



# Religious Observance Calendar 2023-2024 School Year

## July 2023

- July 12 -- Apostles' Feast (Christian - Coptic)
- July 27 -- Tisha B'av, begins Sundown, July 26 (Jewish)
- July 28 -- Ashura, begins Sundown, July 27 (Islamic)

## August 2023

- August 7 -- Saint Mary's Fast (Christian - Coptic)
- August 15 -- Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary (Christian - Catholic/Orthodox)
- August 22 -- Saint Mary's Feast (Christian - Coptic)
- August 30 -- Ullambana Day (Buddhist)

## September 2023

- September 16-17 -- Rosh Hashanah, begins Sundown, September 15 (Jewish)
- September 25 -- Yom Kippur, begins Sundown, September 24 (Jewish)
- September 27 -- Eid e Milad, begins Sundown, September 26 (Islamic)
- September 30-October 6 -- Sukkot, begins Sundown, September 29 (Jewish)

## October 2023

- October 15-24 -- Navratri/Dussehra (Hindu)
- October 31 -- Reformation Day (Christian - Lutheran)

## November 2023

- November 1 -- All Saints' Day (Christian - Catholic/Protestant)
- November 12 -- Diwali (Hindu)

## December 2023

- December 8-15 -- Chanukkah, begins Sundown, December 7 (Jewish)
- December 8 -- Bodhi Day (Buddhist)
- December 8 -- Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary (Christian - Catholic/Orthodox)
- December 25 -- Christmas (Christian - Catholic/Protestant)

## January 2024

- January 1 -- Solemnity of Mary, the Holy Mother of God (Christian - Catholic)
- January 6 -- Epiphany (Christian - Catholic/Protestant)
- January 7 -- Christmas, Julian Calendar (Christian - Coptic/Orthodox)
- January 14 -- Julian Calendar New Year (Christian - Coptic/Orthodox)
- January 19 -- Theophany (Christian - Orthodox)
- January 20 -- Epiphany (Christian - Coptic)

## February 2024

- February 7 -- Isra and Miraj, begins Sundown, February 6 (Islamic)
- February 10 -- Lunar Calendar New Year
- February 13 -- Shrove Tuesday (Christian - Catholic/Protestant)
- February 14 -- Ash Wednesday/Lent Begins (Christian - Catholic/Protestant)

## March 2024

- March 8 -- Maha Shivaratri (Hindu)
- March 11-April 9 -- Ramadan, begins Sundown, March 10 (Islamic)
- March 18 -- Great Lent Begins (Christian - Coptic/Orthodox)
- March 24 -- Purim, begins Sundown, March 23 (Jewish)
- March 24 -- Palm Sunday (Christian - Catholic/Protestant)
- March 25 -- Holi, begins Sundown, March 24 (Hindu)
- March 25 -- Annunciation of the Lord (Christian - Catholic/Protestant)
- March 28 -- Maundy/Holy Thursday (Christian - Catholic/Protestant)
- March 29 -- Good Friday (Christian - Catholic/Protestant)
- March 31 -- Easter (Christian - Catholic/Protestant)

## April 2024

- April 7 -- Annunciation of the Lord (Christian - Coptic/Orthodox)
- April 10 -- Eid al-Fitr, begins Sundown, April 9 (Islamic)
- April 17 -- Ram Navami (Hindu)
- April 23-30 -- Pesach (Passover), begins Sundown, April 22 (Jewish)
- April 28 -- Palm Sunday (Christian - Coptic/Orthodox)

## May 2024

- May 2 -- Great and Holy Thursday, Julian Calendar (Christian - Coptic/Orthodox)
- May 3 -- Good Friday, Julian Calendar (Christian - Coptic/Orthodox)
- May 5 -- Pascha (Easter), Julian Calendar (Christian - Coptic/Orthodox)
- May 9 -- Ascension of the Lord (Christian - Catholic/Protestant)
- May 13 -- Yom Hazikaron (Holocaust Remembrance Day), begins Sundown, May 12 (Jewish)
- May 14 -- Yom Ha'atzmaut (Israel Independence Day), begins Sundown, May 13 (Jewish)
- May 19 -- Pentecost Sunday (Christian - Catholic/Protestant)
- May 26 -- Buddha's Birthday (Buddhist)

## June 2024

- June 12-13 -- Shavuot, begins Sundown, June 11 (Jewish)
- June 13 -- Ascension of the Lord (Christian - Coptic/Orthodox)
- June 17 -- Eid al-Adha, begins Sundown, June 16 (Islamic)
- June 23-- Pentecost Sunday (Christian - Coptic/Orthodox)
- June 24 -- Whit Monday (Christian - Orthodox)

## July 2024

- July 17 -- Ashura, begins Sundown, July 16 (Islamic)
- July 12 -- Apostles' Feast (Christian - Coptic)

## August 2024

- August 7 -- Saint Mary's Fast (Christian - Coptic)
- August 13 -- Tisha B'av, begins Sundown, August 12 (Jewish)
- August 15 -- Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary (Christian - Catholic/Orthodox)
- August 18 -- Ullambana Day (Buddhist)
- August 22 -- Saint Mary's Feast (Christian - Coptic)

This calendar is presented by the University Chaplains Association. Please note, some dates may shift throughout the year based on the lunar cycles. Should you have any questions, please contact us at [uca.odu@gmail.com](mailto:uca.odu@gmail.com) or visit [ucaatodu.org](http://ucaatodu.org).



