

2007 - 2009 Calendar of Religious & Cultural Holidays and Festivals



RELIGIOUS AND ETHNIC OBSERVANCES 2007 - 2009

The SVCCJ Calendar is a resource designed to encourage public awareness of the great mixture of religious and ethnic groups that live in the U.S.. However, because of the number, this resource cannot provide an exhaustive list of all cultural faith traditions.

Holidays and festivals are included for select religious, ethnic and public communities. The list is not exhaustive of the observances of any one religion. For example, regional and ethnic holidays and observances of faith traditions are not included, nor, for the most part, are the traditional holidays celebrated by tribal groups. In cases where these are included, they serve more than one group.

Always consult local religious authorities first! Dates for lunar holidays are subject to change. Different branches of the same tradition may observe holidays on very different days. In an effort to modernize and regionalize, some religions or sects have recently altered their usage.

Those using this calendar also should remember that it is based only on information available at the time of production (Jan. 2007). We have done our best to verify dates with local religious authorities. We recognize that the certainty decreases with each successive year after 2007.

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.

The SVCCJ Calendar is intended to increase our sensitivity to each other and to our different needs. Therefore, those using this resource in a classroom setting to enrich a curriculum may wish to add holidays and observances that are not listed in this calendar but are celebrated by students in their classrooms and/or school.

As an additional aid to teachers and employers, an alphabetical glossary of selected observances appears at the back of this Calendar.

MISSION

The Silicon Valley Conference for Community & Justice (founded in 1965 as the Silicon Valley Region of The National Conference of Christians and Jews, but no longer affiliated in any way with NCCJ) is a human relations organization dedicated to building community among diverse peoples to make Northern California a better place in which to live. SVCCJ fights bias, bigotry, and exclusion in all forms and replaces these with understanding, respect and appreciation among all races, religions and cultures. Through conflict prevention and resolution, and education. SVCCJ works to create a more inclusive society, so that all people will have access to opportunities. SVCCJ's approach is broad-based, rather than single-constituency; it is uniquely positioned with a program system that engages people to create positive intergroup relations. ***SVCCJ is not a religious or sectarian organization; our publication of this document is intended solely to assist in furthering inter-faith understanding.***

KEY TO RELIGIOUS GROUPS:

Baha'i **BA**

Buddhist **BU**

Christian **C**

Jehovah's Witness **JW**

Latter Day Saints (Mormon) **LD**

Orthodox **O**

Protestant **P** - (*P*) indicates not all denominations

Roman Catholic **RC**

Swedishborgian Christian **SC**

Hindu **H**

Interfaith **IF**

Jewish **J**

Jain **JN**

Muslim **M**

Native American **N**

Shinto **SH**

Sikh **SI**

Wiccan/Neo-Pagan **W/P**

Zoroastrian **Z**

Notes on Special Date & Time Considerations

Please be aware that: The standard calendar in use in the U.S. is a solar calendar (Gregorian), in which the "day/date" begins at midnight and ends the following night immediately before midnight. This is NOT true of all religious or cultural calendars, some of which are lunar, some of which have the "day/date" beginning at sunset, and for some of which a celebration is loosely seasonal or event observation driven, rather than strictly dated. Therefore, the date noted in many calendars in use in the U.S. can be misleading relative to those cultural/religious observances.

Because lunar or event-observance based calendars are subject to the interpretation of the religious authorities in each group, their observance dates relative to the standard U.S. solar calendar are subject to change.

Always consult the religious authorities of any group each year for currently accepted dates of observances, and do not rely solely upon this or any other calendar that projects years in advance.

1. All Baha'i, Jewish and Muslim holidays begin at sunset the previous day.
2. Roman Catholics observe "Eves" ("Vigils") of Sundays and holy days starting with sundown of the date before. The obligation to assist at church can be fulfilled either on the eve or the day.
3. 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 of 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. In some cases it may be determined relative to specific seasons in Asia. (Please note that for most other Buddhist observances, this calendar provides the dates followed by the Theravada tradition.)
4. Christians follow a number of different calendars depending on their denomination and/or region. SVCCJ's Calendar includes both the dates of the Western calendar, which is followed by the Roman Catholic and many Protestant churches, and many of 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.
5. 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 all been included as part of this calendar because they often differ by region, religious affiliation and personal belief; only the major ones are mentioned.
6. Protestant Christian denominations do not all celebrate the same holidays. The variations are too numerous to note individually in this calendar. The designation (***P***) indicates dates celebrated or observed by some Protestant denominations, but not by all.
7. There are many variations of Hindu calendars (also called Indian calendars). Some regions use a solar calendar based on the signs of the Zodiac. Other regions use a luni-solar calendar with months based on the lunar cycle and years of either 12 or 13 months. The Gregorian calendar is widely used in India for civil purposes.
8. In northern India, months tend to be measured from the full moon, while in the south they are largely measured from the new moon. Therefore, the dates for some Hindu and Jain observances can vary by as much as a month.
9. Jewish dates listed 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.

10. There are a number of Jewish fast days that are not generally celebrated as holidays. These are not included here.
11. Muslim holidays are subject to change because observance is dictated by the phases and local sightings of the moon. Recently Muslim organizations in the US have various adopted sighting on the East Coast as the standard, but this is not universally accepted.
12. The Sikh calendar, their Nanakshahi calendar, was adopted for use on March 14, 1999 and aligns with the Gregorian Calendar.
13. The Baha'i calendar consists of 19 months of 19 days each; a variable period of four or five days is added each year so that observances will agree with the Gregorian calendar.
14. There are 4 Zoroastrian calendars in use; we are unable to list all.

Notes on Standards of Observance

Standards of observance can vary within denominations or regional groupings of each religion, within families, and even between individuals. The individual's level of prayer/observance does not always coincide with his/her affiliation. Therefore, when accommodating the religious expression of any given person you may need to deal with this on the basis of what they present to you as their legitimate practice and not simply a general standard. Nonetheless, in the interest of providing you with some basis for expectations, we mention below several of the more "orthodox" or "strictly" observant standards for each major group.

1. Daily observances: Several faiths have both prayer/meditation and/or dietary restrictions throughout the year. We do not detail these in this calendar.
2. Weekly or "Sabbath" observances:
 - a. Judaism prohibits "work" (school, etc.) from Friday evening at sunset until Saturday evening at sunset.
 - b. Islam does not prohibit work, but involves stricter attendance at mid-day prayer on Fridays.
 - c. Christian denominations may vary widely in practice, though generally the Sabbath is on Sundays; for Seventh Day Adventists it is on Saturdays. Depending upon the denomination, generally the Sabbath is expected to be a work or commerce restricted day.
3. Monthly observances:
 - a. Mormons (LD) observe a 24 hour fast on the first Sunday of each month.
4. Seasonal observances:
 - a. Native American observances may be seasonal in nature (such as a harvest or planting festival), rather than set on a specific date on either solar or lunar calendars.
5. Native American (American Indian, First Nations) cultures have set days that are observed as national holidays in Canada only.
6. Religious Observance/Holiday specific levels of expression: We are including notes beside the descriptions and definitions of each holiday to indicate each of the following that may apply, as best we are able to determine from our informants in those faiths:
 - a. "Work" restrictions on this holiday = **WR**
 - b. Observance may permit work but involve some adjustments in normal daily scheduling = **SR**
 - c. Dietary or other special restrictions may involve some adaptation of normal daily activities = **DR**

FOR ADDITIONAL RESOURCES:

- For discussion of how public schools and institutions may manage religious observances, consult: Public Schools & Religious Communities: A First Amendment Guide. Available from the First Amendment Center (1207 18th Ave. South, Nashville, TN 37212).
- SVCCJ provides a set of guidelines for use in schools, one set for administrators and an additional desktop handy guide for teachers. To obtain copies of these publications, contact: info@svccj.org.

