

2017 MULTIFAITH CALENDAR

The following are major holy days and festivals for Baha'i, Buddhism, Christianity, Hinduism, Islam, Judaism and Sikhism. Whilst this list is not exhaustive it is comprehensive to represent each of the religions in good faith.

MONTH	DAY & DATE	HOLY DAY OR FESTIVAL	RELIGION
January	Thursday 5	Birthday of Guru Gobind Singh Ji	Sikhism
	Guru Gobind Singh (1666-1708), the 10th and final Sikh master, created the Khalsa (the Community of the Pure) and declared the Scriptures (Guru Granth Sahib) to be the Sikh's Guru from that time on.		
	Friday 6	Epiphany	Christianity
	Signifying the end of the 12 days of Christmas, Epiphany celebrates the visit of the Three Kings to the infant Jesus as the occasion of the manifestation of the Christ to the gentiles.		
	Thursday 7	Nativity/Theophany (Orthodox)	Christianity
	Theophany commemorates the baptism of Jesus and the manifestation of the Trinity.		
	Thu 12 – Sun 15	Mahayana New Year **	Buddhism
	The Buddhist New Year depends on the country of origin or ethnic background of the people. In Mahayana countries the new year starts on the first full moon day in January.		
	Friday 13	Maghi	Sikhism
	Maghi commemorate the sacrifice of the Chali Mukte (the Forty Liberated Ones), who sacrificed their own lives defending an attack by the imperial army in pursuit of Guru Gobind Singh. This took place in Khidrane di Dhab, on 29 December 1705.		
	Saturday 28	Chinese New Year	Buddhism
	Chinese New Year (also called the Lunar New Year and the Spring Festival) is the most important holiday in China and for Chinese people around the world. Celebrated by Buddhist, Confucian, and Taoist practitioners.		
February	Wednesday 15	Nirvana Day **	Buddhism
	Nirvana Day (or Parinirvana Day) is a Mahayana holiday which celebrates the day when the Buddha is said to have achieved Parinirvana (complete enlightenment) upon the death of his physical body.		

February	Saturday 25	MahaShivaratri **	Hinduism
	MahaShivaratri (or the 'Great Night of Shiva') is a festival celebrated with devotion and religious fervour in honour of the Hindu deity Lord Shiva, one of the deities of the Hindu Trinity.		
	Feb 27 - Apr 13	Great Lent [Orthodox]	Christianity
	Great Lent is the period of 40 days which comes before Easter, traditionally a time of fasting and reflection. The 40 days represents the time Jesus spent in the desert overcoming temptation by Satan. In the Orthodox Church, Great Lent starts on <i>Clean Monday</i> and ends on the Friday before <i>Palm Sunday</i> .		
March	Mar 1 - Apr 13	Lent begins on Ash Wednesday	Christianity
	Lent is the period of 40 days (not including Sundays) which comes before Easter, traditionally a time of fasting and reflection. The 40 days represents the time Jesus spent in the desert overcoming temptation by Satan. In Western Christianity, it begins on <i>Ash Wednesday</i> and ends on <i>Maundy Thursday</i> .		
	Sunday 12	Magha Puja Day / Sangha Day **	Buddhism
	Celebration of the presentation of teachings by the Buddha to a spontaneous gathering of 1250 arahants (holy men). Also known as 'Great Assembly Day' or 'Sangha Day'.		
	Sunday 12	Purim *	Judaism
	Commemorates the time when the Jewish people living in Persia were saved from extermination by the courage of a young Jewish woman, Queen Esther. Preceded by the Fast of Esther, Purim is a joyous holiday. Begins at sundown.		
	Monday 13	Holi	Hinduism
	A joyous spring Hindu festival that is dedicated to Krishna in some parts of India; in other parts of India, it is dedicated to Kama, the God of Pleasure. People throw colored water or colored powder in celebration.		
	Monday 13	Hola Mohalla	Sikhism
	An annual festival started by Guru Gobind Singh, the 10 th Sikh Guru, as a gathering of Sikhs for military exercises and mock battles.		
	Monday 20	Naw Ruz *	Baha'i
	Naw Ruz is the Baha'i New Year which coincides with the vernal equinox. The inception of the Baha'i calendar was on 21 March 1844 CE with the declaration of the Bab, the Prophet-Herald of the Baha'i Faith.		
April	Wednesday 5	Rama Navami **	Hinduism
	Hindu festival celebrating the birth of Lord Rama, the seventh incarnation of the Hindu God Vishnu and hero of the religious epic poem 'The Ramayana'.		
	Sun 9 – Sun 16	Holy Week	Christianity
	Holy week is the last week before Easter. It begins with <i>Palm Sunday</i> (commemoration of the triumphal entry of Jesus Christ into Jerusalem) and includes <i>Maundy Thursday</i> (commemoration of the first Lord's Supper), <i>Good Friday</i> (commemoration of the suffering and crucifixion of Jesus Christ), and finishes on <i>Easter Sunday</i> (the resurrection of Jesus Christ following his death by crucifixion).		

