

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

Resolution No.: 2024-D033
Title: Add George of Lydda, Martyr, to Lesser Feasts and Fasts
Proposer: Taylor, Mr. Matthew
Topic: Church Calendar

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](#).

D033 - Add George of Lydda, martyr, to Lesser Feasts and Fasts

Final Status: Not Yet Finalized

Proposed by: Taylor, Mr. Matthew

Endorsed by: Taber-Hamilton, The Rev. Rachel Brown, Deputy Nathan

Has Budget Implications: No

Cost:

Amends C&C or Rules of Order: No

Requests New Interim Body: No

Changes Mandate Of Existing Ib: Yes

Directs Dfms Staff: No

Directs Dioceses: No

Directs Executive Council: No

HiA: HB

Legislative Committee Currently Assigned: 10 - Prayer Book, Liturgy & Music

Completion Status: Incomplete

Latest House Action: N/A

Supporting Documents: Yes

Resolution Text

Resolved, the House of _____ concurring,

That the 81st General Convention designate April 23, May 6, or another appropriate date on the Church Calendar as the annual celebration of the life, martyrdom, and witness of Saint George of Lydda, a symbol of liberation throughout the Middle East, and patron of England and numerous Episcopal parishes around the world; and be it further

Resolved, That the General Convention encourage commemorations of Saint George to include discussion and prayers for peace and justice in the Holy Land and for the continued witness of Christians in the Holy Land; and be it further

Resolved, That the 81st General Convention direct the Standing Commission on Liturgy and Music to prepare appropriate biblical lessons, collects and other liturgical resources commemorating the life and work of Saint George of Lydda.

Explanation

While St. George is venerated by Christians throughout the world including those in the Orthodox Church, the Roman Catholic Church, the Church of the East, Lutheran Churches,

and other Anglican provinces, St. George is not currently included in the official Episcopal Calendar of Saints/Commemorations, *Lesser Feasts and Fasts 2022*.[\[1\]](#)

While there are no direct, contemporary attestations to St. George's historicity, there are Greek references from 368 in which Heraclea of Bethany references the "house or church of the saints and triumphant martyrs George and companions".[\[2\]](#) According to tradition, George was born in 275 A.D. in Turkey and fled to Lydda (Lod in modern Israel) after the death of his father.[\[3\]](#) He was martyred by decapitation for his faith on April 23 (May 6 in Julian Calendar), 303 A.D. Venerations in the Holy Land are recorded from the 6th century. Today, many homes of Palestinian Christians include a depiction of St. George above their doorway. The cross of Saint George is present in our Episcopal Shield and Episcopal flag representing the Episcopal Church's heritage in the Church of England.

As a martyr, George demonstrates the ultimate witness to the power of the Resurrection under the principles of 2015-A010 regarding revisions of *Lesser Feasts and Fasts*.

Despite his popular association with England,[\[4\]](#) he is also the patron of Christians in Palestine, Israel, Lebanon, Syria, and the patron of the Anglican cathedral in Jerusalem (among many other Patrons). Saint George's suffering is a source of "perseverance and steadfastness" among Palestinian Christians and oppressed Christian communities around the world. He is the namesake of innumerable churches throughout the world, including at least 100 churches and schools in The Episcopal Church.[\[5\]](#) This demonstrates his significance as a figure in the life of the church and the local, organic observance of his commemoration.

Given his background in both Turkey (Türkiye) and the Holy Land, his inclusion adds to the depth of the Body of Christ commemorated in the church calendar.

Regarding the date of the celebration, April 23 is the primary date of commemoration in the Anglican Communion, including the Episcopal Diocese of Jerusalem and the Church of England.[\[6\]](#) However, as *Lesser Feasts and Fasts 2022* has a different commemoration on that date, May 6 could also be acceptable, as it is the date of the commemoration in the Orthodox Church.

We have previously remembered George in *A Great Cloud of Witnesses*, which provides a collect and a short biography:[\[7\]](#)

Almighty God, you commissioned your holy martyr George to bear before the rulers of this world the banner of the cross: Strengthen us in our battles against the great serpent of sin and evil, that we too may attain the crown of eternal life; through Jesus Christ our Redeemer, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. Amen.

Today the church remembers George, Soldier and Martyr, c. 304.

George was a Roman soldier, serving in Palestine, who was converted to Christ and consequently was martyred at Lydda. He typified many such soldiers who witnessed to

the faith with their lives and deaths. He is patron of England and of the Anglican cathedral in Jerusalem.

The Church of England and St. George's Cathedral in Jerusalem^[8] uses the following prayer:

God of hosts,
who so kindled the flame of love
in the heart of your servant George
that he bore witness to the risen Lord
by his life and by his death:
give us the same faith and power of love
that we who rejoice in his triumphs
may come to share with him the fullness of the resurrection;
through Jesus Christ your Son our Lord,
who is alive and reigns with you,
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
one God, now and for ever.
Amen.

[1] George is included in the unofficial (but permitted) *A Great Cloud of Witnesses* (https://prayer.forwardmovement.org/the_calendar.php?k=3)

[2] <https://www.vaticannews.va/en/saints/04/23/st--george--martyr.html>

[3] *Martyrdom, Liberation, and Belonging: An Ethnography on the Popular Saint George Veneration among Palestinian Christians*, Elizabeth Martejn, *Journal of World Christianity*, Vol. 10, No. 1 (2020), pp. 53-67 Published by: Penn State University Press (<https://www.jstor.org/stable/10.5325/jworlchri.10.1.0053>).

[4] <https://anglicanism.org/an-all-purpose-saint-for-the-church-of-england-the-post-reformation-evolution-of-the-cult-of-st-george>

[5] <https://www.episcopalassetmap.org/list?keywords=%22St.%20George%22&op=Search>

[6] <https://www.churchofengland.org/prayer-and-worship/worship-texts-and-resources/common-worship/churchs-year/festivals/george-martyr>

[7] https://prayer.forwardmovement.org/the_calendar_response.php?id=300423

[8] <https://www.facebook.com/bishopnaoum/posts/pfbid023Y84i7GDSYZeemX7i7ponAsQ48pv8n1TYah14DYMF7Ejng9KzTtRosHgm25a3oihl>

Support Document:

[Elizabeth Martejijn, Martyrdom, Liberation, and Belonging: An Ethnography on the Popular Saint George Veneration among Palestinian Christians](#)

Note: this resolution and/or its explanation contains external references, such as URLs of websites, that may not be in the required languages of General Convention. Because of copyright restrictions, the General Convention cannot provide translations. However, your web browser may be able to provide a machine translation into another language. If you need assistance with this, please contact gc.support@episcopalchurch.org.