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# Resources:

# Movies and TV, Podcasts, Websites, Books

These resources have been compiled for those who wish to learn about the work of individuals and organizations that promote interfaith understanding, and to explore religion and interfaith issues through an array of mediums. These are examples of the many movies, websites, and books with interfaith themes. Please review all materials in advance to ensure that they are appropriate for the ages involved, your setting, and your mix of religious traditions.

*(****\*\**** *= Interfaith Philadelphia Staff Pick)*

## Movies and TV Shows

All movie descriptions found on IMDb.com unless otherwise noted

**Arranged** (2007) 7.4/10

*Arranged* centers on the friendship between an Orthodox Jewish woman and a Muslim woman who meet as first-year teachers at a public school in Brooklyn. Over the course of the year they learn they share much in common - not least of which is that they are both going through the process of arranged marriages.

**\*\*Baraka** (1992) 8.6/10

*Baraka* is a 1992 non-narrative documentary film directed by Ron Fricke. The title *Baraka* means blessing in a multitude of languages, deriving from the Arabic,ب رك ة descending from a common Semitic ancestor and cognate to the Hebrew Berakhah. Baraka is a documentary film with no narrative or voice-over. It explores themes via a kaleidoscopic compilation of natural events, life, human activities and technological phenomena shot in 24 countries on six continents over a 14-month period. (*Wikipedia*)

**Beyond Belief** (2001) 5.4/10

Susan Retik and Patti Quigley are two ordinary soccer moms living in the affluent suburbs of Boston until tragedy strikes. Rather than turning inwards, grief compels these women to focus on the country where the terrorists who took their husbands' lives were trained: Afghanistan. Over the course of two years, as they cope with loss and struggle to raise their families as single mothers, these extraordinary women dedicate themselves to empowering Afghan widows whose lives have been ravaged by decades of war, poverty and oppression - factors they consider to be the root causes of terrorism.

**The Buddha** (2010) 7.7/10

After 400 BC, a new religion was born in Southeast Asia, generated from the ideas of Buddha, a mysterious Prince from Nepal who gained enlightenment while he sat under a large, shapely fig tree. Buddha never claimed to be God or his emissary on earth, only that he was a human being who had found a kind of serenity that others could find, too. This documentary tells the story of his life.

**Dancing in Jaffa** (2013) 6.6/10

The film follows, Pierre Dulaine, an internationally renowned ballroom dancer as he returns to his birthplace, Jaffa, to fulfill his lifelong dream of teaching Jewish and Palestinian-Israeli children to dance together. The film explores the stories of four children forced to confront issues of identity, segregation and racism, as they dance with their enemies.

**Deaf Jam** (2011) 7.7/10

In Deaf Jam, Aneta Brodski seizes the day. She is a Deaf teen introduced to American Sign Language (ASL) poetry, who then boldly enters the spoken word slam scene. In a wondrous twist, Aneta, an Israeli immigrant living in the Queens section of New York City, eventually meets Tahani, a hearing Palestinian slam poet. The two young women embark on a hearing/deaf collaboration, a performance duet that is a metaphor for the complex realities they share - generating a new form of slam poetry that speaks to both the hearing and the Deaf.

**Eat Drink Man Woman** (1994) 7.8/10

Senior Master Chef Chu lives in a large house in Taipei with his three unmarried daughters, Jia-Jen, a chemistry teacher converted to Christianity, Jia-Chien, an airline executive, and Jia-Ning, a student who also works in a fast food restaurant. Life in the house revolves around the ritual of an elaborate dinner each Sunday, and the love lives of all the family members.

**For the Bible Tells Me So** (2007) 7.8/10

We meet five Christian families, each with a gay or lesbian child. Parents talk about their marriages and church-going, their children's childhood and coming out, their reactions, and changes over time. The stories told by these nine parents and four adult children alternate with talking heads - Protestant and Jewish theologians - and with film clips of fundamentalist preachers and pundits and news clips of people in the street.

**\*\*Gandhi** (1982) 8.1/10

Biography of Mohandas Gandhi, the lawyer who became the famed leader of the Indian revolts against the British rule through a philosophy of nonviolent protest.

