

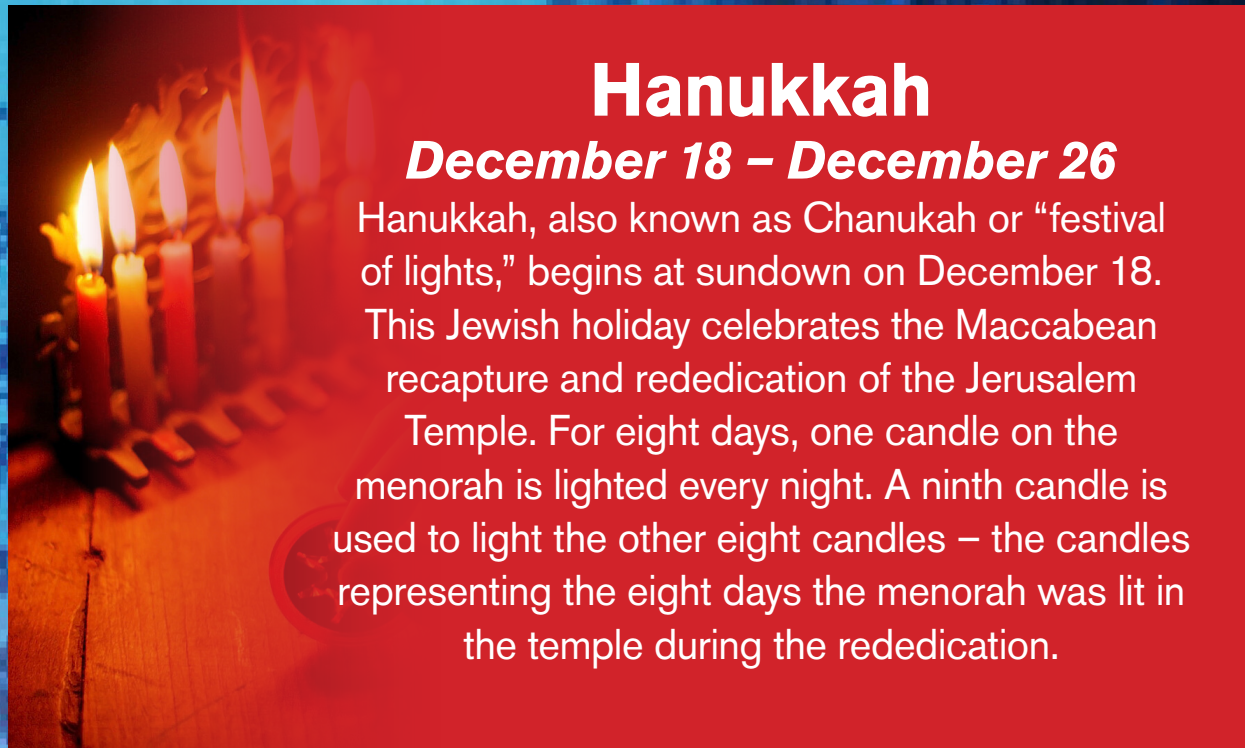
CELEBRATING THE 2022 HOLIDAY SEASON

There are many holidays and religious observances during the month of December. Here are just some that may be celebrated by your colleagues.

Hanukkah

December 18 – December 26

Hanukkah, also known as Chanukah or "festival of lights," begins at sundown on December 18. This Jewish holiday celebrates the Maccabean recapture and rededication of the Jerusalem Temple. For eight days, one candle on the menorah is lighted every night. A ninth candle is used to light the other eight candles – the candles representing the eight days the menorah was lit in the temple during the rededication.



