



## MESSAGE FROM THE DIRECTOR



Each year, York Region District School Board welcomes students, staff and families into our many vibrant learning and working communities. The diversity of our schools and workplaces is reflected in the 2015-16 Holidays and Observances Calendar, which recognizes the significant dates observed by many of the faith communities who make York Region their home.

Through our programs, practices and people, we are able to honour our commitment to the principles of equity, inclusiveness and diversity. We respect and celebrate the various faiths, cultures and backgrounds that are represented in our schools, communities and workplaces.

The artwork featured in the Holidays and Observances Calendar highlights the talents of York Region students and celebrates our many cultural backgrounds. I hope this calendar will serve as a useful planning resource for you and your family.

All the best for 2015-16.

Sincerely,

J. Philip Parappally  
Director of Education

### F.Y.I.

- Christian system is used for dating years.
- B.C.E. (Before the Common Era) is used in preference to B.C. (Before Christ)
- C.E. (Common Era) is used in preference to A.D. (Anno Domini)
- (pbuh) - Peace be upon Him

## COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Teresa Chan  
King City Secondary School

Vivian Chan-Simao  
Richmond Hill High School

Fatima Jessa  
Beckett Farm Public School

Joan Lachhman  
Inclusive School and Community Services

Peter Tse  
Inclusive School and Community Services

Mounir Mounir  
Information Technology Services

Suganja Sinnathamby  
Maple High School

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Staff and Students of the York Region District School Board

Calendar Coordination: Joan Lachhman  
Inclusive School and Community Services

Layout & Design: Chris Jasper  
Learning, Design & Development, YRDSB

For information please call the office of Inclusive School and Community Services, (905) 884 2046 ext. 252, (416) 969 7170 ext. 2409  
or e-mail: joan.lachhman@yrdsb.ca

**This calendar is a selected representation of special days and holy days of the major faith communities in York Region and it is intended to be used primarily as a learning resource. Note that the Calendar does not contain all the dates of a particular faith. This calendar is not applicable in determining faith day/religious holidays for employees. Please refer to the appropriate collective agreement or contact Human Resources at Ext. 2220 or 2304.**

**For accommodation requirements or additional information on faith, please refer to the document *Program Planning for Faith Purposes*.**

# HOLY DAYS BY FAITH

AUGUST 2015 - JULY 2016

## BAHA'I FAITH

October	20	The Birth of the Bab
November	12	The Birth of Baba'u'llah
November	26	The Day of the Covenant
November	28	Ascension of Abdu'l-Baha
Feb. 26 - Mar.	1	Intercalary Days
March	2-20	The Baha'i Fast
March	21	Naw Ruz (New Year)
◆ April	21	Ridvan begins
May	23	Declaration of the Bab
May	29	Ascension of Baha'u'llah
July	9	Martyrdom of the Bab

## BUDDHISM

September	28	Pavarana
September	29	Kathina
January	1	Temple Day
◆ February	8	Lunar New Year
March	20	Spring Ohigon
April	13/14	Saka New Year
May	15	Wesak
July	19	Wassana

## CHRISTIANITY

September	12	Coptic New Year
October	4	World communion Sunday
November	1	All Saints' Day
November	29	First Sunday of Advent (Western)
◆ December	25	Christmas (Western)
January	6	Epiphany (Western)
◆ January	7	Christmas (Eastern)
January	19	Epiphany (Eastern)
February	10	Ash Wednesday (Western)
March	14	First Day of Lent (Eastern)
March	20	Palm Sunday (Western)
March	24	Maundy Thursday (Western)
◆ March	25	Good Friday (Western)
March	27	Easter Sunday (Western)
April	24	Palm Sunday (Eastern)
◆ April	29	Holy Friday (Eastern)
May	1	Easter Sunday (Eastern)
May	5	Ascension Day (Western)
May	15	Pentecost (Western)

## HINDUISM

August	29	Raksha Bandhan
September	5	Sri Krishana Jayanti
September	17	Ganesha Chaturthi
October	13-21	Navaratri (Fall)
◆ November	10	Diwali
November	12-16	Skanda Shashti Vratam
January	14	Makar Sankranti
February	12	Vasant Panchami
March	8	Mahashivaratri (Shivaratri)
March	23	Holi
April	7-15	Navaratri (Spring)
April	14	Chaitra New Year
April	15	Ramanavami

## ISLAM

September	22	Day of Arafat (Hajj)
◆ September	23	Eid-ul-Adha
October	14	First Day of Muharram
October	23	Ashura
December	23	Mawlid-un-Nabi
May	5	Miraj-un-Nabi
May	23	Nisfu Shaban
June	6	First day of Ramadhan
July	1	Lailat-ul-Qadr
◆ July	7	Eid-ul-Fitr

## JAINISM

September	27	Anata Chaturdasi
November	11	Mahavira Nirvana
November	16	Jnana Panchami
December	21	Manu-agiyyaras
April	19	Mahavir Jayanti

## WICCA

August	1	Lammas
September	22	Mabon
October	31	Samhain
December	21	Yule
February	2	Imbolc
March	20	Ostara
May	1	Beltane
June	20	Litha

## JUDAISM

◆ September	14-15	Rosh Hashanah *
◆ September	23	Yom Kippur *
Sept/Oct	28-4	Sukkot
October	5	Shemini Atzeret
October	6	Simchat Torah
December	7-14	Chanukah
March	24	Purim
April	23-30	Pesach/Passover ◆ (April 23) *
June	12-13	Shavuot

## SIKHISM

September	1	First Parkash
November	24	Martyrdom of Guru Tegh Tegh Bahadar Ji
November	25	Birthday of Guru Nanak Dev Ji
January	5	Birthday of Guru Gobind Singh Ji
January	13	Maghi
March	14	Sikh New Year's Day
◆ April	14	Vaisakhi
June	16	Martyrdom of Guru Arjan Dev Ji

## ZOROASTRIANISM

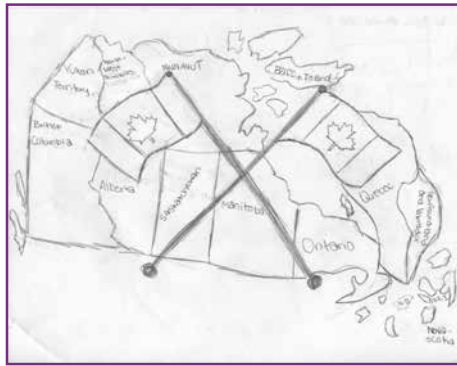
August	18	Naw Ruz (Shenshai)
December	26	Death of Prophet Zarathustra
March	17	Ghambar Hamapasthmaedem
March	21	Naw Ruz (New Year's Day)
March	28	Birthday of Prophet Zarathustra
June - July	29 -3	Ghambar Maidyoshem

- ◆ This excerpt is referenced in the **Scheduling of Events on Faith Days document** – "we are committed to affirm and value equally the faith diversity in our schools and workplaces. Therefore, INTERNALLY scheduled events such as field trips, school concerts, conferences, meetings, workshops, other professional events, co-curricular activities, and exams/tests SHALL NOT be scheduled on these dates referred to as 'Diamond Days' in the YRDSB". Exceptions to the above may be considered where dates for special events are set EXTERNALLY to our Board and after consultation with superintendents who will present requests to Senior Team to determine participation. Please refer to the YRDSB Religious Accommodations Guidelines for more information.
- ▶ Tentative dates subject to the sighting of the new moon each month. Some Jain and Buddhist dates are tentative at the time of publishing.
- ▶ These dates follow the Nanakshahi calendar. Please check our website for updated information: **www.yrdsb.ca**
- \* Please note that observances of these faith days begin on the eve of this event. The same guidelines apply to the 'Diamond Days'.

