

# Ten Names for God

Written by **Dr Aaron Maniam**, Senior Fellow at the Oxford Interfaith Forum, on the occasion of the Oxford Interfaith Forum's visit to pay our deepest respect to Guru Granth Sahib Ji, and with thanks to HE Bhai Sahib, Professor Mohinder Singh Ahluwalia OBE KSG, and the Guru Nanak Nishkam Sewak Jatha (GNNSJ) community in Birmingham for their overflowing generosity in welcoming us on 27 May 2024

- 1  
We place carnations in front of the living, loving Word  
For You, flower of the universe and universal flower
- 2  
We begin quietly: together, breathing, being, leaning  
Into each other, into You, silence that gives language meaning
- 3  
We taste *parshad* – wheat, sugar, butter soft on the tongue,  
For You are the source of all sweetness, sweetest of sources
- 4  
We listen to *kirtan*, notes flying like planets in orbit  
For You are the song of the spheres and stars and sky
- 5  
We hear how this dome comprises 143,000 pieces of glass  
Nothing less for You, light beyond light, source of all reflection

- 6  
Volunteers labour quietly: cooking, cleaning, praying for all  
Who cannot pray themselves. What else is Love if not this?
- 7  
At the school, in drawings fresh with the smell of crayons  
We know You are the seed of creation in each child
- 8  
In the clinic, air still thick with pandemic memories  
We sense you: comforter, balm for bodies, solace for souls
- 9  
You are in the employment centre too. For is not work  
You breathing into us the patterning of Your larger plan?
- 10  
We end around a table, learning from one another  
Knowing You are the ultimate teacher, enlightener

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What are we but grateful miniatures of Your larger glory?  
We see a rainbow on the drive home;  
I imagine You smile as You write our story.

Photo by **Bhai Gurdev Singh Ji**. May his memory be a blessing 🙏