

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

**Resolution No.:** 2024-D041  
**Title:** Support the Adoption of an Ecumenical Feast Day of Creation in our Liturgical Calendar  
**Proposer:** Meyers, The Rev. Dr. Ruth  
**Topic:** Environment, Liturgy

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**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](#).*

# D041 - Support the Adoption of an Ecumenical Feast Day of Creation in our Liturgical Calendar

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**Final Status:** Not Yet Finalized

**Proposed by:** Meyers, The Rev. Dr. Ruth

**Endorsed by:** Hassett, The Rev. Miranda, Mok, Dr. Carolyn, Sweeny-Bender, Mr. Tieran

**Has Budget Implications:** Yes

**Cost:** \$30,000.00

**Amends C&C or Rules of Order:** Yes

**Requests New Interim Body:** No

**Changes Mandate Of Existing Ib:** Yes

**Directs Dfms Staff:** Yes

**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:** Yes

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## Resolution Text

*Resolved*, the House of \_\_\_\_\_ concurring,

That the 81st General Convention support global ecumenical efforts to declare a worldwide Feast Day of Creation in 2025, and direct the Standing Commission on Liturgy and Music, the Standing Commission on Ecumenical Relations, any interim body charged with matters relating to the care of creation, and the Presiding Bishop's staff to participate in liturgical and theological conversations with the Anglican Consultative Council and its various bodies and Member Churches, together with other worldwide communions and the Consultation on Common Texts, to gain consensus on issues such as the name of the Feast Day, liturgical resources, and lectionary readings; and be it further

*Resolved*, That the Standing Commission on Liturgy and Music implement the process to add the Feast to the Book of Common Prayer, once the global ecumenical process achieves consensus on the details; and be it further

*Resolved*, That the 81st General Convention encourage promotion of September 1, 2024, as a special day of prayer for Creation, and encourage congregations and other worshipping

communities to use resources from the Liturgical Materials Honoring God in Creation found in the Book of Occasional Services 2022 to celebrate this special day of prayer; and be it further

*Resolved*, That the 81st General Convention encourage celebration of the Season of Creation (September 1-October 4) in The Episcopal Church with liturgical and educational resources; and be it further

*Resolved*, That the 81st General Convention request the Executive Council Budget Committee to consider an allocation of \$30,000 for implementation of this resolution.

## **Explanation**

The Feast of Creation on September 1, also known as Creation Day or World Day of Prayer for Creation, has gained vast ecumenical popularity and has inspired a larger month-long Season of Creation. Inspired by a rich tradition of the Orthodox Church (where September 1 is the first day of their liturgical year), it was later embraced by the Council of European Churches in 1997, the World Council of Churches in 2008, the Anglican Consultative Council in 2012, and the Roman Catholic Church in 2015.

After decades of ecumenical celebrations of the Feast of Creation, a historic conference took place in Assisi in March 2024, co-sponsored by the Anglican Communion, the World Council of Churches, and other worldwide communions to explore a proposal to elevate the observance to become a liturgical festival in the calendar of Western churches. A strong consensus emerged about the need to move ahead with this joint initiative, particularly as a gesture to mark the 1700th anniversary of the Council of Nicaea in 2025.

The feast has profound theological underpinnings derived from its ancient symbolism in the Orthodox Church as the day representing the divine “act” of Creation. Thus, it can enrich the liturgical calendar with a feast that is both Trinitarian and Christological, motivating stronger attention to the Triune God as Creator, the great mystery of Creation, and the sacredness of all creatures. In other words, it is not only a celebration of Creation as the created order, but most importantly it is a celebration of Creation as theological mystery and a proclamation of our Nicene belief in the Father as “maker of heaven and earth,” in Christ “through [whom] all things were made,” and in the Holy Spirit as “the giver of life.”

One of the stark “signs of the times” is what the United Nations calls the “triple planetary crisis” of climate change, loss of biodiversity, and pollution. Each of these problems is a crisis with its own causes and effects, but all three converge and exacerbate each other. Destabilizing, dismantling, and polluting Earth’s life-systems is an issue of social and racial injustice. Historically marginalized and underserved communities are hurt first and worst by the effects of a degraded environment and are those least likely to have a seat at the table where policy decisions are made. Leaving a ruined world to our children and children’s children is likewise an issue of intergenerational injustice. As people of faith, we understand that environmental degradation is a deeply spiritual and moral issue and that the Church is called to proclaim through prayer and action God’s good news to the whole Creation.

This is an opportune and decisive moment – indeed, a *kairos* moment – for the Church to add a feast day of Creation to its liturgical calendar, for several reasons:

- Acceptance of the feast of Creation and the accompanying season of Creation continues to grow not only across the Episcopal Church and the worldwide Anglican Communion, but also ecumenically, among other branches of Christianity;
- The triple planetary crisis urgently demands our prayerful attention and response;
- Many churches set aside special days to focus on the natural world, such as Earth Day or World Environment Day, but the focus tends to be only on the created order and to ignore the Mystery of God the Creator;
- The Revised Common Lectionary is a vital tool that strengthens our ecumenical relationships;
- The Church recognizes our need to honor and learn from Indigenous spirituality;
- The year of our Lord 2025 has great ecumenical significance as we mark the 1700th anniversary of the Council of Nicaea, a milestone date that requires tangible acts of communion, not just statements;
- The Episcopal Church has demonstrated a long-standing interest in encouraging the development of prayers that honor God in God's Creation and in 2018 added Liturgical Materials Honoring God in Creation to the Book of Occasional Services.

A budget of \$30,000 will support travel for 6 people to international meetings focused on developing this feast.