

## January 2020 - August 2020

<b>New Year's Day</b>	1/1/20		Montgomery County government will observe this holiday. Area: Bethesda/Chevy Chase, East County, MidCounty, Silver Spring, Upcounty
<b>Birth of Guru Gobind</b>	1/2/20		The birth of the last human Guru (divine teacher) of Sikhs (1666 - 1708)
<b>Three Kings Day</b>	1/6/20		Three Kings Days (also called Dia de los Reyes, Epiphany, Feast of Kings, Twelfth Day, Twelfth tide, Day of the Three Wise Men). This major festival of the Christian Church is observed in many parts of the world with gifts, feasting, last lighting of the Christmas lights and burning of Christmas greens. It is the Twelfth and last day of the Feast of the Nativity. It commemorates the visit of the Three Wise Men (Kings of Magi) to Bethlehem. It is one of the oldest Christian feasts, originating in the Eastern Church in the second century, and predates the Western feast of Christmas. It was adopted by the Western Church during the same period in which the Eastern Church accepted Christmas.
<b>Orthodox Christmas</b>	1/7/20		Eastern Orthodox Churches, which use the Julian Calendar to determine feast days, celebrate on January 7 by the Gregorian Calendar.

<b>Korean American Day</b>	1/13/20		A number of U.S. states have declared January 13 as Korean American Day in order to recognize Korean Americans' impact and contributions.
<b>Makar Sankranti</b>	1/15/20		One of the few solar holidays that marks the transition of the Sun into Capricorn on its celestial path and the northward journey of the sun. It also broadly coincides with the winter harvest in many parts of India. Hindus thank God for the bountiful harvest and may pay homage to Goddess Saraswati on this day as well as to ancestors. <i>Pongal</i> is widely celebrated in the Indian state of Tamil Nadu and Sri Lanka.
<b>MLK Day</b>	1/20/19		Location: Montgomery County, MD The Birthday of Martin Luther King, Jr., often called Martin Luther King Day, is a United States holiday honoring the Reverend Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., black civil rights leader, minister, advocate of nonviolence and recipient of Nobel Peace Prize (1964). It is observed on the third Monday of January each year, around the time of Dr. King's birthday, January 15. Area: Bethesda/Chevy Chase, East County, MidCounty, Silver Spring, Upcounty
<b>Asian Lunar New Year</b>	1/25/20		Asian Lunar New Year is typically observed between January 21 and February 19; it is a public holiday in a number of countries and areas where a sizeable Asian population resides. It is the principal holiday in Asian calendars and falls on different dates on the Gregorian calendar every year on different days of the week. New Year season begins with the first new moon after the sun enters Aquarius and lasts for fifteen days. The first week is the most important and most often celebrated with visits to friends and family as well as greetings of good luck. The highlight of the season is the Dragon Parade which is thought to dispel evil spirits. Also known as Losar, Tet, or Chinese New Year
<b>Tet (Vietnamese New Year)</b>	1/25/20		

<b>Vasant Panchami</b>	1/29/20		Worship Saraswati -- goddess of learning
<b>Magha Puja</b>	2/10/20		Fourfold Assembly or Sangha Day. Marks the day Buddha addressed a meeting of 1250 arahants. The date of Magha Puja may be 2/19/19 or ????, depending on the tradition.
<b>Parinirvana</b>	2/15/20		Mahayana Buddhist festival marking the anniversary of Buddha's death. Pure Land Buddhists call the festival "Nirvana Day". Parinirvana is celebrated by some Buddhists on February 8th. Nirvana Day is the celebration of Buddha's death when he reached total Nirvana, at the age of 80.
<b>President's Day</b>	2/17/20		Washington's Birthday is a United States federal holiday celebrated on the third Monday of February in honor of George Washington, the first President of the United States. Although President Lincoln's birthday, February 12, was never a federal holiday, approximately a dozen state governments including Maryland, have officially renamed their Washington's Birthday observances as Presidents' Day. Montgomery County government is closed.
<b>Chotruduchen</b>	2/19/19		Chokhor Duchen, one of the four great holy days of the Tibetan calendar. It is also known as the Festival of Turning the Wheel of Dharma, Chokhor Duchen commemorates the anniversary upon which Shakyamuni Buddha first began teaching the Dharma. For seven weeks after his enlightenment, the Buddha did not teach. After this period, Indra and Brahma offered a dharmachakra and a conch shell and requested Shakyamuni to teach. Accepting, Buddha Shakyamuni turned the Wheel of Dharma for the first time at Sarnath by teaching on the Four Noble Truths.

