

MKA USA Book Club Initiative

Majlis Khuddam-ul-Ahmadiyya USA is encouraging Khuddam to form Book clubs at the local Majlis level to discuss the books of the Promised Messiah (AS), Khulafa and other Jama'at scholars. Participating in these book clubs would not only increase the knowledge of Khuddam about Islam and Ahmadiyyat but would also raise their general literary standard.

Follow this book club guide to setup a book club at the local level.

How to Form a Book Club

Get together a core group. You can start with a core group of two/three Khuddam. This core group could then advertise the club. Each member can invite other Khuddam or advertise the book club at the local mosque/Majlis.

Don't include too many members in your book club. Ideal size of a book club is anywhere from 6 to 10 members. If a larger number of Khuddam are interested in becoming member of the club, create more book clubs at the local level.

Please do not forget to:

- Invite new converts to the book clubs.
- Invite young Khuddam (and Ansar too).

Establish Ground Rules

Hold the first meeting of the book club to set the ground rules. Some of the ground rules that should be established in this initial meeting can include:

- Decide on the type of books to be included. You can either follow the recommendations of the Taleem Department or you can also choose other books based on the recommendations from the book club members.
 - Request the members to recommend at least two books
- Length of the future book clubs meetings. Don't make it too long. Meeting should finish within an hour.
- Create a schedule for future book club meetings. This schedule should be shared with all members
 - Try to hold the Book club meeting at least once a month.
 - Also define the procedure for cancelling or rescheduling a meeting.
 - Do not schedule book club meetings around Jama'at/Khuddam meetings
 - Do not schedule book club meetings during the Holiday season.
- Who hosts the meetings and where would it be hosted?

- Location could be your local mosque, a Khadim's house or a local coffee local shop.
- Meet at a place which would allow you to freely and casually take part in discussions.
- Who would lead the discussions and How?
 - Would there be a specific Khadim, who would always lead the discussion and facilitate the members?
 - Would the member who has recommended the book be leading the discussion?
- Will there be food at the meetings?
 - Appetizers would always be welcomed by the members. Share the cost.

Book Club Meeting: Have Fun and Learn

- Be Nice and have fun.
- Begin on time and end on time.
- Encourage everybody attending the meeting to share their thoughts. Some of these questions can be asked to every member during the meeting:
 - Have you read this book and what impresses you most about it?
 - Did you learn something from this book you didn't know before?
 - Has this book changed your views on a subject?
- Ask the members to bring a list of discussion questions to the meeting so that nothing is left out.
- Be courteous to others. Turn your cell phones off.
- Heated arguments are good during a book club meeting but don't make them personal. Be respectful and leave the meeting happy!

Some Recommendations from the Taleem Department

Books of Promised Messiah (AS)

- **The Criterion for Religions:** A comparative study of Religions on the basis of Natural Criteria
 - Online: <http://www.alislam.org/library/books/TheCriterionForReligions.pdf>
 - English Rendering of *Miyarul Madhahib*.
 - Subject Matter: This book makes a detailed comparison of the major religions of the world from the standpoint of reason and human nature. It discusses at length why other religions, particularly Christianity and Hinduism, fail to present the Perfect and Omnipotent God as proclaimed by Islam.
- **The Philosophy of the Teachings of Islam:**
 - **Note:** This is a rather long book and may take multiple book club meetings to fully cover it.
 - Online: <http://www.alislam.org/library/books/Philosophy-of-Teachings-of-Islam.pdf>
 - English Rendering of '*Islami Usul ki Philosophy*'.

- Subject Matter: This book was originally written as an Address for a Conference of Religions. The conference was organized to call upon the representatives of different faiths to explain the teachings of their respective religions in connection with the following five topics:
 1. Physical, Moral and spiritual condition of Man.
 2. Life after death.
 3. The aim of life on earth and how that aim can be achieved.
 4. What is the impact of our actions on the life in this world and on the life hereafter.
 5. God-realization and how it can be contained; what are its sources?
- **A Message of Peace**
 - Online: <http://www.alislam.org/library/books/Message-of-Peace.pdf>
 - English Rendering of '*Paigham-e-Sulh*'.
 - Subject Matter: The main focus of this book is the gap between the Hindus and Muslims of India due to the mutual hatred and differences in cultures. In this, he made a fervent urgent appeal and declared that the teaching of Islam inculcates respect and reverence for each other's religious values and sensibilities. The general principles laid down in the work are applicable to all countries which host multiple religions