



2024

EQUITY, DIVERSITY & INCLUSION

CALENDAR

Apple Tree Preservation Project at UFV Chilliwack Campus (CEP) | UFV Photo

A UFV agriculture class tackled a project this fall to preserve diseased 80-year-old apple trees on the Chilliwack campus at Canada Education Park while a UFV communications class on storytelling documented the process. The project was part of a special work-integrated learning series celebrating UFV's 50th anniversary.





OUR MISSION

*yoystexw ye totilthet,
ayeget kw'e shxwaylexws,
thayt kw'e st'elt'elawtexw*

Engaging learners,
transforming lives,
building community.

OUR VALUES

letse o sqwelewe | Integrity

We act honestly and ethically, upholding these values and ensuring our mission is delivered consistently.

lexwsq'eq'ostexw | Inclusivity

We welcome everyone, showing consideration and respect for all experiences and ideas.

st'elt'elawtexw | Community

We cultivate strong relationships, acting as a hub where all kinds of communities — educational, scholarly, local, global, and cultural — connect and grow.

ey shxweli | Excellence

We pursue our highest standard in everything we do, with determination and heart.

Learn more at ufv.ca/vision

Éy Swayel Si:yam Siya:ye.

Since well before Canada was formed, the Stó:lō, the Halq'eméylem-speaking People of the River, have lived here as stewards of this land. The Stó:lō have an intrinsic relationship with what they refer to as S'olh Temexw, "Our Sacred Land". The University of the Fraser Valley (UFV) is situated on the territory of the Stó:lō peoples. We express our gratitude and respect for the honour of living and working on this territory.

2024: A Very Special Year

The Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Office, in collaboration with the President's Office and the Community Engagement Office, is pleased to share with you the 2024 version of the EDI wall calendar. This is a very special edition of our annual calendar — a project that has been developed with the UFV community since 2021. This year will mark 50 years since the founding of Fraser Valley College, which has grown and transformed over these decades into the university we are today.

As a catalyst for reflection and discussion, the calendar encourages ongoing self-learning — and unlearning — as critical components for building an accessible, welcoming, supportive, and safe environment for UFV students, faculty, staff, and community. The recurrent themes of the art and initiatives highlighted inside reflect the challenges that are around us in the world today, but also demonstrate hope and the determined effort to make space for joy. A sincere thank you to all who have generously shared their talents and stories with the UFV community — this calendar would not be possible without you.

This calendar highlights significant dates and events throughout the year. Included here are secular and religious public and statutory

holidays, as well as cultural and creed-based commemorative or celebratory observances and holidays. At the back of the calendar, a brief history and significance is provided for each date.

Due to diverse calendar systems observed by various faith groups (sometimes with differing ecclesiastical declarations between different denominations), creed groups, and cultural groups, as well as diversity within each respective group, and different family and individual observances, some variances in these dates do occur.

It is important to remember that this is not an exhaustive list, nor is the calendar a static document. Some of these dates are subject to change and will be updated in the digital version. Also, we have endeavoured to be thorough and mindful in terms of accuracy of the content. Should you have requests for updates or revisions, if you discover any errors, or if you have any questions, please connect with Sundeep Hans, UFV Director of Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion at Sundeep.Hans@ufv.ca. If you would like to showcase your art or initiative in the 2025 calendar, please email UFV Marketing at MarCom@ufv.ca.



JANUARY 2024

| SUNDAY | MONDAY | TUESDAY | WEDNESDAY | THURSDAY | FRIDAY | SATURDAY |
|---|---|---------|---|--|--------------------|--|
| | Oshogatsu New Year's Day 1 | 2 | UFV Winter Semester Begins 3 | World Braille Day Ribbon Skirt Day 4 | Twelfth Night 5 | Epiphany 6 |
| Eastern Orthodox Christmas Christmas Day (Rastafarianism) 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 | 11 | 12 | Lohri 13 |
| 14 | Martin Luther King Day Thai Pongal starts 15 | 16 | Gurpurab; Guru Gobind Singh Ji Jayanti 17 | Bodhi Day Thai Pongal ends 18 | 19 | 20 |
| World Religion Day 21 | 22 | 23 | World Day for African and Afrodescendant Culture International Day of Education Bell Let's Talk Day 24 | 25 | 26 | Family Literacy Day International Holocaust Remembrance Day 27 |
| 28 | National Day of Remembrance and Action Against Islamophobia 29 | 30 | 31 | <p>THIS MONTH: <i>International Decade for People of African Descent 2015–2024; Tamil Heritage Month; Alzheimer's Awareness Month</i></p> | | |

Mural at CEP Campus | VA 390 Community Practices

The Visual Arts 390 class created this mural based on a design by student Jamie Wallman to encourage mental health awareness and a place to rest and rejuvenate. The image depicts Cheam Peak, Lady Peak, Knight Peak, and Welch Peak, with a warm sunset bringing light to a darker, colder landscape.





Eric Garner
January 12, 1973 - July 17, 2014

Eric Garner was a 28-year-old Black man who lived in the South Bronx, New York City. He was known for his activism and his work as a community organizer. In 2014, he was killed by a police officer during a stop-and-frisk operation. His death became a national symbol of police brutality and racial injustice.

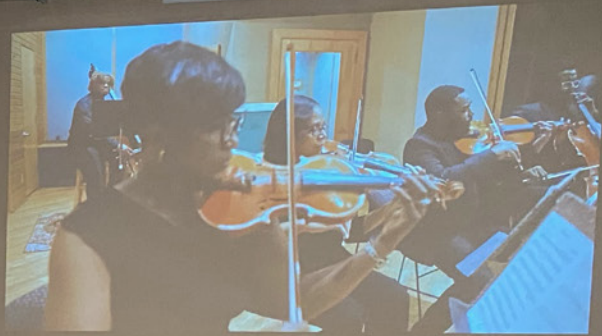
Garner's death led to the creation of the Eric Garner Foundation, which focuses on providing financial support to young Black men and women in the South Bronx. The foundation also works to raise awareness about the issues of police brutality and racial inequality.

Michael Brown
September 9, 1989 - August 9, 2014

Michael Brown was a 18-year-old Black teenager who was killed by a police officer during a stop-and-frisk operation in Ferguson, Missouri. His death led to the Ferguson Uprising and the Black Lives Matter movement.

Brown's death was a catalyst for the Black Lives Matter movement, which has become a global phenomenon. The movement has focused on issues of police brutality, racial inequality, and the lives of Black people in the United States.

THE BLACK LIVES MATTER MEMORIAL PROJECT
Dr. Syrus Marissa Ware and Tom Linton
Featuring Maestro Jason Heam Bridges and Orchestra



FEBRUARY 2024

| SUNDAY | MONDAY | TUESDAY | WEDNESDAY | THURSDAY | FRIDAY | SATURDAY |
|---|--------------------------------|---|--|--|---|---|
| THIS MONTH: <i>Black History Month; World Interfaith Harmony Week (1-7); UFV Reading Week (19-23); Heritage Week in BC (19-25)</i> | | | | Imbolc 1 | Indian Control of Indian Education 2 |  Setsuban-Sai 3 |
| 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | Isra'a and Mi'raj Mahashivaratri 8 | 9 |  Hobiye Lunar New Year 10 |
| 11 | 12 | 13 | St. Valentine's Day Ash Wednesday Lent begins (Western Christianity) 14 | Parinirvana Day (Nirvana Day) International Childhood Cancer Day 15 | 16 |  Random Act of Kindness Day 17 |
| 18 | Family Day 19 | World Day of Social Justice 20 | International Mother Language Day 21 | Human Trafficking Awareness Day 22 | 23 |  Magha Puja Day 24 |
| 25 | 26 | 27 | Pink Shirt Day 28 | 29 | | |

Black Lives Matter Memorial Project | Dr. Syrus Marcus Ware and Toni Latour Featuring Maestro Jason Ikeem Rodgers and Orchestra Noir

The Black Lives Matter Memorial Project, a multidisciplinary art exhibition that honours Black lives taken by police violence in Canada and the United States, ran at the S'eliyemetaxwtexw gallery last fall. The project reflects on the systemic racism that exists in both countries, while recognizing the drive for hope, change and justice.





MARCH 2024

SUNDAY

MONDAY

TUESDAY

WEDNESDAY

THURSDAY

FRIDAY

SATURDAY

THIS MONTH: *Brain Health Awareness Month; Neurodiversity Celebration Week (13–19)*

March 21, 1974: The Honourable Eileen Dailly, Minister of Education, announced in the BC Legislative Assembly that "today the cabinet passed an order-in-council which sets up the Fraser Valley college, so we're ready to go." The order-in-council started the clock on a tenacious race to make the new college operational by September 1974.

Disability Day of Mourning
Zero Discrimination Day
Ala 19-Day Fast begins

1

2

3

4

5

6

7

8

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International Women's Day

Ramadan begins

10

11

12

13

14

15

16

St. Patrick's Day

17

Lent begins
(Eastern Christianity)
Clean Monday

18

Ostara/Spring Equinox
Nowruz (Persian New Year)

19

20

International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination
World Down Syndrome Day

21

World Sleep Day

22

Purim begins

23

Purim ends
Holi begins

24

Holi ends
Hola Mohalla begins
International Day of Remembrance of the Victims of Slavery

25

Purple Day
(Epilepsy Awareness)

26

Hola Mohalla ends

27

Lent ends
(Western Christianity)

28

Good Friday

29

30

Easter Sunday
(Western Christianity)
National Indigenous Languages Day
International Transgender Day of Visibility

31

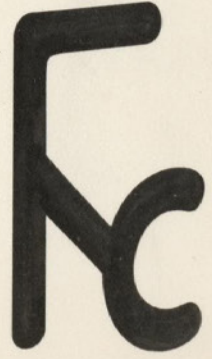
Girlhood | Sharon Strauss

Afghan women have been banned from attending university since December 2022 and high school since September 2021. UFV student Sharon Strauss created an artwork series that was part of an August walk-out at UFV protesting gender apartheid in Afghanistan.





