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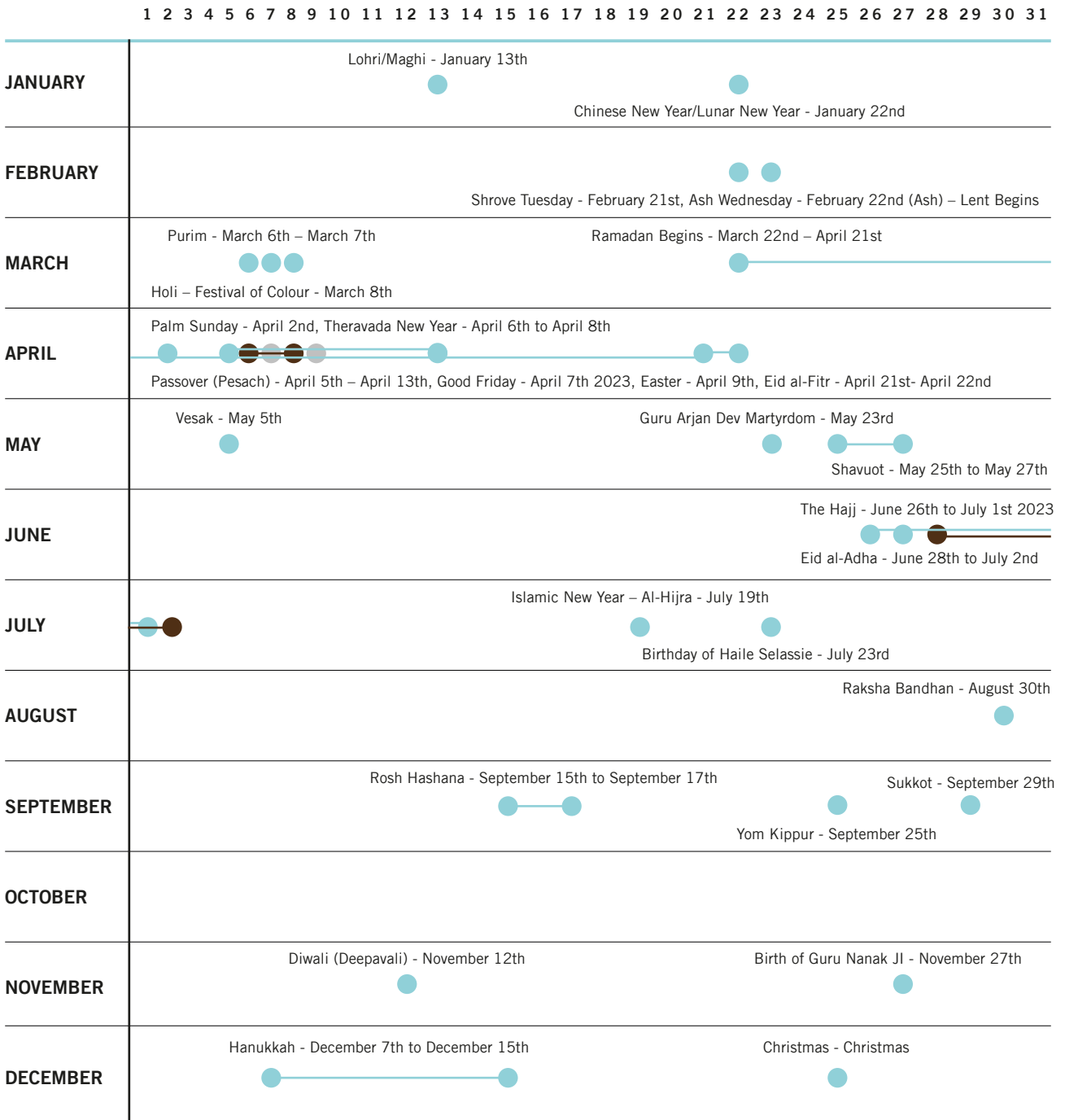
**Key Interfaith Dates**

**2023**



# KEY INTERFAITH DATES 2023

This is a brief overview of some of the key religious dates that are coming up in 2023. Whilst this list is limited, it should highlight some of the key dates and explain the impact that it may have on those celebrating, as well as providing some guidance on impact to programmes.