April	Tue 11 – Fri 14	Theravada New Year	Buddhism
	The Buddhist New Year depends on the country of origin or ethnic background of the people. In Theravadin countries (ie Thailand, Burma, Sri Lanka, Cambodia and Lao) the new year is celebrated for three days from the first full moon day in April.		
	Tue 11 – Tue 18	Pesach *	Judaism
	An eight day festival for families and communities to remember the time when Hebrew slaves were led by Moses out of Egypt to freedom. The festival begins with the Seder meal during which time the story of their deliverance is told. The first and last two days are holidays.		
	Friday 14	Baisakhi	Sikhism
	Baisakhi (Vaisakhi) marks the founding of the Khalsa (the Brotherhood of the Pure) in 1699 CE by Guru Gobind Singh. The Khalsa is the collective body of all baptised Sikhs who carry the five articles of the faith - Kesh (uncut hair), Kirpan (ceremonial sword), Kara (steel bracelet), Kanga (comb) and Kaccha (undershorts).		
	Friday 14	Good/Holy Friday	Christianity
	Commemoration of the suffering and crucifixion of Jesus Christ		
	Sunday 16	Easter/Pascha	Christianity
	The resurrection of Jesus Christ following his death by crucifixion.		
	Apr 20 – May 1	Ridvan *	Baha'i
	Bahai commemoration of the twelve-day period that Baha'u'llah, the founder of the Baha'i faith, spent in the Garden of Ridvan in the last days of his exile in Baghdad, and publicly proclaimed His mission as God's messenger for this age. The first, ninth and twelfth days are celebrated as holy days and work is suspended.		
	Sunday 23	Yom HaShoah *	Judaism
	Yom HaShoah (Holocaust Remembrance Day) is a day set aside to remember the six million Jews who died as victims of the Nazis during World War II and emphasizes respect for human dignity. Observed by many people of Jewish and other faiths.		
	Monday 24	Lailat al Miraj *	Islam
	Observance of Prophet Muhammad's night journey from Mecca to Jerusalem and his ascension (al Miraj) to heaven and return the same night. Also known as 'Night of Journey' (al Isra).		
May	Wednesday 10	Vesak / Buddha Day	Buddhism
	Vesak (Wesak) is the major Buddhist festival. It celebrates the birth, enlightenment and death of the Buddha on the one day. Also known as 'Vishakha Puja' or 'Buddha's Day'. The dates of this celebration vary significantly among Buddhist cultures and communities.		
	Friday 12	Lailat al Bara'ah *	Islam
	On this night, God approaches the Earth to call humanity and to grant forgiveness of sins. Shia and Sunni interpretations may vary on the meaning of this date.		

