

## **Faith Festivals and other Celebrations (relating to Religion and Belief characteristic) 2014**

The definition of Religion and Belief includes religious and philosophical beliefs including having no religion [Atheism / Humanism / Secularism]. Generally a belief should affect your life choices or the way you live for it to be included in the legal definition.

The pages of this faith festivals calendar detail festivals, celebrations and commemorations relating to the following religions / philosophical beliefs:

- Baha'i [Baha'is]
- Buddhism [Buddhist]
- Christian [Christian, Orthodox Christian, Catholic ]
- Hinduism [Hindu]
- Humanism [Humanist]
- Jainism [Jain]
- Jewish [Jew]
- Islam [Muslim]
- Mormonism [Mormon]
- Pagan
- Rastafari
- Shinto
- Sikh
- Zoroastrian

The date some festivals take place on may vary regionally because they are determined by the lunar calendar. For similar reasons the date some festivals takes place on changes annually. Where the date of a festival changes on an annual basis, it is marked (◆).

### **Using this Faith Festivals calendar**

Use this resource as a reference guide to key festivals celebrated or commemorated by different faiths and philosophical life stances. It is useful to consider

- When managing employees (who may request time off / flexible working to celebrate a festival or pray)
- When organising events / consultations and planning meetings

### **Useful Websites**

BBC Religion - <http://www.bbc.co.uk/religion/index.shtml>

British Humanist Association - <http://www.humanism.org.uk/humanism>

North Lincolnshire Multi Faith Partnership - <http://www.northlincsmultifaithpartnership.co.uk/>

**Promoting Religion and Belief Equality** (Religion and Belief is one of the nine protected characteristics covered by the Equality Act 2010.)

**Faith festivals and other celebrations / commemorations [relating to Religion and Belief] 2013 (shown using the Gregorian (Western) Calendar)**

**January 2014**

1 January	<p><b>New Year Day [Secular]</b> The start of the Western Calendar.</p> <p><b>Oshogatsu (or Shogatsu) [Shinto]</b> Shinto New Year and one of the most popular occasions for shrine visits.</p> <p><b>Festival of St Basil the Great [Christian]</b> St Basil is one of the great fathers of the Orthodox Church.</p>
5 January	<p><b>Birthday of Guru Gobind Singh [Sikh]</b> According to the Nanakshahi Calendar. Guru Gobind Singh was the tenth and last of the Sikh Gurus. He instituted the Five 5Ks and established the Order of the Khalsa.</p>
6 January	<p><b>Epiphany [Christian]</b> Celebrates the visit of the wise men (the magi) to the infant Jesus. In the East, where it originated, the Epiphany celebrates the Baptist of Jesus by John the Baptist in the River Jordan. (Catholics and Episcopalians celebrate this separately). This event is also known as Dia de los Reyes (Three Kings Day).</p> <p><b>Theophany (Orthodox) [Christian]</b> Orthodox churches mark the baptism of Jesus on this day.</p>
7 January	<p><b>Christmas Day (Orthodox) [Christian]</b> Most Orthodox churches use the Julian rather than the Gregorian version of the Western Calendar. As a result, they celebrate Christmas thirteen days later than other Christian churches.</p> <p><b>Christmas Day (Ethiopian) [Rastafari]</b> Rastafarians believe Ethiopia to be their spiritual homeland, and a place to which they want to return.</p>
12 January	<p><b>Baptism of the Lord [Christian]</b> Catholics and Episcopalians celebrate this as a Holy day, but Eastern Christianity celebrates the baptism of Jesus at Epiphany.</p>
13 January	<p><b>Milad un Nabi (Birthday of the Prophet Muhammad) [Muslim] (◆)</b> Shia Muslims celebrate this 5 days later. Some Muslims do not approve of celebrating the birthday, and regard doing so as a religious innovation</p>
14 January	<p><b>Makar Sankranti [Hindu]</b> Makar Sankranti is one of the most important festivals of the Hindu calendar and celebrates the sun's journey into the Northern Hemisphere. Days and nights are of equal duration on this date.</p>
15 January	<p><b>Seijin Shiki (Adults' Day) [Shinto]</b></p>

