

**GENERAL CONVENTION OF THE EPISCOPAL CHURCH 2009  
ARCHIVES' RESEARCH REPORT**

**RESOLUTION NO.:** 2009-D008  
**TITLE:** Add Thecla to Calendar  
**PROPOSER:** The Rev. Ruth A. Meyers  
**COMMITTEE:** Prayer Book, Liturgy & Church Music

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**Directly Related:** (attached)

None

**Indirectly Related:**

None

*In preparing this report, the Archives researched the resolutions of General Convention for the period 1976 through 2006, selecting "direct" resolutions that have a substantive bearing on the proposed legislation. Committee members who are interested in obtaining copies of "indirectly related" resolutions, legislative history before 1976, or who require other research assistance should contact the Archives at 800-525-9329 before Convention or at Convention in the General Convention Secretariat.*

TOPIC/TITLE: Add Thecla to calendar  
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C&C PAGE:  
BB PAGE:

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1 *Resolved*, the House of \_\_\_\_\_ concurring, That the 76th General Convention propose  
2 the commemoration of Thecla on September 23 in the Calendar of the Church Year and  
3 authorize trial use thereof for the triennium 2010-2012, with the following propers:  
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5 I God of liberating power, thou didst raise up thy servant Thecla, who allowed no  
6 obstacle or peril to inhibit her from bearing witness to new life in Jesus Christ: Empower  
7 courageous evangelists amongst us, that men and women everywhere may experience the  
8 freedom thou dost offer them in thy kingdom; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who livest  
9 and reignest with thee and the Holy Ghost, one God, for ever and ever. Amen.

10  
11 II God of liberating power, you raised up your servant Thecla, who allowed no obstacle  
12 or peril to inhibit her from bearing witness to new life in Jesus Christ: Empower  
13 courageous evangelists among us, that men and women everywhere may experience the  
14 freedom you offer to them in the realm of God; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives  
15 and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. Amen.

16  
17 Psalm 91:9-16

18 Exodus 1:15-21

19 2 Timothy 3:10-12

20 John 4:23-30, 39-42

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22 Preface of Apostles and Ordinations  
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EXPLANATION:

Thecla, widely known as a disciple of the apostle Paul, was the most popular female saint after Mary in the early church. In the contemporary church, the Seabury-Western Theological Seminary community has commemorated her for several years. Thecla's story is found in the second-century Acts of Paul and Thecla. According to this narrative, upon hearing Paul preach the gospel, Thecla abandoned her plans for marriage and followed Paul. Condemned to burn at the stake, her life was saved by a miraculous thunderstorm. As her adventures continued, she was thrown to the beasts in the local arena. There she was protected by a

*Endorser(s)*: The Rev. Jan "Raisin" Horn, The Rev. Leigh F. Waggoner

fierce lioness. Finally, she threw herself into a pool with ravenous seals, who were struck dead by lightning. Thereupon, Thecla baptized herself in the water. The governor then released her, and she went on to travel and preach the gospel. According to Tertullian (writing in about the year 200), early Christian women appealed to Thecla's example to defend women's freedom to teach and to baptize. A shrine to Thecla in Seleucia (Asia Minor) became a popular pilgrimage site in the fourth and fifth centuries. Devotion to Thecla from Gaul to Palestine is also evident in literature, art, and the practice of naming children after her. Her image appeared on wall paintings, clay flasks, oil lamps, stone reliefs, textile curtains, and other media. Including Thecla in the calendar of the Episcopal Church would add a saint who reminds us that women's ministry was important in Christian antiquity, and who inspired generations of Christians, particularly women, by her courageous and bold evangelism.