FRASER VALLEY COLLEGE



at home here **SOON**

APRIL 2024

| SUNDAY | MONDAY | TUESDAY | WEDNESDAY | THURSDAY | FRIDAY | SATURDAY |
|--|---|---------------------------------|--|---|------------------------------|---|
| | Easter Monday 1 | World Autism Awareness Day 2 | | UFV Day April 4, 1974: Public launch of Fraser Valley College 4 | | Laylat al-Qadr 6 |
| World Health Day 7 | 8 | Ramadan ends 9 | International Day of Pink Eid al-Fitr begins 10 | | | Eid al-Fitr ends Vaisakhi/Baisakhi 13 |
| 14 | 15 | 16 | 17 | 18 | 19 | 20 |
| April 21, 2008: UCFV becomes University of the Fraser Valley 21 | Pesach/Passover begins Earth Day 22 | 23 | 24 | 25 | Lesbian Visibility Day 26 | 27 |
| Ninth Day of Ridvan 28 | 29 | Pesach/Passover ends 30 | <p>THIS MONTH: <i>Sikh Heritage Month; First Salmon Ceremony; Global Youth Service Days (April 29–May 1); UFV Winter Semester Final Exams (11–22)</i></p> | | | |

A College Without Walls | UFV Photo

Fraser Valley College started as a "college without walls" and no facilities of its own in 1974, but by 1975 construction was underway for campuses on Marshall Road in Abbotsford and Yale Road in Chilliwack. Pictured: FVC Board Vice-Chair Norm Crabtree.





MAY 2024

| SUNDAY | MONDAY | TUESDAY | WEDNESDAY | THURSDAY | FRIDAY | SATURDAY |
|---|---------------------------------|---|---|---|--|--|
| THIS MONTH: <i>Asian Heritage Month; Speech and Hearing Awareness Month; Jewish Heritage Month; National Elizabeth Fry Week (7-14); National Accessibility Week (May 26-June 1)</i> | | | Beltane Twelfth Day of Ridvan 1 | 2 | 3 | Lent ends (Eastern Christianity) 4 |
| National Day of Awareness for Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls Easter (Eastern Christianity) 5 | UFV Summer Semester Begins 6 | 7 | 8 | Ascension Day 9 | 10 | 11 |
| Mother's Day 12 | 13 | 14 | 15 | Moose Hide Campaign 16 | International Day Against Homophobia, Transphobia and Biphobia 17 | 18 |
| 19 | Victoria Day 20 | World Day for Cultural Diversity for Dialogue and Development 21 | Declaration of the Bab 22 | Komagata Maru Remembrance Day (Vancouver) 23 | Pansexual Visibility Day 24 | 25 |
| 26 | Ascension of Baha'u'llah 27 | 28 | Red Shirt Day of Action for Accessibility and Inclusion 29 | 30 | 31 | |

Queer-aoke | UFV Photo

The last year has seen a disturbing rise in homophobia, transphobia, and biphobia around the world, in the Fraser Valley, even here on campus at UFV. The UFV Community Health and Social Innovation Hub created a movement of committed support for 2SLGBTQIA+ people, including a queer-aoke event where attendees were encouraged to write messages of love and support on the flags that had become a target of vandalism.





JUNE 2024

SUNDAY

MONDAY

TUESDAY

WEDNESDAY

THURSDAY

FRIDAY

SATURDAY

THIS MONTH:

Pride Month; National Indigenous History Month; Italian Heritage Month; Filipino Heritage Month; Portuguese Heritage Month; BC Seniors Week (June 2–8); UFV Summer Semester (Early Session) Final Exams (June 24–27); Stonewall Riots Anniversary (June 23–July 3);

| | | | | | | | |
|---|---|----|----|----|----|----|---|
| <p>THIS MONTH: <i>Pride Month; National Indigenous History Month; Italian Heritage Month; Filipino Heritage Month; Portuguese Heritage Month; BC Seniors Week (June 2–8); UFV Summer Semester (Early Session) Final Exams (June 24–27); Stonewall Riots Anniversary (June 23–July 3);</i></p> | | | | | | | 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 | <p>UFV Convocation UFV Photo</p> <p><i>UFV Convocation is a tradition that honours the accomplishments of students. Each convocation ceremony also pays tribute to the significant contributions of a member of the wider community. Last June, Naxaxalhts'i Albert (Sonny) McHalsie received an honorary Doctor of Letters degree in recognition of his work preserving Stó:lō culture and promoting understanding to support reconciliation.</i></p> | | | | | | |





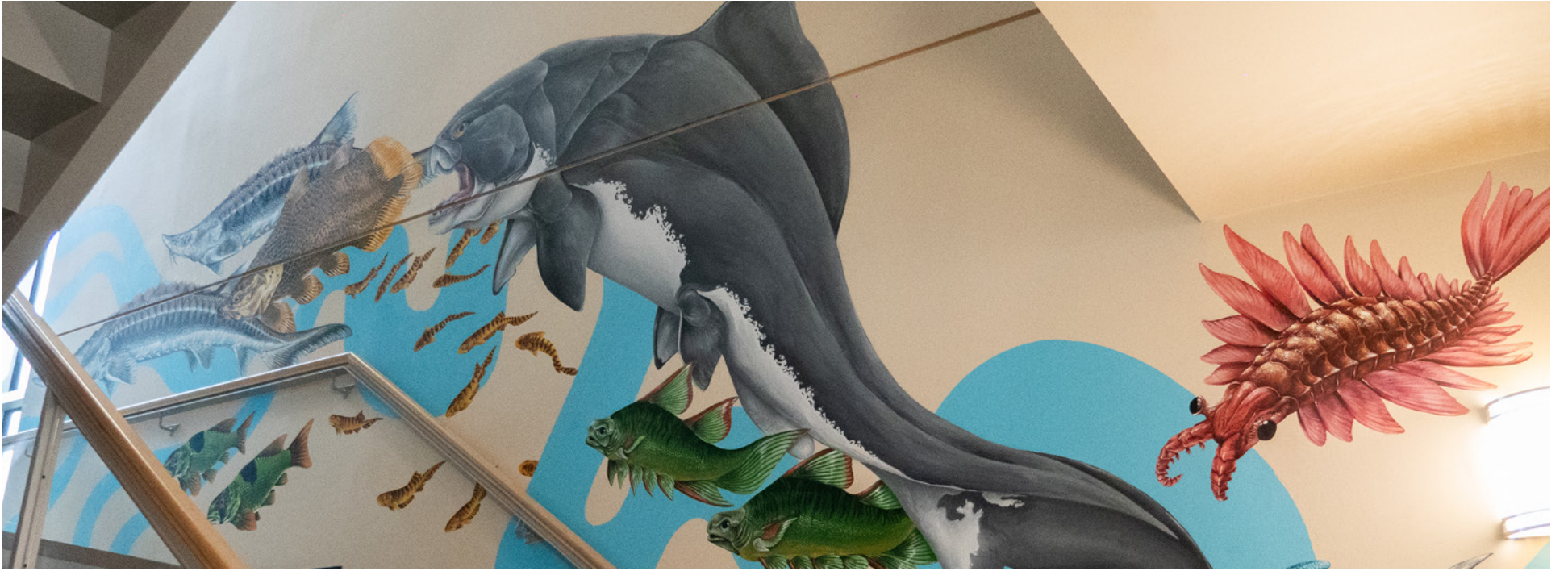
JULY 2024

| SUNDAY | MONDAY | TUESDAY | WEDNESDAY | THURSDAY | FRIDAY | SATURDAY |
|---|-----------------|--------------|---|--|--|---------------------------------|
| | Canada Day 1 | 2 | St. Thomas Day 3 | 4 | July 5, 1991: FVC becomes University College of the Fraser Valley 5 | 6 |
| 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 | St. Benedict's Day 11 | 12 | 13 |
| International Non-Binary People's Day 14 | 15 | Ashura 16 | Ashura World Day for International Justice 17 | Nelson Mandela International Day 18 | 19 | Civil Marriage Act (2005) 20 |
| Dharma Day Chilliwack Pride Festival 21 | 22 | 23 | 24 | 25 | 26 | 27 |
| 28 | 29 | 30 | 31 | <p>THIS MONTH: <i>Fraser Valley Pride (8–15); International Non-Binary Awareness Week (14–20)</i></p> | | |

UN Sustainable Development Goals | UFV Photo

Every July, the UN releases its Sustainable Goals report. The 2023 report sounded the alarm that "urgent action [is needed] to rescue the SDGs and deliver meaningful progress for people and the planet by 2030."





AUGUST 2024

| SUNDAY | MONDAY | TUESDAY | WEDNESDAY | THURSDAY | FRIDAY | SATURDAY |
|---|--|------------------------------|-----------|------------------|---|----------|
| THIS MONTH: <i>National Black Business Month; World Cancer Support Month; UFV Summer Semester — Full Session Final Exams (6–14); UFV Summer Semester — Late Session Final Exams (16–20)</i> | | | | Emancipation Day | | |
| | | | | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| 4 | BC Day | Feast of the Transfiguration | | 8 | International Day of the World's Indigenous Peoples | 10 |
| | | | | | | |
| 11 | Tisha B'av begins International Youth Day | Tisha B'av ends | 14 | 15 | 16 | 17 |
| | | | | | | |
| 18 | 19 | 20 | 21 | 22 | 23 | 24 |
| | | | | | | |
| Arba'een begins | Arba'een ends | | | | | |
| 25 | 26 | 27 | 28 | 29 | 30 | 31 |

Abbotsford Campus Mural | Aysha McConkey

This mural by student Aysha McConkey was inspired by the Stó:lō, the People of the River. Showcasing the river as a binding force that has supported life for millennia, it depicts various aquatic species across geological periods.





