

Religious Observances



STRATEGIC PLAN
2022-2027



Dear CHCCS Principal,

This document was created with the assistance of various faith leaders from our Chapel Hill-Carrboro community. It is a tool to be used for planning/scheduling around major and/or significant religious observances that may not always be as well-known as others.

Some of the topics included are:

- ▶ Background information
- ▶ Significant religious observances
- ▶ Religious and cultural awareness and sensitivity

We owe those that took the time to complete the questionnaire a huge debt of gratitude.

thank you!

Community/Religious Dates

Below are dates which signify community/religious dates on the calendar. In an effort to help the district and its school better plan events while respecting important community and faith-based dates, below is a list shared by community leaders.

AUGUST 2022

August 1	Lammas	Christian
August 1	Lughnassad (Lammas)	Wicca/Neo Pagan
August 1	Fast in honor of Holy Mother of Jesus	Orthodox Christian
August 6	Transfiguration of the Lord	Orthodox Christian
August 15	Assumption of Blessed Virgin Mary	Catholic Christian
August 15	Dormition of the Theotokos	Orthodox Christian
August 29	Beheading of St. John the Baptist	Christian

SEPTEMBER 2022

September 1	Religious year begins	Orthodox Christian
September 8	Nativity of Virgin Mary	Christian
September 14	Elevation of the Life-Giving Cross	Christian
September 23	Fall Equinox	Wicca/Neo Pagan
September 29	Michael and All Angels	Christian

OCTOBER 2022

October 4	St Francis Day	Catholic Christian
October 4	Blessing of the Animals	Christian
October 5	Yom Kippur	Judaism
October 6	Saint Thomas Day	Orthodox Christian
October 10	Sukkot begins	Judaism
October 16	Sukkot ends	Judaism
October 18	St. Luke, Apostle & Evangelist	Christian
October 20	Coronation of Guru Granth Sahib	Sikh
October 26	Birth of the Bab	Baha'i
October 27	Birth of Baha'u'llah	Baha'i
October 28	Milvian Bridge Day	Christian
October 31	All Hallows Eve	Christian
October 31	Reformation Day	Protestant Christian
October 31	Samhain	Wicca/Neo Pagan
October 31	Deep Diwali	Jain
October 31	Sejiki's Birthday	Buddhism

NOVEMBER 2022

November 1	All Saints Day	Christian
November 2	All Souls Day	Catholic Christian
November 12	Birth of Baha'u'llah	Baha'i
November 15	Nativity Fast begins - ends Dec. 24	Orthodox Christian

November 24	Martyrdom of Guru Tegh Bahdur	Sikh
November 26	Day of the Covenant	Baha'i
November 28	Ascension of 'Abdu'l-Baha	Baha'i
November 30	St. Andrew's Day	Christian

DECEMBER 2022

December 6	Saint Nicholas Day	Christian
December 8	Buddha's Enlightenment	Buddhism
December 8	Immaculate Conception of Mary	Catholic Christian
December 12	Feast day - Our Lady of Guadalupe	Catholic Christian
December 16-25	Posadas Navidenas	Hispanic Christian
December 21	Yule	Christian
December 21	Saint Thomas the Apostle	Christian
December 22	Yule/Winter Solstice	Wicca/Neo Pagan
December 24	Christmas Eve	Christian
December 25	Christmas	Christian
December 25	Feast of the Nativity	Orthodox Christian
December 26	Zarathosht Diso (Death of Prophet Zarathushtra)	Zoroastrian
December 26	St Stephen's Day	Christian
December 28	Holy Innocents	Christian
December 30	Holy Family	Catholic Christian
December 31	Watch Night	Christian