Advent

**November 27 -
January 7**

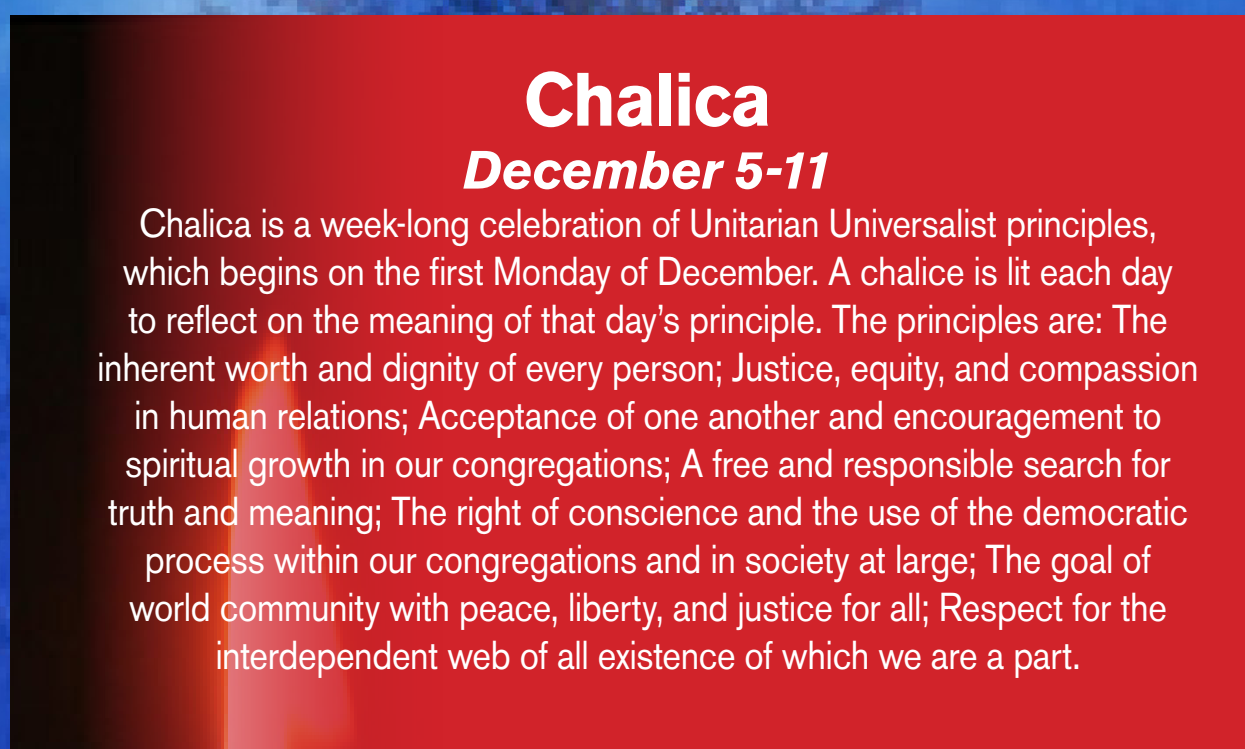
Advent is a Christian observance. It is seen as the time to prepare and celebrate the birth of Jesus Christ and the second coming of Christ.



