

# RELIGIOUS DENOMINATIONS REGISTERED FOR MARRIAGES

Briefing from Humanists UK, October 2022



## SUMMARY

Under the Marriage Act 1949, most religious groups in England and Wales<sup>1</sup> must register their individual places of worship to conduct religious marriages. To do this, the building must first be registered as a place of worship with the General Register Office. According to the latest HM Passport statistics, there are 29,428 registered places of worship in England and Wales.<sup>2</sup> Of these, 22,324 (74.86%) are registered to perform opposite-sex marriages and 292 (0.99%) to perform same-sex marriages.

There has been no prior analysis of these groups, and who they are. Such an analysis is made challenging by the fact that when registering, places of worship simply enter their denomination into a free-text field. There is no standardisation of names, and spelling mistakes even appear. Further, the number of denominations involved is very complex, with subgroups of wider denominations frequently appearing. However, we have now analysed who all these groups are for the first time, and so are now able to reveal the overall patterns.

Our analysis of these statistics suggests that there are at least 535 distinct religions or religious denominations that can conduct legally recognised marriages in England and Wales.<sup>3</sup> This includes 376 denominations that have registered to perform opposite-sex marriages, with 25 of these also registered for same-sex marriages.<sup>4</sup> Some of these groups are very new, with one founded as recently as 2009. The list has also expanded over time, with at least nine denominations registering to conduct marriages for the first time since the Government first gained the (still unused) power to extend legal recognition to humanist marriages, in 2013. We reveal a broad spectrum of groups able to conduct marriages, from UFO religions and occult movements to spiritual traditions that say they can be practised alongside another faith.

### Why have we conducted this research?

Humanists UK has campaigned for legal recognition for humanist marriages in England and Wales for decades. In 2013, an amendment to the Marriage (Same Sex Couples) Act allowed the Government to grant legal recognition to humanist marriages by Order,<sup>5</sup> a power it has yet to use. Instead the matter has been under constant Government review since. Before that, an earlier proposed reform of marriage law with the scope to include humanist marriages was announced in

---

<sup>1</sup> The exceptions being the Church of England, Church in Wales, Society of Friends (i.e. Quakers in Britain), and Jewish groups, none of whom have to register but are instead recognised directly through the Marriage Act 1949.

<sup>2</sup> 'Places of worship registered for marriage', HM Passport Office, last updated 21 December 2021:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/places-of-worship-registered-for-marriage>

<sup>3</sup> [https://humanists.uk/wp-content/uploads/Places\\_of\\_Worship\\_December\\_2021-1.xlsx](https://humanists.uk/wp-content/uploads/Places_of_Worship_December_2021-1.xlsx)

<sup>4</sup> No denomination is registered for same-sex but not opposite-sex marriages.

<sup>5</sup> Section 14(4), Marriage(Same-Sex Couples) Act 2013:

<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2013/30/section/14/enacted>



2001, but was ultimately abandoned in 2005.<sup>6</sup> In any case, humanists have conducted wedding ceremonies since the 1890s.<sup>7</sup>

That so many groups have legal recognition for their marriages in England and Wales makes it all the more unjustifiable that humanist marriages do not – especially when 29% of British adults hold humanist beliefs and values.<sup>8</sup> At least 16 denominations have registered a place of worship for the first time since 2013, the same year that the Government gained the Order-making power to grant legal recognition to humanist marriages, and seven of these have further registered for conducting marriages. Two additional groups had registered places of worship prior to 2015, but have registered to conduct marriages for the first time since then. Some groups have *come into existence* since humanist marriages have been on the Government’s agenda, and now have the right to marry people. And according to 2011 Census data, numerous groups have less followers than there are humanists in England and Wales.

Laying an Order for Humanists UK would merely add one more religion or belief organisation to the hundreds of those already registered. It should be done without further delay.

<b>Overview of the registration process</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Overview of findings</b>	<b>4</b>
The number of denominations with registered places of worship	4
Places of worship registered for opposite-sex marriages	5
Places of worship registered for same-sex marriages	6
The number of marriages conducted per place of worship per year	7
Number of religious marriages per year by denomination	8
<b>Detailed methodology</b>	<b>9</b>
Determining the number of denominations with registered places of worship	10
Determining the number of denominations newly entering the register	10
<b>Full tables of denominations</b>	<b>11</b>
Denominations with registered places of worship	11
Religious and spiritual traditions with registered places of worship	17
Denominations new to the register performing opposite-sex marriages	19
Existing denominations newly performing opposite-sex marriages	20
Denominations newly performing same-sex marriages	20
Denominations new to the register but not performing marriages	22
Descriptions of some religions and spiritual traditions with registered places of worship	22

<sup>6</sup> Lord Filkin confirmed that the proposed reforms could widen the categories of available marriages beyond civil and religious in a 2004 written ministerial statement: [https://publications.parliament.uk/pa/ld200304/ldhansrd/vo040708/text/40708-50.htm#40708-50\\_head1](https://publications.parliament.uk/pa/ld200304/ldhansrd/vo040708/text/40708-50.htm#40708-50_head1)

<sup>7</sup> ‘Humanist Weddings’, Humanist Heritage: <https://heritage.humanists.uk/humanist-ceremonies/>

<sup>8</sup> Polling carried out by YouGov for Humanists UK on 6–7 November 2019. Sample size 2,000.



## OVERVIEW OF THE REGISTRATION PROCESS

In England and Wales, most religious marriages can only take place within a place of worship registered for this purpose.<sup>9</sup> The exceptions to this are the Church of England, Church in Wales, Society of Friends (i.e. Quakers in Britain), and Jewish groups, none of whom have to register their places of worship as they are instead recognised directly through the Marriage Act 1949.

Those four exceptions aside, to register for marriage, a venue must first register as a place of worship with the General Register Office. Places of worship do not *inherently* have to register, which means that the published list will not include every venue in England and Wales that is used for the purpose of worship. However, there are benefits to registering, including exemption from council tax and business rates – and the possibility of also registering to conduct marriages. Registration only requires the completion of a simple one-page form, including a declaration.<sup>10</sup>

The Supreme Court clarified a place of worship as a ‘meeting place [of members of a religious congregation] where they perform their religious rites’ in *Hodkin* in 2013.<sup>11</sup> *Hodkin* also broadened the eligibility of religious groups for registering their places of worship. It removed an earlier requirement set out in *Segerdal* for ‘reverence or veneration for a supreme being’,<sup>12</sup> expanding the definition of religion (and therefore the range of groups that could register) to the following:

‘a spiritual or non-secular belief system, held by a group of adherents, which claims to explain mankind’s place in the universe and relationship with the infinite, and to teach its adherents how they are to live their lives in conformity with the spiritual understanding associated with the belief system.’

Scientists registered to conduct marriages for the first time following this ruling in 2014. Other groups may well have done similarly prior to the register’s publication online in 2015.

