

# MAJOR RELIGIOUS HOLY DAYS 2018 – 2019

The list below includes many of the most important holy/holidays for the major religious traditions.

## BUDDHIST. CHRISTIAN. HINDU. ISLAM. JUDAISM.

\*Begins at sundown the day before this date and ends at sundown on this date.

Holidays in **BOLD print**, mean they are of the most important for the tradition.

Dates underlined are those included on the University Calendar.

### JULY 2018

- 7/22** \*Tisha B'Av. *Jewish*. Day of fasting in remembrance of the destruction of the Temple in 586 b.c.e and 70 c.e. [**7/21-7/22**]  
**7/22** **Asalha Puja/Dharma Day**. *Buddhist*. Observance of when Gautama Buddha made his first public proclamation to five ascetics at Deer Park, Banares. He taught the middle way, the noble eight-fold path and the four noble truths.

### AUGUST 2018

- 8/13** **Obon..** *Buddhist*. Japanese Buddhist festival to honor deceased ancestors. Involves lighting of bonfires, traditional meals, paper lanterns, folk dances.  
**8/15** **Assumption of Mary**. *Christian*.  
**8/22** \***Eid al Adha**. *Islam*. Festival of sacrifice. The day after Arafat, marks the end of the Hajj. [**8/21-8/22**]  
**8/26** Raksha Bandhan. *Hindu*. Festival honoring the loving ties between brothers and sisters in a family.

### SEPTEMBER 2018

- 9/1** The Indictus. *Orthodox Christian*. The New Ecclesiastical Year.  
**9/3** **Krishna Janmashtamim**. *Hindu*. Commemoration of the birth of Krishna – the 8th incarnation of god Vishnu.  
**9/8** Nativity of the Theotokos. *Orthodox Christian*. Mother of God.  
**9/10** \***Rosh Hashanah**. *Jewish*. Jewish New Year. A time of introspection, abstinence, prayer [**9/9-9/10**]  
**9/12** \*Muharram/Al-Jijra. *Islam*. The date of the Emigration of Muhammad and his followers to Medina in 622 c.e. Islamic New Year.  
**9/14** Ganesh Chaturthi. *Hindu*. Festival honoring the god of prosperity, prudence and success.  
**9/14** Exaltation of the Holy Cross. *Orthodox Christian*.  
**9/19** \***Yom Kippur**. *Jewish*. Jewish Day of Atonement. This holiest day of the Jewish year is observed with strict fasting and ceremonial repentance. [**9/18-9/19**]  
**9/21** \*Ashura. *Islam*. There is an optional fast this day. The Shi'a observance is based on the martyrdom of Prophet Muhammad's grandson, Husayn, martyred on this day in 683/684 c.e. at the battle of Karbala. Sunni observance is related to numerous Biblical and Qur'anic events.  
**9/24** \***Sukkot**. *Jewish*. Feast of Tabernacles which celebrates the harvest and the protection of the people of Israel as they wandered in the wilderness dwelling in tents. [**9/23-9/24**]

### OCTOBER 2018

- 10/1** \***Shemini Atzeret**. *Jewish*. Completion of the annual cycle of reading of the Torah. [**9/30-10/1**]  
**10/2** \***Simhat Torah**. *Jewish*. Day to celebrate the reading of the Law. [**10/1-10/2**]  
**10/9** **Navaratri**. *Hindu*. Festival of the divine mother honoring Durga, wife of Shiva, and seeking her blessings. Also known as Durga Puja, Navaratri (nine nights) symbolizes the triumph of good over evil and marks the start of autumn.  
**10/18** Dasera/Dussehra. *Hindu*. Celebration of victory and valor. Lord Rama is remembered as winning a victory over evil.

### NOVEMBER 2018

- 11/1** **All Saint's Day**. *Christian*.  
**11/2** All Soul's Day. *Christian*.  
**11/7** **Diwali**. *Hindu. Buddhist. Sikh. Jain*. Festival of lights symbolizing the human urge to move toward the light  
**11/21** \*Mawlid an-Nabi. *Islam*. Commemoration of the birthday of Prophet Muhammad, founder of Islam, in about 570 c.e. Not universally observed.

11/21 Presentation of the Theotokos in the Temple. *Orthodox Christian*.

#### DECEMBER 2018

12/2 Advent/First Sunday. *Christian*.

12/3 **\*Hanukkah.** *Jewish*. Festival of Lights. Commemorates the Maccabean recapture and rededication of the Jerusalem Temple in 165-164 b.c.e. [12/2-12/10]

12/8 Rohatsu/Bodhi Day. *Buddhist*. Buddhist celebration of the enlightenment of Buddha

12/8 Immaculate Conception. *Christian*.

12/25 **\*Christmas.** *Christian. Protestant. Roman Catholic*. Christian celebration of the birth of Jesus Christ. Observed by prayers, exchanging of gifts and family parties. [12/24-12/25]

12/25 Feast of the Nativity. *Orthodox Christian*.

#### JANUARY 2019

1/1 **The Solemnity of Mary.** *Christian*.

1/6 Epiphany. *Christian*. This date commemorates the revelation of God through Jesus Christ and marks the time the three wise men arrived in Bethlehem and presented gifts to baby Jesus.