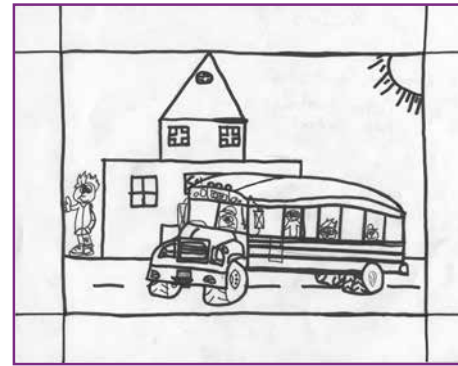




Mehana Architha Nareshkumar, Willowbrook P.S., Gr. 7



Marai Djhednama, Redstone P.S., Gr. 7



Tyler MacInnis, William Armstrong P.S., Gr. 6

## HINDUISM

August 29

**Raksha Bandhan**  
("to tie protection on") is a celebration where girls and married women tie an amulet on the right wrists of their brothers to ward off evil influences.

## WICCA

August 1

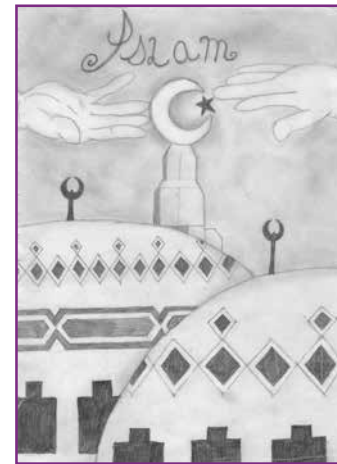
**Lammas** meaning "loaf-mass", time of first harvest and bread making. It is when the plants of spring wither and drop their fruits or seeds for our use, as well as to ensure future crops. The God symbolically loses some strength, as the Sun rises farther in the South each day and the nights grow longer.



Jessica Kong, Parkland P.S., Gr. 8



Calista Pezeshkian, Roy H. Crosby P.S., Gr. 6



Emma Pellegrini, King City S.S., Gr. 9

## ZOROASTRIANISM

August 18

**Naw Ruz.**  
New Year's Day in accordance with the Shenshai calendar.



Joanna Wang, Julliard P.S., Gr. 4



Aurora Chi, Richmond Hill H.S., Gr. 10



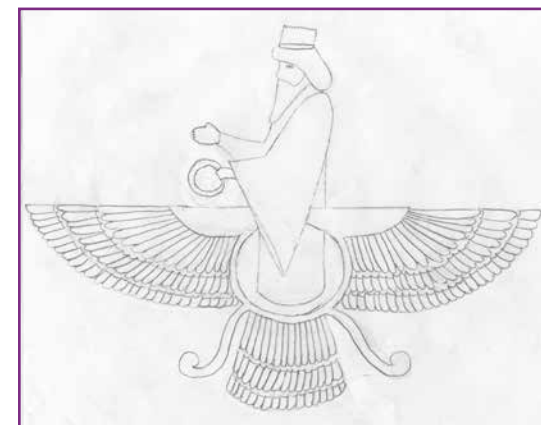
Sophia Bacho, Ross Doan P.S., Gr. 3

# AUGUST 2015

MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY	SUNDAY
<b>Please note:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Muslim dates are tentative and subject to the sighting of the moon each month.</li> <li>All Jewish Holy Days commence on the preceding evening at sunset.</li> </ul>					Lammas 1	2
Civic Holiday 3	4	5	6	7	8	9
P.A. Day Bill Crothers S.S. 10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	Naw Ruz 18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	P.A. Day Elementary/Secondary (Early Start Schools) 27	28	Raksha Bandhan 29	30
31	<b>Notes</b> _____ _____ _____ _____					



Ali Farhadi, Walter Scott P.S., Gr. 8



Solmaz Ebrahimi Iran Pour, Redstone P.S., Gr. 8

JULY	M	T	W	T	F	S	S
			1	2	3	4	5
	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
	13	14	15	16	17	18	19
	20	21	22	23	24	25	26
	27	28	29	30	31		

SEPTEMBER	M	T	W	T	F	S	S
		1	2	3	4	5	6
	7	8	9	10	11	12	13
	14	15	16	17	18	19	20
	21	22	23	24	25	26	27
	28	29	30				



Viviane Wong, Doncrest P.S., Gr. 5



Angel Cao, Bogart P.S., Gr. 5



Nadia Dorca, Roy H. Crosby P.S., Gr. 6



Jennifer Ye, Coppard Glen P.S., Gr. 7

## BUDDHISM

September 28  
September 29

**Pavarana** signals the completion of the Rains of Retreat.

**Kathina** marks Buddha's "descent from heaven." The day is dedicated to remembering the dead and respecting elders.

## CHRISTIANITY

September 12

**Coptic/Ethiopian Orthodox New Year.** This is the day for Copts (Christians of Egyptian origin) to celebrate the New Year and the Feast of Martyrs. For members of the Ethiopian Orthodox community, the New Year is a chance to celebrate the new month as well as the Feast of St. John the Baptist.

## HINDUISM

September 5

**Sri Krishna Jayanti** (also known as Janmashtami) celebrates the birthday of Lord Krishna. According to the Hindu epics, Lord Krishna was the eighth incarnation of the God Vishnu. His purpose was to destroy the demon Kansa who was responsible for the increase of evil in the world.

September 17

**Ganesh Chaturthi** celebrates the birthday of Ganesha, God of success and one of the major Hindu deities. He is invoked at the beginning of all new undertakings.

## ISLAM

September 22

**Day of Hajj** (Day of Arafat), or Pilgrimage to Mecca, is undertaken once in a lifetime for those who can afford it. Hajj is the fifth pillar of Islam after the Belief in One God, daily prayers, fasting and charity. On the Islamic calendar, it falls on the 9th day in the last month of Zul-Hijjah.

September 23 ♦

**Eid-ul-Adha** is the Festival of Sacrifice. It honours Prophet Abraham's willingness to sacrifice his son Ishmael to God. In commemoration, Muslims sacrifice a sheep or goat and donate the meat or its equivalent value in cash to charity. This is the "minimum" requirement for those who can afford it.

## JAINISM

September 27

**Ananta Chaturdasi** is regarded as the holiest period of the year. Fasting, worship, meditation and confession characterize this period.

## JUDAISM

Sept. 14 - 15

✱

♦ **Rosh Hashanah**, the Jewish New Year, marks the start of a ten day period of spiritual self examination and repentance which ends with Yom Kippur. Families celebrate with a festive dinner at which apples dipped in honey are eaten. (New Year's Day, 5776).

September 23

✱

♦ **Yom Kippur**, the day of Atonement, is the most solemn of the Jewish Holy Days. At synagogue, the evening service is called Kol Nidre. People ask for forgiveness of their sins and forgive others. Jews refrain from all eating and drinking on this day.

Sept. 28 - Oct. 4

**Sukkot** is a harvest festival or thanksgiving. Small huts are constructed in which meals are eaten, weather permitting, to commemorate the time when the Israelites dwelled in booths in the desert for 40 years.

## SIKHISM

September 1

**First Parkash** observes the installation of the Guru Granth Sahib, the first edition of the Sikh Scriptures, in the Golden Temple by the fifth Guru, Arjan Dev, in 1604 C.E.

## WICCA

September 22

**Mabon** Autumn Equinox and the second harvest. Wiccans take a moment to pay their respect to the impending dark. They celebrate the aging Goddess as she passes from Mother to Crone, and her consort the God as he prepares for death and rebirth.

♦ Conferences, meetings, workshops, exams, field trips, etc. are not to be scheduled on these dates.

