



Through human work

Ecclesiastes 2:24

Dear Friends,

Welcome to the T4CG Newsletter. As Pentecost approaches, we sense the pandemic is hastening a profound change in the life of the church: Revelation 3 speaks to us: "Whoever has ears, let them hear what the Spirit says to the churches."

In its newfound vulnerability, the church is having a foretaste of what it could yet become: primarily to be *a people*. A people - not just inside the walls of weekly gathering places, but also outside structures, outside programmes - standing in relationship with others in the community. The church (in the sense of *ekklesia*, a body of faithful people) is being called to be a faithful neighbour, to fulfil its eucharistic vocation for the Common Good.

The recent anniversary of *Rerum Novarum* ("Of New Things" - the first encyclical of Catholic social teaching), reminds us that the calling of the church is to stand in solidarity with people in the reality of their lives. At its heart is the gospel assertion that humanity and nature are sacred, and that they must be defended. It describes in clear terms the forces that dehumanise and commodify: unequivocally asserting that human labour must take precedence over the interests of capital. It makes the crucial link between labour, community and a meaningful life.

So in this edition, we thought we'd feature the theme of the dignity of work. It is one of the key building blocks of our conception of the Common Good. Work is more than just a way to make a living – it is good for our humanity, because it is through work that we participate in God's great creative plan.

Another of the great encyclicals, *Laborem Exercens*, states: "*Let the Christian who listens to the word of the living God, uniting work with prayer, know the place that work has not only in earthly progress but also in the development of the Kingdom of God.*"

It is through our work that God shapes the world. With the help of the Holy Spirit, we are called to be the embodiment of God's purposes: through our efforts we make the invisible visible. Human labour is fundamental to the Christian conception of humanity.

So we are honoured to bring you two great essays. **Jon Cruddas** makes the case that since work is fundamentally a spiritual activity, the proposition of a Universal Basic Income is to be rejected, and the dignity of labour must be the cornerstone of the new politics of the Common Good. **Luke Bretherton** reveals the essential links between Christianity, human work and democracy through the authentic practices of organizing. Plus, to give you a grounded example of the church playing a key role in the retention and creation of jobs, we are delighted to have **Andrew Bradstock** telling the story of a time in Liverpool when working people were at the very heart of church leaders' concerns.

Below you'll find some **recommended books** and **articles** to help you read the signs of the times. And, we are pleased to announce a new **series of public conversations** - four over the next six months - in which we ask "What does the Common Good mean for families, for society, and for government?" You are warmly invited and we hope you will join us.

Holy Spirit, come to dwell in each of us this Pentecost, and remake us, Your church, anew.
Together for the Common Good



The Dignity of Labour

The Common Good, Universal Basic Income and the Dignity of Labour

Jon Cruddas makes the case that the dignity of work must be the cornerstone of a common good politics.

A seasoned politician and policy expert whose analysis is underpinned by Catholic social teaching, Cruddas walks us through the meaning of the dignity of labour in theory and in practice, showing why labour takes precedence over capital.

Rejecting fashionable proposals for a Universal Basic Income, he gives the arguments for and against serious consideration. His conviction is that work is fundamentally a spiritual activity through which people collaborate with God for the redemption of humanity. His recent book, 'The Dignity of Labour' has been widely acclaimed.

[Read the essay](#)



Christianity and local democracy

Recovering Christian Faithfulness, through renewed democratic politics

Against the backdrop of an increasingly volatile period across much of Western culture, and the growing lack of faith in conventional politics, **Luke Bretherton** explores the meaning of democracy and its connections with Christianity.

Stressing the need for a bulwark against, and an alternative to, emerging forms of authoritarian politics, he urges Christians to invest in small 'd' democratic politics.

He introduces the tradition of community organising, which in its authentic form has been effective in helping working people achieve justice in relation to jobs, housing and crucially, in the development of leaders. He sets out how its on-the-ground practices of listening, assembly and shared action can connect democracy with Christianity in meaningful ways, particularly at a local, congregational level.

[Read the essay](#)



Communities need jobs to thrive

In the light of today's 'levelling up' agenda and the imperative to bring meaningful work to places abandoned by globalisation, **Andrew Bradstock** recalls a time when Liverpool's church leaders collaborated with working people, business and government, paving the way for the regeneration of the city. Echoing Romans 12:5, their commitment was to honour all members of the community.

He reflects on how churches can learn from this today: by building local relationships and being good neighbours, churches can play a crucial role in the retention of jobs and the creation of new forms of employment, enabling families and communities to thrive in the places where they belong.

Andrew is the official biographer of Bishop David Sheppard (above, left) whose biography, *Batting for the Poor* is now available in paperback.