2007

JANUARY

- 1 Feast of St Basil **O**
Gantan-sai (New Years) **SH**
Mary, Mother of God **RC**
- 3 Mahayana Buddhist New Year **BU**
- 5 Birth of Guru Gobind Singh Ji **SI**
Twelfth Night **(P)**
Vigil of the Epiphany **RC**
- 6 Epiphany **C**
Theophany **O**
- 7 Feast of the Nativity **O**
Baptism of the Lord Jesus **P**
- 8 Baptism of the Lord Jesus **RC, (P)**
- 13 Maghi **SI**
- 14 Makara Sankranthi **H**
- 18 Week of Prayer for Christian Unity (thr. Jan 25) **C**
- 20 Muharram (Islamic New Year) **M**
- 21 Vivekenanda Jayanti **H**
World Religion Day **BA**
- 23 Vasanta Panchami **H**
- 28 Triodion begins **O**
- 29 Ashura **M**

FEBRUARY

- 1 St Brigid of Kildare **C (Celtic)**
- 2 Brigid / Imbolc / Oimelc / Candlemas **W/P**
Presentation of Jesus in Temple/Candlemas **RC, (P)**
- 3 Setsubun-sai **SH**
Tu B'shvat **J**
- 4 Four Chaplains Day **IF**
- 8 Parinirvana Day **BU**
- 11 Meatfare Sunday **O**
- 14 St Valentine's Day **RC, P, O**
- 15 Parinirvana Day (Chinese) **BU**
- 16 Mahashivaratri (Shivarat) **H**
- 18 Transfiguration Sunday **P**
Lunar New Year/Tet **BU, (Chinese/Vietnamese cultural, rather than religious)**
- 19 Great Lent begins (Clean Monday) **O**
- 20 Shrove Tuesday **RC, (P)**
- 21 Ash Wednesday (Beginning of Lent) **C**
- 25 Orthodox Sunday **O**

MARCH

- 1 St David of Wales **RC, (P)**
- 2 Nineteen Day Fast (through 20) **BA**
- 3 Magha Puja Day **BU**
Holi **H**
- 4 Purim **J**
- 14 Hola Mohalla **SI**
New Year, Nanakshahi Calendar **SI**
- 17 St Patrick's Day **RC, P**
- 18 Guanyin's Birthday **BU**
- 19 Rama Navami (Ramayana Reading thr. Mar 28) **H**
- 21 Nav Ruz, Naw Ruz, Norooz (The New Day) **Z, BA**
Ostara, Alban Eiler, Eostre (Vernal Equinox) **W/P**
- 24 Annunciation of the Blessed Virgin Mary **RC**
- 25 Annunciation of the Theotokos **O**
- 28 Rama Navami (end) **H**
- 31 Lazarus Saturday **O**
Mawlid an Nabi (Prophet Mohammad's birthday) **M**
Mahavira Jayanti (Mahavira's Birthday) **JN**

APRIL

- 1 Palm Sunday **O**
Palm/Passion Sunday **C**
- 2 Hanuman Jayanthi **H**
The Lord's Evening Meal **JW**
Theravada Buddhist New Year **BU**
Parinirvana Day **BU**
- 3 Pesach (Passover) First 2 days especially.
(through April10) **J**
- 5 Maundy Thursday **RC, P**
- 6 Founding of the Mormon Church **LD**
Good Friday **C**
Holy Friday **O**
- 8 Easter **RC, P, LD**
Easter/Pascha **O**
- 14 Baisakhi (Vaisakhi) Creation of Khalsa **SI**
Vaisakhi **H**
- 15 Yom HaSho'ah **J**
- 18 Birth Guru Tegh Bahadur Ji **SI**
- 21 Ridvan (through May 2) **BA**
- 23 St. George's Day **RC, (P)**
- 29 Ninth Day of Ridvan **BA**
- 30 Ghambar Maidyozarem (through May 4) **Z**
St. James the Great Day **O**

MAY

- 1 Beltane or May Day **W/P**
- 2 Birth Guru Arjan Dev Ji **SI**
Buddha Day - Visakha Puja **BU**
Buddha's Birthday (Wesak in Theravada) **BU**
Twelfth Day of Ridvan **BA**
- 5 Cinco de Mayo (*cultural not religious - Mexican*)
- 17 Ascension of Jesus **O**
- 20 Ascension of Christ **C**
- 23 Declaration of the Bab **BA**
Shavuot (through 24) **J**
- 27 Pentecost **O**
Pentecost/Whitsunday **RC, P**
- 29 Ascension of Baha'u'llah **BA**

JUNE

- 3 All Saints **O**
Trinity Sunday **C**
- 6 Anniversary of Attack on Akal Takhat **SI**
- 10 Corpus Christi **RC**
- 15 Sacred Heart of Jesus **RC**
- 16 Martyrdom of Guru Arjan Dev Ji **SI**
- 19 New Church Day **SW**
Juneteenth (*African-American cultural*)
- 21 First Nations Day **N**
Litha, Alban Heruin, Midsumarsblot
(Summer Solstice) **W/P**
- 24 Nativity of St. John the Baptist **RC, (P)**
- 29 Feast Day of Saints Peter and Paul **RC, (P)**
Ghambar Maidyoshem (through July 3) **Z**
- 30 Asalha Puja Day **BU**
Guru Purnima **H**

JULY

- 6 Dalai Lama's Birthday **BU**
- 9 Martyrdom of the Bab **BA** Khordad Sal (Birth of Prophet Zoroaster)
- 11 St Benedict Day **RC**
- 18 Dharma Day **BU**
- 13 Obon (Ullambana) **BU, SH**
- 24 Pioneer Day **LD**
Tisha B'av **J**
- 25 St. James the Great Day **RC, (P)**

30 O-harai-taisai **SH**

AUGUST

1 Fast of Repose of Virgin Mary (through 14) **O**
Lammass or Lughnasadh **W/P**
6 Transfiguration of our Lord **RC, P, O**
10 Isra Wa Me'raj **M**
Lailat al Miraj **M**
15 Assumption of Blessed Virgin Mary **RC, (P)**
Dormition of the Theotokos **O**
21 Ullambana **BU**
27 Nisf Sha'baan **M**
28 Lailat al Bara'ah **M**
Rakshabandhan **H**

SEPTEMBER

1 Installation of Guru Granth Sahib (First Parkash) **SI**
Orthodox Church new year **O**
3 Janma Ashtami (Krishna Janmashtami) **H**
8 Nativity of Mary **RC, (P)**
Paryushana Parva begins **JN**
12 Ghambar Paitishahem (through Sep 16) **Z**
13 Ramadan begins (through Oct. 12) **M**
Rosh Hashana (through Sept 14) **J**
14 Exaltation of the Life Giving Cross **O**
Holy Cross Day **RC, (P)**
15 Ganesha Chaturthi **H**
Dasa Laxana begins **JN**
22 Death of Guru Nanak Dev Ji **SI**
Yom Kippur **J**
23 Mabon, Alban Elued, Haustblot / Harvest
(Autumnal Equinox) **W/P**
25 Dasa Laxana end (Anant Chaturdashi) **JN**
27 Sukkot (through Oct 3) **J**
29 St. Michael and All Angels **RC, (P)**

OCTOBER

4 Shemini Atzeret **J**
St Francis Day **RC, P**
5 Simhat Torah **J**
7 World Communion Sunday **(P)**
12 Ghambar Ayathrem **Z**
Navaratri (Dusserah) (through Oct. 20) **H**
Vijaya Dashami **H**
Eid al Fitr - Culmination of Ramadan **M**
20 Birth of the Bab **BA**
Guru Granth Sahib installation **SI**
28 Milvian Bridge Day **C**
31 All Hallows Eve **RC, P**
Reformation Day **P**
Samhuinn (Samhain) , Vetrnaetr / Winter Nights **W/P**

NOVEMBER

1 All Saints' Day **C**
2 All Souls' Day **RC, (P)**
5 Birth of Guru Nanak Dev Ji **SI**
9 Diwali (Deepawali) **H, JN**
Mahavira Nirvana Celebration **JN**
10 Jain New Year (Vir Samvat 5) **JN**
12 Birth of Baha'u'llah **BA**
22 Thanksgiving **IF**
24 Martyrdom Guru Tegh Bahadur Ji **SI**
25 Christ the King **RC, (P)**
26 Day of Covenant **BA**
30 St. Andrew's Day **C**

