

Collect: O God the King of glory, you have exalted your only Son Jesus Christ with great triumph to your kingdom in heaven: we beseech you, leave us not comfortless, but send your Holy Spirit to strengthen us and exalt us to the place where our Saviour Christ is gone before, who is alive and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever.

Acts 1.15–17, 21–26

¹⁵ In those days Peter stood up among the believers (together the crowd numbered about one hundred and twenty people). He said, ¹⁶ 'Friends, the scripture had to be fulfilled, which the Holy Spirit through David foretold concerning Judas, who became a guide for those who arrested Jesus – ¹⁷ for he was numbered among us and was allotted his share in this ministry. ²¹ So one of the men who have accompanied us throughout the time that the Lord Jesus went in and out among us, ²² beginning from the baptism of John until the day when he was taken up from us – one of these must become a witness with us to his resurrection.' ²³ So they proposed two, Joseph called Barsabbas, who was also known as Justus, and Matthias. ²⁴ Then they prayed and said, 'Lord, you know everyone's heart. Show us which one of these two you have chosen ²⁵ to take the place in this ministry and apostleship from which Judas turned aside to go to his own place.' ²⁶ And they cast lots for them, and the lot fell on Matthias; and he was added to the eleven apostles.

John 17.6–19

Jesus looked up to heaven and prayed:
⁶ 'Father, I have made your name known to those whom you gave me from the world. They were yours, and you gave them to me, and they have kept your word. ⁷ Now they know that everything you have given me is from you; ⁸ for the words that you gave to me I have given to them, and they have received them and know in truth that I came from you; and

they have believed that you sent me. ⁹ I am asking on their behalf; I am not asking on behalf of the world, but on behalf of those whom you gave me, because they are yours. ¹⁰ All mine are yours, and yours are mine; and I have been glorified in them. ¹¹ And now I am no longer in the world, but they are in the world, and I am coming to you. Holy Father, protect them in your name that you have given me, so that they may be one, as we are one. ¹² While I was with them, I protected them in your name that you have given me. I guarded them, and not one of them was lost except the one destined to be lost, so that the scripture might be fulfilled. ¹³ But now I am coming to you, and I speak these things in the world so that they may have my joy made complete in themselves. ¹⁴ I have given them your word, and the world has hated them because they do not belong to the world, just as I do not belong to the world. ¹⁵ I am not asking you to take them out of the world, but I ask you to protect them from the evil one. ¹⁶ They do not belong to the world, just as I do not belong to the world. ¹⁷ Sanctify them in the truth; your word is truth. ¹⁸ As you have sent me into the world, so I have sent them into the world. ¹⁹ And for their sakes I sanctify myself, so that they also may be sanctified in truth.'

Post Communion: Eternal God, giver of love and power, your Son Jesus Christ has sent us into all the world to preach the gospel of his kingdom: confirm us in this mission, and help us to live the good news we proclaim; through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Acts 1, 3-11

A few more weeks passed and, at last, the time came for Jesus to leave – to go to heaven and be with God his Father. So he took one last walk with his friends, up a hill near Lake Galilee where their adventures together had begun. Jesus said, I've got to go now, and there is something I want you to do. I will send you a special helper – God's own Holy Spirit. And with his help, I want you to tell my story to the world. Start in Jerusalem, and don't stop until everyone has the chance to follow me. And if you ever feel scared or alone, don't worry. Just talk to me, and I'll be with

you. I promise. Then, all of a sudden, a cloud wrapped itself around Jesus and carried him into the sky. His friends stood and stared, their mouths open, their eyes filled with tears, until two angels appeared and spoke to them. Don't be sad. The angels said. One day Jesus will come back – in the clouds – just as you have seen him go. So off the friends went, down the hill – and in to the whole world, to tell the story of Jesus.



Christian Aid:

Everyone is equal in the sight of God. Yet we live in a world where poverty still persists. Poverty is an outrage against humanity. It robs people of their dignity and lets injustice thrive. But together we have the power to transform lives. For over 70 years, we've been standing with the poorest of our neighbours. We work in 37 countries, with people of all faiths and none, to stand up for dignity, equality and justice.

A Christian Aid Week prayer from 1958:

O Holy Spirit of love, quicken our imaginations that we may feel more deeply for the needs of others as we put ourselves in their place. Give us hearts of self-forgetting compassion which will move us to give from that which you have given us, and to be good neighbours to those both near and far, for the sake of him who taught us that it is more blessed to give than receive, even Jesus our Lord. Amen.

A prayer for Prince Harry and Meghan Markle. God of love, send your blessing upon Harry and Meghan, and all who are joined in marriage, that, rejoicing in your will and continuing under your protection, they may both live and grow in your love all their days, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen