

been *common* prayer, of course. None has been around long enough to achieve anything approaching commonality. During the seventies, the Episcopal Church in the USA also led the process of disintegration of Anglicanism (and decimation of its active membership) by its unilateral action in other important matters central to the radical feminist agenda: chiefly the ordination of women to the "priesthood", advocacy of abortion "rights"; and a policy of tolerance bordering on encouragement of other serious moral and doctrinal aberrations even among its bishops.

The Anglicans are not alone among Protestants in their active collaboration with the *Zeitgeist*, however. Nearly every Protestant body has rushed to update its worship and its beliefs to accommodate a particular view of modernity. The new Methodist Book of Worship, for example, employs feminist principles exclusively to its several "alternate" creeds (God is addressed as "mother" in one, and footnotes in the traditional creeds retained provide further alternative choices).

The problem of feminist liturgical language is not confined to Christian churches. Editors of a prayer book, *Vetaher Libenu* (Purify Our Hearts) published by Congregation Beth El in Sudbury, in Massachusetts, wrote in the *Wall Street Journal* letters column in May 1992:

Since publication [in 1980] of the first egalitarian prayer book in the Jewish community . . . our Prayer book has been reviewed, cited, studied, copied and used by thousands of theologians, journalists and laypeople . . . and we are particularly pleased that nearly 20% of our orders have come from Christian[s].

It should not be so surprising that more and more worshippers of all denominations "have come to believe", as our Ritual Committee declared . . . , "that the exclusive use of masculine imagery to describe God invites idolatry and that imagery too easily becomes reality."

They may be inspired, as we were, by the oldest description of God in the Torah: "And God created humankind in God's image; male and female did God create them" (Genesis 1:27).⁴⁶

⁴⁶ Nancy Lee Gossels, Joan S. Kaye, C. Peter R. Gossels, editors of *Vetaher Libenu* (Sudbury, Mass.: Congregation Beth El, 1980) in *The Wall Street Journal*, May 27, 1992, "Letters to the Editor", p. A15.