

Interfaith Vegan Coalition

NON-DENOMINATIONAL RESOURCES FOR USE WITH ANY SPIRITUAL, FAITH, ETHICAL OR WISDOM GROUP

(Resources specific to your own faith can be found on the links on the main page.)



Ten Steps You Can Introduce to Your Community of Faith to Help Align Their Ideals of Harmlessness and Universal Lovingkindness with Their Daily Actions



These are 10 steps that could be introduced either one at a time or all together. The goal of these steps is to bring the golden rule ideal of harmlessness and lovingkindness into alignment with everyday community practices. You can do this alone, but it is very helpful if you have some interested community members who could join you in forming a “Green” committee or similar group that could help you promote these steps.

1. Include at least one prayer/intention each week for animals in the meetings/ services. Join the [Worldwide Prayer Circle for Animals](#).
2. Include reverence for and kinship with all God’s creatures in the group’s mission statement. Include language such as “guardian” rather than “owner” when referring to animal companions. See [In Defense of Animals’](#) Guardian Campaign.

Use “he” or “she,” rather than “it,” when referring to animals.

3. Help develop a policy to remove or repel insects, mice and others without harming them and to protect birds from hitting large windows.
4. Encourage education and discussion about how the community can help animals by hosting films, speakers, and book studies about veganism and doing no harm to animals. Also, education about the intersectionality of all social justice movements, including animal rights, is very important.
5. Encourage group outings that are nonviolent, such as hiking, camping, and canoeing, instead of hunting, fishing, rodeos, zoos, and circuses.
6. Require that members not wear fur into the meeting area out of respect for the beautiful creatures who are brutally raised and killed for vanity.
7. Begin purchasing paper, cleaning products, candles, etc. that are ecologically sustainable, fair-trade, and certified cruelty-free.
8. Form a Vegan Spirituality group within your place of worship. You can get ideas and post your group on www.veganspirituality.com. With the support of the group, you can often effect more change and have more credibility.
9. Perhaps, the most challenging step, but the most dramatic in its message of compassion and social justice, will be for the group to sponsor only cruelty-free meals. Sharing plant-based meals as a community acknowledges our commitment to our own physical health, the health of the earth, the hungry of the world (since a plant-based diet uses far fewer resources than an animal diet does), and the right of all animals to live their own lives free from human exploitation and violence. Sponsoring only plant-based

meals also signifies respect and inclusion of those church members who are already committed vegans.

10. Encourage your place of worship or spiritual community to work toward receiving a “Vegan” or “Vegan Friendly” designation from Interfaith Vegan Coalition.



QUOTES CONNECTING WORLD PEACE AND VEGANISM:

As long as people will shed the blood of innocent creatures there can be no peace, no liberty, no harmony between people. Slaughter and justice cannot dwell together.--Isaac Bashevis Singer
As long as there are slaughterhouses, there will be battlefields.

– Leo Tolstoy

Until he extends the circle of compassion to all living things, man will not himself find peace.

– Albert Schweitzer

Until we have the courage to recognize cruelty for what it is--whether its victim is human or animal--we cannot expect things to be much better in this world... We cannot have peace among men whose hearts delight in killing any living creature. By every act that glorifies or even tolerates such moronic delight in killing we set back the progress of humanity.

– Rachel Carson

We are the living graves of murdered beasts, slaughtered to satisfy our appetites. How can we hope in this world to attain the peace we say we are so anxious for?

– **George Bernard Shaw**

For as long as men massacre animals, they will kill each other. Indeed, he who sows the seed of murder and pain cannot reap joy and love.-

– **Pythagoras**

“The human cycle of violence will not stop until we stop the underlying violence, the remorseless violence we commit against animals for food.

– **Will Tuttle**

“We need never look for universal peace on this earth until men stop killing animals for food. The lust for blood has permeated the race thought and the destruction of life will continue to repeat its psychology, the world round, until men willingly observe the law in all phases of life, ‘Thou shalt not kill.’

– **Charles Fillmore**



MUSIC

Daniel Redwood’s album, “Songs for Animals, People, and the Earth.” These can be heard and played on his [website](#). The album can also be purchased on that website.

Paul Seymour’s songs, including “Maybe JC Was a Vegetarian.” Although he mentions Jesus, he references other traditions as well. Here is his [music video](#) and [website](#). He has several other vegan songs with videos that are humorous, such as “Don’t Eat Like a Barbarian” and “These Boots Ain’t Made of Leather.”

Vegan Smyth’s “[I Will Be Their Voice](#),”

[Why Must We Eat The Animals?
\(Oh Why Oh Why?\)](#)

BOOKS

An Unnatural Order: The Roots of Our Destruction of Nature by Jim Mason. “...the book explores, from an anthropological, sociocultural, and holistic perspective, how and why we have cut ourselves off from other animals and the natural world, and the toll this has taken on our consciousness...”

