

Update on Sunday and Wednesday services:

Following the Government announcement on Thursday and Friday about new restrictions and guidelines "Rule of Six," as at the time of going to press the Church of England has been advised that regular worship is still being allowed, subject to the existing guidelines. There is likely to be an update early next week that may change things. But, until such news is received, the worship pattern will continue with:

Sunday morning services –

next week we are in Congresbury, followed by Banwell the week after.

Wednesday at 9.00am in Congresbury,

followed by a socially distanced coffee or whatever at St Congar's Coffee Shop.

As soon as we hear any further news we will, of course, let people know as soon as we can.

Matt



Daily Blog – What's happening Next? A Journey into John's Gospel and how Jesus sees the world: "Themes in the Gospel of John" by Tom Wright, New Testament writer.

As mentioned in our "Livestream of Sunday Services," we are going to begin looking at seven themes within the Gospel of John. This week we will look at the first of the seven themes, "Justice" and see how issues of Justice are core to God's desire for the world, but Justice in a way that brings change, not just judgement.

We hope you will join us each day as members of the Daily Blog team share with us a short five minute video picking up on various Bible Stories and scenarios that explore this theme of God's understanding of Justice throughout the coming week.

If you would like to follow the Daily Blog as part of your journey of faith, you can access via the "New Creation Facebook Page" : <https://www.facebook.com/NewCreationChurches/>, via the New Creation website: <http://www.newcreationchurches.org.uk/> or New Creation YouTube Channel : <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCXn34qIXBeOAmO1M1KbBw/>

Rend Collective@the O2 Academy Bristol — Friday 15 October 2021 - 6.30pm

Some of us were looking forward to seeing Irish Christian Folk-Pop Band 'Rend Collective' this September at the O2 Academy in Bristol, however due to guidelines on events, the decision has been made by the band and the venue to move the date back to **Friday 15th October 2021**.

If you already have tickets, the ticket agent will swap them for you but if you have yet to purchase tickets and would like to come, the link to the event page is here. <https://academymusicgroup.com/o2academybristol/events/1291861/rend-collective-tickets>



All tickets are General Admission so there will be no assigned seating, but if we all purchase our own tickets, we can still go together as a group on the day. Any questions? Please don't hesitate to ask. kirsty.bowles@newcreationchurches.org.uk

SUNDAY 13TH SEPTEMBER TRINITY 14

Thought for the week: "What happens when kindness seems to be running out?"

Following the news on Thursday and Friday from the Government about new, tighter restrictions in order to tackle the new spike in Co-Vid cases, I've been amazed at some people's reactions.



Some have expressed to me the new challenges that this is going to present to them as a family, and have shared their worries looking to the future at big occasions like the celebration of Christmas. Others have immediately looked for someone to blame, ranging from, "blaming all those young people out partying all the time," to "that blessed Government," to "it's all a conspiracy theory by the EU and others to break this country."

Opinion polls seem to support what many are worried about, that there is an increasing breakdown in a sense of society and 'community' identity, driven by a sort of highly toxic combination going on between "Lockdown fatigue," as one journalist called it, and an increasing desire to find someone to dump months of frustration, hurt and restraint upon. Some experts even worry that it would just need one issue to capture a sense of shared injustice and there could easily be, not only demonstrations, but widespread anarchy on many of our streets.

Feelings of injustice and of "being wronged" by others are not new. They seem to be part almost of our DNA as human beings. They can insight anger, hatred and plots of revenge in the most law abiding and kindest of people, either because of injustice done to ourselves, to those who we love or value, or to a cause we care passionately about. Feelings can run high indeed.

The Bible, like other human history, is full of such examples. The battles and wars in the Old Testament, the tussle and fight for power and dominance between the Jewish Christian community and the Gentile Christian community in the New. And later Christian history is far from any better with centuries littered with the Church supporting this side or that, and of fighting amongst itself sadly all in the name of 'faith.'

Into all this, the message of Jesus can seem somewhat inconsequential, so insignificant that why should anyone take any notice of what He has to say? Except that, given the above we really haven't been very good at the whole 'justice' business if we're really honest.

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Looking into the whole issue of justice as the first of the “themes of John’s Gospel” that we are going to be looking at over the coming weeks, there is much however that it speaks into. In John ch 12 vs 24, Jesus gives an important teaching. He says, “Very truly I tell you, unless a grain of wheat falls to the ground and dies, it remains only a single seed. But if it dies, it produces many seeds.”

