Interfaith Holidays Calendar, Academic Year 2026-2027

prepared by the Interfaith Cooperation Committee

The Interfaith Calendar has been prepared by the Interfaith Cooperation Committee (IFCC) to further Lewis University's commitment to association and to a spirit of fidelity and ecumenical openness in the search for meaning. The Interfaith Calendar is a reflection of and contribution to Lewis University as a community that welcomes and values all faith traditions and worldviews. The Interfaith Calendar is *not* an official designation of spiritual or religious holidays observed by Lewis University; rather, this calendar is meant to be an educational resource for the Lewis community.

This calendar provides a reference point for celebrations, holidays, or spiritual engagements that Lewis community members may observe during the academic year. The list provided is not exhaustive, and we recognize that inclusivity requires our ongoing, active commitment to both learning and labor. IFCC welcomes additions and edits by emailing Dr. Elizabeth Sartell (esartell@lewisu.edu). We appreciate your work to educate us as we work to enrich our campus community. Thank you!

KEY TO SYMBOLS:

– **holiday is based on the lunar calendar and depends on lunar sightings and calculations**
Therefore, dates provided with this symbol are only approximate.

– **holiday begins at sundown the first day and ends at sundown the last day**

– **fasting is often required**
Consider hosting events without food on this date.

– **dietary restrictions may be applicable for these holidays or faith traditions**
Some dietary restrictions are always applicable (e.g., some Jewish people always keep kosher) but some are holiday-specific (e.g., Catholic or Orthodox Christians may abstain from meat on Fridays in Lent). Consider hosting events with religious dietary restrictions in mind throughout the year, but particularly on these holidays. Examples of faith-related dietary restrictions include: many Muslims eat halal food; many Jews eat kosher food; many Buddhists, Hindus, and Sikhs are vegetarian; etc.

– **religious obligations may be required, such as attendance at services, rituals, or community events**
Take into consideration that these holidays may interfere with submitting major assignments or attendance in class or at work.

For more information, click the name of each holiday to link to its description.

Date	Holiday (and associated religious or faith tradition)
August 1, 2026	Lughnasa (Pagan)
August 25, 2026	Mawlid al-Nabi (*Birthday of the Prophet Muhammad*) (Islam) *note that this follows the Sunni calendar; many Shi'i Muslims celebrate on **September 9-10, 2026**.*
August 28, 2026	Raksha Bandhan (Hinduism)
September 1, 2026	Birth of the Guru Granth Sahib Scripture (Sikhism) *note that the installation of the scripture as eternal guru is celebrated Oct 20; the first parkash (illumination day) of the scripture is often observed on Sept 1.*
September 11 to September 13, 2026	Rosh Hashanah (Judaism) *Rosh Hashanah begins the Ten Days of Repentance, which concludes with Yom Kippur. Note that only the first two days (Rosh Hashanah) and the last (Yom Kippur) are High Holidays. Fasting is only required on some of these ten days, and is sometimes observed the day before Rosh Hashanah begins as well.*

September 14 to September 25, 2026	Ganesh Chaturthi (Hinduism) *note that religious obligations are usually at the start (first day) or tenth day of the holiday (known as Anant Chaturdashi)*
September 20 to September 21, 2026	Yom Kippur (Judaism)
September 22, 2026	Autumnal Equinox / Ostra Mabon (Secular / Humanist / Wiccan / Pagan)
September 25 to October 2, 2026	Sukkot (Judaism) *note that some Jews follow religious requirements prohibiting work on the first two days of Sukkot*
October 2 to October 4, 2026	Shemini Atzeret (Judaism)
October 3 to October 4, 2026	Simchat Torah (Judaism)
October 11 to October 19, 2026	Navaratri (Hinduism) *note that some Hindus fast to celebrate, while others hold feasts*
October 31, 2026	Reformation Day (Protestant Christianity)
October 31, 2026	Samhain (Pagan)
November 1, 2026	All Saints' Day (Catholic Christianity)
November 2, 2026	All Souls' Day (Catholic Christianity)
November 6 to November 10, 2026	Diwali (Hinduism) *note that the Diwali is celebrated in particular on **November 8, 2026***
November 8, 2026	Bandi Chor Diwas (Sikhism)
November 24, 2026	Guru Nanak Jayanti (Birthday of Guru Nanak Dev Ji) (Sikhism)
November 24, 2026	Martyrdom of Guru Tegh Bahadur Sahib (Sikhism)
November 28, 2026, to January 6, 2027	Nativity Fast (Orthodox Christianity)
December 4, 2026 to December 12, 2026	Hanukkah (Judaism)
December 8, 2026	Bodhi Day (Buddhism) *note that this is the date Bodhi Day is celebrated in Japan and in most Western countries; the celebration of Bodhi day based on the lunar calendar will vary*
December 8, 2026	Feast of the Immaculate Conception (Catholic Christianity)
December 12, 2026	Feast of Our Lady of Guadalupe (Catholic Christianity)
December 21, 2026	Winter Solstice / Yule (Secular / Humanist / Wiccan / Pagan)
December 25, 2026	Christmas (Catholic and Protestant Christianity)
December 26, 2026 to January 1, 2027	Kwanzaa (African-American and pan-African)
January 1, 2027	Solemnity of Mary, Mother of God (Catholic Christianity)
January 6, 2027	Epiphany (Catholic Christianity)