JANUARY 2023

January 1	Mary, Mother of God	Catholic Christian
January 1	Feast Day of St Basil	Orthodox Christian
January 1	Shogatsu/Gantan-sai (New Year's)	Shinto
January 1	Feast of the Holy Name of Jesus	Orthodox
January 5	Twelfth Night	Christian
January 5	Guru Gobind Singh birthday	Sikh
January 6	Epiphany	Christian
January 6	Feast of the Epiphany (Theophany)	Orthodox Christian
January 6	Dia de los Reyes (Three Kings Day)	Christian
January 7	Feast of the Nativity	Orthodox Christian
January 8	Feast of the Holy Family	Catholic Christian
January 13	Maghi	Sikh
January 17	Blessing of the Animals	Hispanic Catholic Christian
January 18	Week of Prayer for Christian Unity	Christian
January 25	Conversion of St. Paul	Christian
January 30	Mahayana New Year 3 days	Buddhism

FEBRUARY 2023

February 2	Candlemas/Presentation of Christ in the Temple	Christian
February 2	Imbolc (Candlemas)	Wicca/Neo Pagan
February 2	Saint Brigid of Kildare	Christian
February 3	St. Blaze Day	Christian
February 3	Setsebun (beginning of spring)	Shinto

February 14	St. Valentine's Day	Christian
February 15	Nirvana Day	Buddhist
February 24	Saint Matthew, Apostle and Evangelist	Christian

MARCH 2023

March 1	St. David of Wales	Christian
March 14	Sikh New Year	Sikh
March 17	St. Patrick's Day	Christian
March 19	St. Joseph's Day	Christian
March 21	Norooz (New Year)	Persian/Zoroastrian
March 21	Naw-Rúz (New Year)	Baha'i
March 21	Ostara	Wicca/Neo Pagan
March 25	Annunciation of the Blessed Virgin Mary	Christian
March 30	Magha Puja Day	Buddhism

April 2023

April 8	Buddha's Birthday	Buddhism
April 9	Easter	Christian
April 14	Baisakhi (Vaisakhi)	Sikh
April 16	Theravadin New Year 3 days	Buddhism
April 21	First Day of Ridvan	Baha'i
April 23	St. George's Day	Christian
April 25	Saint Mark, Apostle and Evangelist	Christian
April 29	Ninth Day of Ridvan	Baha'i
April 30	St. James the Great Day	Orthodox Christian

MAY 2023

May 1	Beltane	Wicca/Neo Pagan
May 2	Twelfth Day of Ridvan	Baha'i
May 3	Saints Philip & James	Christian
May 4	National Day of Prayer - USA	Interfaith
May 24	Declaration of the Bab	Baha'i
May 27	Visakha Puja - Buddha Day	Buddhism
May 29	Ascension of Baha'u'llah	Baha'i

JUNE 2023

June 9	St. Columba of Iona	Celtic Christian
June 16	Guru Arjan Dev Ji martyrdom	Sikh
June 19	New Church Day	Swedenborgian Christian
June 22	First Nations Day	Canadian Native People
June 22	Litha Summer Solstice	Wicca/Neo Pagan
June 24	Saint John the Baptist	Christian
June 29	Feast Day of Saints Peter and Paul	Christian

JULY 2023

July 10	Martyrdom of the Bab	Baha'i
July 11	St Benedict Day	Catholic Christian

July 13	Obon (Ulambana)	Buddhist/Shinto
July 15	St. Vladimir the Great Day	Orthodox Christian
July 15	Saint Vladimir	Christian
July 24	Pioneer Day	Mormon Christian
July 25	St. James the Great Day	Christian
July 26	Asalha Puja Day (Dhamma Day)	Buddhism

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Resources:

The Interfaith calendar can be accessed via <https://www.interfaith-calendar.org/index.htm>.

