

RELIGIOUS AND ETHNIC OBSERVANCES  
2009-2011

The *Inclusion Center's Calendar* is a resource designed to encourage public awareness of the great diversity of religious and ethnic groups that live in the United States. Holidays and festivals are included for many religious, ethnic, and public occasions.

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. Those using this calendar also should remember that it is based only on information available at the time of production. In particular, dates for lunar holidays are subject to change.

The *Inclusion Center Calendar* is intended to increase our sensitivity to each other and to our different needs. However, the list is not exhaustive of the observances of any one religion. Therefore, those using this resource in a classroom or employer setting may wish to add holidays and observances that are not listed in this calendar but are celebrated by students in their school or colleagues in their workplace. As an additional aid to both teachers and employers, an alphabetical glossary of selected observances appears in this Calendar.

**MISSION**

Serving Utah since 1967, was founded in 1927 as the National Conference of Christians and Jews. A human relations organization dedicated to eliminating prejudice, bigotry, and discrimination. The *Inclusion Center* develops inclusive solutions to promote respect for all people through conflict resolution, education, advocacy, and empowerment.



**inclusion center**  
for community and justice

**KEY TO RELIGIOUS GROUPS\***

Baha'i	Ba
Buddhist	Bu
Christian	C
Mormon	M
Orthodox	O
Protestant	P
Roman Catholic	RC
Hindu	H
Jewish	J
Muslim	M
Sikh	S

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# 2009



## JULY

4 Independence Day F\*  
 9 Martyrdom of Bab Ba  
 24 Pioneer Day Mo

## AUGUST

14 VJ Day  
 15 Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary O,P,RC  
 22-9/21 Ramadan M

## SEPTEMBER Hispanic-American Heritage Month

1 Installation of the Guru Granth Sahib in the Golden Temple S  
 7 Labor Day F\*  
 11 Patriot's Day  
 19 Navaratri H  
 19-20 Rosh Hashanah J  
 21 'Id al Fitre M  
 22 Autumn Equinox  
 28 Dusserah H  
 28 Yom Kippur J

## OCTOBER Interfaith Month, Diversity Month

3-9 Sukkot J  
 10 Shmini Atzeret J  
 11 Simchat Torah J  
 12 Columbus Day F\*  
 17 Diwali H  
 20 Birth of Bab Ba  
 20 Installation of the Guru Granth Sahib as Eternal Guru S  
 20 Martyrdom of Guru Har Rai S  
 24 United Nations Day  
 31 All Hallows Eve

## NOVEMBER Transgender Awareness Month

1 All Saints Day O,P,RC  
 11 Veteran's Day F\*  
 12 Baha'u'llah's Birthday Ba  
 24 Martyrdom of Guru Teg Bahadur S  
 26 Thanksgiving F\*  
 27 'Id al Adha M  
 29 Advent Begins P,RC

## DECEMBER

7 Pearl Harbor Day  
 8 Bodhi Day Bu  
 12-19 Hanukkah J  
 18 Al Hijra (New Year) M  
 21 Winter Solstice  
 25 Christmas Day Mo,P,RC  
 26-1/1 Kwanzaa

\* US Federal Holidays marked by an F \*\* Interfaith Observances marked by an I

## JANUARY

1 New Year's Day F\*  
 5 Birth of Guru Gobind Singh S  
 6 Epiphany O,P,RC  
 7 Christmas Day O  
 13 Maghi S  
 19 Martin Luther King, Jr. Day F\*  
 26 Chinese and Vietnamese New Year

## FEBRUARY Black History Month

1 Four Chaplain's Sunday I\*\*  
 15 Nirvana Day Bu  
 15-21 Brotherhood Sisterhood Week  
 16 President's Day F\*  
 25 Ash Wednesday/Lent Begins P,RC  
 26-3/1 Ayyam-i-Ha Ba

## MARCH Women's History Month

2 Lent Begins (Clean Monday) O  
 2-20 Nineteen Day Fast Ba  
 9 Mawlid al Nabi M  
 10 Purim J  
 11 Holi H  
 20 Spring Equinox  
 21 Naw-Ruz (New Year) Ba

