the organ donation box on their driver’s license forms because they assume that if they do, they will be born without a particular organ in their next life.

Confucianism



Chinatown Square courtyard.

Like many Asian religions, Confucianism focuses on the cohesion of social groups, collaborative effort, and obedience to elders. The philosophy of Confucianism is to put personal interests and rights aside to increase the well-being of the family (nuclear and extended) and to carry out duties for the group (family, town, region, and country) before personal endeavors (Chen et al., 2004). Like Buddhism, Confucianism holds a negative view of physical disability in which it is assumed to interrupt the harmony of one's family's life and create "shame to [the] lineage of past, present and future generations" (Chen et al., 2004). This view creates environments in which those with disabilities do not participate in public life. Staying hidden in this way can ultimately lead "persons with disabilities [to] internalize rejection, discrimination, unworthiness, hopelessness and low self-esteem" (Chen et al., 2004).

Both Buddhism and Confucianism hold that people with disabilities have little power, which in turn convinces the disabled that they have few rights and abilities. It is not that Buddhists or Confucians are inherently cruel or neglectful; rather, their traditions guide them to believe these things about disabled people. Disabled people are viewed as taking resources from the family, without replenishing them, rather than as having the ability to provide income.

Taoism

Taoism differs from Buddhism and Confucianism in that its views of disability are not as harsh or negative. Taoist philosophy “stresses maintaining a balance of natural energies, that is, heaven (yang) and earth (yin)” (Chen et al., 2004). Disability is thought to develop from an imbalance of these two energies; to cure it, the energies must be rebalanced. There is no link in Taoism between disability and poor life choices or of disability being a punishment. If therapeutic and rehabilitative services are linked to these energies, this lack of stigma and negative views of disability may make it easier to work with disabled Taoists.

By working together, FBOs and DRS can better serve the growing population of AAWDs in Illinois. Counselors must be aware of the negative connotations that disability has in many Asian religions. DRS employees need to take these connotations into account when they are confronted with beliefs and values of Asian religions that could negatively impact the services they are trying to provide to AAWDs. Below are outreach guidelines for potential collaborations with FBOs. These steps do not have to be taken in this order.

DRS Awareness Outreach to Faith-Based Organizations

- Learn what disability means to FBOs and their communities.
- Identify the FBOs' representative and "gatekeepers" for ongoing exchange of information.
- Identify resources and opportunities for collaboration that can help identify potentially eligible customers.
- Have FBOs serve as referral sites to connect community members to services.
- As DRS gets to know the FBO and vice versa, initiatives can be developed.
- Provide translated information on DRS services for ESL individuals.
- FBO staff may help identify local minority-owned businesses that DRS can contact for potential job leads.
- FBOs may identify bilingual, bicultural staff members who can serve on in-house advisory boards that produce culturally appropriate VR information for faith communities.
- FBOs can identify radio broadcasts and community events that would be good outreach vehicles for DRS.
- FBO staff can conduct information sessions on Asian religions and spirituality; in turn, DRS staff can give introductory orientations to FBO staff on VR services.
- DRS can provide contracts or cooperative agreements for some FBOs to serve as job placement sites if these entities already are providing such services.

Appendix I contains an extensive listing of Chicago FBOs, including phone numbers, addresses, and main contacts.

An Example of Outreach: A VR agency and an FBO that served new immigrants began to identify DRS as a resource to community members. Initially, like many CBOs, the FBO had no awareness of VR services and employment options for its disabled members and knew nothing about DRS as a public agency. ADOPT, serving as the cultural broker in identifying and developing grassroots connections between pan-Asian faith communities and DRS, introduced the FBO caseworker to such services. The spiritual leader learned about DRS and immediately thought of a young Asian American refugee with a significant physical disability whom he had never considered employable. Working together, ADOPT and the FBO connected this young woman to a VR counselor and an interpreter so that she could explore the possibility of employment and access to training.