# SEPTEMBER 2015

MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY	SUNDAY
Please refer to the Board's Scheduling of Events on Faith Days document list before scheduling Conferences, Workshops, Co-curricular activities, staff meetings, exams/test, field trips etc.						
	First Parkash		P.A. Day Elementary/Secondary		Sri Krishna Jayanti	
	1	2	3	4	5	6
Labour Day					Coptic/ Ethiopian Orthodox New Year	*
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
◆ Rosh Hashanah	◆ Rosh Hashanah		Ganesh Chaturthi			
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
	Day of Hajj Mabon *	◆ Eid-ul-Adha ◆ Yom Kippur				Ananta Chaturdasi
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
Pavarana Training Day Sukkot begins	Kathina		Notes _____ _____ _____			
28	29	30				



Nishaana Jeyakumar, David Suzuki P.S., Gr. 8



Navya Kumar, Oscar Peterson P.S., Gr. 3

AUGUST	M	T	W	T	F	S	S
						1	2
	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
	10	11	12	13	14	15	16
	17	18	19	20	21	22	23
	24	25	26	27	28	29	30
	31						

OCTOBER	M	T	W	T	F	S	S
				1	2	3	4
	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
	12	13	14	15	16	17	18
	19	20	21	22	23	24	25
	26	27	28	29	30	31	





Yufan Ge, Willowbrook P.S., Gr. 7



Grace Luo, Richmond Hill H.S., Gr. 9



Alison Mclean, Black River P.S., Gr. 7



Sahar Fatema Bhallo, Macleod's Landing P.S., Gr. 4



Lili Palermo, Pierre Berton P.S., Gr. 3



Robin Virdie, Mount Joy P.S., Gr. 3

## BAHA'I FAITH

October 20

**The Birth of the Bab.** The Bab was born Siyyid' Ali Muhammad in Shiraz in southwestern Iran in 1819 C.E. His title, in Arabic, means "The Gate". Work and academic studies are suspended on this day.

## CHRISTIANITY

October 4

**World Communion Sunday** is observed worldwide. Communion is the most fundamental of all Christian rituals.

## HINDUISM

October 13 - 21

**Navaratri (Fall)** is a nine-day celebration of the Divine Goddess for good health, happiness and knowledge.

## ISLAM

October 14

**Muharram** (New Year's Day) begins the new Islamic year. This is the year 1437.

October 23

**Ashura** falls on the 10th day of Muharram. The 10th day commemorates the martyrdom of Hussein, the grandson of the Prophet Muhammad (pbuh).

## JUDAISM

October 5

**Shemini Atzeret** is a festival marking the end of the holiday of Sukkot on which a special prayer for rain is recited.

October 6

**Simchat Torah** is marked by singing and dancing which celebrates the end of public reading of the Torah in the synagogue and the beginning of its reading anew.

## WICCA

October 31

**Samhain.** The third harvest, meaning "summer's end", when the ancestors are honoured. It is a magical interval when the mundane laws of time and space are temporarily suspended, and the thin veil between the worlds is lifted, symbolized by the Crone and her aged Consort.



# OCTOBER 2015

MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY	SUNDAY
<b>Please note:</b> Midterm break for Bill Crothers S.S., Keswick H.S., Maple H.S., Markville S.S. and Sutton D.H.S. is from October 19 - October 23, 2015.			1	2	3	4 World Communion Sunday
Shemini Atzeret	Simchat Torah					
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
Thanksgiving	Navaratri begins	First Day of Muharram				
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
	The Birth of the Bab			Ashura		
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
					Samhain	
26	27	28	29	30	31	

Notes \_\_\_\_\_

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Shirley Liu, Donald Cousens P.S., Gr. 8



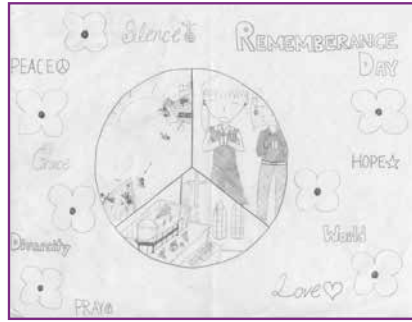
Miyu Igeta, Bogart P.S., Gr. 5

SEPTEMBER	M	T	W	T	F	S	S
		1	2	3	4	5	6
	7	8	9	10	11	12	13
	14	15	16	17	18	19	20
	21	22	23	24	25	26	27
	28	29	30				

NOVEMBER	M	T	W	T	F	S	S
				1	2	3	4
	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
	12	13	14	15	16	17	18
	19	20	21	22	23	24	25
	26	27	28	29	30	31	



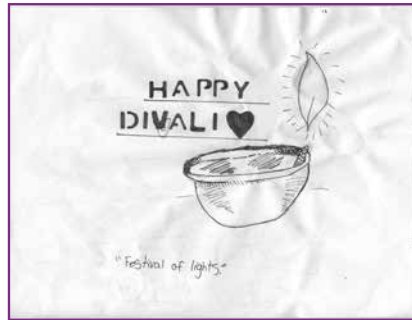
Riyana Khanna, Ventura Park P.S., Gr. 5



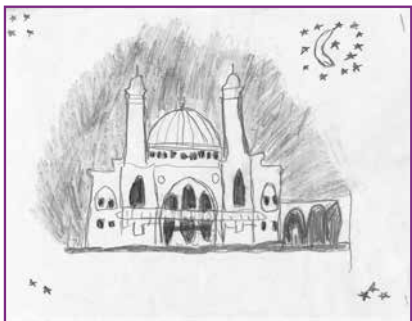
Ellie Sievers, Greensborough P.S., Gr. 7



Nadia Pharsi, Ellen Fairclough P.S., Gr. 7



Veda Chandra, Red Maple P.S., Gr. 3



Sana Farooqui, Cedarwood P.S., Gr. 3



Simranjeet Saini, Milliken Mills P.S., Gr. 5

## BAHA'I FAITH

November 12

**The Birth of Baha'u'llah.** Baha'u'llah was born Mizra Husayn Ali into one of the leading noble families of Persia in 1817 C.E. His name is a title in Arabic meaning "the Glory of God". He is the founder of the Baha'i faith. Work and academic studies are suspended on this day.

November 26

**The Day of the Covenant.** The eldest son and appointed successor of Baha'u'llah Abdu'l-Baha is referred to as the "Centre of the Covenant". The covenant was established by Baha'u'llah to safeguard the unity of the Baha'i community. It was Abdu'l-Baha's wish that the Covenant be celebrated rather than his own birth date.

November 28

**Ascension of Abdu'l-Baha.** After years of serving both his father and the growing Baha'i community, Abdu'l-Baha passed away in Haifa, Israel in 1921 C.E.

## CHRISTIANITY

November 1

**All Saints' Day** is observed as a special day in many Christian churches.

November 29

**First Sunday of Advent** begins the period of preparation for Christmas. In homes and churches, Christians set out special candle holders or Advent wreaths (Western).

## HINDUISM

November 10

◆ **Diwali** (Deepavali) both names mean a row or garland of lights. Also known as the Festival of Lights, Diwali is probably the most widely celebrated Hindu festival. This festival may be celebrated over a five-day period. The diwas (clay pots filled with oil and a wick) herald the start of the new year and symbolize the triumph of good over evil, of light over darkness. For many Hindus, November 11, New Year's Day, is also very important.

November 12-16

**Skanda Shashti Vratam** is a six-day fasting period. It commemorates the destruction of evil by the Lord Murugan (Subramanya), who is the second son of Lord Siva and is celebrated with the dramatic enactment of Soora Samhaaram.

## JAINISM

November 11

**Mahavira Nirvana.** The Jain year begins with Moksha (attainment of final enlightenment and release) by Lord Mahavira. It is popularly known as Deepavali, festival of lamps. Lamps symbolize the light of knowledge.

November 16

**Jnana Panchami**, the day of knowledge, observed with Pooja (ritualistic offering) to pay homage to Saraswati Devi, the deity of knowledge and learning.

## SIKHISM

November 24

**Martyrdom of Guru Tegh Bahadar Ji.** The Guru was executed in 1675 C.E. by a Mughal emperor. Sikhs believe that he gave his life to save the Hindu faith and religious liberty.