More information about various faiths can be found by clicking on one below and via the link above:

[Judaism](#) ● [Islam](#) ● [Buddhist](#) ● [Hindu](#) ● [Christian](#) ● [Baha'i](#) ● [Zoroastrian](#) ● [Sikh](#) ● [Shinto](#)
[Jain](#) ● [Confucian](#) ● [Daoist](#) ● [Native American](#) ● [Materialism](#) ● [Secular Humanism](#)

[Definitions](#)

Baha'is of Chapel Hill



Curriculum & Instructional Connections

- The essence of being a Bahá'í is to love all mankind as one human family, and to consort with the followers of all religions in a spirit of fellowship. There are no established rituals in the Faith, so each family/community is free to observe and/or celebrate Holy Days in a manner of their choosing, so you're likely to encounter a variety of cultural expressions. Bahá'í see racial/cultural diversity as a point of strength rather than a cause for conflict. Bahá'ís have been (and continue to be) heavily persecuted in Irán (the birthplace of the Faith) and many other predominantly Muslim countries.



Celebrated Observances

- Ayyám-i-Há (Intercalary Days), days of spiritual preparation for the Fast, hospitality, charity, and gift giving; "Happy Ayyám-i-Há!"
- The Fast, the last month of the Bahá'í calendar is dedicated to the Bahá'í Fast, in which Bahá'ís between 15 and 70 years of age do not eat or drink from sunrise to sunset and set aside time for prayer and meditation. (there are exemptions for illness, pregnancy, nursing, extended travel, and arduous physical labor)
- Naw-Rúz (New Year), (coincides with the Spring Equinox each year); "Happy Naw-Rúz!"

There is a total of 9 Bahá'í Holy Days which work and school should be suspended; more information can be found here: <https://www.bahai.us/events/holy-days>.

1. Naw-Rúz: March 20 or 21
2. Festival of Ridván: April 20 or 21; April 28 or 29, and May 1 or 2
3. Declaration of the Báb: May 23 or 24
4. Ascension of Bahá'u'lláh: May 28 or 29
5. Martyrdom of the Báb: July 9 or 10
6. Twin Holy Birthdays: October 20-21 and as late as November 11-12
7. Day of the Covenant: Nov. 25 or 26
8. Ascension of 'Abdu'l-Bahá: Nov 27 or 28
9. Ayyám-i-Há or Intercalary Days: floats between Feb. 25 and March

Soto Zen Buddhism



Curriculum & Instructional Connections

- No special greetings at the temple but we often do standing bows as greetings.
- Different Buddhist denominations have different religious observances.
- Many Zen Buddhists are vegetarians.



Celebrated Observances

- Buddha's Birthday, Traditional - April 8, but we usually observe it at the end of April or early in May. We begin with a very short talk directed to the children indoors followed by a procession with the kids through the woods with balloons and bubbles, to an outdoor altar where there is a flower ceremony with chanting and each child pours water over the figure to bathe the Baby Buddha and offers incense.
- *Sejiki* Ceremony, October 31 - The Feeding and Nourishing of Hungry Ghosts. We have the "Hungry Ghost" Ceremony on a weekend evening near Halloween. Instruments are sounded to call up those who are departed but stuck in intermediary realms, as well as to call up the parts of ourselves who are never satisfied with who we are or what we have, and to put to rest unresolved issues with the departed. There is chanting and ritualized feeding of the Hungry Ghosts to help them on their way. We also chant the names of those we have done Memorial Services for during the past year. The children are invited to wear costumes.
- Buddha's Enlightenment - December 8. We observe this on the Sunday closest to December 8. This begins with a short talk directed to the children and includes chanting while circumambulating the meditation hall with the kids scattering dried flower petals. We have also incorporated candle lighting for the children, and they are given small packets of incense and a candle and sometimes pansies to take home and plant.
- New Year's Eve - December 31. Two periods of meditation, a chanting service of renewal of vows and precepts, followed by a fire ceremony outdoors where we write down habits, relationships, state of mind, etc., that we would like to release. Then we go outdoors and put the papers in a bonfire, along with the memorial cards from the past year, while chanting.
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- New Year's Eve - December 31. Two periods of meditation, a chanting service of renewal of vows and precepts, followed by a fire ceremony outdoors where we write down: things, relationships, state of mind, etc., that we would like to release. Then we go outdoors and put the papers in a bonfire, along with the memorial cards from the past year, while chanting.

