

## CHRIST CHURCH SMALL GROUPS

### Lectionary Readings for the Weekend of May 12, 2024 – The Seventh Sunday of Easter, Year B



**Instruction:** Small Groups are encouraged to read each text and use the discussion questions for further conversation and growth.

#### The Collect

O God, the King of glory, you have exalted your only Son Jesus Christ with great triumph to your kingdom in heaven: Do not leave us comfortless, but send us your Holy Spirit to strengthen us, and exalt us to that place where our Savior Christ has gone before; who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, in glory everlasting. Amen.

#### The First Reading | Acts 1:15-17, 21-26

In those days Peter stood up among the believers (together the crowd numbered about one hundred twenty persons) and said, “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—for he was numbered among us and was allotted his share in this ministry. So one of the men who have accompanied us during all the time that the Lord Jesus went in and out among us, 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.” So they proposed two, Joseph called Barsabbas, who was also known as Justus, and Matthias. Then they prayed and said, “Lord, you know everyone’s heart. Show us which one of these two you have chosen to take the place in this ministry and apostleship from which Judas turned aside to go to his own place.” And they cast lots for them, and the lot fell on Matthias; and he was added to the eleven apostles.

#### The Psalm | Psalm 1

- <sup>1</sup> Happy are they who have not walked in the counsel of the wicked,  
nor lingered in the way of sinners, nor sat in the seats of the scornful!
- <sup>2</sup> Their delight is in the law of the Lord, and they meditate on his law day and night.
- <sup>3</sup> They are like trees planted by streams of water, bearing fruit in due season,  
with leaves that do not wither; everything they do shall prosper.
- <sup>4</sup> It is not so with the wicked; they are like chaff which the wind blows away.
- <sup>5</sup> Therefore the wicked shall not stand upright when judgment comes, nor the sinner in the council of the righteous.
- <sup>6</sup> For the Lord knows the way of the righteous, but the way of the wicked is doomed.

#### The Second Reading | 1 John 5:9-13

If we receive human testimony, the testimony of God is greater; for this is the testimony of God that he has testified to his Son. Those who believe in the Son of God have the testimony in their hearts. Those who do not believe in God have made him a liar by not believing in the testimony that God has given concerning his Son. And this is the testimony: God gave us eternal life, and this life is in his Son. Whoever has the Son has life; whoever does not have the Son of God does not have life. I write these things to you who believe in the name of the Son of God, so that you may know that you have eternal life.

#### The Gospel | John 17:6-19

Jesus prayed for his disciples, “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. Now they know that everything you have given me is from you; 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. 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. All mine are yours, and yours are mine; and I have been glorified in them. 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. 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. 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. 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. I am not asking you to take them out of the world, but I ask you to protect them from the evil one. They do not belong to the world, just as I do not belong to the world. Sanctify them in the truth; your word is truth. As you have sent me into the world, so I have sent them into the world. And for their sakes I sanctify myself, so that they also may be sanctified in truth.”

**Discuss:**

1. **The Collect:** We pray to the Lord to “not leave us comfortless.” What does it feel like to be comforted by God? When was a time you needed God’s comfort? Did you feel God’s presence?
2. **The First Reading:** The inner circle of disciples chooses Matthias to join their ranks. How? First, by prayer. Next, they draw lots. Is his selection of the Spirit or of the world? What does this story tell us about Christian leadership?
3. **The Second Reading:** This reading is all about testimony, which can be defined as a public recounting of a religious conversion or experience. Have you ever given a testimony of your faith? What would you say? What’s a story of testimony, of your faith in God in Jesus Christ, that you would share with a listener?
4. **The Gospel:** This is a passage from Jesus’ farewell discourse (his final teachings to his disciples on the night he was betrayed). Jesus prays to the Father, and his disciples listen to his prayer. A central theme is the fragility of the disciples. Jesus asks the Holy Father to protect them in this hostile world. Consider Jesus is praying for you to be protected. How does that make you feel? When is a time you’ve felt the protection of God? What are some metaphors we use for God (think about from Psalms) that help us know God as our fierce protector?