

Table of Contents

REDBRIDGE FAITH FORUM LOOKING FORWARD	2
Wednesday, 24 th April 1.15-3.15 pm – Women’s Interfaith Workshop.....	2
Tuesday, 30 ^h April 12noon – 1.30 pm – RFF Network Meeting- Community Hubs	2
REDBRIDGE FAITH FORUM LOOKING BACK	2
Wednesday, 13 th February 1.15-3.15 pm – Women’s Interfaith Workshop.....	2
REDBRIDGE FAITH FORUM	3
What is it and what does it do?.....	3
Current Trustees	3
DID YOU KNOW?	4
News for residents of Aldborough Ward from Councillor John Howard:-	4
Help Available to clean-up your neighbourhood	4
Free Counter Terrorism Awareness Briefing for Faith Communities	4
Help & Support for Victims of Hate Crime	4
EVENTS TO COME IN REDBRIDGE	5
Mosque Open Day – free refreshments, guided tours, Q&A session	5
Redbridge Neighbourhood Forum - East	5
Wanstead Youth Club – 1 st year celebration	5
International Women’s Day – Sikh Women’s Alliance.....	5
Redbridge Equalities Forum	6
Ilford Historical Society – “Greer Garson film star”	6
Redbridge Music Lounge at The Cranbrook Centre, Valentines Park	6
COMMUNITY NETWORK MEETING	6
Redbridge’s Got Talent – Mayor’s Appeal Fundraising Talent Show.....	7
Barkingside 21 Coffee Morning and an audience with Keith Prince.	7
Redbridge Neighbourhood Forum - West	7
SOME CELEBRATIONS TO COME	7

REDBRIDGE FAITH FORUM LOOKING FORWARD

Wednesday, 24th April 1.15-3.15 pm – Women's Interfaith Workshop
St Andrews Church, The Drive, Ilford IG1 3PE

All women are warmly invited to attend this workshop which will be on the topic of "Births:- Ceremony, Custom & Tradition". This is our third workshop in the series and this time we will be hearing from Christian and Sikh speakers. To reserve your place please email faith.forum@redbridge.gov.uk or ring 0208 708 2478 to leave a message. There is no charge for attendance but a voluntary donation around £3 would be appreciated towards costs.

Tuesday, 30th April 12noon – 1.30 pm – RFF Network Meeting- Community Hubs
Ilford Islamic Centre, Albert Rd, IG1 1HW

Do save the date for this meeting when we will be hearing about the council's plans to create new community hubs at six locations in the borough bringing services to residents. This will be an opportunity to hear about the proposal but also give your views on what you would like the hubs to offer. More information is available at www.redbridge.gov.uk/hubs

ADVANCE NOTICE – PLEASE SAVE THE FOLLOWING DATES:-

Tuesday, 2nd July RFF Annual General Meeting
at Gardens of Peace, Hainault, IG6 3SW

Tuesday, 16th July RFF Quiz Evening
at The Drive Methodist Church Hall, IG1 3PP

REDBRIDGE FAITH FORUM LOOKING BACK

Wednesday, 13th February 1.15-3.15 pm – Women's Interfaith Workshop
Ilford Islamic Centre, 52-56 Albert Road, Ilford IG1 1HW

36 women from different cultures and faiths came together at the Ilford Islamic Centre for a workshop on the topic of Births:- Ceremony, Custom & Tradition. The two speakers, a Muslim and a Jewish, gave interesting perspectives on this topic. After listening to the speakers everyone had the opportunity to ask questions and then break into smaller discussion groups. The



from different faiths and came together at the Islamic Centre for a workshop on the topic of Births:- Ceremony, Custom & Tradition" with giving the Jewish and perspectives on this topic. After listening to speakers everyone had opportunity to ask before breaking into discussion groups. The

afternoon proved to be a very enjoyable event with much learnt about each other's life experiences.



REDBRIDGE FAITH FORUM

What is it and what does it do?

