

Fall Semester:

Jewish High Holidays Guide

As we begin the fall semester, the Office of Transformational and Inclusive Excellence (TIE) wanted to highlight a few key religious holidays and observances for our campus community. Below you will find a description of the holiday, best practices, and customary greetings to support our active investment in fostering an inclusive campus community.



Rosh Hashanah September 16*-17, 2023 (begins at sunset the day before)

About Rosh Hashanah:

Rosh Hashanah begins the Jewish New Year. Rosh Hashanah commemorates the creation of the world and marks the beginning of the Days of Awe, a 10-day period of introspection and repentance that culminates in the Yom Kippur holiday, also known as the Day of Atonement.

Rosh Hashanah Themes to be Mindful of:

Rosh Hashanah is a holiday that speaks of renewal, celebration, creation, evaluation, accountability, and responsibility: a complex holiday filled with joy and trepidation. Rosh Hashanah's customs include attending synagogue services, as well as enjoying festive meals.



Supporting Our Campus Community During Rosh Hashanah:

Rosh Hashanah is a holiday during which work, electronics, and other restrictions are in place for observers. Please be mindful of scheduling around Rosh Hashanah, as this is an important date for the Jewish community. The common way to wish someone well during Rosh Hashanah is to say "Shana Tovah" (ShaNAH ToVAH), meaning "Good Year."

To learn more about Religious Observances and Inclusive Scheduling, scan the QR code below.



Yom Kippur September 25*, 2023 (begins at sunset the day before)

About Yom Kippur:

Yom Kippur is the most solemn religious fast of the Jewish year, the last of the ten days of penitence that begin with Rosh Hashanah. Primarily centered on atonement and repentance, Jewish tradition believes that on this day God places a seal upon the Divine decrees affecting each person for the coming year.

Yom Kippur Themes to be Mindful of:

Yom Kippur is a holiday that centers on atonement and repentance, the day's observances consist of full fasting and ascetic behavior accompanied by intensive prayer as well as sin confessions. Yom Kippur's customs include attending synagogue services, meditations, and fasting. Work is prohibited on this day.



Supporting Our Campus Community During Yom Kippur:

Yom Kippur is a holiday during which fasting takes place and work, electronics, and other restrictions are in place for observers. Please be mindful of scheduling around Yom Kippur, as this is an important date for the Jewish community. The common way to wish someone well during Yom Kippur is to say "Yom Tov" (YOM Tohv) which means "Have a good holy day."

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Sukkot

September 30*-October 1, 2023

October 7-8, 2023

(begins at sunset the day before)

About Sukkot:

Sukkot is the Jewish holiday celebrating the Feast of the Tabernacles and Harvest festival. In addition to its harvest roots, the holiday also holds spiritual importance with regard to its abandonment of materialism to focus on nationhood, spirituality, and hospitality. This principle underlies the construction of a temporary, almost nomadic, structure of a sukkah.

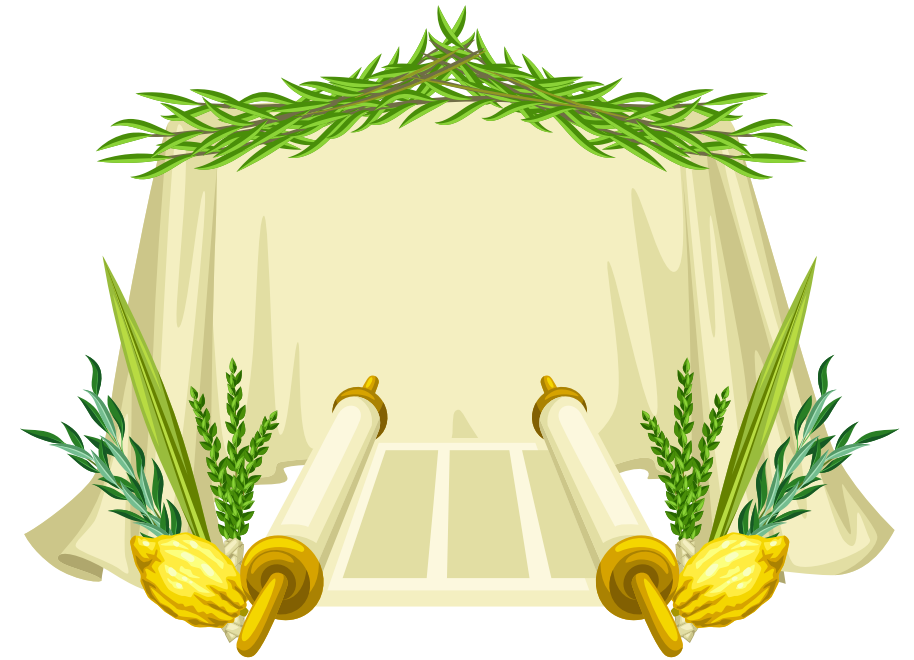
Sukkot Themes to be Mindful of:

Sukkot is a holiday that speaks of the importance of compassion, spirituality, nationhood, and hospitality. During Sukkot, observers are called to build a sukkah to honor and commemorate the harvest season, along with the history of the pilgrimage holiday during which the Israelites would travel to the Temple and dwell in temporary homes. The sukkah structure is a call back to this history and a reminder of the significance of compassion for others and the importance of removing oneself from materialistic things to refocus priorities upon spirituality and community.

Supporting Our Campus Community

During Sukkot:

Sukkot is a holiday during which work, electronics, and other restrictions are in place for observers during the first two and last two days, as these are holy days. Please be mindful of scheduling around Sukkot, as this is an important date for the Jewish community. The common way to wish someone well during Sukkot is to say "Chag Sameach" (khahg sah-MAy-akh), meaning "Happy Holiday."



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Winter Semester:

Jewish High Holidays Guide

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Hanukkah

December 25*, 2024 - January 2, 2025

(begins at sunset the day before)

About Hanukkah:

The eight-day Jewish celebration known as Hanukkah or Chanukah commemorates the rededication during the second century B.C. of the Second Temple in Jerusalem. Jewish people light one candle on the menorah each day, which represents the number of days that the Temple lantern blazed.



Hanukkah Themes to be Mindful of:

During Hanukkah, so most people still go to work or school. Some people may choose to take time off to be with their friends and family. People also traditionally play games of dreidel and eat Jewish foods. Religious rituals such as daily readings of Scriptures, recitations of Psalms, and singing are also held.

Supporting Our Campus Community

During Hanukkah:

While there are no work restrictions during Hanukkah, please be mindful that practitioners may wish to take time to be with their families and celebrate the holiday. The common way to wish someone well during Hanukkah is to say “Hanukkah Sameach! (Happy Hanukkah!) or Chag urim Sameach! (Happy Festival of Lights!).



To learn more about Religious Observances and Inclusive Scheduling, scan the QR code to the right.



Winter Semester: Cultural Observance Guide

As we begin the winter semester, the Office of Transformational and Inclusive Excellence (TIE) wanted to highlight a few key religious holidays and observances for our campus community. Below you will find a description of the holiday, best practices, and customary greetings to support our active investment in fostering an inclusive campus community.



Kwanzaa

December 26, 2024 - January 1, 2025

About Kwanzaa:

Kwanzaa celebrate African American heritage and culture for seven days. During the 7 days of Kwanzaa, December 26 - January 1, families and communities come together to share a feast, to honor the ancestors, affirm the bonds between them, and to celebrate African and African American culture. Kwanzaa culminates with a communal feast called Karamu. Each day of Kwanzaa is dedicated to one of the Seven Principles of Kwanza or Nguzo Saba each day a candle is light in the kinara to represent each principle.

Kwanzaa Themes to be Mindful of:

Kwanzaa is celebrated by hosting daily ceremonies and eating traditional foods. They also light the kinara, which holds seven candles. Each candle represents one of the Seven principles of Kwanzaa. Red, green, and black are the most prevalent colors in decorating for and celebrating Kwanzaa. Some people abstain from eating meat or fast until the big Kwanzaa feast.

Supporting Our Campus Community

During Kwanzaa:

While there are no work restrictions during Kwanzaa, please be mindful that observers may wish to take time to be with their families and celebrate the holiday. A common way to wish someone well during Kwanzaa is to say “Happy Kwanzaa!”



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Winter Semester:

Christian High Holidays Guide

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Christmas

About Christmas:

Christmas is an annual festival commemorating the birth of Jesus Christ, observed primarily on December 25 as a religious and cultural celebration among billions of people around the world. Popular customs in celebrating Christmas are exchanging gifts, decorating Christmas trees, having meals with family and friends, and attending Christmas services.