Won Buddhism



Curriculum & Instructional Connections

- Different Buddhist denominations have different religious observances.



Celebrated Observances

- New Year Celebration Service (January 1st at 11am)
- Karen New Year – January 13, also known as the Kayin New Year.
- Vesak day or the birthday of the Buddha - Vesak day also known as Buddha Jayanti, Buddha Purnima and Buddha Day, is a holiday traditionally observed by Buddhists. “Vesak”, the Day of the Full Moon in the month of May, is the most sacred day to millions of Buddhists around the world. It is known Full Moon Day of Kasong in Myanmar the date of celebration Vesak day is April 8.
- Thingyan festival - It is a Buddhist festival celebrated over a period of four to five days, culminating in the New Year. The dates of the Thingyan Festival are calculated according to the Burmese calendar. The dates of the festival are observed as public holidays throughout Myanmar, and are part of the summer holidays at the end of the school year in April.
- Great Enlightenment Day Service (the nearest Sunday to April 28th, at 10am)
 - April 28th is the holiday for commemorating the birth of the Founding Master Sotaesan as well as the day of his Great Enlightenment after over twenty years of truth-seeking. It is also the day of celebrating the founding of Won-Buddhism and the common birthday of all Won-Buddhists, and hence is the day of origin for the Won Buddhist Community.
- Memorial Service (the last Sunday in May, at 10am, the day before Memorial Day) *
The Memorial Service is observed to honor the memory of the Founding Master, all sages, and lay or ordained Won-Buddhist members who passed away. And in this joint memorial service, we also offer prayers for our ancestors, family members, and all sentient beings.
- Spiritual Thanksgiving Service (Sunday following Thanksgiving at 10am)

Catholic



Curriculum & Instructional Connections

- The Catholic tradition is sacramental, and thus in a sense physical. Our physical presence among the community of believers as we celebrate the Mass is important. The touch of the priest holding bread that will be consecrated to become the Body of Christ. The smell of incense, the sound of bells. The sprinkling of Holy (blessed) Water. All of this physicality puts us in relationship with Jesus Christ, who Himself experienced presence in synagogues, touch as He healed, and so forth.



Celebrated Observances

- Christmas (December 25), celebrating the birth of Jesus Christ. For Catholics, the Christmas liturgical season extends from Dec. 25, through the Epiphany (January 6) to the following Sunday when we celebrate the Baptism of the Lord. Our common greeting is Merry Christmas.
- The season of Lent begins with Ash Wednesday, 46 days before Easter. Lent is a season of penitence, when we consider our relationship with God and neighbor,

and strive to repair any brokenness in those relationships. For those preparing to join the Catholic Church at Easter, Lent is a time of final spiritual preparation and commitment. On Ash Wednesday, ashes are applied to our heads as a sign of repentance, our desire to move away from sin and toward our God. Lent is a period of self-denial, including not eating meat on Fridays, and the tradition of giving up something that on its own is a good in our lives, so that our focus is kept more and more on God and our relationship and service to God and neighbor. There are various special times of prayer that are practiced, such as communal recitation of Morning Prayer and Evening Prayer, the praying of the Stations of the Cross, and celebration of the Sacrament of Reconciliation (Confession).

- Particularly in the Hispanic community, the celebration of Our Lady of Guadalupe is of great importance. This feast day is December 12, but the celebration begins the evening before with prayers, songs, and sharing of hot chocolate. On the feast day, we celebrate Mass followed by a fiesta. This feast commemorates the series of appearances of the Blessed Virgin Mary to a Mexican peasant named Juan Diego in 1531. She asked that a church be built on a hill called Tepeyac in Mexico, but the archbishop asked for a sign that the apparition was real. The Blessed Mother instructed Juan Diego to pick roses from the hill, despite the fact that it was December and the hill should be barren. Juan Diego found the roses and carried them in his cloak to the archbishop. When he opened the cloak and the roses fell out, the cloak was found to have an image of Our Lady emblazoned on it. This image is among the most revered in the Catholic tradition.

