

Enjoy Holidays: Reflect, Recharge, Celebrate

By Jeff Thomas

Editor's note: With much appreciation for the author of this article, we also remember another holiday—New Year's Day, celebrated throughout the world—that reflects the birth of Jesus 2026 years ago. For short film versions, see The Shepherd (<https://watch.thechosen.tv/video/184683594365>) and The Messengers (<https://watch.thechosen.tv/video/184683594463>).

The holiday season is a time of joy, reflection, and unity, marked by diverse celebrations that hold profound significance for millions of people worldwide. Across cultures and religions, the holidays remind us of the values that unite humanity: love, gratitude, and hope. Beyond their religious or cultural roots, they offer an opportunity to connect with loved ones, recharge, and prepare for the coming year.

Religious Celebrations and Their Significance

The holidays are steeped in religious traditions that offer spiritual guidance and meaning.

Christmas, celebrated by Christians, commemorates the birth of Jesus Christ, emphasizing themes of goodwill, generosity, and divine love. For many, the nativity story and traditions like midnight Mass and Advent are reminders of faith and hope.

Hanukkah, the Jewish Festival of Lights, celebrates the rededication of the Second Temple in Jerusalem and the miracle of the menorah's oil lasting eight days. This holiday symbolizes resilience and divine intervention, with traditions like lighting the menorah, playing dreidel, and enjoying foods fried in oil.

Kwanzaa, a weeklong celebration honoring African heritage and culture, is rooted in the principles of unity, self-determination, and collective responsibility. Founded by Dr. Maulana Karenga in 1966, Kwanzaa encourages reflection on shared values and the importance of community.

Eid al-Fitr and Eid al-Adha are significant Islamic holidays. Eid al-Fitr marks the end of Ramadan, a month of fasting, prayer, and reflection, while Eid al-Adha commemorates the willingness of Prophet Ibrahim (Abraham) to sacrifice his son in obedience to God.



These holidays emphasize charity, gratitude, and devotion.

Diwali, celebrated by Hindus, Sikhs, Jains, and Buddhists, is the Festival of Lights that signifies the triumph of light over darkness and good over evil.

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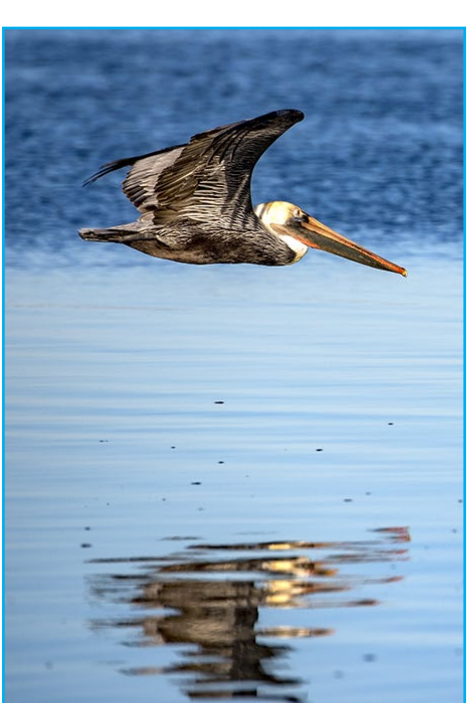
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VIRTUAL EVENTS FOR YOUR BUSINESS

2026

Federal Contracting for Small Businesses Webinar
Tuesday, January 13, 2026, 11:00 am–12:30 pm CST Online
Main Sponsor(s): US Small Business Administration
Contact: Irene Gonzalez, 208-334-1673, irene.gonzalez@sba.gov
Fee: Free; registration required
Learn the essentials of federal contracting for small businesses. This event will cover the basics of navigating the federal contracting process, as well as the various certifications available to help your small business succeed in the government marketplace. Certifications include: 8(a) Business Development Program, HUBZone Certification, Woman Owned Small Business (WOSB/EDWOSB), and Veteran Owned Small Business (VOSB). Don't miss this opportunity to gain valuable insights and resources to help your small business. Register at <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/federal-contracting-basics-and-certifications-for-small-businesses-tickets-1977729716822>

SBA 101: Introduction to SBA Programs Webinar
Thursday, January 15, 2026, 9:00 am–10:00 am CST Online
Main Sponsor(s): US Small Business Administration, Rhode Island District Office
Contact: Brian Hopkins, 401-528-4575, brian.hopkins@sba.gov
Fee: Free; registration required
This free workshop, presented by the Rhode Island

District Office, is designed to help entrepreneurs understand the various SBA programs and services available to help them as they start, expand, grow, and recover their businesses. This overview presentation covers: Introduction to the SBA; SBA Resource Partner Network—Business Training and One-on-One Counseling; Selling to the Federal Government—SBA Contracting Certification Programs; Access to Capital—Loan and Surety Bond Programs; International Trade Assistance; Emergency Preparedness and Disaster Assistance Loans. Register online for the free workshop webinar at <https://www.sba.gov/event/77580>

Federal Contracting: Woman-Owned Small Business (WOSB) Certification Program Webinar
Tuesday, March 17, 2026, 1:00 pm–3:00 pm CST Online
Main Sponsor(s): US Small Business Administration
Contact: Patrice Dozier, patrice.dozier@sba.gov
Fee: Free; registration required
SBA is creating a space for Woman-Owned Small Businesses, via WOSB certification! Are you a woman owner of a small business? The federal government's goal is to award at least five percent of all federal contracting dollars to woman-owned small businesses each year. Join us for training on how to register for SBA's Woman-Owned Small Business (WOSB) program, which helps eligible small businesses to qualify for federal contracting opportunities. The monthly sessions include an overview of the self-certification process, and a discussion of the NAICS codes that qualify as WOSB or EDWOSB. Register at <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/woman-owned-small-business-wosb-certification-program-tickets-1977995825761>

CERTIFICATION

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