Chapter 10 References

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Appendix I. - Faith-Based Organizations in Greater Chicago

The Bahá'ís of Chicago

3321 South Calumet Avenue
Chicago, IL 60616

Website:

www.bahaichicago.org

Contact: Not available

Tel: (312)-225-1919

Email:

secretariat@bahaichicago.org

Services: Daily prayer and communion with God. High moral principles, independent investigation of truth.

Language(s): English

Bong-Boo-Sa Buddhist Temple

5114 North Elston Avenue
Chicago, IL 60630

Website: Not available

Contact: Not available

Tel: (773)-286-0307

Email: Not available

Services: Not available

Language(s):

Not available

Buddhist Temple of Chicago

1151 West Leland Avenue
Chicago, IL 60640

Website:

www.budtempchi.org

Tel: (773)-334-4661

Email:

info@budtempchi.org

Services: Teaching of meditation, calligraphy and Japanese language; wedding, funeral, and memorial services

Language(s): Japanese, English

Cambodian Buddhist Association Inc.

1258 W. Argyle Street
Chicago, IL 60640

Website:

www.khemararam.org

Contact: Not available

Tel: (773)-878-8226

Fax: (773)-942-6255

Email:

info@khemararam.com

Services: Teaching of Buddhism, meditation & Khmer language. Informing about Cambodian culture & Khmer civilization. Social services for the Cambodian-American community. Protecting the human rights of the community; programs; activities; and charity

Language(s): Cambodian, English

Chicago Karma Thegsum Choling

2100 S. Central Avenue
Cicero, IL 60804

Website:

www.chicagoktc.org

Contact: Not available

Tel: (708)-652-9722

Email:

office@chicagoktc.org

Services: Meditation & Buddhism classes, worship services

Language(s): Tibetan, English

Chicago Zen Center

2029 Ridge Avenue
Evanston, IL 60201

Website:

www.chicagozen.org/home

Contact: Not available

Tel: (847)-475-3015

Email:

contact@chicagozen.org

Services: Meditation classes and retreats, talks on dharma

Language(s): English, Japanese

**Chicago's Central
Synagogue (of the
South Side Hebrew
Congregation)**

Conservative

P.O. Box 13079

Chicago, IL 60613

Website: Not available

Contact: Hazzan Toby,
Lou Hayman

Tel: (312)-787-0450

Email: central@jewishchicago.com

Services: Not available

Language(s): English,
Hebrew

Chicago Shaolin Temple

2919 S. Archer Avenue

Chicago, IL 60608

Website:

www.shaolintemplechicago.com

Contact: Not available

Tel: (773)-847-4689

Email: info@shaolintemplechicago.com

Services: Buddhist services, martial arts classes

Language(s): Mandarin Chinese, English

**Chicago Sinai
Congregation (Reform)**

15 W. Delaware

Chicago, IL 60610

Website: Not available

Contact: Rabbi Michael P. Sternfield, Rabbi

Emeritus, & Rabbi Howard A. Berman

Tel: (312)-867-7000

Fax: (312)-867-7006

Email: Contact via phone

Services: Not available

Language(s): English

**Chicago Zen Buddhist
Temple**

1710 W. Cornelia Avenue

Chicago, IL 60657

Website:

<http://zenbuddhisttemple.org/locations/chicago/index.html>

Contact: Not available

Tel: (773)-528-8685

Email:

chicago@zenbuddhisttemple.org

Services: Meditation, chanting, dharma talks, Buddhism teaching

Language(s): English

**Chinese Christian Union
Church**

2301 South Wentworth Avenue

Chicago, IL 60616-2013

Website:

www.ccuc.net/ccuc/

Contact: Not available

Tel: (312)-842-8545

Fax: (312)-225-0423

Email: Not available

Services: Worship services, study & prayer meetings, food collection and distribution to immigrants

