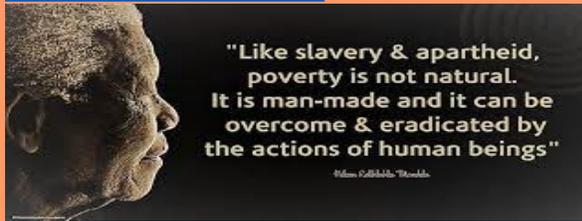


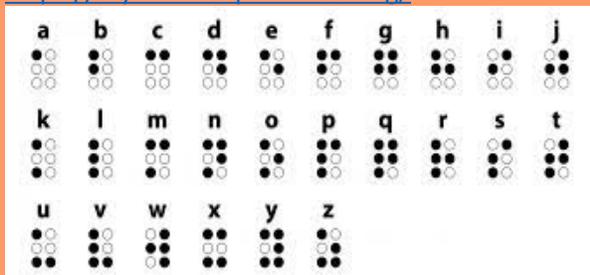
National Poverty in America Awareness Month

“The official poverty rate in 2021 was 11.6 percent, with 37.9 million people in poverty.” As an organization that services people of low socioeconomic status, we recognize National Poverty in Awareness Month and hope that this month will aid in raising awareness of the pervasive issues affecting those experiencing poverty in the United States. Read more here: <https://www.census.gov/newsroom/stories/pove-rtty-awareness-month.html>.



World Braille Day

World Braille Day is celebrated each year on January. It marks the birthday of Louis Braille, the French inventor of the reading and writing code for the blind. In Louis Braille’s time, the code was only used at the school where he studied and later taught. Today, there are Braille codes for virtually every written language in the world, so that blind people everywhere can become literate and acquire the opportunities brought by literacy. Braille is the only method that allows blind people to both read and write independently. Every day, blind people use Braille for everything from shopping lists to labels for canned goods, from reading novels to solving equations, from learning a piece of music to composing one. The increasing availability of Braille signs makes it easier for blind people to get around hotels, office buildings, campuses, and more. Check out this Colorado nonprofit committed to making braille available to blind and vision impaired people in Colorado! <https://mytrueindependence.org/>



National Slavery & Human Trafficking Prevention

Slavery in some form has existed for hundreds of years – and still exists today, though all too many are unaware of this. The American charity group Free the Slaves, is part of Anti-Slavery International, and serves to fight slavery everywhere. In 2007, the United States Senate ratified the resolution establishing January 11th as National Human Trafficking Awareness Day. In 2010, President Obama dedicated the entire month of January to awareness and prevention of human trafficking. Today, there are over 50 established organizations that globally combat this illegal practice, and awareness is being raised more extremely than ever before. In Colorado, Governor Jared Polis has proclaimed Tuesday, January 11, as Human Trafficking Awareness Day each year.

Check out this list of ways to help combat human trafficking: <https://www.state.gov/20-ways-you-can-help-fight-human-trafficking/>



Buddhist New Year (Mahayana New Year)

Mahayana New Year is celebrated this year on January 7 by Buddhists around the world. The term Mahayana encompasses Buddhist ideologies and philosophies. Mahayana is one of the two main branches of Buddhism and is frequently practiced in Northeast Asia — China, Japan, Tibet, Taiwan, Mongolia, and Korea. Each region has its own customs and traditions for practicing Mahayana Buddhism. Special food is offered to monks and nuns. Buddha statues are bathed, houses cleaned, offerings are made to ancestors, and lanterns are lit to bring good luck for the coming year. Despite different geographical locations, this holiday is celebrated with great joy, splendor, and cheering every citizen to live a happy and prosperous life.

