

# 2015-2016 Holiday Calendar

This calendar of religious, national and community holidays has been prepared by the JCRC to assist community institutions in planning their activities. Educators are reminded that students must be given excused absences to meet religious obligations and that reasonable accommodations must be made for students to make up missed work. Please be sensitive about scheduling events so that students and employees do not miss significant activities and opportunities due to religious observance. For a more comprehensive list of Jewish holidays, please consult Hebcal Jewish Calendar at [www.hebcal.com](http://www.hebcal.com). Electronic copies of this calendar can be found at [www.jcouncil.org/2015-2016HolidayCalendar](http://www.jcouncil.org/2015-2016HolidayCalendar)

All Jewish holidays begin shortly BEFORE SUNSET on the eve of the day indicated on this calendar and end approximately one hour after sunset. Baha'i and Islamic festivals are also observed sunset to sunset. Similarly, SHABBAT, the Jewish Sabbath, which commemorates the day G-d rested after the creation of the universe, begins shortly before sunset on Friday. On Shabbat, Jews have a traditional obligation to refrain from "creating," such as writing, driving, and using electricity. Many Jewish festivals have similar traditional restrictions.

## September 2015

National Hispanic Heritage Month

**September 5, Krishna Jayanti (Janmashtami):** Celebrates the birth of Lord Vishnu, giver of the Bhagwat Gita, the Hindu book of guiding principles.

**September 7, Labor Day:** National tribute to the contributions of workers. Legal holiday; all schools closed.

♦ **September 14-15, Rosh Ha'Shanah:** The Jewish New Year, 5776, ushers in a ten day period of reflection and reconciliation. Begins sunset Sep 13.

♦ **September 18, Paryushan Parva:** Final day of an eight day period of Jain repentance and forgiveness.

♦ **September 23, Yom Kippur:** The most solemn day on the Jewish calendar, this Day of Atonement is a time for Jews to repair their relationships with G-d and their fellow human beings. Begins sunset Sep 22.

**September 23-26, Eid al-Adha:** A four day Muslim commemoration of Ibrahim's willingness to offer up his son as an act of obedience to Allah. Begins sunset Sep 22.

♦ **September 28-29, Sukkot:** First two days of a week long festival commemorating the Israelites' 40 year period in the wilderness and the fall harvest. Many Jews today eat and sometimes sleep in temporary dwellings called sukkot in observance of the biblical ordinance. Begins sunset Sep 27.

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## October 2015

♦ **October 5, Shmini Atzeret:** A biblically ordained gathering following and celebrating the last day of the Jewish holiday of Sukkot. Begins sunset Oct 4.

♦ **October 6, Simchat Torah:** Marks the conclusion of the annual cycle of reading the Hebrew Bible (or 'Torah') and the start of a new cycle. Begins sunset Oct 5.

**October 12, Columbus Day:** Remembers Columbus' arrival in the Americas. Legal holiday; some schools closed.

**October 13, Navaratri:** The first day of a 10 day Hindu festival celebrating the feminine form of the divine.

♦ **October 20, Birth of the Bab:** Commemorates the 1819 birth of the Bab, the herald of the Baha'i faith; work is suspended.

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## November 2015 (con't)

Native American Heritage Month

**November 1, All Saints' Day:** A solemn Christian holiday honoring all the saints.

**November 11, Diwali:** A festival of lights observed by Hindus, Sikhs and Jains.

**November 11, Veterans Day:** A celebration of America's veterans.

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## November 2015 (con't)

♦ **November 12, Birth of Baha'u'llah:** A celebration marking the birth of the founder of the Baha'i faith, work is suspended.

**November 25, Guru Nanak Dev Sahib Birthday:** Celebrates the birth of the first Sikh teacher in 1469 CE.

**November 26, Thanksgiving Day:** A national day of gratitude. Legal holiday; all schools closed.

**November 29, First Sunday of Advent:** Marked by church services of joyful anticipation, first of four Sundays before Christmas.