***\*\*The Good Place*** (Netflix, 2017) 8.1/10

The series focuses on Eleanor Shellstrop (Kristen Bell), a woman who wakes up in the afterlife and is introduced by Michael (Ted Danson) to "The Good Place", a highly selective Heaven-like utopia he designed, as a reward for her righteous life. She realizes that she was sent there by mistake and must hide her morally imperfect behavior and try to become a better, more ethical person.

**I am** (2010) 7.6/10

Director Tom Shadyac speaks with intellectual and spiritual leaders about what's wrong with our world and how we can improve both it and the way we live in it.

**The Kite Runner** (2007) 7.6/10

After spending years in California, Amir returns to his homeland in Afghanistan to help his old friend Hassan, whose son is in trouble.

**The Lemon Tree** (2008) 7.4/10

The story of a Palestinian widow who must defend her lemon tree field when a new Israeli Defense Minister moves next door to her and threatens to have her lemon grove torn down.

**\*\*Life of Pi** (2012) 7.9/10

The storyline revolves around a 16-year-old Indian boy named Piscine Molitor "Pi" Patel, who survives a shipwreck in which his family dies, and is stranded in the Pacific Ocean on a lifeboat with a Bengal tiger named Richard Parker. Pi is raised Hindu and vegetarian, but at 12 years old, he is introduced to Christianity and then Islam, and starts to follow all three religions as he "just wants to love God." (*Wikipedia*)

**The Mission** (1986) 7.5/10

18th century Spanish Jesuits try to protect a remote South American Indian tribe in danger of falling under the rule of pro-slavery Portugal.

**\*\*Monsieur Ibrahim** (2003) - French with subtitles 7.4/10

In a street called Blue in a very poor neighborhood in Paris, Monsieur Ibrahim is an old Muslim Turkish owner of a small market. He becomes friends with the Jewish teenager Moses, tenderly nicknamed Momo, who lives with his father in a small apartment on the other side of the street. Monsieur Ibrahim gives paternal love teaching knowledge of the Qur'an to the boy, and receives in return love and respect.

***\*\*Of Many*** *(2014) 7.8/10*

With 9/11 and Arab-Israeli conflict as a backdrop, “Of Many” documents the lives of Imam Khalid Latif and Rabbi Yehuda Sarna, the Muslim and Jewish Chaplains at New York University, and the development of their interfaith commitment to each another and to the communities they represent.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qArtk_17WW0>

**The Other Son** (2012) 7.4/10

Two young men, one Israeli and one Palestinian, discover they were accidentally switched at birth.

**The Quarrel** (1991) 7.1/10

Montreal 1948. On Rosh Hashanah, Chaim (a Yiddish writer) is forced to think of his religion when he's asked to be the tenth in a minyan. As he sits in the park, he suddenly sees an old friend whom he hasn't seen since they quarrelled when they were yeshiva students together. Hersh, a rabbi, survived Auschwitz and his faith was strengthened by his ordeal, while Chaim escaped the Nazis, but had lost his faith long before. The two walk together, reminisce, and argue passionately about themselves, their actions, their lives, their religion, their old quarrel, and their friendship.

***The Sultan and the Saint*** *(2016) 7.3/10*

The Sultan and the Saint tells one of the great, lost stories from history. Set in a past period of East-West conflict, it speaks with urgency to our present. Two men of faith, one an itinerant Christian preacher, the other the ruler of a Muslim Empire, bucked a century of war, distrust, and insidious propaganda in a search for mutual respect and common ground. It is the story of Francis of Assisi and the Sultan of Egypt, and their meeting on a bloody battlefield during the period of Christian-Muslim conflict known as the Crusades. This is big history, important history.

**Soldiers of Peace** (2008)

The stories of peacemakers in 14 countries around the world, narrated by Michael Douglas. Soldiers of Peace showcases the alternatives to conflict, revealing countless inspiring examples to prove that peace can be achieved through great equity, emancipation, tolerance, and understanding.

**Under One Sky: The People of Interfaith Action** (short film) (2013) 6.8/10

The religions of the world make peace in central Texas.

**Unmistaken Child** (2008) 7.7/10

In Nepal, a venerable monk, Geshe Lama Konchog, dies and one of his disciples, a youthful monk named Tenzin Zopa, searches for his master's reincarnation. The film follows his search to the Tsum Valley where he finds a young boy of the right age who uncannily responds to Konchog's possessions. Is this the reincarnation of the master? After the boy passes several tests, Tenzin takes him to meet the Dalai Lama. Will the parents agree to let the boy go to the monastery, and, if so, how will the child respond?

