



## Equity, Diversity & Inclusion Calendar May - 2024

### Month-Long Observances:

**Asian Heritage Month:** Asian Heritage Month is an opportunity for us to learn more about the diverse culture and history of Asian communities in Canada, as well as to acknowledge the many achievements and contributions of people of Asian origin who, throughout our history, have done so much to make Canada the country we know and love. The theme for Asian Heritage Month 2024 is “Preserving the Past, Embracing the Future: Amplifying Asian Canadian Legacy”. This theme celebrates the rich heritage and contributions of people of Asian origin in Canada while also looking forward to the future with optimism and hopefulness. We are acknowledging the voices, stories, and achievements of people of Asian origin in Canada and recognizing their contributions to all aspects of our society, including the arts, sports and social justice.

**Canadian Jewish Heritage Month:** Today marks the beginning of Canadian Jewish Heritage Month, a time to celebrate Jewish culture, faith, and history in Canada. Canada is home to an estimated 400,000 people of Jewish heritage, making it the fourth-largest Jewish community in the world. Jewish Canadians have made and continue to make important contributions to our society, including medicine, theatre, engineering, music, architecture, academia, politics, law, the arts, and more. During this month, we also recognize the courage, determination, and resilience that members of Jewish communities have shown throughout history.

### Day Observances:

**May 1st—2nd Twelfth Day of Ridván:** The Twelfth Day of Ridván holds profound significance in the Bahá'í Faith, concluding the twelve-day period commemorating Bahá'u'lláh's stay in the Ridván Garden during his exile from Baghdad. It marks the culmination of a pivotal moment in Bahá'í history, as it was during this time that Bahá'u'lláh declared his divine mission as the Manifestation of God for this age. Bahá'ís around the world celebrate this day with prayers, devotional gatherings, and acts of service, reflecting on the teachings of Bahá'u'lláh and renewing their commitment to promoting unity, justice, and peace in the world.

**May 3rd World Press Freedom Day:** World Press Freedom Day, observed annually on May 3rd, serves as a global reminder of the fundamental principles of press freedom and the importance of defending the independence of media professionals. It provides an opportunity to assess the state of press freedom worldwide, celebrate the bravery of journalists who report on sensitive issues, and honor those who have lost their lives in the line of duty. Established by the UN General Assembly in 1993, following the recommendation of UNESCO's General Conference, this day commemorates the Declaration of Windhoek and reaffirms the commitment to freedom of expression as a cornerstone of democracy. It serves as a platform for media professionals, policymakers, and civil society to advocate for the protection of journalists, combat misinformation, and promote media literacy programs.



**Diversity**  
Thunder Bay

**May 5th Cinco De Mayo:** Cinco de Mayo, celebrated annually on May 5th, commemorates Mexico's victory over the French Empire at the Battle of Puebla in 1862. While rooted in Mexican history, it's embraced worldwide, including in vibrant cities like New Orleans. In New Orleans, the spirit of Cinco de Mayo blends with the city's unique cultural fabric, adding a dash of Creole flair to the festivities. From festive parades to lively street parties, the day is marked by music, dance, and, of course, delicious Mexican-inspired cuisine served up alongside the city's famous hospitality. It's a celebration of heritage, unity, and the rich tapestry of cultures that make both Mexico and New Orleans so vibrant.

**May 5th Dutch Heritage Day:** Canada will mark Dutch Heritage Day, a time to honour the sacrifices made by past members of the Canadian armed forces in the liberation of the Netherlands during the Second World War. It is also an opportunity to celebrate the many contributions that generations of Dutch Canadians have made—and continue to make—to this country we all know and love. Canada is the proud home of over 1 million people of Dutch descent, with members of the community making homesteads in the Canadian West during the 1890s. Through continued migration to Canada in the 1920s, Dutch Canadians became essential farm, industrial and domestic workers, and after the Second World War, many more immigrated as war brides and children of the Canadian soldiers who played a significant role in freeing their homeland from German occupation.

**May 5th Red Dress Day:** Red Dress Day in Canada is a day of remembrance and awareness focused on missing and murdered Indigenous women, girls, and Two-Spirit people (MMIWG2S). It typically occurs on May 5th each year. Red dresses are displayed in various communities across Canada as a visual symbol to raise awareness about the disproportionate rates of violence faced by Indigenous women, girls, and Two-Spirit people. The day serves as a call to action for justice, accountability, and systemic change to address the root causes of this violence and to ensure the safety and well-being of Indigenous communities.

**May 8th—9th Time of Remembrance and Reconciliation for Those Who Lost Their Lives during the Second World War:** The Time of Remembrance and Reconciliation for Those Who Lost Their Lives during the Second World War is observed annually on May 8th and 9th. It honors the millions lost in one of history's deadliest conflicts, promoting reconciliation and peace among former adversaries. Through reflection, education, and commemorative events, it aims to prevent future tragedies and create a more peaceful world.