Christianity

The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints



Curriculum & Instructional Connections

- Members of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints consider themselves Christians. There are many misunderstandings about our faith and beliefs. Most members are happy to answer any questions or misconceptions about our traditions and beliefs.



Celebrated Observances

- Traditional Christian holidays like Easter, Christmas are important to member of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints. These days are spent with family celebrating the life of Jesus Christ.
- Sunday's are sacred days for members of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints. Members strive to make it holy by refraining from everyday activities and instead devote time with their families, attending church services and serving their neighbors.
- July 24 is known as Pioneer day. This day celebrates the arrival of Latter-Day Saint pioneers entering the Salt Lake valley in 1847. Nothing particular is done other than an occasional event organized by a local congregation.

Christianity ***Non-Denomination***



Curriculum & Instructional Connections

- I am a product of CHCCS and the few observances that we had when I was there have no doubt grown since I was a student. Which I thought made Chapel Hill/Carrboro pretty diverse. But, since it's grown tremendously there are probably some new ideas for me to learn also.



Celebrated Observances

- Christmas
- Easter

Christianity ***Baptist***



Curriculum & Instructional Connections

- The implementation of Juneteenth education and enlightenment.



Celebrated Observances

- Good Friday
- Easter Sunday
- Thanksgiving
- Christmas

Hinduism



Curriculum & Instructional Connections

- Two main celebrations:
 1. Saraswati Puja (worshipping goddess of education in February)
 2. Durga Puja (goddess of spiritual and moral strength)



Celebrated Observances

- Historically, language and culture were ingredients of religion. It was mostly local. We have to move away from the cult culture of the local religion to more global thinking of co-existence.

Islam Sunni



Curriculum & Instructional Connections

- Invite religious leaders from corresponding religious institutions for content presentation relating to associated religious or denominations as it may be more authentic of an experience in understanding other religions and cultures.
- Muslim places of worship are accessible for guided tours, including as part of field trips, and religious leaders may be reached for any questions without questioners needing to be worried about offending anyone.
- Muslim places of worship are open and do not require denominational membership, so the average Muslim may be found praying at the nearest mosque instead of particular ones only, and there is collaboration between Muslim organizations such that the setup is generally more as a Muslim community as opposed to a Muslim organization (separated by membership requirements, etc.). The instructors should reflect this reality in the lessons as opposed to presenting each local Muslim population as disparate relative to those in other localities in terms. It is common for Muslims to travel to other parts of the country or world and visit any mosque (though usually there is some difference between Sunni vs. Shi'ah setups and prayer formats) and greet anyone with the common greeting of "peace be upon you" and feel at home.



Celebrated Observances

- Sunni + Shi'a: Days off request is for the two days of 'Eid (al-Fitr and al-Adha); other days are for consideration of activities and awareness of important religious events/times
- Ramadhaan [commonly spelled Ramadan] (fasting from food and water from dawn to sunset; students may need alternatives to some physical activities during gym/PE, for example)
- Greeting: Ramadhaan (pronounced "Rama-dhaan") Mubaarak (each "a" or "aa" is pronounced similar to the first "a" in "balsamic" [vinegar], and "dh" is pronounced as a soft d sound with the tongue flat and lips rounded)
- 'Eid al-Fitr (holiday the day after Ramadhaan ends; no fasting but congregational prayer and gatherings due to which students may miss school)
- Greeting: 'Eid Mubaarak ("aa" is pronounced elongated similar to the first "a" in "balsamic" [vinegar])
- Ramadhaan [commonly spelled Ramadan]
- Greeting: "Ramadhaan Mubaarak"
- 'Eid al-Fitr
- Greeting: "'Eid Mubaarak"
- Day of 'Arafah (the day before 'Eid al-Adha; many may be fasting on this day and may need accommodations for physical activities or whatever may make them thirsty or hungry).
- 'Eid al-Adha [commonly spelled Eid al-Adha] (this is the 10th day of the lunar month within which the pilgrimage takes place; this day is the ending of the

pilgrimage; congregational prayers and gatherings due to which students may miss school)

