



*Jeremiah 31:31-34*

**Dear Friends in Christ,**

Welcome to the summer edition of the T4CG newsletter. As we learn to live with the pandemic, underlying weaknesses are laid bare and everyone is uneasy. The Churches find themselves diminished and confused. Much of the economy is on life support, and cultural battles are raging. We are mourning the loss of loved ones, we are fearful and exhausted, all experiencing grief in one way or another. And there is a deeper grief: we sense, but may not be able to articulate, that our familiar ways, especially our transactional culture, are not going to be enough to see us through.

Somewhere deep in our memory is the tradition of covenant. It has atrophied as our culture of contract has dominated for so long, but there are stories that can help us recall. If the Churches are to fulfil their purpose in the new era, they will need to offer more than public prayer, feeding the hungry and burying the dead. They will need to recover their sacred sense of place and their covenantal role. Not as a church in a patrician sense as host, but as a distinctively Christian neighbour, alongside other local institutions also humbled by the crisis. A shared sense of vulnerability is drawing the Churches to re-root within local relationships. This will be the focus of our **next webinar** in September.

In this edition, **Sam Tomlin** a Salvation Army officer from Liverpool, tells how his local relationships have changed since he started walking to church. And **Jonathan Herbert**, chaplain to gypsies and travellers in Dorset, tells us how a dispute over a horse helped him tell the difference between contract and covenant. Meanwhile, **Jenny**

**Sinclair** explores what we can learn from the covenant relationship between church leaders and dockers' families in London's East End at the end of the 19th century.

As the impact of job losses sets in, we will need to build up our civic immune systems. During lockdown we have all seen a surge of neighbourliness and new connections forming. But we will need more than this: understanding relational power will make us more effective. So we are pleased to share a new learning series on this topic from **MetroIAF** whose leaders are among the original community organisers in the US. Alongside this, political theologian **David Muir** draws on Pentecostalism's understanding of the Pauline 'principalities and powers' to propose an authentic and distinctively Christian citizenship.


Durable, local relationships are what is needed to uphold community life and overcome division. As a first step, we can build on the spirit that emerged during lockdown: we invite you to try our new **4 session Guide for local groups** free to download below.

Responding to the 'Black Lives Matter' moment, we have assembled a collection of links that support a cross-racial, cross-class solidarity, opening up **a new narrative on race**. Finally, we bring you our latest **Signs of the Times** round up, recommended **books and podcasts**, and news on **T4CG's young people**. We hope you find these resources helpful as you reflect on the complicated times ahead.

*Every blessing on your work*

***Together for the Common Good***

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**Save the date: Thursday 10 September, 4pm BST / 8am PT**

Following our webinar **Preparing for a New Chapter** and our letter to the churches, **the Plague and the Parish**, both produced in partnership with our friends at the Journal of Missional Practice and the Common Good Foundation, the topic of our next webinar will be **Churches and the Building of Local Relationships**.

Further details will follow soon.