May	Tuesday 23	Declaration of the Bab *	Baha'i
	The Baha'i commemorates when the Bab, the herald of the Baha'i Faith, announced in Shiraz, Persia (now Iran), that he was the herald of a new messenger of God.		
	May 27 – Jun 26	Ramadan * (**)	Islam
	The holy month of Ramadan begins with the first light of dawn commemorating the revelation of the Qur'an to the Prophet Muhammad. Throughout this month Muslims fast during daylight hours, celebrate an evening meal with family and friends, pray fervently and show charity to the poor.		
	Sunday 28	Ascension of Baha'ullah *	Baha'i
	Baha'is observe the anniversary of the death in exile of Baha'u'llah, the founder of the Baha'i faith, on May 29, 1892, outside Akko (now northern Israel).		
	May 31 – Jun 1	Shavuot *	Judaism
	Shavuot, also known as Feast of Weeks, commemorates the anniversary of the day God gave the Torah and Commandments to the entire nation of Israel assembled at Mount Sinai. Marks the conclusion of the seven weeks following Pesach. Originally a harvest festival.		
June	Sunday 4	Pentecost	Christianity
	Pentecost commemorates the descent of the Holy Spirit upon the disciples of Jesus seven weeks (50 days) after the Resurrection (Easter). It also commemorates the founding of the Christian Church, which begins on this day.		
	Friday 16	Martyrdom of Guru Arjun Dev Ji	Sikhism
	Guru Arjan Dev (1563-1606), the 5th Guru, was the first martyr-guru. He was responsible for the compilation of the Sikh scriptures in 1604 CE. He also helped to build the Golden Temple at Amritsar and emphasized that the Sikh way was open to all, regardless of caste.		
	Thursday 22	Lailat al Qadr *	Islam
	First revelation of Qur'an (Islamic scriptures) to Prophet Muhammad in 610 CE. Also known as 'Night of Power' or 'Night of Destiny'. Observed during the last ten days of Ramadan.		
	Mon 26 – Wed 28	Eid ul Fitr *	Islam
	An important religious holiday celebrated by Muslims worldwide that celebrates the end of Ramadan, the Islamic holy month of fasting. Also known as the festival of the 'Breaking of the Fast'.		
July	Sunday 9	Ashala Puja / Dharma Day **	Buddhism
	Asalha Puja commemorates Buddha's first teaching (the Wheel of Dharma) and is recognized as the beginning of Buddhism. Also known as 'Dharma/Dhamma Day'.		
	Sunday 9	Martyrdom of the Bab *	Baha'i
	Baha'i commemoration of the anniversary of the execution of the Bab (Siyyid 'Ali-Muhammad), the herald of the Baha'i Faith, by a firing squad on July 9 1850, in Tabriz, Persia (now Iran).		

August	Tuesday 1	Tisha B'Av *	Judaism
	Tisha B'av (Fast of Av) is a day of mourning to remember events such as the destruction of the First Temple and Second Temple in Jerusalem.		
	Monday 7	Raksha Bandhan **	Hinduism
	Also known as Rakhi, this Hindu festival celebrates brotherhood and love; the festival is popularly used to celebrate any brother-sister like relationship between men and women who are relatives or biologically unrelated.		
	Tuesday 15	Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary	Christianity
	Commemorates the assumption of Mary, mother of Jesus, into heaven.		
	Tuesday 15	Krishna Janmashtami **	Hinduism
	Krishna Janmashtami (or Jayanti) is the annual commemoration of the birth of the Hindu deity Krishna, the eighth avatar of the God Vishnu. Worship of Krishna is characteristically expressed in dance and song.		
	Friday 25	Ganesh Chaturthi **	Hinduism
	Ganesh Chaturthi is a Hindu festival celebrating the birthday of Lord Ganesh, one of the major Hindu deities. Ganesh has the head of an elephant and is known as the remover of obstacles.		
September	Saturday 2	Eid Al Adha *	Islam
	Commemorates Ibrahim's (Abraham) willingness to sacrifice his son as an act of submission to God's command. Also known as 'Feast of Sacrifice'. One of the two main Islamic festivals (the other being Eid al Fitr).		
	Thu 21 – Fri 29	Navaratri **	Hinduism
	Navaratri, which literally means 'nine nights', is a festival honouring the Goddess/Divine Mother and her energy/power (Shakti). This nine day festival includes worshipping and dancing as people celebrate various aspects of the feminine.		
	Friday 22	Hijra *	Islam
	The Islamic year is marked by the event known as Hijra which occurred in 622 CE, when the Prophet Muhammad's migrated from Mecca to Medina, where the first Islamic community was established.		
	Thu 21 – Fri 22	Rosh Hashanah *	Judaism
	Jewish New Year festival, marked by the blowing of the horn (shofar) which begins the ten days of penitence culminating in Yom Kippur (Day of Atonement). It is the beginning of the holiest time of the year for Jews, and the anniversary of the creation of the world.		
	Saturday 30	Dussehra	Hinduism
	Dussehra (Vijaya Dashami, Dasara) is a Hindu festival that celebrates the victory of good over evil. People celebrate Dussehra through special prayer meetings and food offerings to the gods at home or in temples.		