FESTIVAL	FAITH(S)	DATES	EXPLANATION/ IMPACT	CONSIDERATIONS
Lohri/Maghi	Hinduism Sikhism	January 13th 2023	Lohri marks the beginning of the winter harvest season of India. The date commemorates the end of the month containing the longest night of the year often marked by the celebration of a sacred bonfire. Maghi is celebrated the day after which is often honoured with a cleansing dip.	Since this day is about happiness and prosperity, it is fine to wish someone a Happy Lohri'. Mentioning happiness, warmth and prosperity is always appreciated.
Chinese New Year/Lunar New Year	Buddhism, Daoism, Confucianism	January 22nd 2023	Year of the Rabbit – Many followers of this festival will be celebrating the new year. Chinese New Year is celebrated by people of different faiths in many countries and cultures and will therefore also be called Lunar New Year.	Many employees may take the day off and young people may not attend activities.  Festivities can span a whole week.  It is tradition to receive 'red packets' of lucky money.  Wishing someone a Happy Lunar New Year is appreciated.
Shrove Tuesday and Ash Wednesday – Lent Begins	Christianity (RC,P)	February 21st (Shrove). February 22nd (Ash) 2023	Many people may have changed dietary requirements during this period.  Pancakes are traditionally eaten in some cultures on Shrove Tuesday.	Be aware of this in the case of organising food for those that are partaking in Lent.  Consider opportunities to connect communities by serving and eating pancakes on Shrove Tuesday.
Purim	Judaism	March 6th – March 7th 2023	Jewish Festival that celebrates the saving of the Jewish people from Haman. Many people will continue to work as normal on this festival however some sources suggest that people should not go about ordinary business out of respect for the festival.	Be aware of dietary requirements in case of organising food (possible Kosher requirements may apply).  Be mindful that some people may wish to work more flexibly during this time to observe the festival.

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Holi – Festival of Colour	Hinduism	March 8th, 2023 (Dates may vary)	Festival of colour in which Hindus celebrate traditionally by throwing coloured water and powder over each other. One of the key dates in the Hindu calendar.	Some people may not follow normal routine on this day. Be mindful that some people may wish to work flexibly during this time to observe the festival.
Ramadan Begins	Islam	March 22nd – April 21st, 2023 (dates may vary)	<p>Islamic festival of Ramadan. Traditionally during this period, followers of Islam will fast during the day for the whole period (which means no food or water during the period in which the sun is up). Many younger people will not partake in the fast as they are too young to handle it (usually starts around age of 14).</p> <p>It is important to be aware that during this period many Muslim participants may not attend sporting activities due to fasting. Those that do may not be able to participate at full capacity.</p> <p>Those who are fasting will also break fast (Iftar) at certain times. This time changes constantly during Ramadan as it falls at sunset. This usually falls around 8-8.30pm. You should check with participants what time Iftar is if it falls during a session as they may wish to pause to break their fast.</p>	<p>Consider supporting Muslim colleagues and friends by providing some food at sessions during Ramadan for those who break their fast during work hours (although they will likely have brought something). Traditionally fast is initially broken by eating dates and drinking water or milk.</p> <p>There are some exceptions to fasting which some may observe (those who are pregnant or those having a period, young children or those who have illnesses for example), so be conscious not to make any assumptions and ask respectfully about an individual's preferred practice if necessary.</p> <p>Be careful not to refer to 'tea' or 'food breaks' during meetings or sessions. Consider using language such as 'rest breaks' as an inclusive alternative.</p>

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Passover (Pesach)	Judaism	April 5th – April 13th 2023	Jewish holiday that celebrates the Israelites freedom from slavery In Egypt. Many people that follow this holiday will celebrate will have strict restrictions on diet and work≈restrictions particularly at beginning and end of the celebration.	Be aware of dietary requirements in case of organising food especially in relation to grains.  Some people may not follow normal routine on this day. Be mindful that some people may wish to work flexibly during this time to observe Passover.
Palm Sunday	Christianity (RC, P,O)	April 2nd 2023	Christian festival that celebrates Christ's entry into Jerusalem. Some Orthodox Christians may not work on this day and may have impact on session attendance.  Many people from different cultures celebrate from Palm Sunday for one week and this is known as Holy Week.	Consider that there may be some people who will take time off at this time of the year.
Theravada New Year	Buddhism	April 6th to April 8th 2023	This is a new year celebration celebrated by many countries of South East Asia such as Cambodia, Laos, Thailand and some South Asian countries such as India and Sri Lanka. There are typically three days of celebration starting with a Temple visit and it is a time of reflection, resolution and celebration.	Consider that people from these countries and cultures may wish to take time off at this time of year.