<b>Purim</b>	2/20/19		Purim is a Jewish holiday that commemorates the deliverance of Persian Jews from the plot of Haman to exterminate them, as recorded in the biblical Book of Esther. Purim is marked by a carnival atmosphere, with masquerades, farcical plays, and the giving of gifts, especially charitable gifts. In the synagogue, the chief observance is the reading of the Megillah (scroll) of Esther, but here, also, unusual levity prevails. For example, at every mention of Haman, the congregation rattles "gregers" (noisemakers) to drown out the sound of his name. Purim begins at sundown on March 20, 2019.
<b>Maha Shivratri</b>	2/21/20		Worship Shiva -- one of the Hindu Trinity, the divine manifestation of transformation and regeneration
<b>Losar</b>	2/25/20	2/27/20	Losar is the Tibetan word for "new year" and it is celebrated for 15 days, with the main celebrations on the first three days. On the first day of Losar, a beverage called changkol is made from chhaang (a Tibetan cousin of beer). The second day of Losar is known as King's Losar (gyalpo losar). Losar is traditionally preceded by the five day practice of Vajrakilaya.
<b>Ash Wednesday</b>	2/26/20		In the Western Christian calendar, Ash Wednesday is the first day of Lent. It occurs forty-six days before Easter, but Lent is nevertheless considered forty days long, because Sundays in this period are not counted among the days of Lent. It falls on different dates from year to year, according to the date of Easter; it can occur as early as February 4 or as late as March 10. Worshippers are blessed by a priest or minister with ashes placed on the forehead in the shape of a cross. Ash Wednesday is observed by fasting and repentance.
<b>Holi</b>	3/9/20	3/10/20	Holi, the festival of colors, is the one of the most important Hindu festivals after Diwali. The festival is celebrated in early Spring with people throwing color powder/water at each other, sharing a meal together, and renewing friendships. The festival is a joyous celebration of the colors of Spring and communal harmony. Holi begins the evening of 3/20/2019

Kuan Yin (Avalokitesvara)	3/12/20		
Norouz	3/20/20		<p>"New Day" (originally "New Light") is the traditional celebration of the ancient Achaemenid Iranian New Year. Norouz is also widely referred to as the Persian New Year. Norouz is celebrated and observed by Iranian peoples and has spread in many other parts of the world, including parts of Central Asia, South Asia, Northwestern China, the Crimea and some groups in the Balkans. It is marked by family visits and the exchange of gifts, as well as special feasts. It is also commemorated by setting tables with foods and special items beginning with the letter S; this is known as the Haft Sin. The 13th day of the New Year festival is called "Sizdah Bedar" and is spent out of doors at picnics and parks. The UN's General Assembly in 2010 recognized the International Day of Norouz, describing it a <u>spring festival of Persian origin which has been celebrated for over 3,000 years</u>.</p>
Nowruz	3/20/20		<p>This marks the first day of spring. Nowruz – 'new day', has been celebrated since Achaemenian times (circa 550 BC – 330BC) as the Persian New Year. The festival is celebrated in many parts of the Persian speaking world, including Iran, Iraq, Afghanistan, the Caucuses, and Central and South Asia. For Zoroastrians, a religious service followed by a feast, is usual. Noteworthy in the celebrations is the ceremonious placement of a 'Haft Sheen' table (consisting of seven items of Ahura Mazda's creations, starting with the letter S), also representing seven divinities in Zoroastrianism.</p>
Ugadi	3/25/20		<p>Ugadi is derived from the Sanskrit words yuga (age) and ādi (starting) - 'the beginning of a new age'. The legend behind this festival is that Lord Brahma created the universe on Ugadi.</p>
Vaisakhi	3/25/20		<p>Vaisakhi celebrates the founding of the institution of Khalsa in 1699 which made the current outer identity of the Sikhs – unshorn hair and beard and a head covering – as a mandatory part of their faith, symbolizing equality, and to follow a code of conduct. <a href="http://www.sikhcouncilusa.org/article.aspx?aid=52">http://www.sikhcouncilusa.org/article.aspx?aid=52</a></p>