## APRIL

9-16 Pesach (Passover) J  
 10 Good Friday P, RC  
 12 Easter P, RC  
 13 Vaisakhi S  
 17 Good Friday O  
 19 Easter O  
 21 First Day of Ridvan Ba  
 21 Yom Hashoah J

## MAY Asian American Heritage Month

5 Cinco de Mayo  
 8 VE Day  
 9 Buddha Day Bu  
 9 Wesak Bu  
 21 Ascension Day P,RC  
 25 Memorial Day F\*  
 29 Shavuot J  
 31 Pentecost P,RC

## JUNE Pride Month

6 D-Day  
 8 Pentecost O  
 14 Flag Day  
 16 Martyrdom of Guru Arjan Dev S  
 19 Juneteenth  
 21 Summer Solstice  
 27 Anniversary of the Stonewall Riots



# 2010



## JANUARY

- 1 New Year's Day F\*
- 5 Birth of Guru Gobind Singh S
- 6 Epiphany O,P,RC
- 7 Christmas Day O
- 14 Maghi S
- 18 Martin Luther King, Jr. Day F\*

## FEBRUARY Black History Month

- 7 Four Chaplain's Sunday I\*\*
- 14 Chinese and Vietnamese New Year
- 14-20 Brotherhood Sisterhood Week
- 15 Nirvana Day Bu
- 15 President's Day F\*
- 15 Lent Begins (Clean Monday) O
- 17 Ash Wednesday/Lent Begins P,RC
- 26 Mawlid al Nabi M
- 26-3/1 Ayyam-i-Ha Ba
- 28 Purim J

## MARCH Women's History Month

- 1 Holi H
- 2-20 Nineteen Day Fast Ba
- 20 Spring Equinox
- 21 Naw-Ruz (New Year) Ba
- 30-4/6 Pesach (Passover) J

## APRIL

- 2 Good Friday O, P, RC
- 4 Easter O, P, RC
- 11 Yom Hashoah J
- 13 Vaisakhi S
- 21 First Day of Ridvan Ba

## MAY Asian American Heritage Month

- 5 Cinco de Mayo
- 8 VE Day
- 13 Ascension Day P,RC
- 19-20 Shavuot J
- 21 Wesak Bu
- 23 Pentecost P,RC
- 24 Pentecost O
- 27 Buddha Day Bu
- 28 Memorial Day F\*

## JUNE Pride Month

- 6 D-Day
- 14 Flag Day
- 16 Martyrdom of Guru Arjan Dev S
- 19 Juneteenth
- 21 Summer Solstice
- 27 Anniversary of the Stonewall Riots

## JULY

- 4 Independence Day F\*
- 9 Martyrdom of Bab Ba
- 24 Pioneer Day Mo

## AUGUST

- 12-9/10 Ramadan M
- 14 VJ Day
- 15 Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary O,P,RC

## SEPTEMBER Hispanic-American Heritage Month

- 1 Installation of the Guru Granth Sahib in the Golden Temple S
- 6 Labor Day F\*
- 9-10 Rosh Hashanah J
- 10 'Id al Fitre M
- 11 Patriot's Day
- 18 Yom Kippur J
- 23 Autumn Equinox
- 23-29 Sukkot J
- 30 Shmini Atzeret J

## OCTOBER Interfaith Month, Diversity Month

- 1 Simchat Torah J
- 8 Navaratri H
- 11 Columbus Day F\*
- 20 Birth of Bab Ba
- 20 Installation of the Guru Granth Sahib as Eternal Guru S
- 20 Martyrdom of Guru Har Rai S
- 24 United Nations Day
- 17 Dusserah H
- 31 All Hallows Eve

## NOVEMBER Transgender Awareness Month

- 1 All Saints Day O,P,RC
- 5 Diwali H
- 11 Veteran's Day F\*
- 12 Baha'u'llah's Birthday Ba
- 16 'Id al Adha M
- 24 Martyrdom of Guru Teg Bahadur S
- 25 Thanksgiving F\*
- 28 Advent Begins P,RC