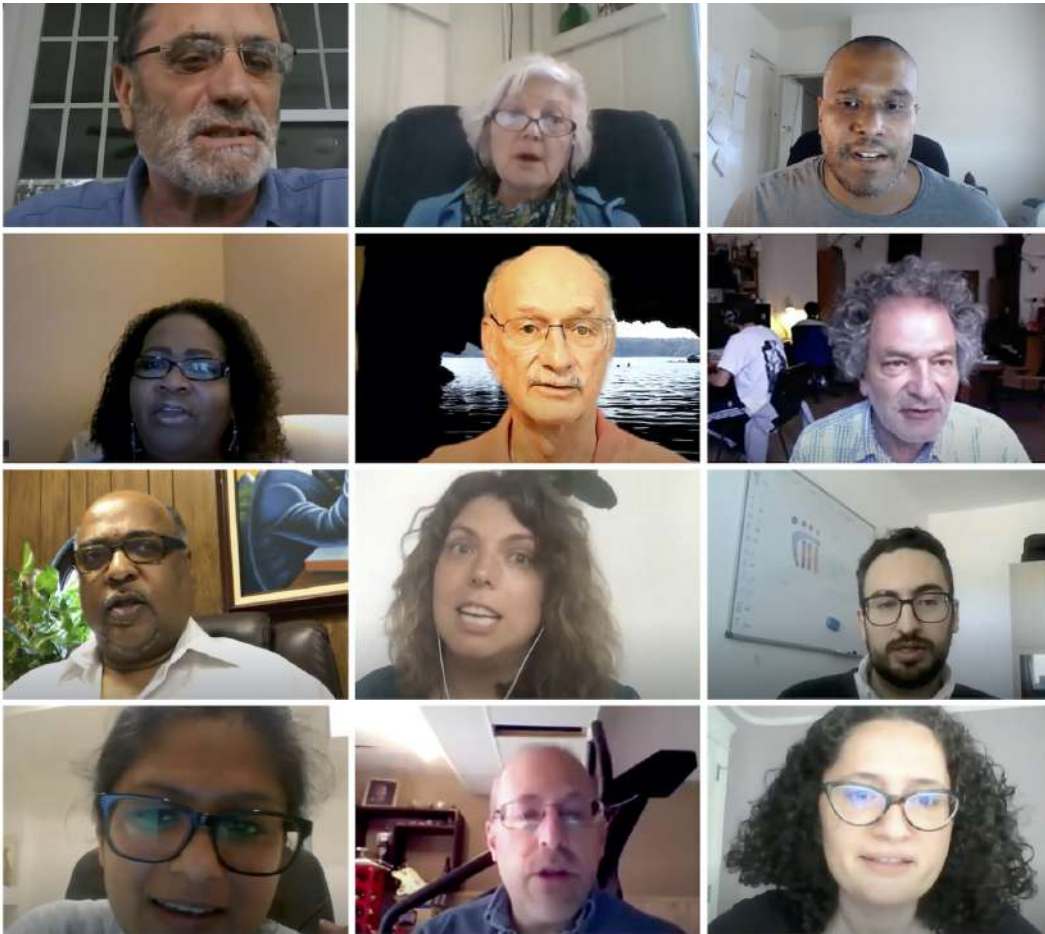
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## Pentecostalism, political culture and the Common Good

Invoking Jeremiah's 'Letter to the Exiles', **David Muir** argues for an active Christian citizenship. In an extended lecture we are delighted to share, he explores the relationship between the Pentecostal understanding of the Pauline 'principalities and powers' and political culture. He explores authentic Christian leadership and participation in the cultural politics of contemporary society.

[Read more](#)



## Understanding power for the Common Good

We are delighted to share with you a **new 10-part learning series** created by leading community organisers at **MetroIAF** (USA) and the **Common Good Foundation** (UK). Developed to strengthen their own practice, it consists of ten videos of informal zoom discussions plus recommended pre-reading. Whether or not you are an organiser you will learn a lot from this - as the fallout of the pandemic sets in, we'll need to understand relational power if we are to build our capacity as civic partners.

[Explore the videos](#)



# LET'S CONTINUE TO BUILD COMMUNITY by pursuing the COMMON GOOD

4 short sessions to build on community spirit and take action to strengthen your neighbourhood

HERE : NOW: US COMMUNITY



## Want to build on lockdown community spirit?

We saw great community spirit emerging during lockdown and we don't want to lose it. As the fallout of the pandemic hits, we'll need to continue to work together to strengthen our neighbourhoods. **Our new Guide is free to download** and, written in non religious language, it is suitable for all. It consists of four, 45 minute sessions framed around the principles of the Common Good and leads to a simple action plan.

[Download for free](#)



## Illegal Grazing: why the culture of contract isn't working

Read how a local dispute over horse grazing revealed the weaknesses of contract culture and the strengths of covenantal relationships. **Revd Jonathan Herbert**, Chaplain to Gypsies and Travellers in Dorset and Wiltshire, shares his story with us.

[Read more](#)

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## Walking to church: good news in the neighbourhood

Loving our neighbours covenantally draws us to be rooted in our local community. So what are we losing if we are driving to church, or if we live and worship in different places? **Sam Tomlin** a Salvation Army officer, writes about what happened when he started walking to church in Stonycroft, Liverpool, where he is starting an intentional monastic community.

[Read more](#)

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## T4CG conversations with young adults

In the last couple of months we've held several zoom events with young adults. We met up with two groups of interns, and our youth branch, the **New Perspectives Network** continued to meet monthly online. NPN's July meetup (available on video) addressed the politics of place and the role of the church with guest **Lord Glasman**. For NPN's June meetup, our director **Jenny Sinclair** led a discussion on the Common Good, racism, solidarity and the importance of local relationships.

[Read more and watch video](#)



**Is it time to forge a new narrative about race?**



There are many different ideas on how racial justice and structural change will be achieved. Not all of them can be regarded as 'Common Good'. The 'white fragility' approach is heavily promoted by the big corporates, and even by the Churches. But many leading Black thinkers reject race-reductionism, arguing that it will fail to deliver, that it will drive further division and worse, that it is in itself a new form of racism. Meanwhile, those engaging in iconoclasm and performative gesture politics may be inadvertently maintaining the power dynamics that exploit and divide.

