A Partial Listing of Religious, Ethnic and Civic Observances

Religious, Ethnic and Civic Observances

2018

January

- New Year's Day (U.S. and International)
- Martin Luther King Jr. Day (U.S.)
- Lady of Guadalupe (Mexican/Mexican-American)
- Sundown on the days noted. Work and school are prohibited during Jewish High Holy Days.

February

- 2018, 2019
- Presidents' Day (U.S.)
- Birthday of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. (U.S.)

March

- Ash Wednesday/Lent begins (Christian)
- Maha Shivaratri (Hindu)
- Hinamatsuri (Japan)
- Birth of the Baha’u’llah (Bahá’í)
- Diwali (Buddhist, Hindu, Sikhism, Jainism)
- Bunka No Hi (Japan)

April

- Easter Sunday (Christian)
- Good Friday (Christian)
- Passover (Jewish)
- Easter (Christian)
- Palm Sunday (Orthodox Christian)
- Holy Saturday (Orthodox Christian)
- Great Friday (Orthodox Christian)
- Holy Saturday (Orthodox Christian)
- Great and Holy Pascha (Orthodox Christian)
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2019

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The legal observance of George Washington's birthday from Feb. 22 to the third of March. Ramadan: a time of worship, reading the Qur'an, charitable acts, and the purification of individual behavior. Also, the time in which the Qur'an was revealed to Mohammad. Reform Jews usually celebrate Rosh Hashanah for one day. The Ten Days of Awe begin at sunset the night before, and celebrates the Ten Commandments, the foundation of Jewish law. Shavout also is known as the Feast of Weeks because it occurs 50 days after Passover. Simhat Torah (Tishri 23) literally means “rejoicing in the Torah” and concludes the annual cycle of the reading of the Torah.

Sukkot, also known as the Feast of the Booths or Feast of Tabernacles, begins at sunset the day before the 15th day of Tishri in the Hebrew calendar. Sukkot commemorates the Israelites’ four months of wandering in the desert after their escape from Egypt and their journey to the Promised Land and lived in the sukkot. Sukkot also signifies a harvest festival. In 1619, the first Thanksgiving was held in the English settlement at Jamestown, Virginia. In 1789, George Washington proclaimed Nov. 26 as a “day of public thanksgiving and private prayer” to be celebrated by all people in the United States. In 1983, the 98th Congress passed Public Law 98-144 to the legal observance of George Washington’s birthday from Feb. 22 to the third of March.

Winter Solstice: The day when the distance between the Tropic of Capricorn and the sun is the shortest. Because of the earth’s tilt, the Northern Hemisphere experiences the shortest day and longest night of the year. The event is observed worldwide as a memorial to the six million Jews killed by the Nazis during World War II. The day and created the Japanese state.

Passover/Pesach: Passover, or Pesach, is an eight-day observance that begins at sunset on the 15th day of Nisan (Nisan 15). The Jewish holiday celebrates the ancient Israelites’ liberation from Egyptian slavery and migration to the Promised Land. Each year during the Passover season, celebrants form a procession and carry a doll representing the Christ Child, and images of Joseph and Mary riding on a burro. They walk through communities and stop at inns, offering food and shelter to travelers.

Christmas season: Christmas commemorates the birth of Jesus Christ. Each year during the Christmas season, celebrants form a procession and carry a doll representing the Christ Child, and images of Joseph and Mary riding on a burro. They walk through communities and stop at inns, offering food and shelter to travelers.

Other observances:
- Good Friday: The Christian Holy Week, which culminates in the celebration of the resurrection of Jesus. From Good Friday to Easter Sunday, Christians observe the events of Holy Week. Each year during the Good Friday season, celebrants form a procession and carry a doll representing the Christ Child, and images of Joseph and Mary riding on a burro. They walk through communities and stop at inns, offering food and shelter to travelers.

With that in mind, we encourage you to display appreciation of religious, ethnic and civic observances. The Diversity Resource Office looks forward to working with you in making the most of the 2018-19 academic year!