

## ABOUT THIS CALENDAR

The **Virginia Center for Inclusive Communities** calendar is a resource designed to encourage public awareness of the great diversity of religious and ethnic groups that live in the United States. Holidays and festivals are included for many religious, ethnic, and public occasions.

Educators 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 religious observances that may result in employee absences, as well as opportunities for increased sensitivity in the workplace. Those using this calendar also should remember that it is based on information available at the time of production. Dates for lunar holidays are subject to change.

The **Virginia Center for Inclusive Communities** 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 religious group. 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.

## ABOUT US

The **Virginia Center for Inclusive Communities** works with schools, businesses, and communities to achieve success by addressing prejudices, in all forms, in order to improve academic achievement, increase workplace civility, and enhance local trust. Through workshops, retreats, and customized programs that raise knowledge, motivation, and skills, VCIC develops leaders who work together to achieve success throughout the Commonwealth.

For more information & resources, please visit our:

**WEBSITE:** [www.inclusiveVA.org](http://www.inclusiveVA.org)

**FACEBOOK:** [www.facebook.com/inclusiveVA](http://www.facebook.com/inclusiveVA)

**INSTAGRAM:** @inclusive\_VA

**LINKEDIN:** [www.inclusiveVA.org/linkedin](http://www.inclusiveVA.org/linkedin)

## KEY TO RELIGIOUS GROUPS

Baha'i	Ba
Buddhist	Bu
Christian	C
Latter-day Saints	L
Orthodox	O
Protestant	P
Roman Catholic	RC
Hindu	H
Jewish	J
Muslim	M
Pagan	Pa
Sikh	S



VIRGINIA CENTER FOR  
**INCLUSIVE**  
COMMUNITIES

# Calendar of Holidays & Festivals 2024 & 2025

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*Note: US Federal Holidays are marked by an F*



# 2024

## JANUARY

1	New Year's Day	F
6	Epiphany	P, RC
7	Christmas Day	O
13	Maghi	S
15	Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Day	F
17	Birth of Guru Gobind Singh	S
25	Tu B'shvat*	J

## FEBRUARY

### *Black History Month*

2	Imbolc*	Pa
10	Lunar New Year	
14	Ash Wednesday/Lent Begins	P, RC
15	Nirvana Day/Parinirvana Day	Bu
19	President's Day	F
25-29	Ayyám-i-Há*	Ba

## MARCH

### *Women's History Month*

1-19	Nineteen Day Fast*	Ba
11 - Apr. 9	Ramadan*	M
18	Lent Begins (Clean Monday)	O
19	Ostara/Spring Equinox	Pa
20	Naw-Rúz (New Year)*	Ba
24	Palm Sunday	P, RC
24	Purim*	J
25	Holi	H
25-27	Hola Mohalla	S
29	Good Friday	P, RC
31	Easter	P, RC

## APRIL

10	Eid al-Fitr*	M
13	Vaisakhi	S
21 - May 2	Ridván *	Ba
23-30	Pesach/Passover*	J

## MAY

### *Asian/Pacific American Heritage Month*

1	Beltane	Pa
3	Holy Friday	O
5	Pascha (Easter)	O
6	Yom HaShoah*	J
9	Ascension Day	P, RC
19	Pentecost	P, RC
23	Vesak (Buddha Day)	Bu
24	Declaration of the Báb*	Ba
27	Memorial Day	F
29	Ascension of Bahá'u'lláh*	Ba

\* Indicates that observance begins at sundown the day before this date.

## JUNE

### *Pride Month*

12-13	Shavuot*	J
13	Ascension Day	O
16	Martyrdom of Guru Arjan Dev	S
17	Eid-al-Adha*	M
19	Juneteenth	F
21	Litha (Midsummer)	Pa

