

church action for Tax justice

June 2019 Newsletter

National Co-ordinator



On 1st June, the new National Coordinator for Church Action for Tax Justice started work. Dr Justin Thacker is a former medical doctor and theologian, author of [Global Poverty: A Theological Guide](#) and comes with a range of campaigning experience across the charitable sector. He can be contacted on Justin.thacker@catj.org.uk and hopes very much to hear from our supporters and friends about any way in which we can make the work of CATJ more effective.

Tax Justice Sunday and Fair Tax Week - events

Fair Tax Week launches on Friday July 5th at the [Fair Tax Conference](#). Justin Thacker from CATJ and Janie Oliver from ECCR will be leading a workshop at the conference looking at tax justice from a faith perspective and why Tax Justice Sunday matters.

Tax Justice Sunday is on Sunday July 7th, and there are now a suite of resources on the newly configured [CATJ website](#). They include a Church Action Pack, Worship Resources, Hymns and Sermons. We hope you will be able to use these resources to mark tax justice Sunday at your church.



Fair Tax Week 2019

Tax for the Common Good

Wednesday 10th July 2019

7.00pm to 8.30pm

Where: **Bertha Wright Room
The Church at Carrs Lane,
Birmingham, B4 7SX**



On Wednesday 10th July, in Birmingham, Justin Thacker is also speaking at Tax for the Common Good, an event put together by CATJ supporters from Birmingham. Please come along if you can, and / or share the event via your networks. The event is free to attend.

Social Media

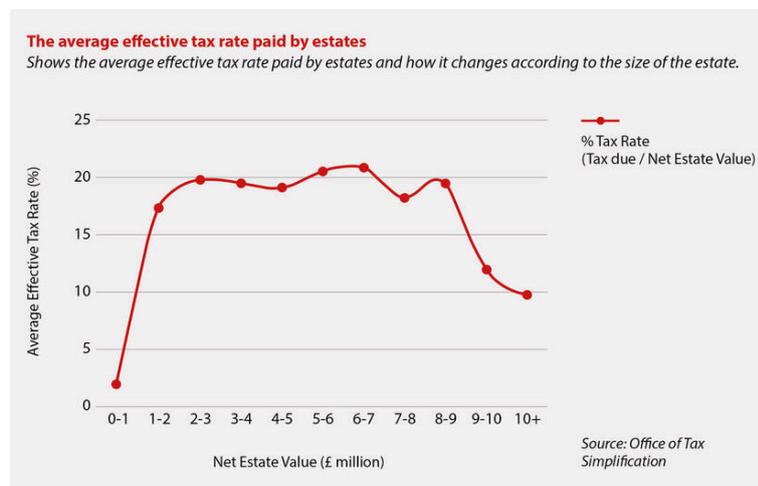
Church Action for Tax Justice is primarily a campaigning organisation. That means we need to build the movement of those who support the message of tax justice. To that end, we have recently introduced the following social media accounts which it would be great if you could like / follow and share to your contacts and friends:

Facebook - <https://www.facebook.com/churchactionfortaxjustice/>

Twitter - [@ChuActTaxJust](https://twitter.com/ChuActTaxJust)

Instagram - [churchactionfortaxjustice](https://www.instagram.com/churchactionfortaxjustice)

Inheritance tax – or how to be generous to the very wealthy!



Tax Justice UK have released a new report, [In Stark Relief](#), which details how the UK's inheritance tax disproportionately favours the very wealthy over the rest. While the effective tax on estates rises rapidly for estates valued at over £1million, it drops off sharply again when your estate is valued at over £9 million. This is due to a series of tax reliefs that become effective or accessible for the very wealthiest.

The report calls for a tightening up of these reliefs to ensure that the very wealthiest pay their fair share, and that inheritance tax is used to reduce inequality.

Digital tax – are we finally catching up with GAFA?