Places of worship do not have to register to perform opposite-sex or same-sex marriages upon entering the register. They can choose to register for either of these at the same time, at a later date, or not at all. All registered places of worship are, however, eligible to further register to perform marriages. This means that any such venues that are not already performing marriages could choose to start doing so in the future. Registering to perform marriages requires the completion of another simple two-page form. The only substantial requirements are to provide a

---

<sup>9</sup> Piecemeal reform allowing religious marriages to take place on the outdoor grounds of places of worship is expected in due course. ‘Outdoor civil weddings and civil partnerships made permanent’, Ministry of Justice and Tom Pursglove MP, 15 March 2022:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/outdoor-civil-weddings-and-civil-partnerships-made-permanent>

<sup>10</sup> *Form for Certifying a Place of Meeting for Religious Worship under the Places of Worship Registration Act 1855*, HM Passport Office: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/certifying-a-place-of-meeting-for-religious-worship-form-76>

<sup>11</sup> *R (on the application of Hodkin and another) (Appellants) v Registrar-General of Births, Deaths and Marriages (Respondent)* [2013] UKSC 77:

<https://www.supremecourt.uk/cases/docs/uksc-2013-0030-judgment.pdf>

<sup>12</sup> *R v Registrar General, ex parte Segerdal*: CA 1970



copy of the marriage service and that 20 householders sign in support.<sup>13</sup> The applicant must also certify that their congregation meets regularly for worship.

These requirements mean that in most cases, a religious marriage taking place somewhere other than within a registered place of worship would not be legally recognised. However, as mentioned, the Church of England, the Church in Wales, the Society of Friends, and Jewish congregations have their own, separate provisions. This also means that they can hold legally recognised marriages wherever they like – not just in their buildings. With that said, Jewish groups and the Society of Friends can still register their places of worship with the General Register Office, and some (but not all) synagogues and Friends meeting houses are registered as a result. The Church of England and Church in Wales do not, and follow separate legislation. This means that these two denominations do not appear on the register at all.

## OVERVIEW OF FINDINGS

### **The number of denominations with registered places of worship**

The latest release of the list of registered places of worship is from December 2021. It appears to list a total of 1,603 self-reported denominations with registered places of worship. Of these, 1,159 have registered at least one of these for marriages. However, these denominations are self-reported using a free-text box on the application form. As a result, they are subject to misspellings and variations on the same name. Some have listed their place of worship's name or their local congregation as their denomination. The published list shows no evidence of an attempt to correct these errors or merge variations, leading us to do so ourselves.

Our tidied-up analysis suggests that **there are at least 535 denominations with registered places of worship in England and Wales, with 376 registering at least one of these to perform marriages, and 25 for same-sex marriages.** As above, this does not include the Church of England and Church in Wales, who do not register their places of worship. Although the Society of Friends and Jewish denominations do not have to register places of worship for marriages, one place of worship belonging to each of these groups has nonetheless done so.

**We further categorised these denominations as belonging to a total of 39 religions or spiritual traditions, listed below. Of these, 20 have registered a place of worship to perform opposite-sex marriages, and seven for same-sex marriages.**

There are inevitably lots of places of worship that are denominationally distinct but registered under the same name as each other, e.g. 'Protestant' or 'Christian'. Others still are registered under

---

<sup>13</sup> *Certificate and Application for the Registration of a Place of Religious Worship for the Solemnization of Marriages under Sec 41 and /or Sec 43A of the Marriage Act 1949*, HM Passport Office: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/certificate-and-application-for-the-registration-of-a-place-of-religious-worship-for-the-solemnisation-of-marriages-form-78>. For same-sex marriages, an additional form must be completed – *Certificate that consent has been given by the relevant governing authority (or authorities) for a building to be registered for the solemnization of marriages of same sex couples*.



'Who Object to be Designated' or variations thereof. As a result, the number of new denominations given is inevitably an undercount of the spread of diversity.

Some denominations on the register are very young. An example is the Order of St Leonard, which has one place of worship registered for opposite-sex marriages. Though the denomination was on the register prior to 2015, it was only founded in 2009.<sup>14</sup> The Goddess People of Avalon was founded in 2000, and only set up a permanent place of worship for the first time in 2002. He Lives Bible Church, which lists its denomination as Glorious Church, was first founded in 1998.<sup>15</sup> A number of groups are new denominations of existing religions. Others are new religious movements, such as the Scientologists, Summit Lighthouse, and the Church of the White Eagle Lodge.

The list has also grown over time. Since its first publication in 2015, at least 15 denominations have registered a place of worship for the first time – and we are aware of a sixteenth, the Church of Scientology, doing so following the ruling in *Hodkin* in 2014. Nine have done so *without* similarly registering for marriages. These are the Druids; Odinists; Radha Soami;<sup>16</sup> Order of the Aviator (Aztec); Catholic (Latin Rite); Orthodox Roman Catholic; Oriental Orthodox;<sup>17</sup> Independent Catholic; and Tenrikyo.<sup>18</sup>

Most of these are Christian denominations that are new to the United Kingdom, while others are new religious movements. Tenrikyo, the most recent denomination to join the list in 2021, is a Japanese new religion founded in 1831.<sup>19</sup> Radha Soami is a spiritual tradition established in India in 1891. Both the Druids and Odinists are neopagan religions. It is unclear what Order of the Aviator (Aztec) refers to. It is not obvious whether it is an Aztec religion or even a serious religion at all. Its address is given as The Barn, Worship Room Only Oaktree Farm, Baybridge Lane, Owslebury, Winchester, Hants.

### Places of worship registered for opposite-sex marriages

Of the 29,428 registered places of worship in England and Wales, 22,324 (75.86%) are registered to perform opposite-sex marriages. Our analysis suggests that these belong to a total of 376 distinctive denominations or 20 religions. The five denominations with the most places of worship registered for opposite-sex marriages are all Christian. These are the Methodist Church with 4,813 places of worship; Roman Catholics with 3,089; Baptists with 1,929; generically listed Christians with 1,351; and the United Reformed Church with 1,239. Once again, this does not include the

<sup>14</sup> 'About', Order of St Leonard: <http://www.orderofstleonard.org/about-osl/>.

<sup>15</sup> 'Our History', He Lives Bible Church: <https://helivesbiblechurch.org/history/>

<sup>16</sup> Note it appears that other sects of the Radha Soami were registered before 2015, but not this sect. The others are of the Radha Soami Satsang Beas sect, which this new place of worship is not.

<sup>17</sup> Other Oriental Orthodox traditions, including Coptic Orthodox and Indian Orthodox, had registered by 2015. The one place of worship listed specifically as Oriental Orthodox, Debrebrhan Qdst Slasie Eritrean Orthodox Church, appears to belong to the Eritrean Tewahedo Orthodox Church tradition. That it was listed using a more generic denomination demonstrates that the list likely does not capture the full spread of denominational diversity.

