



Office for Religious, Spiritual and Ethical Life

STUDENT AFFAIRS AT WASHINGTON UNIVERSITY

Below are many of the religious holidays observed by members
of the Washington University in St. Louis community.
Please note that individual practices may vary.

Fall 2024

August 13: Tisha B'Av (Judaism) – Fast marking the destruction of the Temples in Jerusalem **Fasting starts August 12 at sundown and continues through August 13.*

August 15: Feast of the Assumption of Mary (Catholic Christianity) – holy day marking the assumption of Mary's body and soul into heaven

August 15-16: Krishna Janmashtami (Hinduism) – Commemoration of the birth of Krishna **Fasting*

August 19: Raksha Bandhan (Hinduism) – a festival to symbolize the love between a brother and a sister

August 31-September 7: Paryushan Parva (Jainism) – Eight-day festival of forgiveness and self-discipline **Fasting*

September 7: Ganesh Chaturthi / Vinayaka Chaturthi (Hinduism) – commemorates the birth of Ganesh

September 16: Mawlid al-Nabi (Islam)- Celebrates the birth of Prophet Muhammad **Begins sundown September 15*

September 21-29: Mabon (Pagan/Wiccan) - Celebrates the autumnal equinox

October 3-4: Rosh Hashanah (Judaism) – Jewish New Year and beginning of High Holy Days **Begins at sundown October 2, work restriction sundown October 2 and continues through October 4.*

October 3-12: Navaratri (Hinduism)– Festival of the divine mother in all her forms

October 6: Tzom Gedaliah (Judaism) – Fast of the Seventh Month **Minor fasting*

October 12: Yom Kippur (Judaism) – Day of Atonement **Begins sundown October 11, fasting and work restriction start October 11 and continue through October 12*

October 12: Dussehra (Hinduism) – Commemoration of the last of the days of judgment **Work restriction*

October 17-23: Sukkot (Judaism) – Feast of Tabernacles **Begins at sundown October 16, work restriction starts sundown October 16 and continues through October 18*

October 24: Shemini Atzeret (Judaism) – Eighth day of the Feast of Tabernacles **Begins at sundown Oct 23, work restriction starts sundown October 23 and continues through October 24*

October 25: Simchat Torah (Judaism) – Celebration the beginning of the annual Torah reading cycle **Begins at sundown October 24, work restriction begins sundown October 24 and continues through October 25*

October 31: Diwali (Hinduism, Jainism, Sikhism) – Festival of Lights **Work restriction*

October 22-23: Twin Holy Days (Bahá'í Faith) – Celebration of the birth of the founder of the Bahá'í Faith **Work restriction *Begins sundown the October 21*

October 31: Reformation Day (Protestant Christianity) - Celebration in remembrance of the onset of the Reformation

November 1: All Saints' Day (Christianity)) – Honors all saints known and unknown

November 1: Samhain (Wiccan, Pagan) – Festival honoring endings, beginnings, and the dead. Is the start of the Pagan New Year. **Begins sundown on October 31*

November 2: All Souls' Day (Christianity) – Commemoration of the souls of those who have died

November 15: Guru Nanak Jayanti (Sikh)– Celebrates the birth and founder of Sikhism

November 26: Day of the Covenant (Bahá'í) - Celebrates the appointment of 'Abdu'l-Bahá as the Centre of Bahá'u'lláh's Covenant **Begins sundown November 25*

December 8: Bodhi Day (Buddhism) – Celebration of Buddha's attainment of enlightenment

December 8th: Feast of the Immaculate Conception of Mary (Catholic Christianity)– Observes the immaculate conception of Mary by Joachim and Anne

December 12: Our Lady of Guadalupe (Catholic Christianity) – Celebration of the apparitions of Mary to St. Juan Diego in Tepeyac in 1531

December 21: Yule (Pagan/Wiccan) – Winter solstice in the northern hemisphere

December 25: Christmas (Christianity)– Celebration of the birth of Jesus Christ

December 26: Zarathosht Diso (Zoroastrian)- – Commemorates death of Zarathustra

December 26 – January 2: Hanukkah (Judaism) – Festival of Lights **Begins at sundown December 25*

Spring 2025

January 1: Feast of Mary Mother of God (Catholic Christianity) – Celebration of the motherhood of Mary

January 1: Oshogatsu (Shinto) – Celebration of New Year, thanking the kami, and asking for good fortune

January 10: Asara B'Tevet (Judaism) – The Tenth of Tevet **Minor fasting*

January 6: Epiphany (Christianity) – Feast day celebrating the revelation of God the Son as a human in Jesus Christ

January 7: Christmas (Orthodox Christianity)– Celebration of the birth of Jesus Christ

January 14: Makar Sankranti (Hinduism)– Celebration of the Sun god

January 14: Birth of Guru Gobind Singh (Sikh)

January 27: Lailat al-Miraj (Islam) – Celebration of the Prophet Muhammad's ascent to heaven **Begins at sundown on January 26*

January 29: Lunar New Year (Confucianism, Taoism, Buddhism) – Celebration of a start of the new lunar cycle