A Common Good approach requires a cross-racial, cross-class solidarity to resist the forces that dehumanise. It will involve constructive steps to address structural injustice, but above all it is about treating each other with grace and love. The only way to achieve genuine change is through the obligations of love which are inseparable from relationships and from God, the source of love.

**Watch the British conversation in the video above. For an American perspective, watch the video discussion below.** To go deeper, explore the links here:

**Cedric Johnson** [Don't let Blackwashing save the investor class](#) (also podcast [here](#))

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**Toure Reed** [Toward Freedom: the Case Against Race Reductionism](#) (book)

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**Adolph Reed** [Antiracism: A Neoliberal Alternative to a Left](#)

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**Barbara & Karen Fields** [Revisiting Racecraft: The Soul of Inequality in American Life](#)

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**Howard Thurman** [Jesus and the Disinherited](#) (book)

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**Cedric Johnson** [The Triumph of Black Lives Matter and Neoliberal Redemption](#)

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**Barbara & Karen Fields** [on racism and equality in America](#) (video)

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**Revd James Lawson** [speaking at the funeral of civil rights icon John Lewis](#) (video)

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**John McWhorter** ['White Fragility' is dehumanizing and talks down to Black people](#)

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**Archdiocese of Westminster** [Being Black and Catholic](#) (video)

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**Pastor Corey Brooks** [Police should not allow looting](#) (video)

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**Toure Reed** [Why Liberals Separate Race from Class](#)

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**Joe Hildebrand** [Obama on 'activism' and why left wokeism enables the right](#)

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[The Rainbow Coalition of Chicago, 1969](#) (documentary)

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**Andrew Sullivan** [The Cascading Complexity of Diversity](#)

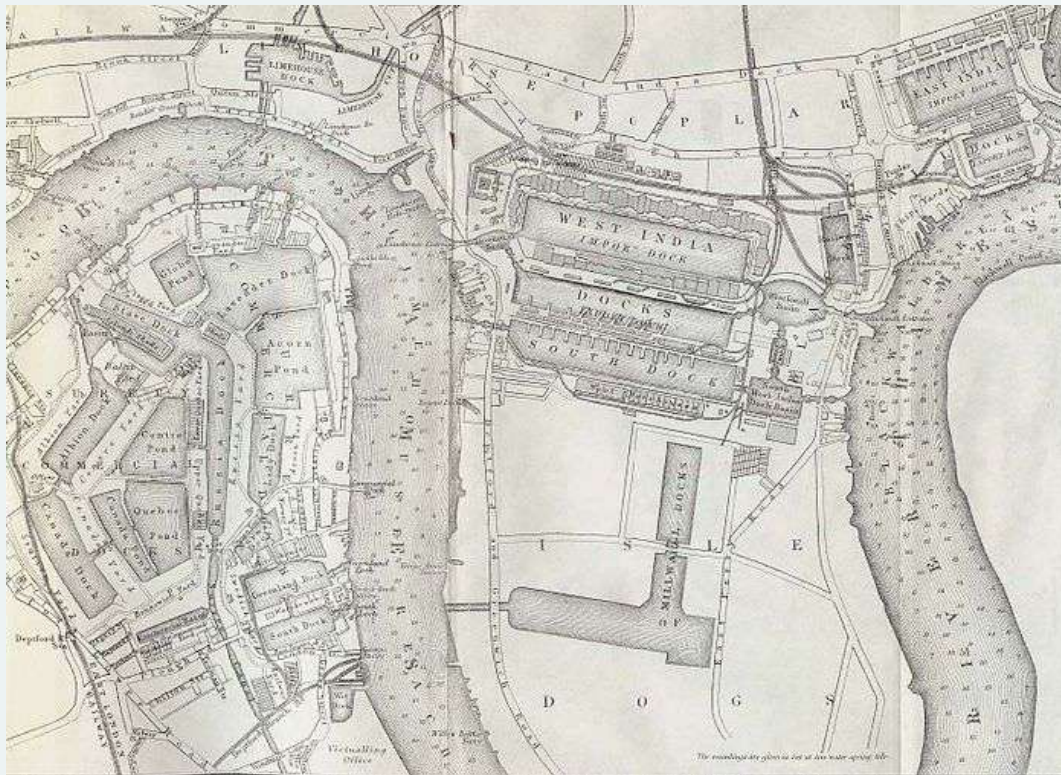
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**Justin Lee** [reading 'White Fragility' won't make you anti racist](#)

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**Batya Ungar-Sargon** [A New Black intelligentsia is pushing back](#)





### To live a decent life: an alliance between neighbours

As the consequences of the pandemic play out in 2020 and beyond, how will the Churches respond? **Jenny Sinclair** reflects on the Great Dock Strike of 1889 and recalls how Cardinal Manning and East End dockers worked together to negotiate a wage in order to sustain family life. Tracing the precarious nature of contract culture then and now, she explores what it might mean for churches to form covenantal relationships with their neighbours today.

