

## SOUTHERN AFRICA

Special acts of worship were ordered in the Dutch colonies in southern Africa from the late seventeenth century, to 1902 in the Afrikaner republics, and throughout by the Dutch reformed church. These occasions may have been more frequent than those appointed in the British colonies and the Church of England, but they await research.

The lists below are for areas under the control of British authorities and the Church of England in southern Africa, and from 1910, for the Union of South Africa. Access to sources for the early 19th century has been limited; further research may well reveal that additional occasions were observed during this period.

Acts of special worship in these areas were sometimes related to occasions which had been or were being observed in Britain, or which were ordered or encouraged from London for observance in the whole empire. Details of these British occasions and communications with overseas authorities are given in *National Prayers* vols 2 and 3. These occasions are indicated in the list as follows:

† occasions ordered on receipt of information of an occasion ordered in the UK. During the 19th century observance could be later than in Britain because of slow communications from London.

\* indicates occasions ordered or encouraged from London for observance in the overseas colonies and dominions. These too might be at a different date to the UK observance.

The annual English 'state' religious commemorations would have been observed in places of worship of the Church of England, and from 1919 all churches observed Armistice day and Remembrance Sunday: see the list of 'Anniversary commemorations in the empire'.

The key to sources is at the end of the list. The abbreviations are:

CC            Cape Colony  
gov            colonial or state governor  
gov-gen        governor-general of the Union of South Africa  
govt            Government  
pm            prime minister of the Union of South Africa

For gazette and newspaper references, the year of publication is the same as the year of observance, unless otherwise stated.

### British colonies in southern Africa

The Dutch Cape Colony, founded in 1652 and governed by the Dutch East India Company, was captured by the British during the French wars in 1795. At the Treaty of Amiens in 1802 the colony was passed to the Batavian Republic, a client state of the French Republic. When the wars resumed, British forces re-occupied the territory in 1806, and formal possession was recognised in the Anglo-Dutch treaty of 1814. The second British territory in southern Africa, Natal, was proclaimed a colony in 1843. Following the 1899-1902 South African War, the two Boer republics – the South African Republic (Transvaal) and the Orange Free State – became parts of the British Empire, with the new names Transvaal Colony and the Orange River Colony.

	type	area	date(s)	authority	cause	sources
1800	thanksgiving prayers†	CC	Sun in Dec		failure of attack on George III	Hewitt, p. 6.
1812	thanksgiving day†	CC	Sun 11 Oct	gov notice	end of smallpox epidemic	<i>Cape Town Gaz</i> , 12 Sept

