

Religious Education: Festivals

Key questions:

- How are special occasions celebrated?
- What is it like to share a celebration?
- What is a religious celebration and why are they important to believers?
- How do religious believers celebrate the meaning of a festival?

We will:

- Consider how important celebrations are to families
- Reflect on and share their own experiences of celebrations
- Learn about the story linked to the celebration (Hanukah/Christmas/Diwali)
- Begin to understand the significance and symbolism of Hanukah/Christmas/Diwali for believers
- Understand that many festivals have a religious significance;
- Explain that worship, both at home and in a place of worship, is a key part of the religious celebration;

Hanukkah	Diwali	Christmas
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Jewish festival of lights • Lasts eight days celebrated in December (Sunday 22nd December - Monday 30th December 2019) • Involves an eight-branched candlestick called a menorah • It is lit every night and blessings are said, each night another candle is lit • Lighting reminds Jews of a miracle at the Temple Of Jerusalem where a candle lasted eight days when there was only enough oil for one. • Children receive small presents each night • Fired foods are eaten (latkes, potato cakes and doughnuts) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hindu festival of lights • Name comes from rows of clay lamps lit outside homes. • Celebrated between October and November (Sunday 27th October 2019) • Start of Hindu New Year • Celebrate victory of good over evil • Celebrate return of lord Rama after defeating evil king Ravana. • Celebrated with family gatherings, decorating, light diyas, sharing sweets and gifts and worshipping lord Ganesh and Goddess Lakshmi 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Christian festival remembers the birth of Jesus the son of the Christian God • Celebrated on 25th December • Story is known as "the Nativity" • Families go to church services and eat a special meal • People give cards and presents and decorate their homes • Trees are put up and covered in lights and baubles. • The four Sundays before Christmas are called advent - this is a time for preparations • Some people light candles to count up to the day • On the Sunday before Christmas or Christmas Eve a Christingle service is held.

Key Vocabulary	
Celebrations	the formal performance of celebrating an important day or event
Festival	a day, event or community gathering, typically for religious reasons
Symbolism	the use of symbols to represent ideas or qualities.
Commemorate	mark or celebrate (an event or person) by doing or producing something
Community	a group of people living in the same place or having a particular characteristic in common
Prayer	a request for help or expression of thanks addressed to a deity (god).
Worship	Expression of respect and love for a deity.
Nativity	the Christian festival of Christ's birth; Christmas.
Church	a building used for public Christian worship.
Christingle	a lighted candle symbolizing Christ as the light of the world
Hanukkah	Jewish festival
Synagogue	a building in which Jews meet for religious worship or instruction.
Menorah	a sacred candelabrum with seven branches used in the ancient temple in Jerusalem.
Diwali	a Hindu festival with lights, held in the period October to November. It is particularly associated with Lakshmi, the goddess of prosperity, and marks the beginning of the financial year in India.
Mandir	A Hindu temple devoted to worship
Aarti	waving of lighted wicks before the deities in a spirit of humility and gratitude, wherein faithful followers become immersed in god's divine form.

