

General Convention of The Episcopal Church 2022 Archives' Research Report

Resolution No.: 2022-C014
Title: On Addressing the Anti-Semitic Impact of Lectionary Readings for Holy Week
Proposer: Washington
Topic: Liturgy, Racism

Directly Related: (Attached)

2015-A062 Address Christian Anti-Judaism in Liturgical Texts
2012-A058 Address Christian Anti-Judaism
2009-A089 Direct Completion of Tasks Assigned to the Commission on Liturgy and Music
2006-C001 Develop Materials to Address Anti-Jewish Prejudice

Indirectly Related: (Available in the [Acts of Convention](#) database, searchable by resolution number)

None

In preparing this report, the Archives researched the resolutions in the Acts of Convention database for the period 1973 through 2018, selecting “direct” resolutions that have a substantive bearing on the proposed legislation. The “direct” resolutions are attached and “indirect” resolutions are available in the Acts of Convention database. Committee members who require other research assistance should contact the Archives through the [Research Request Form](#) or call 800-525-9329.

C014 - On Addressing the Anti-Semitic Impact of Lectionary Readings for Holy Week

Final Status: Not Yet Finalized

Proposed by: Washington

Requests New Interim Body: No

Amends C&C or Rules of Order: No

Has Budget Implications: No

Cost:

HiA: HB

Legislative Committee Currently Assigned: 12 - Prayer Book, Liturgy & Music

Completion Status: Incomplete

Latest House Action: N/A

Supporting Documents: No

Resolution Text

Resolved, the House of _____ concurring,

That the 80th General Convention direct the Standing Commission on Liturgy and Music to recommend revisions to the Church's appointed Lectionary readings for Holy Week to remedy passages that use language that has been interpreted as anti-Semitic while maintaining the meaning and intent of the original Greek texts, and that the Episcopal Church advocate that other denominations using the Revised Common Lectionary consider the same changes.

Explanation

Annually, during Holy Week, the Episcopal Church requires us to hear language denigrating Jews in chapters 18 & 19 of John's Gospel. In 2006-2015, four General Conventions recognized that this language has been used to empower anti-Semitism and called on the Standing Commission on Liturgy and Music (SCLM) to educate the Church by providing context for the language (https://episcopalarchives.org/cgi-bin/acts/acts_resolution.pl?resolution=2006-C001, https://www.episcopalarchives.org/cgi-bin/acts/acts_resolution.pl?resolution=2009-A089, https://www.episcopalarchives.org/cgi-bin/acts/acts_resolution.pl?resolution=2012-A058, https://www.episcopalarchives.org/cgi-bin/acts/acts_resolution.pl?resolution=2015-A062). An example of the SCLM's actions is at: <https://standingcommissiononliturgyandmusic.org/2013/03/19/anti-judaism-issues-in-the-scriptures-for-holy-week-by-louis-weil/>.

This year Presiding Bishop Curry has proclaimed that the Church must stand against the rising tide of racism and anti-Semitism. (<https://episcopalchurch.org/library/article/presiding-bishop-joins-social-media-campaign-counter-anti-semitism-wake-attacks>) In the face of this rising tide, we need to do more than merely provide context and education because context does not stand on the same level as proclamation of Holy Scripture. The Cathedral's recent decision to remove windows with confederate flags stands as an example of recognizing when "context is not enough." In addition, there is no practical way to ensure that every church provides the necessary context. Bulletin notes and sermon explanations are not accessible to all, such as children.

This resolution instructs the SCLM to develop recommended versions of Holy Week Lectionary readings that remedy their anti-Semitic impact. Revised readings of the Passion Narrative are in use throughout the church. An example of how minimal changes to John 18 & 19 allows the power of Jesus's Passion to shine through without imparting an anti-Semitic message is at https://www.bc.edu/content/dam/files/research_sites/cjl/sites/partners/cbaa_seminar/Johannine_PN.htm.



