

HOLY DAYS & RELIGIOUS OBSERVANCES 2023-24

MONTH	DAY	DESCRIPTION	TYPE
September	15-17	Rosh Hashanah It's literally the "head of the year", or Jewish New Year, celebrated with remembrance and judgment in the 10 days of reflection and atonement leading up to Yom Kippur. Common traditions include large meals and prayer.	Jewish
	24-25	Yom Kippur It is considered the holiest of days for Jews, dedication to reparation and abstinence. Common traditions include a day of fasting, praying and the lighting of a Yahrzeit memorial candle in memory of loved ones.	Jewish
	29-Oct 6	Sukkot/Succot It is a week-long festival celebrating and giving thanks for the Fall harvest. Common traditions include decorating the Sukkah, an outdoor "room" with a view of the sky.	Jewish
October	6-8	Shemini Atzeret/Simchat Torah It features the prayer for rain and the Yizkor prayer for the dead while Simchat Torah celebrates the Torah with marching, dancing and reading of the Torah.	Jewish
November	12	Diwali/Deepavali Known as the "Festival of Lights," it is celebrated by various Southern Asian religions. Participants celebrate the triumph of good over evil (or lightness over darkness). Common traditions include the lighting of oil lamps, setting off fireworks and praying.	Hindu Sikh Jain Buddhist
December	25	Christmas Day (Christian) This holiday honors the birth of Jesus Christ and his self-sacrifice. Common traditions include gift-giving, praying in church, decorating Christmas trees and visiting family.	Christian
January (2024)	2	Vaikunta Ekadasi Dedicated to Lord Vishnu, it is believed that on this day, the gate to heaven opens. Common traditions include fasting, worshiping, meditating and singing.	Hindu
	15	Pongal A harvest festival dedicated to thanking the Sun God for agricultural abundance.	Hindu
February	14	Ash Wednesday Signifying the beginning of Lent, a 40-day period leading up to Easter, during which many Christians give up some of their common pleasures. Common traditions include wearing a cross of ashes on one's forehead and attending church service.	Christian
March	8	Maha Shivaratri Honoring Shiva, one of the Hindu deities. Common traditions include fasting, meditating, singing and all night worshiping.	Hindu
	11	Ramadan/Ramazan Focusing on faith, this holy observance celebrates the Quran being revealed for the first time during this month on the night of Laylat al Qadr. Common traditions include fasting during daylight hours, eating the iftar meal each night after reading the Quran, refraining from any bad habits and attending night prayers at Mosques.	Islam
	12	Ramakrishna Honoring the birth of Ramakrishna, a Hindu mystic and saint.	Hindu
	20-21	Norouz/Norooz/Naw-Ruz The Bahá'í New Year, honoring spring and the new life that comes with it. Traditions include praying, dancing and eating large meals.	Baha i
	23-24	Purim Commemorating Esther saving the Jews that were living in Persia. Traditions include	Jewish