This month, the G20 group of finance ministers announced that they were lending their support to a new approach to tackling tax avoidance by the tech giants – Google, Amazon, Facebook and Apple (GAFA) among others. The particular problem with tech companies is that it can be very easy for them to shift profits to low tax regimes as the products that are consumed are often not geographically fixed. In response, the G20 ministers have said that change is required which will introduce a global minimum corporation tax, and will move to taxing consumption of tech services rather than production. Of course, the devil is in the detail and we wait to see whether the supportive noises coming from the G20 are just that, but so far we are cautiously optimistic about this direction of travel.

CATJ's national coordinator, Justin Thacker, took part in an interview with TransWorld Radio to discuss these developments, and the interview can be found [here](#)

Parliamentary reception – Monday 17th June



Church Action for Tax Justice was represented at a parliamentary reception on Monday 17th June hosted by Tax Justice UK, the Fair Tax Mark and the All Party Parliamentary Group on Responsible Tax. The event brought together key voices from business, politics and campaigning to look at how UK policy can encourage positive tax behaviour and support businesses that say what they pay with pride.

Jersey, Guernsey and Isle of Man – coming in from the cold or not?

This month, Jersey, Guernsey and Isle of Man announced that they would [voluntarily publish registers of beneficial ownership](#) as a means to end the tax secrecy with which they are associated. This move comes in response to the efforts of Margaret Hodge and Andrew Mitchell to pass an amendment which would have forced the islands to do just this. However, at present, the timescale for the change is not until 2023 and therefore ongoing pressure is required to ensure that this move really sees the light of day.

New Report from ActionAid

ActionAid have produced a new report, [Collect More and More Fairly](#), calling on the European Commission to make greater efforts in the way they supports poorer countries in their own attempts at domestic tax collection. In particular, the report points to the need for EU support to not just look at overall revenue collection, but also at the impact of tax policies on economic and gender inequalities.

Quakers on Tax Justice



The Quakers have produced a new resource on tax justice which is available [here](#). Hard copies are available from neueconomy@quaker.org.uk

The publication sets out the Quaker vision of a fairer tax regime which includes one that is progressive, green, reduces inequality and addresses poverty. They are also keen to emphasize that we need to be talking about the positive value of tax and in this way change the dominant narratives. We commend the publication to you.

Job Opportunities

The Tax Justice Network is advertising two roles that may be of interest to our supporters or their contacts:

- a data scientist - see <https://www.taxjustice.net/2019/06/20/job-vacancy-data-scientist/> -
- a consultant to scope out what we could be doing around taxes and climate - <https://www.taxjustice.net/2019/06/20/what-should-we-be-doing-about-tax-and-the-climate-crisis/>.

And finally...

As the new national coordinator for Church Action for Tax Justice my intention is to end each newsletter with a biblical reflection that grounds our concern for tax justice in our faith. I hope you find these reflections helpful and if you have any comments or advice on how to improve them, I would love to hear them – see the contact email below.

So God created mankind in his own image, in the image of God he created them; male and female he created them. (Genesis 1:27)

Being created in the image of God may not immediately generate any resonances with the concept of tax justice, but actually this central theological idea lies at the root of all that we do. For centuries, theologians have debated precisely what it means to be made in God's image, but there's a growing consensus that it reflects the ancient near east practice of describing the King as the one who bears the image of the gods. In this way, the ruler was the functional representative of the gods on earth. If this is the relevant background, then for the Hebraic God to declare all of humanity as being in his image indicated a remarkable equality agenda. If everyone from the king to the lowest slave bore the divine image, then everyone from the king to the slave represented God on earth. This includes both women and men, children and adults, those with disabilities and those without and so on. And this is where the link to tax justice occurs. Tax Justice is about ending the inherent unfairness in our tax system – an unfairness that leads to some having to beg for food while others throw it away, an unfairness that means some have access to high quality education while others do not. The message of the image of God is that we are all equal – every one of us – and therefore all of us should be treated with equity, having the same rights, responsibilities and opportunities according to our gifts and abilities. The equality agenda didn't begin in the modern era, it began in the pages of Genesis and campaigning for Tax Justice is part of that agenda.

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