



We need to build relationships.

Dear Friends

Welcome to the Autumn edition of the T4CG Newsletter. As this strange period unfolds, we are all finding it hard to deal with isolation, uncertainty and loss. Weaknesses are exposed and society is fragmented. We sense that the dominant story of the last forty years is running out of steam and may not provide the answers to see us through.

But through our shared, diminished condition, there is grace to be found. Somewhere deep in our collective memory there is another story that can help us bring forth a better way. It points to a reweaving of our social life built on covenant rather than contract. It is called into being when we build durable relationships with our neighbours and fellow local institutions.

For the churches, the starting point is to acknowledge this shared vulnerability, to ask for help as well as to offer it. It means listening and joining in where God is already at work rather than pushing our great idea. The church fulfils its purpose not as a service-provider arm of the state, but through its sacred relationship with people and with place.

We are keen to share with you our letter **Renewing the Covenant** and the accompanying webinar, if you haven't already seen it. In this letter we are calling churches and congregations to build local relationships. Having one-to-one conversations with your neighbours is a good place to start. It may sound too simple but this is how we begin to mount a resistance to the powers that dominate, dehumanise, atomise and fragment.

As we learn from the testimony of **Pastor Jonathan Brooks** in the story below, "there are no God-forsaken places, only church-forsaken places". A church fulfilling its vocation as a humble neighbour can be transformational. Taking an 'asset-based' rather than a needs-based approach is the way to go, as we share below. The churches are also called to promote the dignity of work: as **Tim Thorlby** writes here, the health of our democracy depends upon restoring the status of all kinds of work and ensuring it is decently paid.

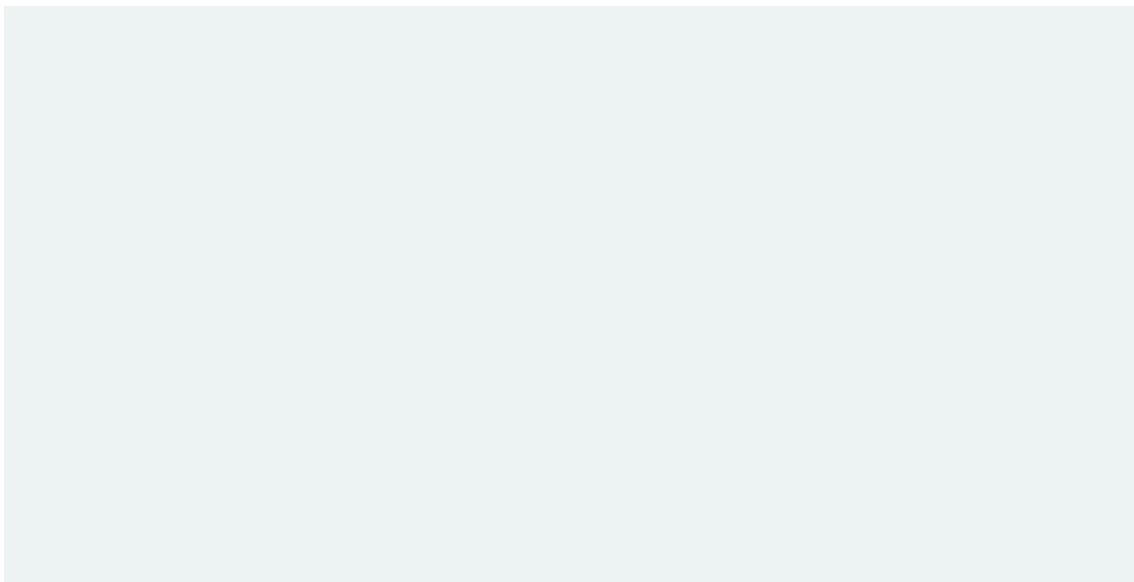
This pandemic and the associated fallout poses a risk not only to our health and to the economy. In terms of power and agency, the threat is also to the Common Good, our shared life. The combination of an increasingly centralised state plus the growing dominance of global corporations accelerates the injustice of pre-Covid trends. However, by building local relationships with our neighbours we can forge a relational power that can uphold a life of meaning and belonging.

Also in this edition, we have gathered a range of commentary for you on the new encyclical **Fratelli Tutti** and as ever, we have assembled a list of **recommended books**, along with our latest collection of articles to help you read the **Signs of the Times**.