January 6, 2027	Theophany (Orthodox Christianity)
January 7, 2027	Christmas (Orthodox Christianity)
January 13 to January 14, 2027	Maghi & Lohri (Sikhism and Hinduism)
January 15, 2027	Guru Gobind Singh Ji Jayanti (*Birthday of Gobind Singh*) (Sikhism)
January 15, 2027	Lunar Bodhi Day (Buddhism) *note: this is the date celebrated based on the lunar calendar;* *Bodhi day is celebrated in Japan and in most Western countries on* ***December 8***
January 18 to January 25, 2027	Week of Prayer for Christian Unity (Christianity)
February 1, 2027	Imbolc (Pagan)
February 8 to March 9, 2027	Ramadan (Islam)
February 10 to March 25, 2027	Ash Wednesday & Lent (Catholic and Protestant Christianity)
February 15, 2027	Parinirvana Day (Buddhism)
March 5 to March 6, 2027	Laylat al-Qadr (Islam)
March 6, 2027	Maha Shivaratri (Hinduism)
March 9 to March 10, 2027	Eid al-Fitr (and end of Ramadan) (Islam)
March 15 to May 1, 2027	Great Lent (Orthodox Christianity)
March 20, 2027	Spring (Vernal) Equinox / Ostara (Secular / Humanist / Wiccan / Pagan)
March 22 to March 23, 2027	Purim (Judaism)
March 22, 2027	Holi (Hinduism)
March 23 to March 25, 2027	Hola Mohalla (Sikhism)
March 26, 2027	Good Friday (Catholic and Protestant Christianity)
March 28, 2027	Easter (and end of Lent) (Catholic and Protestant Christianity)
April 1 to April 4, 2026	Paschal Triduum (Catholic Christianity)
April 7, 2027	Feast Day of St. John Baptist de La Salle (Catholic Christianity)
April 14, 2027	Vaisakhi (Sikhism)
April 15, 2027	Rama Navami (Hinduism)
April 18, 2027	Guru Angad Dev Ji Jayanti (*Birthday of Angad Dev*) (Sikhism)

April 20, 2027	Hanuman Jayanti (*Birthday of Hanuman*) (Hinduism) *note: may also be celebrated on **January 7, 2027**, especially in places such as Tamil and Malayali, or on other days depending on region*
April 21 to April 28, 2027	Passover (Pesach) (Judaism)
May 1, 2027	Beltane (Pagan)
May 2, 2027	Pascha (Easter) (Orthodox Christianity)
May 3 to May 4, 2027	Yom Ha-Shoah (Holocaust Remembrance Day) (Judaism)
May 6, 2027	Feast of the Ascension of Jesus Christ (Catholic Christianity)
May 13, 2027	Buddha's Birthday (Buddhism)
May 14 to May 16, 2027	Day of Arafa (Islam)
May 15 to May 20, 2027	Hajj (Islam) *Note: Not all Muslims perform hajj every year.*
May 16, 2027	Pentecost Sunday (Catholic Christianity)
May 16 to May 17, 2027	Eid al-Adha (Islam) *In the US, Eid al-Adha is generally observed on one day, but Eid can be a 3 or 4-day celebration in other countries.*
May 20, 2027	Vesak (Buddhism) *Note: Exact date may vary according to country*
June 5 to June 6, 2027	Islamic New Year (Islam)
June 10 to June 12, 2027	Shavuot (Judaism)
June 14 to June 15, 2027	Ashura (Islam)
June 16, 2027	Martyrdom of Guru Arjan Dev Sahib (Sikhism) *Note: May alternatively be celebrated on **June 18, 2026** in some regions*
June 21, 2027	Summer Solstice / Litha (Secular / Humanist / Wiccan / Pagan)
July 18, 2027	Asalha Puja (*Dhamma Day*) (Buddhism)

Holiday Descriptions

Note: descriptions are listed in alphabetical order, not by date (given above) as those may vary year-to-year
Click the name of each holiday to link to its date on the calendar above.