## JULY

4	Independence Day	F
7	Al Hijra/Muharram*	M
9	Martyrdom of the Báb*	Ba
16	Ashura*	M
21	Asalha Puja	Bu
24	Pioneer Day	L

## AUGUST

1	Lughnassadh	Pa
13	Tisha B'av*	J
15	Assumption of Blessed Virgin Mary	RC
15	Dormition of the Theotokos	O

## SEPTEMBER

### *Hispanic American Heritage Month*

2	Labor Day	F
15	Mawlid al-Nabi*	M
22	Mabon/Autumnal Equinox	Pa

## OCTOBER

### *Global Diversity Awareness Month*

3-4	Rosh Hashanah*	J
3-12	Sharad Navaratri	H
12	Yom Kippur*	J
12	Dussehra	H
17-23	Sukkot*	J
24	Shemini Atzeret*	J
25	Simchat Torah*	J
29-Nov 3.	Diwali	H

## NOVEMBER

### *Native American Heritage Month*

1	All Saints Day	O, P, RC
1	Samhain*	Pa
2	Birth of the Báb*	Ba
3	Birth of Bahá'u'lláh*	Ba
11	Veteran's Day	F
28	Thanksgiving	F

## DECEMBER

### *Universal Human Rights Month*

1-24	Advent	P, RC
8	Bodhi Day	Bu
21	Yule/Winter Solstice	Pa
25	Christmas Day	F, P, RC
26 - Jan. 1	Kwanzaa	
26 - Jan. 2	Hanukkah*	J



# 2025

## JANUARY

1	New Year's Day	F
6	Epiphany	P, RC
6	Birth of Guru Gobind Singh	S
7	Christmas Day	O
13	Maghi	S
20	Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Day	F
29	Lunar New Year	

## FEBRUARY

### *Black History Month*

2	Imbolc*	Pa
13	Tu B'shvat*	J
15	Nirvana Day/Parinirvana Day	Bu
17	President's Day	F
25-28	Ayyám-i-Há*	Ba

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### *Women's History Month*

1-30	Ramadan*	M
1-19	Nineteen Day Fast*	Ba
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5	Ash Wednesday/Lent Begins	P, RC
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20	Ostara/Spring Equinox	Pa
14	Purim*	J
14	Holi	H
14-16	Hola Mohalla	S
31	Eid al-Fitr*	M

## APRIL

13-20	Pesach/Passover*	J
13	Palm Sunday	P, RC
14	Vaisakhi	S
18	Good Friday/Holy Friday	P, RC, O
20	Easter/Pascha	P, RC, O
20 - May 1	Ridván *	Ba
24	Yom HaShoah*	J

## MAY

### *Asian/Pacific American Heritage Month*

1	Beltane	Pa
12	Vesak (Buddha Day)	Bu
23	Declaration of the Báb*	Ba
26	Memorial Day	F
28	Ascension of Bahá'u'lláh*	Ba
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\* Indicates that observance begins at sundown the day before this date.

## JUNE

### *Pride Month*

2-3	Shavuot*	J
7	Eid-al-Adha*	M
8	Pentecost	P, RC
16	Martyrdom of Guru Arjan Dev	S
19	Juneteenth	F
21	Litha (Midsummer)	Pa
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4	Independence Day	F
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24	Pioneer Day	L

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1	Lughnassadh	Pa
3	Tisha B'av*	J
15	Assumption of Blessed Virgin Mary	RC
15	Dormition of the Theotokos	O

## SEPTEMBER

### *Hispanic American Heritage Month*

1	Labor Day	F
5	Mawlid al-Nabi*	M
22	Mabon/Autumnal Equinox	Pa
22-Oct. 1	Sharad Navaratri	H
23-24	Rosh Hashanah	J

## OCTOBER

### *Global Diversity Awareness Month*

2	Dussehra	H
2	Yom Kippur*	J
7-13	Sukkot*	J
14	Shemini Atzeret*	J
15	Simchat Torah*	J
19-23	Diwali	H
22	Birth of the Báb*	Ba
33	Birth of Bahá'u'lláh*	Ba

## NOVEMBER

### *Native American Heritage Month*

1	All Saints Day	O, P, RC
1	Samhain*	Pa
11	Veteran's Day	F
27	Thanksgiving	F

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### *Universal Human Rights Month*

1-24	Advent	P, RC
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21	Yule/Winter Solstice	Pa
25	Christmas Day	F, P, RC
26 - Jan. 1	Kwanzaa	
15-22	Hanukkah*	J

## EXPLANATORY NOTES

*(Most Civic Holidays and other well-known observances are not included.)*

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

**Al Hijra/Muharram** - Remembrance of the migration of Muhammad (Peace be upon Him) and followers to Medina.

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

**Asalha Puja** - Recognized as the day in which Buddha delivered the first sermon after his enlightenment and shared his core teachings.

