



The Plague and the Parish

John 17:11-19

Dear Friends,

Welcome to a special edition of our newsletter as we celebrate Pentecost. As Pope Francis said last year, we are not living through an era of change but a change of era. We are entering a new chapter in the history of the world, and of the church. The scale of the challenge before us demands a careful response.

Many people are asking us "how should the church respond?" If we are to act effectively and faithfully it is vital to understand what is taking place and how it is different from what went before. To address this, T4CG has been working in partnership with our friends at the Journal of Missional Practice (JMP) and the Common Good Foundation.

We think God is calling the churches into the local, to rediscover their role as civic institutions, to act alongside friends and neighbours to defend the space where human beings flourish. It may require some rewiring and a revitalising of the Christian imagination. It needs to begin with a sense of a humble church and the recognition of shared vulnerability.

As a starting place we offer you a letter: [the Plague and the Parish](#). This is an invitation, a call for the church to renew its vocation. We invite you to read, listen and share your responses with us. What questions does this raise for you? We want to hear from you.

Alongside this, this edition includes a powerful reflection by **Andrew Rumsey** whose daily walks deepen his understanding of the historic relationship between the parish, people and place. We are also delighted to bring you a moving testimony by **William Taylor** about his community's way of honouring the lives of neighbours in his parish lost to Covid-19.

The invitation shared with you here builds upon **Preparing for a New Chapter**, our trans-Atlantic webinar co-hosted with JMP featuring our mutual friend **Maurice Glasman**. We were overwhelmed by the response and the comments we received have shaped our thinking. You can view the webinar via the link below.

Also in this edition, you will find the latest news on T4CG's young adults, plus, as ever, our latest recommended reading, podcasts and our Signs of the Times section with links to some timely articles.

Before us is the great task of civic renewal. To help you and your community play your part we have created some new resources, free for you to download. You will find a short six session course, **The Word and the Common Good**, and also our new **Examen for the Common Good**. We pray they inspire you to strengthen the bonds of trust where you live and work.

Holy Spirit, come upon us. Breathe new life into us. Help us to build up rather than break down. Call us into New Life, through the gift of your Son, Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen.

Together for the Common Good



The Plague and the Parish: An Invitation to the Churches

We are entering a new chapter, a change of era. In partnership with our friends at the *Journal of Missional Practice* and the *Common Good Foundation*, *Together for the Common Good* is asking how should the churches respond?

As we celebrate Pentecost **we offer you an invitation**. We invite you to **read, listen and consider**. Share with us what you are hearing. What questions does this invitation raise? We want to hear from you.

Read, listen and watch the invitation (12 mins)



We grieve: from vulnerability and loss to Common Good

In the new era, our relationship with place has become more important, and the parish may find new ways to fulfil its civic role. This powerful story by **Fr William Taylor** demonstrates how a church, embedded in local relationships, is uniquely well-placed to act in a way that is meaningful for the whole community. Don't miss the video.

[Read more](#) (8 mins)



Walking the parish: a conversation between God, land and humanity

On his early morning walks **Andrew Rumsey** traces the same route. Remembering that communities in the past knew their locale by heart, he considers the parish today as a shared inheritance in which all can participate, where the local church is well-placed to animate a renewed civic conversation.

[Read more](#) (5 mins)

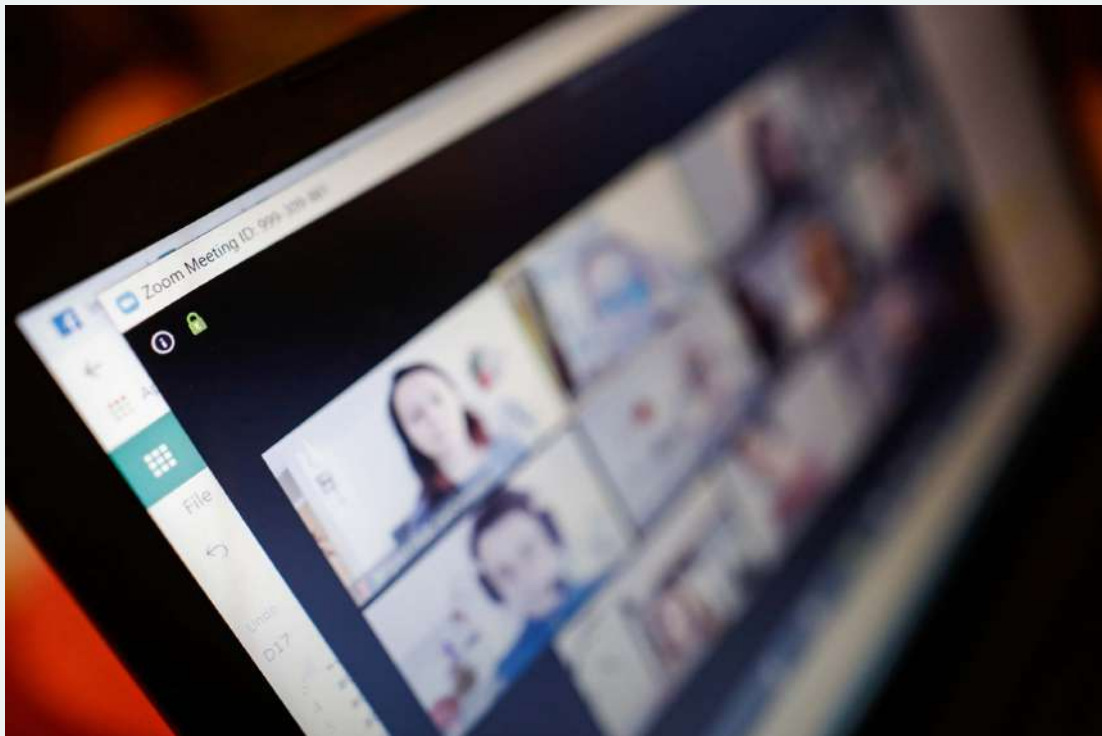


Preparing for a New Chapter: Revitalising the Christian Imagination for the Sake of the Common Good

In our first trans-Atlantic webinar we addressed the implications of the change of era for the churches. The discussion featured **Lord Maurice Glasman** (The Common Good Foundation) and was co-hosted by **Alan Roxburgh** (Journal of Missional Practice) and **Jenny Sinclair** (Together for the Common Good).