## DECEMBER

- 2-9 Hanukkah J
- 7 Pearl Harbor Day
- 7 Al Hijra (New Year) M
- 8 Bodhi Day Bu
- 22 Winter Solstice
- 25 Christmas Day Mo,P,RC
- 26-1/1 Kwanzaa

\* US Federal Holidays marked by an F \* Interfaith Observances marked by an I



# 2011



## JANUARY

- 1 New Year's Day F\*
- 3 Chinese and Vietnamese New Year
- 5 Birth of Guru Gobind Singh S
- 6 Epiphany O,P,RC
- 7 Christmas Day O
- 14 Maghi S
- 17 Martin Luther King, Jr. Day F\*

## FEBRUARY Black History Month

- 6 Four Chaplain's Sunday I\*\*
- 15 Mawlid al Nabi M
- 15 Nirvana Day Bu
- 20-26 Brotherhood Sisterhood Week
- 21 President's Day F\*
- 26-3/1 Ayyam-i-Ha Ba

## MARCH Women's History Month

- 2-20 Nineteen Day Fast Ba
- 7 Lent Begins (Clean Monday) O
- 9 Ash Wednesday/Lent Begins P,RC
- 20 Holi H
- 20 Purim J
- 20 Spring Equinox
- 21 Naw-Ruz (New Year) Ba

## APRIL

- 22 Good Friday O, P, RC
- 24 Easter O, P, RC
- 13 Vaisakhi S
- 19-26 Pesach (Passover) J
- 21 First Day of Ridvan Ba

## MAY Asian American Heritage Month

- 1 Yom Hashoah J
- 5 Cinco de Mayo
- 8 VE Day
- 10 Wesak Bu
- 17 Buddha Day Bu
- 30 Memorial Day F\*

## JUNE Pride Month

- 2 Ascension Day P,RC
- 6 D-Day
- 8-9 Shavuot J
- 12 Pentecost P,RC
- 13 Pentecost O
- 14 Flag Day
- 16 Martyrdom of Guru Arjan Dev S
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- 21 Summer Solstice
- 27 Anniversary of the Stonewall Riots

## JULY

- 4 Independence Day F\*
- 9 Martyrdom of Bab Ba
- 24 Pioneer Day Mo

## AUGUST

- 1-30 Ramadan M
- 14 VJ Day
- 15 Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary O,P,RC
- 30 'Id al Fitre M

## SEPTEMBER Hispanic-American Heritage Month

- 1 Installation of the Guru Granth Sahib in the Golden Temple S
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- 10 Columbus Day F\*
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- 7 Pearl Harbor Day
- 8 Bodhi Day Bu
- 21-28 Hanukkah J
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- 26-1/1 Kwanzaa

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## Explanatory Notes

(Most Civic Holidays and other obvious festivals are not included.)

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

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

**All Saints Day** Christian day for honoring all the saints, especially those who do not have a special day.

**Ascension Day** Celebrates Jesus' Ascension to heaven.

**Ash Wednesday** Begins Christian Lent. Name derives from symbolic use of ashes to signify penitence.

**Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary** Commemorates the assumption of Mary, mother of Jesus, into heaven.

**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.

**Baha'u'llah's Birthday** Commemorates the birth of the founders of the Baha'i faith in 1817.

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

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

**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.

**Buddha Day** The Day Buddha was born, attained enlightenment, and passed away.

**Chinese and Vietnamese New Year** A festive holiday celebrated for about two weeks. Each year is symbolized by a different animal.

**Cinco de Mayo** Celebrated in Mexico and by Mexican-Americans, commemorates the battle of Guadalupe in 1862, when a small Mexican army defeated a large French force.

**D-Day** The day on which the allied forces attacked the French coast to retake Europe from the Nazis

**Diwali** Festival of Lights symbolizing the human urge to move toward the light. One of four seasonal celebrations in India.

**Dusserah** Festival celebrating good over evil; the victory of Lord Rama over Ravana, the demon king of Lanka.

**Epiphany** End of the 12 days of Christmas; celebrates visit of the Three Kings to baby Jesus; especially important to Eastern Orthodox and Roman Catholics of Hispanic descent.