DECEMBER

2 Advent begins (Sundays: 2, 9, 16, 23) **RC, P**
5 Hanukkah begins (8 days) **J**
6 St. Nicholas Day **C**
8 Bodhi Day (Rohatsu) **BU**
Immaculate Conception **RC**
9 Maternity of St. Anne **O**
12 Feast day - Our Lady of Guadalupe **RC**
18 Hajj begins **M**
Waqf al Arafa **M**
20 Eld al Adha **M**
22 Yule, Alban Arthuan, Jol (Winter Solstice) **W/P**
25 Christmas **RC, LD, P**
Sadeh **Z**
26 Kwanzaa (through Jan.1)
(*cultural not religious for African-Americans*)
St Stephen's Day **RC, (P)**
Zarathosht Diso (Death of Prophet Zarathushtra) **Z**
27 St Stephen's Day **O**
28 Holy Innocents **RC, P**
31 Ghambar Mailyarem ends (through Jan. 4) **Z**
Watch Night **C**

2008

JANUARY

1 Feast of St Basil **O**
Gantan-sai (New Years) **SH**
Mary, Mother of God **RC**
5 Birth of Guru Gobind Singh Ji **SI**
Twelfth Night **(P)**
Vigil of the Epiphany **RC**
6 Epiphany **C**
Theophany **O**
7 Feast of the Nativity **O**
10 Muharram (Islamic New Year) **M**
13 Baptism of the Lord Jesus **RC, (P)**
Maghi **SI**
Vasanta Panchami **H**
14 Makara Sankranthi **H**
18 Week of Prayer Christian Unity (thr. Jan 25) **C**
19 Ashura **M**
20 World Religion Day **BA**
21 Vivekenanda Jayanti **H**
22 Tu B'shvat **J**
22-25 Mahayana Buddhist New Year **BU**

FEBRUARY

1 St Brigid of Kildare **C (Celtic)**
2 Brigid / Imbolc / Oimelc / Candlemas **W/P**
Presentation of Jesus in the Temple -
Candlemas **RC, (P)**
3 Four Chaplains Day **IF**
Setsubun-sai **SH**
Transfiguration Sunday **P**
5 Shrove Tuesday **RC, (P)**
6 Ash Wednesday (Beginning of Lent) **C**
7 Lunar New Year/Tet **BU, (Chinese/Vietnamese**
cultural, rather than religious)
15 Parinirvana Day (Chinese) **BU**
17 Tridion begins **O**
21 Rōi **H**

MARCH

1 St David of Wales **RC, (P)**

2 Meatfare Sunday **O**
 Nineteen Day Fast (through 20) **BA**
 6 Mahashivaratri (Shivarat) **H**
 10 Great Lent begins (Clean Monday) **O**
 11 Guanyin's Birthday **BU**
 14 Hola Mohalla **SI**
 New Year, Nanakshahi Calendar **SI**
 16 Orthodox Sunday **O**
 Palm/Passion Sunday **C**
 Rama Navami (Ramayana Reading thr. Mar 25) **H**
 17 St Patrick's Day **RC, P**
 20 Mahavira Jayanti (Mahavira's Birthday), **JN**
 Maundy Thursday **RC, P**
 Mawlid an Nabi (Prophet Mohammad's birthday) **M**
 Ostara, Alban Eiler, Eostre (Vernal Equinox) **W/P**
 21 Good Friday **C**
 Hanuman Jayanthi **H**
 Magha Puja Day **BU**
 Nav Ruz, Naw Ruz, Norooz (The New Day) **Z, BA**
 Purim **J**
 23 Easter **RC, P, LD**
 25 Annunciation of the Blessed Virgin Mary **O**
 Rama Navami (end) **H**
 26 Khordad Sal (Birth of Prophet Zaranhusht) **Z**
 31 Annunciation of the Blessed Virgin Mary **RC**

APRIL

6 Founding of the Mormon Church **LD**
 14 Baisakhi (Vaisakhi) Creation of Khalsa **SI**
 18 Birth Guru Tegh Bahadur Ji **SI**
 19 Lazarus Saturday **O**
 The Lord's Evening Meal **JW**
 20 Palm Sunday **O**
 Pesach (Passover) First 2 days
 especially.(through 27) **J**
 Theravada Buddhist New Year (through 23) **BU**
 21 Ridvan (through May 2) **BA**
 23 St. George's Day **RC, (P)**
 25 Holy Friday **O**
 27 Easter/Pascha **O**
 29 Ninth Day of Ridvan **BA**
 30 Ghambar Maidyozaem (through May 4) **Z**
 St. James the Great Day **O**

MAY

1 Beltane or May Day **W/P**
 2 Birth Guru Arjan Dev Ji **SI**
 Twelfth Day of Ridvan **BA**
 Yom HaSho'ah **J**
 4 Ascension of Christ **C**
 5 Cinco de Mayo (*Mexican cultural, not religious*)
 6 Vaisakhi **H**
 11 Pentecost/Whitsunday **RC, P**
 18 Trinity Sunday **C**
 20 Buddha Day - Visakha Puja **BU**
 Buddha's Birthday (Wesak in Theravada) **BU**
 23 Declaration of the Bab **BA**
 25 Corpus Christi **RC**
 29 Ascension of Baha'u'llah **BA**
 30 Sacred Heart of Jesus **RC**

JUNE

5 Ascension of Jesus **O**
 6 Anniversary of Attack on Akal Takhat **SI**
 9 Shavuot (through June 10) **J**
 15 Pentecost **O**
 16 Martyrdom of Guru Arjan Dev Ji **SI**
 19 Juneteenth (*African-American cultural, not religious*)
 20 Litha, Alban Heruin, Midsumarsblot (Summer

Solstice) **W/P**
 21 First Nations Day **N**
 22 All Saints **O**
 New Church Day **SW**
 24 Nativity of St. John the Baptist **RC, (P)**
 29 Feast Day of Saints Peter and Paul **RC, (P)**
 Ghambar Maidyoshem (through July 3) **Z**

JULY

6 Dalai Lama's Birthday **BU**
 9 Martyrdom of the Bab **BA**
 11 St Benedict Day **RC**
 13 Obon (Ullambana) **BU, SH**
 18 Guru Purnima **H**
 Asalha Puja Day **BU**
 Dharma Day **BU**
 24 Pioneer Day **LD**
 25 St. James the Great Day **RC, (P)**
 30 Isra Wa Me'raj **M**
 O-harai-taisai **SH**
 31 Lailat al Miraj **M**

AUGUST

1 Fast of Repose of Virgin Mary (through 14) **O**
 Lammass or Lugnasadh **W/P**
 6 Transfiguration of our Lord **RC, P, O**
 10 Tisha B'av **J**
 15 Assumption of Blessed Virgin Mary **RC, (P)**
 Dormition of the Theotokos **O**
 Nisf Sha'baan **M**
 Lailat al Bara'ah **M**
 16 Rakshabandhan **H**
 17 Nisf Sha'baan **M**
 20 Dasa Laxana begins **JN**
 27 Dasa Laxana end (Anant Chaturdashi), **JN**
 28 Paryushana Parva begins **JN**

SEPTEMBER

1 Installation of Guru Granth Sahib (First Parkash) **SI**
 2 Ramadan begins (through Oct. 1) **M**
 3 Ganesha Chaturthi **H**
 5 Paryushana Parva end (Samvatsari) **JN**
 8 Nativity of Mary **RC, (P)**
 12 Ghambar Paitishahem (through Sep 16) **Z**
 14 Exaltation of the Life Giving Cross **O**
 Holy Cross Day **RC, (P)**
 22 Death of Guru Nanak Dev Ji **SI**
 Mabon, Alban Elued, Haustblot / Harvest
 (Autumnal Equinox) **W/P**
 23 Janma Ashtami (Krishna Janmashtami) **H**
 29 St. Michael and All Angels **RC, (P)**
 30 Rosh Hashana (through Oct 1) **J**
 Eid al Fitr - Culmination of Ramadan **M**

