

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 2023

Aug. 15th: Feast of the Assumption of Mary (Catholic Christianity) – holy day marking the assumption of Mary’s body and soul into heaven

August 30: Raksha Bandhan (Hinduism) – a festival to symbolize the love between a brother and a sister

September 6-7: Krishna Janmashtami (Hinduism) – Commemoration of the birth of Krishna **Fasting*

September 16-17: Rosh Hashanah (Judaism) – Jewish New Year and beginning of High Holy Days **Begins at sundown September 15, work restriction starts sundown September 15 and continues through September 17.*

September 18: Tzom Gedaliah (Judaism) – Fast of the Seventh Month **Minor fasting*

September 19: Ganesh Chaturthi / Vinayaka Chaturthi (Hinduism) – commemorates the birth of Ganesh

September 20: Paryushana Parva (Jainism) – Eight-day festival of forgiveness and self-discipline **Fasting*

September 21-29: Mabon (Pagan/Wiccan) - Celebrates the autumnal equinox

September 25: Yom Kippur – Day of Atonement (Judaism) **Begins sundown September 24, fasting and work restriction start sundown September 24 and continue through September 25.*

September 27: Mawlid al-Nabi (Islam) - Celebrates the birth of Prophet Muhammad **Begins sundown September 26*

October 15-24: Navratri (Hinduism) – Festival of the divine mother in all her forms

October 23: Dussehra (Hinduism) – Commemoration of the last of the days of judgment **Work restriction*

September 30-October 6: Sukkot (Judaism) – Festival of Booths **Begins at sundown September 29, work restriction starts sundown September 29 and continues through first two days (September 30 – October 1)*

October 7: Shemini Atzeret (Judaism) – Eighth day of the Festival of Booths **Begins at sundown October 6, work restriction starts sundown October 6 and continues through October 7*

October 8: Simchat Torah (Judaism) – Celebration the beginning of the annual Torah reading cycle **Begins at sundown October 7, work restriction begins sundown October 7 and continues through October 8*

October 16-17: Twin Holy Days (Bahá’í Faith) – Celebration of the births of the Báb and Bahá’u’lláh **Work restriction *Begins sundown October 15*

October 31: Reformation Day (Protestant Christianity) - Celebration in remembrance of the onset of the Reformation

November 1: Diwali (Hinduism, Jainism, Sikhism) – Festival of Lights **Work restriction*

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

November 1: Samhain (Wiccan, Pagan) – Festival honoring endings, beginnings, and the dead **Begins sundown on October 31*

November 2: All Souls’ Day (Christianity) – Commemoration of the souls of those who have died

November 26: Day of the Covenant (Bahá’í) - Celebrates the appointment of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá as the Centre of Bahá’u’lláh’s Covenant **Begins sundown November 25*

November 27: Guru Nanak Jayanti (Sikh) – Celebrates the birth and founder of Sikhism

December 8: Feast of the Immaculate Conception of Mary (Catholic Christianity) – Observes the immaculate conception of Mary by Joachim and Anne
December 8: Bodhi Day (Buddhism) – Celebration of Buddha’s attainment of enlightenment
December 8-15: Hanukkah (Judaism) – Festival of Lights **Begins at sundown December 7*
December 12: Our Lady of Guadalupe (Catholic Christianity) – Celebration of the apparitions of Mary to St. Juan Diego in Tepeyac in 1531
December 21: Yule (Pagan/Wiccan) – Winter solstice in the northern hemisphere
December 22: Asara B'Tevet (Judaism) – The Tenth of Tevet **Minor fasting*
December 25: Christmas (Christianity) – Celebration of the birth of Jesus Christ
December 26: Zarathosht Diso (Zoroastrian) – Commemorates death of Zarthustra

