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Postal Service Commemorates Two Most Important Muslim Festivals With New Eid Greetings Stamp

On Sale Today Nationwide

*Special Ceremony to be Held at Muhammad Ali Center,
Louisville, KY, Monday, June 13*

DEARBORN, MI — The U.S. Postal Service today dedicated the Eid Greetings Forever Stamp recognizing the two most important festivals — or eids — in the Islamic calendar: Eid al-Fitr and Eid al-Adha. The ceremony was held at the Islamic Center of America in Dearborn.

In addition, a special Eid Greetings stamp ceremony will be held Monday, June 13, at 11 a.m. EDT at the Muhammad Ali Center in Louisville, KY.

The Postal Service has issued stamps to commemorate these two Islamic holidays since 2001. As with the previous Eid releases, today's stamp features the work of world-renowned calligrapher, Mohamed Zakariya of Arlington, VA, who worked with art director Ethel Kessler to create this design.

"As one of the nation's oldest public service institutions, the Postal Service considers it a tremendous honor to celebrate the diversity of this great nation through our commemorative stamps," said Detroit Postmaster Derron Bray, who dedicated the stamp.

"Ours is truly a world culture, and our stamps allow us to weave together the unique threads of our national tapestry," Bray said. "The Eid Greetings stamp exemplifies the events and cultures that make America unique in the world of history."

Bray was joined at the stamp dedication by Barbara McQuade, U.S. Attorney for the Eastern District of Michigan; Sam Salamey, chief judge, Dearborn's 19th District Court in Michigan; Albert Harp, retired educator and emeritus trustee, Islamic Center of America; Samie Rehman, manager, Revenue and Forecasting, Postal Service; Fouad Khalil, communication specialist,

Information Technology, Postal Service; and Zena Elayan, student, Chamberlain College.

The ceremony also included performances by the Muslim American Youth Academy (MAYA) Students, Islamic Center of America; and the Boy Scouts of America, Troop 1139.

On Eid al-Fitr and Eid al-Adha, Muslims wish each other *Eidukum mubarak*, the phrase shown in Islamic calligraphy on the stamp, evoking centuries of tradition. *Eidukum mubarak* translates literally as “May your Eid be bountiful (or blessed),” a phrase that can be applied to both Eid al-Fitr and Eid al-Adha.

The first day of the Muslim lunar month of Shawwal, Eid al-Fitr signifies “The Feast of Breaking the Fast.” This festival marks the end of Ramadan, the month of fasting. As prescribed in the Qur’an, the holy book of Islam, fasting during Ramadan begins from just before first light until sunset, when Muslims must abstain not only from food and drink, but also from evil thoughts, sexual activity, and smoking. Eid al-Fitr is observed by offering special alms with prayers, feasting, exchanging gifts and visiting family and friends.

Signifying “The Feast of the Sacrifice,” Eid al-Adha occurs approximately two months and 10 days after Eid al-Fitr. Eid al-Adha comes at the end of the hajj, the annual period of pilgrimage to the holy city of Mecca, and commemorates Ibrahim’s willingness to sacrifice his son Ismail. (This is the Muslim account of the story of Abraham and Isaac, which also is well known in Judeo Christian tradition.) Eid al-Adha is celebrated with prayers and social gatherings and traditionally includes the sacrifice of a lamb (or any other animal permitted for food in Islam) as an act of thanksgiving for Allah’s mercy. The sacrificial animal is distributed among family, friends and the poor.

In 2016, Eid al-Fitr will be celebrated July 6 in North America and Eid al-Adha will be celebrated Sept. 12. In 2017, Eid al-Fitr will be celebrated June 25 in North America and Eid al-Adha will be celebrated Sept. 1. These dates, which are based on geographical location and predicted sightings of the moon, are preliminary and may vary slightly as each festival approaches.

Customers may purchase the Eid Greetings Forever Stamp at usps.com/stamps, at the [Postal Store usps.com/shop](https://usps.com/shop), by calling 800-STAMP24 (800-782-6724) and at Post Offices nationwide. A variety of stamps and collectibles also is available at ebay.com/stamps.

Ordering First-Day-of-Issue Postmark

Customers have 60 days to obtain first-day-of-issue postmarks by mail. They may purchase new stamps at local Post Offices, at the Postal Store usps.com/shop or by calling 800-782-6724. They should affix the stamps to envelopes of their choice, address the envelopes to themselves or others and place them in envelopes addressed to:

Eid Greetings Stamp
3800 Greenfield Road
Dearborn, MI 48120-9998

After applying the first-day-of-issue postmark, the Postal Service will return the envelopes through the mail. There is no charge for postmarks up to a quantity of 50. For more than 50, customers are charged 5 cents each. All orders must be postmarked by Aug. 10, 2016.

Ordering First-Day Covers

The Postal Service also offers first-day covers for new stamps and stationery items postmarked with the official first-day-of-issue cancellation. Each item has an individual catalog number and is offered in the quarterly *USA Philatelic* catalog, online at usps.com/shop or by calling 800-782-6724. Customers may request a free catalog by calling 800-782-6724 or writing to:

U.S. Postal Service
Catalog Request
PO Box 219014
Kansas City, MO 64121-9014

Philatelic Products

There are five philatelic products for this stamp issue:

556206, Press Sheet with Die-cut, \$75.20.

556210, Digital Color Postmark Keepsake, \$11.95.

556216, First-Day Cover, \$0.91.

556221, Digital Color Postmark, \$1.62.

556230, Ceremony Program, \$6.95.

Many of this year's other stamps may be viewed on Facebook at facebook.com/USPSStamps or via Twitter [@USPSstamps](https://twitter.com/USPSstamps).

The Postal Service receives no tax dollars for operating expenses and relies on the sale of postage, products and services to fund its operations.

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