Xwexwilmexwawt

SEPTEMBER 2024

| SUNDAY | MONDAY | TUESDAY | WEDNESDAY | THURSDAY | FRIDAY | SATURDAY |
|--------------------|--|--|--------------------------|----------|--------|----------------------------|
| 1 | Labour Day | | UFV Fall Semester Begins | | | |
| 8 | September 9, 1974: Fraser Valley College holds first day of classes in Mission, Hope, Chilliwack, and Abbotsford | | Ethiopian New Year | | | |
| 15 | | Mid-Autumn Festival/ Mooncake Festival | | | | International Day of Peace |
| Fall Equinox 22 | International Day of Sign Language Bisexual Visibility Day | | | | | |
| 29 | Orange Shirt Day/ National Day for Truth and Reconciliation | THIS MONTH: <i>Mennonite Heritage Week (8–14); Bisexual Awareness Week (22–28); Culture Days (September 20–October 13)</i> | | | | |



Xwexwilmexwawt | UFV Photos

In 2023, the UFV Indigenous Affairs office changed its name to Xwexwilmexwawt, a Halq'eméylem word that speakers understand as a place for Indigenous peoples or a place where we work for Indigenous peoples. AVP Indigenous Shirley Hardman insisted that the name stand on its own, without an accompanying English name, to encourage people to use the Halq'eméylem word. Scan the QR code to hear Xwexwilmexwawt pronounced.





OCTOBER 2024

| SUNDAY | MONDAY | TUESDAY | WEDNESDAY | THURSDAY | FRIDAY | SATURDAY |
|---|--------------------|---|---------------------------------|--|---|--|
| THIS MONTH: <i>LGBTQ2S+ History Month; National Disability Employment Awareness Month; Learning Disabilities Awareness Month;</i> | | International Day of Older Persons 1 | Rosh Hashanah begins 2 | Navratri begins 3 | Sisters in Spirit Vigil Rosh Hashanah ends 4 | National Day of Action for Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls International World Teacher Day 5 |
| 6 | 7 | International Lesbian Day 8 | 9 | World Mental Health Day World Sight Day 10 | Yom Kippur begins International Day of the Girl Child National Coming Out Day 11 | Yom Kippur ends Navratri ends 12 |
| 13 | Thanksgiving 14 | Pregnancy & Infant Loss Remembrance Day International Day of Rural Women 15 | International Pronoun Day 16 | Spirit Day (Anti-Bullying) 17 | Persons Day World Menopause Day 18 | 19 |
| Installation of Scriptures as Guru Granth Sahib Ji 20 | 21 | 22 | 23 | 24 | 25 | 26 |
| 27 | 28 | 29 | 30 | Samhain 31 | THIS MONTH CONT'D: <i>Islamic History Month; Women's History Month; Mental Health Awareness Month; Latin American Heritage Month; Stó:lō New Year</i> | |

UFV Centre for Education and Research on Aging (CERA) and Cycling Without Age Trishaw | UFV Photo

UFV CERA partnered with Cycling Without Age to provide older adults in the community an innovative opportunity to enjoy the outdoors. The program is free-of-charge and designed to allow older persons with mobility challenges the ability to experience nature and build intergenerational relationships.





NOVEMBER 2024

| SUNDAY | MONDAY | TUESDAY | WEDNESDAY | THURSDAY | FRIDAY | SATURDAY |
|---|--|---|---|---|--|---|
| <p>THIS MONTH: <i>Veterans Week (5–11); Transgender Awareness Week (13–19); Movember (Men’s Health Awareness); Multiculturalism Week in BC (17–23); UFV Reading Break (11–13)</i></p> | | | | | <p>Diwali Bandi Chhor Divas All Saints’ Day 1</p> | <p>Birth of the Bab 2</p> |
| <p>Birth of Baha’u’llah 3</p> | <p>4</p> | <p>5</p> | <p>Trans Parent Day 6</p> | <p>International Inuit Day 7</p> | <p>National Indigenous Veterans Day 8</p> | <p>9</p> |
| <p>10</p> | <p>Remembrance Day 11</p> | <p>12</p> | <p>World Kindness Day 13</p> | <p>14</p> | <p>15</p> | <p>International Day of Tolerance 16</p> |
| <p>17</p> | <p>18</p> | <p>Louis Riel Day International Men’s Day World Day for Prevention of Child Abuse 19</p> | <p>International Trans Day of Remembrance Universal Children’s Day 20</p> | <p>21</p> | <p>Constitution Express left Vancouver for Ottawa in 1980 22</p> | <p>23</p> |
| <p>Martyrdom of Guru Tegh Bahadur Ji 24</p> | <p>International Day for the Elimination of Violence Against Women 25</p> | <p>26</p> | <p>27</p> | <p>28</p> | <p>International Day of Solidarity with the Palestinian People 29</p> | <p>International Day of Consent 30</p> |

Agriculture Technology Annual Diwali Party | UFV Photo

Diwali is a five-day festival of lights — commonly celebrated globally by Hindus, Sikhs, Jains and some Buddhists around the world. Sikhs also celebrate Bandi Chhor Divas, which commemorates the release of Guru Hargobind.





DECEMBER 2024

| SUNDAY | MONDAY | TUESDAY | WEDNESDAY | THURSDAY | FRIDAY | SATURDAY |
|---------------------|---|--|---|---|---|---|
| World AIDS Day 1 | International Day for the Abolition of Slavery 2 | International Day of Disabled Persons 3 | 4 | 5 | National Day of Remembrance and Action on Violence Against Women 6 | 7 |
| 8 | 9 | Human Rights Day 10 | 11 | 12 | 13 | 14 |
| 15 | 16 | 17 | International Migrants Day 18 | 19 | 20 | Winter Solstice Yule begins (ends Jan 1, 2025) 21 |
| 22 | 23 | Christmas Eve 24 | Hanukkah begins (ends January 2, 2025) Christmas Day 25 | Zartosht No-Diso Kwanzaa begins (ends Jan 1, 2025) Boxing Day 26 | 27 | 28 |
| 29 | 30 | New Years Eve 31 | <p>THIS MONTH: National Human Rights Month; Spiritual Literacy Month; UFV Fall Semester Final Exams (9–18)</p> | | | |

Dr. Ambedkar | Raghavendra K.V. Rao

Artist Raghavendra K.V. Rao donated a painting of Dr. Bhimrao Ramji Ambedkar to UFV's South Asian Studies Institute, where it will serve as a reminder of our commitment to anti-caste work. Dr. Ambedkar was an Indian jurist, politician, and social reformer who played a pivotal role in drafting the Constitution of India and was a leading figure in the fight against social discrimination towards Dalits.



History and Significance of Dates

For a complete list of references used, please visit ufv.ca/edi.

Decade of Peoples of African Descent: The United Nations declared 2015 to 2024 the Decade of Peoples of African Descent, with the goal to strengthen actions and measures for the full realization of the economic, social, cultural, civil, and political rights of people of African descent, and their full and equal participation in society. The operational framework themed "Recognition, Justice and Development" encourages states to eradicate social injustices, and to fight against racism and the racial discrimination to which peoples of African descent are still subjected to.

JANUARY

Alzheimer's Awareness Month: Each January, the Alzheimer Society promotes understanding of what people living with dementia experience in their day-to-day lives — their struggles, their successes, and their hopes.

Bell Let's Talk Day: This campaign was created in 2010 by the Canadian telecommunications company, Bell Canada, to raise awareness and combat the stigma surrounding mental illness in Canada. Millions of Canadians engage in an open discussion about mental illness, offering new ideas and hope for those who struggle.

Bodhi Day: This day, also known as Awakening Day, is celebrated by Buddhists of the Mahayana tradition, including in China, Korea, Japan, and Vietnam, as the anniversary of enlightenment of Buddha. The appearance of the morning star on this day is said to have been the moment of the Buddha's enlightenment.

Christmas Day (Eastern Christianity and Rastafarianism): On this day, some Eastern Orthodox Christians and Rastafarians (who observe the bible and traditions of the Ethiopian Orthodox church) celebrate the birth of Jesus according to the old Julian calendar, which is currently 13 days behind the Gregorian or Western calendar. It's observed as Ethiopian Christmas by those of the Rastafarian faith and is marked by a large vegetarian or vegan feast.

Epiphany: a Christian holiday commemorating the visit of the Magi, the baptism of Jesus, and the wedding at Cana. In Western Christianity, the feast commemorates principally the visit of the Magi to the Christ Child, and thus Jesus Christ's physical manifestation to the Gentiles. It is sometimes called Three Kings' Day, and in some traditions celebrated as Little Christmas.

Family Literacy Day: This day promotes the importance of reading and learning together as a family. Family Literacy Day originated with the ABC Canada Literacy Foundation and founding Family Literacy Day sponsor, Honda Canada.

Feast of the Nativity: Celebrated as one of the most joyful days of the Orthodox Church. The Feast of the Nativity of Jesus is also known as the "Incarnation of Christ" and is observed as the day that Jesus became a man and came into the world as the saviour.

Gurpurab of Guru Gobind Singh Ji: Sikhs celebrate the birthday of Guru Gobind Singh Ji, the tenth Sikh Guru through prayers at home or at the Gurdwara, which take place in the

month of December or January every year, as per the Gregorian calendar.

International Day of Education: This day celebrates the role of education for peace and development.

International Holocaust Remembrance Day: On January 27, 1945, the Auschwitz-Birkenau concentration camp—where more than one million people were sent to gas chambers and to their agonizing deaths during the Holocaust—was liberated. In 2005, that day was designated as an annual day for people all around the world to remember the victims of the atrocities of the Holocaust and reflect on the dangers of anti-Semitism.

Lohri: A traditional winter Punjabi folk festival, celebrated primarily by Hindus, Sikhs, and Muslims from the Punjab and surrounding regions to mark the harvest season in the northern part of the Indian subcontinent.

Martin Luther King Day: This day commemorates the important civil rights activist. He was a leader in the movement to end racial segregation in the United States. He was an advocate of non-violent protest and became the youngest man to be awarded the Nobel Peace Prize. Shortly after his assassination in 1968, a campaign was started for his birthday to become a holiday to honor him.

National Day of Remembrance and Action Against Islamophobia: On January 28, 2017, an act of terror on a Quebec City mosque took the lives of six people. This day honours the victims and expresses solidarity with the survivors of the attack and with Muslim communities across Canada and around the world.

Oshogatsu (Japanese New Year): Rooted in the Shinto (Indigenous or nature religion of Japan) tradition, this day is marked by visits to shrines and is the most popular shared national event in Japan. The essence of Shinto is the

Japanese devotion to invisible spiritual beings and powers called kami, to shrines, and to various rituals.

Ribbon Skirt Day: Celebrates the ribbon skirt traditionally worn by Indigenous women. Canada declared the first official day in 2023, inspired by Isabella Kulak, a member of the Cote First Nation in Saskatchewan, who faced ridicule for wearing a ribbon skirt to her rural school.