<sup>18</sup> As there is no requirement for places of worship to register with the General Register Office, these denominations may well have been practising in England and Wales before the date they first joined the register.

<sup>19</sup> 'Brief History of Tenrikyo and Its Overseas Mission', Tenrikyo: <https://www.tenrikyo.or.jp/eng/history/>



Church of England or the Church in Wales due to their places of worship's automatic recognition. But for completeness, they have 15,539 and 1,259 places of worship, respectively.<sup>20</sup>

Since 2015, six denominations both entered the register for the first time and registered to perform opposite-sex marriages. These are Hillsong Church; Charismatic/Pentecostal; House of Refuge; Life Transformation Ministries; Syro-Malabar Catholics; and Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahedo Church. A further two denominations that were already on the register in 2015, Emmanuel Church and Charismatic/Evangelical, have since registered to perform opposite-sex marriages for the first time. Altogether, two of these denominations registered for opposite-sex marriages in 2015, three in 2016, one in 2018, three in 2019, and one in 2020.

We also know that at least one denomination began performing marriages in 2014, after the Marriage (Same Sex Couples) Act but before the register was first published online. This was the Church of Scientology following its legal victory in *Hodkin*. It now has nine places of worship registered for opposite-sex marriages.

### Places of worship registered for same-sex marriages

The Marriage (Same Sex Couples) Act legalised same-sex marriages in 2013, with the first of these taking place on 29 March 2014. In England and Wales, places of worship must opt in to perform religious same-sex marriages. This requires an additional form confirming the applicant's consent.<sup>22</sup> According to guidance, these requirements honoured 'the Government's commitment that no religious organisation or representative will be forced to conduct or participate in same sex marriage ceremonies.'<sup>23</sup>

Of the 29,428 registered places of worship, 292 are registered to perform same-sex marriages. This is 0.99% of the total number of registered places of worship, and 1.31% of those registered to perform opposite-sex marriages. Every place of worship registered for same-sex marriages is also registered for opposite-sex marriages.

Places of worship registered for same-sex marriages belong to a total of 25 denominations, listed below. These belong to seven religions: all are Christian, spiritualist, Unitarian, or Buddhist, except for the Goddess People of Avalon, the Church of the White Eagle Lodge, and those Who Object to be Designated.

<sup>20</sup> There are 15,539 churches belonging to the Church of England according to 'Statistics for Mission', The Church of England Research and Statistics, 2018:

[https://www.churchofengland.org/sites/default/files/2019-10/2018StatisticsForMission\\_0.pdf](https://www.churchofengland.org/sites/default/files/2019-10/2018StatisticsForMission_0.pdf)

<sup>21</sup> There are 1,259 churches belonging to the Church of Wales according to *Membership and Finance*, The Governing Body of the Church in Wales, 2018:

<https://churcheinwales.contentfiles.net/media/documents/Membership-Finance-2019.pdf>

<sup>22</sup> *Certificate that consent has been given by the relevant governing authority (or authorities) for a building to be registered for the solemnization of marriages of same sex couples*, HM Passport Office:

[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/281246/D0546\\_F78A.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/281246/D0546_F78A.pdf)

<sup>23</sup> 'Marriage (Same Sex Couples) Act: a factsheet', Government Equalities Office, April 2013, p.1.

[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/30600/0/140423\\_M\\_SSC\\_Act\\_factsheet\\_web\\_version\\_.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/30600/0/140423_M_SSC_Act_factsheet_web_version_.pdf)



As of December 2021 the Unitarians had the most places of worship registered for same-sex marriages with 87. This is followed by the United Reformed Church with 82 and Spiritualists with 56. However, the Methodist Church is the most recent – and the largest – denomination to begin performing same-sex marriages. This followed a 254–46 vote in favour at the Methodist Conference in June 2021.<sup>24</sup> As of December 2021 it had four places of worship registered to perform same-sex marriages, but this has presumably risen since.

Eleven denominations registered to perform same-sex marriages in the first year after their legalisation. Another 15 have registered since. Four of these did so in 2015, four in 2016, three in 2017, one in 2018, three in 2019, and one in 2021.

Both the Society of Friends (Quakers) and some Jewish denominations, namely the Reform Jews and Liberal Jews, also perform same-sex marriages. These do not appear on the list as they do not have to register their places of worship for marriage.

### **The number of marriages conducted per place of worship per year**

We commissioned the Office of National Statistics to produce a breakdown of the number of religious marriages conducted per denomination in England and Wales per year, most recently for 2019.<sup>25</sup> Their analysis did not break down every denomination, but did include 12 denominations that must register their places of worship to conduct marriages. We were then able to compare the number of places of worship per denomination to the number of marriages per denomination for those whom this data was available, to determine how many marriages were conducted per place of worship for each.

In total, 39,945 religious marriages took place in England and Wales in 2019. This is 18.2% of the total number of marriages in that year. If the Church of England, Church in Wales, Jewish congregations, and the Society of Friends are removed from this total, this number falls to 10,442, suggesting the number of religious marriages that took place in places of worship registered for marriage. This means that an average of **0.48 religious marriages took place per place of worship registered for marriages in 2019.**

For some denominations, this average is even lower. Statistics for each denomination for which this data is available is listed below.<sup>26</sup> The Salvation Army performed an average of 0.09 marriages per

---

<sup>24</sup> Harry Farley, 'Methodist Church allows same-sex marriage in "momentous" vote', BBC News, 30 June 2021: <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-57658161>

<sup>25</sup> 'Religious marriages by denomination, England and Wales: 2017 to 2019', Office for National Statistics, 27 May 2022: <https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/birthsdeathsandmarriages/marriagecohabitationandcivilpartnerships/adhocs/14701religiousmarriagesbydenominationenglandandwales2017to2019>

<sup>26</sup> Although the Calvinistic Methodists and Presbyterians were listed separately in the ONS' statistics, we have merged them for ease of comparison with our own work.



place of worship, equivalent to one every 11.4 years. Sikhs performed the most at 3.93 marriages per place of worship in 2019, equivalent to one marriage per place of worship every 0.3 years.<sup>27</sup>

**Number of religious marriages per year by denomination**

<b>Denomination</b>	<b>Marriages conducted in 2019</b>	<b>Marriages per place of worship</b>	<b>1 marriage every... years</b>
Roman Catholic	4,049	1.17	0.9
Methodist Church	1,058	0.18	5.5
Sikh <sup>28</sup>	1,058	3.93	0.3
Baptist	749	0.24	4.1
United Reformed Church	386	0.29	3.4
Jehovah's Witnesses	380	0.44	2.2
Muslim <sup>29</sup>	328	0.23	4.4
Unitarian	187	1.28	0.8
Congregationalist	162	0.25	4.1
Presbyterian <sup>30</sup>	159	0.16	6.4
Brethren	111	0.12	8.6
Salvation Army	72	0.09	11.4

We also repeated this exercise for the Church of England, Church in Wales, Jews, and the Society of Friends, for whom the number of marriages performed by each were also provided by the ONS. For the Church of England and Church in Wales, we used the number of places of worship recorded in

<sup>27</sup> Not all Sikh weddings have legal recognition, as some take place outside of places of worship. Included in this count are those with legal recognition only. Some couples may go on to have a civil marriage, or none at all.