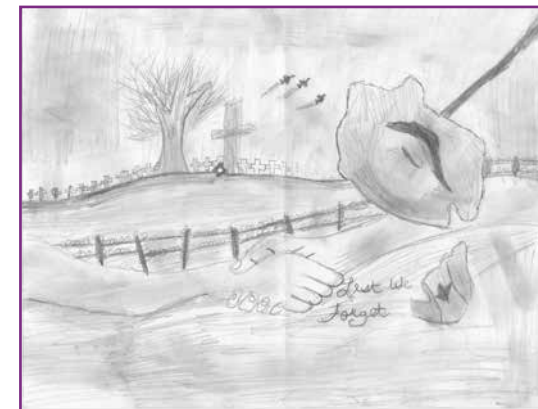
November 25

**Birthday of Guru Nanak Dev Ji.** The founder of the Sikh faith was born in 1469 C.E.

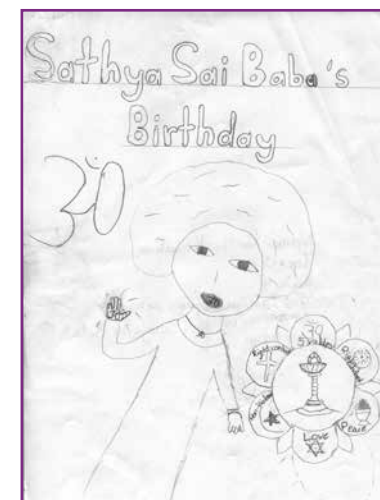
◆ Conferences, meetings, workshops, exams, field trips, etc. are not to be scheduled on these dates.

# NOVEMBER 2015

MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY	SUNDAY
The Holidays and Observances Calendar is presently being drafted for the 2016-2017 school year. Included again this year will be student artwork from <b>Elementary and Secondary Schools</b> for the calendar cover and for each month. Keep an eye out for the memo outlining the details.						All Saints Day  I
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	◆ Diwali	Remembrance Day Mahavira Nirvana	The Birth of the Bab'u'llah Skanda Shashti Vratham begins	13	14	15
Jnana Panchami	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	Martyrdom of Guru Tegh Bahadar Ji	Birthday of Guru Nanak Dev Ji	The Day of the Covenant	P.A.. Day Elementary/Secondary	Ascension of Abdu'l-Baha	First Sunday of Advent
30	Notes _____ _____ _____ _____					



Natalie Bowsher, Bogart P.S., Gr. 5



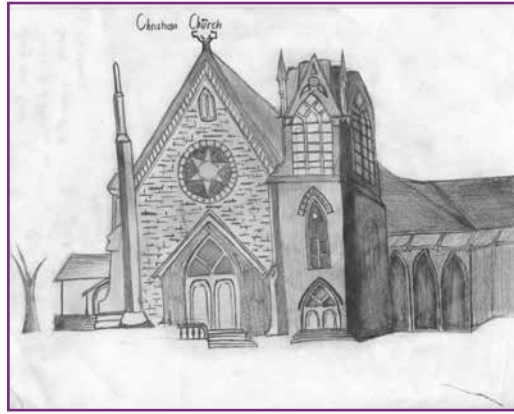
Nivetha Killivalavan, David Suzuki P.S., Gr. 4

OCTOBER	M	T	W	T	F	S	S
				1	2	3	4
	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
	12	13	14	15	16	17	18
	19	20	21	22	23	24	25
	26	27	28	29	30	31	

DECEMBER	M	T	W	T	F	S	S
		1	2	3	4	5	6
	7	8	9	10	11	12	13
	14	15	16	17	18	19	20
	21	22	23	24	25	26	27
	28	29	30	31			



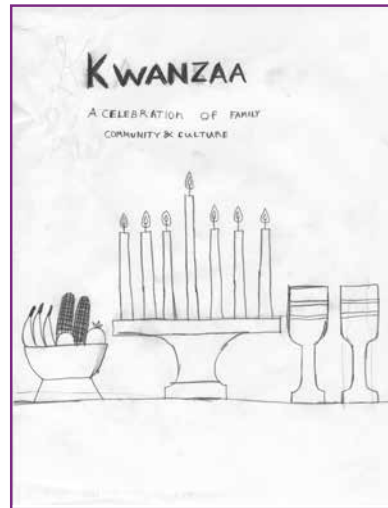
Kealin Taylor-Martin, Highgate P.S., Gr. 6



Sung Hun Choi, Silver Stream P.S., Gr. 6



Lauryn Rotaru, Parkview P.S., Gr. 8



George Keylin, Willowbrook P.S., Gr. 6



Jason Chen, Parkview P.S., Gr. 8



Mindy Chanphakfo, Vellore Woods P.S., Gr. 3

## CHRISTIANITY

December 25 ♦ **Christmas** (Western calendar) celebrates the birth of Jesus about 2000 years ago in Bethlehem. Christians believe that Jesus of Nazareth is the son of God, and accept him as their Saviour and Lord. In many families, Christmas Eve is celebrated with big dinners, visiting and carol-singing, often followed by midnight church services.

## ISLAM

December 23 **Mawlid-un-Nabi** celebrates the birth of the Prophet Muhammad (pbuh).

## JAINISM

December 21 **Maun-agiyyaras** is a day of fasting, silence and meditation.

## JUDISM

Dec. 7 - 14 **Chanukah** (Festival of Lights) celebrates religious freedom by commemorating the victory of the Jews over Antiochus who tried to outlaw the practice of Judaism. Starting on the evening of December 6, candles are lit in increasing numbers for eight nights in a "Chanukiah" which is a special candelabrum containing nine candles.

## KWANZAA

December 26 **Kwanzaa** named after the Swahili word for "first fruits" is a seven day cultural celebration initiated by African Americans starting on December 26th. Each day a candle is lit and placed in a seven-cup candelabrum called a kinara that sits on a straw mat adorned with fruit and vegetables. The participants discuss the principles or Nguzo Saba of Kwanzaa: unity, self-determination, collective responsibility, cooperative economics, purpose, creativity and faith. On the final night of the celebration, friends and relatives gather for a feast known as Karamu.

## ZOROASTRIANISM

December 26 **Death of Prophet Zarathustra** who was the founder of the Zoroastrian faith. His dates are uncertain but Westerners believe he lived in the first or the second millennium B.C.E.

♦ Conferences, meetings, workshops, exams, field trips, etc. are not to be scheduled on these dates.



# DECEMBER 2015

MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY	SUNDAY
<b>Please note:</b> The Religious Accommodations Guidelines document has been posted on the BWV. To learn more about these guidelines and corresponding resources, please visit the equity page on the BWV.						
	1	2	3	4	5	6
Chanukah begins						
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
Maun-agiyaras	WINTER BREAK			Christmas	Kwanzaa Death of Prophet Zarathustra	
21				25	26	27
28	29	30	31	Notes _____ _____ _____ _____		



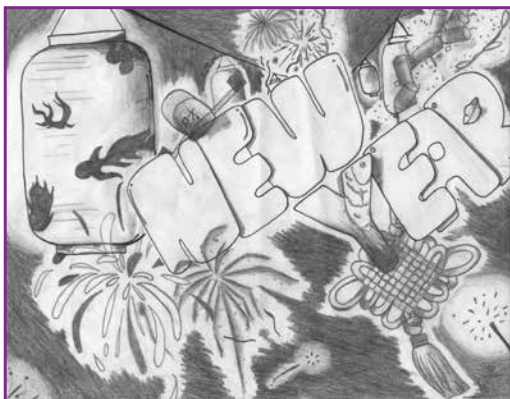
Sunny Zhu, Doncrest P.S., Gr. 5



Rebecca Revizada, Bakersfield P.S., Gr. 4

NOVEMBER	M	T	W	T	F	S	S
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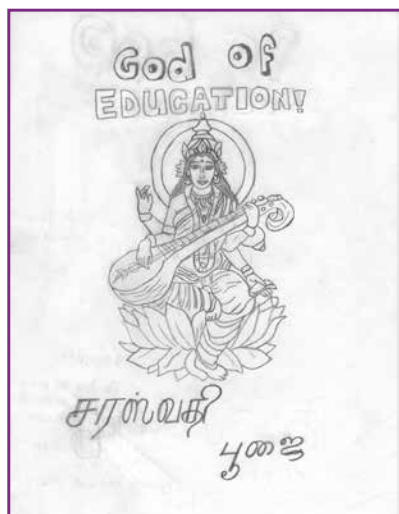
JANUARY	M	T	W	T	F	S	S
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	18	19	20	21	22	23	24
	25	26	27	28	29	30	31



