

Selected Religious Holidays and Celebrations 2008-2009

This calendar is compiled by the Office of the Chaplains and Religious Life at Bucknell University for the use of Bucknell faculty, staff and students for planning purposes. Holidays listed in **bold** type are those effecting the largest groups of our students. As per the April 6, 2004 vote of the faculty: "...faculty are expected to be mindful of potential conflicts with religious observances, and it is incumbent upon each individual faculty member to make reasonable accommodations when students observance of a religious holiday conflicts with an academic obligation." "Scheduling for other major University events and extracurricular activities should also be done mindfully of religious holidays, and schedule conflicts should be avoided whenever possible so that religiously observant students are able to participate." This calendar may contain errors due to the complexity of some religious calendars; please double-check dates before planning major events. Please send any corrections or suggestions to the Interim University Chaplain Timothy Dugan {tpd008@bucknell.edu}.

2008			
July 28-29 (sundown Monday until sundown Tuesday)	Laylat al-Isra' wa al-Mi'raj	Muslim	Night of the Journey and the Ascent: commemorates the Prophet's night journey from Mecca to Jerusalem and ascent into heaven.
August 15	Assumption of Mary	Christian (Roman Catholic)	Commemorates the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary into heaven (Holy Day of obligation).
August 24	Janmashtami	Hindu	Celebrates the birth of Krishna
August 27-September 3	Paryushan	Jain	8-day festival with fasting, meditation, and prayer, ending with a solemn day of penance.
September 1 (date may vary by geographic location)	First Day of Ramadan	Muslim	The Month of fasting begins. All adult Muslims should abstain from all food, drink, sexual activity, and certain other activities from dawn until sunset.
September 3	Ganesh Chaturthi	Hindu	Celebrates the birth of Ganesh, god of new endeavors and remover of obstacles.
September 22	Fall Equinox	Neo-Pagan/Wiccan	Celebration of the transition from life to death, the harvest and the bounty of the

			earth.
September 25-26 (sundown Thursday until sundown Friday)	Laylat al-Qadr	Muslim	Night of Power: commemorates the night the Qur'an was first revealed to the Prophet.
September 29-October 1 (sundown Monday until sundown Wednesday)	Rosh Hashanah	Jewish	The beginning of the Jewish year, it celebrates the birthday of the world. It is the beginning of the High Holy Days or the Days of Awe.
September 30-October 8	Navaratri/Durga Puja	Hindu	The festival of the Divine Mother, Durga, celebrates victory over the demon Mahisasura.
October 1 (date may vary by geographic location)	Eid ul-Fitr	Muslim	The Festival of the Breaking of the Fast, celebrates the end of Ramadan. The date is set by the rising of the New Moon.
October 8-9 (sundown Wednesday until Sundown Thursday)	Yom Kippur	Jewish	The Day of Atonement, the end of the 10 Days of Awe, is devoted to prayer, repentance and fasting.
October 9	Dusshera	Hindu	This festival celebrates Rama's victory over Ravana.
October 13-20 (sundown Monday until sundown Monday)	Sukkot	Jewish	The Feast of the Tabernacles, commemorating the dwelling of the Israelites in booths in the wilderness. It is the harvest festival.
October 20-22 (sundown Monday until sundown Wednesday)	Shemini Atzeret/Simchat Torah	Jewish	The final day of Sukkot. Simchat Torah, the Rejoicing of the Torah is the ending of the Torah reading cycle and the beginning of a new one.
October 28	Divali	Hindu/Indian	The Indian festival of lights celebrates many different sacred stories, depending on the region of the country.
October 31	Samhain	Neo-Pagan/Wiccan	Pagans believe that on this night, the boundary between the physical and spiritual world is thinnest, and access to