1813	fast day†	CC	Wed 1 Sept	gov proclamation	military campaigns against France	<i>Cape Town Gaz</i> , 7 Aug
1814	thanksgiving prayers†	CC	Suns 2 + 9 Jan	gov order	military victories in Spain	<i>Cape Town Gaz</i> , 1 Jan
1848	thanksgiving day	CC Natal	Sat 25 Mar Sat 22 Apr	gov notice	end of war with Xhosa	<i>Cape of GH Govt Gaz</i> , 16 Mar
1851	day of fasting + humiliation	CC	Fr 7 Feb	gov notice	war with Xhosa	<i>Cape of GH Observer</i> , 28 Jan
1854	days of humiliation†	CC Natal	Fr 28 July Fr 25 Aug	gov proclamations	Crimean War	<i>Cape of GH + Natal Gazette</i> , 14 July
1856	thanksgiving day†	CC Natal	Fr 4 July Th 10 July	gov proclamations	Paris peace treaty	<i>Cape Town ... Advertiser</i> , 7 June <i>Natal Witness</i> , 4 July
1859	days of humiliation	CC Natal	Wed 5 Oct	gov proclamations	Drought	<i>Cape Frontier Times</i> , 4 Oct <i>Natal Witness</i> , 11 Nov .
1866	day of humiliation	CC	Fr 12 Jan	gov notice	Drought	<i>Colesberg Advertiser</i> , 2 Jan
1872	thanksgiving days†	CC Natal	Th 3 April Th 9 May	gov proclamations	recovery of prince of Wales from illness	<i>Eastern Province Herald</i> , 5 Apr <i>Natal Witness</i> , 30 Apr
1878	day of humiliation	CC	Th 7 Feb	gov notice	drought and war with Xhosa	<i>Cape Town Daily News</i> , 7 Feb
	thanksgiving day	CC	Th 1 Aug	gov notice	end of Xhosa War	<i>Cape Times</i> , 6 July
	day of humiliation	Natal	Wed 6 Nov	bishop notice	Drought	<i>Natal Witness</i> , 2 Nov
1879	day of humiliation	Natal	Wed 12 Mar	churches' request + gov proclamation	war with AmaZulu	<i>Natal Witness</i> , 22, 25 Feb
	thanksgiving day	Natal	Tue 9 Dec	bishop notice	peace with AmaZulu	ibid., 6 Dec
1885	day of humiliation	CC	Wed 20 Jan	heads of Christian churches	drought	<i>Grahamstown Journal</i> , 16 Jan
	thanksgiving day	Grahamstown diocese	a day 1-8 Nov, selected by parish	bishop notice	rain	Ibid., 26 Oct
1887	thanksgiving days + public holidays *	CC Natal	Tu 21 June	gov proclamations	Queen Victoria's jubilee	<i>Cape of GH Govt Gaz</i> , 13 May
1895	day of humiliation	CC	Sun 3 Nov	gov proclamation	drought	<i>Port Elizabeth Telegraph</i> , 31 Oct
1896	solemn fast day	CC	Th 15 Oct	gov proclamation	rinderpest epidemic	WCPA, PMO/422, no. 333.
1897	fast day	CC	Sun 13 June	gov proclamation	continued rinderpest epidemic	<i>Cape of GH Govt Gaz</i> , 28 May
	public holiday+ services*	CC	Tu 22 June	gov proclamations	Queen Victoria's diamond jubilee	WCPA, PMO/422, no. 160.
1900	thanksgiving day	Natal	Sun 2 Mar	gov proclamation	relief of siege of Ladysmith	<i>Cape Daily Telegraph</i> , 3 Mar
1901	fast day*	CC	Sat 2 February	gov proclamation	death of Queen Victoria	<i>Cape of GH Govt Gaz</i> , 30 Jan
1902	thanksgiving days†	CC	Sun+Mon 8 + 9 June	gov proclamation	end of South African War	<i>Cape of GH Govt Gaz</i> , 10 June
	thanksgiving day*	CC	Sat 9 Aug	gov proclamation	coronation of Edward VII	WCPA, PMO/422, no. 129
	day of humiliation	Orange River	Sun 5 Oct	gov proclamation	Drought	<i>Indian Opinion</i> , 8 Oct
1908	day of humiliation	Natal	Sun 7 June	govt request	cattle disease	<i>Natal Witness</i> , 8 June

[list continues below

## Union of South Africa

In 1910, the four British colonies in southern Africa – Cape Colony, Natal, Orange River and Transvaal – were unified, to form the Union of South Africa.

