



EQUITY, DIVERSITY & INCLUSION CALENDAR

MARCH – 2022

MONTH-LONG OBSERVANCES:

Women’s History Month

Established in 1987, Women’s History Month recognizes all women for their valuable contributions to history and society. It’s intended to honor the vital role of women in American history.

National Developmental Disabilities Awareness Month

Established to increase awareness and understanding of issues affecting people with intellectual and developmental disabilities.

March 1: Lailat al Miraj

A Muslim holiday that commemorates the prophet Muhammad’s nighttime journey from Mecca the Farthest Mosque in Jerusalem, where he ascended to heaven, was purified and given the instructions for Muslims to pray five times daily. Note that in the Muslim calendar, a holiday begins on the sunset of the previous day, so observing Muslims will celebrate Lailat at Miraj starting at sundown on February 28.

March 1: Maha Shivaratri (Hindu)

Hindu festival celebrated each year to honour Lord Shiva. It is celebrated just before the arrival of spring. It is also known as the Great Night of Shiva or Shivaratri and is one of the largest and most significant among the sacred festival nights of India. A 24 hour fast is kept and devotees make pilgrimages to major shrines for worship.

March 1: Mardi Gras

The last day for Catholics to indulge before Ash Wednesday starts the sober weeks of fasting that accompany Lent. The term “Mardi Gras” is particularly associated with the carnival celebrations in New Orleans, Louisiana.

March 1: Shrove Tuesday (Christian)

The day before Ash Wednesday. Although named for its former religious significance, it is chiefly marked by feasting and celebration, which traditionally preceded the observance of the Lenten fast. It is observed by various Christian denominations.

March 1: Pancake Tuesday (United Kingdom)

Shrove Tuesday (Mardi Gras in French, which means Fat Tuesday) is the last day before the beginning of Lent. Strict Christian Lenten rules prohibited the eating of all dairy products during Lent, so pancakes were made to use up their supplies of eggs, milk, butter and other fats. Pancake race are held in many parts of England.

March 1: Maha Shiravatri

A Hindu festival called "Shiva's night" which honors this significant deity.

March 1: Lailat al Miraj

A Muslim holiday commemorating Muhammad's journey from Mecca to Jerusalem where he ascended into heaven.

March 1: St. David's Day

The feast day of St. David, the patron saint of Wales.

March 1 to 19: Ala

Also known as the Nineteen-Day Fast - A time in the Baha'i faith to reinvigorate the soul and bring one closer to God. This fast takes immediately before the beginning of the Baha'i New Year. The English translation of Ala (Arabic) is loftiness.

March 2: Ash Wednesday

This Christian day of fasting and prayer begins the season of Lent. For Catholics, Ash Wednesday often means going to mass and having ashes drawn in a cross upon your forehead. For others, it may just mean a day of reflection and fasting. The day in the Christian Church, that marks the start of Lent, the 40-day period of prayer and fasting before Easter.

March 3 to 5: Losar

The Tibetan Buddhist New Year, a time of renewal through sacred and secular practices. It is celebrated for three days by visiting, feasting and the relaxation the monastic discipline.

March 4: World Day of Prayer

World Day of Prayer is celebrated on the first Friday of March each year to encourage Christian women to engage in personal prayer and lead communal prayer within their mission auxiliaries and associations. Women have a strong sense of identification with the needs of other women and children and are better suited to provide the appropriate support. Since 1861, despite strong resistance from the all-male mission boards, women have established a number of effective boards for foreign and home missions working directly with and for women and children. World Day of Prayer is an initiative of one such board, which aims to make the lives of women and children easier by offering resources and support.

March 6: Cheesefare Sunday or Forgiveness Sunday

The last Sunday prior to the commencement of Great Lent for Orthodox Christians.

March 7: Beginning of Great Lent in the Orthodox Christian faith

The day Great Lent begins this year, is also known as Clean Monday. It is the beginning of the forty-day fast when Christians imitate Jesus' withdrawal into the wilderness before his crucifixion.

