

Luke 24: 36-48.

Bodies!

Dear Miners,

Easter Day might be over, but the church will continue to be in what is known as Eastertide for a good few weeks yet, as we celebrate and explore resurrection and transformation together.

This week's Gospel from Luke relates what happened just as the disciples had been gathered together by Cleopas and another disciple (his wife?) to share their news that they had walked and talked with Jesus all the way from Jerusalem to Emmaus. That Jesus was alive again.

Luke says that

'While they were still talking about this, Jesus himself stood among them and said to them, "Peace be with you."

He goes on to reassure and persuade them that it really is him, in a physical body that can be seen, heard, touched, feels hunger and eats. His body bears the scars of crucifixion, but also seems to be able to appear and disappear at will.

I am not sure how much Christians think about our bodies – or, rather, think positively about bodies, but it does seem that somehow God will raise us, as God raises Jesus, in a body that both reflects our life now yet is somehow 'changed' too. (1 Corinthians, 15:51).

So some questions...

How have Christians spoken about our bodies in your experience?

Our bodies are unique, strong and flawed in different ways, capable and incapable of different things. They are the way in which we engage with the world and the people around us. What do we enjoy about having a body? What are we thankful for about our body? How hard is it to find something to be thankful for?

Jesus had marks on his hands and feet from the crucifixion. What do you imagine might be part of your resurrected body that shows how you are you now?

What Bible stories or verses come to mind that show us how God feels about our bodies? Is there a mix of negative and positive views? Can you find anything about using your body in worship or to give glory to God?

What might you do for your body as a way of acknowledging it as a precious gift? (Then go and do it and enjoy it!).

For those wanting something to read around the subject of bodies, I found this a really fascinating exploration.

Paula Gooder, Biblical Spirituality for the Whole Person

<https://www.amazon.co.uk/Body-Biblical-spirituality-whole-person/dp/0281071004>

For personal thoughts about bodies that are not all we would wish them to be, here are two articles I found moving.

An interview with a young musician living in chronic pain

<https://www.theguardian.com/music/2024/jan/19/i-couldnt-even-spit-my-toothpaste-out-lucy-rose-on-returning-to-music-after-agonising-maternal-osteoporosis>

Jayne Manfredi writes with beautiful poignancy about the relationship she has with her bodyshape, food and Jesus.

https://www.mindandsoulfoundation.org/Articles/630816/Mind_and_Soul/Articles/Fat_Jesus_and_the_Desire_to_be_Thin.aspx

With love from

Lizzie