All Saints' Day (Catholic Christianity)

Also called the "Solemnity of All Saints," this holiday celebrates all saints in heaven, both known and unknown. It is a holy day of obligation in the Roman Catholic Church in the US. It is followed by All Souls' Day.

All Souls' Day (Catholic Christianity)

All Souls' Day is a day of prayer and remembrance that commemorates all those who have passed away. This feast day follows All Saints' Day (which celebrates those who are in heaven). All Souls' Day turns to pray for those who are in purgatory awaiting their entrance into heaven.

Asalha Puja (Buddhism)
Also known as “Dhamma Day,” this festival commemorates the Buddha's first sermon—the first teaching of the dhamma—after attaining enlightenment. This holiday is associated with Theravada Buddhism.

Ash Wednesday & Lent (Christianity)
Ash Wednesday is the first day of Lent, the season of penitence, prayer, and fasting before Easter. Many Catholic or Orthodox Christians will fast and abstain from meat on Ash Wednesday and on all Fridays during Lent.

Ashura (Islam)
Ashura is the 10th day of Muharram, the first month in the Islamic calendar year. Many Sunni Muslims celebrate Ashura as a commemoration of God's deliverance of Moses and the Israelites. For Shi'i Muslims, Ashura commemorates the martyrdom of Husayn ibn Ali, the grandson of the Prophet Muhammad, in the Battle of Karbala.

Autumnal Equinox / Ostra Mabon (Secular/Humanist/Wiccan/Pagan)
The Autumnal Equinox is one of two days in the calendar year when day and night hours are almost equal to one another; it is also the first day of Autumn, or Fall, on the Gregorian calendar.

Bandi Chor Diwas (Sikhism)
Bandi Shor Divas (often translated as the “Day of Liberation”) is celebrated by Sikhs on the same day as the Hindu observance of Diwali. This is the occasion of the return of Guru Hargobind Sahib Ji, the sixth Guru, who was released from prison in 1619. About the time of Diwali, which has long been a national holiday in India, Guru Ji returned home to his followers.

Beltane (Celtic Neopaganism)
Celebration on May 1 that honors fertility, fire, and the blossoming of life, marking the midpoint between spring and summer with rituals of vitality, protection, and renewal.

Birth of the Guru Granth Sahib Scripture (Sikhism)
This holiday commemorates the ‘birthday’ and installation of the Living Guru of Sikhism, “Sri Guru Granth Sahib” (the central holy scripture of the Sikh religion).

Bodhi Day (Buddhism)
“Bodhi” means “enlightenment” in Sanskrit; this holiday celebrates the enlightenment of Gautama Buddha. It is associated with Mahayana Buddhism. (The enlightenment of the Buddha is commemorated as part of the holiday of Vesak in Theravada and Tibetan Buddhism.) *Note that Bodhi Day is celebrated either based on the lunar calendar (in many countries around the world) or on a fixed calendar on December 8 (as in Japan and in most Western countries). Both dates are included on the calendar above.*

Buddha’s Birthday (Buddhism)
Also known as Buddha Purnima, this is a celebration of the birth of Siddhartha Gautama, or Gautama Buddha, around 563-480 BCE. Gautama Buddha is the spiritual teacher and founder of Buddhism. This celebration is associated with Mahayana Buddhism and the practice of Buddhism in East Asia. (The birth of the Buddha is commemorated as part of the holiday of Vesak in much of South and Southeast Asia, in Theravada and Tibetan Buddhism.)