Tamil Heritage Month: Since 2016, this month celebrates Tamil heritage and culture, as well as the contributions of Tamil-Canadians to Canada. Canada is home to one of the largest Tamil diasporas in the world.

Thai Pongal: Following the solar calendar, this traditional harvest festival is observed by all Tamils in India, Sri Lanka, and other countries with a Tamil diaspora.

Twelfth Night: This day is observed by some Christians and is a festival marking the coming of Epiphany. It concludes the twelfth day of Christmas.

World Braille Day: This day is observed to raise awareness of the importance of Braille as a means of communication in the full realization of the human rights for blind and partially sighted people.

World Day for African and Afrodescendant Culture: Established by UNESCO in 2019, this day celebrates the many vibrant cultures of the African continent and African diasporas around the world, recognizing African and Afrodescendant culture as a rich source of the world's shared heritage.

World Religion Day: This day, started by the Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'í Faith, is an annual celebration of the teachings of unity found in all religions. The Bahá'í faith emphasizes universal equality and unity, and the value of all religions. It is celebrated every January on the third Sunday of the month.

FEBRUARY

Ash Wednesday: This Christian holy day marks the first day of the season of Lent, a 40-day period observed by Western Christians, of prayer, repentance, and self-denial that precedes Easter. It derives its name from the practice of repentance ashes that are placed on the foreheads of participants on this day.

Black History Month: This month was designated as a time to learn about the many important contributions of Black Canadians to the settlement, growth, and development of Canada, and about the diversity of Black communities in Canada and their importance to the history of this country.

Family Day: In most provinces of Canada, the third Monday in February is observed as a regional statutory holiday, typically known in general as Family Day.

Heritage Week in BC: Heritage Week offers a chance to explore heritage across BC and Canada and take part in programming that provides opportunities to learn and share about history, diverse cultural heritage and historic places.

Hobiyye: The Nisga'a new year signifies the emergence of the first crescent moon and begins the month Buxw-laks. Celebrations of Hobiyye are done by Nisga'a wherever they are located, but the largest celebrations are in Nisga'a itself and in areas with a large Nisga'a presence like Vancouver.

Human Trafficking Awareness Day: Canada's House of Commons proclaimed February 22 as Human Trafficking Awareness Day to help bring awareness to the magnitude of modern-day slavery in Canada and abroad, and to take steps to combat human trafficking.

Imbolc: As one of the four ancient Celtic Fire festivals, this day celebrates the Earth's regeneration and the increasing strength of God. Historically, it has been observed throughout Ireland, Scotland, and the Isle of Man.

Indian Control of Indian Education: In February 1973, the Canadian government gave official recognition to the policy statement of the National Indian Brotherhood entitled "Indian Control of Indian Education", which advocated that Indian parents enjoy the same fundamental decision-making rights about their children's education as other parents across Canada.

International Child Cancer Day: International Childhood Cancer Day is a global collaborative campaign to raise awareness and promote an increased appreciation and deeper understanding of the challenges faced by children and adolescents with cancer, the survivors, and their families.

International Mother Language Day: This day promotes the preservation and protection of all languages used by peoples of the world, and promotes unity in diversity and international understanding, through multilingualism and multiculturalism.

Isra'a and Mi'raj: Two parts of a Night Journey commemorating the Prophet Muhammad's journey from Mecca to Jerusalem, then his ascent into heavens. Muslims consider it both a physical and spiritual journey that was assisted by Allah.

Lent (Eastern and Western Christianity): This solemn Christian observance commemorates the 40 days that Jesus Christ spent fasting in the desert according to the Gospels of Matthew, Mark, and Luke, where he was tempted by Satan. It is observed by most Christian groups, but the days that are enumerated differ between denominations. Lent is a season of grief that ends with a great celebration of Easter. During this time, many

Christians commit to fasting, as well as giving up certain luxuries in imitation of Jesus Christ's sacrifice during his journey into the desert for 40 days.

Lunar New Year: This day is a celebration of the beginning of a new year on the traditional Chinese calendar. Marking the end of winter and the beginning of the spring season, observances traditionally take place from New Year's Eve, the evening preceding the first day of the year, to the Lantern Festival, held on the 15th day of the year.

Magha Puja Day: This day is one of the most important Buddhist festivals, particularly for followers of the Theravada Buddhist tradition that live in the South and Southeast Asian countries of Laos, Cambodia, Sri Lanka, Myanmar, and Thailand. It marks the day that Buddha addressed a gathering of 1,250 Arahants (enlightened saints).

Mahashivaratri: This day is a major festival in Hinduism dedicated to Lord Shiva, one of the major deities to whom Hindus direct their devotion. It is celebrated annually, and the name also refers to the night when Lord Shiva performs the heavenly dance. The festival is solemn and marks a remembrance of "overcoming darkness and ignorance" in life and the world. It is observed by remembering through chanting prayers, fasting, and meditating on ethics and virtues such as honesty, charity, and forgiveness.

Nirvana Day: This day, also known as Parinirvana in Mahayana Buddhism, is the celebration of Buddha's death when he reached total Nirvana at the age of 80. Local or regional customs may use a variation of this date. To mark this day, passages from the recitations of Nibbana Sutta or Nirvana Sutra describing Buddha's last days of life are often read, or meditation and visits to Buddhist temples and monasteries take place.

Pink Shirt Day: In 2007, when a student at their Nova Scotia school was bullied for wearing a pink shirt, two grade 12 students bought 50 pink shirts and encouraged their classmates to wear pink. In 2008, BC declared a day devoted to the prevention of bullying and promoting kindness and inclusion, which has become a nation-wide day of awareness.

Random Acts of Kindness Day: Founded by The Random Acts of Kindness Foundation, whose mission is to make kindness the norm™ in our schools, workplaces, homes, and communities. They work towards the goal by creating free content that promotes kindness toward others and teaches important social emotional learning skills to kids.

Setsunbun-Sai: This day, also called Risshun, is known as the bean-throwing festival and marks the day before the official calendar beginning of spring and the end of winter.

St. Valentine's Day: This day originated as a Christian feast day honouring an early Christian martyr named Saint Valentine. Through later folk traditions it has become a significant cultural, religious, and commercial celebration of romance and love in many regions of the world.

World Day of Social Justice: This day focuses on the plight of social injustice throughout the world and presses for improvements and solutions. Promoting human rights, removing artificial social barriers based on race, gender, or religion, and standing up for the rights of migrants, the disabled, and the elderly are among the observance's themes on any given year.

World Interfaith Harmony Week: This week celebrates the principles of tolerance and respect for others that are deeply rooted in the world's major religions. The day also calls for solidarity in the face of those who spread misunderstanding and mistrust.

MARCH

Ala: A 19-day fast observed by followers of the Bahá'í faith. Ala is the nineteenth and final month of the Bahá'í year, and the fast is observed in preparation for Nowruz. Those who are healthy and of age abstain from food and drink from sunrise to sunset.

Clean Monday: In many of the Eastern Christianity traditions, Clean Monday is the Monday that occurs seven weeks before Easter and begins the season of Great Lent in Eastern Orthodox Churches.

Disability Day of Mourning: The purpose of this day is to remember the victims of filicide — people with disabilities murdered by their family members. Vigils are held on this day in cities around the world.

Easter/Pascha: This day is a Christian festival and cultural holiday that commemorates the resurrection of Jesus from the dead on the third day of his burial following his crucifixion. It is a joyous holiday because it represents the fulfillment of the prophecies of the Old Testament and the revelation of God's plan for all of humankind, a defeat of death, and the hope of salvation.

Good Friday: Good Friday is a Christian holiday commemorating the crucifixion of Jesus and his death at Calvary. It is observed during Holy Week as part of the Paschal Triduum.

Hola Mohalla: This three-day long Sikh festival commemorates and celebrates a martial tradition established by Guru Gobind Singh Ji (the tenth Guru of the Sikhs), and either follows the Hindu festival of Holi by one day or coincides with it; Hola is the masculine form of the feminine sounding Holi.

Holi: A popular ancient Hindu festival, also known as the Indian "festival of spring", the "festival of colours", or the "festival of love". The festival

signifies the victory of good over evil. It originated and is predominantly celebrated in India but has also spread to other regions of Asia and parts of the Western world through the diaspora from the Indian subcontinent.

International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination: This day was proclaimed by the UN in 1966. On March 21, 1960, police opened fire and killed 69 people at a peaceful demonstration in Sharpeville, South Africa, against the apartheid "pass laws". This day is an opportunity for all people to renew their commitment to building a world of justice, equality, and dignity, where racial discrimination has no place.

International Day of Remembrance of the Victims of Slavery and the Transatlantic Slave Trade: For over 400 years, more than 15 million men, women, and children were the victims of the tragic transatlantic slave trade. In 2007, the UN designated March 25 as an international day to honour and remember those who suffered and died because of the transatlantic slave trade. The day also aims to raise awareness about the dangers of racism and prejudice today.

International Transgender Day of Visibility (TDOV): This day was founded by activist Rachel Crandall in 2009 as a day of celebrating trans peoples' contributions to society and recognizing the discrimination they face.

International Women's Day: This day celebrates the social, cultural, economic, and political achievements of women across the globe. Far from singling out women, the day focuses on unity, equality, and advocacy especially in a world where the differences and injustices between women and men are as great as ever.

Lent (see February)

National Indigenous Languages

Day: This day was established by the Assembly of First Nations (AFN) Chiefs-in-Assembly in 1989 to create awareness across Canada of the languages of the First Peoples, to build support for their preservation, and to honour the strength and endurance of the languages and cultures.

Nowruz (Persian New Year): This day is celebrated by millions of people around the world in honour of spring and the new year. While its origins are Zoroastrian and Persian, it has been celebrated for over 3,000 years by people living in today's Iran, Afghanistan, other parts of Western and Central Asia, including Turkey, the Balkans, the Caucasus regions, and by the Parsi (Zoroastrian) community in India. Nowruz is a secular holiday for many people and is enjoyed by people of several different faiths, but it remains a holy day for Zoroastrians, Bahá'ís, and some Muslim communities.

