The VCU interfaith holiday calendar lists traditional holidays from various world religions. Holidays marked with an asterisk (*) typically begin and end at sundown on the dates listed. In an effort to celebrate diversity in the university community, please keep these dates in mind when scheduling university-sponsored events. If you have questions about this calendar, contact VCU HR at askhr@vcu.edu or call 804-828-0177.

**January 2024**

Jan. 1: Mary Mother of God - Roman Catholic
Celebrated on the Octave (eighth day) of Christmas, this day commemorates Mary, who gave birth to Christ.

Jan. 6: Epiphany - Protestant, Roman Catholic, Greek (Eastern) Orthodox
Commemorates the visit of the Magi to the Christ child.

Jan. 6: Epiphany - Orthodox Christian
Commemorates the baptism of Jesus in the Jordan River.

Jan. 7: Christmas - Orthodox Christian
Commemorates the birth of Jesus Christ.

Jan. 13: Lohri/Maghi - Sikh
Marks the end of winter and the celebration of harvest.

Jan. 15: Pongal/Uttarayan/Makar Sankranti - Hindu
Commemorates the arrival of spring, harvest and thanks to the Sun God.

Jan. 17: Guru Gobind Singh Jayanti - Sikh
Commemorates the birth of Guru Gobind Singh, the tenth guru of Sikhism.

Jan. 24: Tu B'Shvat - Jewish
Celebrates a connection to the Earth and environment.

**February 2024**

Feb. 1: Imbolc - Pagan*
Commemorates the beginning of spring and is celebrated at the halfway point between the winter solstice and the spring equinox.

Feb. 10: Chinese New Year - Buddhist
Commemorates the first day of the Chinese lunar calendar.

Feb. 14: Ash Wednesday/Lent begins - Protestant, Roman Catholic
Marks the beginning of six weeks of penitence, often marked by various forms of abstinence and/or fasting.

Feb. 15: Parinirvana (Nirvana Day) - Buddhist
Commemorates the day that the Buddha achieved enlightenment and his soul released from his body.

Feb. 24: Magha Puja Day - Buddhist
Commemorates the first gathering between the Buddha and his first disciples and celebrates the creation of an ideal and exemplary community.

Feb. 26-29: Ayyam-i-Ha - Baha‘i
Dedicated to socializing, being hospitable, giving to the poor and needy, and preparing for the upcoming month of fasting.

Feb. 29 - Mar. 19: Nineteen-day Fast - Baha‘i*
An obligatory sunup to sundown fast for 19 days, occurring in the last month of the Baha‘i calendar. It serves to reinvigorate the soul and bring one closer to God.

March 2024

Mar. 11 - April 10: Ramadan - Muslim*
One of the five pillars of Islam, this is a month of fasting, prayer, reflection and community that commemorates Muhammad’s first revelation.

Mar. 19: Ostara - Pagan*
Commemorates the spring equinox, when light overcomes darkness and the promises of Imbolc are fulfilled.

March 21: Naw-Ruz - Baha‘i, Zoroastrian
Commemorates the Persian New Year celebrated by various ethnic and religious communities, including Parsis, Ismaili Muslims and members of the Baha’I faith.

Mar. 23: Purim - Jewish*
Celebrates the day Esther, Queen of Persia, saved the Jewish people.

Mar. 24: Palm Sunday - Protestant, Roman Catholic
Commemorates Jesus’ entry into Jerusalem.
Mar. 25: Holi - Hindu
A celebration to welcome in spring and seen as a new beginning where people can start fresh and release their inhibitions.

Mar. 25-27: Hola Mohalla - Sikh
A gathering of Sikhs for military exercises and mock battles on the day following the festival of Holi at Anandpur Sahib.

Mar. 28: Holy Thursday - Roman Catholic
Holy Thursday, the first day of the Easter Triduum, commemorates Christ's Passion.

Mar. 29: Good Friday - Protestant, Roman Catholic
Commemorates the crucifixion of Jesus Christ at Calvary.

Mar. 30: Holy Saturday - Roman Catholic
Commemorates the 40-hour vigil that followers of Jesus Christ held after his death and burial on Good Friday and before his resurrection on Easter Sunday.

Mar. 31: Easter - Protestant, Roman Catholic
Commemorates Jesus Christ's resurrection.

April 2024

April 9-12: Eid al-Fitr - Muslim
Marks the end of Ramadan and the beginning of a feast that breaks the fast.