**Faith festivals and other celebrations / commemorations [relating to Religion and Belief] 2013 (shown using the Gregorian (Western) Calendar)**

	Japanese people the year prior to reaching adulthood (aged 20) attend a shrine to give thanks.
16 January	<b>Tu B'Shevat [Jewish] (◆)</b> The Jewish New Year for trees – The anniversaries of all trees are celebrated on this day regardless of when planted
18 January	<b>Week of Prayer for Christian Unity (start) [Christian]</b> First celebrated in 1908. The days between 18 and 25 January (regardless of the days of the week involved) were originally chosen because they covered the days between the feast of St Peter and the feast of St Paul. Some churches and regions use a different week.  <b>Milad un Nabi (Shia) [Muslim] (◆)</b> Birthday of Prophet Muhammad. (Sunni Muslims celebrate this 5 days earlier)
19 January	<b>World Religion Day [Bahai and Multi-faith] <a href="http://www.worldreligionday.org/">http://www.worldreligionday.org/</a></b> Observed on the third Sunday in January. Usually begins at sundown the day before. Instituted in 1950 the day aims to promote interfaith, understanding and harmony.
31 January	<b>Birthday of Guru Har Rai [Sikh]</b> From the Nanakshahi calendar, Guru Har Rai (1630-1661) was the seventh of the Sikh Gurus.  <b>Chinese New Year</b> 2014 is the year of the Horse The Horse is the seventh sign of the Chinese Zodiac. People born in the Year of the Horse are said to be gifted with a silver tongue and acute insight.

**February 2014**

2 February	<b>Candlemas [Christian]</b> This is often called The Presentation of Christ in the Temple and commemorates the day Mary took Jesus to the temple at Jerusalem to present him to God.  <b>Imbolc [Pagan]</b> Also called Oimelc, Imbolc celebrates the awakening of the land and the growing power of the Sun.
3 February	<b>Rissun (Setsubun) [Shinto]</b> A Spring festival that marks the division between Winter and Spring and is celebrated with beans.
8 February	<b>Parinirvana – Nirvana day [Buddhist]</b> This is a Mahayana Buddhist festival marking the anniversary of Buddha's death. Pure Land Buddhists call the festival "Nirvana Day".

**Faith festivals and other celebrations / commemorations [relating to Religion and Belief] 2013 (shown using the Gregorian (Western) Calendar)**

15 February	<p><b>Nirvana day (an alternative date) [Buddhist]</b> Nirvana Day is also known as Parinrvana and is celebrated by some Buddhists on February 8<sup>th</sup>. Nirvana Day is the celebration of Buddha's death when he reached total Nirvana (a state of bliss or peace) aged 80.</p>

**March 2014**

1 March	<p><b>St David's Day [Christian]</b> Saint David is the patron saint of Wales.</p> <p><b>Fast of Esther (Taanit Esther) [Jewish] (◆)</b> A fast in commemoration of the fast of Mordechai and Esther and all of Israel in the story of Purim</p>
2 March	<p><b>Nineteen Day Fast (start) [Bahai]</b> Ends 20 March. During this period Baha'is go without food or drink from sunrise to sunset.</p>
3 March	<p><b>Hina-matsuri (Festival of Dolls) [Shinto]</b> A celebration of daughters in the family.</p> <p><b>Clean Monday – Beginning of Lent (Orthodox) [Christian] (◆)</b> The start of the "Great Lent" for Orthodox Christians. This day is called Clean Monday, and occurs seven weeks before the Orthodox Easter</p>
4 March	<p><b>Shrove Tuesday [Christian] (◆)</b> Also called Pancake Day and Mardi Gras. The British name of "Pancake Day" comes from the tradition of making pancakes to use up all the food that could not be eaten during Lent.</p>
5 March	<p><b>Ash Wednesday [Christian] (◆)</b> The First day of Lent for Western Christian churches. Lent is the season marking the time Jesus spent in the wilderness</p>
16 March	<p><b>Purim [Jewish] (◆)</b> Purim commemorates the time when the Jewish people living in Persia were saved from extermination by the courage of a young Jewish woman Esther.</p>
17 March	<p><b>Shushan Purim [Jewish] (◆)</b> In some places Purim is celebrated one day later. In this case it is called Shushan Purim</p>

