



## DIVERSITY CALENDAR – JANUARY

This monthly calendar has been created by [Diversity Thunder Bay](#) to mark annual observances. Although not intended to be comprehensive (there are hundreds of worldwide observances each month), it demonstrates the great variety of holidays, celebrations and observances - both religious and secular - that occur worldwide and here in Thunder Bay.

### JANUARY MONTH-LONG OBSERVANCES:

- **Tamil History Month:** A month to honour the many great contributions that Tamil Canadians have made and continue to make to our country. Read more at [Canada.ca](#).
- **Slavery and Human Trafficking Awareness Month:** Every year since 2010, the President of the United States has dedicated the month of January to raise awareness about human trafficking and to educate the public about how to identify and prevent this crime.

### Jan. 1: New Year's Day

The first day of the year according to the modern Gregorian calendar, celebrated in most Western countries.

### Jan. 3: Feast of the Holy Name of Jesus

Celebrated in the Roman Catholic Church, commemorates the naming of the child Jesus.

### Jan. 4: World Braille Day

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. Celebrated on Louis Braille's birthday, the inventor of braille.

### Jan. 5: Twelfth Night

A festival celebrated by some branches of Christianity that marks the coming of the Epiphany.

### Jan. 6: Epiphany or Dia de los Reyes (Three Kings Day)

A holiday observed by Eastern and Western Christians that recognizes the visit of the three wise men to the baby Jesus 12 days after his birth.

**Jan. 6: Christmas**

Celebrated on this day by Armenian Orthodox Christians, who celebrate the birth of Jesus on Epiphany, except for Armenians living in Israel, who celebrate Christmas on Jan. 19. Known as Theophany in Eastern Christianity, it celebrates the manifestation of Jesus as Christ. In addition, the Western Church associates Epiphany with the journey of the Magi to the infant Jesus, and the Eastern Church with the baptism of Jesus by John.

**Jan. 7: Christmas**

Celebrated on this day by Eastern Orthodox Christians, who celebrate Christmas 13 days later than other Christian churches, as they follow the Julian calendar rather than the Gregorian version of the Western calendar.

**Around Jan. 13 (varies by year): Lohri-Maghi**

An annual festival celebrated by the Sikhs commemorating the memory of 40 Sikh martyrs. The date is set according to the Hindu calendar.

**Mid-January: Makar Sankranti**

A major harvest festival celebrated in various parts of India. Hindu Seasonal celebration marking turning of the sun toward the north, the end of winter and the beginning of spring. The date is set according to the Hindu calendar.

**Third Sunday in January: World Religion Day**

This is a Bahá'í observance to proclaim the oneness of religion and the belief that world religion will unify the peoples of the earth. Observed by those of the Bahá'í faith to promote interfaith harmony and understanding.

**Second-last week in January: No Name-Calling Week**

Annual week of educational activities aimed at ending name-calling and bullying of all kinds.

**Jan. 18-25: The Week of Prayer for Christian Unity**

During this week, Christians pray for unity between all churches of the Christian faith.

**Jan 19: Timkat**

A holiday observed by Ethiopian Orthodox Christians who celebrate the baptism of Jesus in the Jordan River on Epiphany.

**Jan 26: Republic Day of India**

Recognizes the date the Constitution of India came into law in 1950, replacing the *Government of India Act* of 1935. This day also coincides with India's 1930 declaration of independence.

**Jan. 27 (may be different days in different countries/traditions) Holocaust Remembrance Day - The International Day of Commemoration**

To remember the victims of the Holocaust. The anniversary of the liberation of the Auschwitz death camp in 1945 and U.N. Holocaust Memorial Day. A time to “mourn the loss of lives, celebrate those who saved them, honor those who survived, and contemplate the obligations of the living.”

— *Former President Barack Obama*. Read more at [Canada.ca](http://Canada.ca).

**Late January/early February: Tu B’shevat or Rosh HaShanah La'Ilanot**

A Jewish holiday recognizing “The New Year of the Trees.” It is celebrated on the 15th day of the Hebrew month of Shevat. In Israel, the flowering of the almond tree usually coincides with this holiday, which is observed by planting trees and eating dried fruits and nuts. This is the Jewish New Year's Day for Trees, and traditionally the first of the year for tithing fruit of trees. Now a day for environmental awareness and action, such as tree planting.

**First full-moon day in January: Mahayana New Year**

A holiday celebrated by the Mahayana Buddhist branch, on the first full-moon day in January.

**First new moon that occurs between Jan. 21 and Feb. 20: Chinese New Year**

One of the most sacred of all traditional Chinese holidays, a time of family reunion and celebration. The Lunar New Year is also celebrated at this time in Japan, Korea, Vietnam and Mongolia.