Carbon Dharma: The Occupation of Butterflies, by Sailesh Rao

Carbon Yoga: The Vegan Metamorphosis, by Sailesh Rao

JoAnn Farb’s [Books to Inspire Compassion or Critical Thinking for Children](#)

Peace to All Beings: Veggie Soup for the Chicken’s Soul and The Missing Peace: The Hidden Power of our Kinship with Animals; 2 books by Judy Carman

A Plea for the Animals: The Moral, Philosophical, and Evolutionary Imperative to Treat All Beings with Compassion, by Matthieu Ricard

World Peace Diet: Eating for Spiritual Health and Social Harmony by Will Tuttle, Ph.D

DOCUMENTARIES AND VIDEOS:

“A Life Connected” is a short, 11 minute, but powerful and feel-good video [online](#).

“[A Prayer for Compassion](#),” by Thomas Jackson.

“Cowsspiracy” and “What the Health” are on Netflix.

“[Earthlings](#)” is a very intense video that shows the unbelievable cruelty endured by animals at human hands. If you plan to show it, you need to give people fair warning. While it has caused many people to go vegan on the spot, it can be traumatic to watch, and viewers need to be given great compassion and care while watching it.

“[Forks Over Knives](#)”, available on Netflix and to purchase.

“[Mad Cowboy](#)”, available on Youtube.

“[The Metaphysics of Food](#),” by Will Tuttle.

“Peaceable Kingdom” and “The Witness” can be watched free [online](#).

“[The Theology of Christian Veganism](#).”

“Vegucated” can be watched [online](#).

Will and Madeleine Tuttle’s [YouTube Channel](#). Here you will find many videos showing Madeleine’s cooking demos, Will’s piano music, and some of Will’s talks. These would be perfect to show at a vegan potluck or an event when you aren’t able to get a speaker to come to the event.

[Gary Yourofsky](#) tells about his experience at a Christian church in which he asked if God condones all this animal killing, what does the Devil do.

PROGRAMS:

Online Radio with Victoria Moran, [Main Street Vegan](#)

[Vegan Spirituality](#) monthly conference calls. Anyone can join the calls.

PRAYERS:

The Prayer Circle for Animals (PCA) is a non-denominational circle of people devoted to using action and the power of prayer, meditation, and/or focused thought to liberate all animals from human oppression and exploitation. PCA believes that, by adding the power of prayer to all the other animal rights work currently being done, we can hasten the transformation. A universal, non-denominational prayer on the website has been translated into many languages. www.circleofcompassion.org and [facebook](#).

Peace to All Beings: Veggie Soup for the Chicken’s Soul by Judy Carman contains many non-denominational prayers and prayers from different religions. This [website](#) contains prayers also and a link to the book.

ACTIVITIES AND CEREMONIES:

1. Have a fun ice cream social with only vegan ice cream at your place of worship or meeting. It may be possible to get donations of coupons from the vegan ice cream companies, Ben and Jerrie’s and others. Also [VegFund](#) may be able to donate money to cover the cost of the ice cream.
2. Organize a vegan potluck for the entire membership or for a book study or other group within the membership. Having a speaker, youtube or documentary at the event might encourage more people to attend.
3. Consider posting on the faith group’s facebook page information about veganism, plant based recipes, health information, and reverence for animals. Be sure to check on any rules about facebook posts before doing so. If it is something several community members are doing, such as a group prayer for animals or something closely related to programs of the spiritual community, those items should be appropriate for the facebook and help change perceptions about animals and food.
4. Write a letter to the minister, priest, rabbi, or spiritual leader introducing the idea of addressing animal issues within the spiritual community and, perhaps, asking for a specific action, such as having a vegan potluck and/or a documentary showing.
5. Often places of worship and faith will have opportunities for members to share their own personal stories or testimonies. Those are great chances to share your story about how and why you became vegan.



6. Offering to teach a plant-based cooking class or bringing someone in to teach a class might be well-received.
7. If there is an animal sanctuary nearby, that could be a very popular idea as a field trip for the congregation/community. Children especially would be enthusiastic.
8. Consider having a supply of flyers that can be handed out at certain events or even left in strategic places in the meeting area. The Christian Vegetarian Association has an excellent flyer appropriate for all Christian churches. In the pages that follow where we refer to specific faiths, we will let you know if that faith has a vegan flyer. If there is none for your particular faith, consider putting one together.
9. If there are other vegans in your faith community, consider forming a committee that would be responsible for introducing vegan activities, etc. to the community. It will definitely make it easier for you if you have others to help. Plus if it is a committee recognized by the community, that gives you more credibility. If there is already a green committee at your place of worship, perhaps you could encourage the members to consider the many connections between environmental destruction and veganism.
10. Prayer Flags for animals, available for purchase at www.peacetoallbeings.com could be given to the church or place of worship accompanied by a ceremony explaining the significance of prayer flags and the need to acknowledge animals with one.