OCTOBER

4 St Francis Day **RC, P**
 5 World Communion Sunday **(P)**
 9 Navaratri (Dusserah) **H**
 Vijaya Dashami **H**
 Yom Kippur **J**
 12 Ghambar Ayathrem **Z**
 14 Sukkot (through Oct 19) **J**
 20 Birth of the Bab **BA**
 Guru Granth Sahib installation **SI**
 21 Shemini Atzeret **J**
 22 Simhat Torah **J**
 28 Diwali (Deepawali) **H, JN**
 Mahavira Nirvana Celebration **JN**

Milvian Bridge Day **C**
 Jain New Year (Vir Samvat 5) **JN**
 31 All Hallows Eve **RC, P**
 Reformation Day **P**
 Samhuinn (Samhain) , Vetrnaetr / Winter Nights **W/P**

NOVEMBER

1 All Saints' Day **C**
 2 All Souls' Day **RC, (P)**
 5 Birth of Guru Nanak Dev Ji **SI**
 12 Birth of Baha'u'llah **BA**
 20 Thanksgiving **IF**
 23 Christ the King **RC, (P)**
 24 Martyrdom Guru Tegh Bahadur Ji **SI**
 26 Day of Covenant **BA**
 30 Advent begins
 (Sundays: Nov 30, Dec. 7, 14, 21) **RC, P**
 St. Andrew's Day **C**

DECEMBER

6 St. Nicholas Day **C**
 7 Hajj begins **M**
 Waqf al Arafah **M**
 8 Bodhi Day (Rohatsu) **BU**
 Eld al Adha **M**
 Immaculate Conception **RC**
 9 Maternity of St. Anne **O**
 12 Feast day - Our Lady of Guadalupe **RC**
 21 Yule, Alban Arthuan, Jol (Winter Solstice) **W/P**
 22 Hanukkah begins (8 days) **J**
 25 Christmas **RC, LD, P**
 Sadeh **Z**
 26 Kwanzaa (through January 1, 2007) **IF**
 St Stephen's Day **RC, (P)**
 Zarathosht Diso (Death of Prophet Zarathushtra) **Z**
 27 St Stephen's Day **O**
 28 Holy Innocents **RC, P**
 31 Ghambar Maidyarem ends (through Jan 4) **Z**
 Watch Night **C**

2009

JANUARY

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 Vigil of the Epiphany **RC**
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 Theophany **O**
 7 Ashura **M**
 11 Baptism of the Lord Jesus **P**
 Baptism of the Lord Jesus **RC**
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 13 Maghi **SI**
 18 Week of Prayer for Christian Unity (through Jan 25) **C**
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 26 Lunar New Year/Tet **BU, (Chinese/Vietnamese cultural, rather than religious)**

FEBRUARY

1 Four Chaplains Day **IF**
 St Brigid of Kildare **C (Celtic)**
 2 Brigid / Imbolc / Oimeic / Candlemas **W/P**

Presentation of Jesus in Temple - Candlemas **RC, (P)**
 8 Triodion begins **O**
 9 Tu B'shvat **J**
 14 St Valentine's Day **RC, P, O**
 15 Parinirvana Day **BU (Chinese)**
 22 Meatfare Sunday **O**
 22 Transfiguration Sunday **P**
 24 Shrove Tuesday **RC, (P)**
 25 Ash Wednesday (Beginning of Lent) **C**

MARCH

1 St David of Wales **RC, (P)**
 2 Great Lent begins (Clean Monday) **O**
 Nineteen Day Fast (through 20) **BA**
 8 Orthodox Sunday **O**
 9 Mawlid an Nabi (Prophet Mohammad's birthday) **M**
 10 Purim **J**
 11 Hola Mohalla **SI**
 Holi **H**
 Magha Puja Day **BU**
 14 New Year, Nanakshahi Calendar **SI**
 17 St Patrick's Day **RC, P**
 21 Nav Ruz, Naw Ruz, Norooz (The New Day) **Z, BA**
 Ostara, Alban Eiler, Eostre (Vernal Equinox) **W/P**
 Setsubun-sai **SH**
 25 Annunciation of the Blessed Virgin Mary **RC**
 Annunciation of the Theotokos **O**
 26 Khordad Sal (Birth of Prophet Zaranhusht) **Z**
 30 Guanyin's Birthday **BU**

APRIL

3 Rama Navami (Ramayana Reading) **H**
 5 Palm/Passion Sunday **C**
 6 Founding of the Mormon Church **LD**
 7 Mahavira Jayanti (Mahavira's Birthday) **JN**
 8 Parinirvana Day **BU**
 The Lord's Evening Meal **JW**
 9 Maundy Thursday **RC, P**
 Pesach (Passover) First 2 days special.(through 16) **J**
 Theravada Buddhist New Year (through 11) **BU**
 10 Good Friday **C**
 11 Lazarus Saturday **O**
 12 Easter **RC, P, LD**
 Palm Sunday **O**
 14 Baisakhi (Vaisakhi) Creation of Khalsa **SI**
 17 Holy Friday **O**
 18 Birth Guru Tegh Bahadur Ji **SI**
 19 Easter/Pascha **O**
 21 Ridvan (through May 2) **BA**
 Yom HaSho'ah **J**
 23 St. George's Day **RC, (P)**
 29 Ninth Day of Ridvan **BA**
 30 Ghambar Maidyozarem (through May 4) **Z**
 St. James the Great Day **O**

MAY

1 Beltane or May Day **W/P**
 2 Birth Guru Arjan Dev Ji **SI**
 Twelfth Day of Ridvan **BA**
 5 Cinco de Mayo **(Mexican civic, cultural, not religious)**
 9 Buddha Day - Visakha Puja **BU**
 Buddha's Birthday (Wesak in Theravada tradition) **BU**
 21 Ascension of Christ **C**
 23 Declaration of the Bab **BA**
 28 Ascension of Jesus **O**
 29 Ascension of Baha'u'llah **BA**
 29 Shavuot (through 30) **J**
 31 Pentecost/Whitsunday **RC, P**

JUNE

- 6 Anniversary of Attack on Akal Takhat **SI**
7 Pentecost **O**
Trinity Sunday **C**
14 All Saints **O**
Corpus Christi **RC**
16 Martyrdom of Guru Arjan Dev Ji **SI**
19 Juneteenth (*African-American cultural, not religious*)
19 Sacred Heart of Jesus **RC**
21 First Nations Day **N** (*civic holiday in Canada*)
Litha, Alban Heruin, Midsumarsblot
(Summer Solstice) **W/P**
21 New Church Day **SW**
24 Nativity of St. John the Baptist **RC, (P)**
29 Feast Day of Saints Peter and Paul **RC, (P)**
Ghambar Maidyoshem (through July 3) **Z**

JULY

- 6 Dalai Lama's Birthday **BU**
7 Asalha Puja Day **BU**
Dharma Day **BU**
9 Martyrdom of the Bab **BA**
11 St Benedict Day **RC**
13 Obon (Ullambana) **BU, SH**
19 Isra Wa Me'raj **M**
20 Lailat al Miraj **M**
22 Ullambana **BU**
24 Pioneer Day **LD**
25 St. James the Great Day **RC, (P)**
30 O-harai-taisai **SH**
Tisha B'av **J**

AUGUST

- 1 Fast of Repose of Virgin Mary (through August 14) **O**
Lammas or Lugnasadh **W/P**
5 Lailat al Bara'ah **M**
Rakshabandhan **H**
6 Transfiguration of our Lord **RC, P, O**
7 Nisf Sha'baan **M**
14 Janma Ashtami (Krishna Janmashtami) **H**
15 Assumption of Blessed Virgin Mary **RC, (P)**
Dormition of the Theotokos **O**
17 Paryushana Parva begins **JN**
21 Ramadan begins (through Oct. 12) **M**
23 Ganesha Chaturthi **H**
25 Paryushana Parva end (Samvatsari) **JN**

