

**GENERAL CONVENTION OF THE EPISCOPAL CHURCH 2018
ARCHIVES' RESEARCH REPORT**

RESOLUTION NO.: 2018-B023
TITLE: Armenian Rite for Holy Cross Day
PROPOSER: The Rt. Rev. C. Franklin Brookhart
TOPIC: Liturgy

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 1976 through 2015, 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 at 800-525-9329 before Convention or at Convention in the General Convention Secretariat.

B023 Armenian Rite for Holy Cross Day

Proposer	The Rt. Rev. C. Franklin Brookhart
Endorsed by	Adams III, The Rt. Rev. Gladstone; Mathes, The Rt. Rev. James
Sponsored by	
Page numbers	Blue Book: p. N/A; Constitution & Canons: p. N/A
HiA / Leg. Cttee	/
Current Status	Pre-Filed Resolution
Version	Original (as filed)
Review Status	Not yet reviewed

RESOLUTION TEXT

- 1 *Resolved*, the House of _____ concurring, That the 79th General Convention direct the Standing Commission on Liturgy and Music to consider making available a rite, “The Liturgy of the Exaltation of the Holy Cross – Adapted from the Rite of the Armenian Orthodox Church,” and that such a rite be brought before the 80th General Convention for its consideration.
- 2 The proposed form of the rite follows.
- 3 *Prior to the rite the following preparations are made.*
- 4 *“A sufficient amount of sweet basil sprigs, to be distributed to the congregation, is obtained.”*
- 5 *“A (silver) tray large enough to hold an altar size cross is covered with the sprigs of basil. The cross is placed (in standing position) on the tray and generously decorated with basil.”*
- 6 *Following the Eucharist on Holy Cross Day (or at another appropriate time) the celebrant and attendants take their place at the basil cross, which is on a table either in the center of the nave or at the head of the central aisle of the church.*
- 7 *Officiant and People*
- 8 Holy God,
- 9 Holy and Mighty,
- 10 Holy and Immortal, you were crucified for us,
- 11 Have mercy on us.
- 12 *The officiant and attendants then carry the basil cross (on the tray) to the west part of the sanctuary, saying as they go:*
- 13 *Officiant*
- 14 Today on the feast of the renewal of the church in Jerusalem the sign of the Lord our God

appeared in great brilliance.

15 *People*

16 O peoples, bless Christ; rejoice and be glad.

17 *Officiant*

18 For the rays of the holy life-creating cross appeared from the east in sun-lit brilliance, in radiant light.

19 *People*

20 O peoples, bless Christ; rejoice and be glad.

21 *Officiant*

22 The Lord's sign, flaming and terrible, marvelous new wonder, appeared from the heavens on Holy Golgotha.

23 *People*

24 O peoples, bless Christ; rejoice and be glad.

25 *The officiant, taking the cross from the tray, raises it and facing to the east says*

26 Let the eastern part of the land be blessed, protected and guarded by Providence by the sign of the Holy Cross, and by the holy Gospel and by the grace of this day, in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.

27 *People*

28 Amen. Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia.

29 *The officiant and attendants then carry the basil cross to the east part of the sanctuary, saying as they go:*

30 *Officiant*

31 You stretched out your spotless arms on the Cross, O Christ our God, and in it gave us the sign of victory.

32 *People*

33 By it preserve our life.

34 *Officiant*

35 The world-saving outstretched wings of your cross, O Christ our God, you gave to us as a staff of power.

36 *People*

37 By it preserve our life.

38 *Officiant*

39 You gave life again to him who had died by eating from the forbidden tree, by the tree of life.

40 *People*

41 By it preserve our life.

42 *The officiant, taking the cross from the tray, raises it and facing to the west says*

43 Let the western part of the land be blessed, protected and guarded by Providence by the sign of the Holy Cross, and by the holy Gospel and by the grace of this day, in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.

44 *People*

45 Amen. Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia.

46 *The officiant and attendants then carry the basil cross to the north part of the sanctuary, saying as they go:*

47 *Officiant*

48 O tree of life, Christ gave you to us as the fruit of life, in exchange for the death-bringing fruit.

49 *People*

50 Preserve under your protection the assembly of believers.

51 *Officiant*

52 Through you was opened the way to the tree of life, guarded by the Seraphim.

53 *People*

54 Preserve under your protection the assembly of believers.

55 *Officiant*

56 Through you our first parents were delivered from the sin of tasting the forbidden fruit, and all

believers bow down in worship before you.

57 *People*

58 Preserve under your protection the assembly of believers.

59 *The officiant, taking the cross from the tray, raises it and facing to the south says*

60 Let the south part of the land be blessed, protected and guarded by Providence by the sign of the Holy Cross, and by the holy Gospel and by the grace of this day, in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.

61 *People*

62 Amen. Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia.

63 *The officiant and attendants then carry the basil cross to the south part of the sanctuary, saying as they go:*

64 *Officiant*

65 We all bless you for the life-giving Cross, which became our salvation. From the Father and light the cross arose on earth with brilliant light and was given to believers as the staff of might.

66 *People*

67 We all bless you for it: Glory to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit, now and always and unto the ages of ages.

68 *Officiant*

69 After its wonderful and brilliant appearing it was given us as help against the enemy.

70 *People*

71 We all bless you for it.

72 *The officiant, taking the cross from the tray, raises it and facing to the north says*

73 Let the north part of the land be blessed, protected and guarded by Providence by the sign of the Holy Cross, and by the holy Gospel and by the grace of this day, in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.

74 *People*

75 Amen. Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia.

- 76 *The officiant and attendants return to the starting point of the procession and conclude with a prayer and a blessing.*
- 77 *Officiant*
- 78 Guard us, O Christ our God, in peace and under the shadow of your holy and precious Cross. Make us worthy to give thanks to you and to glorify you with the Father and the Holy Spirit, now and always and unto the ages of ages.
- 79 *People*
- 80 Amen.
- 81 *Officiant*
- 82 May we be blessed by the grace of the Holy Spirit. Depart in peace and may the Lord be with you all.
- 83 *People*
- 84 Amen. Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia.
- 85 *The people are invited to come to the cross and receive a sprig of basil, which they may take with them or eat at once as they prefer*

EXPLANATION

On the Feast of the Exaltation of the Holy Cross (reckoned as the Sunday closest to September 14) members of the Armenian Apostolic Church gather for an ancient rite that is both solemn and delightful. The service is a multi-sensory and energizing experience of the Cross understood as the Tree of Life. Trial use in various Episcopal settings including two diocesan clergy conferences has demonstrated the appeal of this liturgy. Its themes are congruent with the ecumenical “Season of Creation,” running from September 1 to October 4, recently endorsed by the Archbishop of Canterbury and the Anglican Consultative Council.

The proposed rite is a simplified version adapted from the actual texts of the Armenian liturgy, which are in the public domain. It is suggested for use following the Eucharist on Holy Cross Day with the status of an “available rite,” not unlike the burial service for a companion animal.

The complete liturgy is found in “The Exaltation of the Holy Cross—Processional and Adoration According to the Rite of the Armenian Church”, St. Vartan Press 2007, a publication of the Diocesan Liturgical Committee of the Eastern diocese.