Chalica

December 5-11

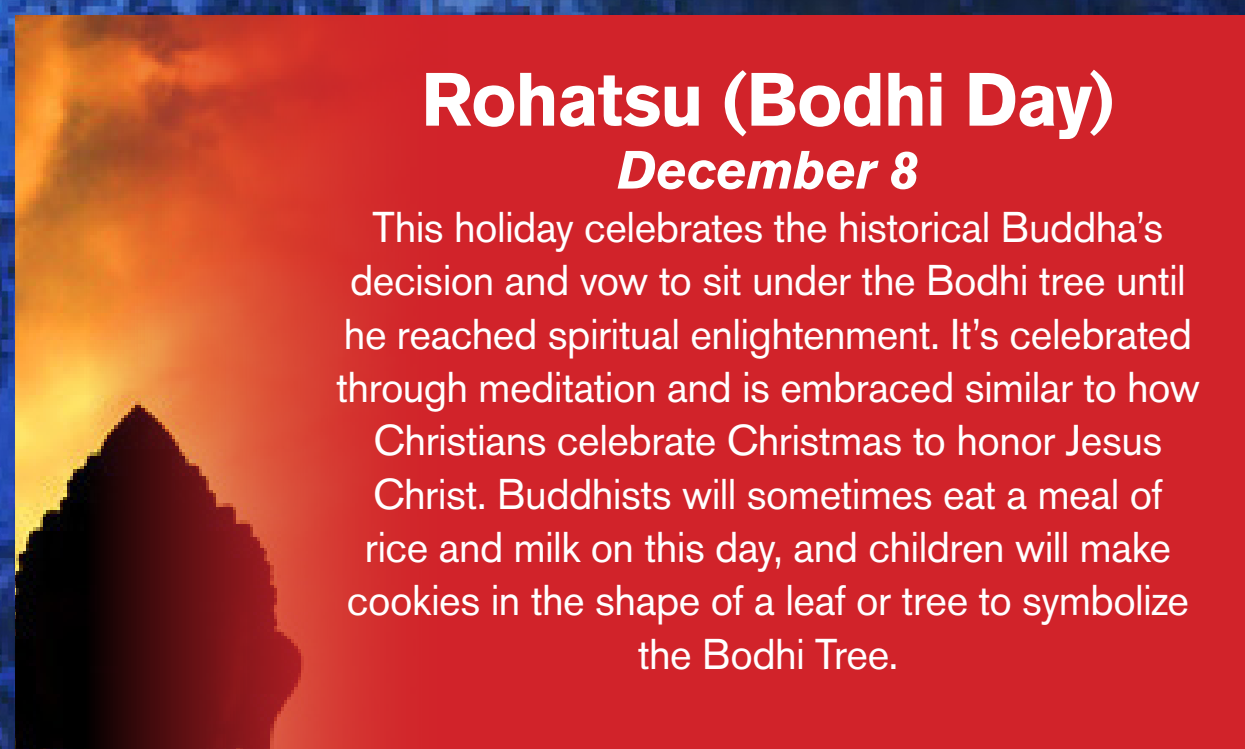
Chalica is a week-long celebration of Unitarian Universalist principles, which begins on the first Monday of December. A chalica is lit each day to reflect on the meaning of that day's principle. The principles are: The inherent worth and dignity of every person; Justice, equity, and compassion in human relations; Acceptance of one another and encouragement to spiritual growth in our congregations; A free and responsible search for truth and meaning; The right of conscience and the use of the democratic process within our congregations and in society at large; The goal of world community with peace, liberty, and justice for all; Respect for the interdependent web of all existence of which we are a part.



Rohatsu (Bodhi Day)

December 8

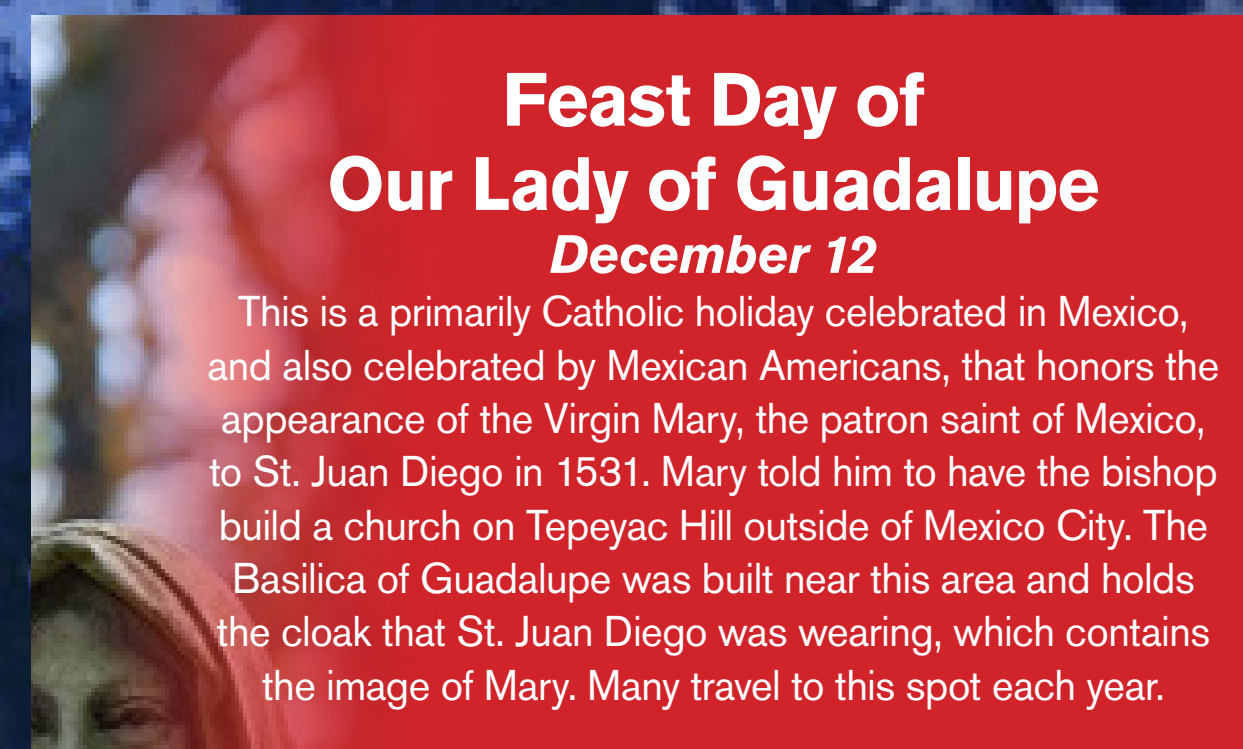
This holiday celebrates the historical Buddha's decision and vow to sit under the Bodhi tree until he reached spiritual enlightenment. It's celebrated through meditation and is embraced similar to how Christians celebrate Christmas to honor Jesus Christ. Buddhists will sometimes eat a meal of rice and milk on this day, and children will make cookies in the shape of a leaf or tree to symbolize the Bodhi Tree.