<b>Khordad</b>	3/28/20		The day marks the birth of Prophet Zarathushtra (Zoroaster). For practical reasons the occasion is celebrated together with Nowruz.
<b>Ram Navami</b>	4/2/20		Celebrates the birth of Lord Rama, an incarnation of Hindu Trinity Vishnu and embodiment of dharma (righteousness)
<b>Theravada New Year</b>	4/7/20		Traditional festival to mark the new year in several South and Southeast Asian cultures, including Thai, Cambodian, Lao, Burmese, Sinhalese, Tamil, Bengali, and Nepali.
<b>Passover</b>	4/8/20	4/16/20	Passover is an eight-day Jewish holiday which is celebrated in the spring. It begins on the 15th day of Nisan (on the Hebrew calendar), which falls between March 15-April 30. Passover commemorates the Exodus and freedom of the Israelites from ancient Egypt. Jews celebrate Passover in their homes at a ceremonial feast called the Seder. At the Seder, the story of the flight of the Israelites is read from a book called the Haggadah. Foods symbolizing the flight from Egypt are placed on the table. The most important symbol is unleavened (unraised) bread called matzo (also spelled matzah). According to the Bible, when the Israelites fled, they did not have time to let their bread rise. They made flat, unleavened bread instead. Therefore, Jews eat matzahs instead of leavened bread during Passover.
<b>Hanuman Jayanti</b>	4/8/20		Hanuman is a monkey god and is worshipped for his unflinching devotion to Lord Rama.

<b>Holy (Maundy) Thursday</b>	4/9/20		In the Christian calendar, Holy Thursday or Great Thursday, called in England and in a few other English-speaking countries Maundy Thursday, is the feast or holy day on the Thursday before Easter that commemorates the Last Supper of Jesus Christ with the Apostles.
<b>Good Friday</b>	4/10/20		Good Friday is a holy day celebrated by most Christians on the Friday before Easter or Pascha. It commemorates the crucifixion of Jesus at Calvary.
<b>Easter</b>	4/12/20		Easter, also known as the Feast of the Resurrection, "the Sunday of the Resurrection", or "Resurrection Day", is the most important religious festival of the Christian liturgical year. The date of Easter, a moveable feast, is derived from the lunar calendar: the first Sunday following the first ecclesiastical full moon on or after March 21-always between March 22 and April 25. It celebrates the resurrection of Jesus, which occurred after his death by crucifixion in AD 27-33). In the Catholic Church, Easter is actually an eight-day feast called the Octave of Easter.
<b>Orthodox Holy Thursday</b>	4/16/20		In the Christian calendar, Holy Thursday or Great Thursday is the feast or holy day on the Thursday before Easter that commemorates the Last Supper of Jesus Christ with the Apostles.
<b>Orthodox Good Friday</b>	4/17/20		Good Friday is a holy day celebrated by most Christians on the Friday before Easter or Pascha. It commemorates the crucifixion of Jesus at Calvary.