Language(s): English, Cantonese, and Mandarin

**Chinese Christian Union
Church-North**

North 1506 Half Day Road

Highland Park, IL 60035

Website:

<http://ccucnorth.net/english/>

Contact: Rev. Luke Tillett (English Congregation)

Tel: (847)-433-6543

Email:

luketillett@gmail.com

Services: Sunday services, Bible study meetings, lunch distribution

Language(s): English, Cantonese, and Mandarin

Chinese Christian Union Church-South

South 3000 S. Wallace Street
Chicago, IL 60616

Website:

www.ccuc.net/ccucs/

Contact: Not available

Tel: (312)-225-5564

Fax: (312)-674-1892

Email: office@ccucs.org

Services: Sunday services, Bible study meetings, lunch distribution

Language(s): English, Cantonese, and Mandarin

Chinese Christian Union Church-West (CCUC)

West 1400 Maple Avenue
Downers Grove, IL 60515

Website:

www.ccuc.net/ccuc/get_doc.asp?id=11

Contact:

Gordon Chi, David Huang
Kai Han, Sandy Hui

Tel: (630)-579-8933

Tel: (630)-848-1756

Tel: (630)-664-3691

Tel: (630)-416-7765

Email:

gordon.chi@walkerparking.com

huanenh@iit.edu

hk616@hotmail.com

fatmeow06@yahoo.com

Services: Sunday services, Bible study meetings, lunch distribution

Language(s): English, Cantonese, and Mandarin

Christ Church of Chicago

6047 N. Rockwell
Chicago, IL 60659

Website:

www.christchurchchicago.net/

Contact: Arlene Hayn,
Administrative Assistant

Tel: (773)-338-8170

Fax: (773)-338-8730

Email:

christchurchchicago@comcast.net

Services: Sunday service, Bible study meetings, karate classes, community outreach in collaboration with nonprofits

Language(s): English and Japanese

Church of Christ, Presbyterian

5846 North Spaulding Avenue

Chicago, IL 60659

Website:

www.churchofchristpresbyterian.org/index.php

Contact: Pastor Charles Miyamoto

Tel: (773)-267-6290

Email:

cofchristp@sbglobalnet.net

Services: Sunday school, worship services

Language(s): English

Congregation Kol Ami (Reform)

845 N. Michigan #913E
(Water Tower Place)
Chicago, IL 60611

Website: Not available

Contact: Rabbi Steven L. Denker

Tel: (312)-664-4775

Fax: (312)-664-4479

Email: Contact via phone

Services: Not Available

Language(s): English

Devon Church of Jesus Christ

1630 W. Devon Avenue
Chicago, IL 60660

Website:

www.devonchurch.org

Contact: Dr. Reverend John Carlini

(Pastor for English congregation)

Rev. Kei Satoh (Pastor for Japanese congregation)

Tel: (773)-338-5687

Email:

info@devonchurch.org

Services: Worship services to Jesus (evangelism), Sunday services, Bible study meetings, missionary activities in Japan where Bible teaching deaf in Japanese sign language

Language(s): English, Japanese

Diamond Way Buddhist Center-Chicago

830 N. Hermitage 1st Floor

Chicago, IL 60622

Website: Not available

Contact: Not available

Tel: (312)-421-0133

Email:

chicago@diamondway.org

Services: Retreats, lectures, classes on Tibetan Buddhism and meditation

Language(s): English

Dhammakaya International Meditation Center

6224 West Gunnison Street

Chicago, IL 60630-2936

Website:

www.dimc.net/branch.html

Contact: Not available

Tel: (773)-763-8763

Tel: (773)-763-0721

Fax: (773)-763-7897

Email:

MCC_072@yahoo.com

Services: Classes and retreats (residential classes) on Dhammakaya meditation technique; Yoga classes

