

## 2018 MULTIFAITH CALENDAR

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

MONTH	DAY & DATE	HOLY DAY OR FESTIVAL	RELIGION
January	Tue 2 – Thurs 4	Mahayana New Year **	Buddhism
	The Buddhist New Year depends on the country of origin or ethnic background of the people. In Mahayana countries the new year starts on the first full moon day in January. It is a time to reflect on the past and cleanse oneself from the prior year's sins to make a fresh start.		
	Friday 5	Birthday of Guru Gobind Singh Ji	Sikhism
	Guru Gobind Singh (1666-1708), the 10th and final Sikh master, created the Khalsa (the Community of the Pure) and declared the Scriptures (Guru Granth Sahib) to be the Sikh's Guru from that time on.		
	Saturday 6	Epiphany	Christianity
	Signifying the end of the 12 days of Christmas, Epiphany celebrates the visit of the Three Kings to the infant Jesus as the occasion of the manifestation of the Christ to the gentiles.		
	Sunday 7	Nativity/Theophany [Orthodox]	Christianity
	Theophany commemorates the baptism of Jesus and the manifestation of the Trinity.		
	Saturday 13	Maghi	Sikhism
	Maghi commemorate the sacrifice of the Chali Mukte (the Forty Liberated Ones), who sacrificed their own lives defending an attack by the imperial army in pursuit of Guru Gobind Singh. This took place in Khidrane di Dhab, on 29 December 1705.		
February	Feb 19 – Mar 30	Great Lent [Orthodox]	Christianity
	Great Lent is the period of 40 days which comes before Easter, traditionally a time of fasting and reflection. The 40 days represents the time Jesus spent in the desert overcoming temptation by Satan. In the Orthodox Church, Great Lent starts on <i>Clean Monday</i> and ends on the Friday before <i>Lazarus Saturday</i> and <i>Palm Sunday</i> .		
	Feb 14 – Mar 29	Lent begins on Ash Wednesday	Christianity
	Lent is the period of 40 days (not including Sundays) which comes before Easter, traditionally a time of fasting and reflection. The 40 days represents the time Jesus spent in the desert overcoming temptation by Satan. In Western Christianity, it begins on <i>Ash Wednesday</i> and ends on <i>Maundy Thursday</i> .		

	<b>Wednesday 14</b>	<b>MahaShivaratri **</b>	<b>Hinduism</b>
	MahaShivaratri (or the 'Great Night of Shiva') is a festival celebrated with devotion and religious fervour in honour of the Hindu deity Lord Shiva, one of the deities of the Hindu Trinity.		
	<b>Thursday 15</b>	<b>Nirvana Day ** (or February 8)</b>	<b>Buddhism</b>
	Nirvana Day (or Parinirvana Day) is a Mahayana holiday which celebrates the day when the Buddha is said to have achieved Parinirvana (complete enlightenment) upon the death of his physical body.		
	<b>Friday 16</b>	<b>Chinese New Year</b>	<b>Buddhism</b>
	Chinese New Year (also called the Lunar New Year and the Spring Festival) is the most important holiday in China and for Chinese people around the world. Celebrated by Buddhist, Confucian, and Taoist practitioners.		
<b>March</b>	<b>Thursday 1</b>	<b>Purim *</b>	<b>Judaism</b>
	Commemorates the time when the Jewish people living in Persia were saved from extermination by the courage of a young Jewish woman, Queen Esther. Preceded by the Fast of Esther, Purim is a joyous holiday. Begins at sundown.		
	<b>Friday 2</b>	<b>Holi**</b>	<b>Hinduism</b>
	A joyous spring Hindu festival that is dedicated to Krishna in some parts of India; in other parts of India, it is dedicated to Kama, the God of Pleasure. People throw colored water or colored powder in celebration.		
	<b>Saturday 3</b>	<b>Hola Mohalla</b>	<b>Sikhism</b>
	An annual festival started by Guru Gobind Singh, the 10 <sup>th</sup> Sikh Guru, as a gathering of Sikhs for military exercises and mock battles.		
	<b>Wednesday 21</b>	<b>Naw Ruz *</b>	<b>Baha'i</b>
	Naw Ruz is the Baha'i New Year which coincides with the vernal equinox. The inception of the Baha'i calendar was on 21 March 1844 CE with the declaration of the Bab, the Prophet-Herald of the Baha'i Faith.		
	<b>25 Mar – 1 April</b>	<b>Holy Week</b>	<b>Christianity</b>
	Holy week is the last week before Easter. It begins with <i>Palm Sunday</i> (commemoration of the triumphal entry of Jesus Christ into Jerusalem) and includes <i>Maundy Thursday</i> (commemoration of the first Lord's Supper), <i>Good Friday</i> (commemoration of the suffering and crucifixion of Jesus Christ), and finishes on <i>Easter Sunday</i> (the resurrection of Jesus Christ following his death by crucifixion).		
	<b>Monday 26</b>	<b>Rama Navami **</b>	<b>Hinduism</b>
	Hindu festival celebrating the birth of Lord Rama, the seventh incarnation of the Hindu God Vishnu and hero of the religious epic poem 'The Ramayana'.		
	<b>Friday 30</b>	<b>Good/Holy Friday</b>	<b>Christianity</b>
	Commemoration of the suffering and crucifixion of Jesus Christ		
	<b>Saturday 31</b>	<b>Magha Puja Day / Sangha Day **</b>	<b>Buddhism</b>
	Celebration of the presentation of teachings by the Buddha to a spontaneous gathering of 1250 arahants (holy men). Also known as 'Great Assembly Day' or 'Sangha Day'.		

