

RELIGIOUS AND ETHNIC OBSERVANCES 2009

This calendar is a resource designed to encourage public awareness of the great diversity of religious and ethnic groups that live in the United States. However, because of the number, this resource cannot provide an exhaustive list of all cultural faith traditions.

Teachers may find the calendar particularly helpful as it identifies opportunities for objective, non-creedal instruction about particular cultures. Employers will find that it serves as a reminder of those religious observances that may result in employee absences. Those using this calendar also should remember that it is based only on information available at the time of production. In particular, dates for lunar holidays are subject to change.

This calendar is intended to increase our sensitivity to each other and to our different needs. However, the list is not exhaustive of the observances of any one religion. Therefore, those using this resource in a classroom or employer setting may wish to add holidays and observances that are not listed in this calendar but are celebrated by students in their school or colleagues in their workplace. As an additional aid to both teachers and employers, an alphabetical glossary of selected observances appears in this calendar.

The Samaritan Counseling Center of Southeastern Michigan, sponsors of the calendar, provides professional therapeutic counseling and educational services to all God's people seeking wholeness through emotional and spiritual growth.

MISSION: The Michigan Roundtable is a non-profit, human relations organization that works to eliminate discrimination and racism by working proactively across racial, religious, ethnic and cultural boundaries. The Michigan Roundtable assists in building sustainable inclusive communities and institutions through diversity training, advocacy, conflict resolution, youth leadership training and community dialogue.

Thomas Costello, President

Michigan Roundtable for Diversity and Inclusion

525 New Center One
3031 W. Grand Boulevard
Detroit, MI 48202
(313) 870-1500
www.miroundtable.org

MICHIGAN
ROUNDTABLE
FOR DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION



Calendar of Holidays and Festivals 2009



The Samaritan Counseling Center
of Southeastern Michigan

KEY TO RELIGIOUS GROUPS*

Baha'i	Ba	Roman Catholic	RC
Buddhist	Bu	Hindu	H
Christian	C	Jewish	J
Mormon	Mo	Muslim	Mu
Orthodox	O	Sikh	S
Protestant	P		

JANUARY *Interfaith Heroes Month*

1	New Year's Day	F*
5	Birth of Guru Gobind Singh	S
6	Epiphany	O,P,RC
13	Maghi	S
14	Makara Sankranti	H
18-24	Week of Prayer for Christian Unity	
19	Martin Luther King, Jr. Day	F*
26	Chinese and Vietnamese New Year	

FEBRUARY *Black History Month*

15	Nirvana Day	Bu
16	President's Day	F*
23	Maha Shivratri	H
25	Ash Wednesday/Lent Begins	P,RC
26-3/1	Ayyam-i-Ha	Ba

MARCH

2	Lent Begins (Clean Monday)	O
2-20	Nineteen Day Fast	Ba
9	Prophet Muhammad's Birthday	Mu
10	Purim	J^
11	Holi	H
21	Naw-Ruz (New Year)	Ba

APRIL

9-16	Pesach (Passover)	J^
10	Good Friday	P, RC
12	Easter	P, RC
12	Palm Sunday	O
14	Vaisakhi	S, H
17	Holy Friday	O
19	Easter	O
21	First Day of Ridvan	Ba
21	Yom Hashoah	J^
29	9 th day of Ridvan	Ba

MAY *Asian Pacific American Heritage Month*

2	12 th day of Ridvan	Ba
5	Cinco de Mayo	
9	Wesak	Bu
21	Ascension Day	P,RC
23	Declaration of the Bab	Ba
25	Memorial Day	F*
28	Ascension of Jesus	O
29	Ascension of Baha'u'llah	Ba
29-30	Shavuot	J^
31	Pentecost	P,RC

JUNE

7	Pentecost	O
---	-----------	---

16	Martyrdom of Guru Arjan Dev	S
19	Juneteenth	

JULY

4	Independence Day	F*
9	Martyrdom of the Bab	Ba
19	Lail Al-Isra wal Mi'rah	Mu
24	Pioneer Day	Mo

AUGUST

14	Krishna Janmashtami	H
15	Assumption of Blessed Virgin Mary	O,P,RC
8/22	Ramadan Begins	Mu
23	Ganesh Chaturthi	H

SEPTEMBER *Hispanic-American Heritage Month*

1	Installation of Sri Guru Granth Sahib	S
7	Labor Day	F*
19-20	Rosh Hashanah	J^
19	Navaratri begins	H
20	Eid El-Fitr	Mu
28	Yom Kippur	J^
28	Navaratri ends	H
28	Vijay Dashami (Dasera)	H

OCTOBER

3-9	Sukkot	J^
10	Shmini Atzeret	J^
11	Simchat Torah	J^
12	Columbus Day	F*
17	Diwali (Deepavali)	H
20	Installation of Adi Granth	S
20	Birth of Bab	Ba
31	All Hallows Eve	

NOVEMBER

1	All Saints Day	O,P,RC
2	Birth of Guru Nanak	H
11	Veteran's Day	F*
12	Birth of Baha'u'llah	Ba
24	Martyrdom of Guru Teg Bahadur	S
25-28	Hajj	Mu
26	Day of the Covenant	Ba
26	Thanksgiving	F*
27	Eid Al-Adha	Mu
28	Ascension of Abdu'l-Baha'	Ba
29	Advent Begins	P,RC

DECEMBER

8	Bodhi Day	Bu
12-19	Hanukah	J^
18	Islamic Year Begins	Mu
25	Christmas Day	O,Mo,P,RC
26-1/1	Kwanzaa	
27	Ashurah	Mu
29	Yule (Wiccan)	

* US Federal Holidays marked by an F
^ Jewish Holidays begin the prior day at sundown

Glossary of Terms

(Most Civic Holidays and other obvious festivals are not included.)