Ostara/Spring Equinox The word Ostara comes from the Anglo-Saxon goddess name, Eostre. Eostre represented spring, new beginnings, and the greening of the earth. Like many other spring celebrations in other cultures, Ostara symbolizes fertility, rebirth, and renewal, and also marks the beginning of the agricultural cycle when farmers plant seeds. This celebration of spring is present in many ancient customs and is observed by Wiccans and Pagans through meditating outdoors or by planting seeds.

Purim: In the Jewish tradition this day commemorates the victory over an oppressive ruler, as related in the Book of Esther. Observance begins at sunset of the previous day. It is celebrated through exchanging gifts of food and drink, donating to charity, sharing meals, and the public recitation of the Scroll of Esther.

Purple Day: Started in 2008 by then nine-year-old Cassidy Megan of Nova Scotia as a grassroots campaign

dedicated to increasing awareness of epilepsy worldwide. On this day, people from around the globe are asked to wear purple and spread the word about epilepsy. Diagnosed at age 7, Cassidy was motivated by her own struggles to create an international day for epilepsy awareness.

Ramadan/Ramzan: The most sacred month in the Islamic calendar is a period of prayer, fasting, and charitable giving is observed. Muslims observe this as a time of self-accountability, and observances involve family and community joining together in prayer. It begins the morning after the crescent moon is sighted. For the entire month of Ramadan (the 29 or 30 days) Muslims fast from dawn to sunset. Traditionally, the crescent of the new moon signifies the beginning and end of fasting during Ramadan, and while this continues, astronomical calculations are now sometimes used by some groups for more consistency.

St. Patrick's Day: This day is both a cultural and religious celebration of Saint Patrick, the patron saint of Ireland and the arrival of Christianity in Ireland. It is observed as a religious holy day, an official Christian feast day by the Catholic Church, Anglican Communion, the Eastern Orthodox Church, and the Lutheran Church. This day is a public holiday in the Republic of Ireland, Northern Ireland, and the Canadian province of Newfoundland and Labrador, and is widely celebrated across the UK, USA, Canada, Australia, and New Zealand and the Irish diaspora, as a celebration of the heritage and culture of the Irish.

World Down Syndrome Day: This day is observed to raise public awareness about Down syndrome and those who have this condition. The date of March 21 was chosen to symbolise the fact that Down syndrome results from the triplication of the twenty-first chromosome. The focus of the day is not just on the situation and needs of

those with Down syndrome worldwide but also on their valuable contributions to human society, respecting their rights, and ensuring their inclusion in all of human social life.

World Sleep Day: Sleep is essential to health, but measurable differences in sleep health persist across the world, reinforcing health inequities. World Sleep Day is an opportunity to promote sleep health globally.

Zero Discrimination Day: This day aims to promote equality before the law and in practice throughout all the member countries of the UN.

APRIL

Baisakhi, also known as Vaisakhi: This day, also known as Valsakhi, marks the Sikh new year and commemorates the formation of Khalsa panth of warriors under Guru Gobind Singh in 1699. Baisakhi is also an ancient festival in northern regions of India, marking the Solar New Year and celebrating the spring harvest.

Earth Day: This day is an annual event to demonstrate support for environmental protection. First held on April 22, 1970, it now includes a wide range of events coordinated globally by EarthDay.org including 1 billion people in more than 193 countries. On Earth Day 2016, the landmark Paris Agreement was signed by the United States, the United Kingdom, China, and 120 other countries. This signing satisfied a key requirement for the entry into force of the historic draft climate protection treaty adopted by consensus of the 195 nations present at the 2015 United Nations Climate Change Conference in Paris.

Eid al-Fitr: This 3 day festival is one of the two official holidays marking the end of Ramadan, the Islamic holy month of fasting. Eid is an Arabic word meaning "festivity" and Fitr means

"breaking the fast". It is the first of the Eids (feasts/festivals) in Islam. This holiday celebrates the conclusion of the dawn-to-sunset fasting for Muslims during the month of Ramadan. Observance begins at sunset of the previous day.

First Salmon Ceremony: Every year Stó:lō people along the Fraser River have a First Salmon ceremony to show honour and respect to the Salmon for giving its life to nourish them. The first one caught is cooked in the traditional way and shared with everyone present at the ceremony. The bones are then collected and placed back into the river with a prayer thanking Chichelh Siyám for the salmon. The purpose of the ceremony is to ensure that there will be plenty of salmon for all Stó:lō families during the fishing season to provide for their nourishment in the winter months. The annual First Salmon ceremony shows respect toward Stó:lō ancestors. Continuing Stó:lō culture and tradition will prove the existence of Shxweli in all living things great and small.

Global Youth Service Days: The largest youth service and civic action event in the world and the only one that celebrates and builds the capacity of all youth ages 5-25 to help our communities and democracy thrive by working together for the common good.

International Day of Pink: This day is dedicated to the cause against bullying, discrimination, homophobia, transphobia, and transmisogyny around the world. You can celebrate diversity by wearing a pink t-shirt and participating in activities in your workplaces, schools, and communities.

Laylat al-Qadr: The last 10 nights of Ramadan are considered the holiest nights of the year because this is when the Qur'an was first revealed to the Prophet Muhammad. Laylat al-Qadr is Arabic for "The Night of Power." Observances include praying, reflecting, and reciting verses from the Qur'an and giving to those in need.

Lesbian Visibility Day: This day showcases women-loving women, providing a platform for lesbian role models to speak out on the issues facing female-identified sexual minorities. This day, alongside all queer awareness days, is an integral part of moving towards an intersectional society where all are treated equally and fairly.

Passover/Pesach: This day is an important Jewish holiday that celebrates the exodus and liberation of the Israelites from slavery in ancient Egypt. It falls in spring on the 15th day of the Hebrew month of Nisan and is traditionally celebrated in the Land of Israel for seven days and for eight days among many Jews in the diaspora. It begins with Seder, a ritual meal where no leavened bread is consumed, celebrated with prayers, and symbolic foods. Observance begins at sunset of the previous day.

Ridvan: Ridvan is a twelve-day festival, known as "the king of festivals," that commemorates the beginning of the Baha'i faith and signifies the transformation of suffering and oppression into joy. The first, ninth, and the final day have special significance and are observed and celebrated through reflection, prayer, abstaining from work and taking part in gatherings, parties, and picnics. The First Day commemorates Bahá'u'lláh, the founder of the Baha'i faith, declaring that he was a Manifestation of God; the Ninth Day commemorates Baha'u'llah learning that he had been officially banished from the Ottoman Empire; and the Twelfth Day commemorates the day that Baha'u'llah left the Ridvan Garden and began the long and arduous exile to Constantinople.

Sikh Heritage Month: This month celebrates the contributions and aspirations of all Sikh-Canadians and helps to develop a greater understanding and appreciation of a rich, unique, and diverse heritage.

Vaisakhi (see Baisakhi)

World Autism Awareness Day: This day highlights the need to help improve the quality of life of those with autism so they can lead full and meaningful lives as an integral part of society.

World Health Day: This day marks the World Health Organization's (WHO) founding and is seen as an opportunity by the organization to draw worldwide attention to a subject of major importance to global health each year.

MAY

Ascension Day: This day is a Christian holiday commemorating Jesus Christ's ascension into heaven according to Christian belief and is observed primarily in the Eastern Orthodox tradition.

Ascension of Baha'u'llah: This day marks the anniversary of the death of the founder of the Bahá'í faith. Bahá'ís suspend work on this day. Observance begins at sunset of the previous day.

Asian Heritage Month: This month is an opportunity for all Canadians to learn more about the many achievements and contributions of Canadians of Asian descent who, throughout our history, have done so much to make Canada the amazing country we share today.

Beltane: One of the four ancient Celtic Fire festivals, Beltane celebrates the conjoining of the infinite potential of the Goddess with the life-sparking energy of the God in a sacred marriage, the basis of all creation. Wiccan and Pagan observance begin at sunset of the previous day.

Easter/Pascha (see March)

International Day Against Homophobia, Transphobia, and Biphobia: This day celebrates diversity and raises awareness of the human rights of LGBTQ2S+ people.

Jewish Heritage Month: This month is a time to celebrate Jewish culture, heritage, history, and contributions in Canada, which is home to the fourth largest Jewish community in the world.

Komagata Maru Remembrance Day: This day is observed to recognize the injustice of the Komagata Maru incident that began on May 23, 1914. The Komagata Maru steamship arrived in Vancouver with 376 passengers onboard including 340 Sikhs, 24 Muslims, and 12 Hindus from the Punjab region of India. Despite being British subjects, they were denied entry into Canada based on discriminatory and racist laws and were forced to remain aboard without sufficient access to medical aid, food, and water. After two months the ship was ordered to return to India, where 19 passengers were killed, and others were injured or imprisoned.

Moose Hide Campaign: An Indigenous man named Paul Lacerte and his daughter Raven were hunting moose near the infamous Highway of Tears, a section of highway between Prince George and Prince Rupert, BC, where dozens of women have gone missing or been found murdered. They had the idea to use moose hide to inspire Indigenous and non-Indigenous men and boys to become involved in the movement to end violence towards women and children. Together with family and friends they cut up the moose hide into small squares and started the Moose Hide campaign. Wearing moose hide signifies their commitment to honour, respect, and protect the women and children in their lives and to work together to end violence against women and children.

Mother's Day: Mother's Day is a celebration honoring the mother of the family or individual, as well as motherhood, maternal bonds, and the influence of mothers in society.

National Access Ability Week: This week is an opportunity to celebrate the valuable contributions of Canadians with disabilities and to recognize the efforts of individuals, communities, and workplaces that are actively working to remove barriers to accessibility and inclusion.

National Elizabeth Fry Week: The goal of this week is to enhance public awareness and education around the victimization and criminalization of women in Canada. The aim is to break down the negative stereotypes that exist around women who are imprisoned and institutionalized and encourages productive and responsible community responses to criminal justice matters from coast to coast.

Pansexual Visibility Day: This day celebrates the pansexual and panromantic community and serves to educate others on the community.

Red Shirt Day of Action for Accessibility and Inclusion: Red Shirt Day of Action for AccessAbility and Inclusion is a day when people across Canada come together and wear red to show their support for disabled people and their families, celebrate disabled Canadians, and to pledge to create a fully accessible and inclusive society.