**Faith festivals and other celebrations / commemorations [relating to Religion and Belief] 2013 (shown using the Gregorian (Western) Calendar)**

	<p><b>St Patrick's Day [Christian] / [Secular]</b> St Patrick is the patron saint of Ireland.</p> <p><b>Hola Mohalla (Lunar Calendar) [Sikh] (◆)</b> Holla Mohalla is a three day festival of military exercises together with religious discussions and devotional music</p>
20 March	<p><b>Spring Equinox – Easter [Pagan]</b> The Spring Equinox celebrates the renewed life of the Earth that comes with the Spring.</p>
21 March	<p><b>Naw –Ruz [Bahai]</b> The Bahai New Year. Naw – Ruz is the first day of the month of Baha (Splendour) which is the first month in the Bahai calendar. One of the nine holy days of the year when work is suspended. Usually begins at Sundown the day before.</p> <p><b>Jamshedi Noruz (Fasli) [Zoroastrian]</b> This date signifies the Zoroastrian New Year's Day in the Fasli Calendar.</p> <p><b>Shubun-sai-Equinox day [Shinto]</b> This is a day for visiting graves. Also associated with Buddhism in Japan.</p>
30 March	<p><b>Mothering Sunday (UK) [Christian] / [Secular – Mothers Day] (◆)</b> Occurs on the fourth Sunday of Lent. (The date varies for other countries.)</p>
31 March	<p><b>Ugadi (Yugadi) [Hindu] (◆)</b> The meaning is 'the start of an era' and is the New Year festival for Andhra Pradesh and Karnataka in southern India. It occurs on the first day of the month of Chaitra.</p>

**April 2014**

8 April	<p><b>Swaminarayan Jayanti [Hindu] (◆)</b> This day marks of Lord Swaminarayan for followers of the Swaminarayan tradition.</p>
13 April	<p><b>Palm Sunday [Christian] (◆)</b> The sixth and last Sunday of Lent. Palm Sunday marks the entry of Jesus into Jerusalem and the start of Holy Week</p> <p><b>Vaisakhi [Sikh]</b> The Sikh New Year Festival, which also commemorates the founding of the Khalsa by the tenth Guru (Guru Gobind Singh) in 1699. Also spelled Baisakhi.</p>

**Faith festivals and other celebrations / commemorations [relating to Religion and Belief] 2013 (shown using the Gregorian (Western) Calendar)**

14 April	<p><b>Fast of the Firstborn [Jewish] (◆)</b> Observed by firstborn males, on the day before Passover. This fast celebrates the survival of Jewish first born sons from the 10<sup>th</sup> Plague of Egypt</p> <p><b>Birthday of Guru Nanak (Nanakshanti calendar) [Sikh]</b> The founder of the Sikh religion was born on 14 April 1469. This festival is also currently celebrated according to the Lunar Calendar, but this may change</p>
15 April	<p><b>Passover (1<sup>st</sup> Day) [Jewish] (◆)</b> The start of the season of Passover when Jews commemorate the liberation of the Children of Israel who were led out of Egypt by Moses. Work is not permitted on the first two and the last two days of Passover.</p> <p><b>Theravada New Year [Buddhist] (◆)</b> New Year festival for Theravada Buddhists, celebrated for three days from the first full moon day in April</p>
17 April	<p><b>Maundy Thursday [Christian] (◆)</b> Christians remember Maundy Thursday as the day of the Last Supper, when Jesus washed the feet of his disciples and established the ceremony known as the Eucharist.</p>
18 April	<p><b>Good Friday [Christian] (◆)</b> Good Friday is the Friday before Easter. It commemorates the execution of Jesus by crucifixion.</p> <p><b>Birthday of Guru Tegh Bahadur (Nanakshahi Calendar) [Sikh]</b> Guru Tegh Bahadur (1621-1675) was the ninth of the Sikh Gurus.</p> <p><b>Birthday of Guru Angad Dev (Nanakshahi Calendar) [Sikh]</b> Guru Angad Dev (1504-1552) was the second of the Sikh Gurus.</p>
19 April	<p><b>Holy Saturday (Western) [Christian] (◆)</b> The evening before Easter Sunday is spent in anticipation of Christ's resurrection the next morning</p>
20 April	<p><b>Easter Sunday (Western) [Christian] (◆)</b> Christians celebrate the Resurrection of Jesus Christ – his return from death after the Crucifixion. The most important Christian festival.</p> <p><b>Easter (Orthodox) [Christian] (◆)</b> Orthodox Christians celebrate the Resurrection of Jesus Christ - his return from death after the Crucifixion. The most important Christian festival.</p>