<b>Festival of Ridvan</b>	4/19/20	5/1/20	Festival of Ridvan - Meaning ("paradise") is a Baha'i celebration commemorating the 12-day period in 1863 that Baha'u'llah (Baha'i founder) spent in the Garden of Ridvan, just outside Bagdad. During this period, Baha'u'llah began his prophethood and became God's messenger for this age. Baha'u'llah was in the Garden of Ridvan from April 21 to May 2, 1863, and this period is considered the most holy festival of the Baha'i faith and is called "Most Great Festival." The Festival of Ridvan is observed according to the Baha'i calendar and begins on the evening of April 20 and continues through May 2 each year.
<b>Orthodox Easter</b>	4/19/20		Easter, also known as the Feast of the Resurrection, "the Sunday of the Resurrection", or "Resurrection Day", is the most important religious festival of the Christian liturgical year. The date of Easter, a moveable feast, is derived from the lunar calendar: the first Sunday following the first ecclesiastical full moon on or after March 21-always between March 22 and April 25. It celebrates the resurrection of Jesus, which occurred after his death by crucifixion in AD 27-33). In the Catholic Church, Easter is actually an eight-day feast called the Octave of Easter.
<b>Yom Ha'Shoah</b>	4/20/20	4/21/20	Officially entitled "Holocaust and Heroism Remembrance Day" by the Israeli Knesset, it also marks the anniversary of the Warsaw Ghetto Uprising. The JCRCGW organizes and sponsors Holocaust Remembrance Commemoration programs in both Montgomery and Fairfax counties to commemorate the more than six million victims of the Holocaust. Begins evening of 5/1/2019
<b>Ramadan: The Islamic Month of Fasting</b>	4/23/20	5/23/20	Ramadan, the month of fasting, the ninth month of the Islamic calendar, is holy because it was during this month that the Holy Quran (Koran) was revealed. Adults fast from dawn until sunset to achieve spiritual and physical purification and self-discipline, abstaining from food, drink and intimate relations. It is a time for feeling a common bond with the poor and needy, and is a time of piety and prayer. It begins on the Islamic lunar calendar date Ramadan 1, 1438.
<b>Wesak or Buddah Day</b>	5/7/20		The most important of the Buddhist festivals. It celebrates the Buddha's birthday, and, for some Buddhists, also marks his enlightenment and death.

<b>Vesak (Theravada)</b>	5/7/20		Buddha's birth, enlightenment, and parinirvana
<b>Ascension Thursday (</b>	5/21/20		Religious observance by many Christians, affirming the ascension of Jesus, celebrated on the Thursday in the sixth week following Easter Sunday.
<b>Eid ul-Fitr</b>	5/23/20	5/24/20	Eid ul-Fitr, or abbreviated simply as Eid, is a principal Islamic holiday that marks the end of Ramadan, the month of fasting. In Arabic, Fitr means "to break" and therefore symbolizes the breaking of the fasting period and of all evil habits. The holiday follows the month of Ramadan (usually October in the Gregorian calendar), falling on the first day of Shawwal (the tenth month in the Islamic calendar). As with all months in the Islamic calendar, it begins with the sighting of the new moon. For this reason there may be regional differences in the exact date of Eid, with some Muslims fasting for 29 days and some for 30 days. In the United States, Eid is expected to begin at sundown on June 3, 2019.
<b>Memorial Day</b>	5/25/20		
<b>Shavuot</b>	5/28/20	5/30/20	Shavuot is the Jewish holiday that celebrates the giving of the Torah (the law) to Moses on Mount Sinai. The holiday is one of the Shalosh Regalim, the three Biblical pilgrimage festivals. Shavuot begins at sundown on June 8, 2019

<b>Saga Dawa Duchen</b>	6/5/20		Buddha's enlightenment and parinirvana
<b>Juneteenth</b>	6/19/20		Juneteenth, also known as Freedom Day or Emancipation Day, is a holiday in the United States honoring African American heritage by commemorating the announcement of the abolition of slavery in the State of Texas on June 19, 1865.
<b>Independence Day</b>	7/4/20		
<b>Guru Purnima</b>	7/5/20		Guru purnima is traditionally celebrated by Hindus, Jains and Buddhists, to pay their respects to their teachers and express their gratitude.
<b>Dharma Day</b>	7/5/20		The anniversary of the start of Buddha's teaching - his first sermon , "The Wheel of Truth", after his enlightenment.

<b>Chokhor Duchen</b>	7/6/20		Chokhor Duchen, one of the four great holy days of the Tibetan calendar. It is also known as the Festival of Turning the Wheel of Dharma, Chokhor Duchen commemorates the anniversary upon which Shakyamuni Buddha first began teaching the Dharma. For seven weeks after his enlightenment, the Buddha did not teach. After this period, Indra and Brahma offered a dharmachakra and a conch shell and requested Shakyamuni to teach. Accepting, Buddha Shakyamuni turned the Wheel of Dharma for the first time at Sarnath by teaching on the Four Noble Truths.
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