Feast Day of Our Lady of Guadalupe

December 12

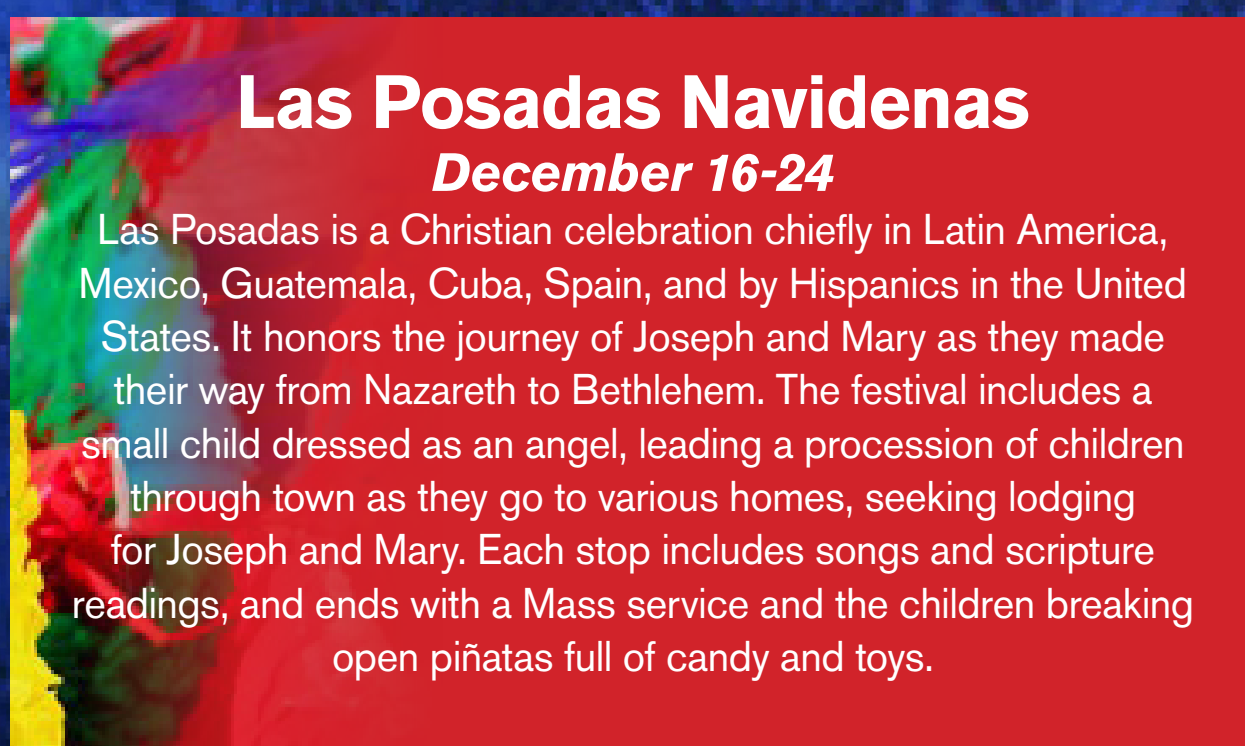
This is a primarily Catholic holiday celebrated in Mexico, and also celebrated by Mexican Americans, that honors the appearance of the Virgin Mary, the patron saint of Mexico, to St. Juan Diego in 1531. Mary told him to have the bishop build a church on Tepeyac Hill outside of Mexico City. The Basilica of Guadalupe was built near this area and holds the cloak that St. Juan Diego was wearing, which contains the image of Mary. Many travel to this spot each year.