RFF hold regular public meetings to discuss social issues affecting faith communities such as education, health, and give people the opportunity to meet and share with other faiths.

RFF was set up in 2003 following a faith conference set up by Redbridge Council, which brought faith leaders together to talk about their communities' needs.

- RFF bring together local members of different faith communities.
- RFF promote social harmony.
- RFF foster a community spirit within Redbridge and the local area.
- RFF recognise the important contribution that religion and spirituality makes to the lives of Redbridge residents.
- RFF lobby relevant organisations that affect faith communities.

Current Trustees

RFF is an independent organisation with a charitable status (1118675). RFF has a board of trustees composed of representatives of different faiths :

Christian: ✝ Phil Butcher (Co Chair), Rev Bernardino Mandlate

Hindu: ॐ Vinaya Sharma, Appathurai Ramkumar

Jewish: ☆ Rabbi Larry Becker, Angela Banner

Muslim: ☪ Mo Dedat (Treasurer), Mohamed Omer (Co-Chair), Imam Khurram Rafiq

Sikh: ੴ Harbans Singh Seehra, Harmander Singh

Buddhist: ☸ Rev P Hemaratana, Dr Suhasini

Bahai Carol Khorsandyon

We hope that you will understand that in order to continue our work to the benefit of all living in Redbridge, the Faith Forum needs to raise funds to cover the various activities we organise. Membership is open to all and there are a range of options available.

Associate member: (open to everyone) receives all e-mail updates, a membership certificate, invitations to all events, able to vote at AGM – suggested donation £10 per year.

We are proposing two other membership scales for large groups and businesses as follows:

Place of Worship: full membership (open to recognised faith groups and their designated representative) all

rights as above; additionally such representative may be nominated for election to the Management Committee and - £30 per year.

If you would like to become a RFF member please email faith.forum@redbridge.gov.uk

DID YOU KNOW?

News for residents of Aldborough Ward from Councillor John Howard:-

At our last coffee morning we had some good interest in setting some community gardens. So, I've decided that we should aim to set up a couple across the ward. The idea of this is that the council with the help of local business would pay for a wooden planter, plants and soil and local residents would help maintain it. This is not only a great way of making our local area greener and more pleasant, but it also helps bring the local community together.

If you are interested or know people who would be please sign up here - <https://www.redbridgelabour.org.uk/get-involved/aldborough/>.

Help Available to clean-up your neighbourhood

CleanupUP (registered charity 1120115) can help you run your own clean-up and put you in touch with others who also care and want to take action. You can improve your neighbourhood and make a difference to your local community.

For more information please get in touch with Neeta telephone 07463660843 – email Neeta.Kanagaratnam@cleanupuk.org.uk

Free Counter Terrorism Awareness Briefing for Faith Communities

As the current threat level from terrorism is at SEVERE which means an attack is highly likely, the Counter Terrorism team at Ilford police station are happy to come and deliver a briefing to your community members at your chosen date/time. The ACT project is a Home office led initiative to promote and encourage members of the community to work in partnership with the police to report, deter and detect terrorist activity and crime.

The briefing session provides essential knowledge in counter terrorism awareness to both help prevent an attack and to know what to do if caught up in one and usually takes two hours to deliver. For further queries and to book a session please PC TICKNER or PC HUSSAIN on 0208 345 2601 or e-mail EastAreaEABCUMailbox-.CTPBST@met.pnn.police.uk

Help & Support for Victims of Hate Crime

Redbridge Equalities & Community Council along with sister organisations run a project – Community Against Hate Crime. A hate crime is a crime motivated or aggravated by prejudice against a particular group in society – for reasons of race, religion, disability, gender, gender reassignment, sexuality, migrant or refugee...If you are the victim of hate crime please get in touch to make an appointment to see RECC advice worker on 020-8551 8178 for advice and advocacy services.

