

The logo for Diversity Thunder Bay features the word "Diversity" in a large, bold, dark grey font, with "Thunder Bay" in a smaller, lighter grey font below it. To the right of the text is a stylized graphic of several curved lines in black, yellow, and red, resembling a ribbon or a set of brushstrokes.

# Diversity Thunder Bay

## Equity, Diversity & Inclusion Calendar January - 2023

### Month-Long Observances:

#### **National Mentoring Month:**

The mentoring movement unites in celebration of National Mentoring Month and uses the power of collective voice to recruit new members, advance the mentoring field's legislative priorities and drive meaningful change for young people. This month-long celebration of mentoring is full of exciting opportunities to grow the movement and raise awareness about the power of relationships.

#### **National Slavery And Human Trafficking Prevention Month:**

The month of January was first declared as such in 2010 by former president Barack Obama. Slavery and human trafficking is often considered a historic problem but sadly is still an issue, which is growing on a worldwide basis and one, which many people in our community could be vulnerable too. Many organizations have developed awareness raising campaigns and material to help educate us all of the signs and threats that are often displayed by those operating in or being subjected to slavery or human trafficking.

#### **Iroquois Midwinter Ceremony:**

January to February, the Ceremony lasts for 8 days and each day is dedicated to an event; Tobacco Invocation Days vary according to community. This is a time of renewing our responsibilities for the coming year. The first day, there are three Great Feather Dances that are done. The third day starts out with, the Tobacco Burning Thanksgiving Ceremony.

#### **Alzheimer's Awareness Month:**

Each January, the Canadian Alzheimer's Society supports Alzheimer's awareness month. This month plays a key role in encouraging organizations and citizens to learn more about Alzheimer's and how it affects those diagnosed with the disease. Further, the month also provides a useful outlet for those working towards policy change regarding Alzheimer's. The World Health Organization estimates the number of people living with dementia worldwide will increase from 55 million to 78 million by the end of this decade. In fact, Alzheimer's disease is the most common form of dementia that contributes to 60-70% of dementia cases.

## Day Observances:

### January 1st: New Year Day

The first day of the year according to the modern Gregorian calendar, celebrated within most Western countries.

### January 1st: St. Basil's Day (Greece)

The Greeks call New Year, St. Basil's Day. Traditionally gifts are exchanged.

### January 1st: Emancipation Proclamation

On this day in 1863, President Lincoln declared all persons held as slaves would be free.

### January 1st: Gantan-Sai (Japan)

Also referred to as Shogatu, is the Shinto New Year holiday. The faithful visit the shrines, often at midnight, praying for the renewal of heart, health and prosperity.

### January 2nd: World Introvert Day

World introvert day recognizes the differences in personality types everyone has. Further, world introvert day recognizes that there are those who prefer different levels of socialization and that does not mean they do not enjoy the company of others or that they are "abnormal" in any way due to that.

### January 4th: World Braille Day

Birthday of Louis Braille (people with disabilities): French educator Louis Braille created a system of reading and writing for those who are visually impaired. His system, known worldwide as "braille" remains largely unchanged today.

### January 5th: Guru Gobind Singh's Birthday

He was the 10th and last living Guru of the Sikh faith. He founded the Khalsa brotherhood where the initiated adopted the five "K"s. Kangha (wooden comb); Kara (steel bracelets); Kirpan (sword); Kaccha (pair of shorts) and Kesh (long hair).

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## **January 5th: Twelfth Night**

A festival day celebrated by some branches of Christianity that marks the coming of the Epiphany.

## **January 6th: Feast Of The Epiphany (Christian)**

A feast day that celebrates the relevance of God incarnate as Jesus Christ. The day celebrates the journey of the three Wise Men to Bethlehem to offer gifts to the infant Jesus. In the Eastern Church, it is associated with the baptism of Jesus by John the Baptist.

## **January 7th: Christmas (Coptic & Eastern Orthodox)**

On this day, some Eastern Churches celebrate the birth of Jesus according to the Julian calendar, which is currently 13 days behind the Gregorian or Western calendar.

## **January 7th: Mahayana New Year:**

The term Mahayana encompasses Buddhist ideologies and philosophies. Mahayana is one of the main branches of Buddhism, as is mostly practiced in Northeast Asia, China, Japan, Tibet, Taiwan, Mongolia, and Korea. Each region has its own customs and traditions for practicing Mahayana Buddhism. In English, Mahayana means “great vehicle”. This can be interpreted in different ways by devout followers of Buddhism. The Mahayana branch of the religion is practiced around the world. The belief of Mahayana Buddhists is that enlightenment, or eternal Nirvana, can be achieved during the course of an individual's life. The state of enlightenment is not only attainable by monks, but by regular Buddhist practitioners too. The ultimate goal is for everyone to make use of the opportunity of enlightenment. The Mahayana New Year dates differ for each country based on their customs and traditions. While some Mahayana Buddhists observe the celebration on January 1st alongside the Gregorian New Year, others wait for the full moon of January. The celebration is marked with extensive prayer and honouring the Buddhist gods. Statues of the gods are shown respect by bathing them. Temples are visited on the Buddhist New Year, and songs of spirituality are sung to the deities. Candles are also lit as a symbol of happiness and luck for the new year. The Buddhist New Year is also a time for internalizing and self-reflection. Lessons from past mistakes are learned, and the goal is becoming a better version of yourself.