**Faith festivals and other celebrations / commemorations [relating to Religion and Belief] 2013 (shown using the Gregorian (Western) Calendar)**

21 April	<p><b>Ridvan (First day) [Bahai]</b> The start of a 12 day festival when Bahai's celebrate the day when Baha'u'llah said that he was the prophet predicted by the Bab. The most important Bahai festival.</p> <p><b>Anniversary of Haile Selassie's visit to Jamaica [Rastafari]</b> Marks the date Haile Selassie I, Emperor of Ethiopia, visited Jamaica in 1966. Rastas believe Haile Selassie is God, and that he will return to Africa members of the black community who are living in exile.</p>
23 April	<p><b>Passover (final day) [Jewish] (◆)</b> The eighth and final day of Passover. [Passover lasts for seven days in Israel].</p> <p><b>St George's Day [Christian]</b> Saint George is the patron saint of England.</p>
27 April	<p><b>Yom Hasho'ah [Jewish] (◆)</b> The Jewish Holocaust Memorial Day. The date is chosen as the closest date (in the Jewish calendar) to the Warsaw Ghetto Uprising in 1943. Shoah is the Hebrew word for 'calamity' and has become the standard terminological reference for the Holocaust</p> <p>[Note Holocaust Memorial Day is commemorated in January each year – refer to Diversity Calendar –Celebrations and Commemoration days.]</p>
29 April	<p><b>Ridvan (ninth day) [Bahai]</b> This date marks the arrival of Baha'u'llah's family at the Ridvan garden.</p>

**May 2014**

1 May	<p><b>Beltane [Pagan]</b> 'Beltane is a Celtic word meaning 'fire of Bel' (Bel being a Celtic deity). It is a fire festival that celebrates the coming of summer and the fertility of the coming year, Beltane is also associated with courtship and sexuality. Pagans celebrate with maypole dances, symbolizing the mystery of the Sacred Marriage of Goddess and God.</p>
2 May	<p><b>Ridvan (twelfth day) [Bahai]</b> Marks Baha'u'llah's departure from the Ridvan garden. It usually begins at sundown the day before.</p> <p><b>Birthday of Guru Arjan Dev (Nanakshahi calendar) [Sikh]</b> Guru Arjan Dev (1563-1606) was the fifth of the Sikh Gurus.</p>
4 May	<p><b>Yom Hazikaron [Jewish] (◆)</b> A day of remembrance on the day preceding Israel's Independence Day.</p>
5 March	<p><b>Yom Ha'atzmaut [Jewish] (◆)</b> Israel's Independence Day</p>

**Faith festivals and other celebrations / commemorations [relating to Religion and Belief] 2013 (shown using the Gregorian (Western) Calendar)**