Christmas Themes to be Mindful of:

Christmas is a time of celebration and hope for many individuals. Many services are held on Christmas Eve and sometimes on Christmas Day to commemorate the birth of Jesus. Christmas is also celebrated by non-Christians as a public cultural holiday. For non-Christians, Christmas is a time of good-will, celebration, and community.

Supporting Our Campus Community

During Christmas:

While there are no work restrictions during Christmas, please be mindful that practitioners may wish to take time to be with their families and celebrate the holiday. The common way to wish someone well during Christmas is to say “Merry Christmas!”

December 25, 2024



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Fall Semester: Pagan/Wiccan/Druid High Holidays Guide

As we begin the spring semester, the Office of Transformational and Inclusive Excellence (TIE) wanted to highlight a few key religious holidays and observances for our campus community. Below you will find a description of the observance, best practices, and customary greetings to support our active investment in fostering an inclusive campus community.



Mabon

September 23, 2023

About Mabon:

Mabon is the Pagan/Wiccan/Druid day which celebrates the autumnal equinox through a ritual of thanksgiving for the fruits of the earth. Mabon also celebrates the mid-harvest festival. Mabon is also referred to as Second Harvest, or simply the Autumn (or Fall) Equinox.



Mabon Themes to be Mindful of:

Modern Mabon celebrations are a time to give thanks for the abundance of Mother Earth - both literally and spiritually. It's also a good time to reflect on the Wheel of the Year, recognizing your successes and letting go of the things that did not serve you during the past twelve months.

Supporting Our Campus Community During Mabon:

Please keep in mind that many Pagan, Wiccan, and Druid practices are highly individualistic and vary from one observer to the next. While not all observers will take time off, devout observers may request time off in recognition of their individual practices. The common way to wish someone well during Mabon is to say "Mabon Blessings" or "Blessed Mabon."

Pagan Traditions:

Observers of this day might perform a ritual to restore balance and harmony to their lives, as this holiday celebrates a day with equal light and day. Another common ritual is to set up an altar with symbols of the season, such as apples, grapes, and other seasonal harvests.

Wiccan Traditions:

Mabon rituals can include decorating your altar with acorns, pine cones, seasonal fruits and nuts, and/or a few of the first colored leaves that drop from the trees. Observers may practice spellwork, set up a harvest altar, and/or set intentions for the coming winter months.

Druid Traditions:

Observers will reflect and give thanks during this time, both for things past and for things to come. This is a time of harvesting the fulfilled promises of spring and summer and giving gratitude as the light of the year begins to turn into darkness. Rituals around thanks, gratitude, and setting intentions for the changing seasons may take place during this holiday.



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Fall Semester: Pagan/Wiccan/Druid High Holidays Guide

As we begin the spring semester, the Office of Transformational and Inclusive Excellence (TIE) wanted to highlight a few key religious holidays and observances for our campus community. Below you will find a description of the observance, best practices, and customary greetings to support our active investment in fostering an inclusive campus community.



Samhain

October 31, 2023

About Samhain:

Samhain is a Pagan/Wiccan/Druid festival honoring endings, beginnings, and the dead. Samhain marks the the end of summer and the end of the harvest season. It also signals the beginning of winter, which is associated with death. On this day, observers believe the veil between the living and the dead is especially thin. This allows spirits of the dead to visit the living.



Samhain Themes to be Mindful of:

Modern Samhain celebrations are a time to celebrate the end of the harvest season by giving thanks and releasing things that no longer serve us in preparation for the new year. It is also a time to connect with ancestors and those departed. Samhain is a good time to reflect on the Wheel of the Year, as Samhain is popularly viewed as the end and new beginning of the wheel of the year.

Supporting Our Campus Community

During Samhain:

Please keep in mind that many Pagan, Wiccan, and Druid practices are highly individualistic and vary from one observer to the next. While not all observers will take time off, devout observers may request time off in recognition of their individual practices. The common way to wish someone well during Samhain is to say “Samhain Blessings” or “Blessed Samhain.”

Pagan Traditions:

Observers of this day might perform rituals associated with honoring their ancestors. This is also a time to celebrate the end of the harvest season with feasting and bonfires. Some may utilize this time to set intentions and manifestations for the new year. Samhain is also a good time to set new intentions as we move from the lighter months into the darker winter season.



