

commongood news

A look at how we're partnering with the poor
for the **common good** of the city

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Two months ago at our Insights evening, we showed you a clip from a documentary by Drew Murphy, a 19-year-old Common Grounder who is studying politics at UCT. The documentary, While the World Sleeps, explores human trafficking in Cambodia.

WE USED DREW'S FILM TO OPEN THE WAY TO RAISE AWARENESS OF HUMAN TRAFFICKING IN SOUTH AFRICA, particularly in the light of 2010, a massive money spinner that will be exploited by human traffickers to the detriment of the most vulnerable people in and outside of our country.

That night our hearts were broken by what we learned. Because of our porous borders and the absence of appropriate legislation, South Africa is a human trafficking hotspot. We're a source, destination and transit country for human trafficking.

The International Labour Organization estimates that at any given time there are 12.3 million people in forced

labour, bonded labour, forced child labour, and sexual servitude. That's according to the US Department of State's most recent Trafficking in Persons report.

Human trafficking is believed to be the third most lucrative crime in the world, after the drugs and weapons trades. Given that it is a low-risk high-reward crime, it's no wonder it's also the fastest-growing crime in the world.

Low risk? In many countries, including our own, a weak legal framework makes it easy for human traffickers to ply their trade. Thankfully, the Prevention and Combating of Trafficking in Persons Bill has finally been published in the Government Gazette and interested parties have until 15 June to comment on it.

Although human trafficking is a demand-driven business, sadly there is an endless

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Waking the bride, Waking the world

“ Human trafficking is believed to be the third most lucrative crime in the world, after the drugs and weapons trades. ”

supply of potential slaves. This is because of extreme poverty, unemployment, migration as a response to conflict, HIV/Aids, gender-based violence, the demand for sexual services, and the demand for cheap labour.

Where does all of this leave us “ordinary” Christians?

One of the reasons we screened Drew’s documentary was to show what one person can do. Drew, an “ordinary” young man serving an extraordinary God, bought a camera off eBay, hopped on an aeroplane to Cambodia and 10 days later emerged with material for a documentary that is now circulating the globe, breaking hearts for what breaks God’s.

But that’s Drew. What about you? What’s God calling you to do?

Working out the answer to the call isn’t always easy. But, as we learned at the Insights evening, it starts when we step

forward and say, “Here am I, Lord. Use me.”

Common Ground teachers Loryn Tuffin and Graham Sayer had precisely such a response. Realising the vulnerability of learners in their charge and the influence that they, as teachers, can wield, they both contacted Sarah Binos the day after the event.

Loryn, who teaches at Sans Souci Girls’ High in Newlands, was heartbroken by the footage of young girls held in captivity for prostitution. “I realized that the girls in the documentary could just as easily be any of the young girls I teach every day. After hearing that this is happening in Cape Town, I was overcome with a powerful sense of sadness and a sense that something had to be done.”

Graham, who heads up the English department at Somerset College senior school, was similarly stirred. “Inspired by the example of these brave young guys, I felt a need to do something to combat the injustice.”

Sarah put Loryn in touch with Graham and the two put their heads together. Apart from their own individual gifting, they had in their hands a copy of Traffic Proof, a manual developed by Justice

Acts, a working group of Youth With A Mission (YWAM). Traffic Proof is a powerful tool used to educate the “at risk”. Loryn and Graham truncated and refined it, bringing it in line with the objectives of the life orientation curriculum for Grade 10, 11 and 12 learners. The manual, which includes drawings by illustrator Karl Mostert, also a Common Grounder, is almost ready for layout and design.

Graham, who’s an advocate at heart, realised the need for a website to make such a resource – and other material relating to human trafficking – available online. So he roped in Roxy Amos, Brian Sayer, Simon Durham and Dave Kromberg, who are in the process of developing a website that will serve as a human trafficking portal.

There’s a great sense of excitement around what God has done among us in such a short space of time, and a greater sense of expectation around what he has yet to do in and through us when we offer him our loaves and fishes.

As Graham says, God’s capacity is infinite and in His hands and accordance with his plans, we can pull heaven to earth.

Angelique Arde

common do-gooders

Take heed! Take action!

What do Kim Sterne, Pepler Head, Nathalie Koenig and Minna Vaisanen have in common? All four were inspired during the Common Good Journey to get involved in volunteering with a common good innkeeper.

Margie Jansen speaks to both giver and receiver.

Tutoring

Beth Uriel’s aim is to provide young men with opportunities that encourage them to carve their own paths towards healthy independence.

“We live as a bizarre, large, purpose-driven family and look to the church and local schools for support,” says Lindsay Henley, a full-time volunteer and the head of the household.

Lindsay continues: “I really appreciate all the help the church has offered. The Beth Uriel family is blessed by you all!”

“I have been tutoring English at Beth Uriel for a few weeks. One of the first things the student I

tutor, Unathi, asked me was, “What does ‘It’s my pleasure’ mean?” It was so easy for me to explain the meaning to him and I could see how much he valued the term. During my last visit, I helped Unathi with some homework. He was appreciative of the help he received and when I said, “it was my pleasure,” it was awesome to know he knew what I meant. I have loved being able to practically share God’s love through the tutoring programme at Beth Uriel,” says bright-eyed Kim Sterne.