The organisation will also come along to speak at events to inform how to report hate crime and what can be done to support those being targeted and can establish mutual support groups of victims. You can also volunteer to become involved in the Community Witness & Support Team.

Email - Office1@redbrideequalities.org.uk - 020-8551 8178
RECC, Room 203, 2nd Floor, Heraldic House, 160-162 Cranbrook Road IG1 4PE.

EVENTS TO COME IN REDBRIDGE

Mosque Open Day – free refreshments, guided tours, Q&A session
Sunday 3rd March 12noon-4 pm – 10-14 Mulberry Way South Woodford E18 1ED

No prior booking necessary – free car parking in the car park opposite the mosque.

Redbridge Neighbourhood Forum - East
Tuesday evening 5th March at Marjorie Collins MS Centre, 237 Grove Road RM6 4XF

- 6:45 - 7:15pm Informal chat with Officers and Councillors
- 7:15 - 8:00pm Formal part
- 8:00 - 8:30pm Q&A with the council Leader

This forum is for residents in Chadwell, Goodmayes, Mayfield, Newbury and Seven Kings wards and is a chance to chat with officers and local ward councillors about local issues.

Please come along from 6:45pm for initial informal discussions with officers and councillors. The formal session will begin at 7:15pm and the Q&A session with the Leader will run from 8pm to 8:30pm.

Wanstead Youth Club – 1st year celebration
Thursday, 7th March 6.00-8.00 pm at Wanstead Youth Centre, Elmcroft Avenue E11 2DB

Wanstead Youth Club, an inclusive youth club for young people aged 10-25yrs has been running for the past 12 months. The youth club is a great way for young people to try new activities, sports and socially mix. The celebration will feature some short speeches, refreshments and activities for both young people and adults. If you can attend to support this event please RSVP by replying to calluma@essexboysandgirlsclubs.org

International Women's Day – Sikh Women's Alliance
Sunday 10th March 12 noon 5pm at Karamsar Centre, Buckingham Road, IG1 1RG

All women are warmly invited – tickets priced £15 per person available from Parminder 07956 139437 or Balvinder 07960 987825

Redbridge Equalities Forum

Monday 11th March 2pm-4 pm at new Hall, Gants Hill United Reform church, Ethelbert Gardens IG2 6UN

Guest speaker Dr. Barbara Judge, Member (formerly Chair) of the Independent Monitoring Board at Her Majesty's Prison Thameside. Dr Judge will talk about what the Board does, her experiences of being on the board, the volunteering to join the board which is important to us encouraging diversity.

Ilford Historical Society – “Greer Garson film star”

Monday 11th March 7.30pm Gloucester Room Central Library IG1 1EA

From Manor Park to Hollywood – the true story of Mrs Miniver. All welcome – visitors £2.

Redbridge Music Lounge at The Cranbrook Centre, Valentines Park

Wednesdays 13th & 27th March & Thursdays 7th & 21st March - 12.30-4.30 pm at Melbourne Gate, Melbourne Road IG1 4SB (for directions see www.cranbrookcentre.london)

The venue is for musicians and anyone interested in playing music, who are retired, in part-time work, unemployed or semi-professional, even if committed to bands/group already but have time and expertise to offer and share mainly, for daytime projects, events and local festivals. Feel free to bring along your instruments and perform – rehearsal equipment and performing facilities are also available. For further information contact Chris Wyatt mob 07929 071155 email criswyatt@aol.com www.rmluk.org. Registered Charity 1151132

COMMUNITY NETWORK MEETING

Wednesday, 20th March 7pm in the Lambourne Room, Town Hall, Ilford

The Community Network Meeting meets three times per year to bring together community leaders and representatives to tackle some of the big challenges that we are facing as a community in Redbridge. For this next meeting, we want to discuss your views on how we can work together to solve issues like youth violence, homelessness and cracking community tensions. Please do come along to have your say. If there are any topics that you would like to discuss in future meetings, please let me know.