14 May	<p><b>Wesak, Visakha Puja or Buddha Day [Buddhist] (◆)</b>            The most important of the Buddhist festivals. A celebration of Buddha's birth and for some Buddhists, his death. Regional customs or moon sightings may cause a variation of this date. Buddha's birthday is celebrated on varying dates throughout the world.</p>
18 May	<p><b>Lag B' Omer [Jewish] (◆)</b>            Jewish observation of the counting of the day – the link- between Pesach (Passover) and Shavuot. Begins at sunset the previous day. (A minor holiday)</p>
23 May	<p><b>Declaration of the Bab [Bahai]</b>            Usually begins at sundown the day before. The Bab (meaning the 'Gate') was the forerunner of Baha'u'llah, founder of the Bahai faith. His mission was to prepare the world for the coming of Baha'u'llah and he declared it in the evening of 22 May 1844. One of the nine holy days of the year when work is suspended.</p>
28 May	<p><b>Yom Yerushalayim [Jewish] (◆)</b>            Jerusalem Day.</p>
29 May	<p><b>Ascension of Baha'u'llah [Bahai]</b>            The anniversary of the Baha'u'llah's death in 1892. One of the nine holy days of the year when work is suspended. Usually begins at sundown the day before.</p>

**June 2014**

1 June	<p><b>Ascension Day (Catholic Church, England and Wales) [Christian]</b>            Catholics celebrate Ascension day on the Sunday following 40 days after Easter.</p>
4 June	<p><b>Shavuot (First day) [Jewish] (◆)</b>            Shavuot is a two-day festival that marks the time when the first harvest was taken to the Temple. Work is not permitted for the duration of the festival.</p>
8 June	<p><b>Pentecost – Whitsun [Christian] (◆)</b>            The seventh Sunday after Easter, commemorating the descent of the Holy Spirit upon the disciples and the birth of the Christian Church.</p>
15 June	<p><b>All Saints Day (Orthodox) [Christian] (◆)</b>            Honouring all saints, known and unknown. [Western Churches celebrate on the 1 November]</p> <p><b>Trinity Sunday [Christian] (◆)</b></p>



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	The first Sunday after Pentecost. Christians meditate on the nature of God as “Three in one”.
16 June	<b>Martyrdom of Guru Arjan Dev (Nanakshahi calendar) [Sikh]</b> Guru Arjan Dev was the first Sikh martyr. He also compiled all of the past Guru’s writing into one book, which is now the Sikh holy scripture: the Guru Granth Sahib.
21 June	<b>Litha – Summer Solstice [Pagan] (◆)</b> The midsummer solstice and longest day of the year- Litha literally means ‘a stopping or standing still of the sun’ the rituals and commemorations therefore relate to the power of the Sun.  <b>World Humanist Day [Humanist /Secular]</b> A humanist holiday celebrated annually around the world on this date. The date is a way of spreading awareness of Humanism as a philosophical life stance and means to effect change in the world. It is also seen as a time for Humanists to gather socially and promote the positive values of humanism. (The British Humanist Association encourages humanists to celebrate the event by doing something in the days surrounding World Humanist Day – “Humanist Week”).
22 June	<b>Corpus Christi (Catholic Church , England and Wales) [Christian] (◆)</b> Celebrated by Catholic Church in England and Wales on the Sunday following Trinity Sunday
28 June	<b>Ramadan (beginning) [Muslim] (◆)</b> Commencing in the ninth month of the Islamic calendar. The Muslim month of fasting. During the 29/30 days of Ramadan all practicing adults give up food, drink, smoking and sexual activity during the hours of daylight. [The date varies annually dependent upon the lunar calendar].

**July 2014**

5 July	<b>Birthday of Guru Hargobind (Nanakshahi calendar) [Sikh]</b> Guru Hargobind (1595-1644) was the sixth of the Sikh Gurus.
9 July	<b>Martyrdom of the Bab [Bahai]</b> This major holy day is celebrated at noon and commemorates the events surrounding the death of the Bab (The prophet-herald of the Bahai faith) in 1850. One of the nine holy days when work is suspended.