Wiccan Traditions:

Samhain rituals can include decorating your altar with apples, pumpkins, and late-fall harvest symbols such as sunflowers and colors like browns, yellows, reds, and purples. Observers may practice spellwork, set up an altar for their ancestors, and/or set intentions for the coming winter months.



Druid Traditions:

Observers will reflect and give thanks during this time, both for things past and for things to come. This is a time of harvesting the fulfilled promises of spring and summer and giving gratitude as the light of the year begins to turn into darkness. Feasts and bonfires will take place during this time, along with rituals and ceremonies around ancestral offerings and manifestations.

To learn more about Religious Observances and Inclusive Scheduling, scan the QR code below.



Winter Semester: Pagan/Wiccan/Druid High Holidays Guide

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Yule

December 21, 2024- January 1, 2025

About Yule:

This holiday is celebrated at the winter solstice as the rebirth of the Great horned hunter god, who is viewed as the newborn solstice sun [modern Paganism]. Yule was originally celebrated by the Norse and Scandinavian peoples. Today, many Pagans still celebrate Yule on the day of the Winter Solstice. Pagans celebrate the rebirth of the sun through gift exchanges, merriment, and deep spiritual reflection.



Yule Themes to be Mindful of:

For Pagans, this is a time of new beginnings, rebirth, transformation, getting rid of unwanted habits, and creativity. In most forms of Wicca, followers celebrate the Great horned hunter god who represents the newborn solstice sun. Some have group or private ceremonies. Yule is considered the Wiccan Sabbat.

Supporting Our Campus Community

During Yule:

Please keep in mind that many Pagan, Wiccan, and Druid practices are highly individualistic and vary from one observer to the next. While not all observers will take time off, devout observers may request time off in recognition of their individual practices. The common way to wish someone well during Lughnasadh is to say “Lughnasadh Blessings” or “Happy Yule!,” “Merry Yuletide,” or “Happy Solstice.”

Pagan Traditions:

For Pagans, this is a time of new beginnings, rebirth, transformation, getting rid of unwanted habits, and creativity. Yule is considered the Wiccan Sabbat. Yule celebrations included bonfires, decorating with holly, mistletoe, and the boughs of evergreen trees, ritual sacrifices, feasts, and gift-giving.



Wiccan Traditions:

In most forms of Wicca, followers celebrate the Great horned hunter god who represents the newborn solstice sun. Some have group or private ceremonies. Yule is considered the Wiccan Sabbat and is a time of reflection and rebirth. Practitioners will decorate with evergreen branches, and other festive winter flora, along with red, green, white, and gold decorations.



Druid Traditions:

For those in the druid tradition, the winter solstice has layered meanings. The trees have lost their leaves and the land has been swept bare with frost and cold, resting fallow for a season before spring returns. During the winter solstice, druids celebrate the return of light, embrace the hope that summer will come again, and honor the winter landscape. This includes lighting candles and inner work.

To learn more about Religious Observances and Inclusive Scheduling, scan the QR code below.



Fall Semester:

Buddhist Holy Days Guide

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Bodhi Day

December 8, 2023

About Bodhi Day:

Bodhi Day is the Buddhist holiday that commemorates the day that Gautama Buddha (Shakyamuni) is said to have attained enlightenment, also known as bodhi in Sanskrit and Pali. According to tradition, Siddhartha had recently forsaken years of extreme ascetic practices and resolved to sit under a peepal tree, also known as a Bodhi tree, and simply meditate until he found the root of suffering, and how to liberate oneself from it.

Bodhi Day Themes to be Mindful of:

Services and traditions vary amongst Buddhist sects, but all such services commemorate the Buddha's achievement of Nirvana, and what this means for Buddhism today. Individuals may choose to commemorate the event through additional meditation, study of the Dharma, chanting of Buddhist texts (sutras), or performing kind acts towards other beings. Some Buddhists celebrate with a traditional meal of tea, cake and readings. Buddhists go to temple services and practice meditation. Some Buddhists decorate bodhi trees with lights and statues of Buddha. They also reflect upon the Noble Eightfold Path and the Four Noble Truths.

Supporting Our Campus Community

During Bodhi Day:

Please keep in mind that many Buddhist practices vary from one observer to the next and by region. While not all observers will take time off, devout observers may request time off in recognition of their practices. The common way to wish someone well during Bodhi Day is to say “Blessed Bodhi Day.”



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