



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: 42-47 'The Fellowship of Believers'

⁴² They devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and fellowship, to the breaking of bread and the prayers. ⁴³ Awe came upon everyone, because many wonders and signs were being done by the apostles. ⁴⁴ All who believed were together and had all things in common; ⁴⁵ they would sell their possessions and goods and distribute the proceeds to all, as any had need. ⁴⁶ Day by day, as they spent much time together in the temple, they broke bread at home and ate their food with glad and generous hearts, ⁴⁷ praising God and having the goodwill of all the people. And day by day the Lord added to their number those who were being saved.

Pauline Webb, a former Vice President of the Methodist Conference once told the story of how at the end of a day of filming in a rural part of South Africa she sat on a veranda with her colleagues to eat an evening meal. A young boy appeared from in the trees, eyeing their food and was given a slice of pie. He reappeared a few minutes later with several companions and she sighed, thinking they all wanted a slice. To her amazement the boy broke his slice into pieces and shared it with his friends, and off they went. Pauline felt ashamed to have judged him in that way, since he had, with the little he possessed, shown a generosity far greater than most of us with our relative riches.

Our reading reminds us of life in the early days of the church following the resurrection where a persecuted minority of believers discovered the blessings of living as Christ had taught them, sharing all things, giving to any in need, and eating and praying together. The events of recent weeks have challenged any complacency about our health, our jobs, our families. One positive sign is the way many people are now willingly putting their lives at risk to care for the health of others, and tens of thousands of volunteers are offering to undertake countless tasks for those confined to home.



Even within our church we are making increased contact with each other through phone calls and video to encourage each other and offer mutual support. We may not be able to meet together and break bread but we are able to praise God through our daily Bible reflections offered online. Maybe our present situation is beginning to make us take more seriously the lifestyle those 1st Century Christians offered.

Prayer: Lord, open our eyes to the needs around us,
and our ears to discern those with hidden needs.
Open our mouths to speak words of hope,
and our hearts to share the burdens of others.
May our actions reflect the hope, confidence and joy
that comes with our Easter faith. Amen