



Create a peaceful space to pause, and allow yourself to feel God's presence alongside you, as near to you as your own breath. In following the reflection below, as a church we will draw closer to God and to one another as we grow in faith and deepen our sense of belonging to God.

### Acts 2:1-4 'The Coming of the Holy Spirit'

<sup>1</sup> When the day of Pentecost had come, they were all together in one place. <sup>2</sup> And suddenly from heaven there came a sound like the rush of a violent wind, and it filled the entire house where they were sitting. <sup>3</sup> Divided tongues, as of fire, appeared among them, and a tongue rested on each of them. <sup>4</sup> All of them were filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other languages, as the Spirit gave them ability.



Flame dancing Spirit come,  
sweep us off our feet and  
dance us through our days.  
surprise us with your rhythms;  
dare us to try new steps, explore  
new patterns and new partnerships;  
release us from old routines  
to swing in abandoned joy and fearful adventure.  
And in the intervals, rest us  
in your still centre. Amen.

I love this verse. We had it on our kitchen notice board for years and it always inspired me. Not that I ever had lessons in dancing, but as a child I made up steps to the classical records in my Dad's collection and even persuaded children in the neighbourhood to join in. I just wanted them to feel as drawn into the dance as I was, but I don't think we were ever rising stars!

There is a strong gusting wind outside as I write today and it brings to life this moment in Acts. The disciples must have wondered what on earth was going on? One minute they are gathered quietly together and the next there is wind and flame swirling in the air. There is immense power being spread among them releasing gifts they didn't know they had. The Holy Spirit, promised by Jesus, filled their whole beings. What a moment! The disciples did not keep their newly bestowed gift to themselves though, they shared the good news with all who would listen.

I have had lovely conversations with some of the Pastoral Group Leaders in the last few weeks and I am amazed at the number of connections church family members have both inside and outside Emmanuel. The Holy Spirit is definitely at work prompting beautiful acts of kindness and concern, linking people together in Christ's name. At this time of lockdown it is difficult to imagine how and when we will all be able to gather again as Emmanuel in a building. There's much talk of how things will never be the same again after the pandemic is over. I ask myself, is that a bad thing? Maybe God is giving us an opportunity to 'dare to try new steps, explore new patterns and new partnerships.' Get ready to dust off your dancing shoes!

**Prayer:** Pray through the poem above as you feel able to, allowing God's Spirit to come and rest upon you, surprise you, and inspire you.