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12 July	<p><b>Asala – Dharma Day [Buddhist] (◆)</b>                      The anniversary of the start of Buddha’s teaching and first sermon “The Wheel of Truth”, after his enlightenment. The day is observed by donating, listening to sermons and giving offerings to temples. Regional customs or moon sightings may cause variation of this date</p>
19 July	<p><b>Jamshedi Noruz (Qadimi) [Zoroastrian]</b>                      The Zoroastrian New Year’s Day in the Qadimi calendar.</p>
23 July	<p><b>Birthday of Haile Selassie I (Rastafari)</b>                      Haile Selassie I was the Emperor of Ethiopia. Rastas believe Haile Selassie is God and that he will return to African members of the black community who are living in exile.</p> <p><b>Birthday of Guru Har Krishen (Nanakshahi calendar) [Sikh]</b>                      Guru Har Krishen (1656-1664) was the eighth of the Sikh Gurus.</p>
24 July	<p><b>Pioneer Day [Mormon]</b>                      Commemorates the arrival in 1847 of the first Latter Day Saints pioneers in Salt Lake Valley.</p> <p><b>Khordad Sal (Qadimi) [Zoroastrian]</b>                      The birthday of Zoroaster, celebrated on this date in the Qadimi calendar.</p>
28 July	<p><b>Eid-UI-Fitr [Muslim] (◆)</b>                      The end of Ramadan when Muslims celebrate the end of fasting and thank Allah for his help and strength given to help practice self-control. The word ‘Fitr’ means ‘to break’, symbolising the breaking of the fast. Actual date each year is dependant upon the sightings of the moon.</p>

**August 2014**

1 August	<p><b>Lughnasadh – Lammas [Pagan]</b>                      A harvest festival and one of the Pagan festivals of Celtic origin which splits the calendar year into four. This is the celtic festival of Lugh, the god of light. The representation of the reaping of the corn is used by Pagans to celebrate Lughnasadh.</p>
5 August	<p><b>Tisha B’Av [Jewish] (◆)</b>                      A solemn day that commemorates a series of tragedies that have befallen the Jewish people over the years, many of which have coincidentally happened on this day.</p>
6 August	<p><b>Transfiguration [Christian]</b>                      Orthodox Christian feast commemorating the sudden emanation of radiance from the person of Jesus that occurred on the mountain.</p>
15 August	<p><b>Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary [Christian]</b>                      A largely Roman Catholic festival celebrating their belief that Mary, the mother of Jesus, was taken body and soul into heaven.</p>

**Faith festivals and other celebrations / commemorations [relating to Religion and Belief] 2013 (shown using the Gregorian (Western) Calendar)**

	<p><b>Dormition of the Theotokos (Orthodox) [Christian]</b> An Orthodox festival that commemorates the death, resurrection, and glorification of Christ's mother.</p>
17 August	<p><b>Birthday of Marcus Garvey [Rastafari]</b> Commemorates the birthday of Marcus Garvey, the Jamaican politician born in 1887 who predicted the crowning of a king of Africa (Haile Selassie I) and instigated the 'Back to Africa' movement. His philosophy is credited as marking the beginning of the Rastafari faith.</p>
18 August	<p><b>Jamshedi Noruz (Shenshai) [Zoroastrian]</b> Zoroastrian New Year's Day in the Shenshai calendar.</p>

**September 2014**

8 September	<p><b>Nativity of the Theotokos [Christian]</b> Orthodox Christians celebrate the birth of the Virgin Mary.</p> <p><b>Birthday of the Blessed Virgin Mary [Christian]</b> Roman Catholic and Anglican churches celebrate the birth of Mary, mother of Jesus.</p>
11 September	<p><b>Ethiopian New Year [Rastafari]</b> The start of the New Year in Ethiopia is recognised because Rastafarians believe Ethiopia to be their spiritual homeland, and a place which they want to return.</p>
14 September	<p><b>The Triumph of the Cross [Christian]</b> Catholics and Orthodox Christians reflect on the salvation they believe inherent in the symbol of the Cross.</p>
23 September	<p><b>Autumn Equinox [Pagan]</b> Also known as Mabon or Harvest Home, the Autumn Equinox is celebrated when day and night are of equal duration.</p>
25 September	<p><b>Rosh Hashanah (First day) [Jewish] (◆)</b> Jewish New Year, commemorating the creation of the world. Begins at sundown the day before and last for two days. The literal translation of Rosh Hashanah is 'head of the year'</p> <p><b>Navaratri (Start) [Hindu] (◆)</b> Navaratri (nine nights) symbolises the triumph of good over evil and marks the start of autumn</p>

