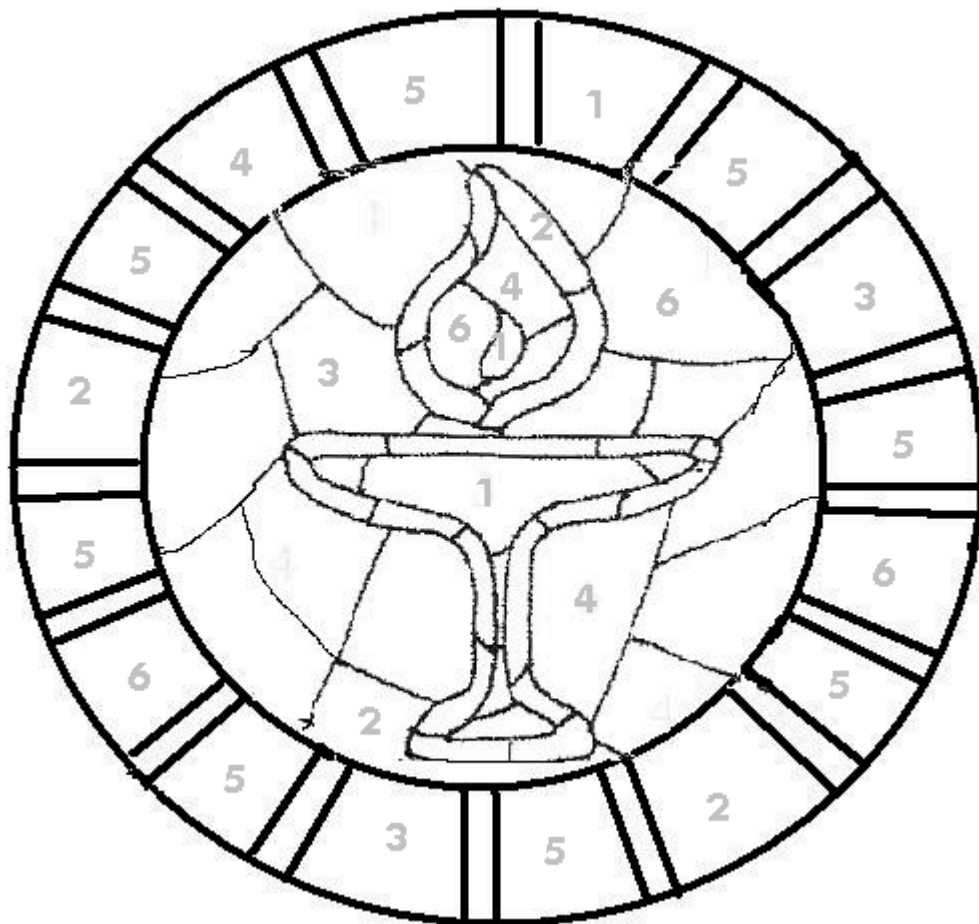


# Khasi Hills Unitarians



- Read each fact about Unitarians in the Khasi Hills. Decide if it is the same or different from what you, your family and your church do or believe. Mark an S if it is the same, a D if it is different.
- On the poster, find the numbered spaces and match them to the list of facts.
- Color the spaces red which match facts marked S. If you marked a fact with a D, color the space yellow.

1. The Khasi Unitarians believe that Jesus was a great teacher, but was not the son of God.
2. Children plan and lead their own Sunday worship services.
3. Khasi Unitarians believe in the forgiveness and the love of God.
4. Khasi Unitarians learn from the holy books of all religions.
5. Khasi Unitarians have their own high school; in many small towns and villages the elementary schools are also Unitarian.
6. Khasis believe that people experience heaven and hell here on earth, not after death.

