

**General Convention of The Episcopal Church 2022
Archives' Research Report**

Resolution No.: 2022-D058
Title: Trial Use of Alternate Liturgy for Good Friday with Revised Passion Gospel
Proposer: Mr. Richard Pryor
Topic: Liturgy

Directly Related: (Attached)

2015-A062 Address Christian Anti-Judaism in Liturgical Texts
2012-A058 Address Christian Anti-Judaism

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.

D058 - Trial Use of Alternate Liturgy for Good Friday with Revised Passion Gospel

Final Status: Not Yet Finalized

Proposed by: Mr. Richard Pryor

Endorsed by: The Rev. William Treadwell, The Rev. Megan L. Castellan

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: Yes

Resolution Text

Resolved, the House of _____ concurring,

That the 80th General Convention approve for trial use an Alternate Liturgy for Good Friday with Revised Passion Translation. This service and translations should be made available digitally for use by worshipping communities.

Explanation

This proposed alternate Good Friday liturgy and revised translation of the passion reading from the Gospel of John is a response to desires by the laity and clergy of the Episcopal Church

to provide a theologically positive accounting of the Jewish people in the Good Friday liturgy. In a time of rising antisemitic violence and rhetoric in the United States and globally, our Jewish partners are looking to Christians of good will for responses. Addressing the problems within the Good Friday liturgy, which historically has been a source of Christian rhetorical and physical violence against Jews, is one concrete way of responding.

This work reflects the broader call of the 79th General Convention to develop new liturgical resources. This liturgy was developed for use in the Diocese of Texas in 2021 and 2022 and has been approved by other dioceses for use during this time. The liturgy and passion

Gospel presented in this resolution includes revisions gathered from dioceses and congregations that used these resources over that period of time. The Rev. Daniel Joslyn-Siemiakoski, Ph.D. is the primary author of the proposed liturgy, and the Rev. Nancy Frausto translated it into Spanish.

To a significant degree this liturgy follows that found in the 1979 Book of Common Prayer. The revisions are found in the follow areas. These changes are also explained in the notes to the liturgy.

- The options for the reading from the epistles are designed to provide alternative perspectives on the meaning of the death of Jesus Christ. The traditional first reading from the Letter to the Hebrews frames the death of Jesus as the final sacrifice offered to God. Jesus Christ becomes both the sacrifice and the high priest offering the sacrifice. The first alternative reading from the Letter to the Ephesians situates the death of Jesus Christ within a larger arc of salvation history. God the Father chose his Son before creation to be for humans the means by which they attain redemption as children of God. This happens through the death of Jesus Christ, which secures the forgiveness of sins. The second alternate reading is the same as in the existing prayer book rite. The image on Jesus Christ as an interceding high priest does not call into question the validity of the Temple sacrifices given by God to the Jewish people to offer as worship. The source of salvation rests in Christ's obedience to God the Father, which those who follow Christ call upon for their own salvation.
- For the reading of the Passion from the Gospel of John, this liturgy provides an option for shortening the reading to John 19:1-42. This reading leaves out parts of the narrative that have historically been used to charge all Jewish people as guilty for the death of Jesus.
- A revision of the Passion from the Gospel of John is provided that does not uniformly render the Greek *hoi Iudaioi* as "the Jews." Traditionally, the repetition of "the Jews" has given rise to anti-Jewish language and violence, marking Good Friday as a historically dangerous time for Jewish communities living in Christian contexts. The provided translation offers other options for this word, especially "the Judeans." This word highlights the regional tensions between Jesus of Nazareth from the Galilee and Judean leadership centered in Jerusalem. This use of the term "Judeans" is not designed to uniformly change the rendering of lectionary readings for the Gospel of John but is only meant for use on Good Friday when the repeated use of the term "the Jews" is especially problematic. The passion Gospel is an emendation of that found in the New Revised Standard Version. It should be noted that two approved translations of the Bible for use in the Episcopal Church, the Contemporary English Version and the Common English Bible, provide other translations besides "the Jews" for this reading.
- This alternate rite introduces a new collect for the Jewish people. Historically, the Western pre-Reformation church prayed on Good Friday that Jews, who had been blamed for the death of Jesus, would convert from their blindness and hardness of heart. While such a prayer has never been in the Episcopal Church's Book of Common Prayer, it is a legacy to which we are accountable, given that it at times

inspired violence against Jews. In our own time, Christian churches have begun to repair their relationship with the Jewish people, including offering prayers on Good Friday that affirm God's relationship with the Jewish people. Notably, the Anglican Church of Canada and the Church of England have such prayers. This solemn collect contains some of the themes found in these recent prayers. It grounds God's redemptive work as beginning with the Jewish people from whom Jesus Christ was born. This collect states that God's covenant with the Jewish people has never been broken and prays for their continued flourishing and safety as witnesses to God. This collect concludes with an acknowledgment of Christian harm done to the Jewish people and envisions a new life where Jews and Christians walk together in the life of God for the sake of the world.

- The Collect for those who suffer has been revised with "person first language," an approach that ensures that those who experience various conditions are not defined by those exclusively. Additionally, some new categories that have emerged within the collective consciousness of the church over the past several decades have been added. A specific petition for persecuted Christians has been added as a reminder that globally many still suffer for Christ's sake.
- The final Solemn Collect retains the original petitions but its bidding and conclusion have been revised from the current rite. This collect does not frame the possibility of redemption solely within an acceptance of the Gospel, but as a question of how people respond to the work of the Triune God. The human failings named in this petition are measured in terms of loving responses to God in the world, whether within or outside the church. The final prayer especially names the importance for Christians to make amends for sins committed even as it hopes that all people may turn to God.



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.