- Greeting: "'Eid Mubaarak"
- Day of 'Arafah
- 'Eid al-Adhhaa
- Greeting: 'Eid (pronounced "eed") Mubaarak ("aa" is pronounced elongated similar to the first "a" in "balsamic" [vinegar])
- Day of 'Aashuura [commonly spelled Ashura] (the day Moses and his people were saved from the Pharaoh; Muslims typically fast this day and either the day after or the day before, so physical activity considerations are needed)
- Shi'a Only:
 - Days of Mourning due to martyrdom of Hussain ibn Ali ibn Abi Talib, the grandson of Prophet Muhammad (may peace, blessings, and mercy of God be upon him and his family and companions)

Judaism



Curriculum & Instructional Connections

- Judaism, the oldest of the three monotheistic faiths, is the religion and way of life of the Jewish people. The basic tenets of Judaism are derived from the Torah, the first five books of the Bible and a rich history of rabbinic interpretation.
- The most important teaching and tenet of Judaism is that there is one God, incorporeal and eternal. We are to reflect God's presence by living lives of loving-kindness, justice and compassion. All people are created in the image of God and deserve to be treated with dignity and respect.
- Passover 2021 begins evening of March 27 and ends in the evening of April 4
- Passover 2022 begins evening of April 15 and ends the evening of April 23rd
- Passover 2023 begins the evening of April 5 and ends the evening of April 13th.
- Passover, or Pesach in Hebrew, commemorates the Exodus from Egypt. The main themes of Passover are freedom, redemption and the obligation to fight oppression in our own time. Centered on the family or communal celebration of the Seder (ritual meal), Passover is one of the most beloved and widely observed of all Jewish holidays.
- Because the Israelites had no time to let their bread rise as they hurriedly left Egypt, Jewish tradition forbids eating (or even possessing) any food that contains leavened grains. While Seders are held on the first two nights of the Holiday, Passover lasts for eight full days. During that time no leavened foods (chametz) are eaten. There is much that is beautiful and life affirming about the Jewish tradition and many positive contributions that American Jews have made to society. Unfortunately, students and families do experience antisemitic comments by fellow students and teachers every year as well as messaging some subtle and some less so that being Jewish is to be an outsider in the school community.
- Customs:

- Holding a Seder with family, friends and community to tell the story of the Exodus and Redemption the first two evenings of the Festival
- Not eating anything with leavened grains
- Eating Matzah – the unleavened bread that reminds us of our oppression and our redemption and our obligation to feed the hungry.
- Greetings:
 - Happy Passover
 - Chag Pesach Sameach v'Kasher (to a joyous and Kosher Passover)
- The rise of white Nationalism (which has at its animating core anti-Semitism), attacks against the Jewish community (currently the greatest target of violent religious hate crimes), and the scapegoating of the Jews by elected officials are all troubling reminders that anti-Semitism is very real in American culture. This reality has an impact on Jewish students.
- Teachers should endeavor to be sensitive to this reality when presenting information about Hitler, World War II and the Holocaust. Also, information about Judaism should go beyond this dark time in Jewish history and point to the resilience of the Jewish people and the positive contributions of the Jewish people to society.

