

Grassy Branch Pentecostal Church, toenails

by [William Kelley Woolfitt](#) in the [February 14, 2018](#) issue

when you stand with the men,
when you love, and do not despise,
and peel off Brother Ivan's moist socks—
his feet two toads, bumpy, swollen,
earth-smelling—his nails snagged, pitted,
sandpapery, little buttons, little moons—
you dip his feet, wash, cradle, pat dry,
he says *oh*—and all of it—the water,
the soft pink towel, his pursed mouth,
skin on skin—is holy, holy, holy—