

Welcome to a Year of Celebration!

Week 14: April 3-9, 2022

Celebrate Ramadan

This year, we are focusing on who God is and how we can celebrate him and the life that he offers to us. We will draw deeper into a relationship with the Lord through examining his nature and desire for personal intimacy with us as his people, and we are going to do so in such a fun way! We are going to journey in 2022 through practical ways to celebrate various holidays! We will look at many of your favorite celebrations: Christmas, Easter, Valentine's Day and much more. We will explore the historic, liturgical holidays of the year, learn about the Jewish festivals of the Bible days, and even consider some of the celebrations of other religious faiths. I'm so glad you will be on this journey with us.

In this packet, you will find some ideas for you to grow closer to God, your family, and others. Nothing is required. It is all for fun and your personal enjoyment and growth. There are enough activities that you could do one or two per day during the week if you want. If you don't want to do something, skip it. If another idea comes to mind, do it. Watch for God's abundant goodness and celebrate it.

Come Join Us as We
CELEBRATE GOD!



**"They celebrate your abundant goodness
and joyfully sing of your righteousness."**

Dr. Patrick Wilson

(Psalm 145:7)

2022



Video Devotional

Go to Patrick Wilson's YouTube page and watch the video devotional for this week: Celebrate Ramadan. Then, consider and discuss with your family/friends the following questions:

- Do you think it is appropriate to learn about and celebrate holidays of other faiths? Why or why not?
- Why do you think there was such hostility between Sarah and Hagar?
- Why do you think God told Hagar to return to Sarah?
- How did God bless Hagar and Ishmael?
- How does it make you feel to know that God is the Living One who Sees You?
- What is making you feel invisible or unappreciated?
- How can you "see" God even in the struggles you are facing?

Craft: Moon and Stars Jewelry

You can make a bracelet or necklace in a variety of ways. If you want to be more elaborate get jewelry making supplies from your local craft store. Here is a simple version:

1. Cut out a crescent moon shape and stars from the yellow card stock. Punch a hole near the top of each.
2. String beads and stars in a pattern so that the moon is in the middle of the bracelet or necklace.
3. Tie the two ends of the string so that the jewelry is the appropriate size for the recipient.

[NOTE: The most common colors in Ramadan are purple/dark violet, yellow, green and turquoise. Feel free to use whatever colors you prefer.]

Supplies:

- String or Wire
- Beads
- Card Stock
- Scissors
- Hole Punch



Foods to Prepare

Like with Lent, fasting is a prominent part of the month long Islamic holiday of Ramadan. However, Muslims fast from sunrise to sunset the entire month. So, they traditionally eat two meals a day: suhoor (just before dawn) and iftar (just after dusk). The foods that are prepared vary by region. Here are some of the most popular Ramadan dishes from various parts of the world according to thekitchn.com.

- Dahi vadey: Lentil dumplings that are soaked in a spicy yogurt sauce (India)
- Haleem: A slow-cooked stew of meat, bulgur wheat, and lentils (Middle East, India, Pakistan, and Central Asia)
- Chicken 65: Spicy, bite-sized pieces of chicken that are marinated and deep-fried (India)
- Ramazan Kebabi: A dish made with lamb, onions, yogurt, and pita bread (Turkey)
- Ful medammes: Fava beans cooked with garlic and spread on bread (North Africa)
- Paomo: A bread and mutton soup (China)
- Chapatis: Unleavened flatbread that is rolled up with vegetables and meats (India and Pakistan)
- Fattoush: A salad made of vegetables and pita bread (Lebanon and Arab countries)
- Konafah: A pastry made with phyllo dough and cheese (Middle East)
- Kolak: A fruit dessert made with palm sugar, coconut milk, and pandanus leaf. Fruits, such as jackfruit or banana, or mung beans are added (Indonesia)

Activity: Pampering

After Ramadan ends with Eid al-Fitr, women pamper themselves at the village bath or have a henna party, where an artist paints intricate designs on their fingertips, palms and soles. If that is too much, do your nails, get a massage, or spend time in the bath. Kids might even consider using temporary tattoos for the day or finger-painting. Regardless, take time for you at some point this week.