Sophia Wang, Parkview P.S., Gr. 8



Brashaya Hariharan, David Suzuki P.S., Gr. 7



Adsana Mohendran, Lincoln Alexander P.S., Gr. 6



Anindro Bhattacharya, Greensborough P.S., Gr. 7



Sahaar Rattansi, Willowbrook P.S., Gr. 6



Karen Wang, Parkview P.S., Gr. 8

## BUDDHISM

January 1

**Temple Day** has become a day for Canadian Buddhists to attend a special service in the local temple.

## CHRISTIANITY

January 6

**Epiphany** (Western Calendar) is the 12th day of Christmas and the end of the Christmas season. It comes from a Greek word referring to the baptism of Jesus and the arrival in Bethlehem of the Three Wise Men who came to worship Jesus. The Armenian Orthodox Church celebrates the nativity of Jesus on this day.

January 7

◆ **Christmas** (Eastern Calendar). In York Region, this is often referred to as "Ukrainian Christmas". Some Orthodox churches celebrate the birth of Jesus on this day. The Julian (Eastern) calendar is currently 13 days behind the Gregorian (Western) calendar.

January 19

**Epiphany** (Eastern Calendar). The Eastern Church associates the date with the baptism of Jesus by John and the miracle of Cana in which Jesus turned water into wine. This day is also known as Theophany in Orthodox churches.

## HINDUISM

January 14

**Makar Sankranti**, is also known as Lohri, Thai Pongal and Til Sankranti. It marks the winter solstice and is primarily a rice harvest festival.

## SIKHISM

January 5

**Birthday of Guru Gobind Singh Ji.** The tenth guru (1666-1708 C.E.) was the final master who created the Sikh Brotherhood, the Khalsa.

January 13

**Maghi** commemorates the forgiveness shown by Guru Gobind Singh to forty deserters who returned to fight the Mughal army and sacrificed their lives under the leadership of a brave Khalsa woman named Mae Bhaago.

◆ Conferences, meetings, workshops, exams, field trips, etc. are not to be scheduled on these dates.

# JANUARY 2016

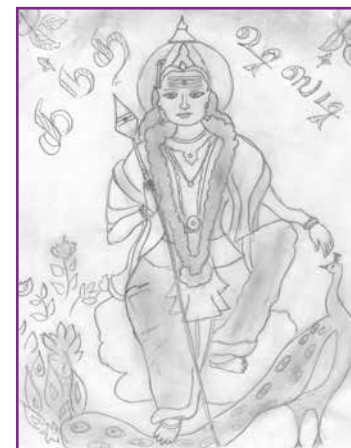
MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY	SUNDAY
	WINTER BREAK			Temple Day	2	3
				1		
4	Birthday of Guru Gobind Singh Ji	Epiphany (Western)	◆ Christmas (Eastern)	8	9	10
	5	6	7			
11	12	Maghi	Makar Sankranti	P.A. Day Elementary	16	17
		13	14	15		
18	Epiphany (Eastern) P.A. Day Bill Crothers S.S.	20	21	22	23	24
	19					
25	26	27	28	29	30	31

Notes \_\_\_\_\_

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Praviya Prabagar, David Suzuki P.S., Gr. 7



Chloe Lam, Beckett Farm P.S., S.K.

DECEMBER	M	T	W	T	F	S	S
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	28	29	30	31			

FEBRUARY	M	T	W	T	F	S	S
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	15	16	17	18	19	20	21
	22	23	24	25	26	27	28
	29						

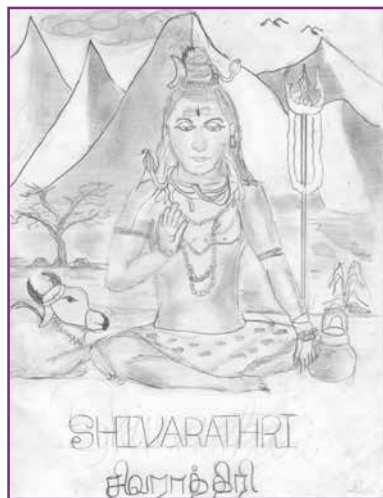




Kaley Lam, David Suzuki P.S., Gr. 7



Jennifer Yu, Louis-Honore Frechette P.S., Gr. 3



Kanishtrayen Baskaran, Coppard Glen P.S., Gr. 7



Scotia Nesbitt, Queensville P.S., Gr. 5



Selina Qiu, Roy H. Crosby P.S., Gr. 6



Helen Zhou, Walter Scott P.S., Gr. 7



Daniel Shui, Stonebridge P.S., Gr. 8

## BAHA'I FAITH

Feb. 26 – Mar. 1 **Intercalary Days** are four days (five in a leap year) that do not belong to any month. They are days of celebration, gift-giving, hospitality and charitable works.

## BUDDHISM

February 8 ♦ **Lunar New Year** the day after the new moon, marks the beginning of the new lunar year. It is the year of the Monkey. Irrespective of their religion or country, all Chinese, Vietnamese and many Koreans celebrate the cultural aspect of this day. This is the beginning of year 4714 in the Chinese calendar. It is a time for renewal and personal relationships, and pledges of prosperity.

## CHRISTIANITY

February 10 **Ash Wednesday** (Western Calendar) is the beginning of Lent, the forty day period (excluding Sundays) of prayer, repentance and self-denial that precedes Easter. It is a reminder of the days Jesus spent alone in the wilderness.

## HINDUISM

February 12 **Vasant Panchami** is particularly celebrated in Northern India. This festival marks the advent of spring. Also known as Shri Panchami, it is a celebration commonly associated with Shri or Lakshmi (Goddess of Wealth). It is also commonly linked with the Goddess of Learning, Saraswati.

♦ Conferences, meetings, workshops, exams, field trips, etc. are not to be scheduled on these dates.



# FEBRUARY 2016

MONDAY TUESDAY WEDNESDAY THURSDAY FRIDAY SATURDAY SUNDAY

## Please note:

The deadline to submit student artwork for the Holidays & Observances Calendar is Friday, February 19, 2016. Please submit all artwork to Joan Lachhman, Inclusive School & Community Services at Dr. Bette Stephenson Centre for Learning.

P.A.. Day Elementary/Secondary						
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
◆ Lunar New Year		Ash Wednesday		Vasant Panchami		
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
Family Day						
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
				Intercalary Days		
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	Notes _____ _____ _____ _____					



Jason Zhao, Silver Stream P.S., Gr. 8



Aditya Agadi, Oscar Peterson P.S., Gr. 3

JANUARY	M	T	W	T	F	S	S
					1	2	3
	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
	11	12	13	14	15	16	17
	18	19	20	21	22	23	24
	25	26	27	28	29	30	

MARCH	M	T	W	T	F	S	S
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	14	15	16	17	18	19	20
	21	22	23	24	25	26	27
	28	29	30	31			



Victor Chung, Roy H. Crosby P.S., Gr. 6



Parveen Rashid, Black Walnut P.S., Gr. 2



Aaliya Mulla, Ellen Fairclough P.S., Gr. 6



Karina Rabkin, Anne Frank P.S., Gr. 7



Sobhan Pakniat, Doncrest P.S., Gr. 4

## BAHA'I FAITH

March 2 - 20

**The 19-Day Fast** is observed every year from March 2 until March 20. During this time those who are physically able, abstain from food and drink from sunrise until sunset each day.

March 21

**Naw Ruz** (Baha'i New Year). Baha'is celebrate New Year on the first day of spring. Work and academic studies are suspended on this day.