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Good Friday	Christianity	April 7th 2023	Christian holiday reflecting on death of Jesus Christ. Many participants will not eat meat on this day.	<p>Be aware of dietary requirements in case of organising food especially in relation to grains.</p> <p>Some people may not follow normal routine on this day. Be mindful that some people may wish to work flexibly during this time to observe Passover.</p>
Easter	Christianity	April 9th 2023	Celebration of the resurrection of Jesus Christ. Many people will celebrate with easter eggs, church services, egg rolling etc.	<p>Consider that there may be some people who will take time off outside of public holidays at this time of the year.</p> <p>It is traditional in some cultures to give gifts of eggs or chocolate eggs, particularly for children.</p>
Eid al-Fitr	Islam	April 21st- April 22nd (Dates may vary)	Eid al-Fitr marks the end of the holy month of Ramadan. Followers will often spend this day visiting family, enjoying large family meals and celebrations.	<p>Attendance at sessions may be heavily impacted by Eid al-Fitr</p> <p>Be mindful that some people may wish to work flexibly or take time off during this time to observe this.</p> <p>Greeting people with 'Eid Mubarak' (have a blessed eve) is customary.</p>

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Vesak	Buddhism	May 5th 2023	<p>An important festival which celebrates the birth, enlightenment, and death of Buddha.</p> <p>People who practice the faith will celebrate in different ways from meditation to practicing good deeds or going to the temple.</p>	Be mindful that some people may wish to work flexibly during this time to observe the festival.
Guru Arjan Dev Martyrdom	Sikhism	May 23rd 2023	The Martyrdom of Guru Arjan Dev Sahib is observed on May 23 every year. It's the day to commemorate and celebrate the life of religious figure Guru Arjan Dev who sacrificed his life for the Sikh people. It is preceded by continuous reading of Sikh scriptures. Traditionally, a cooling drink known as a Chabeel is distributed on this day.	Be mindful that some people may wish to work flexibly or take time off during this time to observe Guru Arjan Dev Martyrdom.
Shavuot	Judaism	May 25th to May 27th 2023	The word Shavuot (or Shavuos) means "weeks." It celebrates the completion of the seven-week Omer counting period between Passover and Shavuot. It is observed through visiting the Synagogue, reading scriptures as well as eating certain dairy foods.	Be mindful that some people may wish to work flexibly or take time off during this time to observe Shavuot.
The Hajj	Islam	June 26th to July 1st 2023 (dates may vary)	Hajj is an annual pilgrimage to Saudi Arabia.	Three may be those who wish to take time off to travel for this pilgrimage.

FESTIVAL	FAITH(S)	DATES	EXPLANATION/ IMPACT	CONSIDERATIONS
Eid al-Adha	Islam	June 28th to July 2nd 2023 (dates may vary)	This holiday is the second of two of the largest Muslim festivals celebrated worldwide each year. Muslim holiday that honours the willingness of Ibrahim to sacrifice his son Ismail as an act of obedience to God's command. It is celebrated through prayer, the ritual of Qurbani, as well as food (often more savoury than Eid-al-Fitr).	Attendance at sessions may be heavily impacted by Eid al-Adha  Be mindful that some people may wish to work flexibly or take time off during this time to observe this.  Greeting people with 'Eid Mubarak' (have a blessed eve) is customary.
Islamic New Year – Al-Hijra	Islam	July 19th 2023	The Islamic New Year – based on the Islamic Lunar Calendar.  The New Year begins on the first day of the month of Muharram. This year, it will start in the evening of the 29th of July and finish on the evening of the 30th of July.  Muharram is the first month of the Islamic calendar and is a time of reflection. It's one of the four sacred months in the Islamic calendar.	Attendance at sessions may be heavily impacted by Al-Hijra  Be mindful that some people may wish to work flexibly or take time off during this time to observe Al-Hijra.  It is customary to exchange gifts and cards during this time.
Birthday of Haile Selassie	Rastafarianism	July 23rd 2023	Celebration of the birth of Emperor Haile Selassie, believed to be the incarnation of God.	This is the most holy observance for Rastafarians' and under considerations put 'Consider that there may be some people who will take time off at this time of the year
Raksha Bandhan	Hindusim	August 30th, 2023	This is a Hindu holy festival that celebrates the bond between siblings through the tradition of tying thread around each others' wrists among other things. For Raksha Bandhan, sisters will often keep fast for their brothers to bless them and wish them prosperity however it is not compulsory.	Be mindful that some people may wish to work flexibly or take time off during this time to observe this.  Consider the symbolism of protection and protecting each other which can span beyond siblings to friends and colleagues which has been a really positive message for many organisations.