## December 2015

**December 7-14, Hanukkah:** Jewish celebration of the rededication of the Temple in 164 BCE. Begins sunset Dec 6.

**December 25, Christmas:** Christian holy day marking the birth of Jesus.

**December 26, Kwanzaa:** Marks the beginning of a week long celebration emphasizing basic values of African culture, including family and community.

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## January 2016

**January 1, New Years Day and Shinto New Year (Gantan-sai):** Celebrates secular and Shinto New Year. Legal holiday; all schools closed.

**January 6, Epiphany:** A Christian commemoration of the day the three wise men visited infant Jesus and Jesus was baptized by John the Baptist.

**January 7, Nativity of Christ/Feast of Nativity:** Orthodox Christian celebration of the birth of Jesus.

**January 18, Martin Luther King Jr. Day:** A holiday devoted to national and community service, in memory of the African-American civil rights leader. Legal holiday; some schools closed.

**January 25, Tu B'Shvat:** Jewish Arbor Day, New Year for trees. Begins sunset Jan 24.

**January 27, International Day of Commemoration in Memory of the Victims of the Holocaust:** Established by the UN in addition to the spring Holocaust Remembrance set by the Jewish calendar.

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## February 2016

African American History Month

**February 3, Setsubun:** Shinto celebration of the change of seasons.

**February 8, Confucian, Daoist, Buddhist New Year:** Year of the Monkey.

**February 10, Ash Wednesday:** First day of Lent on the Christian calendar. Name derives from symbolic use of ashes to signify penitence.

**February 14, Valentine's Day:** Created to honor the martyred St. Valentine; evolved into a day to celebrate love and romance.

**February 15, Presidents Day:** A national holiday celebrating the birthdays of Washington and Lincoln. Legal holiday; some schools closed.

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♦ Denotes a holiday on which there is a traditional obligation to refrain from many activities. In addition, Jews may be fasting on the following minor holiday dates: Sept. 16, 2015 and Dec. 22, Mar. 23, Apr. 22, Jul. 24, 2016.

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## March 2016

Women's History Month

Irish-American Heritage Month

♦**March 2-20, Nineteen Day Fast:** The last month of the Baha'i calendar is recognized with a 19 day fast.

**March 17, St. Patrick's Day:** Feast day for the saint who brought Christianity to Ireland.

**March 20, Palm Sunday:** Commemorates Jesus' entrance into Jerusalem and ushers in Holy Week.

♦**March 21, Naw Ruz/Norouz:** New Year on the Baha'i, Zoroastrian, and Persian calendars.

**March 23, Magha Puja Day:** Celebrates a gathering of holy men to hear Buddha's teachings.

**March 24, Purim:** The day the Jewish people were saved from a massacre in ancient Persia; traditionally celebrated with giving money to the poor, gifts to friends, and reading the book of Esther. Begins sunset March 23.

**March 24, Maundy Thursday:** The day of the Last Supper, when Jesus washed the feet of his disciples and established the ceremony known as the Eucharist.

**March 25, Good Friday:** A solemn observance of the crucifixion of Jesus.

**March 27, Easter Sunday:** Christian holy day commemorating the resurrection of Jesus.

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## April 2016

Arab-American History Month

**April 14, Baisakhi:** Hindu/Sikh New Year for North India.

♦**April 19, Mahavir Jayanti:** Celebrates the birth of the last Jain Tirthankara (or most holy), may fall on different days in different Jain traditions.

♦**April 23-30, Passover:** An eight day celebration of the Jews' Exodus from Egypt. Many Jews adhere to strict dietary guidelines and refrain from work on the first two and last two days. Begins sunset April 22.

♦**April 21-May 2 Festival of Ridvan:** Marks the 12 days Baha'i founder Baha'u'llah resided in the garden "Ridvan" and declared his mission for G-d. Work is suspended on April 21, April 29 and May 2.