The next meeting will take place at:

Date: 20 March 2019

Time: 7pm

Location: Lambourne Room, Town Hall, 128-142, High Rd, Ilford IG1 1DD

Yusuf Patel, Community Engagement Coordinator

Policy, Performance and Equalities Team

London Borough of Redbridge, Floor 7, Lynton House, 255 - 259 High Road Ilford Essex IG1 1NN

Tel: 07741 330456, Email: yusuf.patel@redbridge.gov.uk

Redbridge's Got Talent – Mayor's Appeal Fundraising Talent Show

Friday 22nd March 2019 6.00 pm at Sir James Hawkey Hall, Broadmead Road, IG8 0BG

CONTACT: redbridgemayorsappeal@hotmail.com / 020 8708 2297 / 07985 161112

Auditioning now. Participants free of charge – tickets for audience members £12 per person or £40 for a family of four.

Barkingside 21 Coffee Morning and an audience with Keith Prince.

Tuesday 26th March 2019 10.00-11.45 am - Hainault Room, Fullwell Cross Library,

Free event – all welcome. For further details e-mail Barkingside21@btinternet.com

Redbridge Neighbourhood Forum - West

Tuesday evening 26th March in the Churchill Room of Wanstead Library, Spratt Hall Road, E11 2RQ

- 6:45 - 7:15pm Informal chat with Officers and Councillors
- 7:15 - 8:00pm Formal part
- 8:00 - 8:30pm Q&A with the council Leader

This forum is for residents in Bridge, Churchfields, Monkams, South Woodford, Wanstead Park and Wanstead Village wards and is a chance to chat with officers and local ward councillors about local issues.

Please come along from 6:45pm for initial informal discussions with officers and councillors. The formal session will begin at 7:15pm and the Q&A session with the Leader will run from 8pm to 8:30pm.

SOME CELEBRATIONS TO COME

1st March (Monday) is **St David's Day** for our **Christian** friends. Saint David, or Dewi Sant as he's called in the Welsh language, is the Patron saint of Wales. His influence is shown in the number of churches dedicated to him in Wales and the celebrations each Saint David's Day. There aren't many facts about St David; All we know is that he really existed, that he was at the heart of the Welsh church in the 6th century, that he came from an aristocratic family in West Wales, his mother was a saint, Saint Non, his teacher was also a saint, St Paulinus, he founded a large monastery in West Wales, he was one of the early saints who helped to spread Christianity among the pagan Celtic tribes of Western Britain, he became Archbishop of Wales, but remained in his community at Menevia (now called St David's), his shrine became a great place of pilgrimage; four visits to the shrine at St David's were considered the equivalent of two to Rome, and one to Jerusalem!

The most famous story about Saint David tells how he was preaching to a huge crowd and the ground is said to have risen up, so that he was standing on a hill and everyone had a better chance of hearing him. For more <http://www.timeanddate.com/holidays/uk/st-david-day>

4th March (Monday) is **MahaShivaratri/Shiva Ratri** for our Hindu friends. Maha Shivaratri or Shivratri, the night of the worship of Lord Shiva, is a major festival which occurs on the 14th night of the new moon during the dark half of the month of Phalguna. It falls on a moonless February night, when Hindus offer special prayer to the Lord Shiva. Shivaratri (Sanskrit 'ratri' = night) is the night when he is said to have performed the Tandava Nritya or the dance of primordial creation, preservation and destruction. The festival is observed for one day and one night only. People often fast on the night of Shivratri and sing hymns and praises in the name of Lord Shiva. Hindu temples across the country are decorated with lights and colourful decorations and people can be seen offering night long prayers to Shiva Lingam. Wood apple leaves, cold water and milk are offered to the Shiva Lingam on this day as they are believed to be Lord Shiva's favourite. Shivratri is considered especially auspicious for women. Married women pray for the well-being of their husbands and sons, while unmarried women pray for an ideal husband like Shiva, who is the spouse of Kali, Parvati and Durga. But generally it is believed that anyone who utters the name of Shiva during Shivratri with pure devotion is freed from all sins. He or she reaches the abode of Shiva and is liberated from the cycle of birth and death. For more see <http://www.calendarlabs.com/holidays/india/maha-shivratri.php> and <http://hinduism.about.com/od/festivalsholidays/p/mahashivratri.htm>