	Type	date(s)	authority	Cause	Sources
1910	day of mourning*	Fr 20 May	govt notices	death of Edward VIII	<i>Rand Daily Mail</i> , 13 May
1911	public holiday+ services*	Th 22 June	gov proclamation + churches	coronation of George V	<i>Cape Times</i> , 3 May, 23 June
1912	day of humiliation	Sun 13 Oct	gov-gen proclamation	Drought	<i>South African News</i> , 11 Oct
1915	prayers of intercession†	Sun 3 Jan	king's desire + gov appeal	First World War	<i>Mafeking Mail</i> , 22 Dec
1916	day of intercession†	Sun 2 Jan	king's desire + gov-gen appeal	War	<i>Rand Daily Mail</i> , 24 Dec 1915
	day of prayer†	Fr 4 Aug	king's desire + gov-gen appeal	2nd anniversary of outbreak of the war	<i>South African Outlook</i> , 1 Aug
1917	memorial day and services†	Sat 4 Aug	king's desire + gov-gen appeal	services of remembrance, and 3rd anniversary of outbreak of the war	<i>Rand Daily Mail</i> , 8 June, 6 Aug
		Sun 5 Aug			
1918	day of prayer and thanksgiving*	Sun 6 Jan	king's appeal + gov-gen appeal	War	<i>Mafeking Mail</i> , 4 Jan
	intercession services	Th 28 Mar	gov-gen appeal	forces in France	<i>Rand Daily Mail</i> , 27 Mar
	day of thanksgiving	Fr 15 Nov	gov-gen appointment	Armistice	<i>Cape Argus</i> , 16 Nov
1919	day of remembrance*	Sat 4 Jan	Anglican archbishops	commemoration of the war dead peace, and for the peace conference	<i>Rand Daily Mail</i> , 2 Jan
	thanksgiving day*	Sun 5 Jan			
	thanksgiving day*	Sun 3 Aug	royal proclamation for 6 July; date altered for S. Africa by gov-gen order	peace treaty of Versailles	<i>Rand Daily Mail</i> , 4 July
1924	day of prayer	Sun 27 July	govt appeal	drought and locust plague	ibid., 9, 26 July
1925	thanksgiving day	Sun 3 May	churches' appeal and govt notice	end of drought and locust plague	ibid., 22 Apr
1929	thanksgiving services*	Sun 7 July	king's desire and church leaders	king's recovery from illness	ibid., 6 July
1932	day of prayer	Sun 10 Jan	gov-gen appeal	national difficulties, esp economic	ibid., 6 Jan
1933	day of humiliation	Weds 20 Sept	churches' appeal and pm notice	drought	ibid., 7 Sept
	thanksgiving day	Sun 31 Dec	churches' appeal and govt notice	rain, ending drought	ibid., 14 Dec
1935	public holiday+ services*	Mon 6 May	gov-gen proclamation + churches	silver jubilee of George V	ibid., 16 Mar, 6 May
1936	day of mourning	Weds 22 Jan	gov-gen proclamation	commemoration of George V	ibid., 23 Jan
1937	services + public holiday *	Wed 6 May	pm appeal	coronation	ibid., 6, 20 Mar
1939	day of national prayer*	Sun 1 Oct	church leaders	outbreak of Second World War	ibid., 29 Sept, 2 Oct
1940	day of national prayer*	Sun 26 May	king desire + pm appeal	for allied cause	ibid., 22 May
	day of national prayer*	Sun 8 Sept	king desire + gov-gen appeal	1st anniversary of outbreak of war	ibid., 20 Aug
1941	national day of prayer*	Sun 23 Mar	king desire, gov-gen + pm appeal	war	ibid., 13 Mar
	national day of prayer*	Sun 7 Sept	king desire, gov-gen + pm appeal	2nd anniversary of outbreak of war	ibid., 15 Aug
1942	national day of prayer*	Sun 29 Mar	king desire, gov-gen + pm appeal	war	ibid., 20 Mar
	national day of prayer* <sup>1</sup>	Sun 6 Sept	king desire, gov-gen + pm appeal	3rd anniversary of war	ibid., 11 Aug
1943	day of national prayer* <sup>1</sup>	Sun 5 Sept	king desire + chief officer appeal	4th anniversary of war	ibid., 14 Aug
1944	day of national prayer*	Sun 3 Sept?	king desire, chief officer + pm appeal	5th anniversary of war	ibid., 18 Aug
1945	thanksgiving day*	Sun 13 May	govt notice	victory in Europe	ibid., 28 Apr, 12 May

	thanksgiving day*	Sun 19 Aug	govt notice	victory against Japan	ibid., 14, 20 Aug
1946	day of humiliation	Wed 9 Jan	churches' request + govt appeal	drought	ibid., 1 Jan
	thanksgiving day	Fr 15 Mar	govt appeal	rain, ending drought	ibid., 11 Mar
1949	day of prayer	Sun 2 Jan	churches' request + pm appeal	for rain	ibid., 29 Dec 1948
1950	thanksgiving day	Wed 6 Sept	pm appeal	rain, ending drought	ibid., 7 Aug
1952	prayers	Sun 27 Jan	pm appeal	for rain	ibid., 18 Jan
	day of mourning	Fri 15 Feb	gov-gen appointment	commemoration of George VI	[Union] <i>Govt Gaz</i> , 8 Feb
	day of prayer <sup>2</sup>	Sun 3 Aug	pm appeal	prisoners, and to combat crime	<i>Rand Daily Mail</i> , 7 May
1953	public holiday + special services	Tu 2 June	gov-gen appointment	coronation of Elizabeth II	[Union] <i>Govt Gaz</i> , 8 May

<sup>1</sup> In the Septembers of 1942 and 1943 the Union government decided to continue with Sunday observances for days of prayer, rather than follow Britain and much of the empire in appointing the exact date of the anniversary of the outbreak of war, which in these years fell on midweek days.

<sup>2</sup> This occasion was requested by the National Council of Social Service. It became an annual occasion.

#### Key to the sources:

Hewitt	J. Hewitt, <i>Sketches of English Church History in South Africa. From 1795 to 1848</i> (Cape Town, 1887).
<i>Gaz</i>	<i>Gazette</i>
<i>GH</i>	[Cape of] Good Hope
<i>Govt</i>	<i>Government</i>
WCPA	Western Cape Provincial Archives, Cape Town