SEPTEMBER

- 1 Installation of Guru Granth Sahib (First Parkash) **SI**
Orthodox Church new year **O**
8 Nativity of Mary **RC, (P)**
12 Ghambar Paitishahem (through Sep 16) **Z**
14 Exaltation of the Life Giving Cross **O**
Holy Cross Day **RC, (P)**
19 Navaratri (Dusserah) (through Oct. 20) **H**
Rosh Hashana (through Sept 20) **J**
21 Eid al Fitr - Culmination of Ramadan **M**
Mabon, Alban Elued, Haustblot / Harvest
(Autumnal Equinox) **W/P**
22 Death of Guru Nanak Dev Ji **SI**
28 Yom Kippur **J**
29 St. Michael and All Angels **RC, (P)**

OCTOBER

- 3 Sukkot (through Oct 9) **J**
4 St Francis Day **RC, P**
World Communion Sunday **(P)**

- 10 Shemini Atzeret **J**
11 Simhat Torah **J**
12 Ghambar Ayathrem (through 16) **Z**
17 Diwali (Deepawali) **H, JN, SI**
Mahavira Nirvana Celebration **JN**
20 Birth of the Bab **BA**
Guru Granth Sahib installation **SI**
28 Milvian Bridge Day **C**
31 All Hallows Eve **RC, P**
Reformation Day **P**
Samhuinn (Samhain) , Vetrnaetr / Winter Nights **W/P**

NOVEMBER

- 1 All Saints' Day **C**
2 All Souls' Day **RC, (P)**
5 Birth of Guru Nanak Dev Ji **SI**
12 Birth of Baha'u'llah **BA**
22 Christ the King **RC, (P)**
24 Martyrdom Guru Tegh Bahadur Ji **SI**
26 Day of Covenant **BA**
Hajj begins **M**
Thanksgiving **IF**
Waqf al Arafa **M**
27 Eld al Adha **M**
29 Advent Sundays (Nov 29, Dec 6, 13, 20) **RC, P**
30 St. Andrew's Day **C**

DECEMBER

- 6 St. Nicholas Day **C**
8 Bodhi Day (Rohatsu) **BU**
Immaculate Conception **RC**
9 Maternity of St. Anne **O**
12 Feast day - Our Lady of Guadalupe **RC**
Hanukkah begins (8 days) **J**
18 Muharram (Islamic New Year) **M**
21 Yule, Alban Arthuan, Jol (Winter Solstice) **W/P**
25 Christmas **RC, LD, P**
Feast of the Nativity **O**
Sadeh **Z**
26 Kwanzaa (through January 1, 2008) **IF**
St Stephen's Day **RC, (P)**
Zarathosht Diso (Death of Prophet Zarathushtra) **Z**
27 St Stephen's Day **O**
28 Holy Innocents **RC, P**
31 Ghambar Maidyarem (through Jan 4) **Z**
Watch Night **C**

Glossary & Explanatory Notes

Most civic holidays and other obvious festivals are not included. Where a holiday is included that is not strictly speaking currently a religious holiday, but is of highly significant observance to people of a particular cultural group, we indicate as such. Note alternate transliterations of the names. Some holidays may be celebrated by more than one group under a phonetically similar name, but have a different meaning. Not every holiday below is listed on the yearly calendar.

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

Alban Arthuan or Winter Solstice Druidic or Celtic Pagan solstice celebration.

Alban Eiler or Vernal Equinox Druidic or Celtic Pagan solstice celebration.

Alban Elued or Autumnal Equinox Druidic or Celtic Pagan equinox celebration.

Alban Heruin or Summer Solstice Druidic or Celtic Pagan equinoctial celebration.

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

All Hallows Eve The evening before All Hallows Day.

All Saints Day Christian day for honoring all the saints, especially those who do not have a special day. Holy day of obligation in the Roman Catholic Church

All Souls Day Christian day of prayers of intercession for the dead

Anniversary of Attack on Akal Takhat Sikh commemoration of the 1984 attack on the Golden Temple in Amritsar.

Annunciation of the Theotokos (Blessed Virgin Mary) Christian celebration of Gabriel announcing to Virgin Mary the Jesus' coming birth.

Asalha (Turning of the Wheel of Teaching) Buddhist observance of day when Gautama Buddha made his first public proclamation to five ascetics.

Ascension of Abdu'l-Baha Baha'i celebration of the rising of the spirit of Abdu'l-Baha to the heavenly dwelling.

Ascension of Baha'u'llah Baha'i recollection of the death of Baha'u'llah, the founder. Observed by prayers and readings. Work is suspended. **WR.**

Ascension of Christ Celebrates Jesus' Ascension to heaven. Holy day of obligation in the Roman Catholic Church

Ash Wednesday Begins Lent for Catholics and most Protestants. Name derives from symbolic use of ashes to signify penitence. **SR.**

Ashura Islamic optional one day fast recognizing the Creation, Noah's departure from the ark, and the saving of Moses from Pharaoh. Prophet Muhammad's Grandson, Hussain, martyred on this date in 683-4 AD. **DR.**

Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary Commemorates the assumption of Mary, mother of Jesus, into heaven. Holy day of obligation in the Roman Catholic Church

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. **DR.**

Baisakhi (Vaisakhi) Hindu start of the New Years. Also, Sikh day commemorating founding of the Khalsa, a distinctive Sikh brotherhood.

Baptism of Jesus Christian commemoration of the beginning of the public ministry of Jesus.

Beheading of John the Baptist Christian remembrance of death of John, who is known for preparing the people so they would recognize Jesus as the Messiah.

Beltane (Beltaine) or May Day Wicca celebration of the conjoining of the goddess with the energy of the god in the sacred marriage which is the basis of all creation. Celtic Pagan celebration for god of light, Belenus.

Birth of Baha'u'llah Commemorates the birth of the founders of the Baha'i faith in 1817. Work is suspended on this day. **WR.**

Birth of Guru Arjan Dev Ji, fifth Sikh guru, founder of Golden Temple.

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

Birth of Guru Nanak Dev Ji Sikh honoring of the birthday of their founder, the first Sikh teacher who lived from 1469 -1539 c.e.

Birth of Guru Tegh Bahadur Ji, ninth Sikh guru and martyr.

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

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.

Bon Festival Shinto ancestral soul's day.

Brigid, Imbolc or Oimele Wiccan reflection on the power of the gods from which physical and spiritual harvest will come. Druid celebration of fertility in honor of goddess Brigid.

Buddha Day Buddhists celebrate the birthday of the Buddha.

Candlemas Christian celebration of the presentation of young Jesus in the temple to the aged Simeon and Anna. Also, Wicca (pagan) celebration of the return of the sun and lengthening of days.

Chinese and Vietnamese (Tet) Lunar New Year Festive two week holiday. Each year is symbolized by a different animal.

Christ the King Christian celebration of the preeminence of Jesus over all earthly authorities.

Christmas Day Christian celebration of the birth of Jesus Christ.

Christmas Eve Christian celebration of the arrival of Mary and Joseph in Bethlehem for the birth of Jesus.

Christmas Fast Orthodox Christian fasting period in preparation for the celebration of the Nativity of Jesus Christ. **DR.**

Christmas Season of Christian year following Advent.

Cinco de Mayo Celebrated in Mexico and by Mexican-Americans, commemorates 1862 battle of Puebla, when a Mexican army stood off a larger French force. *Cultural, rather than religious, holiday.*

Circumcision of Jesus Christian recognition of its Jewish foundations. Infant Jesus was brought to the Temple for the ritual act of circumcision.

Conversion of St Paul Christian observance of experience of Paul when confronted by a vision of Jesus while on his way to persecute Christians, then became a leading presenter of Jesus.

Conversion/Confession of St Peter Christian recognition of the classic words of St Peter who responded to a question by Jesus and described him as the long awaited messiah .

Corpus Christi Roman Catholic celebration in recognition of the Eucharist - the Blessed Sacrament of the Body and Blood of Christ.

Dalai Lama birthday Tibetan Buddhist observation with traditional dances, picnics and singing.

