

Sikhism

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Sikhism was founded five centuries before, in 1499, when Guru Nanak preached, "Let us not divide into different faiths; Hindu or Muslim. We are children of same father, our Lord, by any name; Allah, Ram, WaheGuru, God etc. The holy scriptures of Sikhs, *Guru Granth Sahib*, mentions many names of the Almighty. No prophet or *Avtar* can claim a franchise on God, who is not stationed at any particular place but is visible in his whole creation. Heaven or hell are concepts; they are not places where we are destined to go after death. To love God and sing his praises is living in heaven on this earth and suffering from lust, ego, anger, greed and other vices is living in hell.

The mission of human life is to realize His Spirit vibrating in every human being and serving them irrespective of their faith (Allah, Ram Jehova, WaheGuru, God), caste, creed or nation.

Sikhs came to North America before the end of 19th century. However, most of them emigrated during late sixties as professionals in various fields.

A few Sikhs were working/living in the Cleveland area in late sixties as professionals or students at Case Western Reserve University, who later on settled in this area. They had their first organizations like the Sikh Cultural asociety and Guru Nanak Foundation registered in the State of Ohio in early seventies. Later these two organizations pooled their resources and merged as one organization, Guru Nanak Foundation of Greater Cleveland, Inc. in 1976 and in 1980 bought a church building on West 25th Street to be used as *Gurdwara Sahib*, a place for singing His praises.

The Sikh community increased in number considerably in this area as a result of unification of families under U.S. immigration laws, so the *Gurdwara Sahib* had to be relocated to a bigger facility at 4220 Broadview Road , Richfield, Ohio 44286 (Tel 216-659-3748) on a lot of about 8 acres to serve the religious and cultural needs of the community in Northeast Ohio. The foundation observes all major Sikh festivals besides regular Sunday services for families and their children. Recitations from Holy Scriptures and regular classes in Sikh History are held every Sunday followed by community kitchen run by volunteers of individuals and families.