Spring 2024

January 1: Oshogatsu (Shinto) – Celebration of New Year, thanking the kami, and asking for good fortune
January 1: Feast of Mary Mother of God (Catholic Christianity) – Celebration of the motherhood of Mary
January 6: Epiphany (Christian) – Feast day celebrating the revelation of God the Son as a human in Jesus Christ
January 7: Christmas (Orthodox Christianity) – Celebration of the birth of Jesus Christ
January 15: Makar Sankranti (Hinduism) – Celebration of the Sun god
January 17: Birth of Guru Gobind Singh (Sikh) – Birthday of the last Guru
February 2: Imbolc (Pagan/Wiccan) – Marks the beginning of Spring **Begins sundown of Feb 1*
February 7: Lailat al-Miraj (Islam) – Celebration of the Prophet Muhammad’s ascent to heaven **Begins at sundown on February 6*
February 10: Lunar New Year (Confucianism, Taoism, Buddhism) – Celebration of a start of the new lunar cycle
February 14: Ash Wednesday (Christianity) – Beginning of Lent **Fasting*
February 14: Vasant Panchami (Hinduism) – Holy day dedicated to Goddess Saraswati
February 24: Magha Puja Day (Buddhism) – Celebration of Lord Buddha’s teaching to an assembly
March 2-20: Nineteen Day Fast (Bahá’í Faith) – Fast observed by Bahá’í adults **Fasting*
March 8: Maha Shivrathri (Hinduism) – Festival celebrated in honor of the god Shiva **Fasting*
March 11 – April 9: Ramadan (Islam) – Commemoration of the Prophet Muhammad receiving divine revelation as recorded in the Qur’an **Begins evening of March 10, fasting dawn until dusk or sundown*
March 18: Clean Monday/Ash Monday (Orthodox Christianity) – Start of Lent for Orthodox Christians
March 21: Nowruz (Zoroastrianism, Bahá’í Faith, etc.) – Persian New Year **Begins in the evening of March 20*
March 21: Ta’anit Esther (Judaism) – Fast of Esther **Minor fasting when sun up*
March 24: Purim (Judaism) – Festival of Lots **Begins sundown March 23*
March 24: Palm Sunday (Christianity) – Celebration of Jesus’ entrance into Jerusalem
March 24-30: Holy Week (Christianity) – The week of Holy Days before Easter
March 25: Holi (Hinduism) – Festival of Colors **Fasting*
March 28: Holy Thursday (Christianity) – Commemoration of Jesus’ Last Supper
March 29: Good Friday (Christianity) – Commemoration of the crucifixion of Jesus **Fasting*
March 31: Easter (Christianity) – Celebration of the Resurrection of Jesus
April 8: Buddha’s Birthday (Buddhism) – Holiday that commemorates the birth of the Buddha **This holiday is celebrated on different dates by different cultures and regions (usually in April or May)*
April 10: Eid al-Fitr (Islam) – Festival that marks the ending of Ramadan **Begins evening of April 9*
April 13: Vaisakhi (Sikhism) – Celebration of the formation of the religious community of Sikhs by Guru Gobind Singh
April 21: Mahavir Jayanti (Jainism) – Celebration of the birth of the founder of Jainism

April 21– May 2: Ridvan (Bahá'í Faith) – Commemoration of when the founder of the Bahá'í Faith declared his mission **Begins evening of April 20, Work restrictions April 20 sundown - April 21 sundown, April 28 sundown - April 29 sundown, and May 1 sundown - May 2 sundown*

April 22: Ta'anit Bechorot (Judaism) – Fast of the First Born **Fasting*

April 23-30: Passover (Judaism) – Festival of Freedom Exodus from Egyptian Slavery **Begins sundown on April 22, food restrictions all days, Work restrictions 4/22 sundown – 4/24 sundown and 4/28 sundown - 4/30 sundown*

April 28: Palm Sunday (Orthodox Christianity) – Celebration of Jesus' entrance into Jerusalem

April 28-May 4: Holy Week (Orthodox Christianity) – The week of Holy Days before Easter

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

May 2: Holy Thursday (Orthodox Christianity) – Commemoration of Jesus' Last Supper

May 3: Good Friday (Orthodox Christianity) – Commemoration of the crucifixion of Jesus **Fasting*

May 5: Easter (Orthodox Christianity) – Celebration of the Resurrection of Jesus

May 9: Ascension (Christianity) – Commemoration of the ascension of Jesus into heaven

May 24: Declaration of the Báb (Bahá'í Faith) – Celebration of Ali Muhammad's announcement that he was the "gate" to the promised coming of all religions **Begins evening of May 23, work restriction*

May 29: Ascension of Bahá'u'lláh (Bahá'í Faith) – the anniversary of the passing of Bahá'u'lláh **Begins evening of May 28*

June 12-13: Shavuot (Judaism) – Festival of Receiving the Torah **Begins sundown on June 11, work restriction starts sundown June 11 and continues through June 13.*

June 17: Eid al-Adha (Islam) – the Festival of Sacrifice, honoring Abraham's willingness to offer his son to God

July 7: Muharram (Islam) – Islamic calendar new year

July 10: Martyrdom of The Báb (Bahá'í Faith) – the memorial of the execution of The Báb **Work restriction*

July 16: Ashura (Islam) – Commemoration of martyrdom of Hussein, a grandson of the Prophet Muhammad, and when Moses fasted in gratitude for the liberation of the Israelites **Begins at sundown July 15, fasting*

July 23: Tzom Tammuz (Judaism) – Fast commemorating breaching of the walls of Jerusalem **Fasting*

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