

**June 2, 2019 | PRIDETIDE**  
*Misgendering The Creator*

**Ancient Reading**    **Genesis 1:26 & 27, 31a**

Then God said, “Let us make humankind in our image, to be like us, in our likeness. Let them be stewards of the fish in the sea, the birds of the air, the cattle, the wild animals, and everything that crawls, creeps, and moves on the ground. Humankind was created in God’s image as God’s reflection, in the Divine image God created them; male and female, God made them.

God looked at all of this creation, and proclaimed that it was good- very good.

**Second Reading** ~ *adapted from Father Richard Rohr in “On Transformation”*

Most of us know that God is beyond gender. When we look at the Book of Genesis, we see that the first thing God is looking for is quite simply “images” by which to communicate who-God-is (Genesis 1:26-27). God is not looking for servants, or for people who are going to pass loyalty tests. God is just looking for images—“images and likenesses” of the Inner Mystery. Whoever God “is,” is profoundly and essentially what it means to be both male and female in perfect balance. We have to find and to trust images that present both a healthy feminine face for God and a healthy masculine face for God. Both are true and both are necessary for a vital and loving relationship with God. Up to now, we have largely relied upon the presented masculine images of God (which closed many people down) while, in fact, our inner life is much more drawn to a loving feminine energy. That is much of our religious problem today. And I do not believe that is an exaggeration.

**Third Reading** ~ *adapted from Rev. Nadia Bolz-Weber in “Pastrix: The Cranky, Beautiful Faith of a Sinner & Saint*

I was about twenty years old when my friend Renna (who is a straight as they come) asked if I wanted to go to a Lesbian wedding. I replied, “More than anything in the world.” So we drove the 45 minutes listening to The Indigo Girls just to get in the right womany groove, and I held a huge bowl of strawberries on my lap; apparently Lesbian weddings are often potluck. “This is a Wiccan Wedding,” Renna informed me. I didn’t entirely know what that meant, but it sounded “non-Christan”, like me, and I suspected my parents would not approve, and that there would likely be hummus involved, so I was fine with it.

I loved the service and had never seen so many strong women. Women with shoulders back and hair shorn tight and nothing to hide. There was something safe about being there. They let me hang out with a feminine image of God, and I couldn’t help but think she liked me. I spent years with these women, marking the seasons and sharing our lives, and always there were potlucks.

When I tell other Christians of my time with the feminine image of God, I think they expect me to characterize it as a period in my life when I was misguided, and that I have now thankfully come back to both Jesus and my senses. But it's not like that. I can't imagine that the God of the universe is limited to our ideas of God. I can't imagine that God doesn't reveal God's self in countless ways outside of the symbol system of Christianity. In a way, I need a God who is bigger and more nimble and mysterious than what could understand or contrive. Otherwise, it can feel that I am worshipping nothing more than my own ability to understand the Divine.