Christmas (Christianity)
Also known as the “Feast of the Nativity,” this holiday commemorates the birth of Jesus Christ, the Son of God, religious teacher, and founder of Christianity. *Note that Orthodox Christians celebrate Christmas on a different date than Catholic and Protestant Christians (as indicated on the calendar).*

Day of Arafa (Islam)

The Day of Arafah is an Islamic holiday that falls on the second day of the *hajj* pilgrimage. It is the holiest day in the Islamic calendar (the holiest night being Laylat al-Qadr). At dawn of this day, Muslim pilgrims on *hajj* will make their way from Mina to a nearby hillside and plain called Mount Arafah and the Plain of Arafah. It was from this site that Muhammad gave one of his last famous sermons in the final year of his life. Some Muslims hold that part of the Quranic verse announcing that the religion of Islam had been perfected was revealed on this day. It is recommended for Muslims who are not performing *hajj* to fast on this day.

Diwali (Hinduism)

Diwali is the Hindu "festival of lights" that celebrates the Hindu new year. It lasts five days and celebrates the triumph of good over evil. Hindus invite the goddess Lakshmi to their homes to bring abundance and well-being to their households for the next year. Diwali is often celebrated with fireworks and lights (to symbolize the victory of light over darkness), sweets, and colorful patterns called rangolis (made from sand, powder, rice, flowers, etc.).

Easter (Christianity)

Also called "Resurrection Sunday," this holiday celebrates the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, on the third day following his crucifixion. It is the culmination of the season of Lent.

Eid al-Adha (Islam)

Literally translating to the "Holiday (or Festival) of Sacrifice," this festival commemorates the faith and submission of the prophet Ibrahim (Abraham) in his willingness to sacrifice his son in accordance with God's command; however, God rewarded his faith and sent a ram to be sacrificed instead. Many Muslims celebrate with the sacrifice of a sheep, goat, or lamb and donate the meat as charity. This festival follows after the completion of the *hajj* pilgrimage.

Eid al-Fitr (Islam)

The celebration marks the end of the holy month of Ramadan. Translating to the "Holiday (or Festival) of Breaking the Fast," the festival marks the end of the month-long fasting from dawn to sunset.

Epiphany (Catholic Christianity)

This feast day commemorates the visit of the Magi to the baby Jesus, and Jesus' manifestation to the people of the world.

Feast Day of St. John Baptist de La Salle (Catholic Christianity)

St. John Baptist de La Salle was the founder of the Brothers of the Christian Schools. He dedicated much of his life to the education of children and the training of teachers, and as such, is the patron saint of teachers of youth and Christian teachers. The Lasallian tradition of Lewis University follows his example and mission.

Feast of the Ascension of Jesus Christ (Catholic Christianity)

Also known as "Ascension Thursday," this feast day celebrates the ascension of Jesus Christ into Heaven. It is a holy day of obligation in the Roman Catholic Church in the US.

Feast of the Assumption of Mary (Catholic Christianity)

This feast commemorates the bodily assumption of Mary, mother of Jesus Christ, into heaven. It is a holy day of obligation in the Roman Catholic Church in the US.

Feast of the Immaculate Conception (Catholic Christianity)

This feast celebrates the sinless conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary, conceived without original sin. It is a holy day of obligation in the Roman Catholic Church in the US.

Feast of Our Lady of Guadalupe (Catholic Christianity)

This feast commemorates a series of five apparitions of the Blessed Virgin Mary over December 9-12, 1531, four of which were to Saint Juan Diego, an Aztec convert to Catholicism, and one to his uncle, Juan Bernardino. The visions took place near the Hill of Tepeyac (later part of the Villa de Guadalupe, near Mexico City).

Ganesh Chaturthi (Hinduism)

A celebration of the birth of Ganesh (the god of wisdom and intellect, and the remover of obstacles), which may last 10 days. There is often a procession with an idol of Ganesh on the tenth day.

Good Friday (Christianity)

Also known as "Black Friday" or "Holy Friday," this holiday commemorates the crucifixion and death of Jesus Christ. Many Christians observe Good Friday with fasting, abstaining from meat, and prayer.

Guru Angad Dev Ji Jayanti (Birthday of Guru Angad Dev) (Sikhism)

This holiday commemorates the birthday of the second guru of Sikhism, Sri Guru Angad Dev Ji.

Guru Gobind Singh Ji Jayanti (Birthday of Gobind Singh) (Sikhism)

This holiday celebrates the birthday of the tenth (and last human) guru or founder of the Sikh religion, Sri Guru Gobind Singh Ji. Gobind Singh conferred permanent gurudom on the Granth Sahib scripture, naming it the final and eternal Guru of Sikhdom. The birthday is often celebrated with processions and singing, and with communal gatherings, prayer, and meals.

