

## Equity, Diversity & Inclusion Calendar March - 2023

Diversity Thunder Bay is committed to a respectful, equitable, accessible, diverse and inclusive society that is anti-racist and free from discrimination and harassment. We all play a role, one way is by building our awareness and understanding of key days of observances by members of our community and how we can show support - allyship. It is important to recognize we need to actively address Anti-Black, Anti-Indigenous, Anti-Asian, racialized racism and Anti-Semitism, Islamophobia, and LGBTQIA2S+ phobia.

While, in this digest, it is not possible to capture every observance that is celebrated - that does not diminish their importance.

### Month-Long Observances:

#### **Women's History Month:**

Established in 1987, Women's History Month recognizes all women for their valuable contributions to history and society. It is intended to honor the vital role of women in American history,

#### **National Development Disabilities Awareness Month:**

Established to increase awareness and understanding of issues affecting people with intellectual and development disabilities.

### Day-Long Observances:

#### **March 1st: Zero Discrimination Day**

Zero Discrimination Day is an annual day celebrated on 1 March each year by the United Nations and other international organisations. The day aims to promote equality before the law and in practice throughout all of the member countries of the UN.

#### **March 1st: St. David's Day**

The feast day of St. David, the patron saint of Wales.

#### **March 3rd: Employee Appreciation Day**

Employee Appreciation Day is an event, observed on the first Friday in March, meant for employers to give thanks or recognition to their employees.

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# Diversity Thunder Bay

## **March 4th: World Day of Prayer**

World Day of Prayer is celebrated on the first Friday of March each year to encourage Christian women to engage in personal prayer and lead communal prayer within their mission auxiliaries and associations. Since 1861, despite strong resistance from the all-male mission boards, women have established a number of effective boards for foreign and home missions working directly with and for women and children. World Day of Prayer is an initiative of one such board, which aims to make the lives of women and children easier by offering resources and support.

## **March 7th: Great Prayer Festival**

Monks from the three great monasteries of Tibet assemble in Jikhang to pray to Shakyamuni's image as if it were the living Buddha. Philosophical debates are held among the candidates for the Doctor of Metaphysics.

## **March 7th: Purim**

Purim is a Jewish holiday which commemorates the saving of the Jewish people from Haman, an official of the Achaemenid Empire who was planning to have all of Persia's Jewish subjects killed, as recounted in the Book of Esther. Haman was the royal vizier to Persian king Ahasuerus.

## **March 8th: International Women's Day**

First observed in 1911 in Germany, it has now become a major global celebration honouring women's economic, political and social achievements. In August 1910, an international women's conference was organized to precede the general meeting of the Socialist Second International in Copenhagen, Denmark. Inspired in part by the American socialists, German Socialist Luise Zietz proposed the establishment of an annual International Women's Day and was seconded by fellow socialist and later Communist leader Clara Zetkin. This day is intended to celebrate the social, economic, cultural, and political achievements of women. On this day, you may donate to a women's charity, recognize a local woman-owned company or reach out to a woman who has inspired you.

## **March 8th: Holi**

The annual Hindu and Sikh spring religious festival observed in India, Nepal, and Sri Lanka, along with other countries with large Hindu and Sikh populations. People celebrate Holi by throwing colored powder and water at each other. Bonfires are lit the day before in memory of the miraculous escape that young Prahlada accomplished when demoness Holika carried him into the fire. It is often celebrated on the full moon (the Phalguna Purnima) before the beginning of the vernal equinox as based on the Hindu calendar. Holi celebrates the winter harvest as well as the onset of spring. If you live in a climate that you can enjoy the outdoors, this is a great way to do so. Holi is known as the "festival of colours". Often, family and friends will gather in their backyards, neighbourhoods, and driveways with brightly colored powders to throw and smear on each others face.

### **March 8th: Holla Mohalla**

Holla Mohalla, also called Hola, is a three-day long Sikh festival which normally falls in March. It takes place on the second day of the lunar month of Chett, a day after the Hindu spring festival Holi but sometimes coincides with Holi. Hola Mohalla is a big festive event for Sikhs around the world.

### **March 9th: Asian-American Women's/Pacific Islander Women's Equal Pay Day**

The aim is to raise awareness about the pay gap between Asian-American and Pacific Islander women and white men. Asian-American women are paid 90 cents for every dollar paid to white men.

### **March 10th: National Women and Girls HIV/AIDS Awareness Day**

Since the inception of this day in 2005, NWHAAD's goal has been to raise awareness about how women can protect themselves and their partners from HIV. This day brings organizations and communities together to help women and girls protect themselves from HIV through prevention, testing and treatments.

### **March 10th: Harriet Tubman Day**

Harriet Tubman Day is an American holiday in honor of the anti-slavery activist Harriet Tubman, observed on March 10, and in the U.S. state of New York. Observances also occur locally around the U.S. state of Maryland.

### **March 12th: Girl Scout Day**

Thirteen girls and leaders assembled on March 12th, 1912 for a local Girl Guide meeting. They believed that all girls should be given the opportunity to develop physically, mentally and spiritually.

