

Sunday 6th September 2026

Opening Prayer

Almighty god, you search us and know us: may we rely on you in strength and rest on you in weakness, now and in all our days; through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Hymn

As we are gathered, Jesus is here,
One with each other, Jesus is here;
Joined by the Spirit, washed in His Blood,
Part of the Body, the Church of God.
As we are gathered, Jesus is here,
One with each other, Jesus is here.

The Collect

Merciful God, your Son came to save us and bore our sins on the cross; may we trust in your mercy and know your love, rejoicing in the righteousness that is ours through Jesus Christ our Lord.

The Creed

I believe in God, the Father almighty, Creator of heaven and earth.
I believe in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord.
He was conceived by the power of the Holy Spirit and born of the Virgin Mary.
He suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died, and was buried.
He descended to the dead.
On the third day he rose again. He ascended into heaven and is seated at the right hand of the Father. He will come again to judge the living and the dead.
I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy catholic church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body and life everlasting. Amen.

Reading NT Reading: Matthew 18:15-20

If your brother sins against you, go and show him his fault, just between the two of you. If he listens to you, you have won your brother over. But if he will not listen, take one or two others along, so that 'every matter may be established by the testimony of two or three witnesses'. If he refuses to listen to them, tell it to the church; and if he refuses to listen even to the church, treat him as you would a pagan or a tax collector.

"I tell you the truth, whatever you bind on earth will be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth will be lost in heaven.

"Again, I tell you that if two of you on earth agree about anything you ask for, it will be done for you by my Father in heaven. For where two or three come together in my name, there am I with them."

Reflection:

Matthew 18:15-20 provides a foundational blueprint for conflict resolution, community accountability, and the power of unified prayer within the church. Rather than offering a cold, legalistic checklist, Jesus lays out a pathway deeply rooted in humility, privacy and the restoration of relationships.

Step 1: Private Conversation. "Go and tell him his fault between you and him alone". True Christian conflict resolution begins in secret. This protects the offender's dignity, minimizes embarrassment, and

completely chokes out the sin of gossip. The ultimate goal here is not to “win” an argument, but to **gain back a brother or sister**.

Step 2. Small Group Mediation. If privacy fails, you are instructed to bring one or two objective witnesses. This isn’t an ambush, it ensures the facts are established fairly and prevents emotional escalation from distorting the trust.

Step 3. Community Accountability. Only when private and small-group efforts are entirely exhausted does the matter come before the wider church community.

Jesus shifts from personal conflict to corporate authority, introducing the concepts of “**binding and loosing**”. This indicates that the local church’s discerning actions on earth echo the spiritual realities of heaven.

The passage concludes with one of the most comforting promises in Scripture: “**For where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them**”. When we step out in humility to heal a fractured relationship, Jesus is right there beside us, supplying the grace we lack.

Hymn:

Dear Lord and Father of mankind,
Forgive our foolish ways;
Re-clothe us in our rightful mind,
In purer lives thy service find
In deeper reverence praise.

In simple trust like theirs who heard,
Beside the Syrian sea,
The gracious calling of the Lord,
Let us, like them, without a word
Rise up and follow thee.

O Sabbath rest by Galilee!
O calm of hills above,
Where Jesus knelt to share with thee
The silence of eternity,
Interpreted by love!

Drop thy still dews of quietness,
Till all our strivings cease;
Take from our souls the strain and stress
And let our ordered lives confess
The beauty of thy peace.

Breathe through the heats of our desire
Thy coolness and thy balm;
Let sense be dumb, let flesh retire;
Speak through the earthquake, wind and fire

O still small voice of calm.

Closing prayers

Give us obedience to follow you, O Lord,
Give us willingness to serve you,
Give us perseverance to endure,
Give us joy to praise you,
And a lifelong commitment To walk in your way. Amen.

The Lord's Prayer

Our Father in heaven, Hallowed be your name,
Your kingdom come,
Your will be done,
On earth as in heaven.
Give us today our daily bread.
Forgive us our sins,
As we forgive those who sin against us.
Lead us not into temptation,
But deliver us from evil.
For the kingdom, the power, and the glory are yours,
Now and forever. Amen.