



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 Corinthians 12:4-7, 12, 27 'One Spirit, Different Gifts'

⁴ There are different kinds of gifts, but the same Spirit distributes them. ⁵ There are different kinds of service, but the same Lord. ⁶ There are different kinds of working, but in all of them and in everyone it is the same God at work. ⁷ Now to each one the manifestation of the Spirit is given for the common good.

¹² Just as a body, though one, has many parts, but all its many parts form one body, so it is with Christ.

²⁷ Now you are the body of Christ, and each one of you is a part of it.



I wonder how you begin to consider and decide how to use your time wisely? Particularly during the lockdowns of the past year, I have tried to do so, but I know I have not always succeeded. It is because I relied on my own strengths and views rather than that of God. God knows we are only human.

At Pentecost, the first gift as Christians we receive is the Holy Spirit, when we open our lives to Christ. The believers in The Acts of the Apostles heard a noise from the sky like a strong wind and tongues of fire which touched all of them. The Bible is full of imagery that we do not experience in quite the same today, necessarily. But, just as Paul tells the church at Corinth, they had gifts of supporting others, healing, prophesy, teaching and leadership, to use with with God's guidance. At Emmanuel, we are exploring again our mission as we prepare to move location, and the gifts we can, together, offer to God. The apostle Paul reminds us that the body has many parts, with each making the whole, and, without each, we are nothing and so our mission is weakened.

Then in Chapter 13, below, we read his most beautiful and touching, but also essential and perfect, well known affirmation for being a disciple. Disciples are mentioned throughout the Bible. Daniel, for example, is famous for being thrown in the lion's den because he refused to stop praying to God, who is greater than all human achievements, beyond time but who also controls and guides it. Another man is Stephen, who is believed to be the first Christian martyr, who was stoned to death.

Prayer: *For prayer I invite you to prayerfully consider Paul's words of 1 Corinthians 13 as we recommit ourselves to the service of our Lord God.*

¹ If I speak in the tongues of mortals and of angels, but do not have love, I am a noisy gong or a clanging cymbal. ² And if I have prophetic powers, and understand all mysteries and all knowledge, and if I have all faith, so as to remove mountains, but do not have love, I am nothing. ³ If I give away all my possessions, and if I hand over my body so that I may boast,^[a] but do not have love, I gain nothing.

⁴ Love is patient; love is kind; love is not envious or boastful or arrogant ⁵ or rude. It does not insist on its own way; it is not irritable or resentful; ⁶ it does not rejoice in wrongdoing, but rejoices in the truth. ⁷ It bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things.

⁸ Love never ends. ¹³ And now faith, hope, and love abide, these three; and the greatest of these is love.