The small T4CG team is working hard to respond to a growing number of enquiries and requests. Our resources for churches, groups, individuals and schools are all designed to help people fulfil their responsibility to build the Common Good. Most of our material is free and we'd like to keep it that way: so if the work helps you, please consider supporting us.

Every blessing

Together for the Common Good





RENEWING THE COVENANT:

Churches and the Building of Local Relationships

Even before Covid western life was already showing signs of stress due to decades of individualism. As the pandemic compounds damaging pre-existing trends, we sense that our operating system is no longer fit for purpose. Our latest webinar and letter address the failure of a transactional culture, charting a new way forward based on covenantal relationships.

This comes out of a close relationship with our friends at the *Journal of Missional Practice* and *The Common Good Foundation*. As you will see we are building on our letter [The Plague and the Parish](#) and our earlier webinar [Preparing for a New Chapter](#). Our work together is all done for love and on an unpaid basis and we are keen to share it with you.

[Read the letter](#) | [Watch the webinar](#)



The importance of local relationships: 1-2-1 conversations

Loneliness and atomisation pose a major risk to our common life, on top of a culture already fragmented after decades of individualism. People across the churches are well-placed to offer some resistance by building local relationships. We can get to know our neighbours from different backgrounds, and intentional **one-to-one conversations** are a necessary first step. Could you and your congregation adopt this as a core practice? **Use our two-pager to get started.**

[Download our 121 guide now](#)



There are no God-forsaken places: only Church-forsaken places

This is the story of a church fulfilling its vocation as a good neighbour. Drawing on the testimony of **Jonathan Brooks**, Senior Pastor at Canaan Community Church, **Tom Ketteringham** learns how a congregation listened to what God was doing and joined in. By living covenantally within their neighbourhood, they are playing a pivotal, though humble role and in doing so, are helping to effect transformational change.

[Read the story](#)



Answering the Rage: Restoring the Dignity of Work

The 'dignity of work' is deeply embedded within traditional church teaching: everyone is made in the image of God and should be treated as such. Here **Tim Thorlby** explores the reasons behind the political instability of the past few years, arguing that

restoring the dignity of work is necessary to rebuild broken trust. He suggests ways in which we can all be a part of the solution, as churches, consumers and as citizens.

[Read more](#)



Common Good and the asset-based approach

How should we become communities of place? What works? Why are 'programmes' part of the problem? Here we take a look at the Asset-Based Community Development approach. We share a video featuring **Cormac Russell** on how ABCD frees up people to build the Common Good together, using their own gifts and skills.

[Read more](#)



The Ethics of Common Good: at the Good Summit

In mid October, T4CG took part in The Good Summit in Dublin, along with friends from the Common Good Foundation and The Missional Network. **Jools Hamilton** invited **Alan Roxburgh**, **Lord Maurice Glasman** and **Jenny Sinclair** to discuss the ethics of the Common Good and how this approach can address the damaging consequences of western consumer capitalism. Drawing on Catholic social thought and Scripture, the panel discuss the practices and habits that can lead us forward into a new imagination of our economic system, work and shared life.

[Watch the recording](#)



Building Common Good: in the Parish of St Mary's Wendover

St Mary's Wendover settled on the Common Good as their theme for their Sunday Eucharist services for the month of October. It seemed more important than ever that building local relationships should become a priority for the parish. St Mary's approached T4CG to help them think about what could be done in their church and in relationship with their community. A series of four services was designed, with the

first featuring a conversation with **Jenny Sinclair** of T4CG to introduce the theme.

[Read more](#)



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Equipped to build the Common Good?

To help you play your part, we have created resources for churches, individuals and for schools. Have a look round our website and see what suits you. All our material is geared to help you build local relationships, strengthen social trust and foster community.

[Learn more](#)



Signs of the times: Autumn 2020

We have assembled a selection of articles to help you deepen your understanding of what's going on as the politics of this new era unfold. You will find material by **Michael Sandel, John Gray, Mary Harrington, David Goodhart, John Harris, David Brooks, Tom Holland, Eric Kaufman** and many more [here](#).

A selection of articles on racial justice can be found [here](#), featuring material by **Chloe Valdery, Inaya Folarin Iman, Esau McCaulley, John McWhorter, Helen Pluckrose, Cedric Johnson, Toure Reed** and many others.

[Explore the articles](#)



Signs of the times: the churches

As the pandemic proceeds, how are the churches placed to help people cope with grief, trauma and uncertainty?

