



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.

### 1 Kings 19:11-13 'Elijah Meets God at Horeb'

[Then the Lord said to Elijah] <sup>11</sup> 'Go out and stand on the mountain before the Lord, for the Lord is about to pass by.' Now there was a great wind, so strong that it was splitting mountains and breaking rocks in pieces before the Lord, but the Lord was not in the wind; and after the wind an earthquake, but the Lord was not in the earthquake; <sup>12</sup> and after the earthquake a fire, but the Lord was not in the fire; and after the fire a sound of sheer silence. <sup>13</sup> When Elijah heard it, he wrapped his face in his mantle and went out and stood at the entrance of the cave. Then there came a voice to him that said, 'What are you doing here, Elijah?'

Elijah had been bravely following God's instructions, trusting that God would keep him safe and be true to what he told Elijah to do. The priests of Baal were defeated and Baal shown to be just a stone statue, unlike the living God. But then Elijah is threatened with death and he panics. He runs away and ends up hiding in a cave. His mind is full of fear and self-pity, not able to remember all that God has just done. God needs to teach him to be still, not just in body but also in his mind, for only then can he hear God and be told what to do next.

For us today, the news remains full of Covid 19 and the effect it continues to have on our world. We can become fearful for those in the wider world as well as for our family, our friends, ourselves. Normal activities, including meeting and worshipping together, are not happening. We cannot but feel some self-pity for ourselves as well as concerns for others and all this fills our minds. It may be relatively quiet outside our homes – though it is getting noisier as lockdown eases – but our minds are busy, full of unanswered questions – unanswerable questions. The words go round and round. Even when we pray we often talk too much and don't leave space and time to hear God's reply.

We need to heed God's words: "Be still and know that I am God." (*Psalm 46:10a*)

It is in the silence that we can hear God's gentle whisper. It is in the silence we can be restored and enjoy his peace, the peace the world cannot give. And maybe, as with Elijah, God has work for us to do, even now, if we listen hard enough.

### **Prayer:**

May this hymn by Emily Mary Crawford become our prayer:

Speak, Lord, in the stillness,  
while I wait on Thee;  
hushed my heart to listen  
in expectancy.

For the words Thou speakest,  
they are life indeed;  
living bread from heaven,  
now my spirit feed!



South Downs and clear skies from the hills above  
Chalk Farm