### **March 14th: Pi Day**

Pi Day is an annual celebration to commemorate the mathematical constant pi ( $\pi$ ). Pi is a non-repeating, non-terminating decimal that represents the ratio of a circle's circumference to its diameter, and is commonly approximated as 3.14159. Pi Day is typically marked by activities and events that involve mathematics and pi, such as baking and eating pies, reciting digits of pi, and participating in pi-themed games and contests. Pi Day was first officially recognized in 2009 by the United States House of Representatives, and has since become a popular holiday celebrated around the world by mathematics enthusiasts and educators.

### **March 17th: St. Patrick's Day**

A holiday started in Ireland to recognize St. Patrick, the patron saint of Ireland who brought Christianity to the country in the early days of the faith. This is the feast day and death day of Saint Patrick, a Catholic saint. His feast day is now both a cultural and religious celebration held around the world. Saint Patrick used the three leaved shamrock to explain the Christian idea of the Holy Trinity, thus the idea of wearing the shamrock.

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## **March 19th: Feast Day of Saint Joseph**

A day that commemorates the husband of Jesus's mother Mary and surrogate father on Earth. In western Christianity, the principal feast of St. Joseph, the husband of the blessed Virgin Mary.

## **March 20th: Eostre (Wicca)**

A fertility festival celebrating the birth of spring. The word Easter is derived from the Maiden Goddess. Celebrations including lighting fires at sunrise, ringing bells, and decorating hard-boiled eggs, an ancient Pagan custom associated with the Goddess.

## **March 20th: Ostara (Wicca)**

A celebration of the spring equinox commemorated by Pagans and Wiccans. It is observed as a time to make the coming of spring and the fertility of the land.

## **March 20th: Shunki-Sorei-Sai (Shinto)**

Ancestors are given reverence at home altars and considered active members of the living family. Gravesites are cleaned and purified.

## **March 20th: Shunbu No Hi (Japan)**

During the time of the Spring Equinox, Buddhists meditate in the harmony of the universe.

## **March 21st: International Day For The Elimination Of Racial Discrimination**

Observed annually following when on March 21st, 1960, the police killed 69 people in South Africa when they opened fire on a peaceful demonstration. As a call to end racial discrimination, the United Nations proclaimed the day in 1966.

## **March 21st—22nd: Naw-Ruz**

The Baha'i New Year is a holiday celebrated on the vernal equinox. It is one of the nine Baha'i holy days on which work is suspended. The day marks the end of the Baha'i fast.

## **March 21st—22nd: Nowruz/Norooz**

Persian New Year, a holy day of joy, celebration and renewal. The Zoroastrian New Year that is celebrated annually at the spring equinox. There is a major spring cleaning of houses and the purchase of new clothes to wear for the new year.

### **March 22nd: Ramadan**

Ramadan is the ninth month of the Islamic calendar and is considered the holiest month for Muslims. It is a time of spiritual reflection, devotion, and self-control. Muslims observe a fast from dawn until sunset, abstaining from food, drink, and other physical needs. This fast is one of the Five Pillars of Islam and is mandatory for all healthy adult Muslims who have reached puberty. The purpose of Ramadan is multifaceted. Firstly, it is a time for Muslims to deepen their relationship with Allah (God) through worship, prayer, and contemplation. Muslims also reflect on their own behavior and character, seeking to improve themselves in areas such as patience, generosity, and kindness. Additionally, Ramadan is a time for Muslims to demonstrate solidarity with those who are less fortunate by giving charity and supporting those in need.

### **March 22nd: Hindu New Year**

There are numerous days throughout the year celebrated as New Years Day in the different regions of India. The observance is determined by whether the lunar calendar is being followed or the solar calendar.

### **March 25th: International Day of Remembrance of the Victims of Slavery.**

This international day is a United Nations observation that offer the opportunity to honour and remember those who suffered and died at the hands of the brutal slavery system. First observed in 2008, the international celebration also aims to raise awareness about the danger of racism and prejudice.

### **March 25th: Annunciation of the Virgin Mary**

A Christian celebration of the announcement by the angel Gabriel to the Virgin Mary that she would conceive and become the mother of Jesus.

### **March 26th: Birth of Prophet Zarathustra**

Zoroaster in Greek; Zartosht in India and Persia. The founder of the Zoroastrian religion dating back to sometime between 1500 and 1000 BCE. He lived in Persia, modern day Iran. Zoroastrianism became the state religion of various Persian empires until the 7th Century CE.

### **March 31st: International Transgender Day of Visibility**

The International Transgender Day of Visibility is an annual event celebrated to raise awareness about the experiences and achievements of transgender people around the world. The day aims to highlight the contributions made by transgender individuals to society and to promote greater understanding and acceptance of transgender rights. It also seeks to combat discrimination and prejudice faced by transgender individuals and to promote their visibility in society. The day is celebrated with events, discussions, and educational activities that seek to empower transgender individuals and raise awareness about their struggles and experiences.