Dasa Laxana Jain observance with focus on the holy texts describing the ten characteristics to which devotees aspire.

Day of Hajj Islamic observance of Mt Arafat revelation to Mohammed.

Day of the Covenant Baha'i celebration of the covenant given in the last will and testament of Baha'u'llah

Death of Guru Nanak Dev Sikh observance of passing of first great Guru

Declaration of the Bab Baha'i recognition of the 1844 declaration by Ali Muhammed that he is the anticipated "Coming One" of all religions. **WR.**

Deepavali or Diwali Hindu celebration - 5 day festival of lights marking the end of the Hindu year. First day is observed as a holiday by many Hindu people. Symbolizing the human urge to move toward the light (knowledge and wisdom) from darkness (ignorance). One of four seasonal celebrations in India. Traders open new account books on this day. It is probably one of the oldest Hindu festivals. Mahavira attained Nirvana on this night and so Jains also celebrate it.

Dharma Day Buddha's first discourse following his enlightenment.

Dormition (falling asleep) of the Theotokos Orthodox Christian observance of Mary's death, burial, resurrection and transfer to heaven.

Dusserah (same as Navaratri). The worship to goddess Durga, Lakshmi and Saraswathi is done to remove impurities in the mind, restlessness of the mind and remove the ignorance of your true nature respectively. Festival celebrating good over evil; the victory of Lord Rama over Ravana, the demon king of Lanka.

Easter The most holy of Christian sacred days commemorating the resurrection of Jesus from his death by crucifixion.

Eid ul Fitr or 'Id al-Fitr A 3 day Islamic feast marking the close of Ramadan. It is a festival of thanksgiving to Allah for enjoying the month of Ramadan. **DR.**

Eid ul-Adha or 'Id al-Adha Islamic Feast of Sacrifice. The second most important feast of Islam. It concludes the important rituals of Hajj and is a three-day festival recalling Abraham's willingness to sacrifice his son in obedience to Allah. It is a festival of animal sacrifice; commemorates the faith of Abraham and Ishmael.

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

Exaltation of the Life-giving Cross Orthodox Christian celebration of the St Helena finding the Cross upon which Christ was crucified.

Falling Asleep (Dormition) of the Theotokos Orthodox Christian observance of Mary's transfer to heaven.

Fasali Zoroastrian seasonal calendar - "fasal" means "season". These dates remain unchanged from year to year.

Fast of the Repose of the Virgin Mary, Fast in honor of the Holy Mother of Lord Jesus Orthodox Christian 14 day fasting period in preparation for the celebration of the Great Feast of the Dormition of the Virgin Mary. **DR.**

Feast Day of Saint Peter and Saint Paul- Christian feast devoted to two key apostolic founders of the church.

Feast of Our Lady of Guadalupe Catholic Christian honoring of an appearance of the Virgin Mary near Mexico City in 1531 c.e.

Feast of St Basil Orthodox Christian commemoration of St Basil

Feast of the Holy Apostles Christian - recognizing martyrdom of Saint Peter and Saint Paul.

Feast of the Theophany Orthodox Christian Feast to recall the revelation of Jesus to the Magi at his baptism and turning water into wine at Cana.

First Nations Day Canadian First Nations (Indian, Metis and Inuit) most sacred day on the summer solstice.

First Parkash Sikh scripture, Adi Granth, is installed in Golden Temple.

Founding of the Church Mormon Christian commemoration of the appearance of the angel Moroni in 1830 to Joseph Smith.

Four Chaplains Day Commemoration of the event in World War II when 4 Chaplains of Jewish and Christian traditions (Catholic and Protestant) gave their life jackets to others as a troop ship sank in the Atlantic Ocean. **Cultural, rather than religious, holiday.**

Ganesha Chaturthi Hindu festival honoring the elephant faced god who is the Lord of and destroyer of obstacles, prudence and success. Images of Ganesha are worshipped to give success in undertakings. He is the God of knowledge and wisdom, literature and fine arts.

Gantan-sai Shinto New Year festival observed with prayers for inner renewal, prosperity and health.

Ghambar Ayathrem Zoroastrian celebration of creation of plants and sowing of winter crop.

Ghambar Maidyarem Zoroastrian winter feast celebrating creation of animals.

Ghambar Maidyoshem Zoroastrian joyous mid-summer feast relating to the creation of the waters.

Ghambar Maidyozarem Zoroastrian celebration of the creation of the sky and the harvest of winter crops.

Ghambar Paitishahem Zoroastrian festival commemorating the creation of the earth and the harvesting of summer crops.

Gion Matsuri Shinto honoring of the sun god with celebration in July.

Gita Jayanti Hindu celebration of birthday of Srimad Bhagavad Gita and the revelation of the Gospel of Dharma to the world.

Good Friday The commemoration of Jesus' crucifixion. **SR.**

Great Lent 40 day period of intense fasting in the Orthodox tradition which ends on Friday before Palm Sunday. **DR**

Guanyin's Birthday Guanyin is the Bodhisattva of Mercy, the most beloved Bodhisattva (one who enlightens countless sentient beings before becoming a Buddha) in Mahayana Buddhism.

Guru Granth Sahib Installation Sikh remembrance of the eternal installation of the holy books, Granth Sahib.

Guru Purnima Hindu celebration of the ancient Gurus, in particular Sage Ved Vyas. Date is full moon of the month Asadha. Day is considered sacred for sannyasins and students of Vedic studies.

Hajj Islamic pilgrimage rites at Mecca on 7-12th days of month of Dhul Hijjah. The important rituals of Hajj conclude with Eid ul Adha, and those not traveling to Mecca just celebrate Eid ul-Adha.

Hana Matsuri Japanese Buddhist flower/harvest festival in celebration of the Buddha's birth.

Hanukah Festival of Lights; 8-day commemoration of the Maccabean recapture and rededication of the second Temple in 165 B.C.E.

Hanuman Jayanthi, the son of wind God and the most sacred servant of Lord Rama, who gives power.

Hola Mohalla Sikh day; mock battles & martial arts are displayed.

Holi Spring festival of revelry. It is a carnival occasion featuring bright colors, pilgrimages and bonfires reflecting what is occurring in nature during this time. The story of Lord Shiva burning the God of Love who tried to disturb his meditation by opening his third eye is popularly associated with this festival.

Holy Cross Day Christian Day of recognition for the Cross on which Jesus was crucified as central symbol of Christian religion.

Holy Family of Jesus, Mary, Joseph Catholic Christian celebration of the love between the family of Jesus.

Holy Friday Orthodox commemoration of Jesus' crucifixion.

Holy Innocents Day Christian day of solemn memory of male children killed by King Herod in the attempt to destroy Jesus.

Holy Pascha Orthodox Christian feast day of Jesus' resurrection.

Holy Saturday Christian observance of the Saturday before Easter - a time meditation on the mystery of Jesus Christ.

Holy Thursday Christian observance of the final meal that Jesus observed with his disciples.

Holy Week Christians observe the week before Easter with solemn ceremonies based on events in Jesus' life, especially on Holy Thursday and Good Friday.

'Id al-Adha or Eid ul-Adha Islamic Feast of Sacrifice. The second most important feast of Islam. It concludes the important rituals of Hajj and is a three-day festival recalling Abraham's willingness to sacrifice his son in obedience to Allah. It is a festival of animal sacrifice; commemorates the faith of Abraham and Ishmael.

'Id al-Fitre or Eid ul Fitr A 3 day Islamic feast marking the close of Ramadan. It is a festival of thanksgiving to Allah for enjoying the month of Ramadan. **DR.**

Immaculate Conception Roman Catholic day of celebrating the belief that Mary, mother of Jesus, was preserved from original sin all of her life. **A day of obligation and required church attendance**

Installation of the Guru Granth Sahib Commemorates the installation of the Sikh scriptures by Guru Gobind Sing; these scriptures were installed as the perpetual guru.

Isra' Wa Me'raaj Islamic observance of Mohammed's night journey from Mecca to Jerusalem and ascension to heaven.

