



BENTLEY UNIVERSITY

Spiritual Life Center

Religious Observances Calendar

Bentley University is committed to supporting and celebrating a diverse and inclusive campus culture. We recognize and celebrate the diversity of religious traditions represented in the campus community. This calendar is a curated guide relative to our campus community and is not exhaustive of all religious practices. *Is there a holiday or practice you wish to see highlighted?* Please contact: GA_Spiritual_Life@bentley.edu

Many holidays will be celebrated in our Sacred Space in the Student Center, guided by the Spiritual Life Center. Reach out to a Chaplain for more information.

Here are some campus policies and practices:

- [Academic Accommodations](#)
- [Residential Life](#)
- [Faculty and Staff HR](#)
- [Halal and Kosher food](#) available in 921 Dining Hall

Fall Semester 2023

*** Denotes holiday begins and ends at sunset**

***September 15 - 17**

[Rosh HaShanah](#) : work restrictions

Celebration marking the Jewish New Year of 5784 and beginning of the High Holy Days.

A ram's horn [shofar](#) is sounded as a spiritual practice of awakening to the joy of the new year and the beginning of ten days of introspection. The process of realigning and returning to authentic higher self, in Hebrew called *Teshuvah*, continues between Rosh HaShanah and the Day of Atonement, Yom Kippur.



***September 24 - 25**

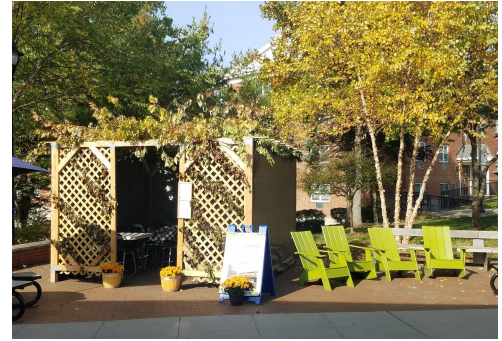
[Yom Kippur](#) : work restrictions and fasting

Jewish day of Atonement. A solemn day including a 25 hour fast and worship services. Often referred to as the holiest day in the Jewish calendar.

***September 29 - October 6**

[Sukkot](#) : work restrictions for the first two days

Jewish fall harvest festival. Meals are eaten within a homemade “sukkah” booth, reminiscent of the simple shelters during the Biblical forty years of nomadic experience in the desert. Bentley’s Sukkah is outside of the Student Center, and you are encouraged to gather there under the sun and stars for conversation and meals.



October 15 - 24

[Navratri](#)

One of the greatest of [Hindu](#) festivals, this 9 night celebration honors the divine in the forms of Durga, Lakshmi, and Saraswati.

***October 23 - 25**

[Shemini Atzeret and Simchat Torah](#): work restrictions

Jewish “Assembly of the Eighth day” and completion of the annual cycle of Torah reading



November 1

[All Saints Day](#) Catholic day of obligation

Christian day honoring the saints.

November 2

[All Souls Day](#)/[Día de los Muertos](#)

Christian observance honoring loved ones who have passed away.

November 12

[Diwali](#)

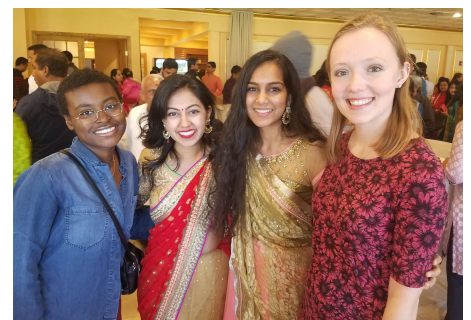
Indian festival of light [celebrated](#) by [Hindus](#), [Jains](#), and [Sikhs](#)



November 27

[Guru Nanak Gurpurab](#)

Celebration of the birthday of the Sikh founder and first Guru, Nanak Dev Ji



December 3 - December 24

[Advent](#) Christian Season of preparation for the birth of Christ

December 8

Feast of the Immaculate Conception [Catholic day of obligation.](#)

Catholic feast that honors the immaculate conception of the Virgin Mary.

December 8

[Bodhi Day](#)

Buddhist holiday commemorating the Buddha's enlightenment

*December 7 - 15

[Hanukkah](#)

Jewish festival of lights

December 25

[Christmas](#)

Protestant and Catholic Christianity celebration of the birth of Jesus Christ

December 26 - January 1

[Kwanzaa](#)

A pan-African celebration of Black culture. While not connected to any particular religion, it is celebrated by many faith and secular communities.



Spring Semester 2024

January 7

[Feast of the Nativity](#)

Orthodox Christian Christmas

February 10

Lunar New Year

(While not a religious holiday, this day is of great cultural importance for our Asian community.)

February 14

Ash Wednesday day of fasting for Catholics

Beginning of six weeks of Lent for Western Christians

February 16

Magha Puja Day

Buddhist holiday commemorating spontaneous gathering of 1250 monks to honor Buddha

*March 23 - 24

Purim

Festive Jewish celebration of deliverance from a threatened massacre. Reading of book of Esther.