Language(s): English, Thai

Gurdwara Sahib of Chicago

2341 W. Devon Ave.

Chicago, IL 60658

Website:

www.worldgurudwara.com

Contact: Not available

Tel: (773)-274-3133

Email: Contact via phone

Services: Promote Gurudwara and provide praying space

Language(s): Sikh, English

The Hindu Temple of Greater Chicago

10915 Lemont Road

Lemont, IL 60439

Website:

<http://htgc.org/test/>

www.ramatemple.org

Contact: Srikrishna

Kosuri (priest)

Tel: (630)-972-0300

Fax: (630)-972-9111

Email: Not available

Services: Worship and priest services, free health screenings, yoga and meditation classes, Sunday meeting, community center rental

Language(s): English, Hindi Telugu, Punjabi, Kannada, Tamil

International Zen Dojo of Japan or Japanese Cultural Center

1016 W Belmont Avenue

Chicago, IL 60657

Website: Not available

Contact: Barbara Rhodes (ZenTeacher)

Tel : (773) 525-3111

Tel : (312) 525-3141

Email: Not available

Services: Zen teachings, meditation

Language(s): English, Japanese

Islamic Cultural Center of Greater Chicago

1810 N. Pfingsten Rd

Northbrook, IL 60062

Website:

www.icc-greaterchicago.com

Contact: Not available

Tel: (847)-272-4406

Email: Contact via phone

Services: Prayer and weekend Islamic classes on both Saturday and Sunday

Language(s): English

Ismaili Center Chicago
6259 N. Broadway Street
Chicago, IL 60660
Website: Not available
Contact: Not available
Tel: (773)-262-1616
Email: Contact via phone
Services: Not available
Language(s): Urdu,
English

**Jain Society of
Metropolitan Chicago**
435 Route 59
Bartlett, IL 60103
Website: Not available
Contact: Not available
Tel: (630)-837-1077
Email: Contact via phone
Services: Not available
Language(s): Hindi,
Indian languages, English

**Joni and Friends
International Disability
Center**
315 Harger Road,
Suite 210
Oak Brook, IL 60523
Website:
[www.joniandfriends.org/
chicago](http://www.joniandfriends.org/chicago)
Contact: Not available
Tel: (630)-573-2900
Fax: (630)-573-2907
Email: [Chicago@joniand-
friends.org](mailto:Chicago@joniandfriends.org)
Services: Forming
outreach programs
throughout the
community and
ministering hope and the
message of Christ to
those who face the daily
challenges of life with a
disability.
Language(s): English

**Lake Shore Drive
Synagogue (Traditional)**
70 E. Elm Street
Chicago, IL 60611
Website: Not available
Contact: Not available
Tel: (312)-337-6811
Email:
LSDSmail@aol.com
Services: Not available
Language(s): English

**Lao Buddhist Temple of
Elgin**
50 King Arthur Court
Elgin, IL 60120
Website: Not available
Contact: Not available
Tel: (847)-741-2535
Email: Not available
Services: Not available
Language(s): Lao,
English

**Ling Shen Ching Tze
Temple**
1035 W. 31st Street
Chicago, IL 60614
Website: Not available
Contact: Not available
Tel: (773)-927-8807
Email: Contact via phone
Services: Not available
Language(s): Chinese,
English

Listing of Synagogues in Chicago

Chicago Central

Chicago Mid North

Chicago Far North

Chicago South Near North, Downtown &

South Loop

Lincoln Park, Lakeview, Uptown

Rogers & West Rogers

Park, Peterson Park

Hyde Park, South

Chicago, Southwest

Website: www.jewishchicago.com/directories/synagogues.html#Chicago%20Central

Lubavitch Chabad of the Loop (Orthodox)

401 S. LaSalle,
Suite 9-770
Chicago, IL 60605

Website: Not available

Contact:

Rabbi Meir Chai
Benhiyoun

Tel: (312)-427-7770

Fax: (312)-427-7103

Email: Contact via phone

Services: Not available

Language(s):