Movies to Watch

If you are movie fan, pick out a favorite movie to watch alone or with family/friends. Here are some movies that focus on Islam, but you certainly are not limited to this list. Pop some popcorn, curl up on the couch, and enjoy the show!

Islam Movies:

- Lawrence of Arabia
- The 13th Warrior
- Kingdom of Heaven
- Malcolm X
- Ali
- Body of Lies
- Aladdin
- Robin Hood: Prince of Thieves
- The Kingdom
- The Lion in the Desert
- Saladin
- The Message
- Salmon Fishing in the Yemen

Read a Children's Book

Below is a list of some of the children's books that explain Ramadan. Pick up one from the library or order it and read it with your family:

1. *Lailah's Lunchbox: A Ramadan Story* by Reem Faruqi
2. *The White Nights of Ramadan* by Maha Addasi
3. *It's Ramadan, Curious George* by H.A. Rey and Hena Khan
4. *Rashad's Ramadan and Eid-al-Fitr* by Lisa Bullard
5. *My 30 Days of Ramadan* by Solmaz Parveen
6. *My First Ramadan* by Karen Katz
7. *Under the Ramadan Moon* by Sylvia Whitman
8. *Moon Watchers: Shirin's Ramadan Miracle* by Reza Jalali
9. *Crayola Ramadan and Eid al-Fitr Colors* by Mari Schuh
10. *Ramadan Moon* by Na'ima B. Robert
11. *The Gift of Ramadan* by Rabiah York Lumbard
12. *Ramadan* by Hannah Eliot

(Children's books are great educational tools for all ages.)



Bible Study

“Then Abraham breathed his last and died at a good old age, an old man and full of years; and he was gathered to his people. His sons Isaac and Ishmael buried him in the cave of Machpelah near Mamre, in the field of Ephron son of Zohar the Hittite” (Gen. 25:8-9).

Ishmael was the firstborn son of Abraham by Sarah’s servant, Hagar. Isaac was Abraham’s son from his wife, Sarah. These two mothers became bitter rivals throughout their lives, but there is little indication that the two sons joined in this hostility (Ishmael did join in the mocking as a teenager). In fact, at the time of their father’s death, the two come together to bury him.

Certainly throughout history there have been periods of conflict between Jews (and Christians) and the Arabian people. Rather than taking sides, we should follow the example of Isaac and Ishmael who came together for the greater good.

Today, Christians and Muslims should live in peace. We should strive to model the acceptance and kindness of Christ, advocate for freedom of religion for all, and avoid stereotyping others based on their religion, nationality, or appearance. This week, consider how you can befriend the “Ishmaelites” in your life and come together for the greater good of all.

Prayer Time

The organization, Open Doors, encourages Christ followers to pray for Muslims throughout the month of Ramadan. Consider these prayer requests as you pray:

- Pray for peace, hope, and healing among people of various faiths.
- Pray that God apprehends hearts in all parts of the world during this season of prayer and fasting.
- Pray for Muslims that experience persecution in America and other countries in the world.
- Pray that God builds up Jesus followers in Muslim regions.
- Pray that God teaches us something new about his inexhaustible love for ALL of his children.



Service: Charity Jar

One of the important practices of Ramadan is giving to charity. Select a charity that is important to you. Research about the charity and share what you find with the rest of the family.

Consider making a charity jar or box for your entire family. Decorate the jar or box with craft supplies (i.e., paints, ribbons, stickers, colored pictures). Consider setting a goal for your family to give to the chosen charity. Then, encourage everyone at dinner each night to consider putting a donation into the jar, even if it is pocket change.

At the beginning of May, if the headquarters is local, find a time when you can all go and give your donation to the charity. Celebrate as a family the way that you are able to participate in helping others through the charity that you contributed to.

If you'd prefer, consider setting up a matching donation for a charity on FaceBook. It is estimated that 1.28 billion people are on FaceBook daily. That is a huge opportunity to connect others to the charity that means so much to you.

