

**Worship Material**  
**Journeying alongside others**  
**Materials from Roots Bible Study**  
**Sunday 28th April**

**Begin with an opening prayer**

God of our journey, guide our path, and make us ready in our encounters with others to learn new things about you – for you are the God of surprises. In Jesus' name. **Amen.**

**Read Acts 8.26-40**

**Bible notes**

Philip is one of seven 'Hellenists', Greek-speaking Jewish Christians (appointed 'to wait on tables') generously serving God's community (6:1-6). When the Jerusalem church was persecuted, they were among those 'scattered' throughout Judea and Samaria' (8:1-3). Travelling north to Samaria, Philip proclaimed the good news and baptized (8:4-13). Now God's messenger tells him to return south, through the wilderness towards Gaza on the coast. There are parallels between Philip's journey and the risen Jesus' walk to Emmaus, reminding us that Philip travels with his Lord. As Jesus opens the conversation with a question, 'What are you discussing?' (Luke 24:17), so does Philip, 'Do you understand?' Both explain the Scriptures, Jesus talking about himself (24:27), and Philip about Jesus. Jesus disappeared as his companions recognised him and they returned to Jerusalem (24:31-33). Philip is spirited away northwards, leaving the African courtier who 'went on his way rejoicing'. Philip travels with his Lord as he journeys with this Ethiopian treasurer from a country with a Jewish tradition, later claimed to date from the time of the Queen of Sheba's visit to Solomon. Philip runs beside the chariot, but this high official, wealthy enough to possess a scroll of Scripture, invites Philip to sit beside him. Philip first waits to be asked a question about the passage from Isaiah 53:7-8 before relating it to Jesus. And it is the Ethiopian who asks for baptism and commands his chariot to stop. Their journey together ends as both of them enter and emerge from the waters of death and resurrection.

**Prayer**

We travel the journey of life but do not go alone,  
**for the Lord is with us.**

We travel the journey of life with thankful hearts,  
**and the Lord is with us.**

We travel the journey of life with each other,  
**and the Lord is with us,**  
now and always with us.

**Amen.**

### **A prayer to conclude**

Lord, be with us on our journeys with others and open our eyes to you. Amen.