**Faith festivals and other celebrations / commemorations [relating to Religion and Belief] 2013 (shown using the Gregorian (Western) Calendar)**

**October 2013**

4 October	<p><b>Yom Kippur [Jewish] (◆)</b> The Day of Atonement. The most solemn day in the Jewish Calendar and an occasion for seeking forgiveness from God and fellow human beings. Eating, drinking, bathing and conjugal relations are not permitted on this day.</p> <p><b>Eid-UI-Adha [Muslim] (◆)</b> Festival of Sacrifice marking the day after Arafat. The Day of Arafat is the most important day in the Hajj ritual. This is a four day holiday</p>
9 October	<p><b>Sukkot (begins) [Jewish] (◆)</b> Also known as the Feast of Tabernacles. A commemoration of the years the Jewish people spent in the desert on their way to the Promised Land, and their protection during this time by God. Sukkot lasts for 7 days and work is not permitted for the first two days. Begins at sundown the day before.</p> <p><b>Birthday of Guru Ram Das (Nanakshahi calendar) [Sikh]</b> Guru Ram Das (1534-1581) was the fourth of the Sikh Gurus.</p>
15 October	<p><b>Hoshanah Rabbah [Jewish] (◆)</b> The seventh day of Sukkot</p>
16 October	<p><b>Shemini Atzeret [Jewish] (◆)</b> The 'Assembly of the eight day' of Sukkot. In Israel the festival is combined with Simchat Torah. Begins at sundown the day before</p>
17 October	<p><b>Simchat Torah [Jewish] (◆)</b> Meaning "Rejoicing in the Torah". This holiday marks the completion of the yearly cycle of weekly Torah readings</p>
20 October	<p><b>Birth of the Bab [Bahai]</b> Celebrates the birth of the precursor of the founder of the Baha'i faith.</p>
23 October	<p><b>Diwali [Hindu] [Jain] [Sikh] (◆)</b> Diwali, the festival of lights, is the most popular of all the festivals from South Asia. It is an occasion for celebrations by Hindus as well as Jain and Sikhs.</p> <p>For Sikhs, Diwali is especially important because it celebrates the release from prison of the sixth guru Guru Hargobind, and 52 other princes with him, in 1619.</p>
31 October	<p><b>Hallowe'en (All Hallows' Eve) [Christian]</b> The night before All Saints' Day (All Hallows' Day). Its origins date back over 2000 years to the ancient Celtic festival of Samhain. [See below]. Celebrated as a Christian festival since the 8<sup>th</sup> Century.</p> <p><b>Samhain (Hallowe'en) [Pagan]</b> Pronounced 'soe'inn', Samhain marks the Feast of the Dead as well as</p>

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	<p>the ending of Summer and Harvest, though Samhain is also a time of reflection on life circumstances. Samhain is also celebrated by many pagans as the beginning of the Celtic New Year.</p> <p><b>Halloween [Secular]</b> Halloween has also become a secular event/ celebration.</p>
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**November 2013**