**May 9th Ascension Day:** May 9th is Ascension Day, observed by Protestant and Roman Catholic communities. It commemorates Jesus' ascension into Heaven after appearing to his disciples for 40 days post-resurrection. This day marks the completion of his earthly ministry and emphasizes belief in eternal life. It's celebrated with church services, prayers, and hymns reflecting on Jesus' ascension and continued presence in believers' lives.

The logo for Diversity Thunder Bay features a stylized graphic of several overlapping, curved lines in shades of grey, yellow, red, and black, resembling a fan or a set of wings. Below this graphic, the word "Diversity" is written in a large, bold, dark grey serif font, and "Thunder Bay" is written in a smaller, lighter grey serif font below it.

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**May 12th Mothers Day:** May 12th is Mother's Day, celebrated in countries including the United States, Canada, most of Europe, and China. While its modern observance varies, its origins trace back to ancient Greek culture, where it was a spring festival honoring Rhea, the mother of the gods. Today, Mother's Day is a special occasion to honor and show appreciation for mothers and mother figures, celebrating their love, sacrifices, and contributions to families and society. It is typically marked with gifts, cards, flowers, and gatherings to express gratitude and affection towards mothers and maternal figures.

**May 15th International Day of Families:** The United Nations International Day of Families, observed on May 15th each year, highlights the significance of families as the fundamental unit of society. It emphasizes the importance of familial bonds and promotes awareness of the challenges facing families globally. This day serves as a reminder to cherish and support families in all their diverse forms, recognizing their vital role in shaping communities and fostering social cohesion.

**May 16th International Day of Living In Peace:** The UN International Day of Living Together in Peace, observed on May 16th, underscores the importance of unity, harmony, and peaceful coexistence among individuals and communities worldwide. It promotes the values of tolerance, understanding, and respect for diversity, aiming to foster a culture of peace and reconciliation.

**May 17th International Day Against Homophobia, Transphobia, and Biphobia:** May 17th is recognized as the International Day Against Homophobia, Transphobia, and Biphobia (IDAHOTB). This day is dedicated to raising awareness of the discrimination, violence, and prejudice faced by lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and intersex (LGBTI) people worldwide. It's an opportunity to promote tolerance, understanding, and acceptance of diversity in sexual orientation, gender identity, and expression. Many organizations and individuals use this day to advocate for human rights and equality for all regardless of sexual orientation or gender identity.

**May 21st World Day for Cultural Diversity for Dialogue and Development:** May 21st marks the World Day for Cultural Diversity for Dialogue and Development, as designated by the United Nations. This day serves as a reminder of the importance of cultural diversity and the need for dialogue to promote understanding and cooperation among different cultures. It highlights the value of cultural diversity as a driver for sustainable development and social cohesion. Celebrating cultural diversity encourages respect for all cultures and helps to foster a sense of belonging and inclusion in societies around the world. It's an opportunity to recognize the richness of human culture and to promote unity amidst diversity.

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**May 23rd Vesak Buddhism:** May 23rd is Wesak, a significant celebration in Buddhism. It commemorates the birth, enlightenment, and death (or Parinirvana) of Gautama Buddha. While the date varies between early April and late May depending on different Buddhist traditions and lunar calendars, it's a time for Buddhists to reflect on the teachings of the Buddha and to engage in practices that promote spiritual growth, compassion, and wisdom. Wesak is marked by various rituals, including meditation, chanting, and acts of generosity, and it serves as a reminder of the principles of enlightenment and the path towards liberation from suffering.

**May 27th Memorial Day:** Memorial Day in 2024 falls on May 27th. It's a day observed in the United States to honor and remember the men and women who have died while serving in the U.S. military. Memorial Day is typically marked by ceremonies, parades, and the decoration of graves with flags and flowers. It's also a time for reflection and gratitude for the sacrifices made by those who have served their country.

**May 27th—28th Ascension of Baha'u'llah:** The Ascension of Bahá'u'lláh is a significant event observed by Bahá'ís around the world. It commemorates the passing of Bahá'u'lláh, the founder of the Bahá'í Faith, on May 29, 1892. Bahá'u'lláh is considered by Bahá'ís to be the latest in a line of prophets and messengers of God, and his teachings emphasize the oneness of humanity, the unity of religions, and the importance of world peace. The Ascension of Bahá'u'lláh is a solemn occasion marked by prayers, gatherings, and reflections on his life and teachings. It serves as a time for Bahá'ís to deepen their understanding of his message and to rededicate themselves to the principles of unity, justice, and service to humanity.