Giles Fraser [covid is causing us to wrestle with thoughts of mortality and meaning](#)

Catherine Pepinster [steps to save a church under threat of closure](#)

David Keen [the stark statistics showing that the church in its current form is dying](#)

Loss and Hope [resources helping churches offer bereavement support](#)

Edward Hadas [Catholic Social Teaching and Covid-19: the economy](#)

Tim Farron MP [closure of churches has troubled me: they should not close again](#)

C of E All Souls Day [effort to help people process loss, grief and bereavement](#)

National Board for Catholic Women [how to provide support around domestic abuse](#)

C of E [churches provide meals for hungry children at half term](#)

Luke Fernandes [the SVP is nourishing faith and friendship during COVID-19](#)

YourNeighbour [churches' pandemic helpline to close due to low demand](#)

Reset the Debt [coalition to give a fresh start for families in debt due to Covid-19](#)

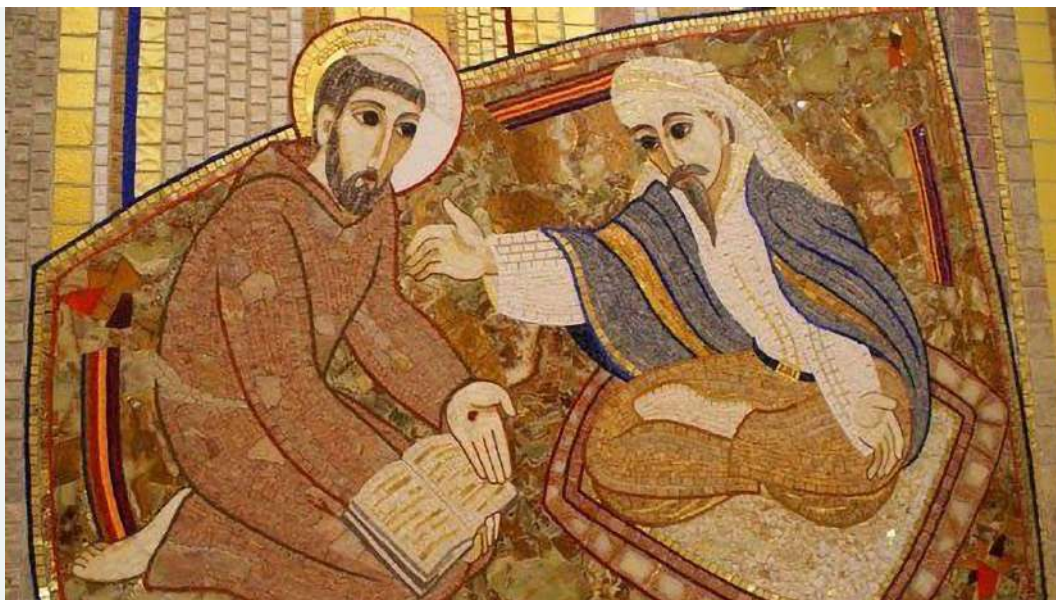
National Churches Trust [measuring the value of church building activity in GBP](#)

Rod Dreher [takes a hard look at Catholicism's crisis](#)

CSAN and **SVP** [a pandemic response kit for parishes](#)

Bishops [warn new lockdown restrictions will lead to unrest](#)

Stephanie MacGillivray [mental health, spiritual wellbeing and COVID-19](#)



Fratelli Tutti: papal encyclical on fraternity and social friendship

Inspired by the teachings of St. Francis of Assisi, Pope Francis' new encyclical *Fratelli Tutti* (Brothers and Sisters All) has the Good Samaritan as a central motif. It calls for solidarity and a new world order, lamenting the indifference of the west, the state of politics and the dominance of individualism. Attempting to achieve a creative tension between the global and the local, it proposes a globalised migration policy while affirming belonging to place. The encyclical has had a mixed reception, is heavily nuanced and is very wide ranging. We will not rush into a quick assessment here, but for the time being, we share a range of the very different views it has received.