Jain New Year Jain year begins on the day after the Mahavira Nirvana. It is called Vir Samvat (or Mahavira year)

Janma Ashtami Hindu celebration of the birthday of Krishna, also called Krishna Janma ashtami.

Juneteenth Observed as the day African-Americans were emancipated. It is the oldest known celebration of the ending of slavery. Scheduled on a mid-June Saturday. *Cultural, rather than religious, holiday.*

Kathina Buddhist monks end 3 month rain retreat and receive new robes.

Khordad Sal Zoroastrian remembrance of Prophet Zarathushtra's birth.

Krishna Janma Ashtami/ Krishna Jayanti (Janmastami) Hindu commemoration of the midnight birth of Krishna - the 8th incarnation of god Vishnu, celebration of the physical courage and mental brilliance of Krishna.

Kwanzaa 7 day celebration of African-American values and traditions and their continued vitality. *Cultural, rather than religious, holiday.*

Lag B'Omer Jewish observation of the counting of the day - the link - between Pesach and Shavuot.

Lailat al Bara'ah (Shab-Barat) Islamic Night of Forgiveness; prayer for forgiveness of the dead and preparation for Ramadan.

Lailat al-Miraj & Israa' Islamic observance of Mohammed's night journey from Mecca to Jerusalem and ascension to heaven.

Lailat ul-Qadr Islamic Night of Destiny. First revelation of Qur'an to Prophet Mohammed. Observed during the last ten days of Ramadan.

Lammas Christian first fruits celebration observed by placing bread baked from first harvest on the altar.

Lazarus Saturday Orthodox Christian celebration of Lazarus' resurrection by Jesus, celebrated on the eve of Palm Sunday.

Lent Period of preparation for Easter; 40 days.

Litha Wicca celebration of the sacred marriage in which energy of the gods is poured into the service of life.

(The) Lord's Evening Meal Jehovah's Witness (Christian) primary annual celebration taking place in the evening.

Los Posadas Christian traditional Latino celebration re-enacting Joseph's search for a room at an inn for Mary to give birth to Jesus.

Lughnasadh Wicca/neo-Pagan observance of first harvest of the year involving agricultural festivals and prosperity magic. (The Christian name of Lammas is sometimes used.) "Festival of the First Fruits".

Lunar New Year (Tet) Chinese and Vietnamese festive holiday celebrated for two weeks. Each year is symbolized by a different animal.

Mabon (Harvest Home) Wicca observance of the autumnal equinox; harvest festival time.

Magha Puja Day Buddhist celebration of the presentation of teachings by Lord Buddha to and assembly of holy men.

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

Maha Shivaratri Hindu festival in honor of Lord Shiva and his marriage to Goddess Parvati. *DR*

Mahavir Jayanti Jain festival honoring Lord Mahavira on founder's birthday.

Mahavira Nirvana commemoration of the Jain founder's entry into Nirvana (enlightenment).

Makara Sakranti Hindu celebration marking the change of season when the sun changes its course and begins to move northward again.

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 Arjan Dev Sikh remembrance of those who have suffered for the faith.

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

Martyrdom of John the Baptist Christian observance to remember the beheading of John who challenged the moral life of King Herod.

Martyrdom of the Bab Ali Mohammed was executed in 1850 by Persian political and religious powers. *WR*

Mary, Mother of God Catholic celebration of the mother of Jesus. Holy day of obligation in the Roman Catholic Church.

Maternity of St. Anne Orthodox commemoration of Conception of Mary.

Maunajiyaras Jain day of fasting, silence, and meditation on the five holy teachers. *DR*

Maundy Thursday Christian observance of the Last Supper during Holy Week.

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

Meatfare (Judgement) Sunday Orthodox Christian observance, 2 weeks before start of Great Lent, preparing the faithful for celebration of resurrection of Christ. Last day for eating meat before the Great Lent.

Midsomarsblot/Midsummer Neo-pagan observance of nature's bounty.

Milvian Bridge Day Christian day of solemn reflection on the relationship of spiritual community and the powers of civil government.

Muharram – Islamic New Year Islamic remembrance of the migration of Mohammed and followers to Medina. The Islamic cycle of 12 lunar months begins. Formulas determine holy days based on lunar events.

National Coming Out Day An international event which gives GLBT people the opportunity to "come out" to others about their sexuality. *Cultural, rather than religious, holiday.*

Nativity of Mary, the Mother of God Christian celebration of birth of the Virgin Mary.

Nativity of St John the Baptist Christian celebration of the role of John in baptizing Jesus. Continues a pre-Christian Midsummer's Day celebration. Special interest for Latino tradition.

Nav Ruz or Naw Ruz or Norooz (The New Day) Zoroastrian, Baha'i and Iranian New Year. *WR*

Navaratri Dusserha or Navaratri or Dusserha Hindu Festival of the divine mother honoring Durga, wife of Shiva, and seeking her blessings. Also observed as a celebration recalling the days of Lord Krishna.

New Church Day Swedenborgian Christian (Church of the New Jerusalem) annual commemoration of the vision document, "The True Christian Religion", by Emanuel Swedenborg in 1770.

New Year (Islam) The Islamic cycle of months begins. Formulas determine holy days based on lunar events.

Nichiren Daishonin Memorial Buddhist memory of Nichiren Daishonin and the Dai-Gohonzon, the true object of worship, for all humanity.

Nineteen Day Fast Baha'i Fast to be observed by adult Baha'is in good health, sunrise to sundown March 2 – 20; no food or drink. *DR*

Ninth Day of Ridvan Baha'i celebration of arrival of Baha'u'llah at a sacred garden. **WR.**

Nirvana Day Buddhist regional observance of the death of Buddha.

Nisf Sha'baan (Lailat al Bara'ah and Shab-Barat) Islamic Night of Forgiveness; prayer for forgiveness of the dead and preparation for Ramadan

Noche Buena Spanish name for Christmas Eve.

Nuzulul Qur'an (Laylat al-Qadr) Islamic Night of Power during final days of Ramadan, worship to mark the first revelation of the Qur'an.

Obon Festival Japanese Buddhist (solar) festival to honor the dead. Involves lighting of bonfires, traditional meal, paper lanterns, folk dances.

Oh-harai-taisai Shinto Grand Purification Ceremony. Observed twice yearly for purification from offenses committed during each half year.

Orthodox Sunday Orthodox Christian first Sunday of Lent. Restoration of icons to the church is celebrated.

Ostara (Eostre) Wicca welcoming of spring and the goddess-as-maiden.

Palm Sunday Christian celebration of the entry of Jesus into Jerusalem. The day begins Holy Week.

Parinirvana Buddhist observance of the entry of Buddha into the final nirvana - a state of complete enlightenment.

Paryushana Parva Jain 8-day festival signifying human emergence into a new world of spiritual and moral refinement.

Pavarana Day Buddhist festival marking the end of the Rains Retreat, primarily observed by monks in monasteries.

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. **DR. WR** on 1st, 2nd, 7th, & 8th days.

Pioneer Day Observance of the arrival of Brigham Young and first settlers to Great Salt Lake, Utah on July 24, 1847. **Cultural, rather than religious, holiday.**

Posadas Latino Christian feast of The Lodgings commemorating journey of Mary and Joseph to Bethlehem in preparation for the birth of Jesus.

Precious Blood of Jesus Roman Catholic veneration of the life giving power of the blood of Jesus, celebrated on Corpus Christi.

Presentation of Jesus Christian remembrance of the infant Jesus being brought to the temple in Jerusalem.

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

Rakshabandhan Hindu celebration of the brother sister love. It is the reminder of brotherly duties and a repeat and renewal of a sister's wishes. It is the celebration of being a part of the family. The tiny silk threads pull the siblings together and make the bonds even stronger. The delicate thread is symbolic of the peaceful coexistence of not only the siblings but of the whole human race. Jains also celebrate Dakshabandhan to celebrate saving of 700 Jain munis (saints) by Shri Vishnukumar Muni

Rama Krishna Jayanti (Sri Krishna Jayanati) Hindu celebration of the birthday of Sri Rama Krishna, an apostle.