## Religious Observance Calendar 2021-2022 School Year

### Buddhist

Bodhi Day -- The day that the historical Buddha, Siddhartha Gautama (Shakyamuni), experienced enlightenment.

Buddha's Birthday -- The birthday of the Buddha. Also called Vesak Day.

Ullambana Day -- The day of offering filial piety to parents.

### Christian (Catholic/Coptic/Orthodox/Protestant)

All Saints' Day -- Christian festival celebrated in honor of all the Saints, both known and unknown.

Annunciation of the Lord -- The Solemnity of the Annunciation is celebrated nine months before the Nativity of the Lord, Christmas. The Annunciation recalls the day when the Archangel Gabriel appeared to Mary and revealed God's will that she become the Mother of the Son of God, and she accepted.

Apostles' Feast -- The Apostles' Feast follows the Apostles' Fast. This commemorates the fast observed by the disciples after the Ascension of Christ. The fast starts on the Monday that follows Pentecost and ends on the Apostles' Feast, which commemorates the apostles Peter and Paul.

Ascension of the Lord -- Commemorates the bodily Ascension of Jesus Christ into Heaven.

Ash Wednesday -- This day marks the beginning of Lent. Ashes are worn as a reminder that we are creatures and that our lives were given to us. Also, they remind us that our lasting home is in eternity with God not here.

Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary (Theotokos)/Saint Mary's Feast -- The Immaculate Mother of God, the ever Virgin Mary, having completed the course of her earthly life, was assumed body and soul into heavenly glory.

Christmas -- The celebration of the birth of Jesus Christ.

Easter Sunday/Pascha -- The celebration of Jesus being raised from the dead.

Epiphany -- Celebrates the revelation of God incarnate as Jesus Christ. Commemorates principally (but not solely) the visit of the Magi to the Christ Child, and thus Jesus' physical manifestation.

Good Friday -- The day Jesus was crucified and died.

Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary (Theotokos) -- The conception of the Virgin Mary, free from original sin by virtue of the merits of her son Jesus.

Lent/Great Lent -- Lent is a six week period of prayer and fasting in anticipation of Easter.

Maundy/Holy Thursday/Great and Holy Thursday -- The institution of the Lord's Supper.

Palm Sunday -- Christian feast that falls on the Sunday before Easter. The feast commemorates Jesus' triumphal entry into Jerusalem, an event mentioned in each of the four canonical Gospels.

Pentecost Sunday/Whit Monday -- Commemorates the coming of the Holy Spirit in the form of flames to the Apostles, thus allowing the apostles to speak in other languages through 'tongues of fire,' and they started preaching the word of Jesus. Many Christians recognise this day as the birth of the Church.

Reformation Day -- Anniversary of the day Martin Luther is said to have posted his Ninety-five Theses on the door of the church in Wittenberg, Germany (October 31, 1517). It was later identified by Protestants as the beginning of the Reformation.

Saint Mary's Fast -- This is a two-week fast that helps one to prepare for the Feast of the Assumption.

Shrove Tuesday -- The last day before the beginning of Lent. This day is marked through the eating of pancakes or other items you might be fasting from during Lent. The holiday is celebrated in many different cultures through names such as Mardi Gras and Carnival. As a popular feast day, the holiday is celebrated religiously by Christians but also culturally by many others worldwide.

Solemnity of Mary, the Holy Mother of God (Theotokos) -- A feast day of the Blessed Virgin Mary under the aspect of her motherhood of Jesus Christ, whom Christians see as the Lord, Son of God.

Theophany -- This observance commemorates Christ's baptism by John the Baptist in the River Jordan, beginning of Christ's ministry on earth and revealing the Holy Trinity of God, Jesus and the Holy Spirit to mankind.

## Hindu

Diwali -- Festival of Lights. This holiday is typically celebrated by families sharing various traditional rituals in their homes.

Holi -- Festival of Spring or Festival of Colors. This day is typically celebrated by families in India, Nepal, and other parts of Asia by partaking in various regional traditions.

Maha Shivaratri -- Hindu festival celebrated annually in honor of the god Shiva. The name also refers to the night when Shiva performs the heavenly dance called Tandava.

Navratri/Dussehra -- This is one of the most revered Hindu festivals and is observed in the honor of Mother Goddess Durga.

Ram Navami -- This celebration commemorates the birth of Lord Rama to the king of Ayodhya, King Dasharatha.

### Islamic

Ashura -- Shi'a Muslims commemorate the martyrdom of Husayn ibn Ali, Muhammad's grandson. According to Sunni Muslims, Muhammad fasted and asked others to do so on this day as well.