Ridvan (see April)

Speech and Hearing Awareness Month: This month is dedicated to highlighting the importance of early detection and intervention in the treatment of communication disorders, and the role that our members and associates play in helping people to "Speak well. Hear well. Live well."

The Declaration of the Bab: Declaration of the Bab commemorates the day in 1844 on which he announced his identity as the Bab, or Gate, the herald of the new age. This is an important day for people of the Bahá'í faith and observance begins at sunset of the previous day.

The National Day of Awareness for Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls: This day was declared as a national day of awareness to raise concern for the crisis and to remind people on issues affecting Indigenous women. On this day and many other days, you will often see people wearing red in honor of these girls who have gone missing or have been murdered.

The World Day for Cultural Diversity for Dialogue and Development: This day provides an opportunity for people to deepen their understanding of the values of cultural diversity.

Victoria Day: Victoria Day is a federal Canadian public holiday observed on the last Monday preceding May 25 in honour of Queen Victoria.

JUNE

BC Seniors Week: Seniors' Week celebrates seniors and their many contributions — providing an opportunity to acknowledge and celebrate the integral part seniors play in communities across British Columbia.

Canadian Multiculturalism Day: This day is an opportunity for all Canadians to celebrate and appreciate the contributions of the various multicultural groups and communities to Canadian society.

Coqualeetza Indian Residential School Closed on June 30, 1940: Methodist missionaries opened a day school at Coqualeetza, Sardis BC in 1886. The following year, they added a residence for boarding students. A new school, built in 1889, burned down in 1891. Starting in the 1920s, the school began teaching Aboriginal handicrafts. The principal, in an effort to decrease the institutional nature of the school, introduced cottages for younger students and semi-private rooms for older students in the 1930s. When the school closed in 1940, students

were transferred to the Alberni school and the school building became the Coqualeetza Indian Hospital, a federally run tuberculosis hospital. The Coqualeetza Indian Hospital closed on Sept. 30, 1969.

Eid al-Adha: This day is one of the two official holidays celebrated in Islam. It follows Eid al-Fitr by just over two months and is also known as the Feast of Sacrifice or Festival of Sacrifice as it commemorates Ibrahim's willingness to sacrifice his son to God as an act of obedience to God. It is around this time that many Muslims perform the Hajj to Mecca.

Filipino Heritage Month: This month celebrates the culture, heritage, and contributions of the nearly one million Canadians of Filipino descent, one of the fastest growing communities in the country. It coincides with the Philippines Declaration of Independence from Spain on June 12, 1898.

Italian Heritage Month: Canada is home to one of the largest Italian diasporas in the world with more than 1.5 million Canadians with Italian descent. This month is recognized by the government of Canada and British Columbia as a time to showcase the culture, heritage, and contributions of Italian Canadians.

Juneteenth/Emancipation Day (US): While it has been celebrated annually in various parts of the country, it was officially recognized as a federal holiday in the United States in 2005. It is also known as Emancipation Day, Freedom Day, and Black Independence Day, as it commemorates the anniversary of the June 19, 1865, emancipation of enslaved African Americans in Texas, which was the last state of the Confederacy with institutional slavery. Celebrations include singing traditional songs and the reading of works by noted African-American writers, street fairs, cookouts, and family reunions. Some Canadians observe this day as well with celebration and continued activism.

Litha: On the longest day of the year, with gratitude, many Neopagans celebrate the sun's life-giving light and warmth. Wiccan and Pagan observance begin at sunset of the previous day.

National Indigenous History Month:

People across the country mark the month in recognition of the rights, histories, and extraordinary achievements of Indigenous peoples in Canada. The unique cultures and perspectives of First Nations, Métis, and Inuit communities are celebrated nationally and locally.

National Indigenous Peoples Day:

This day of celebration to recognize and honour the heritage, cultures, and valuable contributions to society by First Nations, Inuit, and Métis peoples. National Indigenous Peoples Day is the same day as the summer solstice and was chosen for its important symbolism to many Indigenous peoples.

National PTSD Awareness Day:

National PTSD Awareness Day is celebrated annually to raise awareness of posttraumatic stress disorder, a mental health problem that can affect anyone, regardless of socio-economic status, gender, age, nationality, or vocation.

Portuguese Heritage Month: This month celebrates the culture, heritage, and contributions to Canada of Portuguese Canadians. Canada is home to one of the biggest Portuguese diasporas in the world, with almost half a million people of Portuguese descent. It coincides with Portugal Day on June 10 in honour of the famous 16th century soldier-poet, Luis de Camoes and his famous epic poems.

Pride Month: Evolved out of the Stonewall Riots that occurred in June 1969, Pride Month is a global month of action and celebration for LGBTQ2S+ people.

St. Mary's Indian Residential School closed on June 30, 1984: Between the late 1800s and 1996, the Government of Canada and church organizations operated the Indian Residential School System. An estimated 150,000 First Nations, Métis, and Inuit children were removed from their families, homes, languages, and lands. These schools were part of Canada's official policy, which aimed to eliminate Indigenous cultures and through assimilation cause Indigenous peoples to cease to exist. The first school opened in Mission, BC (St. Mary's) in 1867; it was the final school to close in BC in 1984.

Summer Solstice: This day is the longest day of the year. Over the centuries, the June solstice has inspired countless festivals, midsummer celebrations, and holidays.

The Stonewall Riots: A series of spontaneous demonstrations by members of the gay (LGBT) community in response to a police raid that began in the early morning hours of June 28, 1969, at the Stonewall Inn in the Greenwich Village neighborhood of Manhattan, New York City. Patrons of the Stonewall, other Village lesbian and gay bars, and neighborhood street people fought back when the police became violent. The riots are widely considered to constitute one of the most important events leading to the gay liberation movement and the twentieth century fight for LGBT rights in the United States.

World Refugee Day: The purpose of this day is to draw the public's attention to the millions of refugees and internally displaced persons worldwide who have been forced to flee their homes due to war, conflict, and persecution.

JULY

Ashura: This day is marked by Muslims as a whole, but for Shi'a Muslims it's an important and solemn day of mourning in commemoration of the martyrdom at Karbala of Hussein, a grandson of the Prophet Muhammad. It falls on the 10th day of Muharram, one of the four sacred months for Muslims, and is preceded by nine nights of mourning.

Canada Day: Canada's national holiday is celebrated on July 1, marking the anniversary of Confederation in 1867.

Civil Marriage Act: In 2003, Ontario and British Columbia became the first two provinces to legalize the licensing of same-sex marriage. In 2005, same-sex marriage became legal across Canada. This change required that definitions for husband and wife be amended to spouse.

Dharma Day: This festival marks the beginning of the Buddha's teaching. It is a special day for Theravada Buddhists in many countries including Laos, Cambodia, Thailand, and Sri Lanka. It is seen as an opportunity to express gratitude and is usually celebrated with readings from the Buddhist scriptures and is observed by donating offerings at temples and listening to sermons.

International Non-Binary People's Day: This day shines a light on those who identify as non-binary and celebrates the rich diversity of the community. The term "non-binary" describes someone who does not identify exclusively as a man or a woman. Non-binary folks may identify as being both a man and a woman or as falling completely outside these categories.

International Non-Binary Awareness Week: This awareness week is dedicated to people whose gender identity doesn't sit within the dominant gender binary of male or female. Non-Binary people may identify

with neither or both genders, or vary between them. Terms such as gender neutral, pangender, gender fluid, and genderqueer are sometimes also used.

Nelson Mandela International Day: In recognition of the former South African President, this day commemorates Mandela's values and his dedication to the service of humanity in: conflict resolution; race relations; promotion and protection of human rights; reconciliation; gender equality and the rights of children and other vulnerable groups; the fight against poverty; and the promotion of social justice.

Pioneer Day: This day commemorates the entry of Brigham Young and the first group of Mormon pioneers into the Salt Lake Valley on July 24, 1847, where the Latter-day Saints community settled after being forced from Nauvoo, Illinois, and other locations in the eastern United States where members were persecuted for their beliefs. This day is marked by parades, fireworks, picnics, and other festivities.

St. Benedict Day: This day is the feast day of Saint Benedict of Nursia, who was proclaimed patron saint of all of Europe by Pope Paul VI and is recognized as the father of Western monasticism. The 'Benedictine Rule' became the norm for monastic groups in Europe.

St. Thomas Day: This day of feast for St. Thomas is observed on July 3 by most Christians across the world. St. Thomas was one of the Twelve Apostles of Jesus Christ according to the New Testament.

World Day for International Justice: This day unites all those who wish to support justice, promote the rights of victims, and help prevent crimes that threaten the peace, security, and well-being of the world.

AUGUST

Arba'een: This day is observed by Shi'a Muslims and is a day that commemorates the martyrdom of Hussein Ibn Ali, the grandson of the Prophet Muhammad. It occurs 40 days after Ashura and is observed through religious gatherings, prayer, and one of the world's largest annual pilgrimages attended by Shias and non-Shias alike.

Emancipation Day: August 1 was officially designated Emancipation Day in Canada by the House of Commons on March 24, 2021. It commemorates the actual day in 1834 that the Slavery Abolition Act of 1833 came into effect across most of the British Empire. However, this did not include the territories controlled at that time by the East India Company, Ceylon, what is modern-day Sri Lanka and St. Helen's, and slavery wasn't abolished in these regions until 1843. The history of the existence of slavery in Canada and the fact that Black and Indigenous peoples were enslaved on these lands has not been taught, and many Canadians are unaware of these truths. While Emancipation Day celebrates the strength and perseverance of Black communities in Canada, all Canadians are called to reflect, educate, and engage on this history to support the ongoing fight against anti-Black racism and discrimination.

Feast of the Transfiguration: This day is celebrated by various Christian communities in honour of the transfiguration of Jesus. This is a particularly important festival in Orthodox Christianity.

International Day of the World's Indigenous Peoples: Indigenous peoples have sought recognition of their identities, their way of life and their right to traditional lands, territories, and natural resources for years. Yet, throughout history, their rights have been violated. The international community now

recognizes that special measures are required to protect their rights and maintain their distinct cultures and way of life. This day is an opportunity to raise awareness of the needs of Indigenous peoples.

