Religious Holidays 2019-2020

Below are many of the religious holidays observed by members of the Washington University in St. Louis community. Please note that individual practices may vary.

**Fall 2019**

August 27: Paryushana Parva – eight-day festival of forgiveness and self-discipline (Jainism)

September 10: Ashura – Commemoration of martyrdom of Hussein, a grandson of the Prophet Muhammad, and when Moses fasted in gratitude for the liberation of the Israelites (Islam) *Begins sundown September 9, fasting

September 29 – October 7: Navratri – Festival of the divine mother in all her forms (Hinduism)

September 30 – October 1: Rosh Hashanah - Jewish New Year and beginning of High Holy Days (Judaism) *Begins at sundown September 29, work restriction begins sundown September 29 and continues both days

October 2: Tzom Gedaliah – Fast of the Seventh Month (Judaism) *Minor fasting

October 8: Dussehra – Commemoration of the last of the days of judgement (Hinduism) *Work restriction

October 9: Yom Kippur – Day of Atonement (Judaism) *Begins sundown October 8, fasting and work restriction begin sundown October 8 and continue through October 9

October 14-20: Sukkot – Feast of Tabernacles (Judaism) *Begins at sundown October 13, work restriction begins sundown October 13 and continues through first two days (October 14-15)

October 21: Shmini Atzeret – Eighth Day of the Feast of Tabernacles (Judaism) *Begins at sundown October 20, work restriction begins sundown October 20 and continues through October 21

October 22: Simchat Torah – Celebrating the Beginning of the Annual Torah reading cycle (Judaism) *Begins at sundown October 21, work restriction begins sundown October 21 and continues through October 22

October 27: Diwali - Festival of Lights (Hinduism, Jainism, Sikhism)

November 1: All Saints’ Day – Honors all saints known and unknown (Christianity)

November 1: Samhain – Festival honoring endings, beginnings, and the dead (Wicca, Paganism) *Begins at sundown on October 31
November 2: All Souls’ Day – Commemoration of the souls of those who have died (Christianity)

November 12: Birth of Baha’u’llah – Celebration of the birth of the founder of the Bahá’í Faith (Bahá’í Faith) *Work restriction

December 18: Bodhi Day – Celebration of Buddha’s attainment of enlightenment (Buddhism)

December 23-30: Hanukkah – Festival of Lights (Judaism) *Begins at sundown December 22

December 25: Christmas – Celebration of the birth of Jesus Christ (Christianity)

Spring 2020

January 7: Asara B’Tevet – The Tenth of Tevet (Judaism) *Minor fasting when sun up

January 7: Christmas – Celebration of the birth of Jesus Christ (Orthodox Christianity)

January 25: Lunar New Year – Celebration of a start of the new lunar cycle (Confucianism, Taoism, Buddhism)

February 8: Magha Puja Day – Celebration of Lord Buddha’s teaching to an assembly of men (Buddhism)

February 26: Ash Wednesday – Beginning of Lent (Christianity) *Fasting

March 2: Clean Monday/Ash Monday – Start of Lent for Orthodox Christians (Orthodox Christianity)

March 2-20: Nineteen Day Fast – Fast observed by Bahá’í adults (Bahá’í Faith) *Fasting

March 9: Ta’anit Esther – Fast of Esther (Judaism) *Minor fasting when sun up

March 10: Purim – Festival of Lots (Judaism) *Begins at sundown March 9

March 20: Nowruz – Persian New Year (Zoroastrianism and Bahá’í Faith)

March 22: Lailat al Miraj – Celebration of the Prophet Muhammad’s ascent to heaven (Islam) *Begins at sundown on March 21

April 5: Palm Sunday – Celebration of Jesus’ entrance into Jerusalem (Christianity)

April 5-11: Holy Week – The week of Holy Days before Easter (Christianity)

April 6: Mahavir Jayanti – Celebration of the birth of the founder of Jainism (Jainism)

April 9: Holy Thursday – Commemoration of Jesus’ Last Supper (Christianity)

April 9-16: Passover – Festival of Freedom (Judaism) *Begins at sundown April 8, food restrictions all days, work restrictions on 4/8 sundown - 4/10 sundown and 4/14 sundown - 4/16 sundown
April 10: Good Friday – Commemoration of the crucifixion of Jesus (Christianity) *Fasting

April 12: Easter – Celebration of the Resurrection of Jesus (Christianity)

April 13: Vaisakhi – Celebration of the formation of the religious community of Sikhs by Guru Gobind Singh (Sikhism)

April 12: Palm Sunday – Celebration of Jesus’ entrance into Jerusalem (Orthodox Christianity)

April 12-18: Holy Week – The week of Holy Days before Easter (Orthodox Christianity)

April 16: Holy Thursday – Commemoration of Jesus’ Last Supper (Orthodox Christianity)

April 17: Good Friday – Commemoration of the crucifixion of Jesus (Orthodox Christianity) *Fasting

April 19: Easter – Celebration of the Resurrection of Jesus (Orthodox Christianity)

April 20 – May 1: Ridvan – Commemoration of when the founder of the Bahá’í Faith declared his mission (Bahá’í Faith)

April 24 – May 23: Ramadan – Commemoration of the Prophet Muhammad receiving divine revelation as recorded in the Qur’an (Islam) *Begins evening of April 23, month of fasting dawn until dusk or sundown

May 1: Beltane – Festival of Light honoring fertility and creation (Wicca, Paganism) *Begins sundown of April 30

May 12: Lag B’Omer – 33rd day of counting the Omer (Judaism) *Begins at sundown May 11

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