Very true, we may say, in a gardening context. But what does this have to do with the issue of justice and the present heightened tensions and blame game, both locally and on our TV screens? Well, Jesus is very clear, our first choice is to decide what the end game should be. Is our desire to simply get retribution dressed up as justice – to claim an eye for an eye, simply to get some sort of equality or “fairness?” If I suffer, all must suffer like me.

Or, can we see a bigger picture, which is what Jesus is trying to hold out for, when God will liberate us all from our divisive struggles and help us to see that it is the lies, the illness, the pandemic that needs to be tackled, not each other, and that indeed rather than blaming each other, “being kind” and doubling our efforts to take all that negative ‘hurt-filled’ energy, and trying to use it to do Acts of Kindness or good, that is what builds, rather than tears down, community.

It can feel though, like we’re somehow letting the ‘other’ off the hook: not holding them truly to account for their insensitivity, their naivety, or even their deliberate unfair action. But Jesus doesn’t say that. He encourages us to seek the truth, to be uncompromising in even presenting the truth. But, and here is the costly bit, to also give the person another chance to do it different. This is the cost of the seed needing to die because its me, my hurt, my pain that I need to let go of. And the danger of not doing so is that it can consume me.

Now, of course, not everyone will be able to raise their game to meet someone who goes there. They can, and often will, still justify to themselves why they will carry on and do exactly the same thing the next time, all over again. But they cannot also ‘unknow’ the fact that the other person has taken them, in the twinkling of an eye, to the throne of Grace. For it is often only when we have truly done something we know we should receive judgement for, and instead receive mercy, do we truly discover and/or can we re-trust that we are, in fact, profoundly loved.

We can live the “blame game” with ever heightening tension during this time, seeking out the groups and others who we wish to label the “themes;” people to blame, people to hold to account, people even to hate with a self-righteous anger. Or, we can take the narrower path, of taking all our hurt and frustration and pain and trusting it to God and then seeking to focus on the future, on what we truly believe and long for, a better world, and so commit to do new Acts of Kindness to make up for the ones that have been so painfully lost in His name.

Jesus calls this sacrificial justice. It’s never easy, and as soon as we seek to play out a particular memory or experience in these terms that we ourselves have gone through we can pretty much immediately see how difficult it is – Jesus even calls it “the narrow way.” But Jesus is also clear, in His view this is the only way He knows were everyone truly can see Justice lift people, potentially all people, to a new level of humanity.

Something to think about in the midst of all that is going on. Have a good week. Matt

CHURCH @ HOME

JOIN US FOR CHURCH LIVE ON FACEBOOK EVERY SUNDAY AT 10:30 AM!

AND FOLLOW THE DAILY VIDEO BLOGS, PRAYERS & STORIES ON

WWW.FACEBOOK.COM/NEWCREATIONCHURCHES



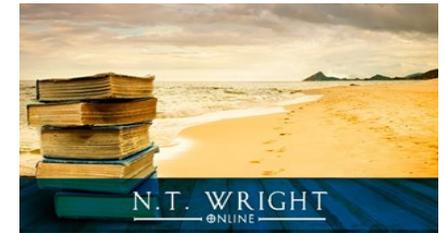
Live Stream Church for Sunday: “NEW Church for a NEW Society – Two Churches as ONE” - 10.30am:

THIS Sunday we will be in **Banwell** for the first of our Sundays where we focus on the “**Themes of John’s Gospel.**” And the first theme is Justice – and in particular, God’s understanding and insight into Justice.

We’re going to spread this theme over two weeks: this week looking at what is God’s understanding of Justice, and how it might be different to how we have often looked at Justice as human beings previously. And then, next week, we are going to look at how we can apply God’s understanding of Justice to the times we are going through.

John’s Gospel is such an engaging account of Jesus life. Known as the “spiritual” Gospel, John had more time than the others to sit back not only to remember the events of Jesus’ life as best as he could, but also to think in greater depth about what they therefore could mean. The other themes we will be looking at over the coming weeks include:

- Relationships
- Spirituality
- Beauty
- Freedom
- Truth
- Power



So please join us for the first week on Justice this week. The service will last approximately fifty minutes.

You can access the Service by joining us in church or **LIVE** via the “New Creation Facebook Page” : <https://www.facebook.com/NewCreationChurches/> or catch up later via the New Creation website: <http://www.newcreationchurches.org.uk/> or New Creation YouTube Channel : <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCXn34qIXBeOAmO1M1KbBw/>

Matt Thomson

Please continue to pray for Bishop Peter Hancock and for his family:

Bishop Peter has been diagnosed with a particularly aggressive form of Leukaemia and is continuing his treatment in hospital. Please pray for him, and for his family at the time.

Please pray also for Bishop Ruth, for Howard and their family as she takes on his role within the Diocese in his stead.