We would like to recognize a few special days in our communities.

January

- January 1: New Year’s Day, the first day of the year according to the modern Gregorian calendar, celebrated within most Western countries.
- January 1: Emancipation Proclamation, by U.S. President Abraham Lincoln "that [in 1863] all persons held as slaves [in the U.S.] ...shall be free."
- 3rd Monday in January: Martin Luther King, Jr. Day, a U.S. federal holiday observed annually to mark his birthday (Jan 15). MLK Day is designated as a national day of service to encourage all Americans to volunteer.

February

- Black History Month in the United States and Canada. Since 1976, the month has been designated to remember the contributions of people of the African diaspora. See the Antiracist Action Calendar, celebrating Black History Month
- February: Chinese New Year (aka Lunar New Year, Spring Festival) begins with the new moon that appears between 21 January and 20 February. The 15-day festival is one of the most important holidays in China.
- February 1: National Freedom Day, which celebrates the signing of the 13th Amendment that abolished slavery in 1865.
- February 1: Imbolc, a Gaelic traditional festival marking the beginning of spring.
- February 1: St. Brigid of Kildare, feast day for St. Brigid celebrated by some Christian denominations.

March

- Women’s History Month, started in 1987 to recognize all women for their valuable contributions to history and society.
- National Developmental Disabilities Awareness Month, established to increase awareness and understanding of issues affecting people with intellectual and developmental disabilities.
- National Multiple Sclerosis Education and Awareness Month, established to raise
public awareness of the autoimmune disease that affects the brain and spinal cord and assist those with multiple sclerosis in making informed decisions about their health care.

April

- **Ramadan**[^7] is observed by Muslims as a month of fasting (during daylight hours), prayer, reflection, and community. The Islamic calendar is a lunar one, based on the phases of the moon. Ramadan, over time, passes through all seasons. The **start of Ramadan**[^8] varies every year: April 2, 2022 | Mar 23, 2023 | Mar 11, 2024 | Mar 1, 2025 | Feb 18, 2026 | Feb 8, 2027 | Jan 28, 2028.

- Diversity Month, started in 2004 to recognize and honor the diversity surrounding us all. By celebrating differences and similarities during this month, organizers hope that people will get a deeper understanding of each other.
- April is Autism Awareness Month, established to raise awareness about the developmental disorder that affects an individual's normal development of social and communication skills.
- Jewish American Heritage Month, an annual recognition and celebration of Jewish American achievements in and contributions to the United States of America during the month of May. President George W. Bush first proclaimed the month on April 20, 2006, as a result of cooperation with Sen. Arlen Specter, as well as the Jewish Museum of Florida and the South Florida Jewish Community.

May

- Asian Pacific American Heritage Month in the United States. May was chosen to commemorate the immigration of the first Japanese to the United States on May 7, 1843, and to mark the anniversary of the completion of the transcontinental railroad on May 10, 1869. The majority of the workers who laid the tracks on the project were Chinese immigrants.
- Older Americans Month, established in 1963 to honor the legacies and contributions of older Americans and to support them as they enter their next stage of life.
- May is Jewish American Heritage Month, which recognizes the diverse contributions of the Jewish people to American culture.
- Mental Health (Awareness) Month, which aims to raise awareness and educate the public about mental illnesses and reduce the stigma that surrounds mental illnesses.

June

- Caribbean American Heritage Month, named a June diversity observance by presidential proclamation in 2006. It aims to promote the rich culture and heritage of the Caribbean American people.
- Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender Pride Month, established to recognize the impact that gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender individuals have had on the world. LGBT groups celebrate this special time with pride parades, picnics, parties, memorials for those lost to hate crimes and HIV/AIDS, and other group gatherings. The last Sunday in June is Gay Pride Day.
- June 19: Now a federal holiday, Juneteenth marks our country's second independence day. The celebration commemorates the day in 1865 when enslaved people in Galveston, Texas were told more than two years later that enslaved African Americans were freed by President Lincoln's Emancipation Proclamation, January 1, 1863. Read
more about the Historical Legacy of Juneteenth [9].


July

- July 1: Canada Day, or Fête du Canada, is a Canadian federal holiday that celebrates the 1867 enactment of the Constitution Act, which established the three former British colonies of Canada, Nova Scotia and New Brunswick as a united nation called Canada.
- July 4: Independence Day (aka 'Fourth of July'), a United States federal holiday that celebrates the adoption of the Declaration of Independence on July 4, 1776. The original 13 American colonies declared independence from Britain and established themselves as a new nation known as the United States of America.
- Asalha Puja, or Dharma Day, is a celebration of Buddha’s first teachings.

August

- August 1: Lammas, a festival to mark the annual wheat harvest within some English-speaking countries in the Northern Hemisphere.
- August 1: Lughnasadadh, a Gaelic festival marking the beginning of the harvest season.

September

- Hispanic Heritage Month is observed from September 15 to October 15. This month corresponds with Mexican Independence Day, which is celebrated on September 16, and recognizes the revolution in 1810, ending Spanish dictatorship.
- Rosh Hashanah is the Jewish New Year "head of the year" and the first of the Jewish High Holy Days. It begins the 1st day of the 7th month of the Hebrew calendar. The exact date varies every year, though normally in September or October.

October

- Yom Kippur "Day of Atonement" is Judaism's holiest day of the year. It begins on the 10th day of the 7th month of the Hebrew calendar, 10 days after Rosh Hashana. The exact date varies every year, normally between Sept 14 and October 14.
- Global Diversity Awareness Month increasing awareness and acceptance of diverse cultures.
- LGBT History Month, a U.S. observance started in 1994 to recognize lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender history and the history of the gay-rights movement.
- October has become the official month to celebrate the Italian American culture and heritage after the 1989 proclamation by President George H. W. Bush designating it as National Italian American Heritage Month.

November

- National Native American Heritage Month, which celebrates the history and contributions of Native Americans.
- National Veterans and Military Families Month
- Diwali, the festival of lights, a Hindu five-day celebration with socializing and exchanging gifts. The exact dates vary every year, though usually observed in early autumn (last half October & early November), after summer harvest and coincides with the full moon.
- Nov 10: U.S. Marine Corps' birthday
• Nov 11: Veterans' Day: a holiday honoring military veterans. The date is also celebrated as Armistice Day, or Remembrance Day, in other parts of the world and commemorates the ending of World War I in 1918.

December

• World AIDS Day, commemorating those who have died of AIDS, and to acknowledge the need for a continued commitment to all those affected by the HIV/AIDS epidemic.
• Dec 21st: Yule Winter Solstice, celebrated by Pagans and Wiccans. The shortest day of the year represents a celebration focusing on rebirth, renewal and new beginnings as the sun makes its way back to the Earth. A solstice is an astronomical event that happens twice each year when the sun reaches its highest position in the sky.
• Dec 25th: Christmas Day, the day that many Christians associate with Jesus' birth.
• Dec 26-Jan 1: Kwanzaa is an annual celebration honoring African heritage and African-American culture. Started in 1966, it often includes singing, dancing, storytelling, poetry reading, music, and feasting.
• December 31: Watch Night, a day for Christians to review the year that has passed, make confessions, and then prepare for the year ahead by praying and resolving.

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