

Harvard Divinity School » Multifaith Calendar

May 2024

Declaration of the Bab

Wed., May 22, 2024

Tradition: Baha'i

Commemorates the day in 1844 on which he announced his identity as the "Bab" ("Gate"), the herald of the new age. Begins at sundown.

Ascension of Baha'u'llah

Mon., May 27, 2024

Tradition: Baha'i

Marks the anniversary of the death of the founder of the Baha'i faith. Work is suspended on this day.

June 2024

Pentecost

Tue., June 4, 2024

Tradition: Christianity-Orthodox

(Or Whitsunday.) The commemoration of the coming of the Holy Spirit upon the disciples of Jesus following his ascension, Pentecost is considered the "birthday" of the Christian church (Acts 2:1-11). It comes 50 days after Easter (Pascha, Orthodox Easter). Roman Catholic and Protestant Christians often observe Pentecost on a different date from Orthodox Christians.

Shavuot

Tue., June 11 – Thu., June 13, 2024

Tradition: Judaism

(Or "Feast of Weeks.") Shavuot marks the conclusion of the seven weeks following Pesach (Passover). It is a celebration of the harvest of first fruits and commemorates the giving of the Torah and Commandments at Mount Sinai. Begins at sundown.

Ascension of Jesus

Thu., June 13, 2024

Tradition: Christianity-Orthodox

The celebration of Jesus' ascension into heaven and enthronement as universal sovereign. It comes 40 days after Easter. The date observed by Protestants and Roman Catholics is often different from the date observed by Orthodox Christians.

Martyrdom of Guru Arjan Dev Ji

Sun., June 16, 2024

Tradition: Sikhism

(1563-1606) The fifth Guru, he built the Golden Temple of Amritsar to emphasize that the Sikh way was open to all, regardless of caste; the temple was constructed with doors facing all four directions. The first Sikh martyr, Arjan is also remembered for his contributions to and compilation of the Sikh Scriptures.

Litha

Fri., June 21, 2024

Tradition: Wicca/Paganism

Summer Solstice, celebrating the longest day and the blessings of light as well as the beginning of the sun god's death. Begins at sundown.

Eid al-Adha ('Id Al Adha)

Thu., June 27 – Sun., June 30, 2024

Tradition: Islam

(Festival of Sacrifice) One of the two main Islamic festivals (the other is Eid al-Fitr), this festival falls on the 10th day of the lunar month of Zul-Hijja and is the concluding act of pilgrimage to Mecca. In commemoration of Abraham's faith, sheep, goats and camels are offered to God, and the meat is distributed to the poor and needy. Eid al-Adha is observed whether or not one is on pilgrimage.

Martyrdom of the Prophet Joseph Smith and his Brother Hyrum

Thu., June 27, 2024

Tradition: Latter Day Saints

The Prophet Joseph Smith and his brother Hyrum were assassinated in 1844 while incarcerated in Carthage, Illinois.

Ghambar Maidyoshem

Sat., June 29 – Wed., July 3, 2024

Tradition: Zoroastrianism

Celebrates the creation of water, the sowing of the summer crop, and the harvesting of grain.

July 2024

Ghambar Maidyoshem

Sat., June 29 – Wed., July 3, 2024

Tradition: Zoroastrianism

Celebrates the creation of water, the sowing of the summer crop, and the harvesting of grain.

First of Muharram (Ra's al-Sanat Al Hijrivah)

Sun., July 7, 2024

Tradition: Islam

The first day of the first month of the Islamic year. This day commemorates the Hijra ("migration") of Muhammad and his followers from Mecca to Medina in 622 C.E., where the first Islamic community was established. Begins at sundown.

Martyrdom of the Bab

Mon., July 8, 2024

Tradition: Baha'i

Anniversary of the martyrdom of the Bab, the forerunner of Baha'u'llah, in 1850. Work is suspended on this day. Begins at sundown.

Ashurah ('Ashurah)

Tue., July 16, 2024

Tradition: Islam

For Sunni Muslims, it is a voluntary fast day. Many important events are believed to have occurred on this day, such as Noah's leaving the Ark and the freedom and departure of the Children of Israel from Egypt. For Shi'i Muslims, it is a time of mourning commemorating the martyrdom of Husain (the grandson of the Prophet Muhammad) on the 10th day of the lunar month of Muharram.

