

The Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary and The Nativity of the Blessed Virgin Mary

A Brief History of Anglican Commemorations
Christopher Raymond
Church of the Ascension, Chicago
Advent 2020

The Conception of the BVM is listed on the 1662 BCP calendar (albeit without propers). The same is true for the Nativity of Mary.

Prayer Book Studies, vol. IX (1957), noted that the Conception was on the calendars of Rome, Sarum, England (1661), England (1928), Canada, Scotland, South Africa, and India. All these plus the American BCP of 1928 also noted the Nativity. (PBS, vol. IX, pp. 116, 119.)

Both were rejected for inclusion in the successor to the 1928 BCP, as set forth in PBS. The Nativity as not being recorded in scripture nor any reliable historical record. Further, it was held that the primary feast ought to be, as for other Christian saints, the date of her death (or assumption, depending on one's Mariology....)

These reasons cascaded to the Conception as well, and also because "the modern dogma of the Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin is so repugnant to most Anglicans, that it is difficult to see how this feast would be acceptable to the American church." (PBS, vol. IX, p. 127.)

Per Wikipedia (following the links in the article "List of Anglican Church calendars"), today both feasts are on Anglican calendars in Australia, Canada, the C of E, and the Scottish Episcopal Church (as a "Category 5" feast).

Celebrating only the Nativity are: Brazil, Hong Kong, Melanesia, New Zealand, and Southern Africa.

Quirkily, the Anglican Church of Korea celebrates the Conception but not the Nativity.

And of course, in 2018, TEC added the Nativity to the new revision of LFF.

..... So that's the deep dive into the observance of Nativity & Conception within the Anglican Communion!

Sources:

Prayer Book Studies 1 through 16, published between 1950 and 1963.

1662 Book of Common Prayer, and specifically the Liturgical Calendar thereof.

The Wikipedia index article to Anglican Communion calendars.

2018 Lesser Feasts and Fasts