<b>March</b>	<b>Mar 31 – 7 April</b>	<b>Pesach *</b>	<b>Judaism</b>
	An eight day festival for families and communities to remember the time when Hebrew slaves were led by Moses out of Egypt to freedom. The festival begins with the Seder meal during which time the story of their deliverance is told. The first and last two days are holidays.		
<b>April</b>	<b>Sunday 1</b>	<b>Easter</b>	<b>Christianity</b>
	The resurrection of Jesus Christ following his death by crucifixion.		
	<b>Sunday 8</b>	<b>Easter/Pascha [Orthodox]</b>	<b>Christianity</b>
	The resurrection of Jesus Christ following his death by crucifixion.		
	<b>Thursday 12</b>	<b>Yom HaShoah *</b>	<b>Judaism</b>
	Yom HaShoah (Holocaust Remembrance Day) is a day set aside to remember the six million Jews who died as victims of the Nazis during World War II and emphasizes respect for human dignity. Observed by many people of Jewish and other faiths.		
	<b>Friday 13</b>	<b>Lailat al Miraj *</b>	<b>Islam</b>
	Observance of Prophet Muhammad's night journey from Mecca to Jerusalem and his ascension (al Miraj) to heaven and return the same night. Also known as 'Night of Journey' (al Isra).		
	<b>Saturday 14</b>	<b>Baisakhi</b>	<b>Sikhism</b>
	Baisakhi (Vaisakhi) marks the founding of the Khalsa (the Brotherhood of the Pure) in 1699 CE by Guru Gobind Singh. The Khalsa is the collective body of all baptised Sikhs who carry the five articles of the faith - Kesh (uncut hair), Kirpan (ceremonial sword), Kara (steel bracelet), Kanga (comb) and Kaccha (undershorts).		
	<b>Apr 21 – May 2</b>	<b>Ridvan *</b>	<b>Baha'i</b>
	Baha'i commemoration of the twelve-day period that Baha'u'llah, the founder of the Baha'i faith, spent in the Garden of Ridvan in the last days of his exile in Baghdad, and publicly proclaimed His mission as God's messenger for this age. The first, ninth and twelfth days are celebrated as holy days and work is suspended.		
	<b>Sunday 29</b>	<b>Vesak / Buddha Day</b>	<b>Buddhism</b>
	Vesak (Wesak) is the major Buddhist festival. It celebrates the birth, enlightenment and death of the Buddha on the one day. Also known as 'Vishakha Puja' or 'Buddha's Day'. The dates of this celebration vary significantly among Buddhist cultures and communities.		
	<b>30 Apr – 2 May</b>	<b>Theravada New Year</b>	<b>Buddhism</b>
	The Buddhist New Year depends on the country of origin or ethnic background of the people. In Theravadin countries (i.e. Thailand, Burma, Sri Lanka, Cambodia and Lao) the new year is celebrated for three days from the first full moon day in April.		
<b>May</b>	<b>Tuesday 1</b>	<b>Lailat al Bara'ah *</b>	<b>Islam</b>
	On this night, God approaches the Earth to call humanity and to grant forgiveness of sins. Shia and Sunni interpretations may vary on the meaning of this date.		