[Read more](#)



## The Faith in Politics interns explore the Common Good

T4CG's latest online session was for the **Faith in Politics** internship programme for young people working in public service and Parliament. The group discussed the causes and implications of the new era, subsidiarity, relational power and the civic role of the church, and what it means to be a Eucharistic community engaged in the neighbourhood. **Ellen Martin** reports on the conversation.

[Read more](#)



## Signs of the Times

*A few links to help you make sense of the unfolding new era*

**John Gray** (video) [this moment may be bigger than 1989, 1968, 1917, 1848...](#)



**Eric Kaufman** [the great awakening and the second American revolution](#)

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**Maurice Glasman** [the importance of internationalism; the problems of globalisation](#)

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**ONS** [coronavirus and its economic impacts in the UK](#)

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**Jenny McCartney** [after decades of disdain for working people applause is not enough](#)

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**Local Area Coordinators** [renewal through citizenship and resilience not dependency](#)

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**David Goodhart** [why Gove praises FDR, America's most left-wing president](#)

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**Robert Putnam** (podcast) [the impact of the pandemic on the ties that bind us](#)

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**Mary Harrington** [the transition of wokeness into an alternative religion](#)

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**Jonathan Haidt** [people care more for defeating the other side than the common good](#)

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**Anthony Horan** [hate crime legislation risks Scotland becoming an intolerant society](#)

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**Xiao Li** [to people who survived the Cultural Revolution, US events are too familiar](#)

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**The Relationships Project** [100 days of lockdown: the moment we noticed](#)

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**Joseph Rowntree Foundation** [low-income voters and the future of politics](#)



## **From the churches**

*Some of the signs of Common Good thinking coming from across the churches*

**Pope Francis** [new papal instruction on 'the parish community'](#)

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**J D Vance** [why joining the church is an act of resistance](#)

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**Revd Sam McNally-Cross** don't sacrifice the poor, for the love of God

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**Cardinal Nichols** churches are wellsprings of our common good

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**Bishop Philip North** trust the parish, empower laity, return responsibility to the local

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**Sarah Small** no one left behind: we have chosen to stay, to face the future together

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**David Brooks** Jesus in his original Jewish context and the message of covenant

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**Giles Fraser** on the C of E's struggle about the parish and why it matters to all of us

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**Bishop John Inge** churches are a blessing not a burden

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**USPG** grief, pastoral and spiritual care - how the church is responding

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**United Reformed Church** renewing our community engagement

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**Church Army** death, grief and hope - resources for adults, young people, & prisoners

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**Theos** bridging the gap: what the church can do about inequality



## Recommended books

Going Public: An Organizers Guide to Citizen Action

**Mike Gecan**

Community: The Structure of Belonging

**Peter Block**

Accompaniment, Community and Nature

**Jonathan Herbert**



### Christ and Culture

**Richard Nieburhr**

### Rekindling Democracy: A Professional's Guide to Working in Citizen Space

**Cormac Russell**

### For the Parish: A Critique of Fresh Expressions

**Andrew Davison and Alison Milbank**

### Place, Ecology and the Sacred: The Moral Geography of Sustainable Communities

**Michael Northcott**

### A Christian Theology of Place

**John Inge**

### Compassion (&) Conviction: The AND Campaign's Guide to Faithful Civic Engagement

**Justin Giboney, Michael Wear, Chris Butler, Barbara Williams-Skinner**

### Michaela: The Power of Culture

**Katharine Birbalsingh and the staff of Michaela School**

You may also be interested in our

- [Leading Thinkers](#) collection of articles
- [Section](#) on Catholic social thought
- [Previous reading lists](#)

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## 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](#)

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## 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](mailto: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 (Chair), Holly Terry (Company Secretary)  
Catherine Brady, 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, Joe Moore, Joanne Rolling and Ellen Martin.

#### 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.

**SISTERS of MERCY**  
*of the Union of Great Britain*

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



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