

Selected Religious Holidays and Celebrations 2017-2018

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 affecting 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 Office of the Chaplains and Religious Life {jpc026@bucknell.edu}. The calendar may be found on the Chaplain's Office website at: <http://www.bucknell.edu/chaplains-and-religious-life/observance-of-religious-holidays.html>. Click on the 2017 – 2018 (PDF) link.

2017			
May 27 (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.
June 22 (celebrated within the last 10 days of Ramadan)	Laylat al-Qadr	Muslim	Night of Power: commemorates the night the Qur'an was first revealed to the Prophet.
June 25 (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.
June 25 – July 23	Sitta Shawal	Muslim	In addition to fasting during the month of Ramadan and after celebrating Eid ul-Fitr, it is recommended that Muslims fast for (six days) at anytime in the blessed month of Shawwal – Allah will reward them as if they have fasted the whole year.

August 15	Dormition of Mary	Christian (Orthodox)	Commemorates the falling asleep of the Virgin Mary.
August 15	Assumption of Mary	Christian (Roman Catholic)	Commemorates the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary into heaven (Holy Day of obligation).
August 15	Janmashtami	Hindu	Celebrates the birth of Krishna.
August 19	Paryushan	Jain	8-day festival with fasting, meditation, and prayer, ending with a solemn day of penance.
August 25	Ganesh Chaturthi	Hindu	Celebrates the birth of Ganesh, god of new endeavors and remover of obstacles.
August 31	Yaum al-Arafah / Day of Arafat (Hajj)	Muslim	Hajj is an annual Islamic pilgrimage to Mecca and on the 9 th day of the month of Dhul-Hijjah Arafah is observed. It is the main pillar and focal point of the Hajj (pilgrimage) and if one is to fast on this day, it's believed to be the greatest day for the expiation of sins (of up to two years), acceptance of supplication, etc.
September 1 (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.
September 20 - 22 (sundown Wednesday until sundown Friday)	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 21	Muharram	Muslim	Islamic Calendar begins.
September 21 - 29	Navaratri/Durga Puja	Hindu	The festival of the Divine Mother, Durga, celebrates victory over the demon Mahisasura.
September 22	Fall Equinox	Neo-Pagan/Wiccan	Celebration of the transition from life to death, the harvest and the bounty of the earth.

September 29 - 30 (sundown Friday until sundown Saturday)	Yom Kippur	Jewish	The Day of Atonement, the end of the 10 Days of Awe, is devoted to prayer, repentance and fasting.
September 30	Aashura	Muslim	On the 10 th day of Muharram, Muslims believe that Allah rescued Moses (PBUH) and his people from Pharaoh, an epitome of Allah's mercy to mankind. Thus, Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) recommended that all Muslims strive to fast on the 9 th and 10 th day of Muharram to commemorate this glorious day as it brings hope to all those who are oppressed across the globe as well as differentiate Muslims in this regard.
September 30	Dusshera	Hindu	This festival celebrates Rama's victory over Ravana.
October 4 - 6 (sundown Wednesday until sundown Friday)	Sukkot	Jewish	The Feast of the Tabernacles, commemorating the dwelling of the Israelites in booths in the wilderness. It is the harvest festival.
October 11 - 13 (sundown Wednesday until sundown Friday)	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 19	Diwali	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 4	Guru Nanak's Birthday	Sikh	Commemorates the birth of the founder of Sikhism.
December 1	Mawlid-al-Nabi	Muslim	Birthday of Prophet Muhammad (PBUH).
December 3	First Sunday of Advent	Christian	This day is the beginning of the Church year. Together with the other three Sundays of Advent, it prepares Christians for the celebration of the Messiah's coming in Jesus at Christmas.
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 12 - 20 (sundown Tuesday until sundown Wednesday)	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 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 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.
2018			
January 6	Holy Epiphany	Christian (Orthodox)	Commemorates the Baptism of Jesus and the manifestation of the Holy Trinity in the Eastern churches.

February 14	Ash Wednesday	Christian	The beginning of Lent, the 40-day period (excluding Sundays) of prayer and repentance that precedes Easter.
February 14	Mahashivratri	Hindu	A major celebration for devotees of Siva.
February 15 (celebrated on February 15 in Japan)	Nirvana Day	Buddhist	In the Northern tradition, celebrates the day when Gautama died.
February 16	Chinese/Vietnamese/Korean New Year	Chinese Religions	The most important holiday of the year in China and many other countries; the Year of the Dog begins.
February 19	Orthodox Lent {Clean Monday}	Christian (Orthodox)	Eastern Orthodox churches begin the season of Lent, marked by fasting, prayer and charity.
February 28 – March 1 (sundown Wednesday until sundown Thursday)	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 2 – 20	Baha'i Fast	Baha'i	Fast observed from sunrise to sunset each day.
March 3	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
March 25 – April 1	Holy Week/Easter	Christian	The most important Christian Holy Days. Palm/Passion Sunday: Morning and afternoon services. Holy/Maundy Thursday: all day is a solemn observance. Evening services.

			Good Friday: all day is a solemn observance. Afternoon services. Easter Sunday: Morning services.
March 26	Ramnavami	Hindu	Begins a nine-day festival in honor of Ram; the Ramayana is performed.
March 30 – April 7 (from sundown Friday until sundown Saturday; 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 1 – 8	Orthodox Holy Week/Easter	Christian	Eastern Orthodox churches observe Holy Week and Easter (Pascha).
April 12	Yom ha-Shoah	Jewish	Holocaust Memorial Day
April 13	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.
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 – May 2 (from sundown Saturday until sundown Wednesday)	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.
April 29 (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 10	Ascension Day	Christian	The celebration of Jesus' Ascension into heaven, forty days after his Resurrection.
May 16 (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.
May 19 - 21 (sundown Saturday until sundown Monday)	Shavuot	Jewish	The Feast of Weeks, celebrates the giving of the Torah at Mt. Sinai. It is the holiday of the first fruits.
May 20	Pentecost	Christian	Pentecost celebrates the giving of the Holy Spirit and the founding events of the Christian church.
June 15 (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.