**TV Episode – “True Life: I’m in an Interfaith Relationship”** from MTV

There are few things young people find more important than their religions and their significant others. But how do you make a relationship work when the person you love doesn't share your creed? On this episode of True Life, we follow two couples struggling to hold on to their affections -- while still holding on to different faiths.

## Podcasts

***All Together***

“From the Pope to Patti Smith — All Together is dedicated to exploring how religion ideas, ethics and spiritual practices inform and shape our personal lives, our communities and our world. Host Rev. Paul Brandeis Raushenbush is the Executive Editor of HuffPost Religion, which is America’s most widely-read religion website.”

***The Ask Sri Vishwanath Show***

“In the Ask Sri Vishwanath show you can bring in your questions and Sri Vishwanath will answer them for you live. He is the author of The Secret of Bhagavad Gita and runs the Bhagavad Gita University. Each session runs from 9 to 20 minutes and is packed with the wisdom and secrets of Bhagavad Gita. Simple to absorb easy to implement. You will love these subtle teachings of Bhagavad Gita and want to visit them again and again.”

***BBC Heart and Soul***

“Each week, Heart And Soul explores and tries to explain personal experiences of spirituality and faith from around the world.”

***Buddhist Geeks***

“Buddhist Geeks has been exploring the convergence of Buddhism with emerging technology and our increasingly global culture since 2007.”

***\*\*The Bible For Normal People***

This podcast is part of a discussion Pete and Jared have been having for years: how can everyday people get access to the best Bible teachers around and have a place to talk about it with a group of others on a journey of faith. How can we invite more and more people into conversation about what the Bible is and what we should do with it? And so The Bible For Normal People was born.

***#GoodMuslimBadMuslim***

“A monthly podcast featuring Tanzila “Taz” Ahmed and Zahra Noorbakhsh about the good and the bad of the American Muslim female experience. But you know, satirically & disturbingly hilarious.”

***Interfaith Voices***

“Interfaith Voices is the nation’s only public radio show exclusively about religion. We were born just three days after 9/11, when a feisty nun got the idea to host a multi-faith panel on religion and terrorism, live on the radio. The phones rang off the hook, and it became clear that listeners were hungry for informed, respectful dialogue on religion in the public square. We carry on that mission today with our free, weekly podcast...led by that same unstoppable nun-turned-radio host, Maureen Fiedler.”

***\*\*On Being***

“On Being with Krista Tippett takes up the big questions of meaning with scientists and theologians, artists and teachers — some you know and others you’ll love to meet. Updated every Thursday, a new discovery about the immensity of our lives.”

***\*\*Ram Dass Here and Now***

“Ram Dass Here and Now Podcast is brought to life by the years of work Ram Dass has done in giving lectures and spiritual talks all over the world. Ram Dass has devoted his life to the love of his guru, Neem Karoli Baba. Through this love Ram Dass has shared a little piece of Maharajji with all who have listened to him. Ram Dass teaches that through the Bhakti practice of unconditional love we can all connect with our true nature.”

***Research on Religion***

“A weekly podcast exploring academic research on religion and featuring top scholars in history, sociology, political science, economics and religious studies.”

***The Sikh Cast***

“A new podcast hosted by the Sikh Research Institute that will feature members of Sikh community to talk about issues relevant to Sikhs around the world.”

## Websites

**\*\* www.interfaithcenterpa.org** (or follow us on Facebook)

* Stay up to date on programming at the Interfaith Center of Greater Philadelphia and keep in touch with Interfaith Center Staff.

**\*\* www.IFYC.org**

* Learn about Eboo Patel’s nonprofit organization, the Interfaith Youth Core, and their work with college students.

**\*\* www.pluralism.org**

* Check out the Pluralism Project, a decade-long research endeavor of Diana Eck at Harvard University regarding the changing American religious landscape.

**www.charterforcompassion.org**

* Sign the Charter for Compassion, which is a cooperative effort to restore compassionate thinking and compassionate action to the center of religious, moral and political life.

**www.tanenbaum.org**

* The Tanenbaum Center for Interreligious Understanding promotes mutual respect through programs in education, health care, conflict resolution, and in the workplace.