Advent Period of four weeks in which Christians prepare for Christmas.

Al-Hijra Islamic remembrance of the migration of Mohammed and followers to Medina.

All Saints Day Christian day for honoring all the saints, especially those who do not have a special day.

Ascension Day Celebrates Jesus' Ascension to heaven.

Ascension of Abdu'l Baha' Marks the death of the son of Baha'u'llah who is the Center of His Covenant and authorized interpreter of His revelation.

Ascension of Baha'u'llah Marks the death of the founder of the Baha'i faith.

Ash Wednesday Begins Christian Lent. Name derives from symbolic use of ashes to signify penitence.

Ashurah For Sunni Muslims, it is a voluntary fast day, the observance of which is considered commendable and beneficial. For Shi'a Muslims, it is a time of mourning commemorating the martyrdom of Husayn, grandson of the prophet.

Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary Commemorates the assumption of Mary, mother of Jesus, into heaven.

Ayyam-I Ha This period adjusts the Baha'i year to the solar calendar. It leads to the 19 day fast. Each day of Ayyam-I Ha is marked by a different virtue like hospitality, gift giving, or charity.

Birth of Bab Anniversary of the birth of one of the twin Prophet Founders of the Baha'i faith, Mirza 'Ali-Muhammed, in 1819

Birth of Baha'u'llah Commemorates the birth of the immediate Prophet Founder of the Baha'i faith in 1817, Mirza Husein Ali.

Birth of Guru Gobind Singh Sikh observation of the 1666 C.E. birthday of the tenth and last human guru.

Bodhi Day Buddhist celebration of the time when Prince Gautama (Buddha) took his place under the Bodhi tree vowing to remain until he attained supreme enlightenment, ca. 596 B.C.E.

Chinese and Vietnamese New Year A festive holiday celebrated for about two weeks. Each year is symbolized by a different animal.

Cinco de Mayo Celebrated in Mexico and by Mexican-Americans; commemorates the battle of Guadalupe in 1862, when a small Mexican army defeated a large French force.

Day of Covenant Celebration of the birth of 'Abdu'l-Baha

Declaration of the Bab This holy day celebrates the Bab's announcement of his mission to prepare people for the advent of One who was greater than Himself.

Diwali Festival of Lights symbolizing the human urge to move toward the light. One of four seasonal celebrations in India.

Easter The greatest and oldest Christian feast, which celebrates Christ's Resurrection from the dead. Easter is the "feast of feasts", the solemnity of solemnities, the "Great Sunday". Christians

prepare for it during Lent and Holy Week, and catechumens usually receive the sacraments of Christian Initiation (Baptism, Confirmation, Eucharist) at the Easter Vigil.

Eid al-Adha A holiday in commemoration of Prophet Abraham's willingness to sacrifice his son to God. It is also a holiday that commemorates the pilgrims that are performing the obligatory pilgrimage referred to as Hajj.

Eid al-Fitr An Islamic holiday that marks the end of Ramadan, the month of fasting. Holiday of the Fast Breaking.

Epiphany End of the 12 days of Christmas; celebrates visit of the Three Kings to baby Jesus; especially important to Eastern Orthodox and Roman Catholics of Hispanic descent.

Ganesh Chaturthi Celebrated the states of Maharashtra, Tamil Nadu, Karnataka and Andhra Pradesh and many other parts of India to promote culture and nationalism.

Good Friday The Friday of Jesus' crucifixion.

Hanukah Festival of Lights; Eight-day commemoration of the Maccabean recapture and rededication of the second Temple in 165 B.C.E.

Holi Spring festival dedicated to the god of pleasure. It is a carnival occasion featuring bright colors, pilgrimages, and bonfires.

Installation of Adi Granth Commemorates the installation of the original scripture the Adi Granth at the Golden Temple by Guru Arjan.

Installation of Sri Guru Granth Sahib Commemorates the installation of the Sikh scriptures as the eternal guru by Guru Gobind Singh.

Juneteenth Observed as the day African Americans were emancipated. It is the oldest known celebration of the ending of slavery.

Kwanzaa Seven day celebration of African American values and traditions and their continued vitality. Kwanzaa is Kiswahili and means "first fruits of the harvest."

Lent Period of preparation for Easter; usually 40 days.

Makara Sankranti Shiva's day of revelation.