Dharma Day

Sun., July 21, 2024

Tradition: Buddhism

Commemorates the Buddha's first teaching following his enlightenment. The date and name of this Buddhist celebration varies significantly among cultures and communities.

Pioneer Day

Wed., July 24, 2024

Tradition: Latter Day Saints

Mormon observance of the arrival of Brigham Young at the site of Salt Lake City, Utah in 1847.

Lammas/Lughnasa

Wed., July 31, 2024

Tradition: Wicca/Paganism

The first harvest festival, celebrating the sacrifices of the Earth and the sun for the harvest and the diminishing strength of summer.

August 2024

Tisha B'Av

Mon., Aug. 12, 2024

Tradition: Judaism

Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary

Thu., Aug. 15, 2024

Tradition: Christianity-Protestant, Christianity-Roman Catholic

Commemorates the assumption of Mary, mother of Jesus, into heaven.

Dormition of the Theotokos

Thu., Aug. 15, 2024

Tradition: Christianity-Orthodox

Raksha Bandan

Mon., Aug. 19, 2024

Tradition: Hinduism

Also abbreviated to Rakhi, it is the Hindu festival that celebrates brotherhood and love. It is celebrated on the full moon in the month of Sravana in the lunar calendar.

Krishna Janmashtami (Sri Krishna Jayanti or Janmashtami)

Mon., Aug. 26, 2024

Tradition: Hinduism

Celebrates the birthday of Krishna. According to the Hindu epics, Krishna was the eighth incarnation of the God Vishnu, opposed to the demon Kansa, who was responsible for the increase of evil in the world. Worship of Krishna is characteristically expressed in dance and song.

Paryusana Festival

Fri., Aug. 30 – Sat., Sep. 7, 2024

Tradition: Jainism

Considered the holiest period of the year, these eight days are marked for Jains by fasting, meditation, prayer and public readings of the life story of Lord Mahavira. Observed especially by the followers of the Shvetambara sect, Paryusana concludes on Samvatsari, the most solemn occasion of self-scrutiny and forgiveness. On this day, Jains ask for forgiveness from their relatives and friends for any offense they may have committed by deed, word or thought.

September 2024

Paryusana Festival

Fri., Aug. 30 – Sat., Sep. 7, 2024

Tradition: Jainism

Considered the holiest period of the year, these eight days are marked for Jains by fasting, meditation, prayer and public readings of the life story of Lord Mahavira. Observed especially by the followers of the Shvetambara sect, Paryusana concludes on Samvatsari, the most solemn occasion of self-scrutiny and forgiveness. On this day, Jains ask for forgiveness from their relatives and friends for any offense they may have committed by deed, word or thought.

Ganesh Chaturthi

Fri., Sep. 6, 2024

Tradition: Hinduism

A celebration of Ganesh's birthday, one of the major Hindu deities. Ganesh, who has the head of an elephant, is the God of Success and is invoked at the beginning of all new undertakings.

Das Laxana Festival

Sun., Sep. 8 – Tue., Sep. 17, 2024

Tradition: Jainism

(the Paryusana Festival of Jain Digambar Sect): A 10-day festival that is considered to be a holy convocation. During these days, Jains impose some restraints on their daily activities by fasting, meditation and prayer. The last day of Paryusana is the most solemn occasion of forgiveness and the examination of one's own thoughts and feelings. On this day, Jains ask for forgiveness from their relatives and friends for any offense they may have committed by deed, word or thought.

Feast of the Nativity of the Theotokos

Sun., Sep. 8, 2024

Tradition: Christianity-Orthodox

Ghambar Paitishem

Thu., Sep. 12 – Mon., Sep. 16, 2024

Tradition: Zoroastrianism

Celebrates the creation of plants, the sowing of the winter crop and the return of herds from pasture

Mawlid an-Nabi

Sun., Sep. 15, 2024

Tradition: Islam

The birthday of the Prophet Muhammed. Begins at sundown.

Mabon

Sun., Sep. 22, 2024

Tradition: Wicca/Paganism

Autumnal equinox and the second harvest festival, celebrating the equivalence of light and dark, the arrival of Autumn, and thanksgiving for the Earth's bounty. (Begins at sundown)

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