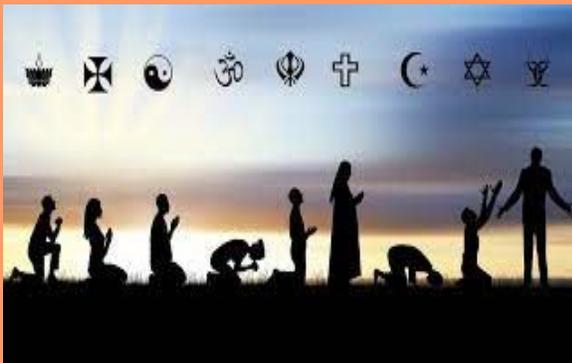
You can read a snapshot of Buddhism in Colorado here: <https://www.cpr.org/show-segment/as-da-lai-lama-visits-boulder-a-snapshot-of-buddhism-in-colorado/>



World Religion Day

In 2023 World Religion Day is celebrated on January 15, 2023. The first official observance of World Religion Day (as it is known today), was in 1950, but the concept began a few years prior to that. In Portland, Maine, the National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'í Faith hosted a talk in the Eastland Park Hotel in October 1947, culminating in the decision to observe an annual event, then known as World Peace Through World Religion. By 1949, the event began to be observed in other parts of the U.S. and grew more popular. By 1950, it came to be known as World Religion Day. On this day, at various locations, many authors, educators, and philosophers are invited to speak on world religions and the importance of establishing and maintaining harmony between them. It's a great forum for learning more about other religions and cultures, and provides an opportunity to intermingle socially with people of different faiths and world views.

<https://nationaltoday.com/world-religion-day/>



Martin Luther King Jr. Day

This year, we celebrate Martin Luther King Jr. Day on January 16, 2023. The road to having a MLK day celebration was not an easy or short one, but as of early 2000 every state recognizes the day. In celebration Dr. King's contributions to the Civil Rights Movement, the day is designated as a National Day of Service. People are encouraged to find a way to get involved in their community. CLS recognizes MLK Day and encourages everyone to find a way to give back to their community. To read more about the road to recognizing MLK Day, please read here

<https://nmaahc.si.edu/explore/stories/15-year-battle-martin-luther-king-jr-day.>

Here's more info about MLK Day in Denver:

<https://www.denver.org/things-to-do/fall-winter/festivals-events/martin-luther-king-day/>.



Lunar New Year (Chinese New Year)

Chinese New Year 2023 falls on Sunday, January 22nd, 2023, and celebrations culminate with the Lantern Festival on February 5th, 2023. Celebrations last up to 16 days, but only the first 7 days are considered a public holiday. Each Chinese year is associated with an animal sign according to the Chinese Zodiac cycle. 2023 is the year of the Rabbit. The sign of Rabbit is a symbol of longevity, peace, and prosperity in Chinese culture. 2023 is predicted to be a year of hope. Over 1 billion people take part in the holiday's festivities in countries around the world. The year of the rabbit happens every 12 years, so if you were born in 1999 or 2011, or each 12th year before, this is your birth year.

There are various ways to celebrate this rebirth. It's a ritual to clean your house in preparation for the new year. Red is the color most associated with Lunar New Year, as it's considered a symbol of prosperity and good fortune. Other customs include fireworks, and performances of lion dances and red ribbon dances. While everyone's celebration is unique, Lunar New Year gatherings typically include sweet dumplings, rice cakes, fish, and citrus fruits. The greeting in Mandarin Chinese is: "Xīnnián kuàilè" (pronounced shin-nyen kwahy-ler) which means "Happy New Year!".

There are celebrations throughout Colorado such as the Colorado Springs Annual Chinese New Year Festival hosted by the Colorado Springs Chinese Cultural Institute (<https://www.csccl.org/CNYF>) and the Colorado Chinese New Year Celebration hosted by the Chinese American Foundation of Colorado and the Chinese School (<https://www.denverchineseschool.org/chinese-new-year-celebration/>)



Holocaust Remembrance Day

January 27, 2022 is Holocaust Remembrance Day. The United Nations General Assembly designated January 27 (the anniversary of the liberation of Auschwitz-Birkenau) as International Holocaust Remembrance Day. On this annual day of commemoration, the UN urges every member state to honor the six million Jewish victims of the Holocaust and millions of other victims of the Nazis and to develop educational programs to help prevent future genocides. CLS recognizes and honors the victims of the Holocaust and encourages everyone to learn more about the Holocaust and other genocides around the world.

If you would like to learn more Holocaust Remembrance Day, please visit: <https://www.ushmm.org/remember/international-holocaust-remembrance-day>.