March 7: Great Prayer Festival

Monks from the three great monasteries of Tibet assemble in Jikhang to pray to Shakyamuni's image as if it were the living Buddha. Philosophical debates are held among the candidates for the Doctor of Metaphysics.

March 8: International Women's Day

First observed in 1911 in Germany, it has now become a major global celebration honouring women's economic, political and social achievements. In August 1910, an International Women's Conference was organized to precede the general meeting of the Socialist Second International in Copenhagen, Denmark. Inspired in part by the American socialists, German Socialist Luise Zietz proposed the establishment of an annual International Women's Day and was seconded by fellow socialist and later communist leader Clara Zetkin. Another day for women. This day is intended to celebrate the social, economic, cultural, and political achievements of women. On this day, you may donate to a women's charity, recognize a local woman-owned company, or reach out to a woman in your life who has inspired you.

March 9: Asian-American Women's/Pacific Islander Women's Equal Pay Day

The aim is to raise awareness about the pay gap between Asian-American and Pacific Islander women and White men. Asian-American women are paid 90 cents for every dollar paid to White men.

March 10: National Women and Girls HIV/AIDS Awareness Day

Since the inception of this day in 2005, NWHAAD's goal has been to raise awareness about how women can protect themselves and their partners from HIV. This day brings organizations and communities together to help women and girls protect themselves from HIV through prevention, testing and treatment.

March 11: Maha Shivarati

One of the major festivals in Hinduism dedicated to worshipping Lord Shiva. People celebrate by fasting, keeping vigil and doing pujas at homes and temples.

March 12: Girl Scout Day

Thirteen girls and leaders assembled on March 12, 1912 for a local Girl Guide meeting. They believed that all girls should be given the opportunity to develop physically, mentally and spiritually.

March 13: Mothering Sunday (Ireland)

The celebration of motherhood in the United Kingdom and takes place on the fourth Sunday of Lent.

March 13 to April 15: Deaf History Month

This observance celebrates key events in deaf history, including the founding of Gallaudet University and the American School for the Deaf.

March 13: Orthodox Sunday

Celebrated on the first Sunday of Great Lent. It is the celebration of the victory of the iconodules over the iconoclasts by the decision of the Seventh Ecumenical Council. Therefore, the service commemorates the restoration of icons for use in services as well as a Christian's private devotional life.

March 16 to 20: Gahambar Hamaspathmaedem (Zoroastrian)

This day celebrates the creation of human beings

March 17: St. Patrick's Day

A holiday started in Ireland to recognize St. Patrick, the patron saint of Ireland who brought Christianity to the country in the early days of the faith. This is the feast day and death day of Saint Patrick, a Catholic saint. His feast day is now both a cultural and religious celebration held around the world. How you choose to celebrate is up to you. Some people like to bake festive desserts while others like to raise a toast. St. Patrick used the three-leaved shamrock to explain the Christian idea of the Holy Trinity, thus the idea of wearing a shamrock.

March 17: Purim (Jewish)

A Jewish celebration that marks the time when the Jewish community living in Persia was saved from genocide. On Purim, Jewish people dress up in costumes, offer charity, and share food with friends. The Feast of Lots in the Jewish faith that honors the survival of ancient Persian Jews who were marked for death.

March 18: Butter Lamp Festival (Tibet, Buddhist)

To celebrate Shakyamuni's victory over non-Buddhist opponents in 1409. Lord Neu Dzong, a noted patron of Tsongkapa, illuminated numerous butter lamps. The tradition has since then flourished.

March 18: Holi (Sikh, Hindu)

The annual Hindu and Sikh spring religious festival observed in India, Nepal, and Sri Lanka, along with other countries with large Hindu and Sikh populations. People celebrate Holi by throwing colored powder and water at each other. Bonfires are lit the day before in memory of the miraculous escape that young Prahlada accomplished when demoness Holika carried him into the fire. It is often celebrated on the full moon (the Phalguna Purnima) before the beginning of the vernal equinox as based on the Hindu calendar. Holi celebrates the winter harvest as well as the onset of spring. If you live in a climate that you can enjoy the outdoors, this is a great way to do so. Holi is known as the "Festival of Colors." Often, family and friends will gather in their backyards, neighborhoods, and driveways with brightly colored powders to throw and smear on their faces.

