

Understanding Episcopal Liturgy

#22. What is the reason we are saying this new form of The Lord's Prayer?

For the past six months we have been using an older form of *The Lord's Prayer*. The old form is almost identical to the language found in the King James Bible of 1611.

Our use of *The Lord's Prayer* is based on the version found in Matthew 6. There are several newer versions of *The Lord's Prayer* in a variety of Bible translations. For the next several months we will be using a newer, more literal translation based on the *New Revised Standard Version* (NRSV) and found in the 1979 *Book of Common Prayer* (page 364).

Even though the newer form of *The Lord's Prayer* is less familiar and requires more effort for some of us, we have two good reasons for learning it and using it in our worship services. First, it corrects a poor translation of the Greek word *peirasmos*, which was translated in 1611 with the phrase 'Lead us not into temptation.'. *Peirasmos* is correctly understood as a time of challenge or trial. So the newer translation of *The Lord's Prayer* uses the phrase 'Save us from the time of trial.' There is a change in meaning which is important.

Second, the newer translation (which is more than 40 years old) was affirmed by religious leaders and scholars from many different Christian traditions, including Episcopalian, Lutheran, Methodist, Presbyterian, and Roman Catholic Christians. By using the newer form of *The Lord's Prayer* we are taking a step towards being more welcoming to those who come from diverse Christian traditions.