Held together

Present the reading & Talk together

Open the Bible at Matthew 18.15-20

Jesus teaches us how to deal with someone who upsets us.

Imagine,' said Jesus, with his disciples gathered about him, 'that somebody in the church has done something to upset you.' The disciples had just been asking about who was the most important in the church, and Jesus had shocked them by saying it was the children. Now he was teaching them about relationships.

Jesus continued, 'Speak to the person alone and tell them what they've done wrong. If they listen, you'll have solved the problem and got a brother or sister back.'

'What if they don't listen?' the disciples asked.

'Take along one or two other people, who can hear what you say to one another,' Jesus replied. 'If the person still won't listen, then tell the whole church what has happened. If they won't even listen to the church, then that person is not like a brother or sister to you. They are like a Gentile or a tax collector, and you shouldn't treat them as family.'

Jesus told the disciples that they would be the ones making judgements in the church. 'You are in charge of deciding what is forbidden and what is allowed now. Whatever you forbid on earth, will also be forbidden in heaven. Whatever you allow on earth, will be allowed in heaven. And remember, if two of you agree when you ask for something on earth, my Father in heaven will give it to you.' Looking at the group listening to him, Jesus said, 'Where two or three are gathered in my name, I am there among them.'

Glossary

Gentile the name that Jews give to non-Jews;
tax collector tax collectors were Jews who worked for the Romans, collecting money from their own people. This meant they were seen as traitors.

Talk together (🌐 Connect faith with everyday life)

- Why do you think Jesus tells us that the whole church should be involved if two people can't sort a problem out?
- Have you ever fallen out with a friend? What did you do about it?
- What things can we do to help everyone get along with one another?