## Some things to know about Unitarians in the Khasi Hills of India.

### Beliefs and Practices

1. The motto of the Khasi Unitarians is “To Nangroi,” which means “keep on progressing.” Can you think of something in your church that is like a motto?
2. Khasis believe that heaven and hell are states of being here on earth, not after death. What would be an example of “heaven on earth” for you?
3. All churches in the Unitarian Union agree with a statement of Principles of the Unitarian Faith. They have 15 principles in their statement. How many are in the UUA Statement of Principles and Purposes? Can you say any of them?
4. “BLEI,” the Khasi word for God, means “Who can do for you without expecting anything in return.” Khasis believe God expects no reward or payment for creation and protection.
5. Khasi Unitarians believe in the forgiveness and the love of God. Has anyone ever forgiven you? Who, and what for?
6. To the Khasi Unitarians, Jesus was a great teacher, but not the son of God. His two great teachings were “to love God and to love fellow humans.” Do you know something else Jesus taught?
7. Khasi Unitarians believe that holy books from other religions are good and can help them towards better knowledge of God. Can you name a holy book from a religion other than Christianity?
8. Khasi Unitarians believe that the Bible was written by God-searching people and has both truths and errors in it. Have you ever read from the Bible at home or in your church school? What is your favorite Bible story?
9. Children and youth in the Khasi Hills run their own Sunday school service before and after classes. If you were in charge of a Sunday school service, what you include?
10. Ministers in the Unitarian Union are called Church Visitors. Each is responsible for 3-5 congregations. For the most part they are unpaid volunteers with no special training. Today they are working hard to develop a training program. Does your church ever have visiting ministers or volunteer speakers?
11. A chalice is found inside most Khasi Unitarian churches. Sometimes a banner with the motto, “To Nangroi” is also in the church. What would a visitor find every Sunday in your church?
12. The Khasis have one book for worship. It includes readings, responsive readings, hymns and prayers. Do you have a favorite hymn, reading, or prayer? What is it?
13. There are 4 church activities every Sunday: 7am children’s worship service done by the children, 10:30 am Sunday School classes, 1:30 pm worship service for everyone, and 6:30 pm home service where a different family hosts the service each week. How long do the Sunday activities go on in your church?
14. Each service has readings, hymns, prayers and a sermon given by a member of the congregation, who is the service leader. Do members of your church, or children, help to lead the worship services?
15. On Wednesday nights there is a confession service, and on Saturday nights there is a short service led by young people. Does your church ever have services or special events in the middle of the week?

16. The children's religious education classes follow lesson plans that are the same for all churches. Today the churches are working hard to improve the teaching and materials in Sunday Schools. What Sunday School activity have you liked most this year?
17. On September 18 each year the Khasi Unitarians celebrate the anniversary of the founding of Unitarianism in North East India. They invite others who are not Unitarian to join them for a big feast and an evening service, followed by dances of different types by children and youth through the whole night. This is the only State holiday for Unitarianism in the world. Does your church celebrate a special anniversary or date in its history?
18. Here are some of the words to a popular Khasi children's song:  
God with love calls you,  
Children come, children come!  
His words always speaks to you:  
Come! children come!  
Come and walk the "Narrow Way"  
Come to earn your life,  
Come to prepare your soul;  
Come ! Children come!

Does your church have a special song for children?

### Khasi customs

1. Khasi culture and language is very different from the rest of India. For instance, they do not wear saris or cook with curry. What is one difference between people of two regions in your country?
2. A common tradition among all tribes is that property and money is passed from the mother to the youngest daughter. Do you have something in your house that was passed down from your grandparents or great-grandparents?
3. Khasi Unitarians have their own high school: the Hajom Kissor Singh Memorial High School, in Jowai. There are 550 students. How many students are in your school? Your class?
4. Education is important in the Khasi Hills. Some travel by bus or cab 30 minutes or more to the nearest town with a school. How far away is your school?
5. Schools are divided into five stages: Lower Primary (Age:4-10); Upper Primary School ( Age: 11-13); Secondary School (Age: 14-16); College (Any age); and University. Which stage of school would you be in?
6. Schools use a book called "Ka Kot Jingsneng Tymmen" which teaches about right and wrong and how to be honest in all respects. What have you learned about being honest? Has it ever been hard for you to do?
7. Khasis speak their native language, even though some know English well and use it at work. Rural people do not know how to speak English. Do you know anyone who speaks more than one language? Do you?

8. A typical Khasi home includes the parents, their unmarried children and the husband and children of the youngest daughter, if she is married. Who lives in your home?
9. A basket of betelnut is found in every Khasi home and offered to everyone who visits. This teaches that everyone is equal—all (rich or poor) can afford to give guests betelnut. What is a favorite snack that you like to offer guests?
10. Popular sports for boys are soccer, cricket and basketball. What is your favorite sport?
11. Popular sports for girls are basketball and volleyball. Girls also enjoy knitting and sewing, which are part of their lessons in school. Have you learned any special skill in school?
12. Many Khasis live in simple houses, without electricity, and they farm for a living. What things do you have in your home that need electricity?
13. Wealthier churches help with projects in the poorer, more rural churches. Does your church work on projects for people who need help? What are they?
14. Celebrations of thanksgiving happen in the Khasi Hills in April and in July. There are special dances for these celebrations: one is called “Dance with the merry soul,” another “To drive away sickness.” Have you ever learned a special folk dance?
15. Boiled rice, vegetables, and dried fish are the most common foods of the Khasis. What is one food your family eats often?
16. Meghalaya in the Khasi Hills means “abode in the clouds.” The region is famous for having the most rainfall on earth. Annual rainfall in the capital of Shillong is 92 inches! Does the name of your town or region have a special meaning?
17. The whole area of Meghalaya is a mountain plateau. The average height is 6500 ft. What is the highest mountain near you? Do you know how high it is?
18. On moonlit nights, young people in rural areas spend their time walking and sitting on the footpath together and singing songs merrily. Khasis love to sing. What is your favorite song ?