



Sustainable Holidays!

Holidays are an integral part of our faith life. These important dates commemorate foundational religious events that connect us to the ancestors of our faith and to our religious community. Holidays are an opportunity to learn and teach, to pass down and start traditions, to deepen our faith and strengthen our relationships with family and friends. When we mindfully plan and celebrate, holidays support our wellbeing. The materialistic and consumeristic mainstream US culture encourages us to rush, be stressed, and go into debt on stuff that does not last or support the healing of the earth. As people of many faiths, we are invited to mindfully consider every aspect of our holidays and to honor the Creator and Creation through our celebrations.

Traditions:

- Learn about and pass on religious traditions
- Attend worship services with family and friends
- Invite people who are alone to your celebration
- Go for a hike or walk
- Play board games, do a group puzzle or scavenger hunt
- Lead a family art project
- Volunteer together

Decorations:

- Create or purchase natural decorations, avoiding plastics
- Use recycled paper, glass jars, fabrics, ribbons and more as décor materials
- Use LED or solar lights, recycle lights after the holiday
- Turn off the lights at night or use timers
- Use beeswax or soy candles, avoiding harmful additives
- Purchase or rent a live potted tree that can then be planted
- Purchase a live tree from a sustainable tree farm
- Decorate outside for the animals with popcorn and berries, and natural bird feeders

Shopping:

- Make a list, start early, be thoughtful
- Support Local artists at art fairs and small businesses
- Avoid expedited/ overnight shipping + consolidate your online purchases

Gifts:

- Holiday and Greeting Cards
 - Make your own from scratch or by reusing old cards
 - Purchase from a local artist
 - Send electronic cards, Focus on quality presents, not quantity
- Gift Wrapping
 - Use recycled or repurposed paper
 - Wrap in cloth
 - Use grocery bags or newspaper
 - Reuse gift bags
- Pay for experiences, such as
 - Cooking or Art classes
 - Museum or Cultural Site Admission
 - Short or Long Trips
 - Subscriptions to Magazines, Educational Apps
- Gift Hope by making donations to Honor loved ones
- Provide time from a landscape artist who uses native plants
- Purchase gift certificates from plant nurseries toward native trees and plants
- Give Homemade Items that you knit, sew, bake, build, or create
- Repurposed or Thrift Items to give
- Give durable and sustainably sourced items made of natural products
- Support Local, Minority and Women Owned Businesses
- Send digital gift cards that support sustainable or charitable causes

Holiday Meal:

- Center plant-based foods, serve less animal products
- Prioritize seasonal foods
- Purchase from farmer's markets only what you will eat
- Use "real" dishware
- Eat or donate your leftovers
- Compost food scraps
- Buy eco-chocolates
- Serve eco-coffee

Travel:

- Be thoughtful
- Consider carpooling, taking a train, bus, or car