International Youth Day: This day is an opportunity to celebrate and mainstream young peoples' voices, actions, and initiatives, as well as their meaningful, universal, and equitable engagement. It brings youth issues to the attention of the international community and celebrates the potential of youth as partners in today's global society.

National Black Business Month: This is a time to recognize the invaluable contributions of black-owned businesses to our economy and support the need for their growth and success.

Tisha B'av: This annual fast day in Judaism commemorates a number of disasters that have occurred in Jewish history, but primarily it marks the destruction of both Solomon's Temple by the Neo-Babylonian Empire and the Second Temple by the Roman Empire in Jerusalem.

World Cancer Support Month: An opportunity to raise awareness about the importance of cancer support, serving as a reminder of the immense strength, resilience, and compassion that unite individuals, families, and communities in the face of this challenging disease.

SEPTEMBER

Labour Day: Labour Day is an annual holiday to celebrate the achievements of workers. Labour Day has its origins in the labour union movement, specifically the eight-hour day movement, which advocated eight hours for work, eight hours for recreation, and eight hours for rest.

Bisexual Awareness Week: This week was co-founded by GLAAD and BiNet USA to raise awareness of and celebrate the bisexual+ community.

Bisexuality Visibility Day: This day, also referred to as Bisexual Pride Day, recognizes and celebrates bisexual people, the bisexual community, and the history of bisexuality.

Culture Days: These days seek to eliminate barriers to access and participation, and stimulate understanding, appreciation, and exploration of arts and culture — so that every person in the country has a deeper connection with themselves, their communities, and Canada.

Ethiopian New Year: This day is the beginning of the New Year in Ethiopia and is celebrated by Rastafarians because Ethiopia is their spiritual homeland, and a place to which they want to return. During this time, the history of Ethiopia is remembered, and its importance acknowledged through Biblical passages and prayer. A Nyabingi session is also held to mark the occasion.

Fall Equinox/Mabon: Celebrated by Wiccans and Pagans, this day is a time of giving of thanks for the fruits of the harvest and a time to share their good fortune with others. As a time when dark and light are once again briefly held in perfect balance it is seen as a time to reflect on matters of balance within their lives and within themselves. Observance begins at sunset of the previous day.

International Day of Peace: This day is observed to strengthen the ideals of peace, through observing 24 hours of non-violence and cease-fire.

International Day of Sign Language: This day is a unique opportunity to support and protect the linguistic identity and cultural diversity of all deaf people and other sign language users.

Mennonite Heritage Week: Declared by the federal government on May 29, 2019, this week is an opportunity to celebrate the culture, heritage, and contributions of Mennonite Canadians. The presence of the Mennonite community in what is now known as Canada goes back to the late 1700s.

Mid–Autumn Festival, also known as Moon Festival or Mooncake Festival: This traditional festival is celebrated by many East and Southeast Asian people. It is the second-most important holiday after the Chinese New Year with a history dating back 3,000 years, when China's emperors worshipped the moon for bountiful harvests. The celebration is called Chuseok (autumn eve) in Korea and Tsukimi (moon-viewing) in Japan.

Orange Shirt Day/National Day for Truth & Reconciliation: Orange Shirt Day was first established in 2013 to honour the victims and survivors of residential schools, and to promote education and awareness of the cultural genocide perpetrated against Indigenous People for over a century. The Canadian government declared the day a federal holiday in 2021 as the National Day for Truth and Reconciliation, calling public commemoration of the tragic and painful history and ongoing impacts of residential schools a vital component of the reconciliation process.

OCTOBER

Installation of Scriptures as Guru Granth Sahib Ji: Sikhs across the world celebrate this day as the passing on of the Guruship to the Guru Granth Sahib Ji (Holy Scriptures) by the tenth Guru, Guru Gobind Singh Ji. The holy text is comprised of nearly 6,000 hymns of the Sikh Gurus and various early and medieval saints of different religions and castes.

International Day of Older Persons: Designated as a day to recognize the aging population and its implications

for nearly all sectors of society, including labour and financial markets, the demand for goods and services, such as housing, transportation, and social protection, as well as family structures and intergenerational ties.

International Day of Rural Women: This day recognizes the critical role and contribution of rural women, including Indigenous women, in enhancing agricultural and rural development, improving food security, and eradicating rural poverty.

International Day of the Girl Child: This day recognizes girls' rights and the unique challenges girls face around the world. It focuses attention on the need to address the challenges girls face and to promote girls' empowerment and the fulfilment of their human rights.

International Lesbian Day: This day celebrates women-loving women. The day originated in New Zealand and is believed to have begun in 1980 when a group of forty lesbians marched through Wellington Park on International Women's Day. International Lesbian Day is celebrated on October 8 because it is exactly six months after International Women's Day.

International Pronoun Day: This day seeks to make respecting, sharing, and educating about personal pronouns commonplace. Referring to people by the pronouns they determine for themselves is basic to human dignity. Being referred to by the wrong pronouns particularly affects transgender and gender nonconforming people. Together, we can transform society to celebrate people's multiple, intersecting identities.

Islamic History Month: This month recognizes the significant contributions the Muslim community has made to Canadian society. Muslim-Canadians enrich our lives and contribute to the prosperity and heritage of our country through their outstanding achievements in many fields.

Latin American Heritage Month: This month celebrates the culture, heritage, and contributions of Canadians of Latin American descent. Members of the Latin American community arrived here mostly in the late 20th century from all around Latin America.

Learning Disabilities Awareness Month: Draws attention to this widespread disability by generating grassroots activities that raise Canadian awareness of learning disabilities and the challenges faced by these individuals and their families.

LGBTQ2S+ History Month: Founded by history teacher Rodney Wilson in 1994. The month-long observation is intended to highlight the contributions of the LGBTQ2S+ community, their history, and struggle for civil rights in Canada and abroad.

Mental Health Awareness Month: According to the Canadian Mental Health Association, in any given year, one in five Canadians will personally experience a mental health problem or illness.

National Coming Out Day (NCOD): Started in 1988 by LGBT activists Robert Eichberg and Jean O'Leary, the day celebrates coming out for people from a variety of marginalized sexual and gender identities. October 11 was chosen as the day for NCOD as it was the anniversary of the 1987 March on Washington for Lesbian and Gay Rights in the United States.

National Day of Action for Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls: This day recognizes and commemorates the missing and murdered Indigenous women, girls and gender-diverse people, and calls to honour them through taking concrete action against violence that disproportionately impacts their communities.

National Disability Employment Awareness Month:

Established to increase awareness of the positive outcomes of hiring persons with disabilities in Canada and the positive contributions that employees with disabilities make to Canadian workplaces.

Navaratri: This festival spans nine nights and is celebrated every year in the autumn season. It celebrates divine feminine, the defeat of Mahishasura by Goddess Durga, and signifies the victory of good over evil. In some parts of India, people observe fasting during Navaratri.

Persons Day: Marked in 1929 when the historic decision to include women in the legal definition of “persons” was handed down by Canada’s highest court of appeal. This gave some women the right to be appointed to the Senate of Canada and paved the way for women’s increased participation in public and political life. Though this decision did not include all women, such as Indigenous women and women of Asian heritage and descent, it did mark critical progress in the advancement of gender equality in Canada.

Pregnancy and Infant Loss Remembrance Day:

An annual day of remembrance for pregnancy loss and infant death, which includes miscarriage, stillbirth, SIDS, ectopic pregnancy, termination for medical reasons, and the death of a newborn. It also serves to promote greater awareness and support for the estimated 1 in 4 individuals and families whose lives are irrevocably altered by the death of their children during pregnancy, at birth, and in infancy.

Rosh Hashanah: This day is considered one of the two High Holy Days in the Jewish religion, Yom Kippur is the other. Literally meaning “head [of] the year”, it is the Jewish New Year and celebrates the creation of the world, marking the beginning of the Days of Awe, a 10-day period of introspection and repentance that culminates in the Yom Kippur holiday.

Samhain: One of the four ancient Celtic Fire festivals, this day marks the beginning of winter and the dark half of the year. It is the also the Celtic New Year and is considered to be one of the most powerful times of the year by Wiccans and Pagans. Ancestors are honoured and loved ones who have died in the last year are mourned.

Sisters in Spirit Vigils: This day began as a research, education, and policy initiative led by Indigenous women. The goal was to conduct research and raise awareness surrounding the alarming rates of violence against Indigenous women, girls, and gender-diverse people in Canada. On this day, a vigil is organized to honour the memory of missing and murdered Indigenous women and girls.

Spirit Day: Each year, millions go purple to support LGBTQ2S+ youth in a united stand against bullying. Pledging to “go purple” on Spirit Day is a way for everyone — global and local brands and companies, world leaders, celebrities, neighbors, parents, classmates, and friends — to visibly show solidarity.

Stó:lō New Year: This starts around the full moon in October, when the Sts’ailes salmon run comes. Sqwéxem is the Ts’a’íles spring salmon, and it’s the arrival of that spring salmon into the Ts’a’íles River that begins the Stó:lō New Year.

Women’s History Month: This is an annual celebration of the outstanding achievements of women throughout Canada’s history.

World Menopause Day: World Menopause Day is held each year on October 18 to raise awareness, break the stigma, and share support available for improving health and wellbeing for those experiencing menopause.

World Mental Health Day: The purpose of this day is to raise awareness of mental health issues around the world and mobilizing efforts in support of mental health.

World Sight Day: The purpose of this day is to focus global attention on vision impairment and blindness. There is a different theme every year, with many taking the opportunity to both celebrate achievements to date and advocate for increasing attention towards eye care.

World Teachers’ Day: This day has become the occasion to mark progress and reflect on ways to counter the remaining challenges for the promotion of the teaching profession.

Yom Kippur: This is the year’s holiest day and a day of fasting for Jewish people. Also known as the Day of Atonement because of the central themes of atonement and repentance. On this solemn day, Jews traditionally observe with a day-long fast, confession, and intensive prayer, often spending most of the day in synagogue services.

NOVEMBER

All Saints’ Day: This day is observed by many Christians, including those following the Western and Eastern traditions. On this day, Christian Saints from across the ages, both known and unknown, are honoured through prayers.