Maghi Commemoration of the battle in which 40 Sikhs (the Immortal Ones) laid down their lives for Guru Gobind Singh Ji.

Martyrdom of the Bab Ali Mohammed was executed in 1850 by Persian political and religious powers. Observed by abstaining from commerce and work.

Martyrdom of Guru Arjan Dev Anniversary of the martyrdom of Guru Arjan Dev in 1606 C.E., the fifth guru who built the Golden Temple of Amritsar.

Martyrdom of Guru Teg Bahadur Anniversary of the martyrdom of Guru Teg Bahadur in 1675 C.E., the ninth guru.

Mawlid al-Nabi Birthday of the Prophet Muhammed, ca. 570 C.E.

Naw Ruz Baha'i and Iranian New Year.

Navaratri A Hindu Festival of the divine mother honoring Durga, wife of Shiva, and seeking her blessings. It is celebrated according to local custom.

Nineteen Day Fast Time of heightened reliance on God and development of spiritual potential with no food from sunrise to sunset.

Nirvana Day In the Northern tradition, this is the anniversary of Buddha's passing away. In the Southern tradition, the Buddha's death is commemorated during Visakha.

Pesach (Passover) An 8 day commemoration of the deliverance of the Jews from slavery in Egypt.

Pentecost Observation of the day when the Holy Spirit came to the disciples, following ascension of Jesus. The name indicates 50 days after Easter.

Pioneer Day Observance of the arrival of Brigham Young and the first settlers to Great Salt Lake, Utah on July 24, 1847.

Purim Feast of Lots; celebrates deliverance of the Jewish minority in Persia from genocide.

Ramadan The ninth month in the Islamic calendar; 30 days of strict fasting from sunup to sundown. In honor of the first revelations to the Prophet Muhammed.

Ridvan Commemoration of the declaration of Baha'u'llah to his followers in 1863. Work is to be suspended for the 1st, 9th, and 12th days.

Rosh Hashanah New Year; beginning 10 days of penitence concluded on Yom Kippur.

Shavuot Festival of Weeks; celebrates harvest of first fruits and commemorates Moses' descent from Mt. Sinai with the torah and Commandments.

Shmini Atzeret Celebration of the eighth and last day of Sukkot.

Simchat Torah Festival celebrating the completion of the reading cycle of the Torah. Symbolized by singing, dancing, and marching around the synagogue. The first book is begun again.

Sri Krishna Janmashtami Associated with Lord Krishna's birthday, is a combination of religion and celebration together.

Sukkot Jewish Feast of Tabernacles or Booths which celebrates the fall harvest and the wandering of Israel in the desert wilderness in tents.

Vaisakhi Hindu and Sikh solar new year. Anniversary of the creation of the Khalsa (the army of the Pure Ones) in 1699. It is the most important holy day of the year for Sikhs.

Vijay DaShami (Dasera) Festival celebrating good over evil; the victory of Lord Rama over Ravana, the demon king of Lanka.

Visakha (Buddha Day) The Day Buddha was born, attained enlightenment and passed away.

Wesak In the Northern tradition, this is the anniversary of Buddha's birth. In the Southern tradition, this is celebrated during Visakha.

Yom Hashoah Jewish Holocaust Remembrance Day. This day has been established to remember the six million Jews killed by the Nazis in 1933-45.

Yom Kippur Jewish Day of Atonement. This holiest day of the Jewish year is observed with strict fasting, prayer, and ceremonial repentance.

Explanatory Notes

- All **Baha'i**, **Jewish**, and **Muslim** holidays begin at sunset the previous day.
- **Buddhist** and **Hindu** holidays may be observed at different times than those indicated in the calendar. The observance date is dependant on both religious group affiliation and region. For example, Buddha's birthday is one of the most widely celebrated Buddhist holidays. However, there is no one date accepted by all Buddhists. Therefore, the observance of Buddha's birthday will vary by both tradition and region, as seen by the inclusion of Wesak, Bodhi Day, and Buddha Day in this calendar. (Please note that for all other Buddhist observances, this calendar provides the dates followed by the Theravada tradition.)
- **Christians** follow a number of different calendars depending on their denomination and/or their region. The Michigan Roundtable's calendar includes both the dates of the Western calendar which is followed by the Roman Catholic and Protestant churches and the dates for the Orthodox New Calendar which is the same as the Western calendar for fixed holidays and observances but uses the Julian Calendar for moveable feasts. The Orthodox New Calendar is primarily used by the Greek and Cypriotic Orthodox Churches.
- We recognize that, for many **Christians**, an integral part of their faith is the observance of days that commemorate the lives of saints. These days have not been included as part of this calendar because they often differ by region, religious affiliation, and personal belief.
- **Jewish** dates on this calendar are in accordance with the Orthodox tradition. The length of some holidays and the extent to which they are observed may vary according to denominational affiliation.
- **Muslim** holidays are subject to change because observance is dictated by the phases and sightings of the moon.
- The **Sikh** calendar – their own Nanakshahi calendar – was adopted for use on March 14, 1999 and aligns with the Gregorian calendar.