Connect: Learn from a Muslim

This week, reach out to someone that you know who is a Muslim. Respect their fast and avoid asking them to meet for lunch or dinner. Instead, ask to spend some time with them to learn about Ramadan and their Islamic faith tradition.

Here are some opening questions you might consider:

- What does Ramadan mean to you?
- What practices do you follow during Ramadan?
- How does your family join in this celebration?
- What benefit comes from your practice of Ramadan?

Watch for commonalities and shared values in the conversation.





Worship

Carve out some time to listen to worship music, hum or sing along. Here are some great songs to get you started. These songs focus on Jesus as King over all people and everything. Look them up on YouTube if you don't have them in your music repertoire.

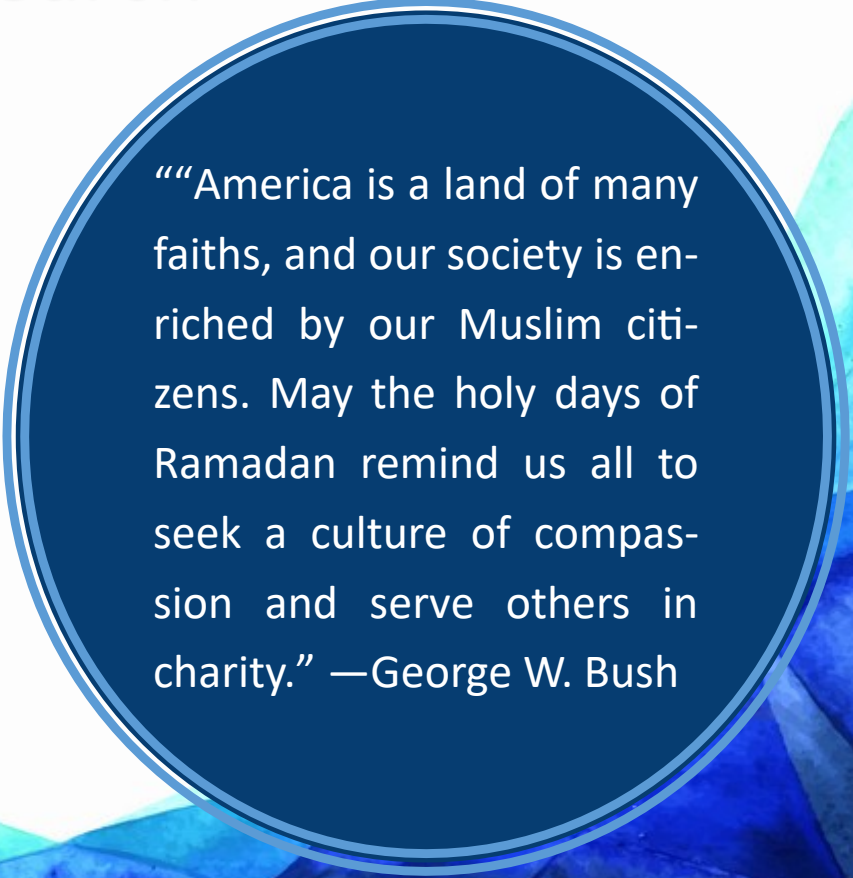
Pick your own songs and spend time worshipping and celebrating who God is to you and all the ways that he has blessed your life.

King Jesus Worship Songs:

- Revelation Song
- King of Kings
- How Great is our God
- King of My Heart
- Be Thou My Vision
- All Hail King Jesus
- Come Thou Long Expected Jesus
- All Hail the Power of Jesus' Name
- Crown Him with Many Crowns
- All Creatures of our God and King
- King Jesus

Challenge: Research the Crusades

To go the extra mile in understanding the tensions between Muslims and Christians, spend some time studying the Crusades, attempts of European Christians to overtake the Holy Lands from Muslim Arabs or Egyptian occupants. Consider how Zionism was a major motivation behind these wars. Here is a short video from the History Channel to get you started: <https://www.history.com/topics/middle-ages/mankind-the-story-of-all-of-us-videos-the-crusades-video>



““America is a land of many faiths, and our society is enriched by our Muslim citizens. May the holy days of Ramadan remind us all to seek a culture of compassion and serve others in charity.” —George W. Bush