1/6 **Nativity of Christ.** *Orthodox Christian*.

1/21 Mahayana New Year. *Buddhist*.

1/20 \*Tu BiShvat. *Jewish*.

#### FEBRUARY 2019

2/2 Presentation of Our Lord in the Temple. *Orthodox Christian*.

2/5 **Chinese New Year.** *Buddhist. Confucian. Taoist*. Begins a fifteen Day Festival for Chinese people of all religions. Family reunions with thanksgiving and remembrance of departed relatives take place. Traditionally a religious ceremony honors Heaven and Earth.

2/8 \*Nirvana Day. *Hindu. Buddhist*. A regional observance of the death of the Buddha.

2/9 Vasant Panchami. *Hindu*. Celebration dedicated to Saraswati, goddess of Learning.

#### MARCH 2019

3/4 Maha Shivaratri. *Hindu*. Festival in honor of Lord Shiva and his marriage to Goddess Parvati

3/5 Shrove Tuesday. *Christian*.

3/6 **Ash Wednesday.** *Christian. Protestant. Roman Catholic*. Lent begins.

3/11 Great Lent begins. *Orthodox Christian*.

3/17 Sunday of Orthodoxy. *Orthodox Christian*.

3/21 **\*Purim.** *Jewish*. Celebration of the deliverance of the Jewish minority in Persia from genocide. [2/21-2/22]

3/21 **Magha Puja Day.** *Buddhist*. Celebration of the presentation of teaching by Lord Buddha to an assembly of holy men.

3/21 Holi. *Hindu*. Festival of Colors.

3/25 Annunciation. *Orthodox Christian*.

#### APRIL 2019

4/3 \*Laylat al-Mi'raj. *Islam*. Commemorates Muhammad's night journey from Mecca to Jerusalem and ascension to heaven.

4/6 **Ramayana.** *Hindu*.

4/14 **Palm Sunday.** *Christian. Eastern Orthodox. Protestant. Roman Catholic*. A commemoration of Jesus' entry into Jerusalem as crowds lined his path with palm fronds.

4/14 Rama Navami. *Hindu*.

4/18 Maundy Thursday. *Christian. Protestant. Roman Catholic*. Thursday before Easter, commemorates the Last Supper of Jesus with the Apostles.

4/19 Therevadin New Year. *Buddhist*.

4/19 **Good Friday.** *Christian. Protestant. Roman Catholic*. Christian remembrance of the crucifixion of Jesus and related events.

4/19 Hanuman Jayanti. *Hindu*.

4/20 Saturday of Lazarus. *Orthodox Christian*.

- 4/20** \***Pesach**. *Jewish*. Jewish 8 day pilgramige festival celebrating the Exodus from slavery to freedom. Also known as Passover. [4/19-4/27]
- 4/21** \*Laylat al-Bara'ah. *Islam*. Night of Forgiveness (also known as Shab-e baraat). A night of prayer to God for forgiveness for oneself and for the dead. Preparation for Ramadan through intense prayer begins on this date.
- 4/21** **Easter**. *Christian*. The most holy of Christian Sacred days. The day commemorates the resurrection of Jesus Christ from his death by crucifixion.
- 4/21** Palm Sunday. *Orthodox Christian*.
- 4/26** **Great and Holy Friday**. *Orthodox Christian*.
- 4/28** Divine Mercy Sunday. *Christian*.
- 4/28** **Orthodox Eas/ter/Pascha**. *Orthodox Christian*.

#### MAY 2019

- 5/2** \*Yom HaShoa. *Jewish*. Jewish Holocaust Day. Remembering the six million Jews killed by the Nazis in 1933-45. [5/1-5/2]
- 5/6-6/4** \***Ramadan**. *Islam*. 9th month on Islamic calendar, devoted fasting from first light to sunset. In this month, the Prophet Muhammad's reception of the divine revelation, the Qur'an, is commemorated. It is the holiest period of the Islamic Year. The start date is set either by following Saudi practice of by moonsighting.
- 5/8** **Visakha Puja Day/Buddha Day**. *Buddhist*. Marking of the birth, enlightenment and death (attainment of Nirvana) of Lord Buddha.
- 5/23** Lag B'Omer. *Jewish*. Observation of the counting of the day - the link - between Pesach and Shavuot.
- 5/30** **Ascension Thursday**. *Christian*.

#### JUNE 2019

- 6/5** \***Eid al-Fitr**. *Islam*. Marks the end of Ramadan. It is a festival of thanksgiving to God. [6/4-6/5]
- 6/6** Ascension. *Orthodox Christian*
- 6/9** **Pentecost/Whit Sunday**. *Christian*. Christian observation of the day when the God the Holy Spirit came to the disciples in the forms of tongues of fire and rushing wind. It is a traditional day for baptism and confirmation of new Christians.
- 6/9** \***Shavuot**. *Jewish*. Celebration of Moses' descent from Mt. Sinai with the Ten Commandments. [6/8-6/10]
- 6/16** Trinity Sunday. *Christian*.
- 6/16** Pentecost. *Orthodox Christian*.
- 6/23** Corpus Christi. *Christian*.