Bandi Chhor Divas: This day, also known as the “day of liberation” or the “day of the prisoners’ release”, is an important Sikh celebration commemorating the day of the return of the sixth Guru to the holy city of Amritsar after he negotiated the release of 52 Kings who had been held for political reasons. This day is celebrated by the lighting up of homes and Gurdwaras, celebratory processions, and langar (community kitchen).

Birth of Bab: The birth anniversary of the Bab, which is heralded as the new age for Bahá’ís. The Bab’s revelation, which lasted only six years until his execution by a fearful government, nevertheless paved the way for the coming of Baha’u’llah. Bahá’ís

celebrate the births of both the Bab and Baha’u’llah, the two prophets associated with the Baha’i revelation one right after the other.

Birth of Baha’u’llah: One of the Bahá’í “twin holy days,” this day celebrates the birth of Baha’u’llah. It is one of nine holy days in the Bahá’í calendar that is celebrated by adherents of the Bahá’í Faith on which work is suspended. While there is no established tradition, the day is marked by prayers and devotional readings, and in the spirit of the Bahá’í, is to be open to all.

Constitution Express left Vancouver for Ottawa: The repatriation of the Constitution was a moment of crisis for Aboriginal people with the realization in 1980 that proposed versions to the “new” constitution would effectively end recognition of Aboriginal title and rights. The Constitution Express was a 3000-mile trek, led by George Manuel, then President of the Union of BC Indian Chiefs, to the seat of the federal government. The purpose of this journey was to tell Trudeau and his government that the Indian people have rights as the first inhabitants of this land, and that these rights have been guaranteed by treaty and historical agreement between Indian Nations and the British Government. This peaceful protest gathered over 1000 people nationwide along the way. As a result of this, and other actions, section 35, recognizing Aboriginal title and rights, was included in the constitution. The first Constitution Express left Vancouver on November 24, 1980.

Dia de los Muertos (Day of the Dead): This Mexican multi-day holiday involves family and friends gathering to pray for and to remember friends and family members who have died. It is commonly portrayed as a time of celebration rather than mourning.

Diwali/Deepavali: An ancient Hindu tradition dating back for more than 2,500 years, Diwali has incredible historical and unique meaning and

significance for many different communities within South Asia. Hindus, Jains, and Sikhs celebrate this festival. The word Diwali comes from the Sanskrit word deepavali, meaning “rows of lighted lamps” as a marker of change, hope, and a pathway from despair. Diwali is not homogenous, and each community celebrates with hope in mind, with celebration in mind, and with history in mind.

International Day for the Elimination of Violence Against Women: This day has been observed by women’s rights activists since 1981 as a day against gender-based violence. This date was selected to honour the Mirabal sisters, three political activists from the Dominican Republic who were brutally murdered in 1960 by order of the country’s ruler, Rafael Trujillo.

International Day of Consent: This is a day to focus on consent as a practice and a tool for changing lives. Consent is so much more than a simple yes or no. Consent is about how we connect, with ourselves, with each other, and with the world we make together. Consent is transformative.

International Day of Solidarity with the Palestinian People: This day provides an opportunity for the international community to focus its attention on the fact that the question of Palestine remains unresolved and that the Palestinian people have yet to attain their inalienable rights as defined by the General Assembly.

International Day of Tolerance: The purpose of this day is to strengthen tolerance by fostering mutual understanding among cultures and peoples. This imperative lies at the core of the United Nations Charter, as well as the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, and is more important than ever in this era of rising and violent extremism and widening conflicts.

International Inuit Day: At the 2006 Inuit Circumpolar Council (ICC), an international non-governmental organization representing Arctic peoples (the Inuit, the Yupik, and the Chukchi) living in Canada, Greenland, United States and Russia, proclaimed November 7th as Inuit Day to honour the birth date of ICC visionary, Eben Hopson, Sr. This day celebrates the culture and identity of all these peoples.

International Men's Day: This day celebrates the positive value men bring to the world, their families, and communities. It highlights positive role models and raises awareness of men's well-being.

International Transgender Day of Remembrance (TDOR): Founded in 1999 by Gwendolyn Ann Smith in memory of Rita Hester. TDOR is a day to honour the trans people who have died, most often from transphobic violence, and to confront systems of violence that are overwhelmingly faced by trans women of colour and trans sex workers.

Louis Riel Day: On this day, the legacy of Louis Riel is commemorated by recognizing his advocacy for the protection of the rights and culture of the Métis Nation. Louis Riel made significant contributions to Canada by defending Métis rights and providing leadership and governance for the Métis. We must also acknowledge the persistence of the injustices he fought against in his advocacy of Métis rights. The actions of past repressive colonial governments and policies were driven by racism and fear — fear of a different culture and a unique way of life.

Martyrdom of Guru Tegh Bahadur Ji: This day commemorates the martyrdom of Guru Tegh Bahadur Ji, the ninth of the Ten Sikh Gurus. He is remembered not only for his defense of the Sikh Faith, but also for willingly giving up his life for religious liberty of all faiths.

November: Originating in Australia in 2003, this men's health awareness movement has grown, inspiring support from all over the world. The movement engages men to accelerate change in mental health and suicide prevention, prostate cancer, and testicular cancer.

Multiculturalism Week: This week is recognized as a time to celebrate the contributions of our multicultural communities and to appreciate the way diversity enriches British Columbia.

National Indigenous Veterans Day: This day was designated in 1994 to acknowledge the many ways in which First Nations, Métis, and Inuit peoples contributed to Canada's war efforts and to our country's reputation as a peacekeeping nation. When these veterans returned home, many did not receive the same benefits and services as non-Indigenous veterans. In fact, it is only since 1995 that they and their families have been allowed to lay wreaths at the National War Memorial in Ottawa to remember their fallen family and friends.

Remembrance Day: A memorial day observed in Commonwealth countries since the end of the First World War to honour armed forces members who have died in the line of duty. In most countries, Remembrance Day is observed on 11 November to recall hostilities ended at the 11th hour of the 11th day of the 11th month of 1918.

Transgender Awareness Week: People and organizations around the country participate to help raise visibility around transgender people and address issues members of the community face.

Trans Parent Day: This day celebrates the life and the love between transgender parents and their children and transgender children and their parents.

Universal Children's Day: This day is devoted to promoting the ideals and objectives of the UN Charter and the welfare of the children of the world.

Veterans Week: During this week, Canadians honour those who have served Canada in times of war, military conflict, and peace. It is recognized as the week leading up to Remembrance Day (November 11).

World Day for Prevention of Child Abuse: This day was launched in 2000 by the Women's World Summit Foundation (WWSF), a non-governmental organization, along with an international coalition of advocacy organizations for women's and children's issues, with the purpose of mobilizing governments and societies to take action and prevent child abuse.

World Kindness Day: This day highlights good deeds in the community focusing on the positive power and the common thread of kindness for good which binds us.

DECEMBER

Boxing Day: Boxing Day is a holiday celebrated after Christmas Day, occurring on the second day of Christmastide (December 26). Boxing Day was once a day to donate gifts to those in need, but it has evolved to become a part of Christmas festivities, with many people choosing to shop for deals on Boxing Day.

Christmas: On this day, many Christians around the world celebrate the birth of Jesus Christ over 2000 years ago. This day is observed in various ways across cultures but the gathering of family and community at home and in churches, lighting candles, exchanging gifts, church celebrations, special meals, and the display of Christmas decorations are common.

Hanukkah: In the Jewish calendar, the first day of Hanukkah is on the 25th day of the month of Kislev. The festival is observed by lighting the candles of a candelabrum with nine branches, commonly called a menorah or hanukkah.

Human Rights Day: This day is observed on the day the United Nations General Assembly adopted, in 1948, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR). The UDHR is a milestone document that proclaims the inalienable rights which everyone is entitled to as a human being — regardless of race, colour, religion, sex, language, political or other opinion, national or social origin, property, birth, or other status.

International Day for the Abolition of Slavery: This day focuses on the eradication of contemporary forms of slavery, such as trafficking in persons, sexual exploitation, the worst forms of child labour, forced marriage, and the forced recruitment of children for use in armed conflict.

International Day of Disabled Persons: The purpose of this day is to promote the rights and well-being of persons with disabilities in all spheres of society and development, and to increase awareness of the situation of persons with disabilities in every aspect of political, social, economic, and cultural life.

International Migrant Day: This day recognizes the important contribution of migrants while highlighting the challenges they face. (United Nations)

Kwanzaa: This day celebrated by many North Americans of African descent in recognition of their heritage. Kwanzaa means first fruit in Swahili and is a harvest festival, and families exchange gifts and have African-style feasts. Seven-pronged candle holders are lit on each consecutive night for seven principles: unity, self-determination, responsibility, sharing, purpose, creativity, and faith.

National Day of Remembrance and Action on Violence Against Women: This day commemorates the tragic mass shooting that took place on December 6, 1989 at l'École Polytechnique de Montréal that saw the promising lives of 14 young women cut violently short.

National Human Rights Month: A time to honor the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, an international document stating the basic rights and fundamental freedoms to which all human beings are entitled. These rights include freedom from discrimination, the right to equality, and the right to be considered innocent until proven guilty.

Spiritual Literacy Month: A challenge to read at least one book on spirituality to broaden our minds or deepen our faith. Religion is organized and has specific beliefs that usually come with a strict set of rules. However, spirituality is more of just believing in something bigger than humanity and being empowered.

Winter Solstice: For many cultures around the world, this marks an important milestone. It's the shortest day of the year and the longest night of the year. It celebrates the longest hours of darkness and the rebirth of the sun and is believed to hold a powerful energy for regeneration, renewal, and self-reflection.

Yule: This day is observed by Wiccans and Pagans as the longest night of the year, where a night vigil is held and then at dawn, welcome the turning of the wheel and the return of the light. It is a time for ritually shedding the impurities of the past year, and for contemplating avenues of spiritual development in the year ahead.

Zarathosht Diso: An important day of remembrance in the Zoroastrian religion, this day is a commemoration of the death of the Prophet Zarathustra, the founder of the Zarathushti (Zoroastrian) faith.

EQUITY, DIVERSITY & INCLUSION