1 November	<p><b>All Saints' Day (Hallowmas, All Hallows') [Christian]</b> The time when Anglicans and Roman Catholics honour all saints, known and unknown, of the Christian church. [Orthodox churches celebrate it on the first Sunday after Pentecost].</p>
2 November	<p><b>All Souls' Day (Catholic) [Christian]</b> A remembrance of faithful deceased Christians.</p> <p><b>Coronation of Emperor Haile Selassie I [Rastafari]</b> Commemorates the Coronation in 1930 of Ras Tafari Makonnen as His Imperial Majesty Emperor Haile Selassie (Power of the Trinity) I, conquering Lion of the Tribe of Judah, Elect of God and King of the Kings of Ethiopia.</p>
3 November	<p><b>Ashura [Muslim] (◆)</b> An Islamic holy day observed on the 10<sup>th</sup> of the Islamic month of Muharram. Shi'ite Muslims regard it as a major commemoration marking the martyrdom of the Prophet's grandson, Hussein.</p>
12 November	<p><b>Birth of Baha'u'llah [Bahai]</b> Celebrates the birth in 1817 of the founder of the Baha'i faith.</p>
15 November	<p><b>Shichigosan (7-5-3 festival) [Shinto]</b> A festival to give thanks for children. Often celebrated on the nearest Sunday to the 15<sup>th</sup> to allow working parents to take part.</p>
17 November	<p><b>Birthday of Guru Nanak (Lunar Calendar) [Sikh] (◆)</b> This festival may be date fixed by the Nanakshahi calendar on April 14</p>
23 November	<p><b>Niinamesei [Shinto]</b> Labour Thanksgiving Day, a national holiday in Japan and originally a harvest festival.</p>

**Faith festivals and other celebrations / commemorations [relating to Religion and Belief] 2013 (shown using the Gregorian (Western) Calendar)**

24 November	<p><b>Martyrdom of Guru Tegh Bahadur (Nanakshahi calendar) [Sikh]</b> Guru Tegh Bahadur was the ninth Sikh Guru and honoured as a champion of religious freedom. He was executed in 1675 for refusing to convert to Islam.</p>
26 November	<p><b>Day of covenant [Bahai]</b> This minor festival celebrates the covenant of Baha'u'llah (meaning Glory to God). Baha'is also marks the life of 'Abdu'l –Baha on this day.</p>
28 November	<p><b>Ascension of Abdu'l – Baha [Bahai]</b> Marks the death of the son of Baha'u'llah in 1921. This is a minor holiday and work is not suspended. Usually begins at sundown the day before.</p> <p><b>Hanukkah [Jewish]</b> Hanukkah is the Festival of Lights and marks the restoration of the temple by the Maccabees in 164 BCE. Although Hanukkah is celebrated around the same time as Christmas, there is no connection at all between the festivals.</p>
Friday 30 November	<p><b>St Andrews Day [Christian]</b> Saint Andrew is the patron saint of Scotland [and also Greece and Russia].</p> <p><b>Advent Sunday [Christian]</b> The beginning of the ecclesiastical year on the Sunday closest to November 30. Advent is the season before Christmas – In Western Christendom, four Sundays are included in Eastern Christendom, and the season begins in November.</p>

**December 2013**

8 December	<p><b>Feast of the Immaculate Conception (Catholic) [Christian]</b> Celebrated by Roman Catholics who remember Mary's Conception as being without sin, therefore immaculate.</p> <p><b>Bodhi Day [Buddhist]</b> On Bodhi day, some Buddhists celebrate Gautama's attainment of enlightenment under the Bodhi Tree at Bodhgaya, India.</p>
17 December	<p><b>Hanukkah [Jewish]</b> Hanukkah is the Festival of Lights and marks the restoration of the Maccabees in 164 BCE. Hanukkah is celebrated at roughly the same time as Christmas, but there is no connection between the festivals</p>

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21 December	<p><b>Winter Solstice – Yule [Pagan]</b>  Yule is the time of the Winter Solstice, the sun child is reborn and an image of the return of all new life born through the love of the Gods. Within the Northern Tradition Yule is regarded as the New Year.</p>
24 December	<p><b>Christmas Eve [Christian]</b>  The day before Christmas Day.</p>
25 December	<p><b>Christmas Day [Christian]</b>  The day when Western Christians celebrate the birth of Jesus Christ.</p> <p><b>Christmas Day [Secular]</b>  Although a Christian celebration, secular society has adopted this date (preceded by the ‘run up to Christmas’) to celebrate “Christmas” and “Father Christmas”. For many it is considered a precious day to spend with family and friends and share in present giving.</p>
26 December	<p><b>Boxing Day [Secular]</b>  The day after Christmas Day.</p> <p><b>St Stephen’s Day [Christian]</b>  St Stephen was the first Christian Martyr, and is celebrated on this day. The day is also called the Feast of Stephen.</p>