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## May 2016

Asian-Pacific American Heritage Month

Jewish American Heritage Month

**May 1, Orthodox Easter Sunday**

**May 5, Ascension Day:** A Christian holiday marking Jesus' ascent to heaven 40 days after his Easter resurrection. In the U.S. it is often recognized on the Sunday following its Thursday date.

**May 5, Yom Ha'Shoah:** A day of Holocaust remembrance. Begins sunset May 4.

**May 5, Cinco de Mayo:** Celebrates the victory of Mexican forces over a much larger French army at the Battle of Puebla.

**May 8, Mother's Day:** A celebration of motherhood, maternal bonds and the influence of mothers in society.

**May 11, Yom Ha'Zikaron:** A memorial day for those who lost their lives fighting for Israel. Begins sunset May 10.

**May 12, Yom Ha'Atzmaut:** A celebration of the establishment of the State of Israel in 1948. Begins sunset May 11.

**May 15, Pentecost:** Christian holiday commemorating the descent of the Holy Ghost upon the apostles 50 days after Easter.

**May 15, Vesak/Visakha Puja:** A commemoration of the birth, enlightenment, and death of Buddha. Also known as "Buddha Day," may fall on different days in different Buddhist traditions.

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## May 2016 (cont)

♦**May 23, Declaration of the Bab:** Commemorates the date in 1844 when the Bab announced his role as messenger of G-d. Work is suspended.

**May 26, Lag B'Omer:** On this day, practices traditionally banned between Passover and Shavuot are permitted. Begins sunset

♦**May 29, Ascension of Baha'u'llah:** A Baha'i remembrance of the death of founder, Baha'u'llah; work is suspended.

**May 30, Memorial Day:** Day of remembrance for those who died in service to the United States. Legal holiday; all schools closed.

## June 2016

**June 5, Yom Yerushalayim:** Israeli commemoration of the 1967 reunification of Jerusalem. Begins sunset June 4.

**Jun 6 - Jul 6, Ramadan:** First day of a

month long commemoration of Muhammed's divine revelation, observed with fasting during daylight hours. Begins sundown June 5.

♦**June 12-13, Shavuot:** Celebration of the spring harvest and the giving of the Torah at Mt. Sinai. Begins sunset June 11.

**June 14, Flag Day:** Celebrates adoption of the U.S. national flag.

**June 19, Juneteenth:** A celebration of African-American contributions and the end of slavery in the United States.

**June 19, Father's Day:** A celebration of fatherhood, paternal bonds and the influence of fathers in society.

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## July 2016

**July 4, Independence Day:** Celebrates the adoption in 1776 of the United States' Declaration of Independence. Legal holiday; all schools closed.

**July 7-9, Eid al Fitr:** A three day Islamic celebration marking the end of Ramadan.

♦**July 9, Martyrdom of the Bab:** A Baha'i remembrance of the execution of Savvid Ali Mohammed in 1850; work is suspended.

**July 24, Pioneer Day:** Celebrates the arrival of the first Mormon pioneer settlers into the Salt Lake Valley.

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## August 2016

**August 13, Obon:** Marks the beginning of a three day Japanese Buddhist festival to honor deceased ancestors.

**August 14, Tisha B'Av:** A twenty-five hour Jewish fast day marking the date on which both the First and Second Temple were destroyed. Begins sunset August 13.

**August 25, Krishna Jayanti (Janmashtami):** Celebrates the birth of Lord Vishnu, giver of the Bhagwat Gita, the Hindu book of guiding principles.

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### Two-Year Calendar of Major Jewish Holidays

	2016-2017	2017-2018
Rosh Hashanah	Oct. 3-4	Sep. 21-22
Yom Kippur	Oct. 12	Sep. 30
Sukkot	Oct. 17-18	Oct. 5-6
Shemini Atzeret	Oct. 24	Oct. 12
Simchat Torah	Oct. 25	Oct. 13
Passover	Apr. 11-12	Mar. 31-Apr. 1
Passover (final days)	Apr. 17-18	Apr. 6-7
Shavuot	May 31-June 1	May 20-21