		reading the Book of Esther, dressing in costumes, holding carnivals and eating hamantaschen (triangular, filled pastries).	
	29	Good Friday Commemorating the execution of Jesus, this holy day occurs the Friday before Easter. Traditions include attending church service, praying and fasting.	Christian
	31	Easter Recognizing Jesus' resurrection from death. Common traditions include gifting others with colorful eggs and candy (sometimes chocolate-shaped bunnies) and gathering with family for a large meal.	Christian
April	6	Laylat Al Qadr Commemorating the Quran first being revealed to Muhammed, this holy day is traditionally celebrated on the 27th day of Ramadan. Common traditions include praying late into the evening.	Islam
	9-10	Eid Al-Fitr Signifying the last day of Ramadan and the end of the fasting period. Common traditions include exchanging gifts, praying, and feasting with friends and family.	Islam
	13	Baisakhi/Birthday of the Khalsa Celebrating the New Year and founding of Sikhism in 1699. Common traditions include dance, music, parades and the chanting of scripture.	Sikh
	22-30	Passover/Pesach Honoring the emancipation of the Jewish slaves from ancient Egypt and the delivering of the 10 Commandments from God. Common traditions include the ritual seder meal, reading from the Haggadah, family gatherings and lighting of the ahrzeit memorial candle.	Jewish
May	5	Pascha Recognizes Jesus' resurrection from death. Twelve weeks of preparation precede this holy day. Celebrated with a collection of services combined as one.	Eastern Orthodox
	6	Yom HaShoah Held to remember the lives lost in the Holocaust and the many brave activists who fought against it. Common traditions include memorial ceremonies during which names of the dead are read aloud and the reciting of the Kaddish (prayer for the dead).	Jewish
June	11-13	Shavuot Commemorates the giving of the Torah from God to the nation of Israel on top of Mount Sinai. Common traditions include studying the Torah, devotional programs, the lighting of the Yahrzeit memorial candle and reciting Yizkor, the prayer for the dead.	Jewish
	16	Martyrdom of Guru Arjan Dev Sahib Commemorates Guru Arjan Dev Sahib becoming the first martyr. Common traditions include praying, singing hymns, and attending Sikhism-based lectures.	Sikh
	16-17	Eid al-Adha Eid al-Adha or the Feast of Sacrifice is the second and the largest of the two main holidays celebrated in Islam. It honours the willingness of Abraham to sacrifice his son, either Isaac or Ismail, as an act of obedience to God's command.	Islam
July	16-17	Ashura The 10th day of Muharram, the first month of the Islamic calendar, known as 'Ashura, is observed by Muslims around the world. Most notably known for the Battle of Karbala in 61 A.H. / 680 C.E., in which Husayn, grandson of the prophet Muhammad, was killed. The observance of 'Ashura also traces back to the earliest days of Islam when the prophet Muhammad is reported to have commanded his followers to fast on that day in honor of the exodus of the Israelites from Egypt and in order to seek atonement for their sins.	Islam

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	11-12	Yom Kippur It is considered the holiest of days for Jews, dedication to reparation and abstinence. Common traditions include a day of fasting, praying and the lighting of a Yahrzeit memorial candle in memory of loved ones.	Jewish
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February	26	Maha Shivaratri Honoring Shiva, one of the Hindu deities. Common traditions include fasting, meditating, singing and all night worshiping.	Hindu
March	1-31	Ramadan/Ramazan Focusing on faith, this holy observance celebrates the Quran being revealed for the first time during this month on the night of Laylat al Qadr. Common traditions include fasting during daylight hours, eating the iftar meal each night after reading the Quran, refraining from any bad habits and attending night prayers at Mosques.	Islam
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Website Content - Holy Days & Religious Observances

NC State respects all faiths and cultures. Please use this calendar as a resource for education and accommodation as you plan classroom, academic and co-curricular events.

When scheduling tests, deadlines, events or activities, it is vital that we reasonably accommodate all faculty, staff and students for observation of their religious holidays. It is against federal law to discriminate on the basis of religious or spiritual beliefs.

For students: If you have a question about an absence for a holiday that is not listed, please contact the Division of Academic and Student Affairs (DASA) at absence-verification@ncsu.edu and see the [class absence verification website](#).

For questions about this calendar, please contact the Office for Institutional Equity and Diversity at equalopportunity@ncsu.edu.

About the Holy Days Observances Calendar

- Some religious communities limit or avoid their use of technology during holy days, which also include the Sabbath (celebrated by Jews from Friday night through Saturday night). Such technology includes but is not limited to the use of virtual learning platforms.
- Bahá'í, Judaic and Islamic observances begin at sundown and end at sundown on the dates listed.
- "Kosher restrictions apply" refers to the dietary restrictions of Jewish Law that include avoidance of pork, shellfish and mixing dairy with meat.
- "Halal restrictions apply" refers to the dietary restrictions of Islamic Law. These include pork and alcohol.
- Although the dates listed are based on the Gregorian calendar, many cultures and religions are lunar or solar-based
- Not all holy days in every religious and spiritual tradition are included in this calendar and there may be some variances to dates due to regional differences.
- There are numerous spaces available across campus for prayer, meditation and quiet reflection. [Click here](#) to learn more about the locations of our interfaith prayer and meditation spaces.