

Reformers propose astronomical observation–based Easter date

Various church denominations have suggested reforms for the date of Easter.

In 1997, the World Council of Churches suggested direct astronomical observation to replace an equation-based method of calculating Easter. This would have solved the Easter date difference between churches that observe the Gregorian calendar and those that observe the Julian calendar.

The reform was supposed to go into effect in 2001, but has not.

There was another suggestion in the United Kingdom, where the Easter Act of 1928 was established to allow the Easter date to be fixed on the first Sunday after the second Saturday in April. This was not implemented, although



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The Sky's the Limit

it is active on the U.K. Statute Law Database.

Technically, the observation method would be correct, but many, including me, can see the advantage of having it set on the calendar like Christmas and New Year.

The scripture gives no comment on setting a date.

Sky watch

On Friday, April 7, Jupiter will shine brightly with its four usual moons around.

On Sunday, April 16, look southeast after midnight and watch the moon and Saturn rise close together into the dawn.

On Sunday, April 30 before sunrise, Venus will seem almost blinding in a telescope.

Lyrids meteor shower, also known as April shooting stars, is produced by dust particles left behind by a comet. Look east into the constellation of Lyra near Vega and you should be able to catch 10-20 meteors per hour on average with rare surges of up to 100 with no moonlight.

Public events

Check out the monthly stargazing event hosted by the Calgary branch of the Royal Astronomical Society of Canada.

The event starts at 7:30 p.m. on Friday, April 14.

A brief indoor presentation on “Easter and the Stars” will be followed by a special presentation by Vulcan Tourism. We will then begin observing through our resident 11-inch Celestron telescope.

All are welcome to this free event. Refreshments are provided. Come early as space fills up by the time we get underway.

Experts are on hand the second Friday of each month to explain the heavens, teach telescoping skills and help you develop your knowledge of our sky.

For further information, contact Vulcan Tourism at 403-485-2994 or visit the website www.vulcantourism.com.

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