Not available

Makom Shalom

637 S. Dearborn
Chicago, IL 60605

Website:

www.makomshalom.com

Contact: Rabbi Allen
Secher

Tel: (312)-913-9030

Fax: (312)-913-9050

Email: Sech1@aol.com

Services: Congregation
that promotes spiritual
growth and social
responsibility

Language(s): English

Midwest Buddhist Temple

435 W. Menomonee
Street
Chicago, IL 60614

Website:

www.midwestbuddhist-temple.org

Contact: Rev. Ron
Miyamura

Tel: (312)-943-7801

Email:

jweinstein@heartlandalliance.org

Services: Weekly regular
services are held for
members and for the
public every Sunday;
meditation and education.

Language(s): English

North Shore Baptist Church

5244 North Lakewood
Avenue
Chicago, IL 60640

Website:

www.northshorebaptist.org

Contact: Ron Barlow
(Church Administrator)

Tel: (773)-728-4200

Fax: (773)-728-1582

Email: Not available

Services: Worship
services, Bible study,
Sunday meetings, food,
locker and shelter
support to homeless,
refugees

Language(s): English,
Spanish, Karen, and
Japanese

**SGI-USA Chicago
Cultural Center**

1455 S. Wabash
Chicago, IL 60605

Website:

www.sgi-usa-chicago.org

Contact: Martin Matths
(Administrative Assistant)

Tel: (312)-913-1211

Fax: (312)-913-0988

Email:

Martinm389@hotmail.com

Services: Chanting,
peace concerts & other
Nichiren Buddhism
related activities. Serves
community organizations
such as the Tuskegee
Airmen, Chicago Job
Council, blood banks,
various condo association
boards, and the South
Loop School events.

Language(s): English

**St. Therese Chinese
Catholic Church**

218 W. Alexander Street
Chicago, IL 60616

Website:

www.sttheresechina-town.org/church_home.html

Contact: Sharon Yu
(Local Outreach
Committee member)

Tel: (312)-842-6777

Fax: (312)-567-1389

Email:

StTherese@archchicago.org

Services: Worship
services (Catholic), Bible
study and training, Runs
Catholic school

Language(s): Chinese,
English

Thai Buddhist Temple

7059 West 75th Street
Chicago, IL 60638

Website: Not available

Contact: Not available

Tel: (708)-594-8100

Email: Not available

Services: Not available

Language(s): Thai and
English

**Truc Lam Temple or,
Buddhist Cultural
Center of Vietnam In
Chicago**

1521 W Wilson Avenue
Chicago, IL 60640

Website:

<http://chuatruclamchicago.org/chanhdien/>

Contact: Not available

Tel: (773)-506-0749

Email: Not available

Services: Worship,
meditation classes

Language(s): Vietnamese
and English

Udumbara Zen Center

501 Sherman Avenue
Evanston, IL 60202

Website:

www.udumbarazen.org

Contact: Not available

Tel: (847)-475-3264

Fax: (847)-475-8937

Email: Udumbara@udumbarazen.org

Services: Meditation Zen
classes and trainings.
Udumbara chaplaincy
program has chaplains
who work in hospice,
prison work, social
welfare, and mental
health.

Language(s): English

Uptown Baptist Church

1011 West Wilson Avenue
Chicago, IL 60640

Website:

www.uptownbaptistchurch.org

Contact: Uyen Nguyen,
Administrator

Tel: (773)-784-2922

Email: info@ubcreal.org

Services: Sunday
meeting, worship
services, Bible study,
Monday night meal to
homeless and poor

Language(s): English

**Vajrayana Kadampa
Buddhist Center**

13 Harrison Street
Oak Park, IL 60304

Website: www.meditateinchicago.org

Contact: Not available

Tel: (708)-763-0132

Email: info@meditateinchicago.org

Services: Teaching on
Buddhism, meditation,
retreats and classes

Language(s): English