*March 25

Holi

South Asian holiday at the beginning of spring, celebrating the triumph of goodness over evil. On campus, it is celebrated with a fun tossing of vibrant colors on the Green Space. Observed by Hindus, Sikhs, Jains.



*March 10 - April 9

Ramadan : fasting sunup to sundown

Islamic holy month of fasting and prayer, marking the month Allah revealed the Qur'an.

March 24

Palm Sunday

Beginning of Holy Week (March 24 -30) for Western Christians



*April 22 - 30

Passover : work restrictions first two nights and last two nights

Jewish holiday commemorating the journey from slavery to freedom recorded in the book of Exodus. A ritual Seder meal is held on the first two nights of the holiday. During Passover, no leavened bread is eaten and dietary habits conform to "kosher for Passover" foods.



March 28

Maundy Thursday

Christian commemoration of Last Supper and Jesus' foot washing

March 29

Good Friday: day of fasting for Catholics

Solemn Christian observance of the passion and death of Jesus Christ

March 31

[Easter Sunday](#)

Celebration of Jesus Christ's resurrection, Catholic and Protestant Christians



April 28 - May 4

Eastern Orthodox Holy Week

May 5

Pascha (Easter)

[Orthodox Christian](#) celebration of Jesus Christ's resurrection



*May 3 -4

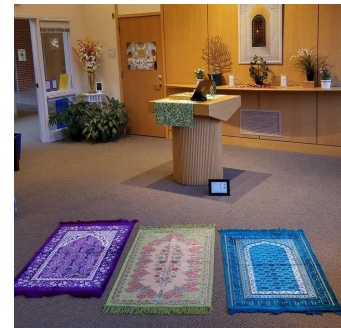
[Yom HaShoah](#)

Holocaust Remembrance Day.

*April 9

[Eid al-Fitr](#)

Festive gathering that marks the end of the holy month of Ramadan for Muslims.



May 9

[Feast of the Ascension](#) : Catholic holy day of obligation

40 days following Easter



Summer 2024

***June 11 - 13**

[Shavuot](#)

Jewish commemoration of the giving of the Torah on Mt. Sinai, seven weeks after the Exodus from Egypt.

***June 16**

[Eid-al-Adha](#)

Islamic Festival of Sacrifice, commemorating Abraham's sacrifice of his son. The Eid marks the end of the annual [hajj](#) pilgrimage to Mecca.

***July 7 - 8**

[Al-Hijra](#)

Beginning of the Islamic New Year 1446

August 15

[Feast of the Assumption of Mary](#): Catholic Day of Obligation

Bentley Policy on Religious Observances

Bentley University is committed to supporting a diverse and inclusive campus culture. We recognize the diversity of religious traditions represented in the campus community, and affirm the rights of students to receive reasonable accommodations when their sincerely held religious observances conflict with an academic requirement, except when such an accommodation would create an undue hardship. We offer reasonable religious accommodations in accordance with Massachusetts state law and Bentley core values.

Massachusetts General Laws, Chapter 151C, Section 2B states: "Any student in an educational or vocational training institution, other than a religious or denominational educational or vocational training institution, who is unable, because of his religious beliefs, to attend classes or to participate in any examination, study, or work requirement on a particular day shall be excused from any such examination or study or work requirement, and shall be provided with an opportunity to make up such examination, study, or work requirement which he may have missed because of such absence on any particular day; provided, however, that such makeup examination or work shall not create an unreasonable burden upon such school. No fees of any kind shall be charged by the institution for making available to the said student such opportunity. No adverse or prejudicial effects shall result to any student because of his availing himself of the provisions of this section. A copy of this section shall be published by each institution of higher education in the catalog of such institution containing the list of available courses."

The following are guidelines for students and faculty to follow in order to arrive at an agreed upon accommodation:

For students: If a student anticipates being unable to attend class, take an exam, or turn in an assignment because of a religious observance, they are strongly encouraged to discuss their needs with their professors at the outset of the semester, but not less than two weeks before the day of the religious observance in order to ensure that the faculty member and the student can adequately determine an appropriate accommodation. Students are expected to work with the faculty member to identify an accommodation that satisfies the specific need of the student while maintaining the necessary academic requirements. In general, reasonable religious observance accommodations will be made for the day of the religious observance but not for any days preceding or succeeding it.

For faculty: Faculty are expected to respect the religious traditions of their students and make reasonable accommodations when academic requirements conflict with a student's sincerely held religious beliefs or practices, unless when such accommodations would cause undue hardship. Faculty should not expect the student to disclose their religious affiliation in order to receive a religious accommodation. Faculty are expected to work with the student to identify an accommodation that meets the student's needs and those of the class and that maintains equity for all students in the class. A day missed under this accommodation cannot be counted against the attendance policy.

For students and faculty: Academic Services is a resource to students and faculty when determining reasonable accommodations for religious observances. Students and faculty can reach out to Academic Services at any time with questions regarding how to agree upon a reasonable accommodation. A student is encouraged to work with their professors directly, but they may also choose to work solely with Academic Services, who will then liaise with their professor. Once an accommodation is agreed upon, that agreement should be documented in writing; an email between the student and professor can serve as such documentation

Approved April 2021 Faculty Senate