<sup>28</sup> As above.

<sup>29</sup> As above, not all Muslim weddings take place within places of worship.

<sup>30</sup> Includes Calvinistic Methodist.





reports produced by each, as they do not have to register these.<sup>31, 32</sup> Although the Society of Friends and Jewish groups can register their places of worship, this is likely an undercount given that they do not have to do so in order to conduct marriages. For Jewish groups, we estimate that there are closer to 446 synagogues in England and Wales,<sup>33</sup> which we used to calculate the below. However, although online sources suggest that the Society of Friends has 354 meeting houses across England, Wales, and Scotland, the group has registered 359 places of worship in England and Wales alone.<sup>34</sup> We have therefore used the latter figure to calculate the number of weddings the Society of Friends conducts a year.

Denomination	Marriages conducted in 2019	Marriages per place of worship	1 marriage every... years
Church of England	27,241	1.75	0.6
Church in Wales	1,671	1.29	0.8
Jewish	567	1.24	0.8
Society of Friends	24	0.07	15.0

## DETAILED METHODOLOGY

Since February 2015, HM Passport Office has periodically published a spreadsheet of ‘Places of worship registered for marriage’ on GOV.UK. This lists the names of all places of worship registered with the General Register Office in England and Wales, their addresses, denominations, and whether they have registered for opposite-sex and/or same-sex marriages. This list has been updated 24 times since its first publication, most recently in December 2021 – the main spreadsheet used for this analysis. Most of the previous versions are available through the UK Government Web Archive.<sup>35</sup>

<sup>31</sup> There are 15,539 churches belonging to the Church of England according to ‘Statistics for Mission’, The Church of England Research and Statistics, 2018:

[https://www.churchofengland.org/sites/default/files/2019-10/2018StatisticsForMission\\_0.pdf](https://www.churchofengland.org/sites/default/files/2019-10/2018StatisticsForMission_0.pdf)

<sup>32</sup> There are 1,259 churches belonging to the Church of Wales according to *Membership and Finance*, The Governing Body of the Church in Wales, 2018:

<https://churcheinwales.contentfiles.net/media/documents/Membership-Finance-2019.pdf>

<sup>33</sup> There were 454 synagogues in the UK in 2016, according to *Synagogue membership in the United Kingdom in 2016*, Institute for Jewish Policy Research, July 2017:

<https://www.jpr.org.uk/reports/synagogue-membership-united-kingdom-2016?id=9953>. Removing the seven Scottish synagogues identified in ‘Guide to Jewish Facilities in Scotland’, Scottish Council of Jewish Communities, August 2022 (<https://www.scojec.org/resources/files/guidebook.pdf>) and the one synagogue in Northern Ireland (belonging to the Belfast Jewish Community) leaves a total of 446.

<sup>34</sup> This may be because not all Quakers meet in a dedicated meeting house. The 354 figure only includes dedicated meeting houses, and is from ‘Quaker Meeting Houses Assessed’, Historic England, 6 April 2018:

<https://historicengland.org.uk/whats-new/research/back-issues/quaker-meeting-houses/>.

<sup>35</sup> UK Government Web Archive, Archived instances of the page:

[https://webarchive.nationalarchives.gov.uk/\\*/https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/places-of-worship-registered-for-marriage](https://webarchive.nationalarchives.gov.uk/*/https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/places-of-worship-registered-for-marriage)



### **Determining the number of denominations with registered places of worship**

We first sought to determine how many denominations have registered places of worship, and of these, how many are registered to perform opposite-sex or same-sex marriages. The removal of duplicates from the list suggests a total of 1,603 denominations, of which 1,159 have registered at least one place of worship for marriages. However, as mentioned above, the application form uses a free-text box for entering denominations. This means that they are subject to spelling mistakes and variations on the same name. We manually cleaned up these denominations, which reduced their number to 535. Of these, 420 have registered for marriages.

In some instances, an applicant appeared to list their individual place of worship or congregation as their denomination. In these cases, we searched for an online presence to determine whether these groups were denominationally distinct, or belonged to an already existing religious denomination. Further, some places of worship are shared between multiple religions or denominations. To avoid artificially increasing the total number of places of worship, those that listed multiple denominations or religious groups (e.g. 'Baptist and United Reformed Church'; 'Hindu, Sikh, and Zoroastrian') were categorised separately, rather than belonging to each of these groups individually. However, we removed these from the counts of total denominations listed above. We also categorised non-denominational groups (e.g. 'Christians Who Object to be Otherwise Designated'; 'Non Denominational Christian') under the wider religious group they fall into (e.g. Christian). Our decision on how to categorise each individual denomination can be viewed in the accompanying spreadsheet.<sup>36</sup>

Following this, we then categorised each denomination into broader denominational groups. In fact we did this three times, each increasingly broad in scope. For example, a denomination listed as Assemblies of God would be categorised as Assemblies of God in level one, Pentecostal in level two, Protestant Christian in level three, and Christian in level four, while a denomination listed simply as Christian would be categorised as such at all four levels. These categorisations can also be viewed in full in the spreadsheet.<sup>37</sup>

### **Determining the number of denominations newly entering the register**

We then determined how many denominations joined the register since it was first published by comparing the newest version of the list to the oldest. We identified any denominations listed on the newest version that were not on the oldest version, or denominations newly performing opposite-sex or same-sex marriages. This again excluded variants on the same name, or those determined to have changed their name based on their given address.

This methodology does not capture every change to the register that has happened since 2015. It only captures denominations that were not registered in early 2015, but are registered today. Other changes to the register that are not captured include:

- Denominations leaving the register entirely

<sup>36</sup> [https://humanists.uk/wp-content/uploads/Places\\_of\\_Worship\\_December\\_2021-1.xlsx](https://humanists.uk/wp-content/uploads/Places_of_Worship_December_2021-1.xlsx)

<sup>37</sup> Ibid.



- Denominations that first joined the register within the last six years but have subsequently left
- Similarly, individual places of worship within already established denominations either entering or leaving the register.

## **FULL TABLES OF DENOMINATIONS**

### **Denominations with registered places of worship**

Since 535 denominations have registered places of worship, it would be excessive to list them all. Instead we list the second level of denominational categories (as explained in the detailed methodology) that we determined these groups to belong to – of which there are 107 – alongside the number of places of worship belonging to each of these denominations.