[Read the story](#)

PUBLIC CONVERSATIONS SERIES 2021



What does the Common Good mean - for families, for society, and for government?

We're pleased to announce our new series of four public conversations, which will run between June and November, 2021.

Speakers include **Professor Philip Booth**, **Dr Sam Bruce**, **Lord Maurice Glasman**, **Ruth Gledhill**, **David Goodhart**, **Edward Hadas**, **Richard Harries**, **Lord Syed Kamall**, **Ruth Kelly**, **Danny Kruger MP**, **Mercy Muroki**, **Cristina Odone**, **Trevor Phillips**, **Jenny Sinclair**, **Caroline Sloccock**, and **Julia Unwin**.

Our 2021 series is held in partnership with Caritas Social Action Network, the Centre for Social Justice, and the Benedict XVI Centre for Religion and Society at St. Mary's University, and supported by our longstanding partner, CCLA, one of the UK's largest

ethical fund managers, home of the new Catholic Investment Fund.

[Find dates and details here](#)



Signs of the times

We've collected a selection of articles for you

work

Rowan Williams [the crucial link between labour, community and the meaningful life](#)
Jon Cruddas [work matters: tech utopianism absolves the Left from doing politics](#)
James Timpson [decent work and commitment to ethical recruitment](#)
Martin Kettle [imagine if a political leader put dignified work at the heart of their pitch](#)
Daniel Dombey/Javier Espinoza [Spain grants gig delivery workers employee rights](#)
ITV news [solar panels linked to forced labour of Uighur Muslims in China](#)

politics

John Gray [the fall of Cameron: government subordinated to the market](#)
Maurice Glasman [how money corrupted football](#)
Adrian Pabst and Ron Ivey [why we must build a new civic covenant](#)
Lee Cain [the class bias in Westminster](#)
Aris Roussinos [China is forcing western capitalism to remake itself](#)
Joel Kotkin [how America turned into the EU](#)
Matthew Goodwin [what's the point of the Labour Party?](#) and 7 minute video [here](#)
Maurice Glasman [the loss of Hartlepool is the death rattle for Labour](#)

covid

Fiona Mountford [our conspiracy of silence over grief](#)
Leigh Philips [the link between neoliberal states and failing vaccine distribution](#)
Matthew Crawford [science is not apolitical, it can be used to undermine citizenship](#)
Tom Whipple [Wuhan lab Covid escape can't be ruled out](#)
Ian Birrell [Chinese Covid dissidents taking on the CCP](#)
Katy Balls [the Indian variant and the government debate over June 21](#)

antisemitism

Hattie Williams [Welby condemns antisemitic incidents by pro-Palestinian activists](#)
CTBI/CCJ [a resource for Christians to learn about antisemitism](#)
Ritchie Torres [I'm on the left but moves to wipe Israel off the map are unacceptable](#)
Stephen Daisley [don't compare Israel to Hamas](#)
Rosa Doherty [pro-Palestinian convoy in North London spreading anti semitic abuse](#)
Community Security Trust [security operation underway across Jewish communities](#)

division

Daniel Aldridge [building relationships between groups, post Covid](#)
Bret Weinstein [how anarchists captured Portland](#)
Chloe Valdery [Black people are far more powerful than critical race theory preaches](#)
David Goodhart [on the Sewell Commission](#)
Aaron Kindsvatter [rigid anti-racism is distorting mental health practitioner training](#)
Ayan Hirsi Ali [moderate liberals and conservatives must both resist tribal impulses](#)
Christopher Rufo [conservatives and liberals join up against racialized indoctrination](#)
Ilana Redstone [a thesis flattening human experience into an unrelenting state of war](#)
B. Duncan Moench: [Musa Al-Gharbi: the last academic who can tell the truth](#)
Mike Wade [Edinburgh University academics battle unchallengeable orthodoxy](#)
See also our selection of articles on "a new narrative on race" [here](#)



Signs of the times: the churches

A few links to explore

a changing church

Martin Robinson & Al Roxburgh a 'future proofed' church is a church without God

Paul Connor, Eden Network Ragworth Community Grocery

Fr Raniero Cantalamessa on the need to overcome ideology in the Catholic Church

Catherine Pepinster Nazir Afzal to head Catholic Standards Safeguarding Agency

Craig Simpson chaplain flagged to Prevent: victim of 'Church of Postmodernism'

Sr Nathalie Becquart vision of the synod is that 'all of the baptised are protagonists'

Jericho Church a church enterprise providing people with work and training

David Ison on the financial devastation of Covid 19 on St Paul's

society

Paul Kingsnorth from rebellion to surrender, from environmental activism to sacrifice