			the knowledge of the dead is possible.
November 1-2	All Saints Day/All Souls Day	Christian	Celebrates the Christian saints and those who have died.
November 13	Guru Nanak's Birthday	Sikh	Commemorates the birth of the founder of Sikhism.
December 8	Immaculate Conception	Christian (Roman Catholic)	Feast in honor of the Blessed Virgin Mary being conceived without original sin (Holy Day of obligation).
December 8	Bodhi Day	Buddhist	In the Northern tradition, this day celebrates the Buddha's attainment of Enlightenment.
December 8 (date may vary by geographic location)	Eid ul-Adha	Muslim	The Festival of the Sacrifice remembers Abraham's devotion in offering his son as a sacrifice.
December 21	Winter Solstice	Neo-Pagan/Wiccan	The shortest day of the year symbolizes the natural cycle of life and death, and the coming of light into the world again.
December 21-29 (sundown Sunday until sundown Monday)	Hanukkah	Jewish	Festival of Lights, marks the victory of the Maccabees and rededication of the Temple. It is a celebration of religious freedom and an affirmation of God's saving power.
December 25	Christmas	Christian	The celebration of the birth of Jesus in Bethlehem.
December 26-January 1	Kwanzaa	African-American	An African-American celebration honoring African community values and beliefs.
2009			
January 6	Holy Epiphany	Christian (Orthodox)	Commemorates the Baptism of Jesus and the manifestation of the Holy Trinity in the Eastern churches.
January 26	Chinese/Vietnamese/Korean	Chinese Religions	The most important holiday of the year in

	New Year		China and many other countries; the Year of the Ox begins.
February 8 (celebrated on February 15 in Japan)	Nirvana Day	Buddhist	In the Northern tradition, celebrates the day when Gautama died.
February 23	Mahashivratri	Hindu	A major celebration for devotees of Siva.
February 25	Ash Wednesday	Christian	The beginning of Lent, the 40-day period (excluding Sundays) of prayer and repentance that precedes Easter.
March 2	Orthodox Lent {Clean Monday}	Christian (Orthodox)	Eastern Orthodox churches begin the season of Lent, marked by fasting, prayer and charity.
March 2-20	Baha'i Fast	Baha'i	Fast observed from sunrise to sunset each day.
March 9-10 (sundown Monday until sundown Tuesday)	Purim	Jewish	This joyous celebration commemorates the victory of the Jews over their tyrannical enemy. The Jews changed the day marked for their destruction into a day of victory.
March 11	Holi	Hindu/Indian	A very popular festival where people throw colored water or powder at one another to celebrate episodes in the life of Krishna.
March 20	Spring Equinox	Neo-Pagan/Wiccan	This day represents the rebirth of the year, and celebrates the change of the seasons and the rebirth of the spirit after death.
March 21	Nav Ruz	Zoroastrian / Baha'i	New year Celebration
April 3	Ramnavami	Hindu	Begins a nine-day festival in honor of Ram; the Ramayana is performed.
April 5-12	Holy Week/Easter	Christian	The most important Christian Holy Days. Palm Sunday, April 5: Morning and evening services. Holy Thursday: all day is a solemn

			observance. Evening services. Good Friday: all day is a solemn observance. Services at noon and 5 p.m. Easter Sunday: Morning services.
April 8-16 (from sundown Wednesday until sundown Thursday; dietary restrictions apply throughout the period)	Passover	Jewish	Passover commemorates the liberation of the Israelites from Egyptian bondage. "Seders" are conducted on the first and second nights, retelling the story of the exodus, so that Jews never forget that they were once slaves and that God helped set them free.
April 12-19	Orthodox Holy Week/Easter	Christian	Eastern Orthodox churches observe Holy Week and Easter (Pascha).
April 13	Vaisakhi	Sikh/Hindu	Marks the New Year for Hindus and the formation of the Khalsa by Guru Gobind Singh for Sikhs.
April 13 –15	Songkran/Thingyan	Buddhist (Thai and Burmese)	The new year washing ceremony is observed in Thailand and Burma, representing a cleansing of the soul by water and a washing away of the old year. (Dates are variable)
April 21	Yom ha-Shoah	Jewish	Holocaust Memorial Day
April 21-May 2 (from sundown Tuesday until sundown Saturday)	Ridvan	Baha'i	Commemorates the 12 days when the founder, Baha'u'llah declared his mission; the 1 st , 9 th , and 12 th days are holy days.
May 2 or 9 (calendars differ) (Buddha's Birth celebrated on April 8 in Japan)	Vesak (Buddha Day)	Buddhist	Holiest of Buddhist holy days, in the Southern tradition, honors the birth, enlightenment and death of the Buddha, in the Northern tradition, only the birth.
May 21	Ascension Day	Christian	The celebration of Jesus' Ascension into heaven, forty days after his Resurrection.

May 28-30 (sundown Thursday until sundown Saturday)	Shavuot	Jewish	The Feast of Weeks, celebrates the giving of the Torah at Mt. Sinai. It is the holiday of the first fruits.
May 31	Pentecost	Christian	Pentecost celebrates the giving of the Holy Spirit and the founding events of the Christian church.