5th March (Tuesday) Shrove Tuesday Christian (Western Churches). 'Shrove' relates to absolution from sin. In Britain it is called 'Pancake Day', as pancakes use up all the rich foods before Lent. Elsewhere it is known as Mardi Gras (Fat Tuesday), and is a time for carnivals and fairs.

6th March ASH (Wednesday) Christian (Western Churches). This first day of Lent recalls the temptations Jesus faced for forty days in the wilderness. In Catholic and some Anglican churches, worshipper's foreheads are marked with a cross of ash made from burning the palm crosses of the previous year – hence 'Ash Wednesday'

6th March (Wednesday) – 20 April (Friday) LENT Christian (Western Churches) A period of forty days fasting and self-discipline that leads up to Easter. Traditionally Christians give up something during this time to mark the forty days Jesus spent in the wilderness. Many Christians feel it is a time for study groups, prayer and Bible reading. Source: <https://www.interfaith.org.uk/resources/religious-festivals>

11th March (Monday) FIRST DAY OF LENT / THE GREAT FAST Christian (Orthodox) This is the beginning of the Lenten Fast, which involves abstinence from meat, fish and dairy products until Easter. Source: <https://www.interfaith.org.uk/resources/religious-festivals>

17th March (Sunday) is St Patrick's Day for our Christian friends. It is a national holiday in Ireland and commemorates one of its patron saints, St Patrick. In the United Kingdom, it is celebrated in Irish pubs and in cities, such as Nottingham and London where many people with an Irish background live. St Patrick is believed to have died on March 17 in or around the year 493. He grew up in mainland Britain, but spent time in Ireland as a young man and later as a missionary. According to popular legend, he is buried under Down Cathedral in Downpatrick, County Down, and banished all snakes from Ireland. However, it is thought that there have been no snakes in Ireland since the last ice age. The "snakes" that St Patrick banished from Ireland, may refer to pagan worshipers of snake gods. St Patrick's Day was originally a religious occasion to mark the life and work of St Patrick. In 1903 it became a public holiday in the whole of Ireland. Pubs were not allowed to open on March 17 until the 1970s. It is only recently that St Patrick's Day has become a secular holiday. For more <http://www.timeanddate.com/holidays/uk/st-patricks-day>

19th March (Tuesday) is St Joseph's day, (husband of the Blessed Virgin Mary) for our Christian friends. St. Joseph's Day is a Roman Catholic feast day commemorating the life of St. Joseph, the step-father of Jesus and husband of the Blessed Virgin Mary. "As befitting Saint Joseph's legacy of never

speaking directly in the scriptures, leading years of unknown activities as Jesus' earthly father, and dying at date and place unknown, there are two different names for his feast and two different dates and one variable date. There is a tremendous lack of information about St. Joseph.

Catholic tradition honours the feast of Saint Joseph as the husband of Mary on March 19 and the feast day of St. Joseph on May 1 as Joseph the worker. The March 19 date is of comparatively recent years (1621) and is formally named the Solemnity of Saint Joseph Spouse of The Blessed Virgin Mary, the traditional day in the Western Church. An optional date of May 1 for Joseph the Worker was set in 1955 but has not caught on in the Christian world. On the March 19 feast of St. Joseph, Catholics honour him with an age-old tradition called St. Joseph's table. History has it the tradition began on the Italian island of Sicily. There was a drought that ruined harvest and caused a famine. The Sicilians prayed to Saint Joseph, the Patron Saint of the Family and prayers were answered when the famine and the drought receded. In the finest Italian heritage, homage to St. Joseph comes in the form of food and celebration. Over the years many different types of foods have joined the traditional collage that today is known as St. Joseph's table – all done in the theme of bounty food for all". For more, see <http://www.st-joseph-medal.com/st-josephs-day.html> and <http://www.fisheaters.com/customslent5.html>