April 13: Vaisakhi - Sikh
Commemorates the spring harvest and the formation of the Khalsa panth of warriors under Guru Gobind Singh in 1699.

April 19-30: Ridvan - Baha’i
Celebrates the anniversary of the declaration of prophethood by Baha’u’llah.

April 21: Mahavir Jayanti (the birth of Mahavir) - Jain
Commemorates the birth of Mahavir Swami, the 24th and last spiritual teacher born of Jainism.

April 22-30: Passover - Jewish*
Commemorates the exodus of Jewish people from Egypt.

April 28: Palm Sunday - Orthodox Christian
Marks the beginning of Holy Week, commemorating the entrance of Jesus into Jerusalem.
May 2024

May 1: Beltane - Pagan
Commemorates the beginning of the pastoral summer season and occurs halfway between spring equinox and summer solstice.

May 3: Great Friday - Eastern Orthodox Christian
Commemorates the death of Christ on the Cross.

May 5: Easter - Eastern Orthodox Christian
A feast day commemorating the resurrection of Jesus Christ.

May 5: Yom HaSho’ah - Jewish*
Also known as Holocaust and Heroism Remembrance Day, this day commemorates the approximately six million Jewish people who perished in the Holocaust.

May 9: Ascension Day - Protestant, Roman Catholic
Commemorates Jesus’ ascension into heaven.

May 13-14: Yom haatzmaut - Jewish*
Commemorates the day Israel declared independence.

May 15: Vesak (Buddha Day) - Buddhist
Known as Buddha Day, this day commemorates the Buddha’s birth, enlightenment and death.

May 15: Buddha Purnima (birth of Buddha) - Buddhist
Commemorates the birth of the Buddha.

May 19: Pentecost - Protestant, Roman Catholic
Commemorates the descent of the Holy Spirit upon the Apostles, celebrated 50 days after Easter Sunday.

May 22: Declaration of the Bab - Baha’i
The anniversary of the Bab’s declaration, revealing himself as the door through which God’s revelation would come.

May 27: Ascension of Bahá’u’lláh - Baha’i
It celebrates Bahá’u’lláh, the founder of the Bahá’í faith, as well as his teachings.

June 2024

June 11-13: Shavuot - Jewish*
Commemorates the feast of weeks and is celebrated seven weeks after the second Passover.

June 13: Ascension Day - Orthodox
Commemorates Jesus’ ascension into heaven.

June 14-19: Hajj - Muslim*
An annual Islamic pilgrimage to Mecca, the holiest city for Islam. Performing Hajj is one of the five pillars of Islam.

June 15: Waqf al Araf - Muslim*
Occurring on the second day of Hajj, this day commemorates one of Muhammad’s last famous sermons in his final year of life.

June 16: Martyrdom of Guru Arjan Dev - Sikh
It's the day to commemorate and celebrate the life of religious figure Guru Arjan Dev who sacrificed his life for the Sikh people.

June 17-20: Eid al-Adha - Muslim*
Known as the feast of sacrifice, this day commemorates Abraham's willingness to sacrifice his son as an act of obedience to God. Considered one of the holiest days of Islam.

June 21: Summer Solstice/Litha - Pagan
One of the solstices; commemorates the longest day and the shortest night of the year. This celebration marks the power of the sun.

June 23: Pentecost - Eastern Orthodox Christian
Commemorates the descent of the Holy Spirit upon the Apostles, celebrated 50 days after the Great and Holy Pascha.

July 2024

July 7: Muharram - Muslim*
Regarded as one of the four Islamic sacred months of the year, Muharram is the first month of the Islamic calendar, thereby making it the Islamic New Year. The most sacred day within this month is the Day of Ashura. It falls on the tenth day of this month and many people consider it synonymous with the month of Muharram.

July 16 : Ashura - Muslim*
Ashura is the tenth day of the month of Muharram in the Islamic calendar. It marks the day that Husayn ibn Ali, the grandson of Muhammad, was martyred. Ashura is an important holiday and is commemorated by Shi’a Muslims as well as a recommended day of fasting in Sunni Muslims.
July 21: Asalha Puja Day - Buddhist
Celebrates the Buddha’s first sermon in which he set out the doctrine that came to him following his enlightenment.

August 2024

Aug. 1: Lammas/Lughnasadh - Pagan
Commemorates the beginning of the harvest season and falls at the halfway point between the summer solstice and the autumnal equinox.

