

# CELEBRATE RAMADAN

## Personal Ramadan Story

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In 2021, Ramadan will begin on April 13. Muslims will fast from all food and drink from pre-dawn until sunset, about 15 hours, for a period of 30 days. While many would see this as a hardship and struggle, our family looks forward to Ramadan every year. It is a time to train ourselves both physically and spiritually and grow closer to God and each other.

In addition to fasting, we work hard to avoid any negative acts such as gossiping, lying or arguing, a not so easy task during quarantine. We increase in good works such as prayer and charity. We welcome Ramadan as an opportunity for self-reflection, and spiritual improvement- a sort of boot camp. In our family, everyone is now at the age where they are able to fast the entire month and share goals to accomplish, both personally and as a family.

We have a pre-dawn meal together, share in the cooking and break our fast together at sunset. Ramadan is also usually a highly social time as we invite friends and family to break fast together and meet for prayers at the mosque every night. Last year and likely this one as well, Muslims have had to try to stay socially and spiritually engaged in different ways. We have made use of YouTube talks, Zoom parties, and Facetime with grandparents. We have started praying the night prayers in a congregation of 5 rather than 500. In place of feeding friends and family, we have donated to food pantries and helped with distribution for the hungry. Although we miss the Mosque and our beautiful community and look forward to returning soon, we have also learned that the essence of Ramadan lives within our hearts.

