

PLEASANT RIDGE BAPTIST CHURCH

1997 Pleasant Ridge Road

State Road, N.C. 28676

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What are the Origins of Easter?

The origins of Easter are obscure. It is often assumed that the name *Easter* comes from a pagan figure called Eastre (or Eostre) who was celebrated as the goddess of spring by the Saxons of Northern Europe. According to the theory, Eastre was the “goddess of the east (from where the sun rises),” her symbol was the hare (a symbol of fertility), and a festival called Eastre was held during the spring equinox by the Saxons to honor her. This theory on the origin of Easter is highly problematic, however.

The major problem with associating the origin of Easter with the pagan goddess Eastre/Eostre is that we have no hard evidence that such a goddess was ever worshiped by anyone, anywhere. The only mention of Eastre comes from a passing reference in the writings of the [Venerable Bede](#), an eighth-century monk and historian. Bede wrote, “Eosturmonath has a name which is now translated as ‘Paschal month,’ and which was once called after a goddess of theirs named Eostre, in whose honor feasts were celebrated in that month. Now they designate the Paschal season by her name, calling the joys of the new rite by the time-honoured name of the old observance” (*De Temporum Ratione*). And that’s it. Eostre is not mentioned in any other ancient writing; we have found no shrines, no altars, nothing to document the worship of Eastre. It is possible that Bede simply extrapolated the name of the goddess from the name of the month.

In the nineteenth century, the German folklorist Jakob Grimm researched the origins of the German name for Easter, *Ostern*, which in Old High German was *Ostarâ*. Both words are related to the German word for “east,” *ost*. Grimm, while admitting that he could find no solid link between Easter and pagan celebrations, made the assumption that *Ostara* was probably the name of a German goddess. Like Eastre, the goddess Ostara was based entirely on supposition and conjecture; before Grimm’s *Deutsche Mythologie* (1835), there was no mention of the goddess in any writings.

So, while the word *Easter* most likely comes from an old word for “east” or the name of a springtime month, we don’t have much evidence that suggests anything more. Assertions that Easter is pagan or that Christians have appropriated a goddess-holiday are untenable. Today, however, it seems that Easter might as well have pagan origins, since it has been almost completely commercialized—the world’s focus is on Easter eggs, Easter candy, and the Easter bunny.

Christians celebrate Easter as the resurrection of Christ on the third day after His crucifixion. It is the oldest Christian holiday and the most important day of the church year because of the significance of the crucifixion and [resurrection of Jesus Christ](#), the events upon which Christianity is based ([1 Corinthians 15:14](#)). In some Christian traditions, Easter Sunday is preceded by the season of [Lent](#), a 40-day period of fasting and repentance culminating in Holy Week and followed by a 50-day Easter season that stretches from Easter to Pentecost.

Because of the commercialization and possible pagan origins of Easter, many churches prefer to call it “Resurrection Sunday.” The rationale is that, the more we focus on Christ and His work on our behalf, the better. Paul says that without the resurrection of Christ our faith is futile ([1 Corinthians 15:17](#)). What more wonderful reason could we have to celebrate! Whether we call it “Easter” or “Resurrection Sunday,” what is important is the reason for our celebration, which is that Christ is alive, making it possible for us to have eternal life ([Romans 6:4](#))!

Should we celebrate Easter or allow our children to go on Easter egg hunts? This is a question both parents and church leaders struggle with. Ultimately, it comes down to a matter of conscience ([Romans 14:5](#)). There is nothing essentially evil about painting and hiding eggs and having children search for them. What is important is our focus. If our focus is on Christ, our children can be taught to understand that the eggs are just a fun game. Children should know the true meaning of the day, and parents and the church have a responsibility to teach the true meaning. In the end, participation in Easter egg hunts and other secular traditions must be left up to the discretion of parents.



God's Blessings Mar. 6, 2022

Budget Needs:	\$7,265.61
Budget Receipt:	\$15,699.00
Cemetery fund in memory of Clyde & Lula Norman	\$900.00
Cemetery fund	\$2200.00

God's Blessings Mar. 13, 2022

Budget Needs:	\$7,265.61
Budget Receipt:	\$6,021.00
Annie Armstrong:	\$125.00
Baptist Men:	\$17.00
Sunday School Attendance	104
Worship Attendance	183

God's Blessings Mar. 20, 2022

Budget Needs:	\$7,265.61
Budget Receipt:	\$9,279.00
Annie Armstrong:	\$770.00
Lottie Moon:	\$100.00
NC Children's Home:	\$100.00
Pure Water Pure Love	\$100.00
Sunday School Attendance	94
Worship Attendance	168