Resolution Number: 2015-A062
Title: Address Christian Anti-Judaism in Liturgical Texts
Legislative Action Taken: Concurred
Final Text:

Resolved, That the 78th General Convention direct the Standing Commission on Liturgy and Music to continue to collect, review, and disseminate materials to address Christian anti-Judaism expressed in and stirred by portions of Christian scriptures and liturgical texts.

Citation: General Convention, *Journal of the General Convention of...The Episcopal Church, Salt Lake City, 2015* (New York: General Convention, 2015), p. 727.



Resolution Number: 2012-A058
Title: Address Christian Anti-Judaism
Legislative Action Taken: Concurred
Final Text:

Resolved, That the 77th General Convention direct the Standing Commission on Liturgy and Music to continue to collect, review, and disseminate materials to address Christian anti-Judaism expressed in and stirred by portions of Christian scriptures and liturgical texts.

Citation: General Convention, *Journal of the General Convention of...The Episcopal Church, Indianapolis, 2012* (New York: General Convention, 2012), p. 501.



Resolution Number: 2009-A089
Title: Direct Completion of Tasks Assigned to the Commission on Liturgy and Music
Legislative Action Taken: Concurred as Amended
Final Text:

Resolved, That the 76th General Convention direct the Standing Commission on Liturgy and Music to complete the work on Daily Prayer and report back to the 77th General Convention; and be it further

*Resolved, That the 76th General Convention direct the Standing Commission on Liturgy and Music to continue the work of developing liturgical materials for inclusion in the *Enriching Our Worship* series for the pastoral issues in the context of adoption of children; and be it further*

Resolved, That the 76th General Convention direct the Standing Commission on Liturgy and Music to continue to collect, develop and disseminate materials that assist members of the Church to address Christian anti-Judaism expressed in and stirred by portions of Christian scriptures and liturgical texts, including the preparation of a pamphlet explaining Christian anti-Judaism and ways to address it in teaching, evangelism and congregational life; the development of age-appropriate educational materials for children; the identification and evaluation of available resources pertaining to liturgy and music, giving special attention to Holy Week and Easter liturgies and to the diverse traditions of song in The Episcopal Church; and to report the results of its efforts to the 77th General Convention; and be it further

Resolved, That the 76th General Convention request that the Standing Commissions on Liturgy and Music and on Ecumenical and Interreligious Relations develop a statement defining Christian anti-Judaism and why it demands our attention, and to report to the 77th General Convention; and be it further

Resolved, That the 76th General Convention direct the Standing Commission on Liturgy and Music to continue the work begun in the World Music project; and be it further

Resolved, That the 76th General Convention direct the Standing Commission on Liturgy and Music to collect comprehensive data from across The Episcopal Church to determine congregational music needs and wants; and be it further

*Resolved, That the 76th General Convention direct the Standing Commission on Liturgy and Music to undertake a substantial revision of the *Book of Occasional Services* and report its progress to the 77th General Convention; and be it further*

Resolved, That the 76th General Convention request that liturgical and musical resources be made widely available not only in print but also in electronic format on the internet; and be it further

Resolved, That the 76th General Convention direct the Joint Standing Committee on Program, Budget and Finance to consider a budget allocation of \$136,500 for implementation of the projects requested in this resolution, and for any other projects that the 76th General Convention directs the Standing Commission on Liturgy and Music to undertake in the 2010-2012 triennium, and any other projects required by the SCLM's canonical mandates.

Citation: General Convention, *Journal of the General Convention of...The Episcopal Church, Anaheim, 2009* (New York: General Convention, 2009), p. 525.



Resolution Number: 2006-C001
Title: Develop Materials to Address Anti-Jewish Prejudice
Legislative Action Taken: Concurred as Substituted
Final Text:

Resolved, That the 75th General Convention direct the Standing Commission on Liturgy and Music to collect and develop materials to assist members of the Church to address anti-Jewish prejudice expressed in and stirred by portions of Christian scriptures and liturgical texts, with suggestions for preaching, congregational education, and lectionary use, and to report to the 76th General Convention.

Citation: General Convention, *Journal of the General Convention of...The Episcopal Church, Columbus, 2006* (New York: General Convention, 2007), pp. 417-418.