

**General Convention of The Episcopal Church 2024
Archives' Research Report**

Resolution No.: 2024-A014
Title: Addition of Laurence Whipp to Lesser Feasts and Fasts
Proposer: Secretary of General Convention
Topic: Church Calendar, Lesser Feasts/Fasts

Directly Related: (Attached)

None

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 2022, 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](#).

A014 - Addition of Laurence Whipp to Lesser Feasts and Fasts

Final Status: Not Yet Finalized

Proposed by: Secretary of General Convention

Has Budget Implications: No

Cost:

Amends C&C or Rules of Order: No

Requests New Interim Body: No

Changes Mandate Of Existing Ib: No

Directs Dfms Staff: No

Directs Dioceses: No

Directs Executive Council: No

HiA: No House Assigned

Legislative Committee Currently Assigned: No Committee Assigned

Completion Status: Incomplete

Latest House Action: N/A

Supporting Documents: No

Resolution Text

Resolved, the House of _____ concurring,

That the 81st General Convention authorize the inclusion of Lawrence Whipp in *Lesser Feasts and Fasts*.

Explanation

This resolution was referred by the 80th General Convention. It was proposed by the Very Rev. Dr. Benjamin Shambaugh and endorsed by The Rev. Deacon Richard Cole, Ms. Anne Swardson, Mr. David Case, Mr. Denis LeMoullac, Ms. Janet Day-Strehlow, and The Ven. Dr. Walter Baer. It was numbered 2022-D028 and referred to Legislative Committee 12 - Prayer Book, Liturgy & Music.

To quote from pages 58-59 of Hal Vaughn's 2004 book *Doctor to the Resistance*: "The story of Lawrence Whipp is extraordinary. In an article about him in *Time* magazine from March 12, 1945 ("The case of the missing organist", <http://content.time.com/time/magazine/article/0,9171,797254,00.html>), he is described as "an impeccable ornament of Paris' pre-war community, a man aloof yet religious and deeply

committed to his vocation.” *Time* goes on to explain how Whipp, “served the Cathedral for twenty years – even under the Wehrmacht during the German occupation – as the organist and choirmaster. When most Americans fled Paris – including the Cathedral's Dean, the Very Rev. Beekman – Whipp stayed at his post as lay reader. He is said to have been caught listening to the BBC by the Gestapo, arrested and imprisoned. But there was still a rumor, at least at the American Cathedral in 1999, that Whipp, a homosexual, had been imprisoned to make him cooperate with the Gestapo. Apparently the Gestapo was still trying to recruit Whipp in 1944. A letter bears the notation in Whipp's handwriting, “Gestapo—I refused!” Whatever the case, after the liberation of Paris in August 1944, Whipp mysteriously disappeared. Some say Whipp was killed by zealots of the Resistance who accused him of siding with the Nazis. After the liberation, he had given sanctuary to a French Wagnerian opera singer, Mme Lubin, who had sung for the Nazis and was thus considered a traitor. Having found out Whipp's “compassion” for the woman, the Resistance would have killed him in her place. But other theories abound. In any case, his body was found floating in the Seine in late April 1945.”

This story shows how Lawrence Whipp fits each of the criteria for inclusion in *Lesser Feasts and Fasts*. In this time when the “greatest generation” of those who lived through World War II is disappearing, the example of this man who retained his faith and continued his ministry of Episcopal worship and presence during the German occupation of Paris is worthy of remembrance. He not only embodies historicity, Christian discipleship, significance and (as a gay man in a time when that was a great risk and a representative of Americans and Episcopalians serving overseas) inclusion, he also represents the courage of Christians throughout the centuries who have sustained the Church in times of adversity and made choices to do the right thing even knowing their lives might be at risk. Having his day on August 25 would not only honor the liberation of France (August 25, 1944). Combining that day with Louis, King of France would honor the French people and the great Christian history of that country. It would also provide the calendar with both an organist and a member of the Convocation of Episcopal Churches in Europe, where he is much remembered.