**Flag Day** Commemorates acceptance of the stars and stripes as the U.S. flag in 1777.

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

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

**Hanukkah** Festival of Lights; Eight-day commemoration of the Maacabean recapture and rededication of the second Temple in 165 B.C.E.

**Holi** Spring festival dedicated to the god of pleasure. It is a carnival occasion featuring bright colors, pilgrimages, and bonfires.

**'Id al-Adha** Festival of animal sacrifice; commemorates the faith of Abraham; also a memorial to the dead. Meat is given to the poor.

**'Id al-Fitre** A 3 day Islamic fast marking the close of Ramadan

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

**Juneteenth** Observed as the day African Americans were emancipated. It is the oldest known celebration of the ending of slavery.

**Kwanzaa** Seven day celebration of African American values and traditions and their continued vitality. Kwanzaa is Kiswahili and means "first fruits of the harvest."

**Lent** Period of preparation for Easter; usually 40 days.

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

**Martyrdom of the Bab** Ali Mohammed was executed in 1850 by Persian political and religious powers. Observed by abstaining from commerce and work.

**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 Amristar.

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

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

**Naw Ruz** Baha'i and Iranian New Year.

**Navaratri** A Hindu Festival of the divine mother honoring Durga, wife of Shiva, and seeking her blessings. It is celebrated according to local custom.

**Nirvana Day** In the Northern tradition, this is the anniversary of Buddha's passing away. In the Southern tradition, the Buddha's death is commemorated during Visakha.

**Patriot's Day** Commemoration of those heroes who died in the attacks of 9/11/2001.

**Pearl Harbor Day** The date that will live in infamy commemorating the sneak attack on Pearl Harbor that brought the United States into the war against the world's fascist dictators.

## Explanatory Notes (continued)

**Pesach (Passover)** An 8 day commemoration of the deliverance of the Jews from slavery in Egypt.

**Pentecost** Observation of the day when the Holy Spirit came to the disciples, following ascension of Jesus. The name indicates 50 days after Easter.

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

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

**Ramadan** The ninth month in the Islamic calendar; 30 days of strict fasting from sunup to sundown. In honor of the first revelations to the Prophet Muhammed.

**Ridvan** Commemoration of the declaration of Baha'u'llah to his followers in 1863. Work is to be suspended for the 1<sup>st</sup>, 9<sup>th</sup>, and 12<sup>th</sup> days.

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

**Shavout** Festival of Weeks; celebrates harvest of first fruits and commemorates Moses' descent from Mt. Sinai with the torah and Commandments.

**Shmini Atzeret** Celebration of the eighth and last day of Sukkot.

**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.

**The Stonewall Riots** Commemorates the 1969 incident when transgender, bisexual, gay, and lesbian patrons of the Stonewall Inn in NY stood their ground against police harassment and became the catalyst for the modern political movement for GLBT liberation.

**Sukkot** Jewish Feast of Tabernacles or Booths which celebrates the fall harvest and the wandering of Israel in the desert wilderness in tents.

**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.

**VE Day** Marks the end of the Second World War in Europe and the final liberation of the death camps.

**VJ Day** Marks the final end of the war in the Pacific ending the Second World War with victory over Japan.

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

**Yom Hashoah** Jewish Holocaust Remembrance Day. This day has been established to remember the six million Jews killed by the Nazis in 1933-45.

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

## Additional Notes

All Baha'i, Jewish, and Muslim holidays begin at sunset the previous day.

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 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. (Please note that for all other Buddhist observances, this calendar provides the dates followed by the Theravada tradition.)

Christians follow a number of different calendars depending on their denomination and/or their region. This calendar includes both the dates of the Western calendar which is followed by the Roman Catholic and Protestant churches and 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.

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 been included as part of this calendar because they often differ by region, religious affiliation, and personal belief.

Jewish dates on this calendar 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.

Muslim holidays are subject to change because observance is dictated by the phases and sightings of the moon.

The Sikh calendar – their own Nanakshahi calendar – was adopted for use on March 14, 1999 and aligns with the Gregorian calendar.

*The Inclusion Center acknowledges the work of the Federation for Just Communities and their members for helping putting this calendar together*



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