<b>Religious or spiritual group</b>	<b>No of registered places of worship</b>	<b>No of places of worship registered for marriages</b>
Methodist	5786	5042
Roman Catholic	3454	3108
Christian	3135	1966
Baptist	3080	2845
Pentecostal	2219	1482
United Reformed Church	1323	1239
Muslim	1144	257
Presbyterian	1016	946
Brethren	951	668
Jehovah's Witnesses	854	777
Salvation Army	818	661
Evangelical Christian	792	616
Congregationalist	658	597
Spiritualist	450	335
Society of Friends	359	1
Jewish	335	1



Latter Day Saints	280	254
Sikh	269	207
Sunni Muslim	266	41
Hindu	237	106
Christadelphian	188	139
Adventist	181	140
Christian Scientist	179	2
Christian Spiritualist	161	88
Unitarian	146	138
Buddhist	118	15
Eastern Orthodox	115	84
Methodist and United Reformed Church	98	96
Churches of Christ	57	49
Protestant Christian	56	36
Who Object To Be Designated	51	16
Anglican	45	36
Orthodox Jewish	44	0
Lutheran	35	29
New Church	31	26
Oriental Orthodox	26	20
Moravian	23	20
Shia Muslim	23	6
Charismatic	21	10
Catholic	20	6
Baptist And United Reformed Church	17	17
Protestant Dissenter	17	13



Baptist, Methodist and United Reformed Church	16	16
Calvinist	16	14
New Apostolic Church	14	11
Christian Community	13	0
Baptist and Congregationalist	12	11
Unitarian and Free Christian	12	11
Ravidassia	12	11
Christ Apostolic Church	12	10
Scientologist	11	9
Church of Scotland	9	9
Church of God Seventh Day	9	8
Baptist and Methodist	9	8
Cherubim and Seraphim	9	5
Jain	8	3
Baha'i	8	1
Liberal Jewish	8	0
Theosophist	8	0
Independent and Baptist	7	7
Brahma Kumari	7	0
Subud	7	0
Baptist, Roman Catholic, Methodist and United Reformed Church	5	5
Church of the Lord (Aladura)	5	3
International Society for Krishna Consciousness	5	1
Radha Soami	6	0
Roman Catholic and Methodist	4	3
Das Dharam	4	1



Aetherius Society	4	1
Young Men's and Young Women's Christian Association	4	1
Sufi Muslim	4	1
Adult School Union	4	0
Holiness Movement	4	0
Church of the White Eagle Lodge	3	2
Faithist	3	2
Zoroastrian	3	1
Ahmadi Muslim	3	0
Reform Jewish	3	0
Anabaptist	3	0
Druid	3	0
Salafi Muslim	3	0
Bible Student	3	0
Unitarian Christian	2	2
United Christian Church	2	2
Presbyterian And Methodist	2	2
Orthodox Christian	2	2
Eastern Christian	2	2
Roman Catholic, Methodist and United Reformed Church	2	2
Methodist and Congregationalist	2	1
Goddess People of Avalon	2	1
Charismatic and Pentecostal	1	1
Salvation Army and Pentecostal	1	1
Spirit of Jesus Church	1	1
Fellowship of Universal Guidance	1	1



Anglican and Methodist	1	1
Good News Mission	1	1
Roman Catholic and Protestant	1	1
Baptist and Pentecostal	1	1
Roman Catholic and United Reformed Church	1	1
Congregationalist and Methodist	1	1
Congregationalist and Baptist	1	1
Hindu, Sikh and Zoroastrian	1	1
Methodist and Anglican	1	1
Roman Catholic and Free Church	1	1
Sandemanian	1	1
Baptist and Free Church	1	1
Baptist and Church Of England	1	1
Unitarian and English Presbyterian	1	1
Unitarian and Spiritualist	1	1
Catholic and Oriental Orthodox	1	1
Iglesia Ni Cristo	1	1
Presbyterian, Baptist, Methodist and United Reformed Church	1	1
Independent	1	1
Presbyterian, Baptist, and United Reformed Church	1	1
Presbyterian and United Reformed Church	1	1
United Church	1	1
Moravian and United Reformed Church	1	1
Baptist and Roman Catholic	1	1
Roman Catholic and United Reform Church	1	1
Moravian and Baptist	1	1



Tenrikyo	1	0
Individual	1	0
Advait Mat	1	0
All Faiths	1	0
Community of the Many Names of God	1	0
Sukyo Mahikari	1	0
Mount Zion Church of God Seventh Day	1	0
Pathwork	1	0
Hasidic Jewish	1	0
Summit Lighthouse	1	0
Order of the Aviator (Aztec)	1	0
Holy Tabernacle Ministries	1	0
Om Sai Ram	1	0
Radha Soami	1	0
Rastafarian	1	0
Unity Church	1	0
Fellowship of Reconciliation	1	0
Odinist	1	0
Universal Confluence of Yoga And Vedanta Luminary Trust	1	0
Yiguandao	1	0
Ek Niwas	1	0

For denominations that do not register their places of worship – the Church of England, Church in Wales, and Jewish denominations – other sources suggest that their places of worship total the following:

<b>Religious or spiritual group</b>	<b>No of registered places of worship</b>
-------------------------------------	---





Church of England	15,538 <sup>38</sup>
Church in Wales	1,259 <sup>39</sup>
Jewish (all)	446 <sup>40</sup>

**Religious and spiritual traditions with registered places of worship**

Below are the 39 religious or spiritual traditions that these denominations belong to, the number of registered places of worship by each and, where available, the number of people belonging to that tradition in England and Wales according to the 2011 Census.<sup>41</sup> For each group that is not a major world religion, a brief description can be found below.

Religious or spiritual group	No of registered places of worship	No of places of worship registered for marriages	Population in England and Wales (2011 Census)
Christian	26,210 <sup>42</sup>	21,175	33,243,175
Muslim	1,443	305	2,706,066
Spiritualist	450	335	39,061
Jewish <sup>43</sup>	392 <sup>44</sup>	1	263,346
Sikh	269	207	423,158
Hindu	239	106	816,633

<sup>38</sup> 'Statistics for Mission', The Church of England Research and Statistics, 2018: [https://www.churchofengland.org/sites/default/files/2019-10/2018StatisticsForMission\\_0.pdf](https://www.churchofengland.org/sites/default/files/2019-10/2018StatisticsForMission_0.pdf)

<sup>39</sup> *Membership and Finance*, The Governing Body of the Church in Wales, 2018: <https://churchinwales.contentfiles.net/media/documents/Membership-Finance-2019.pdf>

<sup>40</sup> There were 454 synagogues in the UK in 2016, according to *Synagogue membership in the United Kingdom in 2016*, Institute for Jewish Policy Research, July 2017:

<https://www.jpr.org.uk/reports/synagogue-membership-united-kingdom-2016?id=9953>. Removing the seven Scottish synagogues identified in 'Guide to Jewish Facilities in Scotland', Scottish Council of Jewish Communities, August 2022 (<https://www.scojec.org/resources/files/guidebook.pdf>) and the one synagogue in Northern Ireland (belonging to the Belfast Jewish Community) leaves a total of 446.

