

## DATES FOR THE DIARY

Monday Patchwork Group meet @ 12.30pm  
Tuesday Friendship Group meet @ 10am  
Wednesday Golf Group meet @ 6.30am  
Thursday Bible Study @ 10am  
Revd Josie at church between 10am - Noon  
Saturday Stall Holders meeting @ 9am  
Travel Talks @ 10am

**BAPTISM** – today we formally welcome Fleur Odette Carvolth into the body of Christ through her baptism. And celebrate this joyous occasion with her parents Taylor & Karine Carvolth, godparents Matthew & Nicole Agar and extended family and friends.

**STALL HOLDERS MEETING** – this Saturday at 9am so we can discuss anything we need to do in relation to the upcoming Christmas Fair on Saturday 4<sup>th</sup> November at 8am.

**TRAVEL TALKS** – this Saturday at 10am. It will be really interesting with lots of great photos and 3 talks about 3 different countries all in the space of an hour. You'll be able to ask any question you like. And have a delicious morning tea. Please let us know if you're coming for catering purposes.

**Please pray for:** Paul; Monica; Isla; Keena; Charlotte; Cameron; Deidre; David & Lyn; Andrew; Dave; Janet; Don & Gazza



*Happy birthday to anyone who may be celebrating a birthday this week*

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## Welcome to Worship



## Pentecost 15

10<sup>th</sup> September 2023

**We are a warm-hearted community who are delighted to have you worshipping with us today ...**

### Our Mission is to

- **Know God personally**
- **Love and respect one another deeply**
- **Disciple and serve those around us**

**Sentence:** 'Where two or three are gathered in my name,' says the Lord, 'I am there among them.'  
Matthew 18:20

### Collect of the Day

Go before us, O Lord,  
and further us with your continual help,  
that in all our works,  
begun, continued, and ended in you,  
we may glorify your holy name,  
and finally, by your mercy, obtain everlasting life;  
through Jesus Christ our Lord,  
who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. **Amen.**

### Today's readings:

Exodus 12:1-14  
Psalm 149  
Romans 13:1-10  
Matthew 18:10-20

### Next Week:

Exodus 14:19-31  
Psalm 114  
Romans 14:1-14  
Matthew 18:21-35

**I got ninety-nine problems  
but ewe ain't one.**



#### **Pentecost 15 – Matthew 18:10-20**

*“If your brother sins against you, go and tell him his fault between you and him alone ... If he does not listen, take two others along with you, so that ‘every fact may be established on the testimony of two or three witnesses.’ If he refuses to listen to them, tell the church ... ‘For where two or three are gathered together in my name, there I am in the midst of them.’”*

Chapter 18 of Matthew’s Gospel is a collection of Jesus’ sayings on the practical challenges facing the Christian community, including status-seeking, scandal, division, and the topic of today’s reading conflict.

Today’s Gospel reading sounds more like regulations devised by an ecclesiastical committee than a discourse by Jesus (this chapter has been called the “church-order discourse” of Jesus). But the real point of Jesus’ exhortation is that we must never tolerate any breach of personal relationship between us and another member of the Christian community. At each stage of the process – personal discussion, discussion before witnesses, discussion before the whole community – the goal is to win the erring Christian back to the community (the three-step process of reconciliation outlined by Jesus here corresponds to the procedure of the Qumran community).

Jesus’ exhortation closes with a promise of God’s presence in the midst of every community, regardless of size, bound together by faith.

Jesus challenges us in today’s Gospel not to tolerate the dysfunction in our lives or allow our judgements and disappointments to isolate us from others, but to

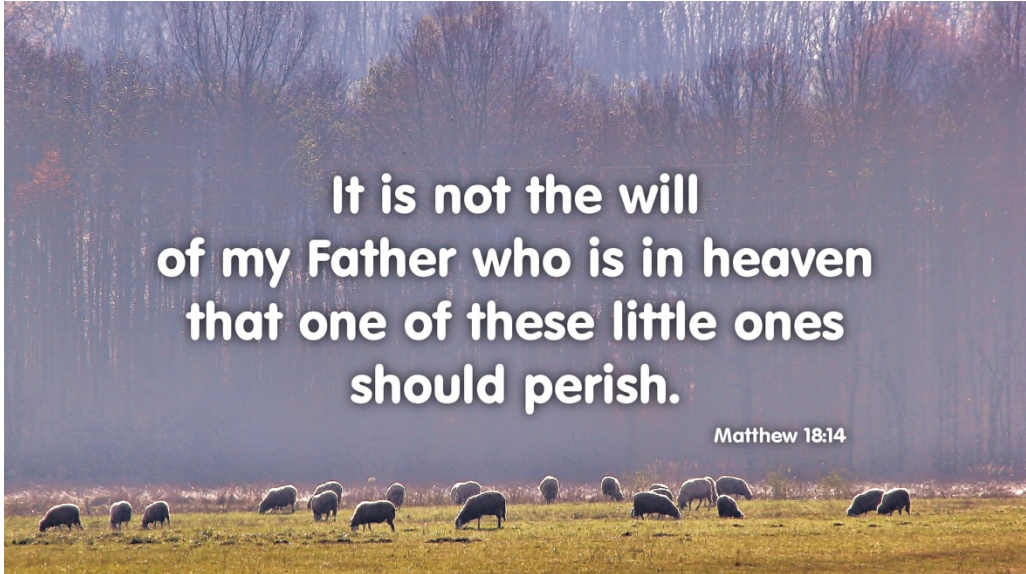
confront those problems, misunderstandings and issues that divide us, grieve us, embitter us.

Today’s Gospel outlines a process of reconciliation among divided members of a community. Jesus calls his hearers to seek honesty and sincerity in all relationships, to put aside self-interest, anger and wounded pride, and take the first step in healing the rifts that destroy the sense of love that binds family and friends, church and community – the love of Christ is the “debt” that binds us to one another.

In the “rules” and “procedures” for bringing sinners back to the community he lays out in today’s Gospel, Jesus calls us to build communities that are inclusive, not exclusive: to bring the lost back, not out of pride or zealotry, but out of “the debt that binds us to love one another.”

Today’s exhortation by Jesus is designed to help us create and maintain households of love and forgiveness and communities of reconciliation and peace, where even the smallest and youngest and least able to contribute are as welcomed and honoured as we would welcome and honour Christ himself. Christ promises that whenever we gather in his name, he is in our midst. Sometimes it requires an extra sharp and focused vision of faith to realise and recognize Christ with us, but he is always there. Christ’s presence should move us, inspire us, transform us into a community of disciples and witnesses of his resurrection.

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**It is not the will  
of my Father who is in heaven  
that one of these little ones  
should perish.**

Matthew 18:14