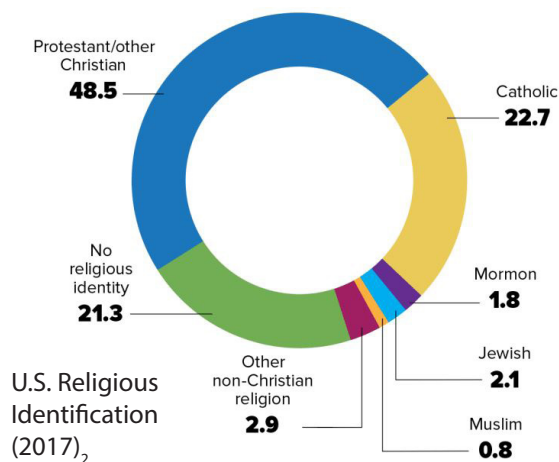


# Happy Holidays or Merry Christmas?

Late November to early January is a festive time in our communities, filled with dozens of celebrations from many faiths, cultures and traditions. Some of the more well-known celebrations are Thanksgiving, Christmas, Hanukkah, and New Year's Day. Others include Winter Solstice, Kwanzaa, Yule, Epiphany, and Boxing Day. From someone's physical appearance, we may not be able to tell what celebrations they observe this time of year. In the spirit of respect and recognition of others' beliefs, "Happy Holidays" has grown to be a popular holiday salutation.

"Happy Holidays" is an inclusive greeting and is not intended as an attack on any religion. Rather, it is an acknowledgment of the diversity of beliefs and celebrations, including Christmas. Opponents of the greeting generally claim it is intended to de-emphasize Christmas or even replace it entirely. Actually, the phrase attempts to ensure that every member of our communities feels included and emphasizes that all of our beliefs and traditions are important.



If you know someone celebrates Christmas, there is no harm in saying, "Merry Christmas." If you are uncertain of what someone celebrates, using "Happy Holidays" is an inclusive way of wishing someone well and showing that you respect and value whatever tradition they observe. What matters is the sentiment, not the specific holiday

November 23<sup>rd</sup> - Thanksgiving  
 November 30<sup>th</sup>: Feast of St. Andrew  
 December 7<sup>th</sup>\* -  
 December 15<sup>th</sup>: Hanukkah



December 6<sup>th</sup>:  
 Saint Nicholas Day



December 21<sup>st</sup>:  
 Winter Solstice  
 December 21<sup>st</sup> -  
 January 1<sup>st</sup>: Yule  
 December 25<sup>th</sup>: Christmas



December 26<sup>th</sup>:  
 The Feast of St. Stephen  
 January 1<sup>st</sup>:  
 New Year's Day



January 7<sup>th</sup>:  
 Orthodox Christmas

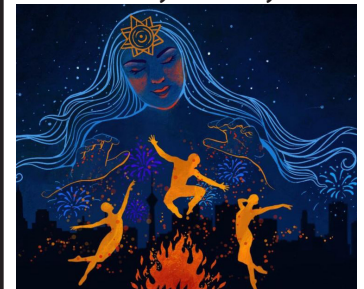
December 3<sup>rd</sup> -  
 December 24<sup>th</sup>: Advent  
 December 8<sup>th</sup>: Bodhi Day



December 21<sup>st</sup> - 25<sup>th</sup>:  
 Pancha Ganapati



December 24<sup>th</sup>:  
 Christmas Eve  
 December 25<sup>th</sup> - January 5<sup>th</sup>:  
 Twelve Days of Christmas  
 (Twelvetide)  
 December 26<sup>th</sup>: Boxing Day  
 December 27<sup>th</sup>:  
 Chaharshanbe Suri (last  
 Wednesday of the year)



December 26<sup>th</sup> -  
 January 1<sup>st</sup>: Kwanzaa



December 31<sup>st</sup>:  
 New Year's Eve  
 January 6<sup>th</sup>:  
 Feast of the Epiphany  
 ...and many more

Holidays marked \* begin the prior evening.