<sup>41</sup> '2011 Census: Religion (Detailed), local authorities in England and Wales', Office for National Statistics: [https://www.ons.gov.uk/file?uri=/peoplepopulationandcommunity/populationandmigration/populationestimates/datasets/2011censuskeystatisticsforlocalauthoritiesinenglandandwales/r21ewrtableqs210ewladv1\\_tcm77-290988.xls](https://www.ons.gov.uk/file?uri=/peoplepopulationandcommunity/populationandmigration/populationestimates/datasets/2011censuskeystatisticsforlocalauthoritiesinenglandandwales/r21ewrtableqs210ewladv1_tcm77-290988.xls)

<sup>42</sup> Adding the churches owned by the Church of England and Church in Wales brings the total number of Christian churches in England and Wales to 43,008.

<sup>43</sup> Jewish denominations are provided for separately by the Marriage Act 1949, meaning they do not have to register their places of worship to conduct legally recognised marriages.

<sup>44</sup> To reiterate, we estimate that the actual number of Jewish synagogues in England and Wales is closer to 446.



Unitarian	146	138	N/A
Buddhist	118	15	247,743
Who Object to be Designated	51	16	N/A
Ravidassia	12	11	11,058
Scientologist	11	9	2,418
Jain	8	3	20,288
Baha'i	8	1	5,021
Theosophist	8	0	N/A
Brahma Kumari	7	0	442
Subud	7	0	N/A
Radha Soami	6	0	N/A
International Society for Krishna Consciousness <sup>45</sup>	5	1	N/A
Das Dharam	4	1	N/A
Aetherius Society	4	1	N/A
Church of the White Eagle Lodge	3	2	N/A
Faithist	3	2	N/A
Zoroastrian	3	1	4,105
Druid	3	0	4,189
Goddess People of Avalon	2	1	N/A
Fellowship of Universal Guidance	1	1	N/A
Hindu, Sikh and Zoroastrian <sup>46</sup>	1	1	N/A

<sup>45</sup> We have categorised this as a separate religious tradition as ISKCON's founder did not describe the group as Hindu, according to 'Are ISKCON Devotees Hindu?', ISKCON News, 9 June 2012:

<https://iskconnews.org/are-iskcon-devotees-hindus/>.

<sup>46</sup> This appears to be a place of worship that caters to multiple religions, and is not included in our final count.



Unitarian and Spiritualist <sup>47</sup>	1	1	N/A
Tenrikyo	1	0	N/A
Individual <sup>48</sup>	1	0	N/A
Advait Mat	1	0	N/A
All Faiths <sup>49</sup>	1	0	N/A
Sukyo Mahikari	1	0	N/A
Pathwork	1	0	N/A
Summit Lighthouse	1	0	N/A
Order of the Aviator (Aztec)	1	0	N/A
Holy Tabernacle Ministries <sup>50</sup>	1	0	N/A
Om Sai Ram <sup>51</sup>	1	0	N/A
Rastafarian	1	0	7,906
Odinist	1	0	N/A
Ek Niwas	1	0	N/A

### Denominations new to the register performing opposite-sex marriages<sup>52</sup>

The following table does not include the Church of Scientology, which first gained the right to marry people in its places of worship following its victory in *Hodkin* in 2014.

Denomination	First on register
--------------	-------------------

<sup>47</sup> Same as above.

<sup>48</sup> It is unclear what this refers to, or whether it is a separate religious tradition at all. The one place of worship belonging to this group lists its address as Serendipity Place, Ground Floor, 56 Mascotts Close, Brent.

<sup>49</sup> This is the denomination entered by the Temple of All Faiths. Its address is listed as Back of No. 2 Rosslyn Hill, Hampstead. Little information on the temple or its beliefs is available online, but it appears to have existed since at least the 1980s.

<sup>50</sup> It is unclear whether this refers to an alternate name used by the Nuwaubian Nation, or whether it is a Christian denomination. The address of its one place of worship is listed as Units 25 and 33B Eurolink Business Centre, 49 Effra Road, Brixton.

<sup>51</sup> It is unclear what this refers to. The one place of worship belonging to this denomination is the Om Sai Temple, whose address is listed as 10 Carlton Street, Brierfield, Lancashire.

<sup>52</sup> Scientologists gained the right to conduct legally recognised marriages for the first time in 2014, following the *Hodkin* ruling.



Charismatic/Pentecostal	30/04/2016
Hillsong Church	04/11/2016
House of Refuge <sup>53</sup>	19/10/2018
Life Transformation Ministries	16/04/2019
Syro-Malabar Catholics	29/10/2019
Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahedo Church	10/02/2020

**Existing denominations newly performing opposite-sex marriages**

<b>Denomination</b>	<b>First registered</b>
Emmanuel Church	12/10/2015
Charismatic / Evangelical	30/04/2016

**Denominations newly performing same-sex marriages**

<b>Denomination</b>	<b>No of places of worship</b>	<b>First registered</b>
Spiritualist	56	17/03/2015
Unitarian	87	17/03/2015
Christian <sup>54</sup>	6	17/03/2015
Who Object to be Designated <sup>55</sup>	3	17/03/2015
Particular Baptist	5	17/03/2015
Christian Spiritualist	10	17/03/2015
Reformed Church of the Netherlands	1	17/03/2015
Goddess People of Avalon	1	17/03/2015
Baptist	8	17/03/2015

<sup>53</sup> This appears to be a different denomination of Christ Apostolic Church from others registered prior to February 2015.

<sup>54</sup> Includes five designated as 'Christians Not Otherwise Designated'.

<sup>55</sup> Includes one designated as 'Who Object of be Designated by any Distinctive Religious Appellation'.



Protestant Dissenter	1	17/03/2015
Unitarian and Free Christian	4	17/03/2015
Buddhist	1	12/10/2015
Danish Lutheran	1	12/10/2015
Congregationalist	9	12/10/2015
Unitarian – Also Spiritualist	1	12/10/2015
Baptist and United Reformed Church	1	19/01/2016
Lutheran <sup>56</sup>	1	30/04/2016
United Reformed Church	82	04/11/2016
Welsh Independent <sup>57</sup>	2	04/11/2016
Church of the White Eagle Lodge	1	16/10/2017
Swedish Lutheran	1	16/10/2017
Unitarian Christian	1	16/10/2017
Community of Christ	2	16/04/2018
Independent	1	29/10/2019
Order of Buddhist Contemplatives <sup>58</sup>	1	29/10/2019
Evangelical Christian <sup>59</sup>	1	29/10/2019
Methodist Church	4	17/12/2021

**Denominations new to the register but not performing marriages**

Denomination	First on register
--------------	-------------------

<sup>56</sup> This place of worship appears to be pan-Scandinavian Lutheran, so it is listed separately from other Lutheran entries.