Las Posadas Navidenas

December 16-24

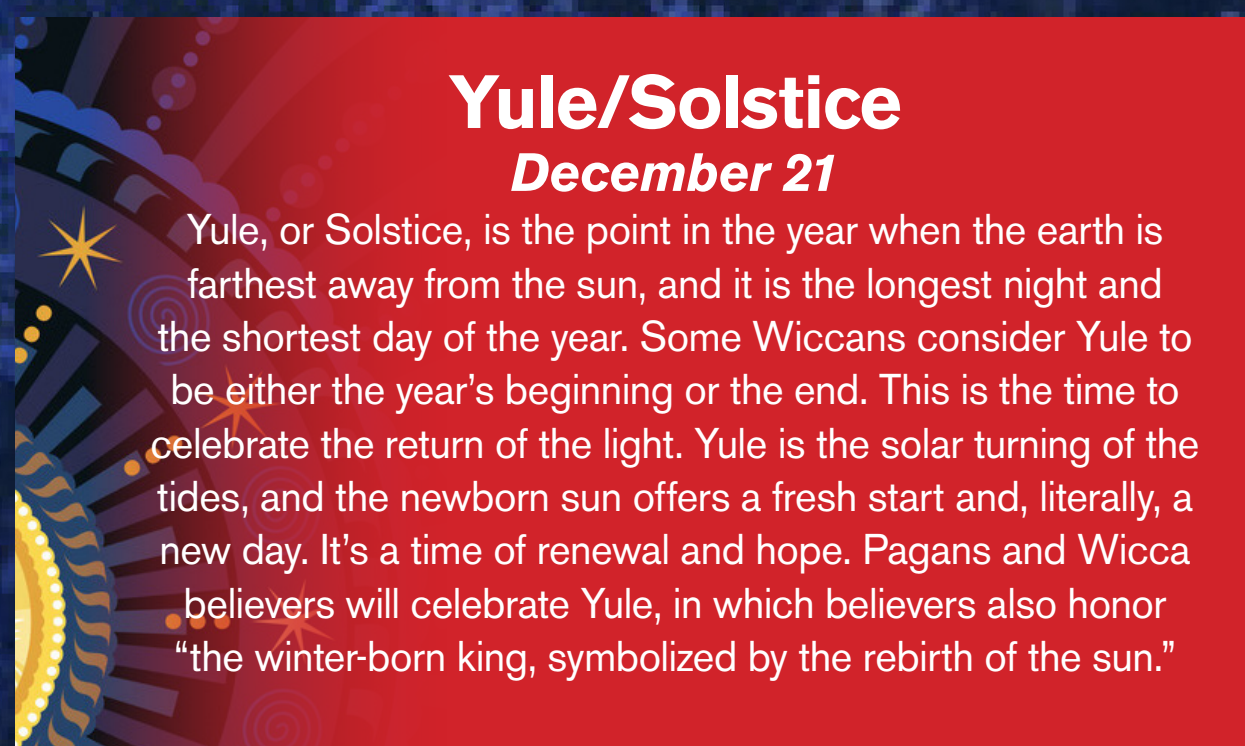
Las Posadas is a Christian celebration chiefly in Latin America, Mexico, Guatemala, Cuba, Spain, and by Hispanics in the United States. It honors the journey of Joseph and Mary as they made their way from Nazareth to Bethlehem. The festival includes a small child dressed as an angel, leading a procession of children through town as they go to various homes, seeking lodging for Joseph and Mary. Each stop includes songs and scripture readings, and ends with a Mass service and the children breaking open piñatas full of candy and toys.



