

CHICAGO

ELCA/ELCiC Celebrate New Hymnal

The ELCA and the ELCiC (The Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada) are celebrating their new hymnal, “Evangelical Lutheran Worship.”

The hymnal is “progressive,” that is, it reflects the causes that characterize “progressive” agendas, including but not limited to the following:

Feminism: Progressives regard God’s name – Father, Son, and Holy Spirit – as offensive to feminist sensibilities. Therefore alternate gender-neutral invocations and benedictions are offered in every setting.

Masculine pronouns in reference to God are dropped in many hymns and liturgies, as in the following: “It is right to give **him** thanks and praise” shifts to: “It is right to give **our** thanks and praise” – with the consequence that the focus shifts to “us” and “our praise” rather than to what God has done for us.

All 150 psalms have been cleansed of masculine pronouns in reference to God, and many texts have been made gender neutral. For example, Psalm 128 is changed as follows:

- Your **wife** shall be like a fruitful vine . . .
- Your **spouse** shall be like a fruitful vine . . .

Hard for husbands to be “a fruitful vine,” but in the ELCA and ELCiC gender-neutrality is trump.

Pacifism: All soldiering language is out. The idea that the Christian life is one of spiritual warfare is absent. Gone are “Onward Christian Soldiers,” “Stand Up, Stand Up for Jesus,” “God of our Fathers.”

Gone are stanzas such as: “Oh, may your soldiers faithful, true, and bold, fight as the saints who nobly fought of old,” “Warriors fighting for the Lord,” “the hosts of God in conquering ranks combine,” “all newborn soldiers of the Crucified,” etc.

Works-Righteousness: Faith, rightly understood, gives **freedom** for works, but the new hymnal perpetuates the old problem of faith legislating certain “righteous” works so that the message conveyed by the worship service is salvation = faith + works.

Instead of the freedom of the Christian life, some of the liturgies and prayers read like spiritual-to-do lists: “Strengthen us to give ourselves away as bread for the hungry,” “Go in peace. Remember the poor,” “Strive for justice and peace.”