**www.ravelunravel.com**

* Watch a variety of short video interviews of individuals explaining their personal religious or spiritual beliefs, including discussion of common religious stereotypes and misconceptions. Ravel/UnRavel is a program of Project Interfaith.

**www.huffingtonpost.com/news/interfaith**

* A Huffington Post news page that is regularly updated with interfaith themed blog posts, articles, and photography.

**www.nain.org**

* The North American Interfaith Network has many opportunities for young adults to become involved in interfaith engagement, including social media networks and a series of educational conference calls.

**www.pbs.org/wnet/religionandethics**

* A newsweekly site that covers articles relating to world religions and their interaction with ethical conflicts.

**www.religionfacts.com**

* Information including facts, definitions, and articles on a wide variety of world religions and belief systems, both ancient and modern.

***http://www.religioustolerance.org/***

* Working to bring unity between all religious and non-religious traditions.

**www.interfaithalliance.org**

* Interfaith Alliance celebrates religious freedom by championing individual rights, promoting policies that protect both religion and democracy, and uniting diverse voices to challenge extremism.

**www.interfaithpeacewalk.org**

* The website of the annual Interfaith Peace Walk in Philadelphia.

**www.interfaithradio.org**

* Interfaith Voices is the nation's leading public radio show about faith, ethics and spirituality. They offer weekly analyses of the big headlines alongside lesser-told stories.

**www.interfaith.org**

* Information about different religions and resources for comparative religion. Also includes an interfaith dialogue forum.

**www.interfaithcalendar.org**

* A list of major religious holidays for the next six years.

## Books

All book descriptions found on Amazon.com.

**\*\* Acts of Faith: The Story of an American Muslim, the Struggle for the Soul of a Generation**, Eboo Patel (2010)

*Acts of Faith* is a remarkable account of growing up Muslim in America and coming to believe in religious pluralism, from one of the most prominent faith leaders in the United States. Eboo Patel’s story is a hopeful and moving testament to the power and passion of young people—and of the world-changing potential of an interfaith youth movement.

**A New Religious America: How a ‘Christian Country’ Has Become the World’s Most Religiously Diverse Nation**, Diana Eck (2001)

Why understanding America's religious landscape is the most important challenge facing us today.

**Baha'u'llah And the New Era: An Introduction to the Baha'i Faith,** J.E. Esslemont (2006)

In this compact work, Esslemont comprehensively yet succinctly sets forth the teachings of Baha'u'llah, the Prophet and Founder of the Baha'i Faith. He outlines the religion's early history; explains its theology; incorporates extracts from Baha'i scripture; and provides information on Baha'i spiritual practices. This is essential reading for students of comparative religion.

**The Faith Club: A Muslim, A Christian, A Jew - Three Women Search for Understanding**, Ranya Idliby, Priscilla Warner, and Suzanne Oliver (2007)

When an American Muslim woman befriends two other mothers, one Jewish and one Christian, they decided to educate their children about their respective religions. None of them guessed their regular meetings would provide life-changing answers and form bonds that would forever alter their struggles with prejudice, fear, and anger. Personal, powerful, and compelling, The Faith Club forces readers to face the tough questions about their own religions.

**Faitheist: How An Atheist Found Common Ground With The Religious**, Chris Stedman (2012)

In *Faitheist,* Stedman draws on his work organizing interfaith and secular communities, his academic study of religion, and his own experiences to argue for the necessity of bridging the growing chasm between atheists and the religious. As someone who has stood on both sides of the divide, Stedman is uniquely positioned to present a way for atheists and the religious to find common ground and work together to make this world— the one world we can all agree on—a better place.

**Getting to the Heart of Interfaith: The Eye-Opening, Hope-Filled Friendship of a Pastor, a Rabbi & a Sheikh**, Pastor Ted Falcon, Rabbi Don Mackenzie, and Sheikh Jamal Rahman (2009)

From their deep commitment and lived experience, they present ways we can work together to transcend the differences that have divided us historically. Together they explore: The five stages of the interfaith journey, the power of our stories, the core of our traditions, the promises and problems of our traditions, new dimensions of spiritual identity, and much more.