**Ascension Day** - Celebrates Jesus' Ascension to heaven.

**Ascension of Bahá'u'lláh** - A commemoration of the death of Bahá'u'lláh

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

**Ashura** - A one-day fast to commemorate God freeing The Children of Israel and Moses from Pharaoh.

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

**Ayyám-i-Há** - 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.

**Beltane** - Joyful festival that welcomes spring and the union of masculine and feminine energy.

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

**Birth of Bahá'u'lláh** - Commemorates the birth of the founders of the Baha'i faith in 1817.

**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.

**Declaration of the Báb** - Commemorates when the Báb announced that he was a messenger of God and foretold the coming of another messenger of God in the near future

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

**Dormition of the Theotokos** - The Orthodox Christian commemoration of the death and burial of the Virgin Mary.

**Dussehra** - Festival celebrating good over evil; the victory of Lord Rama over Ravana, the demon king of Lanka.

**Eid al-Adha** - Festival of sacrifice; commemorates the faith of Abraham and the near sacrifice of Ishmael; as well as the Muslim Pilgrims making Hajj.

**Eid al-Fitr** - A 3 day Islamic fast marking the close of Ramadan.

**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.

**Good Friday** - The Friday of Jesus' crucifixion.

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

**Hola Mohalla** - A day to commemorate the valor and bravery of the Sikhs. This 3-day festival consists of mock battles, music, and poetry reading.

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

**Holy Friday** - The commemoration in the Orthodox Church of the death of Christ on the Cross.

**Imbolc** - Celebrates the first sign of spring and is dedicated to Brigid, a Celtic goddess of poetry and fire.

**Juneteenth** - Also known as Freedom Day or Emancipation Day, it commemorates the announcement of the abolition 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.

**Litha/Midsummer** - Celebration of the summer solstice and the longest day of the year.

**Lughnassadh** - Festival commemorating the beginning of the harvest season.

**Mabon/Autumnal Equinox** - Fall Equinox celebration to mark the transition into darkness of the winter months.

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

**Martyrdom of the B'ab** - 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 Amristar.

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

**Naw-Rúz** - Baha'i and Iranian New Year.

**Nineteen Day Fast** - A fast observed by adult Baha'is in good health from sunrise to sundown.

**Nirvana Day/Parinirvana 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.

**Ostara/Spring Equinox** - Celebration of the lighter half of the year and the arrival of spring.

**Palm Sunday** - Celebrates the arrival of Jesus into Jerusalem during Passover. This also commemorates the beginning of Holy Week.

## EXPLANATORY NOTES *(continued)*

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

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

**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.

**Ridván** - Commemoration of the declaration of Baha'u'llah to his followers in 1863. Work is to be suspended for the 1<sup>st</sup>, 9<sup>th</sup>, and 12<sup>th</sup> days.

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

**Samhain** - Celebration of the end of harvest season and the start of the Pagan/Wiccan New Year.

**Sharad Navaratri** - The most celebrated of the four Navaratri, observed in honor of the goddess Durga.

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

**Shemini 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. The first book is begun again.

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

**Tisha B'av** - A day of mourning and repentance in remembrance of the destruction of the First and Second Temples in Jerusalem.

**Tu B'shvat** - The day that marks the beginning of a "new year" for trees.

**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.

**Vesak (Buddha Day)** - The Day Buddha was born, attained enlightenment, and passed away.

**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.

**Yule/Winter Solstice** - Celebration of the Winter Solstice, marking the day on which the sun is reborn.

## ADDITIONAL 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 dependent 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. This 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 Cypriot 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.

Dates of holidays and festivals were researched to the best of our ability. These dates may vary depending on region and affiliation. VCIC strives to make this resource accurate and inclusive. If you see an error or omission, please notify us at [contact@inclusiveVA.org](mailto:contact@inclusiveVA.org).



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