

# Easter to Pentecost: A Season of Prayer

## Week 6: The Language of Prayer

If it would interest anyone, as well as James's reflection on the blog re Acts 17, there are two slightly opposing views on the Methodist website, A Word in Time, [Tuesday 30th May 2017](#) and [Wednesday 31st July 2019](#). The "to ponder" questions are very thoughtful provoking, especially "what is the greatest intellectual challenge to Christianity today, and can you deal with it"?

What does it mean to be united in prayer? Is it more important that we are praying the same things or that we are praying at the same time? If we use a prayer sheet, or listen to a recording of a service, we are praying the same things but at different times. Even when we can physically meet in the same place, we sometimes have communal silent prayer where people will be praying different things but at the same time. Video-conferencing raises further questions such as whether it matters that we are physically in the same place, and whether we can hear and see one another, or only see people's avatars.

This prompts me think about what it means to be present with someone. We talk about God being present with us. We might also talk about a family member not being present with us if they are sat beside us but glued to their phone. Maybe there is something about a capacity for surprise. Someone (including God) is present when they can do something contrary to our expectations of them or we can respond in a way that is contrary to their expectations of us.

Random thoughts.

1. The implication of using the appeal " Direct our thoughts " in our prayers.
2. Sometimes I'm conscious of a person being physically with me when I read what they've written.
3. Words of familiar hymns can often provide a helpful starting point for prayers. e. g Spirit of the Living God.