Rowlands, Cavanaugh, Hancock, Riccardi, Camosy, Ormerod, Rees
Pope Francis' "architecture of peace" [podcast]

Damian Howard SJ **Fratelli Tutti is an attempt to save liberalism from itself**

Adrian Pabst **what the left can learn from Pope Francis**

Brandon McGinley **Francis is a liberal, but the liberal paradigm has passed**

Anna Rowlands **a letter for dark times: Pope Francis on the call for a new politics**

Agbonkhianmeghe E. Orobator **Fratelli Tutti is Ubuntu by any other name**

Ken Craycraft **a timely and welcome meditation**

Philip Booth **examines Francis' argument for global governance**

Christine Allen **how to be a 'Good Samaritan' in the time of Covid**

Archbishop Cranmer **Francis doesn't get it: Brexit it was an assertion of subsidiarity**

Benedict Rogers [Vatican fails to apply own principles to relationship with China](#)

Michael Warren Davies [Francis condemns not nationalism, but nationhood](#)

Annemarie Paulin-Campbell [encyclical on love misses the boat on women](#)

Samuel Gregg [a familiar mixture of dubious claims, strawmen, genuine insights](#)

Austen Ivereigh [a defence of Fratelli Tutti](#)

Larry Chapp [Fratelli Tutti and its critics](#)

Eduardo Echeverria [culture, dialogue, religion, and truth in *Fratelli Tutti*](#)

Daniel J. Mahoney [brothers without borders: a quasi-humanitarian manifesto](#)

[Read Fratelli Tutti](#)



Teachers in Italy [mark their relationship with T4CG](#)

Over a number of years T4CG has forged a longstanding relationship with the **Association of Italian Catholic Teachers**. This year's annual festival was online and included contributions from T4CG's Jenny Sinclair, Professor Tiberio Guerrieri, Father Graziano Gavioli and teachers Franca Gambari and Giuliana Bardi Paterniti.

[Watch video](#) | [Find out about T4CG's Common Good Schools](#)



Recommended books

Our latest selection of books

David Goodhart [Head Hand Heart: The Struggle for Dignity & Status in the C21st](#)

Michael Sandel [The Tyranny of Meritocracy: What's Become of the Common Good?](#)

Esau McCaulley [Reading While Black](#)

Thomas Frank [The People, No: a brief history of anti-populism](#)

Tim Carney [Alienated America: Why Some Places Thrive While Others Collapse](#)

Rod Dreher [Live Not by Lies: A Manual for Christian Dissidents](#)

Marcia Pally [Commonwealth and Covenant: Economics, Politics, and Relationality](#)

Jonathan Brooks [Church Forsaken: Presence in Neglected Neighborhoods](#)

Hak Joon Lee [God and Community Organizing - A Covenantal Approach](#)

Martin Charlesworth, Natalie Williams [Building A Poverty-Busting Lifestyle](#)

Bradstock, Chaplin et al [The Future of Brexit Britain: Anglican Reflections](#)

You may also be interested in

- [Leading Thinkers](#) collection of articles
- [Common Good thinking](#) and Catholic social thought
- [Previous reading lists](#)

What is the Common Good?

The Common Good is the **shared life** of a society in which everyone can flourish - as we act together in different ways that all contribute towards that goal, enabled by social conditions that mean every single person can participate.

We create these conditions and pursue that goal by working together across our differences, each of us taking responsibility, according to our calling and ability.

[Learn more](#)

T4CG needs you

Most of our work is available for free and we want to keep it that way.

Please consider donating £10, £20 or £50 per month

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About us

Together for the Common Good is a charity working to strengthen the bonds of social trust. Our work calls people to fulfil their vocational responsibility by putting Common Good principles into practice and by working with others of different opinions and backgrounds in shared purpose.

T4CG partners with people across the churches and offers resources, training and events. We are non partisan, independent, ecumenical in character and proud of our different Christian traditions.

Our People

Team: Jenny Sinclair (Founder Director), Alison Gelder (Director of Operations, p/t)

Louise Lambert (Team Support Worker, p/t), Chris Knowles (Here: Now: Us People project leader, p/t)
Board of Trustees: Richard Holman (Chair), Holly Terry (Company Secretary)
Sophie Stanes, Geoff Knott, Edward Hadas

T4CG punches above its weight thanks to help-in-kind and our wonderful Associates, Volunteers and Working Groups who contribute on a pro bono basis to different strands of our work, too many to name here. We'd like to thank in particular Leo Donaghy, Fiona Foreman, Catherine Brady, Annette McBride, Miriam Brittenden and Joe Moore.

Our sincere thanks

We are most grateful to our regular donors for their faithful generosity.
The Sisters of Mercy kindly allow us to use free office space.



CCLA has generously sponsored the design and build of our smart new website.



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