Guru Nanak Jayanti (Birthday of Guru Nanak Dev Ji) (Sikhism)

This holiday commemorates the birthday of the first guru and founder of Sikhism, Sri Guru Nanak Dev Ji. It is often celebrated with readings, music, and communal meals featuring sweet food like *karah prashad*.

Hajj (Islam)

Hajj is the Muslim pilgrimage to the Kaaba in Mecca, which happens annually over 5-6 days during Dhu al-Hijjah, the last month of the Islamic calendar.

Hanukkah (Judaism)

The eight-day celebration of Hanukkah (or the 'Festival of Lights'), commemorates the victory of the Maccabees and the rededication of the Temple in Jerusalem.

Hanuman Jayanti (Hinduism)

Hanuman Jayanti celebrates the birth of Lord Hanuman. Hanuman was the son of Anjana, a female spirit of the clouds and waters, and Desari, the chief of the *vanara*, a group of powerful monkey people who lived in the forests. The wind god Vayu also played a role in the conception and birth of Hanuman. Some texts identify Hanuman as an incarnation of Shiva, but Hanuman is best known for his role in the epic poem and sacred text the Ramayana, "Rama's Journey." Every spring, Hindus across the world visit temples and apply *sindoor*, a red pigment, to their foreheads.

Hola Mohalla (Sikhism)

This festival, which translates to "mock fight," is a 3-days long celebration of Sikh martial skills. Guru Gobind Singh started this festival as a day for Sikhs to practice their military exercises and hold mock battles.

Holi (Hinduism)

Also known as the "Festival of Colors," or the "Festival of Love," this holiday celebrates the triumph of good over evil, and the blossoming of life and love with the arrival of spring. The many colors used in celebration represent the beauty of the world.

Imbolc (Celtic Neopaganism)
Celebration around February 1 which marks the first signs of spring and honors the Celtic goddess Brigid with themes of renewal, inspiration, and returning light.

Islamic New Year (Islam)
Also called the Hijri New Year, this day marks the 1st day of Muharram, the first month in the Islamic calendar year.

Krishna Janmashtami (Hinduism)
This holiday commemorates the birth of Krishna (the eighth avatar of Vishnu, and the god of protection, love, and compassion).

Kwanzaa (African-American and pan-African)
Kwanzaa is an African-American and pan-African holiday that spans seven days (December 26 to January 1), first observed in 1966. It celebrates Black culture, community, and family. Each of the seven days is dedicated to one of the seven principles of Kwanzaa: unity, self-determination, collective work and responsibility, cooperative economics, purpose, creativity, and faith. Celebrations often include music, dance, song, poetry, and feasts.

Laylat al-Qadr (Islam)
Translating to the "Night of Power," this holiday commemorates the night during which the Qur'an was first revealed to the Prophet Muhammad. It is considered the holiest night in the Islamic calendar. Some Muslims spend the whole night in prayer to celebrate the revelation of the Qur'an.

Lughnasa (Celtic Neopaganism)
Celebration on August 1 that marks the beginning of the harvest season and honors the Celtic god Lugh with offerings of grain, bread, and community gatherings.

Maghi & Lohri (Sikhism and Hinduism)
Maghi marks the first day of the month of Magh, a day celebrated by both Sikhs and Hindus. It is especially important in the Punjab region of South Asia. For Sikhs, Maghi commemorates the martyred "40 Liberated Ones" (*Chali Mukte*), 40 Sikhs who had deserted the tenth guru Gobind Sing but who had later rejoined him and were killed in battled in Muktsar, Punjab, in 1705. Sikhs mark the day with recitations of scripture, bathing in holy water, acts of charity, and eating sweets like kheer. In Muktsar, the Sikh celebration takes place over 3 days, when Sikh pilgrims visit shrines and sites from the battle, and bathe in the sacred pools at Muktsar. For Hindus, Maghi is often celebrated by bathing in the Ganges or another river or body of water, by cleaning and decorating their homes, and by eating traditional food and sweets. The night of Lohri (or the winter festival marking the end of winter and passing of the winter solstice) is often observed the night before Maghi.

Maha Shivaratri (Hinduism)
This holiday is "the Great Night of Shiva," a major, solemn festival celebrating the god Shiva. It may be observed through fasting and all-night prayers and meditation.