<b>May</b>	<b>May 16 – Jun 14</b>	<b>Ramadan * (**)</b>	<b>Islam</b>
	The holy month of Ramadan begins with the first light of dawn commemorating the revelation of the Qur'an to the Prophet Muhammad. Throughout this month Muslims fast during daylight hours, celebrate an evening meal with family and friends, pray fervently and show charity to the poor.		
	<b>Wednesday 20</b>	<b>Pentecost</b>	<b>Christianity</b>
	Pentecost commemorates the descent of the Holy Spirit upon the disciples of Jesus seven weeks (50 days) after the Resurrection (Easter). It also commemorates the founding of the Christian Church, which begins on this day.		
	<b>Sun 20 – Mon 21</b>	<b>Shavuot *</b>	<b>Judaism</b>
	Shavuot, also known as Feast of Weeks, commemorates the anniversary of the day God gave the Torah and Commandments to the entire nation of Israel assembled at Mount Sinai. Marks the conclusion of the seven weeks following Pesach. Originally a harvest festival.		
	<b>Thursday 24</b>	<b>Declaration of the Bab *</b>	<b>Baha'i</b>
	The Baha'i commemorates when the Bab, the herald of the Baha'i Faith, announced in Shiraz, Persia (now Iran), that he was the herald of a new messenger of God.		
	<b>Tuesday 29</b>	<b>Ascension of Baha'ullah *</b>	<b>Baha'i</b>
	Baha'is observe the anniversary of the death in exile of Baha'u'llah, the founder of the Baha'i faith, on May 29, 1892, outside Akko (now northern Israel).		
<b>June</b>	<b>Monday 11</b>	<b>Lailat al Qadr *</b>	<b>Islam</b>
	First revelation of Qur'an (Islamic scriptures) to Prophet Muhammad in 610 CE. Also known as 'Night of Power' or 'Night of Destiny'. Observed during the last ten days of Ramadan.		
	<b>Saturday 16</b>	<b>Martyrdom of Guru Arjun Dev Ji</b>	<b>Sikhism</b>
	Guru Arjan Dev (1563-1606), the 5th Guru, was the first martyr-guru. He was responsible for the compilation of the Sikh scriptures in 1604 CE. He also helped to build the Golden Temple at Amritsar and emphasized that the Sikh way was open to all, regardless of caste.		
	<b>Fri 15 – Sun 17</b>	<b>Eid ul Fitr *</b>	<b>Islam</b>
	An important religious holiday celebrated by Muslims worldwide that celebrates the end of Ramadan, the Islamic holy month of fasting. Also known as the festival of the 'Breaking of the Fast'.		
<b>July</b>	<b>Tuesday 10</b>	<b>Martyrdom of the Bab *</b>	<b>Baha'i</b>
	Baha'i commemoration of the anniversary of the execution of the Bab (Siyyid 'Ali-Muhammad), the herald of the Baha'i Faith, by a firing squad on July 9 1850, in Tabriz, Persia (now Iran).		
	<b>Sunday 22</b>	<b>Tisha B'Av *</b>	<b>Judaism</b>