WEBSITES:

[Society of Ethical and Religious Vegetarians](#) (SERV) is an “Interfaith Peace Effort Pursuing Plant-based, Nonviolent Nutrition.” “We wish to respectfully make religious communities aware that the realities of animal-based diets and agriculture are inconsistent with basic religious teachings, such as those to treat animals with compassion, preserve our health, protect the environment, conserve natural resources, reduce hunger, and pursue peace and nonviolence.” Their “Information” page includes the pamphlet “Veganism and the Major World Religions,” lists of relevant books, music, articles, sample letters to the editor and quotes.

[Circle of Compassion](#). Home of the Prayer Circle for animals—“a non-denominational circle of people devoted to using action and the power of prayer, meditation, and/or focused thought to liberate all animals from human oppression and exploitation.” This website promotes a daily prayer for animals in many languages. The prayer is “Compassion encircles the earth for all beings everywhere.” In addition, there are other prayers, articles, and resources. The Prayer Circle [facebook page](#) is a great place to post prayer requests, read the weekly prayer, and help others with prayers.

National Animal Rights Day [website](#) for the annual day observed to raise awareness of the rights of animals to be free and to memorialize animals. Many events are held in major cities. This would be an event to encourage your place of worship to get involved in.

[Peace to All Beings](#). Prayer flags for animals can be bought here. Also there are many articles connecting environmental concerns with veganism, and prayers to use.

[Society for Ethical and Religious Vegetarians](#). “We wish to respectfully make religious communities aware that the realities of animal-based diets and agriculture are inconsistent with basic religious teachings, such as those to treat animals with compassion, preserve our health, protect the environment, conserve natural resources, reduce hunger, and pursue peace and nonviolence.” This website has many excellent articles and resources.

[Vegan Spirituality](#). The website asks “Do you feel passionate about being vegan for ethical reasons? Is

compassion for all living beings fundamental to your spiritual beliefs? You can honor your vegan ethics and nurture your spiritual self by joining our Vegan Spirituality Community. “VS hosts monthly conference calls to hear vegan spiritual teachers; and yearly VS retreats, and assists people in starting their own local VS group. Starting a VS group within your place of worship would be a great step forward in veganizing it. Vegan Spirituality’s [facebook](#).

ARTICLES:

[Do Animals have Souls?](#) By Michael Jawer

[Dogs have Souls.](#) From the Seattle Times

[Animal Souls, Feelings and Government Torture.](#)

By Marc Bekoff

[Animals Have Souls and Feelings, Just Like We Do.](#)

In HinduismToday.

[What World Religions Have to Say about Vegetarianism](#), by Joel Kahn, M.D



A SAMPLE LETTER TO YOUR SPIRITUAL LEADER

Example Offered by Frank Lane for his parish priest: I love our Holy Family and Church. So every day I ask Jesus to make my hands His hands and today I send you an opportunity to understand the abject cruelty and suffering we contribute to in our blindness to the animal holocaust. Fr. John Dear and the Holy Father have been very vocal on this subject. This mission is very heavy on my heart and I would like to support my church in raising an awareness of the pain and suffering we contribute to by our diet choices. Please help my hands serve this mission of compassion.

I will be inviting you to a Vegan Spirituality Potluck at my home. I would like the opportunity to discuss this mission of compassion with you.

SPEAKERS:

You can find a great list of speakers on the <https://americanvegan.org/> website who are available to give talks on many subjects related to veganism and animal rights. <https://americanvegan.org/speakers-bureau/>

Will and Madeleine Tuttle. You can see their speaking schedule on www.willtuttle.com and www.worldpeacediet.org. If they are traveling near you they may be able to add your place of worship to their schedule. They also hold World Peace Diet weekend seminars and other workshops. By attending a seminar you can be certified as a World Peace Diet facilitator. In lieu of the Tuttle’s giving a talk, you could show one of their events as a [video](#).

TRAINING:

Will Tuttle’s World Peace Diet Facilitator Training: This training helps you “develop skills to embody, share, and teach healthy and compassionate living for service, fun, and/or your livelihood...The World Peace Diet Facilitator Training Program is created by Dr. Will Tuttle, author of The World Peace Diet,... to help you thrive as a vegan, and to empower you to help create a more harmonious and healthy world. Certification is provided at the completion of the course. <http://worldpeacemastery.com/>



ACTIVIST SUPPORT:

Follow Up Support for You

SHOULD YOU NEED IDEAS, SUPPORT, ADVICE, ETC., PLEASE EMAIL:

veganspirituality@gmail.com
or activistsupport@idausa.org