Lailat al Miraj

In support of our staff, students, faculty and postdocs, this information is offered as a resource about the Muslim observance of Lailat al Miraj.

APRIL 12-13, 2019

HISTORY AND MEANING

Lailat al Miraj celebrates the Prophet Muhammad's nighttime journey from Mecca to Jerusalem, where he then ascended to heaven. While sleeping in the Ka'bah, the sacred shrine of Mecca, Muhammad was visited by the archangels Jibril and Mikal. The archangels purified his soul and filled him with wisdom. He was then transported from Mecca on the back of the winged Buraq to Jerusalem. There, he ascended to heaven, met the previous prophets on the different levels of heaven, and eventually met God. He was then instructed on the importance of reciting salat, or prayer, five times a day. This is a very important and sacred day in the history of Islam.

TYPICAL OBSERVANCES

- The story of Muhammad’s nighttime journey is often read at mosques or at home to celebrate this day.
- Special additions can be made to nighttime prayers.

TIPS FOR SUPPORTING THE VANDERBILT COMMUNITY

- Community members should be aware of Lailat al Miraj and how they can impact their Muslim colleagues.
- Ask those in observance how they can be supported.
- While students are not automatically excused from class for this observance, they may work with their course instructors to make accommodations. Graduate and professional students must refer to their own school and departmental vacation policies and calendars for more specific information.
- Staff members may request paid time off for this observance. Support their preference to take leave for their religious observance.

RESOURCES FOR MANAGING WELL-BEING AND MENTAL HEALTH

People feel many types of emotions during the holidays—joy, peace, stress and depression, to name a few. Whatever you feel, know you are not alone, and Vanderbilt has resources to help you through these challenges.

Faculty, Staff and Postdocs
Work/Life Connections-EAP
(615) 936-1327
vumc.org/health-wellness/work-life

Students
Office of Student Care Coordination
(615) 343-9355
vanderbilt.edu/carecoordination

This resource is part of a toolkit created by Equity, Diversity and Inclusion to highlight religious and cultural observances that members of our community may practice. This toolkit is not meant to be exhaustive, but instead to provide a general overview of how we can support staff, faculty, students and postdocs. We continually refine this information and welcome your suggestions.

For more information, please contact Equity, Diversity and Inclusion at edi@vanderbilt.edu. For more information on the university’s policy on religious holy days and observances, contact the Office of the University Chaplain and Religious Life at religiouslife@vanderbilt.edu or Human Resources at human.resources@vanderbilt.edu.