

Week 5.

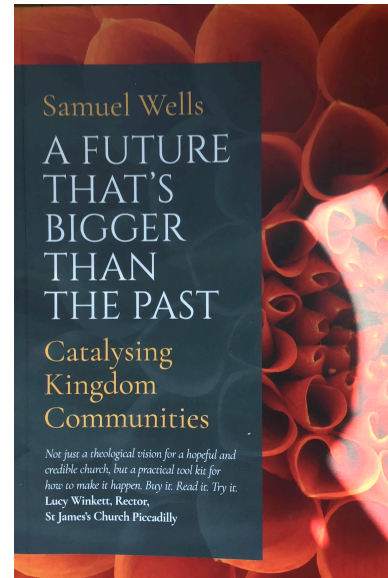
- What is a congregation?
- Read Matthew 22:34-40
- What does Jesus regard as core to being in relationship with God?

Jesus' Jewish background is reflected in the use of the Shema (Deut. 6:4-5) but he goes a step further to include loving yourself and others.

- How do his Commandments translate into day to day 'congregational' life?

'Community generates hope, because those committed to one another generate momentum and expectation of what God has in store; [which in turn] generates community'
(P.142)

- Do we believe that God has given us everything we already need, within our congregations, to be able to engage and share with others our abundant life?
- Are there people you know who don't come to church because they feel they 'wouldn't fit in' or perhaps 'it's not their thing'?
- How might we become a more loving and inclusive christian community where these people are welcome?
- Are we willing to proceed with self-examination, repentance, prayer and humility in order to allow God's Kingdom to grow?
- Close in prayer, thanking God for the resources we have within our congregations. Pray for courage to share what we have with others around us and create a welcoming, non-judgemental community.



Congregation

Congregation = Gathering / Community

[Paraphrase from Penguin Thesaurus]

'Renewal is ...revelation to those amid suffering, hardship & desperation, that God is with them.'

'Diversity...regarded as an asset, not a problem'

[Sam Wells P. 149 & 154]