21st March (Thursday) is **Naw-Ruz (News Year)** for our **Bahá'í** friends. "Baha'is faithful celebrate the start of a new year with the arrival of spring. After sundown on March 20 – the eve of the vernal equinox (in the Northern Hemisphere) – Baha'is throughout the world will celebrate Naw-Ruz, the start of the Baha'i New Year. For Baha'is this is a religious holiday that marks the end of the Nineteen Day Fast. It is one of the nine Baha'i holy days on which work and school is to be suspended. The Baha'i Faith originated in Persia (present-day Iran), and the Baha'i calendar adopted the Persian new year holiday, Naw-Ruz, which has been celebrated for thousands of years at the vernal equinox (in the Northern Hemisphere). Baha'is practitioners observe Naw-Ruz through prayer, meditation, readings from Baha'i scripture and festive gatherings.)" <http://www.bahai.us/2011/03/02/the-annual-nineteen-day-fast-a-time-of-spiritual-purification/> . For more, <http://info.bahai.org/article-1-4-7-2.html>

21st March (Thursday) Magha Puja. This is when our Buddhist friends celebrate Magha Puja. (AKA Fourfold Assembly or "Sangha Day") Considered one of the most important Buddhist celebrations, Magha Puja Day refers to the veneration of Buddha and his teachings that takes place on the full moon of the third lunar month (about the last week of February or early March). This holy day is observed to commemorate an important event that occurred early in the Buddha's teaching life: the day on which Lord Buddha recited the "Ovadha Patimokkha" (the Fundamental Teaching or rules and regulation of the monastic orders) to his disciples.

After the first Rains Retreat (Vassa) at the Deer Park at Sarnath, the Buddha went to Rajagaha city where 1250 Arahats, (Enlightened saints) who were the Buddha's disciples, without prior appointment, returned from their wanderings to pay respect to the Buddha. They assembled in the Veruvana Monastery with the two chief disciples of the Buddha, Ven. Sariputta and Ven. Moggallana.

The assembly is called the Fourfold Assembly because it consisted of four factors: (1) 1,250 Buddhist monks from different places spontaneously came to pay homage to the Lord Buddha, without any appointment. (2) All of them were Arahants (enlightened monks) who had attained the Apinyas (Six Higher Knowledge). (3) All of them had been individually ordained by Lord Buddha himself (Ehi Bhikkhu). (4)-It was the full moon day of Magha month (March).

Magha Puja is a time for Buddhist to give thanks for the existence and work of the monks and nuns in the religious orders without whose prayers and guidance, sustaining a spiritual life and a spiritual community would be much more challenging. The spiritual aims of the day are: not to commit any kind of sins; to do only good and to purify one's mind. Celebrations vary, but can include chanting, meditation, the lighting of oil lamps, and the reaffirmation of people's commitment to Buddhist practice and traditions. Magha Puja is a traditional time for exchange of gifts; it has become a

prominent festival among Western Buddhists even though it is less well known in the East. For more, see <http://www.bbc.co.uk/religion/religions/buddhism/holydays/sangha.shtm>

21st March (Thursday) is when our **Hindu** friends celebrate **Holi**. "Holi celebrates triumph over divisiveness and negativity," Sheetal Shah, senior director of the Hindu American Foundation in the National Geographic <http://news.nationalgeographic.co.uk/news/2013/04/pictures/130401-india-holi-krishna-vishnu-holiday-religion-culture/>.