Martyrdom of Guru Arjan Dev Sahib (Sikhism)
On June 16, each year, Sikhs commemorate the martyrdom of the Sikh Guru Arjan. Guru Arjan Dev Ji, the fifth Sikh guru (and first martyr), was tortured and killed by the Mughal Emperor Jahangir in 1606.

Martyrdom of Guru Tegh Bahadur Sahib (Sikhism)
The Day of Martyrdom of Guru Tegh Bahadur is observed as Shaheed Diwas every year. Guru Tegh Bahadur was publicly executed on November 24, 1675, on Mughal Emperor Aurangzeb's orders because he had resisted the religious persecution of Kashmiri Hindus. Guru Tegh Bahadur was the ninth of the ten gurus or founders of Sikhism.

Mawlid al-Nabi (Islam)
Literally translating to “the birthday of the Prophet,” this holiday is a celebration of the birth of Prophet Muhammad (around the year 570 CE).

Nativity Fast (Orthodox Christianity)
In Orthodox Christianity, the Nativity Fast, or the “Christmas Fast,” is a period of penitence, prayer, fasting, and abstaining from meat in preparation for Christmas.

Navaratri (Hinduism)
This festival lasts for nine days and celebrates the goddess Durga (worshipped as a mother goddess who protects the oppressed)'s battle and the triumph of good over evil. The nine avatars of Durga are celebrated over the nine days.

Onam (Hinduism)
Onam marks the first month of the Malayalam calendar known as Chingam. The festival commemorates the appearance of the Vamana avatar of Vishnu and the subsequent homecoming of the legendary King Mahabali. The celebrations of Onam start on Atham day (the day when Atham Nakshatra prevails) and continue for 10 days till Thiruvonam day, also the most auspicious day during the festival of Onam.

Parinirvana Day (Buddhism)
Also called “Nirvana Day,” this holiday celebrates the attainment of *parinirvana*, or the complete nirvana, by the Buddha after his physical death. It is associated with Mahayana Buddhism. (Buddha's attainment of complete nirvana is commemorated as part of the holiday of Vesak in Theravada and Tibetan Buddhism.)

Pascha (Easter) (Orthodox Christianity)
This holiday celebrates the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, on the third day following his crucifixion. Pascha is the “Feast of Feasts,” or the most important religious holiday, in Orthodox Christianity.

Paschal Triduum (Catholic Christianity)
The Three Days—sunset Holy Thursday to sunset Good Friday, sunset Good Friday to sunset Holy Saturday, and sunset Holy Saturday to sunset on Easter Sunday—are the holiest season of the Christian calendar for Catholics. These Three Days of Christian passover pivot from six weeks of prayer, fasting and almsgiving to seven weeks of celebration re-energized service and just-peacebuilding called Eastertime.

Passover (Pesach) (Judaism)
Pesach is a week-long celebration commemorating the deliverance of the Jewish people from slavery in ancient Egypt; the first two and last two days of Passover are full holy days.

Pentecost Sunday (Catholic Christianity)
The Catholic Christian feast of Pentecost celebrates the coming of the Holy Spirit upon the Apostles and other followers of Jesus, fifty days after Easter. Pentecost recalls Jesus' promised Spirit energizing of all disciples for mission. The liturgical celebration concludes the season of Lent-Eastertime (which pivots in the Three Days of the Paschal Triduum).

Purim (Judaism)
Purim is a carnival-like celebration of the saving of the Jewish people from Haman (as told in the *Book of Esther*).

Raksha Bandhan (Hinduism)
Literally translating to “The Bond of Protection” or “The Bond of Care,” this holiday celebrates the bond between sisters and brothers. Sisters often tie a *rakhi* bracelet on their brothers’ wrists, and brothers give sisters gifts.

Rama Navami (Hinduism)
Rama is believed to have been an incarnation of the god Vishnu and a wise and good king whose reign (the "Rama Rajya") brought about great prosperity. The holiday is also celebrated in Nepal and by Hindus around the world. To celebrate the occasion, devotees will chant appropriate mantras all day long. They will also offer Rama flowers and fruits and go to temples or family shrines at noontime to pray to him. Additionally, there will be processions of his statues, rocking of smaller versions of his statue in a cradle, drinking of a sweet, peppered jaggery beverage, fasting until evening, and feasting during the evening.