God's Blessings Mar. 27, 2022

Budget Needs:	\$7,265.61
Budget Receipt:	\$10,772.00
Annie Armstrong:	\$895.00
Sunday School Attendance	101
Worship Attendance	172

PRBC BUSINESS MEETING HIGHLIGHTS

- The average Sunday School attendance for January 2022 was 70.
- Handbells are back. Handbell practice will be on Sunday mornings at 9:00.
- Sanctuary lighting has been dim. Update: all the bulbs have been changed to make a brighter sanctuary.
- Online giving platform approved. Update: online giving will be implemented sometime in the future.
- Robin Callaway has accepted the position of VBS director. She will be assisted by Chelsea Cockerham.
- There was a Baptist on Missions Rally in Boonville on Thursday, February 24.
- The ARK meal was February 22, and was led by Debbie Garner. Volunteers are still needed for this ministry.
- The Baptist Men were able to clean up a yard for Alene Luffman recently. There are also several smaller projects in progress.
- The High Spirits visited several of our shut-in members to present them with "Token of Appreciation" gifts this past Saturday. Several people expressed their delight and appreciation for these visits and gifts. There is also a blood drive on April 7.
- The Senior Saints trips and gatherings have been on hold recently due to increasing COVID numbers. There are some trips being planned and more information will be available soon.
- Pastor John and Cindy have purchased a home in State Road at 109 Eldridge Lane. They appreciate all the prayers for this opportunity at PRBC and are continuing to be grateful and amazed by God's blessings as they continue to transition to NC. Pastor John is enjoying the Wednesday evening services. Some new members have been added to the church recently, and this is a wonderful blessing and encouragement. Continue to pray specifically for them and our church.

Tri-C for March: Shampoo Donations: 36 Pounds

Ark Meal for Apr 19: Brandon and Regina Davis

Deacon Election: The Deacon Body present Kevin Calloway as the nominee for Deacon position #9. We are thankful that Kevin has agreed to serve on our Deacon Board and will be confirmed by church vote on April 3 at the 11am Service. Please be in prayer for Kevin and family.

Annual Blood Drive: Mark your calendar for Thursday, April 7, 2:00 until 6:30 for our annual blood drive. Sponsored by the High Spirits. If you have questions, please contact Pat Luffman.

Youth Trip: to Snowbird Wilderness Outfitters, Fri. April 8-10th. Please see Pastor Brandon for more info.

Easter Celebration: HE LIVES! Come join us as we celebrate the goodness of the Lord and the resurrection of Jesus Christ. Including the Easter Story, treats, Easter egg hunt and crafts! Sat. April 16, 3:00-5:00pm. It will be a great time for all the family!

Annie Armstrong Easter Offering : NOW THROUGH END OF APRIL The Annie Armstrong Easter Offering goes to train, resource, and send more than 5,000 missionaries across the United States and Canada.



LifeLine Offering \$1626.17!

- ✻ A Thank You
- ✻ PRBC, the vase of cut flowers were beautiful. They brightened up our house during the death of my beloved husband, John Chambers. Thank you so much for thinking of us during this time. Love, Bobbie Chambers

- **Blessing Box Supplies: With the increase in gas and grocery prices and the growing needs in the community, it's required again to concentrate on the Blessing Box. Please consider making donations the first week of every month, but of course you may contribute at any time.**
- **Would you please consider donating non-perishable foods, canned foods, small personal care items. There is a tote in the vestibule for your donations. Please contact Keely Tharp**

Pastor's Corner

As we flip a page in our calendar, we are coming up on the most important celebration day for every Christian this month, Resurrection Sunday! The assurance of Eternal life is because our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ ROSE FROM THE DEAD! As a church we will celebrate and rejoice in our Savior and His work of atonement on that cross and rejoice in the day of His resurrection. This is what the plans are for the Easter Week:

- There will be **NO Wednesday** Evening services on the 13th.
- There will be a special Lord's Table service on **Thursday** the 14th at 7:00 pm.
- Family Easter event Saturday 3 pm - 5 pm.
- Sunday Morning will start with a Sunrise service across the street at 6:30 am.
- Church family breakfast in the fellowship hall at 7:30 am.
- Regular Sunday school at 10:00 am and Worship service at 11:00 am.

I trust you will be in prayer for the great season... HE IS RISEN!

IN-JOY! Pastor John