## BUDDHISM

March 20

**Spring Ohigon** is a special time to listen to the teaching of the Buddha and to meditate on the perfection of enlightenment. This day is of particular importance for Jodo Shinshu Buddhists.

## CHRISTIANITY

March 14

**First day of Lent**, (Eastern Calendar), which is the great fast, is the last six weeks of a ten week period before Easter. This day is also known as Clean Monday. Some Eastern Churches may start Lent a week before on March 7.

March 20

**Palm Sunday** The Sunday before Easter; the beginning of the Holy Week celebrating Jesus' entry into Jerusalem. (Western Calendar)

March 24

**Maundy Thursday** (Holy Thursday) is the commemoration of the institution of the Lord's Supper (Western Calendar).

March 25

◆ **Good Friday** commemorates Jesus' death by crucifixion (Western Calendar).

March 27

**Easter Sunday** celebrates the resurrection of Christ. It is the most important festival in the Christian year (Western Calendar).

## HINDUISM

March 8

**Mahashivaratri** (or Shivaratri, "Great Shiva Night") is a special night of prayer. Devotees sing the praises of Shiva, one of the major Hindu deities.

March 23

**Holi** is a colourful spring festival observed widely in Hindu communities around the world. The myths, customs and rituals associated with Holi vary considerably from place to place.

## JUDAISM

March 24

**Purim** celebrates the victory over an oppressive ruler by Queen Esther and her Uncle Mordecai.

## SIKHISM

March 14

**Sikh New Year's Day** is the first day of the new Nanakshahi solar calendar. This is year 548 of the new era.

## ZOROASTRIANISM

March 17

**Ghambar Hamaspathmaedem** celebrates the creation of human beings.

March 21

**Naw Ruz** (New Year's Day) in Farsi calendars. This is the first day of the Zoroastrian and Persian year. It is a time of religious observance preceded by ten days of remembrance of the dead. It symbolizes the renewal of the world after winter. Irrespective of their religion, many Iranians celebrate this day. This celebration may also fall on March 20.

March 28

**Birthday of Prophet Zarathustra**, the founder of the Zoroastrian faith.

◆ Conferences, meetings, workshops, exams, field trips, etc. are not to be scheduled on these dates.

# MARCH

# 2016

MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY	SUNDAY
		19-Day Fast begins				
	1	2	3	4	5	6
	Mahashivaratri					
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
March Break begins Sikh New Year's Day First Day of Lent (Eastern)	<b>MARCH BREAK</b>					Spring Ohigon Palm Sunday (Western)
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
Naw Ruz		Holi	Maundy Thursday Purim	◆ Good Friday (Western)		Easter Sunday (Western)
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
Birthday of Prophet Zarathustra						
28	29	30	31			

Notes \_\_\_\_\_

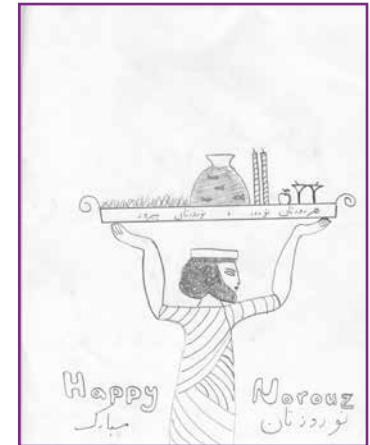
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Mishelle Sholkov Richmond Hill H.S., Gr. 11



Sina Madihiyan, Roselawn P.S., Gr. 8

FEBRUARY	M	T	W	T	F	S	S
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	15	16	17	18	19	20	21
	22	23	24	25	26	27	28
	29	30	31				

APRIL	M	T	W	T	F	S	S
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Mansi Asthana, King City S.S., Gr. 9



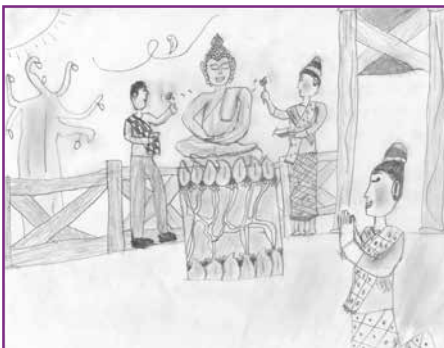
Ben Musselman, Oscar Peterson P.S., Gr. 8



Jasma Zhou, Bogart P.S., Gr. 5



Gracy Patel, Oscar Peterson P.S., Gr. 8



Noona Sichantha, Maple Leaf P.S. Gr. 6



Nivini Walgama, Kettle Lakes P.S., Gr. 5

## BAHA'I FAITH

April 21

- ◆ **Ridvan.** Baha'u'llah, the founder of the Baha'i Faith, declared his mission as the most recent messenger of God. Baha'is observe the first, ninth and twelfth days of this period. The actual event occurred in a garden, called Ridvan (Paradise) in Baghdad, Iraq in 1863 C.E. Work and academic studies are suspended on this day.

## BUDDHISM

April 13/14

**Saka** (New Year's Day). This is New Year's Day according to the Saka calendar. This day is both a religious and cultural celebration.

## CHRISTIANITY

April 24

**Palm Sunday**, the Sunday before Easter (Eastern Calendar).

April 29

- ◆ **Holy Friday** (Eastern) commemorates the passion of Jesus Christ, i.e. his submission to death by crucifixion. The Eastern churches focus on his burial.

## HINDUISM

April 7 - 15

**Navaratri (Spring)** is a nine-day celebration of the Divine Goddess for good health, happiness and knowledge.

April 14

**Chaitra New Year** The first day of the Solar year is an agricultural festival celebrating the harvest. This day is also celebrated as the Tamil New Year, Varusha Pirappu, Vishu, Ugadi, Rongali Bihu and Naba Barsha.

April 15

**Ramanavami.** On this day Lord Rama the 7th incarnation of Lord Vishnu is said to have been born.

## JAINISM

April 19

**Mahavir Jayanti** is the celebration of the birthday of Lord Mahavira (meaning the Great Hero) of Jina (the Conqueror).

## JUDAISM

April 23 - 30

- ◆ (April 23)

\*

**Pesach** (Passover) is a "Festival of Freedom" that commemorates the exodus of the Jews from slavery in Egypt. Symbolic foods, such as matzo, are eaten and leavened products are prohibited. First Seder is on the evening of April 22nd. The second and last two days of Pesach are also observed as full holy days by Jews.

## SIKHISM

April 14

- ◆ **Vaisakhi.** This day celebrates the founding of the Khalsa order (Sikh religion) in 1699 C.E. by Guru Gobind Singh Ji. Many Sikhs choose to be baptized into the Khalsa Panth (Brotherhood of the Pure) on this day. Also on this day, male Khalsa Sikhs are named Singh (lion), female Khalsa Sikhs are named Kaur (princess). It is the most important holy day of the year for Sikhs.

- ◆ Conferences, meetings, workshops, exams, field trips, etc. are not to be scheduled on these dates.