Rama Navami Hindu celebration of the birth of Lord Rama, hero of the religious epic poem, The Ramayana. The day involves telling of stories and going to the temple.

Ramadan 9th month on Islamic calendar, devoted to the commemoration of Muhammad's reception of the divine revelation recorded in the Qur'an. The event begins when the new moon for the 9th month is sighted. It is the holiest period of the Islamic Year. There is strict fasting from sunrise to sunset for 30 days. **DR. SR.**

Ramayana Reading Hindu. The entire Ramayana is read by the family during this period.

Reformation Day Protestant Christian anniversary of their tradition and its emphasis on the place of the Bible and religious freedom. On 10/31/1517 Martin Luther posted a belief statement on Wittenberg Church door.

Ridvan Baha'i commemoration of the twelve day period in 1863 when Baha'u'llah declared that he was God's messenger for this age. Work is to be suspended on days 1, 9, and 12 of the festival. **WR.**

Rohatsu Buddhist celebration of the enlightenment of Buddha.

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

Sacred Heart Roman Catholic occasion to pay homage to Christ's all encompassing love for humanity.

Sadeh (Jashan-e Sadeh) Zoroastrian mid winter celebration in which a bonfire is often used to express defiance of the cold of winter.

Saint Andrew's Day Christian observance of the coming of Christianity to the area now known as Scotland. The martyrdom of St Andrew is remembered as the season of Advent begins on the Sunday closest to the Feast of St. Andrew (before or after).

Saint Benedict Day Catholic Christian recognition of the father of the Benedictine Order, first Order of Western Church Monastic tradition.

Saint Brigid of Kildare Christian recognition of Brigid who displayed unusual compassion; brought up as a Druid and became Christian.

Saint Columba of Iona Christian recognition of Columba who began the famous community of Iona off the coast of Scotland in 563.

Saint David of Wales Celtic Christian saint known for his wisdom and missionary work.

Saint Francis Day Christian recognition of service to people and appreciation of the natural world, as practiced by St Francis

Saint George Day Christian remembrance of a person who, in the 4th century, was a martyr and became an ideal of martial valor and selflessness. Especially honored by Eastern Christians.

Saint James Day Christian recognition of the martyrdom of the Apostle James the Great in 44 c.e

Saint Michael and All Angels Christian celebration of angels as companions who help fight off evil and are present at the hour of death.

Saint Nicholas, Bishop of Myra and Wonderworker. Especially important in Eastern Christianity.

Saint Patrick's Day Christian celebration of Patrick who brought Christianity to Ireland in early days of the faith.

Saint Philip the Apostle & St James the Less Catholic Christian remembrance of two disciples of Jesus.

Saint Stephen's Day Christian remembrance of St Stephen, the first Christian martyr, and of love of God presented in Jesus and in the lives of Christian believers

Saint Valentine's Day Christian remembrance of St Valentine; as formerly observed. **Cultural, rather than religious, holiday**

Samhuinn or Samhain Wiccan New Year celebration of endings and beginnings. revering of elders. Celtic Pagan celebration of "Summer's End".

Setsubun-sai Shinto celebration of the change of seasons with the coming of spring with shouts of "Devils out, Good Fortune in".

Shavuot Festival of Weeks; celebrates harvest of first fruits; commemorates Moses' descent from Mt Sinai with the Torah and Commandments. **WR first 2 days.**

Shemini Azteret or Shmini Atzeret Jewish completion of annual cycle of reading Torah. Celebration of the eighth and last day of Sukkot. **WR.**

Shivarat (Mahashivaratri) Hindu. A day of solemnity and austerity representing the intense renunciation aspect of the Lord. The observance is related to at least three stories: the austerity practiced by a hunter, the day Shiva drank the poison during the churning of the ocean, the day Shiva married Parvathi.

Shogatsu (Gantan-sai) Shinto New Year's Day celebration.

Shrove Tuesday Christian carnival day on the eve of Ash Wednesday which begins Lent, a time of fasting and devotions, also known as Fat Tuesday in some places.

Shubun-sai Shinto vernal equinox observance.

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. **WR.**

Slichot Jewish worship service to begin making repentance for wrongs done the past year.

Spring Ohigan Buddhist time of meditation on the teachings of Buddha at the equinox.

Sri Ramakrishna Jayanti Hindu celebration of the life of Sri Ramakrishna a significant 19th century guru, teacher of Vivekenanda, who brought Vedanta Hinduism to the West.

Sukkot Jewish Feast of Tabernacles or Booths; celebrates fall harvest and the wandering of Israel in the desert wilderness dwelling in tents. **WR first 2 days.**

Tammuz, Seventeenth of Jewish traditional day of fasting to mourn over Jerusalem and destruction of the Temple. **Not universally observed. DR.**

Tet or Vietnamese Lunar New Year Celebrated at the same time as Chinese New Year, beginning with the lunar month.

Thanksgiving Interfaith celebration of the created earth in the USA. **Cultural, rather than religious, holiday.**

Theophany (Feast of...) Orthodox Christian celebration of the Baptism of Jesus, at which time the Trinity was revealed to the world.

Tiragan Zoroastrian celebration in honor of Tishtar - the Dog Star. Recognizes dogs as helpers of humanity.

Tishah B'av A Jewish day of fasting in remembrance of the destruction of the Temple in 586 b.c.e. and 70 c.e. **DR full 24 hour fast.**

Tohji-Taisai Shinto Grand Ceremony of the Winter Solstice.

Transfiguration of Jesus Christian commemoration on Mt Tabor when Jesus' physical appearance became brilliant as his connection with traditional Jewish holy figures became evident to the disciples.

Trinity Sunday or Day Christians honor the belief in one God with a threefold nature.

Triodion Byzantine Orthodox ten-week period of preparation for Easter.

Tu B'shevat Jewish celebration of the coming of spring by preparation of foods native to Israel. It is also known as "New Year for Trees".

Tulasidas Jayanti Hindu remembrance of the poet Tulasidas as one who brought spiritual uplift to the masses of people by giving us Ramacharithmans.

Twelfth Day of Ridvan Baha'i celebration of the declaration of Baha'u'llah as the promised One of God. **WR.**

Twelfth Night Christian observance of the vigil of the epiphany. **Cultural, rather than religious, holiday for Christians.**

Ugadi (YugAdhi) Hindu beginning of an era or epoch (King Shalivahana crowned on this day) and celebrated as the beginning of a New Year.

Ullambana Buddhist (lunar calendar) conclusion of the three-month Rainy Season Retreat; celebration of the ritual of saving the deceased from torments after death.

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.

Vasanta Panchami Hindu celebration marks beginning of spring season to become aware of changes in nature so as to live in harmony with them.

Vijaya Dashami Hindu day Sri Rama killed Ravana and got victory in the battle signifying victory over our own minds that comes after worshipping goddesses Durga, Lakshmi and Saraswathi.

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

Vivekananda Jayanti Hindu celebration of birthday of Swami Vivekenanda who brought Vedanta to the west thereby building bridge between east and west in the understanding of human life.

Waqf al Arafa Islamic observance day during Hajj when pilgrims pray for forgiveness and mercy.

Watch Night New Year's Eve observance including reflection and prayer.

Week of Prayer for Christian Unity Christian observance with prayer for the restoration of unity between the churches of the faith.

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

Whitsunday Alternate name for Pentecost, Christian celebration of coming of the Holy Spirit on community of the faithful.

World Communion Sunday Protestant Christian observation of the unity of Christians in celebration of the last supper of Jesus with the disciples.

World Religion Day Baha'I sponsored day dedicated to the unity and oneness of all world religions.

Yom HaShoah Jewish Holocaust Remembrance Day. This day has been established to remember the six million Jews killed by the Nazis in 1933-45. **Cultural, rather than religious, holiday.**

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

Yule (Jol) Norse Pagan & Wicca celebration of the winter-born king.

Zarathosht Diso Zoroastrian anniversary of the death of Prophet Zarathushtra.

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