## **January 9th: Seijin No Hi (Japan)**

Is a national holiday in Japan. Coming-of-age of youth who have turned twenty years old. They wear traditional clothes and visit the shrines where the family announce their adulthood to the spirits.

### **January 11th: National Human Trafficking Awareness Day**

Raise awareness of the persistent issue of human trafficking. Though the entire month of January has already been recognized as National Slavery and Human Trafficking Prevention Month, this day is specifically dedicated to awareness and prevention of the illegal practice. This holiday is also separate from the World Day against Trafficking persons as established by the United Nations. Since the Senate established this day of observance in 2007, it has drawn massive public support from individual donations to government organized events. The horrific injustice of human trafficking can affect people of any race and background, and on this day we are all called to fight trafficking wherever it exists.

### **January 13th: St. Knut's Day (Finland, Sweden)**

King Knut who ruled Sweden from 1080—1086 is honoured as a saint for his virtue and generosity. He had declared that Christmas should be celebrated for twenty days, officially ending the season on January 13th.

### **January 14th: Lohri Sikh (Hindu)**

Bonfires are lit to mark the change from the decrease to the increase of the sun.

### **January 15th: Makar Sankranti**

The festival in the Hindu faith that is dedicated to the Hindu religious sun god Surya. The transition of the Sun from Sagittarius to Capricorn during the winter solstice in the northern hemisphere is known as Markar Sankranti. The days gradually lengthen in the northern hemisphere.

### **January 15th: World Religion Day**

The aim of World Religion Day is to promote inter-faith understanding and harmony. Through a variety of events held around the globe, followers of every religion are encouraged to acknowledge the similarities the different faiths have.

### **January 16th: Martin Luther King Jr. Day**

An American Baptist minister and activist, revered as one of the great leaders of the American civil rights movement. People of all races and religions have benefited from the sacrifices and accomplishments made by Marin Luther King Jr.

### **January 19th: Timkat-Theophany (Christian, Coptic & Eastern Orthodox)**

The Eastern Orthodox Church associates Theophany with the baptism of Jesus by John the Baptist.

### **January 22nd: Lunar New Year (Year Of The Rabbit)**

The Lunar New Year is a very important celebration in parts of East and Southeast Asia. The Lunar New Year typically begins with the first new moon and usually occurs near the end of January. Each Lunar New Year is represented by twelve Zodiac animals. The twelve zodiac animals that are associated with the Lunar New Year are the rat, ox, tiger, rabbit, dragon, snake, horse, sheep, monkey, rooster, dog and pig. The beginning of the Lunar New Year is thought to have originated with the Shang Dynasty in the 14th century BC.

### **January 24th: International Day Of Education**

Celebrating the fifth International Day Of Education. As detailed by UNESCO, the theme of this year is “to invest in people and prioritize education”. This year's day will focus on maintaining education initiatives around the world and to ensure that global education programs have the funding they need.

### **January 25th: Robert Burns Night (Scotland, Ireland)**

Honours Scotland's national poet, born in 1759. The night is celebrated by the Scots with a sit down “Burns Supper” and speeches, poetry and song.

### **January 18th — 25th: They Week Of Prayer For Christian Unity**

An ecumenical Christian observance in the Christian calendar that is celebrated internationally. It is kept annually between Ascension Day and Pentecost in the Southern Hemisphere and between 18th January and 25th January in the Northern Hemisphere.

### **January 25th: Kitchen God Celebration (China)**

The custom is based on the traditional farewell ceremony for T'sao Wang, Prince of the Oven, before he leaves for his annual trip to heaven to report on families' good behaviour.

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**Diversity**

Thunder Bay

### **January 27th: International Holocaust Remembrance Day**

International Day of Commemoration in Memory of Victims of the Holocaust (United Nations). The day commemorates the approximately six million Jewish men, women and children killed during World War Two.

### **January 30th: Sadeh (Iran)**

In Persian, Sadeh means “hundred” and refers to one hundred and nights past the end of summer in ancient Persian/Iran. Sadeh is a mid-winter festival where bonfires are lit to honour fire and to defeat the forces of darkness, frost and cold. People gather and pray, and then they will hold each other’s hands, form a circle and dance around the fire.