February 2: Imbolc (Pagan/Wiccan) – Marks the beginning of Spring **Begins sundown of February 1*

February 2: Vasant Panchami (Hinduism) – Holy day dedicated to Goddess Saraswati

February 26: Maha Shivratri (Hinduism) – Festival celebrated in honor of the god Shiva **Fasting*

March 1–30: Ramadan (Islam) – Commemoration of the Prophet Muhammad receiving divine revelation as recorded in the Qur'an **Begins evening of February 28, fasting dawn until sundown*

March 1-19: Nineteen Day Fast (Bahá'í Faith) – Fast observed by Bahá'í adults **Fasting*

March 3: Clean Monday/Ash Monday (Orthodox Christianity) – Start of Lent for Orthodox Christians

March 5: Ash Wednesday (Christianity) – Beginning of Lent **Fasting*

March 13: Ta'anit Esther (Judaism) – Fast of Esther **Minor fasting when sun up*

March 14: Purim (Judaism) – Festival of Lots **Begins sundown March 13*

March 14: Holi (Hinduism) – Festival of Colors **Fasting*

March 19th: Ostara (Pagan, Wiccan) - Honors the awakening of the Earth, balance, renewal, and rebirth.

March 22: Nowruz (Zoroastrianism and Bahá'í Faith) – Persian New Year **Begins in the evening of March 21*

March 30: Magha Puja Day (Buddhism) – Celebration of Lord Buddha's teaching to an assembly

March 31: Eid al-Fitr (Islam) – Festival that marks the ending of Ramadan **Begins evening of March 30*

April 13: Palm Sunday (Orthodox Christianity) – Celebration of Jesus' entrance into Jerusalem

April 13-20: Holy Week (Orthodox Christianity) – The week of Holy Days before Easter

April 10: Mahavir Jayanti (Jainism) – Celebration of the birth of the founder of Jainism

April 10: Ta'anit Bechorot (Judaism) – Fast of the First Born **Fasting*

April 13-20: Passover (Judaism) – Festival of Freedom **Begins sundown on April 12, food restrictions all days, work restrictions 4/12 sundown - 4/14 sundown & 4/18 sundown - 4/20 sundown*

April 13: Palm Sunday (Christianity) – Celebration of Jesus' entrance into Jerusalem

April 13-20: Holy Week (Christianity)– The week of Holy Days before Easter

April 17: Holy Thursday (Orthodox Christianity) – Commemoration of Jesus' Last Supper

April 18: Good Friday (Orthodox Christianity) – Commemoration of the crucifixion of Jesus **Fasting*

April 14: Vaisakhi (Sikhism) – Celebration of the formation of the religious community of Sikhs by Guru Gobind Singh

April 17: Holy Thursday (Christianity) – Commemoration of Jesus' Last Supper

April 18: Good Friday (Christianity) – Commemoration of the crucifixion of Jesus **Fasting*

April 20: Easter (Christianity) – Celebration of the Resurrection of Jesus

April 20: Easter (Orthodox Christianity)– Celebration of the Resurrection of Jesus

April 21– May 2: Ridvan (Bahá'í Faith) – Commemoration of when the founder of the Bahá'í Faith declared his mission **Begins evening April 20, Work restrictions 4/20 sundown - 4/21 sundown, 4/28 sundown - 4/29 sundown, 5/1 sundown - 5/2 sundown*

May 1: Beltane (Wicca, Paganism) – Festival of Light honoring fertility and creation **Begins at sundown April 30*

May 5: Buddha's Birthday (Buddhism) **This holiday is celebrated on different dates by different cultures and regions (usually in April or May)*

May 23: Declaration of the Bab (Bahá'í Faith) – Celebration of Ali Muhammad's announcement that he was the "gate" to the promised coming of all religions **Begins evening May 22, Work restrictions*

May 29: Ascension of Bahá'u'lláh (Bahá'í Faith) – Commemoration of the death of Bahá u'lláh the founder of the Bahá'í Faith **Begins evening May 28, Work restrictions*

May 29: Ascension (Christianity) – Commemoration of the ascension of Jesus into heaven

June 2-3: Shavuot (Judaism) – Festival of Receiving the Torah **Begins sundown on June 1, work restriction starts sundown June 3.*

June 7: Eid al-Adha (Islam) – the Festival of Sacrifice, honoring Abraham's willingness to offer his son to God **Begins sundown of June 6, work restrictions*

June 8: Pentecost (Christianity)- 50 days after Easter, commemorating the descent of the Holy Spirit

June 20: Litha Sabbat (Pagan, Wiccan) - Celebration honoring the Summer Solstice and the peak of light.

June 27: Muharram (Islam) – Islamic calendar new year **Begins evening of June 26*

July 5: Ashura (Islam) – Commemoration of martyrdom of Hussein, a grandson of the Prophet Muhammad, and when Moses fasted in gratitude for the liberation of the Israelites **Begins at sundown July 4, fasting*

July 9: Martyrdom of The Báb (Bahá'í Faith) – the memorial of the execution of The Báb **Work restriction*

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