

Pagan Easter beliefs

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ABSTRACT (ABSTRACT)

We all know about Good Friday and Easter eggs, the big bunny and Jesus dying and coming back to life. But what you might not know is that Easter didn't start out this way. In his book, *Easter* (1984), Julian Fox tells us that Easter started as a pagan holiday to celebrate the end of winter and the coming of spring.

Now, what does this have to do with the Christian concept of Easter? When Christianity spread across Europe, it was common for believers to adapt the old pagan rites to fit with the life and teaching of Jesus. They didn't want to prevent people from honouring their spring goddess, Eostre; instead they transformed the festival into an important religious event.

What do other countries do at this time of year? In China the spring festival is called Ch'ing Ming, which means 'Pure Brightness.' In Japan it is known as Setsubun, the 'Change of Season.' Japanese people spread roasted beans around their homes and in the streets in order to drive away evil spirits so that the new season will begin well.

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FULL TEXT

We all know about Good Friday and Easter eggs, the big bunny and Jesus dying and coming back to life. But what you might not know is that Easter didn't start out this way. In his book, *Easter* (1984), Julian Fox tells us that Easter started as a pagan holiday to celebrate the end of winter and the coming of spring.

Thousands of years ago, people thought that the sun died in the winter and was reborn in spring-time. Its return was definitely cause for a big celebration. In the Middle East it was the god Adonis who died and then came back. In Rome it was Attis, the god of spring. Northern Europeans believed the goddess, Eostre, was the one who brought the world back to life in the spring. Her name later became Easter. Celebrations back then would have included dancing and feasting, and the exchange of painted eggs to symbolize new life.

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Happy Easter/Eostre to all!

ADOPT A BOOK

The Lennoxville Library is a non-profit organisation funded by a grant from the Borough of Lennoxville, by fundraising and by donations. We have a considerable collection of books in both English and French, but acquiring new books to meet the community's needs can be challenging.

That's where the annual Adopt-a-Book fundraiser steps in. Every year we display a variety of new books which are

available for adoption by the public. You choose a book that you would like to see on the library shelves and donate the purchase price. We will place your name on the inside cover to recognize your donation, and you will be the first to read the book. Or, if you like, you can make a donation to purchase another book of your choice or to help with operational expenses.

Adopt-a-Book opens on Thursday, April 16th at 7 p.m. at the library, with an evening of refreshments and an opportunity to choose your book (or books) early. However, for those who cannot attend, the fundraiser continues for another week. Come on into the library and see our display.

BOOK ENDS

-Please note that the library will be closed on Friday, April 10th, for Good Friday.

-The library's reading club, Books and Brown Bag Lunches, will meet on Wednesday, April 15th, at the library from noon until 1 p.m. Bring your lunch and share a book you have enjoyed.

-The next children's activity will take place on Saturday, April 25th, from 1:30 to 3:30 p.m. The theme will be, "Bzzzzzy Bugs," with bilingual stories and crafts.

For information on all library events, call us at 819-562-4949 or visit our website.

www.lennoxvillelibrary.ca.

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