# APRIL 2016

MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY	SUNDAY
<b>Please note:</b> Second Semester break for Bill Crothers S.S, is from April 18 - April 22, 2016.				1	2	3
4	5	6	7 Navaratri begins	8	9	10
11	12	13 Saka	14 Chiatra New Year ♦ Vaisakhi	15 Ramanavami	16	17
18	19 Mahavir Jayanti	20	21 ♦ Ridvan	22 *	23 ♦ Pesach	24 Palm Sunday (Eastern)
25	26	27	28	29 ♦ Holy Friday (Eastern)	30	

Notes \_\_\_\_\_

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Jasleen Sandhu, Coppard Glen P.S., Gr. 7



Lindsay Burnett, Sharon P.S., Gr. 2

MARCH	M	T	W	T	F	S	S
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	28	29	30	31			

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	16	17	18	19	20	21	22
	23	24	25	26	27	28	29
	30	31					



Ashley Tang, Parkview P.S., Gr. 8



Angelina Phon, Bogart P.S., Gr. 5



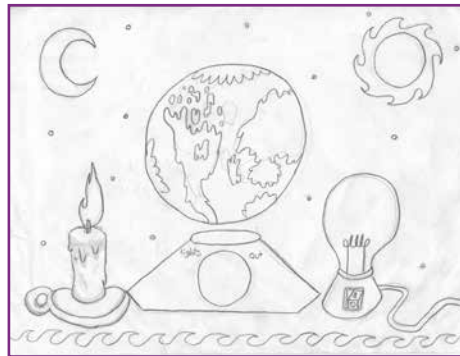
Akshika Akilan, Oscar Peterson P.S., Gr. 8



Elaine Chong, Highgate P.S., Gr. 8



Kylie Hamill, Cornell Village P.S., Gr. 2



Amelia White, Parkview P.S., Gr. 7

## BAHA'I FAITH

May 23

**Declaration of the Bab.** On this day in 1844 C.E., a man known as the Bab, a title which means "the Gate," announced his mission as a manifestation of God whose purpose was to prepare the world for the coming of the promised manifestation of all religions, Baha'u'llah. The Baha'i calendar is dated from this day. Work and academic studies are suspended on this day.

May 29

**Ascension of Baha'u'llah.** This date marks the passing in 1892 C.E. of Baha'u'llah, the prophet-founder of the Baha'i Faith, near Haifa, in the Holy Lands. Work and academic studies are suspended on this day.

## BUDDHISM

May 15

**Wesak** is celebrated on the full moon. It is considered the most auspicious day of the year, celebrating Buddha's Birth, Enlightenment, and Final Demise. In Canada, many Buddhist groups join together to celebrate the three festivals of Buddha's life as one event. They do this on the day of the fourth full moon after the lunar new year, or the Sunday closest to that day. This is usually around mid-May.

## CHRISTIANITY

May 1

**Easter Sunday** in the Orthodox churches. The church calendar year begins with Pascha (Eastern Calendar).

May 5

**Ascension Day** (Western) marks Jesus' ascension into heaven and is observed through prayers and music. It occurs forty days after Easter.

May 15

**Pentecost** (Western) celebrates the renewal of faith that Jesus' followers felt after his death. It commemorates the coming of the Holy Spirit upon the disciples of Jesus. It comes fifty days after Easter.

## ISLAM

May 5

**Miraj-un-Nabi** commemorates Prophet Muhammad's (pbuh) famous night journey (al-Isra) from Mecca to Jerusalem and his subsequent ascension (al-Miraj) to paradise.

May 23

**Nisfu-Shaban** is known as the Night of Forgiveness or repentance. Many Muslims spend the preceding night in prayer seeking God's guidance.

## WICCA

May 1

**Beltane** meaning "May", the greening of the Earth, blossom time, when Goddess and God are reunited. Beltane has long been celebrated with feasts and rituals.

# MAY 2016

MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY	SUNDAY
<p>Do you need a translator/interpreter?            The translator/interpreter list is posted on the Portal at <a href="http://bww.yrdsb.ca">bww.yrdsb.ca</a>. Select Board Services and then click on the Inclusive School and Community Services page.</p>						Easter Sunday (Eastern) Beltane  
2	3	4	Ascension Day (Western) Miraj-un-Nabi	P.A. Day Secondary	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14	Pentecost Wesak
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
Declaration of the Bab Victoria Day Nisfu-Shaban	24	25	26	27	28	Ascension of Baha'u'llah
23						29
30	31	Notes _____ _____ _____ _____				



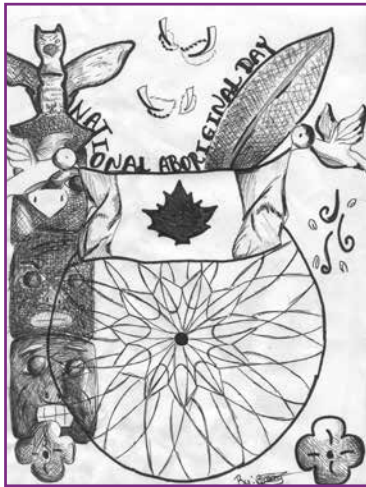
Maxwell Ng, Roy H. Crosby P.S., Gr. 4



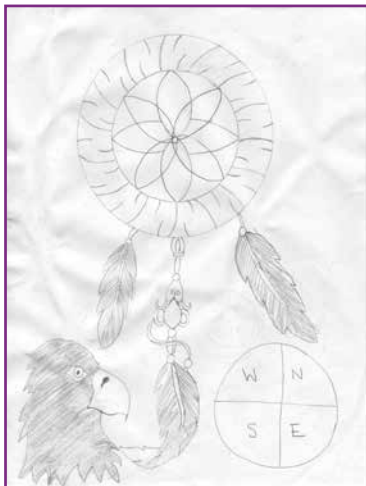
Sydney Wu, Beckett Farm P.S., Gr. 7

APRIL	M	T	W	T	F	S	S
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JUNE	M	T	W	T	F	S	S
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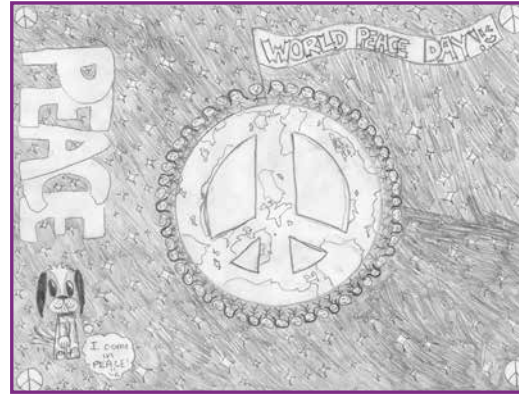
Gracey Zhong, Stonebridge P.S., Gr. 7



Faith Boettger, Black River P.S., Gr. 7



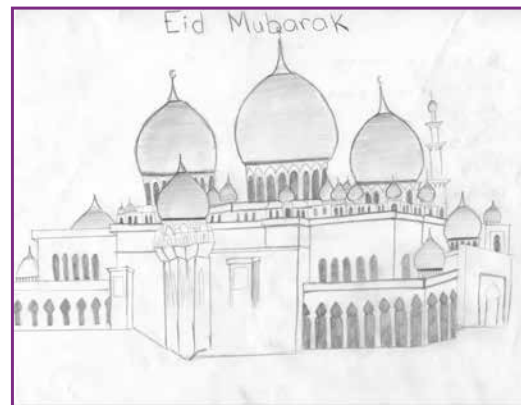
Abeera Masood, Crossland P.S., Gr. 8



Alyssa Zhao, Doncrest P.S., Gr. 5



Jennifer Zhang, Stonebridge P.S., Gr. 7



Maya Mouawie, Vellore Woods P.S., Gr. 5

## ISLAM

June 6

**Ramadhan** is the ninth month of the Islamic calendar. All Muslims who are physically able, fast during this month abstaining from food and drink each day from dawn to sunset. The beginning of Ramadhan depends on the sighting of the moon on the previous evening.

## JUDAISM

June 12 - 13

**Shavuot** celebrates the Israelites receiving the Torah.

## NATIONAL ABORIGINAL DAY

June 21

**A day declared by the Assembly of First Nations.**

All First Nations' organizations cease work during this day. This is a day where all Canadians can celebrate the contributions Aboriginal peoples have made to Canada. This day was chosen because it is also the summer solstice, the longest day of the year. For generations, many Aboriginal people have celebrated their culture and heritage on or near this day. For more information about the day's activities, visit the Indian & Northern Affairs Canada Website at [www.inac.gc.ca](http://www.inac.gc.ca) and look in the "Culture and History" section. Additional resources on First Nation, Metis, Inuit (FNMI) can be found on the [Equity page](http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/aboriginal/index.html), as well as on: <http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/aboriginal/index.html>

## SIKHISM

June 16

**Martyrdom of Guru Arjan Dev Ji.** The fifth Guru (1563 - 1606 C.E.), who built the Temple of God in Amritsar, was martyred on this day.

