

----- Through The Years -----

With the Easter season upon us, we are reminded of many traditions and customs that are familiar to our families. Wearing your Easter finery, sunrise services, Easter baskets, and Easter flowers are some of the ways we celebrate the Resurrection. The universality of Easter celebrations is reflected in the many different traditions observed around the world.

In England, there is an activity known as Egg Jarping. It's also called egg tapping, egg fighting, egg knocking, and egg boxing. It is a game that pits two people, each with a hard-boiled egg, who then smash the eggs against each other to see whose eggshell remains intact. The winner is the person whose eggshell doesn't crack. It sounds weird, but there are actual rules to this contest. The World Jarping Championship takes place each Easter in Durham, England. This game is also played in the U. S. in New York City by the Saint Nicholas Society. This organization is made up of men who are descendants of early Dutch and English settlers of New York City. One of its prominent members was Theodore Roosevelt.

The children of France don't get their chocolates and presents from the Easter bunny but the Easter bells. No church bells may ring between Holy (Maundy) Thursday and the Easter Vigil due to the solemnity of the time of Jesus' crucifixion and death. A legend evolved that said the church bells weren't rung because they grew wings and flew to Rome to be blessed by the Pope. They returned on Easter with goodies for the children and to ring the good news of the Resurrection.

While India is not a predominately Christian nation, elaborate Easter festivities still occur. The State of Goa in Western India celebrates with plays, songs, and dances. People exchange chocolates, flowers, and lanterns as gifts. Similar celebrations also take place in Northeast India.

Ethiopians refer to their Easter celebration as Fassika. They wear white clothes called Yabesha Libs. The Ethiopians observe the Eastern Orthodox calendar; thus their Easter this year is April 28. While a large festive meal is eaten on Easter, on Holy Thursday a special dish of beans mixed with wheat and then boiled is consumed. It is believed this food symbolized the Old Testament Passover.

These are just a few examples of the many Easter traditions observed all over the world. While they differ greatly their purpose is the same, to celebrate the Resurrection of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ. He is Risen! He is Risen Indeed!

Do you have any MUMC history you would like to share with the congregation? Please send it to:

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