Ramadan (Islam)
Ramadan is the ninth month in the Islamic calendar, commemorating the month during which the Qur'an was first revealed to the Prophet Muhammad. It is celebrated with fasting from dawn until sunset. Many Muslims celebrate with community dinners, prayers, and gatherings in the evenings.

Reformation Day (Protestant Christianity)
This Protestant Christian holiday is a remembrance of the onset of the Reformation in Western Christianity. On October 31, 1517, the German monk Martin Luther nailed his grievances with the Roman Catholic Church or *Ninety-Five Theses* to All Saints' Church in Wittenberg, Germany.

Rosh Hashanah (Judaism)
This holiday is the Jewish New Year. It includes 10 days of penitence, with the first two (noted on the calendar above) designated as High Holidays. Rosh Hashanah culminates on Yom Kippur (also noted on the calendar above).

Samhain (Celtic Neopaganism)
Celebration around October 31 that marks the end of the harvest and the beginning of winter, honoring ancestors and the thinning of the veil between worlds.

Shavuot (Judaism)
Shavuot is the "Feast of Weeks." It commemorates the anniversary of the giving of the Torah by God to Moses and the Israelites at Mt. Sinai.

Shemini Atzeret (Judaism)
This is the final day of Sukkot; the final portion of the Torah is read this day.

Simchat Torah (Judaism)
This is a celebration of the Torah; it is the beginning of the annual Torah reading cycle.

Solemnity of Mary, Mother of God (Catholic Christianity)
This feast day celebrates the Blessed Virgin Mary as the mother of Jesus Christ. It is a holy day of obligation in the Roman Catholic Church in the US.

Spring (Vernal) Equinox / Ostara (Secular / Humanist / Wiccan / Pagan)
Spring Equinox is one of two days in the calendar year when day and night hours are almost equal to one another. It is also the first day of Spring in the Gregorian calendar.

Sukkot (Judaism)
Sukkot is a week-long festival that commemorates the dwelling of the Israelites in temporary *sukkot* (booths; singular: *sukkah*) as they journeyed in the desert from Egypt to the promised land.

Summer Solstice / Litha (Secular / Humanist / Wiccan / Pagan)
The Summer Solstice is celebrated on the day when the sun reaches its maximum elevation on the day with the greatest number of daylight hours, which is typically on or around June 21st, the first day of summer.

Theophany (Orthodox Christianity)
Also known as the “Feast of the Epiphany,” this holiday in the Orthodox Christian Church celebrates the baptism of Jesus and the revelation of the Holy Trinity made manifest at the baptism.

Vaisakhi (Sikhism)
Vaisakhi (or Baisakhi) is a spring harvest festival celebrated by both Sikhs and Hindus. It commemorates the formation of Khalsa warrior community under Guru Gobind Singh in 1699, when the first members (the Five Beloved Ones, or the *Panj Pyare*) were inducted into the Khalsa Sikh community and given an identity represented with five symbols (*kesh* or uncut hair, *kara* or a steel bracelet, *kanga* or wooden comb, *kaccha* or cotton undergarments, and *kirpan* or a sword).

Vesak (Buddhism)
Also known as “Buddha Day,” this celebration commemorates the birth, enlightenment, and attainment of nirvana (upon his physical death) of Gautama Buddha. It is a celebration associated with Theravada and Tibetan Buddhism.

Week of Prayer for Christian Unity (Christianity)
The Week of Prayer for Christian Unity is an ecumenical or Christianity-wide annual octave--eight days of prayer across Christian denominations for the realization of Jesus' prayer the night before he died that all his followers would be one. Each year a biblical text is chosen as a theme for prayer, reflection, dialogue and action. *Note that this week is observed at different times in the Southern (Ascension Day through Pentecost) and Northern hemispheres (dates as marked in this calendar).*

Winter Solstice / Yule (Secular / Humanist / Wiccan / Pagan)
The Winter Solstice is celebrated on the day when the sun reaches its lowest elevation on the day with the smallest number of daylight hours, which is typically on or around December 21st, the first day of winter.

Yom Ha-Shoah (Judaism)
Yom Ha-Shoah is Holocaust Remembrance Day, a commemoration of the approximately six million Jews killed in the Shoah (Holocaust).

Yom Kippur (Judaism)
This is the Day of Atonement. It is the culmination of the 10 days of penitence to start the Jewish New Year and is designated as a High Holiday.