Aug. 13: Tisha B'Av - Jewish
The major day of communal mourning in the Jewish calendar.

Aug. 15: Assumption of Mary - Catholic
Commemorates the death of Mary and her bodily assumption into Heaven.

Aug. 19: Raksha Bandhan - Hindu
Popularly known as brother-sister day, this day is celebrated by the tying of a sacred thread, promising protection, obligation and care between the one who ties the thread and its recipient.

Aug. 26: Krishna Janmashtami - Hindu
Commemorates the birth of Lord Krishna, the eighth avatar of Lord Vishnu.

Aug. 31- Sept. 7: Paryushana - Jain
This is the most important annual holy event for Jains. It involves prayers and fasting for 8 – 10 days and ends with the celebration of Kshamavani (the day of forgiveness).

September 2024

Sept. 6: Ganesh Chaturthi - Hindu
Commemorates the arrival of Lord Ganesh to earth from Kailash Parvat (Mount Kailash) with his mother Parvati.

Sept. 21-29: Mabon - Pagan
Commemorates the autumnal equinox, the time of year when days and nights are nearing the same length.

October 2024

Oct. 3: Navaratri - Hindu
Literally meaning “nine nights,” this is a major Hindu event that honors the divine feminine, Devi.
Oct. 3-4: Rosh Hashanah - Jewish*
Commemorates the Jewish New Year.

Oct. 12: Yom Kippur - Jewish*
The Jewish day of communal and personal atonement for sins committed during the past year with prayer and fasting

Oct. 12: Dussehra - Hindu
The tenth day that marks the end of Navaratri and commemorates Lord Rama's battle and victory over Ravana, exemplifying the victory of good over evil.

Oct. 12: Sukkot - Jewish*
Known as the festival of tabernacles and the feast of booths, this day celebrates one of Judaism's three central pilgrimage festivals, along with Passover and Shavuot.

Oct. 17-23: Shemini Atzeret - Jewish
Known as the eighth day of assembly, this day may be celebrated at the same time as Simchat Torah or separately to commemorate the end of one cycle and the beginning of another.

Oct. 24: Simchat Torah - Jewish
Known as rejoicing in Torah, this day may be celebrated at the same time as Shemini Atzeret or separately to commemorate the end of one cycle and the beginning of another.

Oct. 31: Samhain - Pagan
Commemorates the end of the growing season and the beginning of winter. Takes place at the midpoint between fall equinox and the winter solstice.

Oct. 31 - Nov. 4: Diwali - Hindu
Spanning five days, this is one of Hinduism's most well-known holidays. Commemorates the victory of light over darkness, good over evil, knowledge over ignorance and is usually associated with the Goddess Laxmi.

**November 2024**

Nov. 1: Vikram Samvat New Year - Hindu
Commemorates the new year based on the Hindu lunar calendar. This is the official state calendar of Nepal and also used throughout India and by practicing Hindus throughout the world.

Nov. 15: Guru Nanak Jayanti (birth of Guru Nanak) - Sikh
One of the most sacred festivals of Sikhism, this day commemorates the birth of Guru
Nanak, the first guru of Sikhism.

December 2024

Dec. 8: Bodhi Day - Buddhism
Commemorates the day Gautama Siddhartha attained enlightenment and became the Buddha.

Dec. 8: Immaculate Conception - Roman Catholic
Commemorates the conception of the Virgin Mary in the womb of her mother, Saint Anne

Dec. 12: Our Lady of Guadalupe - Catholic
Commemorates the miracles of the Virgin Mary and angels in Guadalupe, Mexico.

Dec. 21: Winter Solstice/Yule - Pagan
One of the solstices, commemorates the shortest day and the longest night of the year.

Dec. 24: Christmas Eve - Protestant, Roman Catholic
Commemorates the day and night before Christmas. The two days (Christmas Eve and Christmas) together are considered some of the most culturally significant days in Christendom.

Dec. 25: Christmas Day - Protestant, Roman Catholic, Greek (Eastern) Orthodox
Commemorates the birth of Jesus Christ.

Dec. 26-Jan. 1, 2022: Kwanzaa
Kwanzaa is a weeklong celebration that honors African heritage in African American culture.

Dec. 26-Jan. 2: Hanukkah - Jewish*
Known as the festival of lights, Hanukkah commemorates the victory of the Maccabees over the Syrian Greek army, the subsequent miracle of rededicating the Holy Temple in Jerusalem and restoring its menorah.