Eid al-Adha -- Festival of Sacrifice. Commemorates the willingness of Abraham to sacrifice his son Ishmael. God provided a sheep to sacrifice in Ishmael's place

Eid al-Fitr -- Marks the end of Ramadan, the month of fasting, and the holiest month in Islamic tradition. It literally means "breaking the fast." Eid al Fitr is Allah's (God's) reward for believers who have fasted during the holy month of Ramadan. This is also believers thanking Allah (God) for giving them the chance and the strength to carry out His commands during the blessed month of Ramadan.

Eid e Milad -- Recognizes the birthday of the Prophet Muhammad. The holiday honors Muhammad's life and teachings.

Isra and Miraj -- Celebrates the night when the Prophet (PBUH) ascended to the Heavens. "Exalted is He who took His Servant by night from al-Masjid al-Haram to al-Masjid al- Aqsa, whose surroundings We have blessed, to show him of Our signs. Indeed, He is the Hearing, the Seeing" (Quran; Surah Isra: 1).

Ramadan -- The most sacred month of the year in Islamic culture. Muslims observe the month of Ramadan, to mark that Allah, or God, gave the first chapters of the Quran to the Prophet Muhammad in 610. During Ramadan, Muslims fast from sunrise to sunset, abstain from pleasures and pray to become closer to God.

### Jewish

Chanukkah -- In the second century BCE, the Holy Land was ruled by the Seleucids (Syrian-Greeks), who tried to force the people of Israel to accept Greek culture and beliefs instead of their own. Against all odds, a small band of faithful Jews led by Judah the Maccabee, defeated one of the mightiest armies on earth, drove the Greeks from the land, reclaimed the Holy Temple in Jerusalem and rededicated it

to the service of G-d. When they sought to light the Temple's Menorah (the seven-branched candelabrum), they found only a single cruse of olive oil that had escaped contamination by the Greeks. Miraculously, they lit the menorah and the one-day supply of oil lasted for eight days, until new oil could be prepared under conditions of ritual purity. To commemorate and publicize these miracles, the sages instituted the festival of Chanukah. Jews light an eight branched candelabra and eat special foods to commemorate the miracles.

Pesach (Passover) -- The eight-day festival of Passover is celebrated in the early spring, from the 15th through the 22nd of the Hebrew month of Nissan. It commemorates the emancipation of the Israelites from slavery in ancient Egypt. It is observed by avoiding leaven and highlighted by the Seder meals that include four cups of wine, eating matza and bitter herbs, and retelling the story of the Exodus. The first and last two days are like Sabbaths and no work is permitted.

Purim -- It commemorates the salvation of the Jewish people in ancient Persia from Haman's plot "to destroy, kill and annihilate all the Jews, young and old, infants and women, in a single day," as recorded in the Megillah (book of Esther).

Rosh Hashanah -- It is the birthday of the universe, the day G-d created Adam and Eve, and it's celebrated as the end of the Jewish year. The holiday is two days and involves blowing a ram's horn, having festive meals, and being in synagogue. Both days are considered like a Sabbath and no work is permitted.

Shavuot -- The holiday of Shavuot is a two-day holiday. The word Shavuot (or Shavuot) means "weeks." It celebrates the completion of the seven-week "Omer" counting period between Passover and Shavuot. The Torah was given by G-d to the Jewish people on Mount Sinai on Shavuot more than 3,300 years ago. Every year on the holiday of Shavuot we renew our acceptance of G-d's gift, and G-d "re-gives" the Torah. The two days of this holiday are like a Sabbath and no work may be done on these days.

Sukkot -- Sukkot is a weeklong Jewish holiday. Sukkot celebrates the gathering of the harvest and commemorates the miraculous protection G-d provided for the children of Israel when they left Egypt. We celebrate Sukkot by dwelling in a foliage-covered booth (known as a sukkah) and by taking the "Four Kinds" (arba minim), four special species of vegetation. The first two and last two days are observed like Sabbaths and no work is permitted.

Tisha B'av -- The 9th day of the Hebrew month of Av, is the saddest day on the Jewish calendar, on which we fast, deprive ourselves and pray. It is the culmination of the Three Weeks, a period of time during which we mark the destruction of the Holy Temple in Jerusalem.

Yom Ha'atzmaut (Israel Independence Day) -- Israel's Independence Day is celebrated on the fifth day of the month of Iyar, which is the Hebrew date of the formal establishment of the State of Israel, when members of the "provisional government" read and signed a Declaration of Independence in Tel Aviv. The original date corresponded to May 14, 1948. It is a day of celebration.

Yom Hazikaron (Holocaust Remembrance Day) -- Yom Hashoah is a day set aside for Jews to remember the Holocaust. The name comes from the Hebrew word 'shoah', which means 'whirlwind'. Yom Hashoah was established in Israel in 1959 by law. It falls on the 27th of the Jewish month of Nissan, a date chosen because it is the anniversary of the Warsaw Ghetto uprising.

Yom Kippur -- Yom Kippur is the holiest day of the year, when we are closest to G-d and to the essence of our souls. Yom Kippur means "Day of Atonement." It is the 10th day of the Jewish year and is a full day (sunset to sunset) fast and is typically spent in synagogue. It is like a Sabbath and no work may be done on this day.