

# The Compass Center

Multifaith Communities | Interfaith Engagement | Meaning and Purpose | Spiritual Life

## Religious Observance and Holiday Calendar *and* Religious Accommodation Policy Academic Years 24-25 and 25-26

As a religiously unaffiliated institution, Butler University is proud to welcome people of all faith and secular orientations to our campus communities. We strive to ensure there is awareness and understanding of religious observance in our curricular planning as well as all the events and programming that occurs with and for students, faculty, staff, alumni, and wider communities.

### Holy Days

Faculty and staff are encouraged to avoid scheduling exams, field trips, campus events, alumni events, or other activities on the major holy days observed and celebrated by our campus communities provided below.

The dates below are not comprehensive of all religious traditions nor are they inclusive of all important dates within any particular religion. These dates represent the most important holy dates for the religious traditions that are most commonly observed within our campus community. For a much more comprehensive list of religious holidays, the Compass Center has linked to [an interfaith calendar](#) housed on Harvard Divinity School's website, which is very informative and thorough.

### Academic Year 2024-2025

Dates	Holy Day Description	Dietary Observances
June 16-19, 2024*†	<b>Eid al-Adha</b> , the second of the two major holidays celebrated around the world in Islam; a great feast that marks the end of the Hajj.	
October 2-4, 2024*	<b>Rosh Hashanah</b> , the New Year in the Jewish calendar and the first of the High Holidays.	
October 11-12, 2024*	<b>Yom Kippur</b> , the day of Atonement for Jewish Communities, second of the High Holidays, and the most widely observed Jewish holiday during the year.	Jews who are observing Yom Kippur traditionally will be fasting from work, eating, and drinking from sundown to sundown while attending services.
October 16-18, 2024*	<b>Sukkot</b> , the Feast of the Tabernacles and celebration of fall harvest, during which	

<i>While important and observed on campus, these dates are not as essential to avoid for planning.</i>	Jewish people build sukkot (or booths) and spend time in thanksgiving for God's presence in creation.	
November 1, 2024	<b>Diwali</b> , festival of lights celebrated within South Asia and world-wide, connected to Hinduism, Sikhism, and Jainism.	
December 24, 2024- January 2, 2025* <i>While important and observed on campus, these dates are not as essential to avoid for planning.</i>	<b>Hanukah</b> , The Feast of Lights is the Jewish eight-day celebration that marks the rededication of the Holy Temple after a victory over occupying forces in 165 BCE.	
December 25, 2024	<b>Christmas</b> , celebration of the birth of Jesus. Typically, one of the two most holy days of the year for Christians.	
December 26, 2024- January 1, 2025	<b>Kwanzaa</b> , African American and Pan-African holiday celebrating family, community, and culture. The holiday is secular with some religious expressions celebrating seven life virtues.	
January 7, 2025	<b>Orthodox Christmas</b> , celebration of the birth of Jesus in the Eastern Orthodox traditions.	
January 29, 2025	<b>Chinese/Vietnamese/Korean New Year</b> , celebrated as the most important holiday of the year in East Asian Lunar calendars, the holiday is observed all over the world and has connections to Buddhism, Daoism, and Confucianism, though its origins are secular and observance spans across religious and secular communities.	
February 28-March 30, 2025*† (Avoid exams and other programs on the first 2 nights of Ramadan)	<b>Ramadan</b> , the holy month of fasting within Islam; avoid exams and events on the first two nights of Ramadan and during the Eid celebration. Muslims will continue daily activity, but most adults will be fasting from dawn until dusk.	Muslims fast daily from food or drink before sunrise until sunset.
March 5, 2025	<b>Ash Wednesday</b> , Christian first day of Lent. Participation in an Ash Wednesday service or distribution of the ashes is observed by many Christians and may require schedule flexibility.	Christians may fast from meat on Fridays or engage in other forms of fasting between March 5 and April 20.
March 14, 2025*†	<b>Holi</b> , Hindu festival of colors celebrating episodes of the life of Krishna. Commonly celebrated by South Asian communities of many religious and secular traditions.	

