

# SOUTHWELL MINSTER VIRTUAL JUNIOR CHURCH

6<sup>th</sup> September 2020

Thirteenth Sunday after Trinity

*Making peace*

**Welcome** Isabel, Bridget, Phoebe, James, Isaac, Lucas, younger James and any other young friends who may be joining us at Minster Virtual Junior Church. (Alison speaking)

Let's begin by thinking about each other as if we are together.



And as we do this let's pray for each other, for our families, for our friends and for everyone who is affected by the coronavirus.

*Just have a moment of quiet looking at the candle and remembering that Jesus is the light of the world, and he is with us.*

Today we read about how important it is to say sorry and make friends again.

## Matthew 18: 15-20.

"If your brother sins against you, go to him and show him his fault. But do it privately, just between yourselves. If he listens to you, you have won your brother back. But if he will not listen to you, take one or two other persons with you, so that 'every accusation may be upheld by the testimony of two or more witnesses,' as the scripture says. And if he will not listen to them, then tell the whole thing to the church. Finally, if he will not listen to the church, treat him as though he were a pagan or a tax collector.

"And so I tell all of you: what you prohibit on earth will be prohibited in heaven, and what you permit on earth will be permitted in heaven.

"And I tell you more: whenever two of you on earth agree about anything you pray for, it will be done for you by my Father in heaven. For where two or three come together in my name, I am there with them."

### Questions to help you think about what happened

1. Why does Jesus suggest if you have a friend who has acted badly towards you, you should first of all tell him or her about it privately?
2. What is the point of having witnesses at stage two of the dispute?
3. How can the church help resolve things?
4. Sometimes various teachings of Jesus get put together. At the end here is one about praying. Can you guess why it fits with the words about making peace between Christians?

My own answers, though we may all have different ones to some of these questions. Yours are as good as mine!

1. As Jesus says, you don't want to lose a friend and might get them back by keeping it between yourselves. Once other people get involved, the quarrel can get worse.
2. Witnesses can help bring the two people disputing together. And they can act as a record of what was said, if the dispute gets more official.
3. The church can mediate and bring the two people at odds together. They are friends with both the people in the quarrel and can help make peace by thinking about how Christians should act.
4. The words about praying show that there is strength in joining with others - even a few people. We are stronger together and we pray in harmony with each other. That harmony when our prayer is one unites us to God and his peace. Praying as one is the opposite of quarrelling

### Points to help you understand the story

1. Jewish people would go to the rabbi, as an expert on the law to sort out disputes. Jesus asks his friends to do it themselves first.
2. He follows the Jewish law in using witnesses at the next stage. It is all written down in Deuteronomy 19, where two witnesses at least are needed to accuse anyone of anything. This is fair. Our law asks for witnesses too.
3. The difference here is that Jewish law has punishments. The worst here, however, that can happen to someone who will not sort out a dispute is to ignore him or her. Pagans are non-Jews who worshipped the Greek or Roman gods; tax collectors are considered cheats, who take extra money as well as taxes for the Romans. If you really refuse to make peace - then you are no longer part of the community.

Questions to think about what the story means:

1. Is this a fair way to make peace with someone who has done something wrong to you?
2. How do you make peace when you fall out with your friends or brothers and sisters?

My own answers, though we may all have different ones to some of these questions.

1. I think so because it gives the person every chance to make things right. Ignoring them is only a final resort.
2. I should do it this way by telling the person how they have hurt me. I don't always. It's a bit embarrassing to tell someone they have done something wrong, but much better to tell them so they can put it right than sit in your room feeling miffed.

## ACTIVITIES

**Make a Peace Wreath for your door**

This is a sign of the importance of making up and also of joining together. I have shown two versions: one uses flags of different countries; the second has hands of different skin colours to show how we should all be one human family.



**You need:**  
**Strong paper or card**  
**Pens or paints**

## Scissors

Cardboard or a paper plate

Glue

Ribbon

### Instructions:

1. Use a dinner plate as a stencil and draw round it on the cardboard. Cut round the outside of your circle.
2. Use a smaller plate or bowl - a pasta bowl is ideal - and rest it on the cut-out circle. Draw round it and cut out the inside circle. You now have a ring to attach your peace hands
3. Using your own hand, draw round it as many times as you want hands: 10-12 is about right.
4. Then decide whether to decorate each hand with the flag of a different country, or different skin colour. For flags of the world look here: <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/docs/flagsoftheworld.html> You can either copy them onto your hand, or print some out and use the printed flag to draw a hand around. It would be good to put countries which are not very friendly next to each other. Ask a grown-up for ideas! For skin colour, either colour each hand or use ready coloured card.
5. Glue each hand as in the illustrations. They look good overlapping as that enacts the idea of making peace. In my examples, one overlaps all in one direction and the other has hands on either side pointing up.
6. Attach the ribbon to a small hole at the top and hang on your door.

## Prayer Stones

To help you pray, find three small stones. Arrange them in a triangle and remember, when two or three people are together praying, Jesus is there too.