Pepler Head, a student from UCT, shares Kim’s sentiments: “I really wanted to get involved in tutoring, but had no idea where. An opportunity soon arose when a few friends and I decided to go on the Common Good Adventure and visited Beth Uriel. I was encouraged to

get involved after meeting some of the guys and hearing their stories. With great excitement I awaited my first session, ready to download all my knowledge to the student I would be working with. However, I have gained so much more in return. There is so much joy, laughter and love in their house. It’s strangely surprising how God gives you so much more than you ask for!”

Children in need

Arise is a ministry dedicated to caring for the physical, spiritual and emotional needs of vulnerable children. To achieve this, Arise promotes and oversees the placement of vulnerable children with foster parents as well as running a weekly literacy programme with Dagbreek Primary School in Heideveld.

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“My short time at Dagbreek School has meant so much more to me than helping kids out with schoolwork,” says Nathalie Koenig who spends her Wednesday afternoons in Heideveld. “The opportunity literally fell out of the sky, answering a yearning so perfectly and placing me on a path to places I know I’m meant to be. There is so much need in our community and it gets overwhelming sometimes, but I’ve learnt that every little bit can make a world of difference. It is crazy how little it takes to brighten a child’s day, how far-reaching that little beam of God’s love can be and how much joy can be found in restoring brokenness.”

Minna Vaisanen, a mother of four, has stepped in the gap to provide respite care to a child in need. Minna and her husband are looking after a six-month old baby, named Simphiwe, for two months while his mom gets back on her feet. Minna says her whole family is very fond of little “Simpi!” “He has been a great blessing and, really, taking care of him has not changed our life much. We made the decision to *safety parent* as a family, so everybody is involved in looking after him

in one way or another. The wonderful thing is that we can help those in need straight from our home!”

Beyond the call of duty

The carers at **ThembaCare**, an efficient palliative care centre, work around the clock to offer HIV+ babies a second chance at growing up to be healthy, productive adults. Genevieve Nel, a qualified massage therapist, is spearheading the Caring for the Carers common good initiative by visiting the staff at ThembaCare every Saturday armed with a massage table and healing hands.

When asked what impact the ministry has on the carers, Louise Saaiman from ThembaCare had the following to say: “Our staff are at the cold face of the trauma and are often dealing with their own tales of woe. This is why Genevieve’s gift to us is so treasured.”

A staff member thanks Genevieve: “Thank you very much for giving us those massages. It really made us feel good. We know it is expensive and you are giving it for free. Thank you for thinking of us here at ThembaCare. May God richly bless you.” ■

You’ll have MAIL

Since the Common Good Journey three months ago, a wide variety of new and exciting volunteer opportunities have been planned. As a result, the first *common good action* email will be sent out at the beginning of June. This monthly email will keep you informed of the latest common good activities and volunteer opportunities as well as all the information you need to get stuck in!

Are you a small group leader?

This emailer will serve as practical tool when considering how you can involve your small group in a once-off activity. New opportunities will be featured as well as upcoming events such as our annual golf day. Check your inbox!

CONTACT US!

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Innkeeper focus U-Turn

Written by **Nicolene Heyns**

Ever felt confronted by a beggar at your car window? You know that giving money isn’t the answer, but neither is a cold shoulder.

WHAT STARTED OUT AS A ONCE-A-WEEK FEEDING SCHEME in Colleen Lewis’ garden, is now a full-time organisation with its goals set high to reach out and touch our community by feeding hungry bodies as well as hungry souls.

U-Turn’s meal voucher system is a concrete and practical way to show Christ’s love - and point people in the direction of help. A voucher can be redeemed for either food or clothing at a U-Turn station. But that’s just the beginning. At the station U-Turn’s staff members are ready and waiting to minister and make a difference in these precious lives.

U-Turn director Sam Vos talks passionately about how he came to head up the organisation. A former mechanical engineer living in London, Sam became increasingly struck by the idea that South Africans needed to improve the lives



of the poor while at the same time preaching the gospel of Christ. “After all, what does it help someone if you say to him ‘Don’t worry about your empty stomach brother, Jesus loves you’, yet we don’t move to help him in any way?” asks Sam. “By the same token what does it help someone if you help him to gain the whole world as profit if at the end of the day he loses his soul?”

He calls his job at U-Turn “an ideal match” for these convictions. The organisation aims to restore the self-esteem of homeless people by addressing their spiritual, physical and emotional needs. The goal is to eventually rehabilitate and re-integrate them back into society.

Over the years, the meal voucher concept has helped get many people off the streets and equipped to turn their lives around. ■

AS OF NEXT MONTH, the vouchers will be redeemable every weekday in both Wynberg (lunchtime) and Claremont (evenings). The meal vouchers are available for purchase at the Common Ground church involvement desk on Sundays, and at Westerford Quickspar, Super Spar on Rosmead Ave or the Engen Garage on Claremont Main Road. They sell for R20 for a booklet of five vouchers. At just R4 per voucher, responding with Godly wisdom to those outstretched hands has never been easier.