March 18 to 19: Lailat al Bara'a

Also known as Lailat Al Baraah, Barat, or popularly as Shab-e-Bara or Night of Forgiveness. Practitioners of the faith seek forgiveness for sins. Muslims spend the night in special prayers. It is regarded as one of the most sacred nights on the Islamic calendar during an Islamic holiday.

March 18 to 20: Hola Mohalla (Sikh)

A Sikh festival that takes place on the second day of the lunar month of Chet, a day after the Hindu spring festival Holi. The 3-day Sikh festival honoring valor, skill, and defense preparedness.

March 19: Feast Day of St. Joseph

A day that commemorates the husband of Jesus's mother Mary and surrogate father on Earth. In Western Christianity, the principal feast of St. Joseph, the husband of the Blessed Virgin Mary .

March 20: Eostre (Wicca)

A fertility festival celebrating the birth of spring. The word Easter is derived from the Maiden Goddess. Celebrations including lighting fires at sunrise, ringing bells, and decorating hard-boiled eggs, an ancient Pagan custom associated with the Goddess.

March 20: Ostara

A celebration of the spring equinox commemorated by Pagans and Wiccans. It is observed as a time to mark the coming of spring and the fertility of the land.

March 20: Shunki-Sorei-Sai (Shinto)

Ancestors are given reverence at home altars and considered active members of the living family. Gravesites are cleaned and purified.

March 20: Shunbu no hi (Japan)

During the time of the Spring Equinox, Buddhists meditate on the harmony of the universe.

March 21 to 22: Naw-Ruz

The Baha'i New Year is a holiday celebrated on the vernal equinox. It is one of the nine Baha'i holy days on which work is suspended. The day marks the end of the Baha'i fast.

March 21 to 22: Nowruz/Norooz

Persian New Year, a holy day of joy, celebration and renewal. The Zoroastrian New Year that is celebrated annually at the spring equinox. There is a major spring-cleaning of houses and the purchase of new clothes to wear for the new year.

March 21: International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination

Observed annually on March 21, 1960, the police killed 69 people in South Africa when they opened fire on a peaceful demonstration. As a call to end racial discrimination, the United Nations proclaimed the day in 1966 and called on the international community to redouble its efforts to eliminate all forms of racial discrimination. Reflect on your own privilege and examine your own biases on this day as a way to bring the world closer together.

March 22: Hindi New Year

There are numerous days throughout the year celebrated as New Year's Day in the different regions of India. The observance is determined by whether the lunar calendar is being followed or the solar calendar.

March 15: Evangelismou (Greece)

The Greeks combined the national Independence Day with the Annunciation and what was earlier believed to be the spring equinox. Greeks wear traditional clothes and celebrate with speeches and folk dancing.

March 25: International Day of Remembrance of the Victims of Slavery

The Transatlantic Slave Trade is a United Nations international observation that offers the opportunity to honour and remember those who suffered and died at the hands of the brutal slavery system. First observed in 2008, the international celebration also aims to raise awareness about the danger of racism and prejudice.

March 25: Annunciation of the Virgin Mary

A Christian celebration of the announcement by the angel Gabriel to the Virgin Mary that she would conceive and become the mother of Jesus.

March 26: Birth of Prophet Zarathustra (Fasli) Zoroastrian

Zoroaster in Greek; Zarthosht in India and Persia. The founder of the Zoroastrian religion dating back to sometime between 1500 and 1000 BCE. He lived in Persia, modern day Iran. Zoroastrianism became the state religion of various Persian empires, until the 7th Century CE.

March 31: International Transgender Day of Visibility

Celebrated to bring awareness to transgender people and their identities as well as recognize those who helped fight for rights for transgender people