Almost 100 church leaders participated via Zoom and over 1,000 watched on Facebook Live. The response has been overwhelming and has shaped the Plague and the Parish invitation mentioned above. Within our limited capacity, we are planning further webinars - watch this space.

[Watch the video](#)



New Perspectives Network: T4CG's young adults' meetups

Our young adults network continues to grow during lockdown, holding monthly meetups online instead of in the pub. The group is entirely self-run on a voluntary basis. Taking turns to lead, they look at hot button issues through the lens of the Common Good, most recently the implications of Covid-19 on the dignity of work, education and class.

[Find out more](#)


THE WORD AND THE COMMON GOOD

Six Session Course

New six session course: the Word and the Common Good

We are launching today *The Word and the Common Good*, a set of 6 x 45 minute sessions for use in small groups either face-to-face or online. The sessions enable people to use Scripture to reflect on the Common Good, prompting them to build on community spirit and strengthen local relationships. Anyone can run a session. You may find this helps people to reflect on the current situation and share concerns and experiences. During the pandemic we are making this material available for free.


[Download for free](#)




The Common Good EXAMEN

- 1 Become aware of God's presence. Look at the day with Gratitude.
- 2 Ask for the Grace to see through God's eyes. Review the last 24 hours, noticing my thoughts, feelings and actions.
- 3 Ask the Holy Spirit to show me where the Common Good was at work and where it was absent.
- 4 Ask forgiveness for the moments when I have fallen short.
- 5 Look forward to tomorrow and ask where I need God in the day to come. Give thanks.

This prayer is based on the classic Ignatian Examen, a way to reflect prayerfully on the events of the day in order to discern God's direction for us. Learn more at www.ignatianspirituality.com.
The Common Good Examen © T4CG 2020





The Common Good Principles

Find out more at www.togetherforthecommongood.co.uk

New resource: the Common Good Examen

We have created a Common Good Examen prayer. By reflecting on the events of the day in God's presence, you discern how you are being called to play your part for the Common Good.

[Download for free](#)



Signs of the Times

A quickly assembled collection of timely articles

Tomáš Halík church's role in time of crisis: care, diagnostic, preventative, convalescent

David Bagnall will the church will rediscover the importance of the local?

Sujatha Gidla We Are Not Essential. We Are Sacrificial

John Sentamu a decent wage for care workers

Michael Lind power sharing and micro democracy at neighbourhood level

Alice Whalley YouTube sermons will not feed the hungry

Giles Fraser the unedifying sight of bishops taking part in a Twitter pile-on

Mike Gecan to defend against the next crisis, civic society needs to be strengthened

Anna Rowlands the paradoxes of power, community and the politics of mourning

Cardinal Vincent Nichols trust is an issue of leadership and common good

Andy Haldane Reweaving the social fabric after the crisis

Maurice Glasman on Rabbi Pinter's ability to build trust with all parts of the community

Aline Kalbian the moral responsibility to protect people in prison

David Skelton new settlement must balance interests of workers with shareholders

Luke Miller churches are places for people to gather: to rejoice, to weep and to party

Al Barrett the storiedness, sacredness of place that refuses the abstractions of space

Jo Siedlecka churches lead civic collaboration to feed homeless in central London

Vacancy: short SEO/web development assignment

We are looking for an efficient all-round WordPress/SEO/digital marketing practitioner to support our team to complete our recently built website and improve online visibility.

Temporary 4 week contract.

[Find out more](#)



Recommended books and podcasts

[Laborum Excerens \(On Human Work\)](#)

Pope John Paul II

[A Voice of Their Own: The Authority of the Local Parish](#)

William A Clark SJ

[The New Class War](#) (podcast)

Michael Lind

[Life After the Pandemic](#) (pdf)

Pope Francis

[Manufacturing a Recovery from Coronavirus](#) (pdf)

Caroline Flint and John Mills

[The neighbourhood is the primary unit of change. Not the individual](#) (podcast)

Cormac Russell

[The Great Transformation: The Political and Economic Origins of Our Time](#)

Karl Polanyi

[For the Parish: A Critique of Fresh Expressions](#)

Andrew Davison and Alison Milbank

[Church must embrace its vulnerability and minister out of its own weakness](#) (podcast)

Nicholas Henshall

You may also be interested in our

- [Leading Thinkers](#) collection of articles
- [Section](#) on Catholic social teaching
- [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](#)

ABOUT T4CG

Together for the Common Good helps people across the churches play their part to strengthen the bonds of social trust.

We do this through Common Good resources, training and events. Everything we do is in partnership, boosted by help in kind and the *pro bono* support of our wonderful associates and volunteers.

Without regular donors we cannot plan ahead.

Would you join us and make a regular donation of £10, £20 or £50 per month?

Please click [here](#) to lend your support.

Contact us at info@togetherforthecommongood.co.uk.

Please support our work



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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)

Board of Trustees: Richard Holman (Treasurer and Acting Chair)

Catherine Brady (Director of Resource Development, *pro bono*)

Geoff Knott, Holly Terry (Company Secretary), 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, Nicholas Townsend, Annette McBride, Miriam Brittenden, Joe Moore and Joanne Rolling.

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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