**God is Not One: The Eight Rival Religions that Run the World**, Stephen Prothero (2011)

Stephen Prothero, the New York Times bestselling author of *Religious Literacy*, makes a fresh and provocative argument that, contrary to popular understanding, all religions are not simply different paths to the same end... and why this matters greatly for us. Readers of Huston Smith and Karen Armstrong will find much to ponder in *God Is Not One.*

**\*\* Hearing the Call Across Traditions: Readings on Faith and Service**, edited by Adam Davis and foreword by Eboo Patel (2011)

Explore the connections between faith, service, and social justice through the prose, verse, and sacred texts of the world's great faith traditions--Christianity, Judaism, Islam, Buddhism, Hinduism, Taoism, and more. Drawing from diverse literary genres, religious and philosophical perspectives, and historical periods, these short and provocative readings cut to the heart of the many obstacles and joys that accompany lives devoted to faith and service.

**\*\* How to be a Perfect Stranger: The Essential Religious Etiquette Handbook (Fifth Edition),** Stuart Matlins and Arthur Magida (2010)

This easy-to-read guidebook, with an "Everything You Need to Know Before You Go" checklist, helps the well-meaning guest to feel comfortable, participate to the fullest extent possible and avoid violating anyone's religious principles--while enriching their own spiritual understanding.

***How's Your Faith?: An Unlikely Spiritual Journey****, David Gregory (2016)*

In this “thoughtful, introspective, and moving account” (The Washington Post), former NBC news anchor David Gregory probes various religious traditions to better understand his own faith and answer important questions about who we want to be and what we believe002E

**Interfaith Heroes and Interfaith Heroes 2**, Daniel L Buttry (2007, 2008)

*Interfaith Heroes* is an inspiring 31-day reader, showcasing short biographies of men and women throughout history who have crossed traditional boundaries of religious groups to build stronger communities. The book includes questions for daily reflection that are designed to spark creative thinking by people of all faiths.

***Peace Be upon You: The Story of Muslim, Christian, and Jewish Coexistence,*** *Zachary Karabell (2007)*

The story of conflict and confrontation between Islam and the West has become daily news, but throughout the ages Muslims, Christians, and Jews have shared more than enmity and war: there is also a rich and textured history of coexistence that has all but disappeared from our collective memory. In this timely and revealing book, Zachary Karabell traces the legacy of tolerance and cooperation from the advent of Islam to the present day.

**Toward a True Kinship of Faiths: How the World's Religions Can Come Together**, The Dalai Lama XIV (2010)

The Dalai Lama profoundly shows how a sincere believer can, with integrity, be a pluralist in relation to other religions without compromising commitment to the essence of the doctrinal teachings of their own faith. An issue of central importance for the Dalai Lama personally and for the entire world in general, *Toward a True Kinship of Faiths* offers a hopeful yet realistic look at how humanity must step into the future.

***The Interfaith Alternative: Embracing Spiritual Diversity****, Steven Greenebaum (2012)*

The Interfaith Alternative shows us how we can celebrate each other without fear of losing our own identity. It illuminates the path to creating a nurturing spiritual community that honors and includes all religious languages—an alternative to Jews worshiping only with Jews, Christians with Christians, and Muslims with Muslims. In doing so, it demonstrates that through coming together in a mutually supportive environment we can concentrate on our shared desire to remake the world into a compassionate, loving place.

***\*\* Why Did Jesus, Moses, the Buddha, and Mohammed Cross the Road?: Christian Identity in a Multi-Faith World,*** *Brian D. McLaren (2012)*

Can you be a committed Christian without having to condemn or convert people of other faiths? Is it possible to affirm other religious traditions without watering down your own? In his most important book yet, widely acclaimed author and speaker Brian McLaren proposes a new faith alternative, one built on "benevolence and solidarity rather than rivalry and hostility." This way of being Christian is strong but doesn't strong-arm anyone, going beyond mere tolerance to vigorous hospitality toward, interest in, and collaboration with the other.

**Zealot: The Life and Times of Jesus of Nazareth**, Reza Aslan (2013)

*Zealot* yields a fresh perspective on one of the greatest stories ever told even as it affirms the radical and transformative nature of Jesus of Nazareth’s life and mission. The result is a thought-provoking, elegantly written biography with the pulse of a fast-paced novel: a singularly brilliant portrait of a man, a time, and the birth of a religion.