October	Saturday 30	Yom Kippur *	Judaism
	Yom Kippur, also known as Day of Atonement, is the holiest day of the year for the Jewish people, characterized by repentance and forgiveness. Jewish people traditionally observe this holy day with fasting and intensive prayer, often spending most of the day in synagogue services.		
	Thu 5 – Wed 11	Sukkot *	Judaism
	Sukkot, also known as the Feast of Booths, is an eight day Jewish festival of giving thanks for the fall harvest. The name refers to the booths (sukkot) used by Israelites during the 40 years of wandering in the desert after the giving of the Torah atop Mt Sinai. Sukkot is celebrated 5 days after Yom Kippur.		
	Friday 13	Simchat Torah	Judaism
	Simchat Torah is a joyous festival in which the annual cycle of reading the Torah is over, and the cycle begins again for the year. The celebration typically includes singing, dancing, and marching with Torah scrolls. Begins after Sukkot ends.		
	Thursday 19	Diwali **	Hinduism
	Diwali, also known as Festival of Lights, is one of the most celebrated Hindu festivals, commemorating the victory of good over evil. Diwali means 'row of lamps/lights' and refers to the rows of lamps celebrants place around their homes or on top of temples.		
	Thursday 19	Bandi Chhor Divas (Diwali)	Sikhism
	Bandi Chhor Divas, also known as 'The Celebration of Freedom', commemorates the release in 1619 CE from prison of the sixth Sikh guru, Sri Guru Hargobind Ji. Sikhs continue this annual celebration with lamps being lit outside gurdwaras and sweets distributed to all.		
	Friday 20	Conferment of Guruship to Guru Granth Sahib	Sikhism
	This day celebrates Guru Gobind Singh Ji's (10th Guru) passing on guruship to the holy scriptures, henceforth known as the Guru Granth Sahib. The Guru Granth Sahib, comprising of 1430 pages of hymns, presides the most prominent place and shines the light of Truth to all Sikhs or devotees who seek it.		
	Saturday 21	Birth of the Bab *	Baha'i
	The anniversary of the birth in 1819 CE in Shiraz, Persia (now Iran), of Siyyid 'Ali-Muhammad, who later took the title of 'the Bab', meaning 'the Gate'. The Bab was the herald of the Baha'i faith.		
	Sunday 22	Birth of Baha'ullah *	Baha'i
	The anniversary of the birth of Baha'u'llah (born Mirza Husayn-'Ali) in 1817 CE in Tehran, Persia (now Iran). Baha'u'llah, which means the 'Glory of God', is the founder of the Baha'i faith.		
November	Wednesday 1	All Saints Day	Christianity
	All Saints Day honours exemplary Christians who achieved sainthood, especially those not having a special day. For many Christian denominations, all Saints Day is a remembrance of departed Christian people of any time and place.		

November	Saturday 4	Birth of Guru Nanak Dev Sahib Ji	Sikhism
	Observes the birth of Guru Sri Guru Nanak Dev Sahib, the founder of the Sikh religion, born in 1469 CE. An accomplished poet, 974 of his hymns are part of the Guru Granth Sahib.		
	Friday 24	Martyrdom of Guru Tegh Bahadur Ji	Sikhism
	Guru Tegh Bahadur (1621-1675) was the 9th Guru of the Sikhs. He was publicly beheaded by the emperor of the day in 1675 for his defense of the Sikh faith and for upholding the right to practice religious freedom.		
December	Fri 3 – Sun 24	Advent	Christianity
	Advent is the period leading up to Christmas. It begins on the fourth Sunday before Christmas (Advent Sunday) and continues through to December 24th (Christmas Eve). In Western churches, Advent Sunday marks the beginning of the Christian liturgical year.		
	Friday 8	Bodhi Day **	Buddhism
	Bodhi Day is a Buddhist holiday commemorating the day the historical Buddha, Siddhartha Gautama reached enlightenment around 596 BCE. Prince Gautama took his place under the Bodhi tree vowing to remain there until he attained supreme enlightenment.		
	Wed 13 – Wed 20	Hanukkah *	Judaism
	Hanukkah (Chanukah), also known as the Feast of Lights, is an eight day festival commemorating the recapture and rededication of the Temple in Jerusalem over occupying forces in 165 BCE.		
	Monday 25	Christmas	Christianity
	Christmas is the celebration of the birth of Jesus Christ, who is considered by Christians to be the Son of God, and the savior of all people.		

** Jewish, Islamic and Baha'i holy days begin at sundown on the previous day listed.*

*** Certain Hindu, Buddhist and Islamic holy days cannot be definitely determined in advance as they begin when the new moon is sighted.*

Promoting a Harmonious Multifaith Victoria

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