Yule/Solstice

December 21

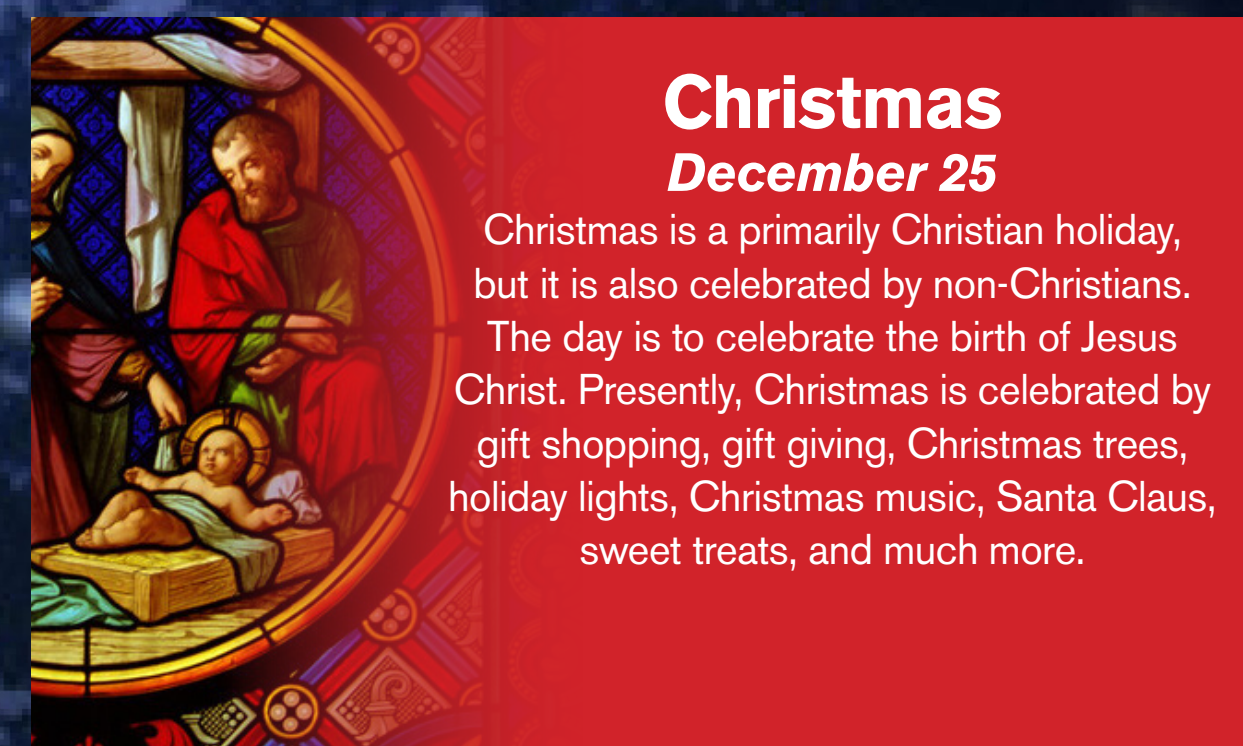
Yule, or Solstice, is the point in the year when the earth is farthest away from the sun, and it is the longest night and the shortest day of the year. Some Wiccans consider Yule to be either the year's beginning or the end. This is the time to celebrate the return of the light. Yule is the solar turning of the tides, and the newborn sun offers a fresh start and, literally, a new day. It's a time of renewal and hope. Pagans and Wicca believers will celebrate Yule, in which believers also honor "the winter-born king, symbolized by the rebirth of the sun."