## ZOROASTRIANISM

June 29 - July 3

**Ghambar Maidyoshem** celebrates the creation of water; the sowing of the summer crop and the harvesting of grain.



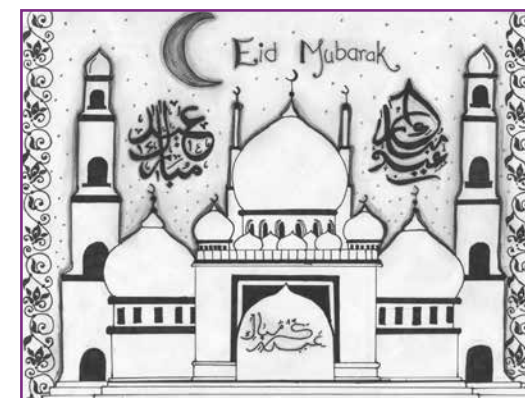
# JUNE 2016

MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY	SUNDAY
				P.A. Day Elementary		
		1	2	3	4	5
Ramadhan						Shavout
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
			Martyrdom of Guru Arjan Dev Ji.			
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
	National Aboriginal Day		P.A. Day Bill Crothers S.S.	P.A. Day Bill Crothers S.S.		
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
		Ghambar Maidyoshem P.A. Day Secondary	P.A. Day Elementary/Secondary			
27	28	29	30			

Notes \_\_\_\_\_  
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Oviya Sivakkumaran, Legacy P.S., Gr. 6

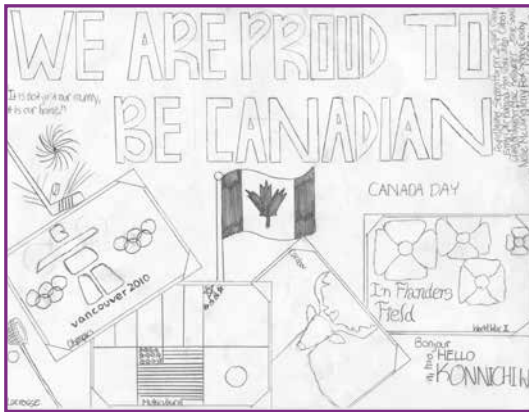


Saniya Mirza, Coppard Glen P.S., Gr. 7

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16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
30	31					

M	T	W	T	F	S	S
				1	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	31

If you haven't received a copy of the 2015-2016 Holidays & Observances calendar please call Joan Lachhman at Inclusive School and Community Services at 905-884-2046 ext. 252, 416-969-7170 ext. 2409 or email [joan.lachhman@yrdsb.ca](mailto:joan.lachhman@yrdsb.ca)



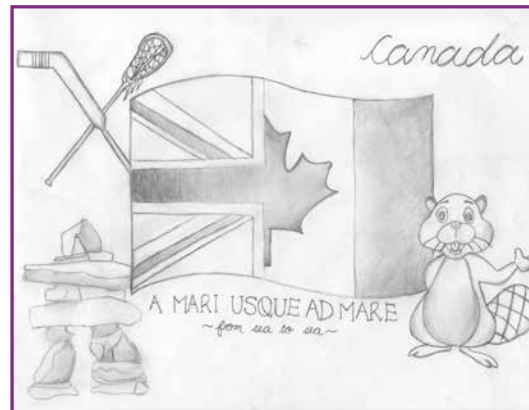
Alexis Fang, Roy H. Crosby P.S., Gr. 6



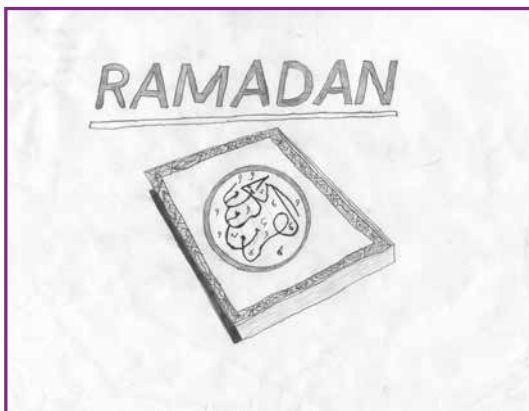
Asiah Salimi, Coppard Glen P.S., Gr. 7



Safa Bozai, Black Walnut P.S., Gr. 5



Yaline Ganesathasan, Harry Bowes P.S., Gr. 8



Kaleel Versi, Macleod's Landing P.S., Gr. 4



Dominique Buttino, Joseph A. Gibson P.S., Gr. 8

## BAHA'I FAITH

July 9

**Martyrdom of the Bab.** The Bab was put to death at the age of 31, by a firing squad in the market square of Tabriz (Persia), in 1850 C.E. The event is observed at noon. Work and academic studies are suspended on this day.

## BUDDHISM

July 19

**Wassana** is celebrated on the full moon. It marks the beginning of the three month Rains Retreat for monks and nuns.

## Canada Day

July 1

**149th anniversary** of Confederation.

## ISLAM

July 1

**Lailat-ul-Qadr** (literally the Night of Power) commemorates the night in 610 C.E. on which the Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) received the first revelation of the Islamic Holy scriptures (the Qur'an) from God through the Angel Gabriel. For many Muslims, any odd nights in the last ten days can be observed as Lailat-ul-Qadr.

July 7

◆ **Eid-ul-Fitr** is a celebration that marks the end of Ramadhan, the month of fast. It falls on the first day of the following month Shawal. The beginning of the month depends on the sighting of the new moon. It is the first day in which those who were fasting can eat and drink during the day.

◆ Conferences, meetings, workshops, exams, field trips, etc. are not to be scheduled on these dates.

# JULY 2016

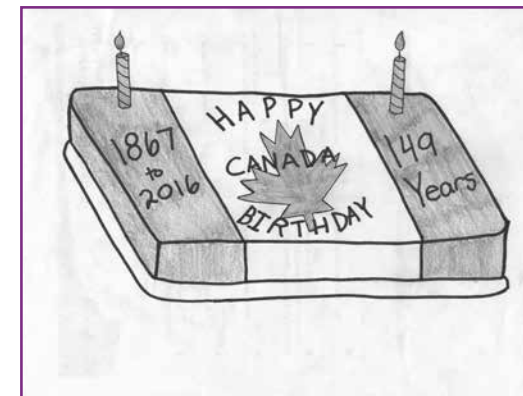
MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY	SUNDAY
<b>Looking for funds for inclusive activities?</b> Go to the Board's Portal Site at <a href="https://bww.yrdsb.ca">https://bww.yrdsb.ca</a> , Board Services, select Inclusive School and Community Services and click on Road to Inclusivity Grants.				Canada Day Lailat-ul-Qadr 1	2	3
4	5	6	◆ Eid-ul-Fitr 7	8	Martyrdom of the Bab 9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	Wassana 19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	31

Notes \_\_\_\_\_

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Sophie Collins, Parkview P.S., Gr. 7



Urooj Anees, David Suzuki P.S., Gr. 8

JUNE	M	T	W	T	F	S	S
			1	2	3	4	5
	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
	13	14	15	16	17	18	19
	20	21	22	23	24	25	26
	27	28	29	30			

AUGUST	M	T	W	T	F	S	S
						1	2
	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
	10	11	12	13	14	15	16
	17	18	19	20	21	22	23
	24	25	26	27	28	29	30
	31						



# CALENDAR 2015 - 2016



Sarah Coletta, Kleinburg P.S., Gr. 7



Teresa Shi, Richmond Hill H.S., Gr. 10



Peri Goodman, Richmond Hill H.S., Gr. 11



Aidan Campagner, Kleinburg P.S., Gr. 7



Savi Chedie, Beckett Farm P.S., Gr. 6

**Front Cover Illustration by**  
Zoe Wu, Highgate P.S., Gr. 8

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