<sup>57</sup> Includes one listed as ‘Annibynwyr’ and one listed as ‘Welsh Congregationalist’. Both terms refer to the Union of Welsh Independents.

<sup>58</sup> This place of worship was registered in February 2015 as ‘Soto Zen Buddhists’, but was not performing same-sex marriages at the time.

<sup>59</sup> Listed as ‘Christians Evangelical’, but was tidied-up in our analysis to match other entries.



Druid	12/10/2015
Odinists	19/01/2016
Radha Soami <sup>60</sup>	30/04/2016
Order of the Aviator (Aztecs)	04/11/2016
Catholic (Latin Rite)	19/10/2018
Orthodox Roman Catholic	19/10/2018
Oriental Orthodox	29/10/2019
Independent Catholic	29/10/2019
Tenrikyo	17/12/2021

**Descriptions of some religions and spiritual traditions with registered places of worship**

Below we offer descriptions of some religions and spiritual traditions that have registered places of worship. We exclude the ‘big six’ world religions. These are listed in descending order of number of registered places of worship, as outlined above.

Founded in 19th century America, **Spiritualism** is a new religious movement whose followers believe that the living can communicate with the spirits of the dead.<sup>61</sup>

**Unitarianism** is a religious tradition that teaches that no single religion, religious scripture, or individual holds claim to the truth, encouraging its adherents to form their own beliefs within a set of core principles. Unitarians emphasise the oneness of God, and reject the idea of a trinity. Although Unitarianism emerged from the Protestant Reformation of the 16th century, and many Unitarians are Christians, more recent denominations are open to adherents with a range of religions and beliefs.<sup>62</sup>

**Ravidassia** is an Indian religious movement that follows the teachings of Shri Guru Ravidass Ji, considered the ‘true guru’. Born in the 14th century, Ravidass belonged to India’s lowest caste, the Dalits, as do many of his modern-day followers. Although his teachings appear in the central Sikh holy scripture, the Guru Grant Sahib, Ravidassia do not consider themselves Sikh.<sup>63</sup>

<sup>60</sup> This appears to be a different denomination of Radha Soami from Radha Soami Satsang Beas, the latter of which was on the register in February 2015.

<sup>61</sup> ‘Modern Spiritualism at a glance’, BBC : <https://www.bbc.co.uk/religion/religions/spiritualism/ataglance/glance.shtml>

<sup>62</sup> ‘Unitarianism at a glance’, BBC : <https://www.bbc.co.uk/religion/religions/unitarianism/ataglance/glance.shtml>

<sup>63</sup> The Ravidassia Community: <https://ravidassia.wordpress.com/>



**Scientology** is a movement based on ideas developed by L. Ron Hubbard in the 1950s. Originally presented as a form of therapy, Hubbard's ideas had taken a religious turn by the time the Church of Scientology was established in 1954. Scientologists believe that humans are immortal spiritual beings known as thetans, who are separate from the human body and came into existence billions of years ago. Scientology claims to help humans understand this spiritual form.<sup>64</sup>

**Jainism** is an ancient Indian religion, dating back to at least the 7th century BCE. It teaches a spiritual path to enlightenment centred on non-violence and welfare.<sup>65</sup>

The **Baha'i Faith** was founded in Iraq in the 19th century by Mirzā Ḥosayn 'Alī Nūrī, known as Bahā' Allāh. Baha'is believe all of the major world religions teach the same universal truth, and were revealed as part of a progressive plan for humanity.<sup>66</sup>

**Theosophy** is an occult movement founded in New York City in the 19th century by Russian aristocrat Helena Blavatsky. It is an esoteric movement, believing that an inner meaning can be found within the world religions. Blavatsky claimed to be in contact with a brotherhood of Great Masters that guide humanity's spiritual path.<sup>67</sup>

The **Brahma Kumaris** are an Indian spiritual tradition founded in 1937. The group teaches a form of open-eye meditation called Raja Yoga.<sup>68</sup> It is known for being led primarily by women, and claims to be the largest women-led spiritual organisation in the world.<sup>69</sup>

**Subud** is an interfaith spiritual movement founded in 1930s Indonesia by Muhammad Subuh Sumohadiwidjojo. Its followers participate in a form of worship called the *laithan kejiwaan*, which is described as experienced differently by each individual. The movement does not regard itself as a religion, allowing adherents to practise its teachings while holding beliefs from another faith.<sup>70</sup>

**Radha Soami** is a spiritual tradition founded in India in the mid-19th century by Shiv Dayal Saheb, a Hindu banker. Its teachings are followed by both Hindus and Sikhs.<sup>71</sup>

The **International Society for Krishna Consciousness**, also known as the Hare Krishna movement, is a religious organisation founded by A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda in New York City in 1966. Based on Hindu scriptures, it teaches that the ultimate goal for living beings is 'to reawaken their love' of the god Krishna.<sup>72</sup>

<sup>64</sup> 'Scientology', Britannica: <https://www.britannica.com/topic/Scientology>

<sup>65</sup> 'Jainism', Britannica: <https://www.britannica.com/topic/Jainism>

<sup>66</sup> 'Bahā'ī Faith', Britannica: <https://www.britannica.com/topic/Bahai-Faith>

<sup>67</sup> 'Theosophy', Britannica: <https://www.britannica.com/topic/theosophy>

<sup>68</sup> 'Raja Yoga Meditation', Brahma Kumaris: <https://www.brahmakumaris.org/meditation/raja-yoga-meditation>

<sup>69</sup> 'Introduction', Brahma Kumaris: <https://www.brahmakumaris.org/about-us/introduction>

<sup>70</sup> 'What is Subud?', Subud Britain: <https://www.subudbritain.org/about-subud/>

<sup>71</sup> 'Radha Soami Satsang', Britannica: <https://www.britannica.com/topic/Radha-Soami-Satsang>

<sup>72</sup> 'What is ISKCON?', International Society for Krishna Consciousness (ISKCON): <https://www.iskcon.org/about-us/what-is-iskcon.php>



**Aetherius Society** is a new religious movement founded in England in 1954 by George King, after he claimed to have been contacted by an extraterrestrial intelligence called Aetherius. According to its website, the group believes in a wide spectrum of religious and spiritual ideas, including extraterrestrial life, UFOs, psychic powers, and reincarnation.<sup>73</sup>