Christmas

December 25

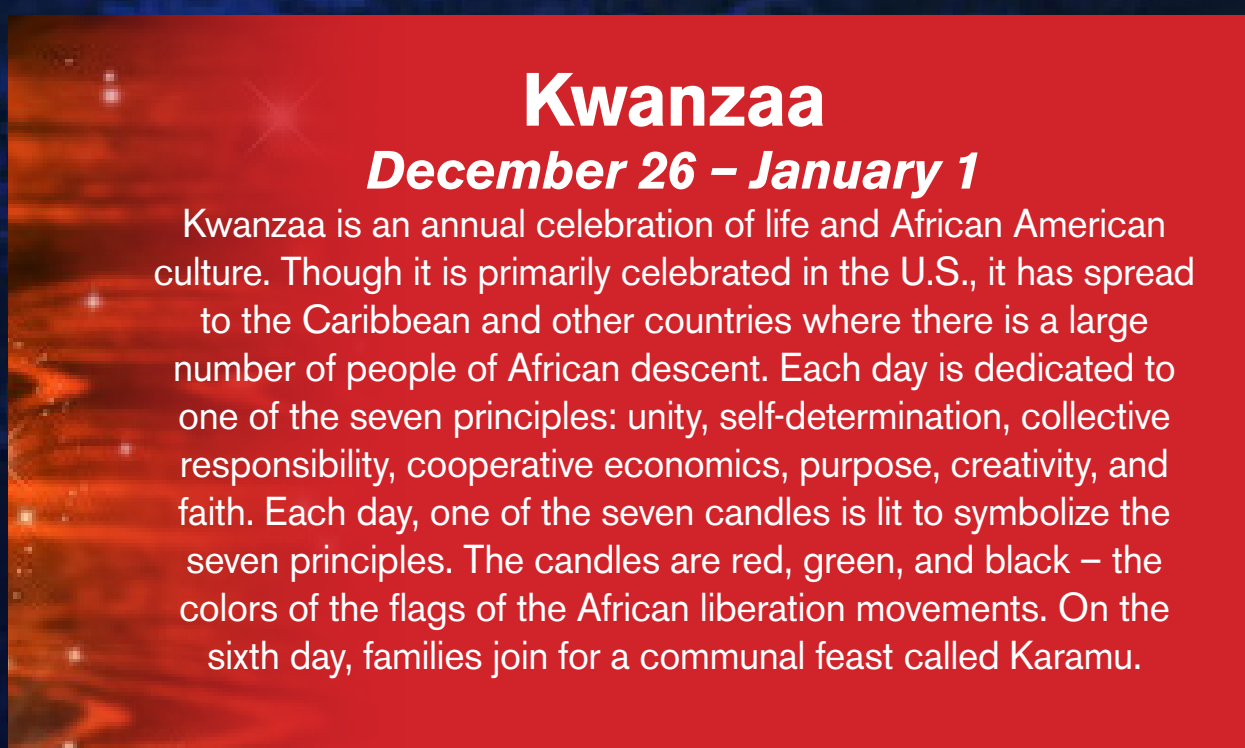
Christmas is a primarily Christian holiday, but it is also celebrated by non-Christians. The day is to celebrate the birth of Jesus Christ. Presently, Christmas is celebrated by gift shopping, gift giving, Christmas trees, holiday lights, Christmas music, Santa Claus, sweet treats, and much more.



Kwanzaa

December 26 – January 1

Kwanzaa is an annual celebration of life and African American culture. Though it is primarily celebrated in the U.S., it has spread to the Caribbean and other countries where there is a large number of people of African descent. Each day is dedicated to one of the seven principles: unity, self-determination, collective responsibility, cooperative economics, purpose, creativity, and faith. Each day, one of the seven candles is lit to symbolize the seven principles. The candles are red, green, and black – the colors of the flags of the African liberation movements. On the sixth day, families join for a communal feast called Karamu.



Omisoka

December 31

Omisoka is a Japanese traditional celebration on the last day of the year. Traditionally, it was held on the final day of the 12th lunar month. With Japan's switch to using the Gregorian calendar at the beginning of the Meiji era, December 31 is now used for the celebration.