Contact details:



Operational centre in Claremont: 021 674 0400
 U-Turn office: 021 674 6119
 General inquiries: info@homeless.org.za
 Website: www.homeless.org.za



NETwork is taking great shape

Foreigners in our city will soon have a place to go that feels like home. NETwork's new venue at 134 Main Road, Wynberg is currently being metamorphosed into an inviting hub that welcomes the north-east-south-west's of Africa. Julie Stevens reports.

By jumping off a nearby taxi or train, NETwork will be the place to come for information on becoming established in Cape Town, to catch up with news, and stay in touch with home. It's also a chance to meet other foreigners and connect with some locals over a cup of coffee. Most importantly however, NETwork is about equipping people to gain and maintain meaningful employment through job readiness training and access to opportunities. NETwork as a project name and venue, merely formalises and provides greater scope for what Andre Ntambwe has already been doing for the past 12 months through common good foundation. Responding to ►



“ The real drivers behind NETwork are our uncommonly talented Common Grounders ”

God's call, Andre has helped many along the road towards becoming established and finding work as well providing spiritual encouragement.

Word of mouth has already been promoting NETwork as testified by Barry Siletsha, a 23 year-old unemployed South African from Gugulethu. Even though the vision is to help refugees, our doors are also open to South Africans. Barry has recently been assisted to find a permanent position as a call centre consultant.

Tatenda Parerewa, a 20 year-old Zimbabwean has been in the country for 4 months and battled to find work. NETwork has assisted him through our church networks and he is now permanently employed as a hygiene controller at Atlantis Meat.

The real drivers behind NETwork are our uncommonly talented Common Grounders. Already, the skills of 57 volunteers have been banked since the CG expo to become involved once NETwork goes live in August. Our current requirements during facility installation phase are for carpenters, electricians and painters. Please contact Jane Spengler in the gap.jane@gmail.com to discuss the work brief in order to quote. ■

save the dates

Education sector - Insights Evening

We're excited to be hosting a dinner and documentary screening at the Café on Tuesday, 9 June from 7pm to 9pm. We will be screening **Testing Hope: Grade 12 in the New South Africa** which shows the obstacles students in Gugulethu face in passing Grade 12. The documentary follows four students at Oscar Mpetha High School, as they work towards their crucial Matric exams.

Tickets will be for sale from this Sunday at the involvement desk (R35).

This is an invitation not just for those in the education sector but also for those interested in issues relating to education in our country.

Contact Paul Maughan for more details.

paul.maughan@uct.ac.za

Golf Day

Every year the common good foundation hosts a Golf Day to raise funds for the foundation. You're invited to participate in the day at Rondebosch Golf Club on the Friday, 12 June. It promises to be as an unforgettable event.

There are a number of opportunities where you (or you company) can get involved.

Please contact Denis Cassidy for more information on 021 403 4156. "I look forward to hearing from you soon, and seeing you tee-off for a good cause!" says Denis.

Keeping north bound in a south-bound world

1 Timothy 2: 1 – 2 says:

“I urge you, first of all, to pray for all people. Ask God to help them, intercede on their behalf, and give thanks for them. Pray this way for kings and all who are in authority so that we can live peaceful and quiet lives marked by godliness and dignity.”

Although God is all-powerful and all-knowing, he has chosen to let us help him change the world through our prayers. What better opportunity to do just that than now, at this time of political change.

Newly-elected Cape Town Mayor Dan Plato says he intends to make job creation and housing delivery his priorities.

Plato, elected on 13 May, said he was under no illusions about the challenges that lay ahead and he understood how high the stakes were.

“I would love to see us doing an awful lot more for the poor out there,” he said on Wednesday shortly after he assumed the mayoral chain.

He said service delivery, and the provision of shelter in particular, was a “dramatic challenge” in the city.

There were over 100 000 backyard dwellers in the city, in addition to the numbers in informal settlements.

The city could not afford to deal with this by itself, and would have to do it in partnership with provincial and national governments.

Over the past seven years, the city had seen increasing service delivery protests by communities.

“I am not here to make big promises I can’t keep. I intend to be honest about what we can and cannot do.”

Let’s pray for an increase in partnership between the public sector and provincial government to stop poverty in the greater Cape Town area. Let’s pray for our leaders’ wisdom and discernment as they make important decisions daily.

(Source: Mail and Guardian)

Smart Giving

giving treasure

We hold a picture in our hearts and minds of a city in which all people experience social, physical, economic and spiritual well-being through the demonstration of Christ’s love.

You can support the common good foundation’s mission by giving of your finances

Did you know that we are registered as a section 21 company with 18A status? This benefits you as a donor.

In addition our projects can earn you points for BEE compliance.

For more information please contact Margie via email.

margie@commongroundchurch.co.za

Name: Common Good Foundation

Bank: Standard Bank

Branch: Rondebosch

Branch code: 025 009

Account no: 270 604 553