



Happy
Vesak Day!

Vesak Day

Buddhism

[veh-suhk](#)



Vesak, also known as Wesak Day, Buddha Purnima, Buddha Jayanti, Buddha Day, or Buddha's Birthday, amongst other names, is one of the most important and sacred holidays to Buddhists. It is a celebration of the Buddha's birth, enlightenment, and death.

Celebrations vary among Buddhist communities around the world. It is a day to reflect on the Buddha's teachings and to bring happiness to others. Followers will go to temple to listen to talks from monks, leave offerings of flowers, candles, and incense, and to symbolically bathe a statue of Buddha in water or sweet tea as a way to cleanse bad karma. Buddhists will wear special white clothes, read poems, decorate their homes and temple with lanterns, perform charitable acts, and avoid any killing of living things.

The United Nations declared Vesak Day an international public holiday in 1999.

This collection of information sheets on major holidays and cultural events is a joint partnership of the School of Information staff, the Office of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion, and the Office of the Provost. Facts have been vetted by U-M's Association of Religious Counselors (ARC), and other campus groups. Public feedback is welcome; please email DEIHolidayFacts@umich.edu.

Date

- Vesak Day varies each year and takes place on the full moon of the lunar month of Vesākha. This is usually in April, May, or June.
- Check the [Calendar Index](#) for Religious Holidays during the current academic year for the exact date.

Greetings

Wishing a celebrant a "Happy Vesak Day" is welcome.

Common Practices and Celebrations

- Acts of kindness and charity towards the unfortunate is expected from Buddhists on this day.
- Buddhists will go to their temples to decorate with symbolic items like flowers and lanterns.
- A Buddha statue is bathed in water or sweet tea to cleanse bad karma.

Common Dietary Restrictions

- Buddhists are encouraged to adhere to a vegetarian diet on this day.

Impact to U-M Community

- Link to [U-M Guidance Regarding Conflicts](#).

U-M Campus Resources

- [Maize Pages - Buddhist](#), U-M
- [Association of Religious Counselors](#), U-M

Information Sources

- [Vesak Day: Celebrating the life of Buddha](#), CNN
- [Wikipedia](#)
- [United Nations](#)

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