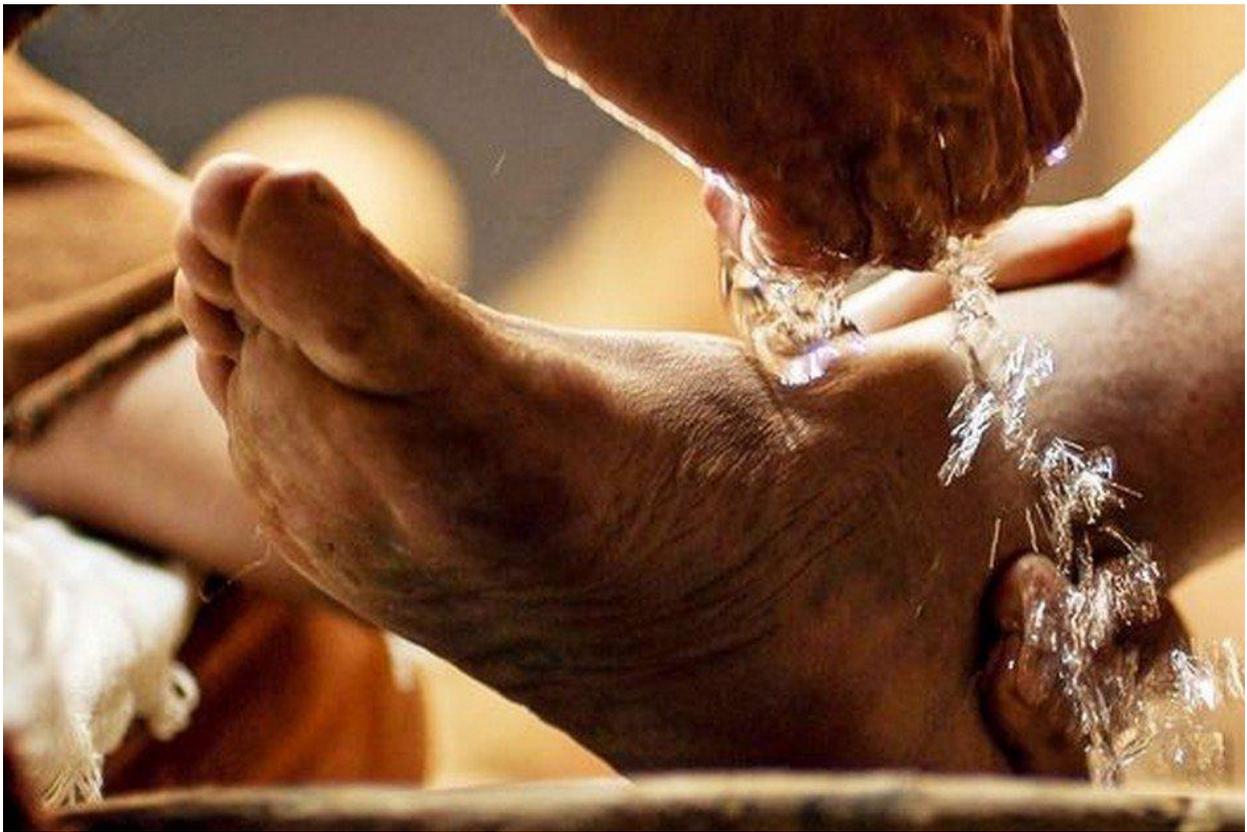


## The Body (of Christ)

She is the body of Christ on earth - born amidst tribulation, under jealous skies. Cradled in her innocence and guarded for Christ's purpose. She grows in wisdom and stature with victory on her lips and freedom in her hands. Hers is an unstoppable cause. She embraces the world with dignity, honor and compassion; gives vision to the sightless and life to the dying – [Robert Fergusson](#)



### ROMANS 12

**1** Sisters and brothers, I beg you through the mercy of God to offer your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God—this is your true and proper worship.

**2** Do not conform yourselves to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God's will is—the good, pleasing and perfect will of God. **3** For by the grace given me I say to every one of you: Do not think of yourself more highly than you ought, but rather think of yourself with sober judgment, in accordance with the faith God has distributed to each of you.

**4** For just as each of us has one body with many members, and these members do not all have the same function, **5**so in Christ we, though many, form one body, and each member belongs to all the others. **6** We have different gifts, according to the grace given to each of us. If your gift is prophesying, then prophesy in accordance with your faith; **7** if it is serving, then serve; if it is teaching, then teach; **8** if it is to encourage, then give encouragement; if it is giving, then give generously; if it is to lead, do it diligently; if it is to show mercy, do it cheerfully.

**9** Love must be sincere. Hate what is evil; cling to what is good. **10** Be devoted to one another in love. Honor one another above yourselves. **11** Never be lacking in zeal, but keep your spiritual fervor, serving Christ. **12** Be joyful in hope, patient in affliction, faithful in prayer. **13** Share with God's people who are in need. Practice hospitality. **14** Bless those who persecute you; bless and do not curse. **15** Rejoice with those who rejoice; mourn with those who mourn. **16** Live in harmony with one another. Do not be proud, but be willing to associate with people of low position. Do not be conceited. **17** Do not repay anyone evil for evil. Be careful to do what is right in the eyes of everyone. **18** If it is possible, as far as it depends on you, live at peace with everyone. **19** Do not take revenge, my dear friends, but leave room for God's wrath, for it is written: "It is mine to avenge; I will repay," says our God.

**20** On the contrary: "If your enemy is hungry, feed him; if he is thirsty, give him something to drink. In doing this, you will heap burning coals on his head." **21** Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good.

## FOR REFLECTION

1. In the book of Genesis, God creates the human person in God's own image and likeness, breathing into them the divine breath. With the human body commanding such "goodness", how do you see (or not see) your body as deserving of honor, exuberance and grace?
2. In the Hebrew Scriptures, male and female roles in the community were governed by the laws and codes of Leviticus and Deuteronomy (see Leviticus 12:2, 12:5, Chapters 15, 18; 1 Corinthians 11:8-9; Judges 19:24-25; 1 Timothy 2:11-14; Deuteronomy 22:22). How do you see such roles today? What shapes your ideas of male, female, and transgender or non-binary roles in a community?
3. *"Do not conform to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God's will is— the good, pleasing and perfect will of God."* What patterns of the world do you see as adverse to or conflicting with your transformation/testing of God's will for you?
4. What does the incarnation of God mean to you as an LGBT person or ally? How is your body a "temple of the Holy Spirit?"
5. How do you understand the term "Body of Christ?" As an LGBT person or ally how do you choose (or not choose) to be part of the Body of Christ?

## PRAYER

The Body Prayer from the motto of the Order of Julian of Norwich

Take a few minutes to let the attentions of your heart and mind sink deeper into your body to remember your inherent oneness with God and creation.



Follow these simple guidelines:

**AWAIT** (hands at waist, cupped up to receive): Await God's presence, not as you expect, hope, or imagine, but just as it is in this moment.

**ALLOW** (reach up, hands open): Allow a sense of God's presence (or not) to come and be what it is, without meeting your expectations.

**ACCEPT** (hands at heart, cupped towards body): Accept as a gift whatever comes or

does not come. Accept that you are not in charge. Accept the infinity of God's presence, whether or not you are aware.

**ATTEND** (hands outstretched, ready to be responsive): In this stance of openness, attend to the action(s) that God invites you to take.

OR

Explore "Prayer Walking" practices like making a pilgrimage, walking the Stations of the Cross or journeying a labyrinth.