March 30-31, 2025*†	<b>Eid al-Fitr</b> , known as the “Festival of the Breaking of the Fast,” this is a three-day celebration at the end of the holy month of Ramadan within Islam.	
April 12-20, 2025* (Avoid exams and other programs on the evenings of 4/12-4/13)	<b>Passover</b> , Jewish 8-day long observance of Exodus from Egypt. Seder meals are typically conducted on the first and second nights and many students travel home during the first two days.	Jewish people observing Passover will eat no leavened bread and may observe other dietary restrictions from April 12-20.
April 13-14, 2025	<b>Vaisakhi</b> , the harvest festival of the Punjabi region of India and celebration of the founding of the Sikh tradition as the anniversary of Guru Gobind Singh’s creation of the Khalsa in 1699.	
April 13 – 20, 2025	<b>Holy Week and Easter/Pescha</b> , beginning with Palm Sunday on April 13, the week includes <b>Maundy/Holy Thursday (4/17), Good/Holy Friday (4/18), Holy Saturday and Easter Vigils on Saturday night (4/19), and Easter/Pescha Sunday services (4/20)</b> . This year, Catholics, Protestants, and Orthodox Christians will all observe these same dates as the most important days of the year; the week includes ritualized telling of the Last Supper, passion narrative, crucifixion, and resurrection of Jesus.	Many adults will fast from food and drink on Holy Friday within the Orthodox traditions.
May 12, 2025	<b>Wesak Day</b> , the commemoration of the Buddha’s birth, enlightenment, and Parinirvana. The holiday is celebrated differently, even on different dates, based on regional identities and liturgical calendars across Buddhism.	

\*Indicates the holiday begins at sundown.

† Indicates the holiday date may vary by a day or two; dates are finalized leading up to the holiday. For this reason, sometimes it may be difficult for students to utilize the Religious Accommodation policy a full 2-weeks in advance as final observance decisions are made by faith leaders sometimes within 10 days of the holiday.

## Academic Year 2025-2026

Dates	Holy Day Description	Dietary Observances
June 6-7, 2025*†	<b>Eid al-Adha</b> , the second of the two major holidays celebrated around the world in Islam; a great feast that marks the end of the Hajj.	
September 22-24, 2025*	<b>Rosh Hashanah</b> , the New Year in the Jewish calendar and the first of the High Holidays.	
October 1-2, 2025*	<b>Yom Kippur</b> , the day of Atonement for Jewish Communities, second of the High Holidays, and the most widely observed Jewish holiday during the year.	Jews who are observing Yom Kippur traditionally will be fasting from work, eating, and drinking from sundown to sundown while attending services.
October 6-8, 2025* <i>While important and observed on campus, these dates are not as essential to avoid for planning.</i>	<b>Sukkot</b> , the Feast of the Tabernacles and celebration of fall harvest, during which Jewish people build sukkot (or booths) and spend time in thanksgiving for God's presence in creation.	
October 20, 2025	<b>Diwali</b> , festival of lights celebrated within South Asia and world-wide, connected to Hinduism, Sikhism, and Jainism.	
December 13-22, 2025* <i>While important and observed on campus, these dates are not as essential to avoid for planning.</i>	<b>Hanukah</b> , The Feast of Lights is the Jewish eight-day celebration that marks the rededication of the Holy Temple after a victory over occupying forces in 165 BCE.	
December 25, 2025	<b>Christmas</b> , celebration of the birth of Jesus. Typically, one of the two most holy days of the year for Christians.	
December 26, 2025-January 1, 2026	<b>Kwanzaa</b> , African American and Pan-African holiday celebrating family, community, and culture. The holiday is secular with some religious expressions celebrating seven life virtues.	
January 7, 2026	<b>Orthodox Christmas</b> , celebration of the birth of Jesus in the Eastern Orthodox traditions.	
February 17, 2026	<b>Chinese/Vietnamese/Korean New Year</b> , celebrated as the most important holiday of the year in East Asian Lunar calendars, the	