Tim Dakin church to partner with FE colleges to enrich local life + report

Mgr Janusz Urbanićzyk warns democracy is compromised without faith dialogue

John Root a nuanced review of the Sewell Report

C of E From Lament to Action - C of E anti racism report

Danny Webster the vilification of Jesus House (exclusion in an age of inclusion)

Giles Udy how critical race theory captured the church

Justin Welby reimagining Britain post-pandemic

Catherine Robinson pro life charities welcome cuts to international aid

James Roberts Pope joins global elite "to plan for world after Covid"

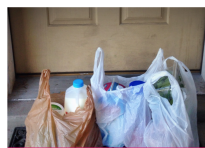
Methodist Finance Board disposes of remaining shares in the oil and gas sector

resources

London Jesuit Centre online course in Catholic social thought with Francis Stewart

Evangelical Alliance Public Leader course - applications open until 11 June

Housing Justice ABC Commission resources to respond to local housing need



HERE: NOW: US
COMMUNITY



HERE: NOW: US
PEOPLE



COMMON GOOD
SCHOOLS



COMMON GOOD
LEADERSHIP



COMMON GOOD
BUILDER



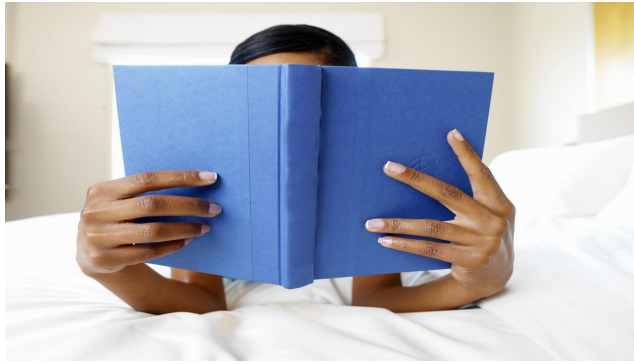
MORE
RESOURCES

Tools to build the Common Good where you are

We are here to help you build the common good, whether you are a congregation, leader, parish, diocese, organisation, prayer group, community, school, youth group...

Lots of free stuff, including:

- Bible study resources
- Common Good Examen
- Common Good Checklist
- New: an eleven-part podcast series on the authentic practice of community organizing, hosted by Luke Bretherton.



Recommended books

Our latest selection

Jon Cruddas [The Dignity of Labour](#)

Adrian Pabst [The Postliberal Moment: Manifesto for a Post-Pandemic Politics](#)

Steven Garber [Visions of Vocation: Common Grace for the Common Good](#)

Phyllis Tickle [The Great Emergence: How Christianity is Changing and Why](#)

Andy Ngo [Unmasked: Inside Antifa's Radical Plan to Destroy Democracy](#)

Yves Congar [The Meaning of Tradition](#)

Ben Aldous, Idina Dumore and Mohan Seevaratnam [Intercultural Church \(Grove\)](#)

Stephen R. Soukup [The Dictatorship of Woke Capital](#)

Agbonkhianmeghe E. Orobator [The Pope and the Pandemic: Lessons in Leadership in a Time of Crisis](#)

Catholic social thought on the dignity of work

- [Laborum Exercens \(Through Work\)](#)
- [Rerum Novarum \(Of New Things\)](#)



Podcasts and videos

Luke Bretherton [Listen, Organize, Act](#) podcast series

Jonathan Pageau ["the church is struggling to understand what it's for"](#)

Paul Kingsnorth [Environmentalism, Christianity and the Disintegration of Culture](#)

Giles Fraser with Matthew Sweet [the relationship between Judaism and Christianity](#)

The Chosen [new multi season tv series on the life of Christ](#)

You may also be interested in

- [Recommended books](#) in previous newsletters
- our [Leading Thinkers](#) collection
- [Common Good thinking](#) and Catholic social thought

Feedback

We always welcome feedback on the T4CG Newsletter so please email us at info@togetherforthecommongood.co.uk

Our recent survey told us that most of our readers are in leadership roles.

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.

[Find out more and explore our free resources](#)



Supporting T4CG

We are truly independent. We receive no funding from the major denominations, so everything you give us really counts.

Click [here](#) to donate. Thank you.



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 works with people across the churches and beyond.

We create resources, broker relationships and convene conversations.

We are non partisan, independent, ecumenical 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

Our sincere thanks

Our sincere thanks for help-in-kind and support from our partners and associates who contribute pro bono to different strands of our work. [Download](#) the latest T4CG annual report to find out more. We are most grateful to our regular donors for their faithful generosity, to the Sisters of Mercy for the use of free office space, and to CCLA for sponsoring our smart new website.



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