

Early Word: Acts 8:26-40

Easter 5, Year B

By Beth Barnett

This is an intergenerational bible reading engagement for Early Word, using a very plain and simple reading designed to animate the text and convey the sense of the movement of the Spirit in the life of Philip and the Ethiopian through footsteps and horses hooves.

You will need:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Text with highlighted words on screen or printed and shared among your gathering.
Time required:	3 minutes

Our reading to day is from the book of Acts.

There's lots of action and movement in this story – there's comings and goings and a few stoppings as well.

To help us get into the spirit of the action, we will all join together on the words about going –which are highlighted in the text.

And, whenever someone is travelling – running or walking or skipping or riding or charioteering or flying or moving in the spirit – anything, lets add footsteps either with our own feet on the floor, or with our hands patting on our knees, or our hands together like horses hooves. Listen carefully and you'll know what kind of action is required. Watch out for the stops too.

Read the text slowly and expressively, with great excitement, but not too fast, allowing time for people to participate.

Repeat!

Acts 8:26-40

Then an angel of the Lord said to Philip, “**Get up and go** toward the south to the road that **goes down** from Jerusalem to Gaza.” (This is a wilderness road.)

So he **got up and went**.

Now there was an Ethiopian eunuch, a court official of Candace, queen of the Ethiopians, in charge of her entire treasury. He had **gone to Jerusalem** to worship

and was **going home**; seated in his chariot, he was reading the prophet Isaiah.

Then the Spirit said to Philip, “**Go over** to this chariot and join it.”

So Philip ran up to it and heard him reading the prophet Isaiah. He asked, “Do you understand what you are reading?”

He replied, “How can I, unless someone guides me?” And he invited Philip to **get in and sit** beside him.

Now the passage of the scripture that he was reading was this: “Like a sheep he was led to the slaughter, and like a lamb silent before its shearer, so he does not open his mouth.

In his humiliation justice was denied him. Who can describe his generation? For his life is taken away from the earth.”

The eunuch asked Philip, “About whom, may I ask you, does the prophet say this, about himself or about someone else?”

Then Philip began to speak, and starting with this scripture, he proclaimed to him the good news about Jesus.

As they were **going along** the road, they came to some water; and the eunuch said, “Look, here is water! What is to **stop** me from being baptized?”

He commanded the chariot to **stop**, and both of them, Philip and the eunuch, **went down** into the water, and Philip baptized him.

When they **came up** out of the water, the Spirit of the Lord **snatched Philip away**; the eunuch saw him no more, and **went on his way** rejoicing.

But Philip found himself at Azotus, and as he was **going through** the region, he proclaimed the good news to all the towns until he came to Caesarea.