FESTIVAL	FAITH(S)	DATES	EXPLANATION/ IMPACT	CONSIDERATIONS
Rosh Hashana	Judaism	September 15th to September 17th, 2023	<p>This is the Jewish New Year celebration.</p> <p>Families and friends typically come together to celebrate with a meal on both nights which is preceded by a ceremony involving prayers and special foods.</p> <p>Throughout this time of year, many congregate in synagogues to worship, particularly on Rosh Hashanah and on the tenth day – the fast of Yom Kippur (see below)</p>	<p>Be aware of dietary requirements in case of organising food (possible Kosher requirements may apply) and that there are people who may observe some fasting throughout this month.</p> <p>Be mindful that some people may wish to work more flexibly during this time to observe the festival or to take time off.</p>
Yom Kippur	Judaism	September 25th 2023	<p>The holiest day in Judaism. A day in which Jewish people seek to expiate their sins and reconcile with God.</p>	<p>Be aware that fasting is typically observed for Yom Kippur and there are other restrictions that may be observed (possible Kosher requirements may apply).</p> <p>Be mindful that some people may wish to work more flexibly during this time to observe the festival or to take time off.</p> <p>Be careful not to refer to ‘tea’ or ‘food breaks’ during meetings or sessions. Consider using language such as ‘rest breaks’ as an inclusive alternative during this time.</p>
Sukkot	Judaism	September 29th, 2023	<p>Sukkot, also called the Feast of Tabernacles and the Feast of the Ingathering, is a Jewish festival celebrated in September or October. It is considered the most joyous festival of the year</p>	<p>Be mindful that some people may wish to work more flexibly during this time to observe the festival or to take time off.</p>

FESTIVAL	FAITH(S)	DATES	EXPLANATION/ IMPACT	CONSIDERATIONS
Diwali (Deepavali)	Hinduism, Sikhism, Buddhists	November 12th 2023	Another key festival in the Hindu calendar. A celebration of good over evil. People will often celebrate with oil lamps, fireworks, and sweets. Another hugely important date in the calendar for those that subscribe to the faiths.	Attendance at sessions can be heavily impacted by Diwali.  Be mindful that some people may wish to work more flexibly during this time to observe the festival or to take time off.
Birth of Guru Nanak Ji	Sikhism	November 27th 2023	A day that honours the birth of the founder of Sikhism	Consider that there may be some people who will take time off at this time of the year
Hanukkah	Judaism	December 7th to December 15th, 2023	Hanukkah, the Jewish festival of lights, is celebrated every year to remember the revolt of the Maccabees more than 2,000 years ago. It is celebrated over an 8-day period. It has a celebratory feeling and includes activities such as giving gifts, lighting candles (Menorah), giving gelt and putting up lighting decorations around a home.	Attendance at sessions can be impacted by Hanukkah. Be mindful that some people may wish to work more flexibly during this time to observe the festival or to take time off.
Christmas	Christianity	c 2023  Orthodox Christmas takes place on the 7th January based on the Julian calendar	The holiday that celebrates the birth of Jesus Christ. Although it is a Christian celebration many other cultures and people of different faiths celebrate this period by having time off, spending time with family or loved ones. It is typically celebrated through parties, gift giving and food even for those who do not believe in a God.	While it is generally a positive and celebratory festival it is important to be mindful that for many people that are marginalised from society's celebrations or excluded from their families, it can also be a very lonely time. Be mindful not to make assumptions when asking questions about whether they will be spending time with family and ask more open questions about how they might spend the season.

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Christmas	Christianity	<p>December 25th 2023</p> <p>Orthodox Christmas takes place on the 7th January based on the Julian calendar</p>		<p>Many people of different cultures and faiths will choose to take time off due to the various public holidays in the UK.</p> <p>However, be mindful that there will be those of different faiths who do not wish to celebrate and may wish to work during this period.</p>