	Tisha B'av (Fast of Av) is a day of mourning to remember events such as the destruction of the First Temple and Second Temple in Jerusalem.		
	<b>Friday 27</b>	<b>Ashala Puja / Dharma Day **</b>	<b>Buddhism</b>
	Asalha Puja commemorates Buddha's first teaching (the Wheel of Dharma) and is recognized as the beginning of Buddhism. Also known as 'Dharma/Dhamma Day'.		
<b>August</b>	<b>Wednesday 15</b>	<b>Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary</b>	<b>Christianity</b>
	Commemorates the assumption of Mary, mother of Jesus, into heaven.		
	<b>Wed 22 – Sat 25</b>	<b>Eid Al Adha *</b>	<b>Islam</b>
	Commemorates Ibrahim's (Abraham) willingness to sacrifice his son as an act of submission to God's command. Also known as 'Feast of Sacrifice'. One of the two main Islamic festivals (the other being Eid al Fitr).		
	<b>Sunday 26</b>	<b>Raksha Bandhan **</b>	<b>Hinduism</b>
	Also known as Rakhi, this Hindu festival celebrates brotherhood and love; the festival is popularly used to celebrate any brother-sister like relationship between men and women who are relatives or biologically unrelated.		
<b>September</b>	<b>Monday 3</b>	<b>Krishna Janmashtami **</b>	<b>Hinduism</b>
	Krishna Janmashtami (or Jayanti) is the annual commemoration of the birth of the Hindu deity Krishna, the eighth avatar of the God Vishnu. Worship of Krishna is characteristically expressed in dance and song.		
	<b>Mon 10 – Tue 11</b>	<b>Rosh Hashanah *</b>	<b>Judaism</b>
	Jewish New Year festival, marked by the blowing of the horn (shofar) which begins the ten days of penitence culminating in Yom Kippur (Day of Atonement). It is the beginning of the holiest time of the year for Jews, and the anniversary of the creation of the world.		
	<b>Tuesday 11</b>	<b>Hijra *</b>	<b>Islam</b>
	The Islamic year is marked by the event known as Hijra which occurred in 622 CE, when the Prophet Muhammad's migrated from Mecca to Medina, where the first Islamic community was established.		
	<b>Thursday 13</b>	<b>Ganesh Chaturthi **</b>	<b>Hinduism</b>
	Ganesh Chaturthi is a Hindu festival celebrating the birthday of Lord Ganesh, one of the major Hindu deities. Ganesh has the head of an elephant and is known as the remover of obstacles.		
	<b>Wednesday 19</b>	<b>Yom Kippur *</b>	<b>Judaism</b>
	Yom Kippur, also known as Day of Atonement, is the holiest day of the year for the Jewish people, characterized by repentance and forgiveness. Jewish people traditionally observe this holy day with fasting and intensive prayer, often spending most of the day in synagogue services.		

