



Celebrating religious festivals, Eid, Easter and Passover at Highlands School

Spring religious festivals

During the month of March and April 2025, there are three important religious festivals



Similarities between Judaism, Christianity and Islam

These three religions are all connected.

- They all believe that their religion can be traced back to the prophet Abraham/Ibrahim who devoted himself to one God.
- Judaism started in around 2,000BC, making it the oldest of the three religions.
- Christianity followed 2,000 years after Judaism.
- Islam is the youngest of the three religions and started in probably 610CE.
- They all have some connection to Jesus.
- Jesus was Jewish. He started his own new way of practicing Judaism and this later became its own religion now known as Christianity.
- The Qur'an (the Muslim holy book) states that Jesus (Isa) is a prophet.
- The Torah is the Jewish holy book, but it is also the first five books of the Bible.



Eid

Eid-ul-Fitr occurs at the end of Ramadan. It is a joyful festival of thanksgiving to Allah and celebrates the fact that Muslims have completed the month of fasting (Ramadan)

At Eid ul Fitr a special zakah is collected - this is a percentage of your earnings to help the poor. Eid is important for community togetherness.

During Eid, one of the most common things you'll hear people say to one another is "Eid Mubarak" which means "blessed Eid" and is a way of expressing celebration.

This year Eid took place on Sunday 30th March - Monday 31st March.





Easter - Christianity

Easter is the most important festival in the Christian calendar. It celebrates Jesus' resurrection (rising from the dead), three days after he was crucified.

When is Easter? This year, Easter is celebrated on the following days.

- From 18th - 21st April.
- 18th April - Good Friday (when Jesus was crucified).
- 20th April - Easter Sunday (when Jesus resurrected).

The week leading up Easter is called Holy Week. Churches hold special services during this week to commemorate important events, e.g. Palm Sunday, Maundy Thursday, Good Friday and Easter Sunday.

Easter marks the end of Lent - the 40 days when Jesus went into the desert to fast and was tempted by the devil.

Easter is important to Christians because they believe that when Jesus died on the cross, he sacrificed his life for the sins of humanity. This is why he is seen as a 'Saviour' to Christians.

Christians believe that if they believe in Jesus, as forgiveness for their sins and follow his teachings, then they will go to heaven.





Orthodox Easter

Orthodox Christians, including those in the Greek Orthodox Church, often celebrate Easter on a different date than most of the Western World. This is because they follow a different calendar to determine when Easter should be observed. However, this year, both Orthodox and Western Christians will celebrate Easter on the same date.

Orthodox Easter commemorates the resurrection of Jesus Christ after his crucifixion. A key part of the celebration involves greeting friends and family with the phrase "Christos Anesti," which means "Christ is Risen" in Greek.

One of the most cherished traditions is the breaking of red-dyed eggs, symbolising the new life brought through Christ's resurrection. The red colour represents the blood of Jesus shed on the cross. Eggs have long been a symbol of new life, and early Christians used them to signify the resurrection.

This year, Orthodox Easter falls on Sunday, 20th April.





Passover - Judaism

During the festival of Passover, Jewish people remember when they were Israelite slaves in Ancient Egypt, and God freed them to make their journey to the promised land.

Moses was the prophet that God chose to lead the Israelite slaves out of Egypt.

This year, Passover runs from 12th April - 20th April.

Jewish people celebrate Passover by having a special meal on the evening before Passover begins. This is known as Seder night.

During the meal, families sing songs, say prayers, and retell the story - all of which are about the Israelite (Jewish) exodus (departure) from slavery in ancient Egypt.

There is a special plate on the table with foods which symbolise the Passover story.

Passover lasts for eight days and during this time, Jewish people should not eat bread or anything that contains yeast. Instead, they eat a thin, cracker type of bread called Matza.

This is because in the Torah, it says when the Israelites escaped slavery in Egypt, they did not have enough time to bake proper bread for their long journey, and instead they had unleavened bread (bread that has not risen).





Easter key messages

New life

Forgiveness

Redemption

Passover key messages

**God's
benevolence**

Freedom

**Human
rights**