	<p>holiday is observed all over the world and has connections to Buddhism, Daoism, and Confucianism, though its origins are secular and observance spans across religious and secular communities.</p>	
<p>February 18-March 19, 2026*† (Avoid exams and other programs on the first 2 nights of Ramadan)</p>	<p><b>Ramadan</b>, the holy month of fasting within Islam; avoid exams and events on the first two nights of Ramadan and during the Eid celebration. Muslims will continue daily activity, but most adults will be fasting from dawn until dusk.</p>	<p>Muslims fast daily from food or drink before sunrise until sunset.</p>
<p>February 18, 2026</p>	<p><b>Ash Wednesday</b>, Christian first day of Lent. Participation in an Ash Wednesday service or distribution of the ashes is observed by many Christians and may require schedule flexibility.</p>	<p>Christians may fast from meat on Fridays or engage in other forms of fasting between March 5 and April 20.</p>
<p>March 4, 2026*†</p>	<p><b>Holi</b>, Hindu festival of colors celebrating episodes of the life of Krishna. Commonly celebrated by South Asian communities of many religious and secular traditions.</p>	
<p>March 20, 2026*†</p>	<p><b>Eid al-Fitr</b>, known as the “Festival of the Breaking of the Fast,” this is a three-day celebration at the end of the holy month of Ramadan within Islam.</p>	
<p>March 29-April 5, 2026</p>	<p><b>Holy Week and Easter</b>, beginning with Palm Sunday on March 29, the week includes <b>Maundy Thursday (4/2), Good Friday (4/3), Holy Saturday and Easter Vigils on Saturday night (4/3), and Easter Sunday services (4/5)</b>. Catholics and Protestants observe the same dates whereas Orthodox Christians observe later in the spring. The week includes ritualized telling of the Last Supper, the passion narrative, the crucifixion, and the resurrection of Jesus.</p>	
<p>April 1-9, 2026*</p>	<p><b>Passover</b>, Jewish 8-day long observance of Exodus from Egypt. Seder meals are typically</p>	<p>Jewish people observing Passover will eat no leavened bread and may observe other</p>

(Avoid exams and other programs on the evenings of 4/1-4/3)	conducted on the first and second nights and many students travel home during the first two days.	dietary restrictions from April 12-20.
April 5-April 12, 2026	<b>Orthodox Holy Week and Pascha (Easter)</b> , Easter Orthodox Christian observance of Holy Week, including <b>Holy Thursday (4/9)</b> , <b>Holy Friday (4/10)</b> , and <b>Pascha (4/12)</b> on Sunday	
April 13-14, 2026	<b>Vaisakhi</b> , the harvest festival of the Punjabi region of India and celebration of the founding of the Sikh tradition as the anniversary of Guru Gobind Singh's creation of the Khalsa in 1699.	
May 1, 2026	<b>Wesak Day</b> , the commemoration of the Buddha's birth, enlightenment, and Parinirvana. The holiday is celebrated differently, even on different dates, based on regional identities and liturgical calendars across Buddhism.	

\*Indicates the holiday begins at sundown.

† Indicates the holiday date may vary by a day or two; dates are finalized leading up to the holiday. For this reason, sometimes it may be difficult for students to utilize the Religious Accommodation policy a full 2-weeks in advance as final observance decisions are made by faith leaders sometimes within 10 days of the holiday.

## Religious Holiday Accommodation Policy

Butler University passed a Religious Holiday Accommodation policy through the Faculty Senate on November 6, 2012. The policy states:

*Butler University respects all students' right to religious observance and will reasonably accommodate students' religious practice with regard to class attendance, examinations, and assignments when requests are made in a timely manner.*

*Butler University recommends that each class should have a syllabus that provides a schedule of activities for the class. It is the student's responsibility to inform instructors of course conflicts resulting from religious observations at least two weeks in advance of the observance, so that accommodations can be made. Requests must be made in writing, and the student should include a proposed alternative due date, examination date, or make-up outline.*

*The professor should review the request and if the student's proposed suggestion is acceptable, he/she should notify the student of the agreement. Any solution that is mutually agreeable to both student and faculty member is acceptable.*

*If accommodations cannot be agreed upon, the instructor and students should seek the advice of the associate dean in the appropriate college. No adverse or prejudicial effects will result to students because they have made use of these provisions.*

The policy can also be found at <https://www.butler.edu/registrar/religious-holidays>.

### Questions or Suggestions

Please contact The Compass Center for additional information or with suggestions about how we can continue to celebrate and welcome the religious diversity on our campus. Daniel Meyers, Compass Center Director, can be reached at [dgmeyers@butler.edu](mailto:dgmeyers@butler.edu).



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