<b>September</b>	<b>Mon 24 – Sun 30</b>	<b>Sukkot *</b>	<b>Judaism</b>
	Sukkot, also known as the Feast of Booths, is an eight day Jewish festival of giving thanks for the fall harvest. The name refers to the booths (sukkot) used by Israelites during the 40 years of wandering in the desert after the giving of the Torah atop Mt Sinai. Sukkot is celebrated 5 days after Yom Kippur.		
<b>October</b>	<b>Tuesday 2</b>	<b>Simchat Torah</b>	<b>Judaism</b>
	Simchat Torah is a joyous festival in which the annual cycle of reading the Torah is over, and the cycle begins again for the year. The celebration typically includes singing, dancing, and marching with Torah scrolls. Begins after Sukkot ends.		
	<b>Wed 9 – Wed 17</b>	<b>Navaratri **</b>	<b>Hinduism</b>
	Navaratri, which literally means ‘nine nights’, is a festival honouring the Goddess/Divine Mother and her energy/power (Shakti). This nine day festival includes worshipping and dancing as people celebrate various aspects of the feminine.		
	<b>Friday 19</b>	<b>Dussehra</b>	<b>Hinduism</b>
	Dussehra (Vijaya Dashami, Dasara) is a Hindu festival that celebrates the victory of good over evil. People celebrate Dussehra through special prayer meetings and food offerings to the gods at home or in temples.		
	<b>Saturday 20</b>	<b>Conferment of Guruship to Guru Granth Sahib</b>	<b>Sikhism</b>
	This day celebrates Guru Gobind Singh Ji's (10th Guru) passing on guruship to the holy scriptures, henceforth known as the Guru Granth Sahib. The Guru Granth Sahib, comprising of 1430 pages of hymns, presides the most prominent place and shines the light of Truth to all Sikhs or devotees who seek it.		
<b>November</b>	<b>Thursday 1</b>	<b>All Saints Day</b>	<b>Christianity</b>
	All Saints Day honours exemplary Christians who achieved sainthood, especially those not having a special day. For many Christian denominations, all Saints Day is a remembrance of departed Christian people of any time and place.		
	<b>Wednesday 7</b>	<b>Diwali **</b>	<b>Hinduism</b>
	Diwali, also known as Festival of Lights, is one of the most celebrated Hindu festivals, commemorating the victory of good over evil. Diwali means ‘row of lamps/lights’ and refers to the rows of lamps celebrants place around their homes or on top of temples.		
	<b>Friday 9</b>	<b>Birth of the Bab *</b>	<b>Baha’i</b>
	The anniversary of the birth in 1819 CE in Shiraz, Persia (now Iran), of Siyyid ‘Ali-Muhammad, who later took the title of ‘the Bab’, meaning ‘the Gate’. The Bab was the herald of the Baha’i faith.		
	<b>Friday 9</b>	<b>Bandi Chhor Divas (Diwali)</b>	<b>Sikhism</b>
	Bandi Chhor Divas, also known as ‘The Celebration of Freedom’, commemorates the release in 1619 CE from prison of the sixth Sikh guru, Sri Guru Hargobind Ji. Sikhs continue this annual celebration with lamps being lit outside gurdwaras and sweets distributed to all.		

<b>November</b>	<b>Saturday 10</b>	<b>Birth of Baha'ullah *</b>	<b>Baha'i</b>
	The anniversary of the birth of Baha'u'llah (born Mirza Husayn-'Ali) in 1817 CE in Tehran, Persia (now Iran). Baha'u'llah, which means the 'Glory of God', is the founder of the Baha'i faith.		
	<b>Friday 23</b>	<b>Birth of Guru Nanak Dev Sahib Ji</b>	<b>Sikhism</b>
	Observes the birth of Guru Sri Guru Nanak Dev Sahib, the founder of the Sikh religion, born in 1469 CE. An accomplished poet, 974 of his hymns are part of the Guru Granth Sahib.		
	<b>Saturday 24</b>	<b>Martyrdom of Guru Tegh Bahadur Ji</b>	<b>Sikhism</b>
	Guru Tegh Bahadur (1621-1675) was the 9th Guru of the Sikhs. He was publicly beheaded by the emperor of the day in 1675 for his defense of the Sikh faith and for upholding the right to practice religious freedom.		
<b>December</b>	<b>Sun 2 – Mon 24</b>	<b>Advent</b>	<b>Christianity</b>
	Advent is the period leading up to Christmas. It begins on the fourth Sunday before Christmas (Advent Sunday) and continues through to December 24th (Christmas Eve). In Western churches, Advent Sunday marks the beginning of the Christian liturgical year.		
	<b>Mon 3 – Mon 10</b>	<b>Hanukkah *</b>	<b>Judaism</b>
	Hanukkah (Chanukah), also known as the Feast of Lights, is an eight day festival commemorating the recapture and rededication of the Temple in Jerusalem over occupying forces in 165 BCE.		
	<b>Saturday 8</b>	<b>Bodhi Day **</b>	<b>Buddhism</b>
	Bodhi Day is a Buddhist holiday commemorating the day the historical Buddha, Siddhartha Gautama reached enlightenment around 596 BCE. Prince Gautama took his place under the Bodhi tree vowing to remain there until he attained supreme enlightenment.		
	<b>Monday 25</b>	<b>Christmas</b>	<b>Christianity</b>
	Christmas is the celebration of the birth of Jesus Christ, who is considered by Christians to be the Son of God, and the savior of all people.		

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

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

## *Promoting a Harmonious Multifaith Victoria*

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