**Das Dharam** was founded in India in February 1980 by Mahraz Darshan Das Ji, a spiritual teacher. Its congregation is open to people of all faiths. The group describes itself as 'a path to strengthening individual human ties through shared values and ideals towards God and humanity'.<sup>74</sup>

The **Church of the White Eagle Lodge** was founded in England in 1935 by medium Grace Cooke and her husband Ivan. It takes its name from the spiritual teacher from whom Grace claimed to receive wisdom, known as White Eagle.<sup>75</sup> The group states that it grew in popularity as people sought spiritual guidance during World War II.<sup>76</sup>

**Faithist** refers to groups that follow the teachings of *Oahspe: A New Bible*, a new religious scripture published in 1881 by John Newbrough, an American. According to the website of one such group, the Kosmon Sanctuary, *Oahspe* seeks 'to teach mortals how to attain to hear the Creator's voice, and to see his heavens, in full consciousness, whilst still living on the earth, and to know in truth, the place and condition awaiting them after death'.<sup>77</sup>

**Zoroastrianism** is an ancient Iranian religion. It is one of the world's oldest organised religions, predating the Abrahamic faiths by several centuries. Although not explicitly monotheistic, it is one of the first religions to worship a supreme God.<sup>78</sup>

**Druidry** is a modern spiritual movement that seeks to revive the practices of the ancient Druids. The largest Druid organisation in Britain is the British Druid Order, which describes itself as rooted in the 'earliest native spirituality of Britain and Europe'.<sup>79</sup>

The **Goddess People of Avalon** is a Glastonbury-based group that first opened as a pop-up temple in 2000. According to its website, it is 'dedicated to the worship of the indigenous British Goddess in all of Her many manifesting forms'. It holds that the Goddess, the Lady of Avalon, was widely worshipped prior to the arrival of 'patriarchal religions', and claims to be the first temple dedicated to her worship in 1,500 years.<sup>80</sup>

**The Fellowship of Universal Guidance** is a metaphysical New Age group founded in 1961 by Americans Wayne A. Guthrie and Bella Karish. It states that its goal is to 'assist those who desire

<sup>73</sup> 'Overview', Aetherius Society: <https://www.aetherius.org/overview/>

<sup>74</sup> 'Das Dharam', Rabbi Darshan: <https://rabbidarshan.com/das-dharam/>

<sup>75</sup> 'Our History', White Eagle Lodge: <https://www.white-eagle.org.uk/about-us/our-history/>

<sup>76</sup> 'White Eagle', White Eagle Lodge:

<https://www.white-eagle.org.uk/about-us/white-eagle-and-his-teachings/>

<sup>77</sup> 'About Us', Kosmon Sanctuary: <https://www.kosmonsanctuary.org/about-the-kosmon-sanctuary>

<sup>78</sup> 'Zoroastrianism', Britannica: <https://www.britannica.com/topic/Zoroastrianism>

<sup>79</sup> British Druid Order: <https://www.druidry.co.uk/>

<sup>80</sup> 'Our Story', Goddess People of Avalon: <https://goddess temple.co.uk/our-story/>





spiritual fulfillment and evolvment to become cleansed, balanced, and attuned physically, emotionally, mentally, and spiritually, as well as subconsciously and consciously blending with their Higher Selves'.<sup>81</sup>

**Advait Mat**, or Shri Paramhans Advait Mat, is an Indian religious group that follows the teachings of its founder, Shri Paramhans Dayal Maharaj Ji. According to the Charity Commission, 'the principle objective of the temple is to advance religion by spreading and preaching the spiritual teachings of Parmhans Shri'.<sup>82</sup>

**Ek Niwas** is a multi-faith temple founded in November 1990, located in Wolverhampton. According to its website, one of the group's aims is 'to convey the message that there is only One Supreme Almighty God whom we call by many names'.<sup>83</sup>

**Odinism** is a neo-pagan movement. The one registered Odinist place of worship in England and Wales belongs to the Odinist Fellowship, which claims to follow the 'original, indigenous faith of the English people'. It describes itself as 'ethnospecific'.<sup>84</sup>

**Pathwork** is a spiritual tradition derived from lectures given by Eva Pierrakos between the 1950s and 1970s, said to have been channelled by a nameless 'Being'. According to its website, these lectures provide wisdom that gives 'a sure path to our spiritual essence or True Self'.<sup>85</sup>

**Rastafarianism** was first established in Jamaica in the 1930s. Rastafarians believe that Haile Selassie, emperor of Ethiopia between the 1930s and 1970s, is the Second Coming of Christ.<sup>86</sup>

**Sukyo Mahikari** is a Japanese new religious movement founded by Kōtama Okadu in 1959.<sup>87</sup> Its members perform a spiritual practice called The Art of True Light, believed to allow practitioners to 'become more in tune with God's will'.<sup>88</sup>

**Summit Lighthouse** is an organisation founded by Mark L. Prophet in 1958.<sup>89</sup> With its origins in the I AM theosophical movement, Mark and his wife Elizabeth claimed to receive teachings from a group of divine figures known as the Ascended Masters, including prominent figures from world religions.

90

---

<sup>81</sup> Fellowship of Universal Guidance: [https://www.foug.org/the\\_fellowship.htm](https://www.foug.org/the_fellowship.htm)

<sup>82</sup> Shri Paramhans Advait Mat – UK, Charity Commission for England and Wales: <https://register-of-charities.charitycommission.gov.uk/charity-details/?regid=276370&subid=0>

<sup>83</sup> 'About Us', Ek Niwas: <https://www.ekniwas.net/about-us>

<sup>84</sup> Odinist Fellowship: <https://www.odinistfellowship.co.uk/>

<sup>85</sup> Pathwork UK: <https://pathwork.org.uk/>

<sup>86</sup> 'Rastafari', Britannica: <https://www.britannica.com/topic/Rastafari>

<sup>87</sup> 'Our Aims', Sukyo Mahikari Europe: <https://www.sukyomahikarieurope.org/en/aims/>

<sup>88</sup> 'Our Practice', Sukyo Mahikari Europe: <https://www.sukyomahikarieurope.org/en/practice/>

<sup>89</sup> 'Mark L. Prophet', Summit Lighthouse, : <https://www.summitlighthouse.org/mark-prophet/>

<sup>90</sup> Summit Lighthouse: <https://www.summitlighthouse.org/aboutus/>



**Tenrikyo** is a 19th-century Japanese new religious movement. It is based on the teachings of Nakayami Miki, a woman who claimed to have been possessed by the Lord of Divine Wisdom. By the 1980s, the group had amassed over 2 million followers.

**For more details, information, and evidence, contact Humanists UK:**

Richy Thompson  
Director of Public Affairs and Policy  
0781 5589 636  
020 7324 3072  
[richy@humanists.uk](mailto:richy@humanists.uk)  
[humanists.uk](https://www.humanists.uk)