"Celebrated on the day after the full moon in the month of Phalguna—which usually falls in early March—the major Hindu festival also marks the beginning of spring. During the evening of the full moon, bonfires are lit to ward off spirits and to celebrate the victory of good over evil. The following day, people pile into the streets for the beginning of the central Holi ritual—the throwing of bright, vibrant coloured powders and water at friends and strangers alike as they celebrate the arrival of spring, commemorate Krishna's pranks, and allow each other a momentary freedom -- a chance to drop their inhibitions and simply play and dance". For more <http://www.holifestival.org/holi-calendar.html> and for a glimpse of how it is celebrated in India see <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xaysqwFoVOE>

21st March and 22nd March (Thursday and Friday) is **Hola Mahalla** (in the Lunar Calendar) for our **Sikh** friends. Hola Mahalla begins on the first day of the lunar month of Chet in the Nanakshahi calendar and follows the Hindu festival of colours, Holi. Guru Gobind Singh started this festival as a day for Sikhs to practise their military exercises and hold mock battles. Today, Sikhs celebrate by watching and partaking in martial arts parades, led by the Nishan sahibs (triangular flag on mast denoting the existence of a Gurdwara) of the Gurdwaras. These are followed by poetry readings and music. For more see http://www.sikhiwiki.org/index.php/Hola_Mahalla

21st March (Thursday) is **Purim** for our **Jewish** friends. The story of Purim is told in the Book of Esther. Purim commemorates Esther's courage in saving the Jewish people living in Persia 2000 years ago from extermination. Esther is a Jewish girl who becomes Queen to King Xerxes of Persia, and through her bravery, is able to thwart an attempt to slaughter all the Jews living in Persia at that time. Purim is celebrated on the 14th and 15th days of Adar, the twelfth month of the Jewish calendar. The 14th day of Adar is the day that Xerxes' Prime Minister, Haman, chose for the extermination of the Jews. The word Purim means lots and refers to the lottery that Haman used to choose the date for the massacre, (Esther 3:7). Adar usually falls in March, and is synonymous with joy because it has traditionally been a month of hope and good luck for the Jewish people.

The main commandment related to Purim is to hear the reading of the Book of Esther. The Book of Esther is known as the Megillah, which means scroll. Another mitzvah (commandment) is that Jewish people should eat, drink and be merry at Purim. It is customary to hold carnival-like celebrations on Purim, to perform plays and parodies. Last but not least, Jews are commanded to send gifts of money, food or drink, and make donations to charity. More at <http://www.jewfaq.org/holiday9.htm>

25th March (Monday) is **The Annunciation of the Lord/ Christian (Anglican)**. Lady Day celebrates the angel Gabriel announcing to Mary that she is to bear a child and Mary's response in the Magnificat. The day provides an opportunity to focus on the doctrine of the incarnation. Gabriel told Mary to name her son Jesus, meaning "Saviour". It is one of the twelve Great Feasts of the church year. Many Christians observe this event with the Feast of the Annunciation on 25 March, nine full months before Christmas, the birthday of Jesus. The feast of the Annunciation is usually moved in the Catholic Church, Anglican and Lutheran liturgical calendars when this date would fall during Holy Week or Easter Week or on a Sunday. The Eastern Orthodox Church, Oriental Orthodoxy and Eastern Catholic Churches do not move the feast, having special combined liturgies for those years when the Annunciation coincides with another feast. For more: <https://www.cute-calendar.com/event/feast-of-annunciation/20433.html>

31st March (Sunday) is **Lady Day Secular**. This day commemorates the crucifixion of Jesus. Meditative services are held in church to mark the time that Jesus spent on the cross. In the western Liturgical year, Lady Day is the traditional name of the Feast of the Annunciation of the Blessed Virgin in some English-speaking countries. It is the first of the four traditional English quarter days. The "Lady" was the Virgin Mary. The term derives from Middle English, when some nouns lost their genitive inflections. "Lady" would later gain an -s genitive ending, and therefore the name means "Lady's day."

Disclaimer:

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