Celebrated Observances



- Rosh Hashanah
- The Jewish new year, is both a time of rejoicing and of serious introspection, a time to celebrate the completion of another year while also taking stock of one's life. The two days of Rosh Hashanah usher in the Ten Days of Repentance also known as the Days of Awe, which culminate in the major fast day of Yom Kippur, the Day of Atonement.
- On Rosh Hashanah and the month leading up to the Holiday we blow the shofar, a ram's horn that makes a trumpet-like sound. The shofar is like a "wake up" call" to help us focus intensely on Teshuvah – repentance -- returning to our highest selves, turning to others to ask for and grant forgiveness and turning to God in compassion.
- Greetings for Rosh Hashanah: L'shanah Tovah
- Customs: Festive meals, communal prayer in the evening as well in the morning lasting into early afternoon, doing no work, hearing the shofar, and eating apples dipped in honey to represent a sweet New Year.
- Yom Kippur
 - Yom Kippur, a day of collective confession, fasting and prayer is the most solemn and sacred day of the Jewish calendar. It is called the "Sabbath of Sabbaths" and all forms of work (except that involved in saving a life) are prohibited on this day.
- The fast of Yom Kippur begins in the evening and lasts 25 hours. It is a complete fast from all food and drink. Prayer services begin in the evening, resume the next morning and last all day into the evening. Students observing Yom Kippur will not attend school or be able to do any school work on that day.
- Customs: Fasting from all food and drink, communal prayer, turning to others to ask for and grant forgiveness, turning to God for forgiveness.

- Greetings:
 - May you have a meaningful Fast or May you have a meaningful Yom Kippur
- G'mar chatimah Tovah (May you have a good sealing in the Book of Life).
- Passover
 - Passover, or Pesach in Hebrew, commemorates the Exodus from Egypt. The main themes of Passover are freedom, redemption and the obligation to fight oppression in our own time. Centered on the family or communal celebration of the Seder (ritual meal), Passover is one of the most beloved and widely observed of all Jewish holidays.
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Sikhism



Curriculum & Instructional Connections

- Sikh Faith originates from India, and is a small minority in every country, including India itself (Sikhs are less than 2% of total Indian population)
- Church and State should be separate! BUT if prayer from one faith group is allowed then all should be allowed.
- Sikhs do not cut hair, students will often have long hair wrapped into a turban. They have a distinct appearance which often can lead to hurtful remarks. Men and women who serve in the military or law enforcement often have to request exemptions. Chapel Hill Police Department currently has a Sikh police officer.
- Many Sikhs are vegetarians – however, many are not. Eggs are also often off the menu.
- Primary Sikh teaching is to regard all human beings equally; therefore, an observant Sikh will treat all of his/her classmates with equal regard no matter what their background.

Celebrated Observances

- Vaisakhi: April 14 - 15. On this day (original dates are March 27, 1469 and March 30th, 1699) our First Guru, the founder of the Sikh Faith, was born. His name was Guru Nanak. Then in 1699, on Guru Nanak's Birth, our 10th Guru created/revealed a "nation" called the Khalsa in an elaborate ceremony. The Khalsa represents all the values that Guru Nanak taught his followers. We refer to the day as Vaisakhi Day or Khalsa Day. The shift in dates over the years is due to the miss-match of western and Indian calendars. There are no particular rituals; however, we celebrate this day with gatherings at local Gurudwaras or families as time and schedules permit.
- Martyrdom (Shahidi) of Guru Arjan Dev Ji - June 16th. In 1606, our 5th Guru was tortured to death for not accepting the ruling faith, Islam. We celebrate this each summer to remind ourselves to be faithful to our principles and our own identity. The issue isn't about one faith against another but about the right to worship the way you choose - Freedom of Religion! Once again there are no rituals other than to gather as a congregation.
- Coronation of Guru Granth Saheb Ji as the Guru - Oct 20. In Sikh faith, Word is the Guru - the savior, messiah, prophet, God, all rolled into one! "Granth" is a text, a book. The words of our Gurus were written by them and our 10th Guru compiled all of the writings into one final volume. The Granth was entitled as our Guru on Oct 20 1708. From that day onwards, we take our guidance from Guru Granth, our eternal Guru.