



**IT MAY BE LENT, BUT WE CAN STILL
CONGRATULATE SUE LUCAS
ON THIS MILESTONE!**



stmarysbattersea

<https://www.stmarysbattersea.org.uk>

Fractals, Alienation & the Common Good

Reverend Aaron Kennedy

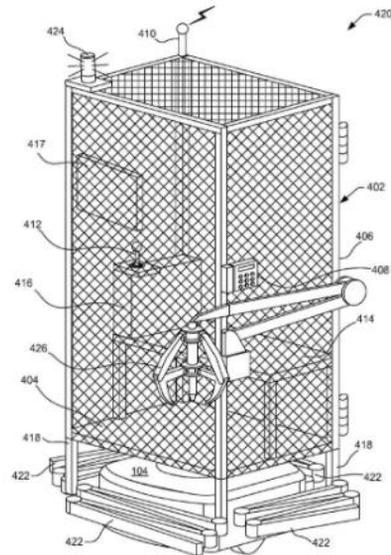
I've been writing, and sharing, recently, about how a commitment to the common good necessitates a shift from [contractual to covenantal forms of community life](#), from the transactional to the relational. You might look at the difference between the nature of the relationship the Church of England has to the people it serves versus that of, say, Google. Google exists to make money and its

relationship to its clients is contractual (and that is not meant to be a criticism); the Church of England's relationship to the people of this country is based on covenant – on relationship, commitment to service, to the mutual flourishing of church and society – and not on the exchange of goods for payment. If people stop giving money to the Church of England (which they have begun to do in large numbers, in recent decades), we are not going to go away and find other people to sell our wares to. We are committed to serve the people of this country, come what may.

A great local example of this is a group called *Stitch Together*, which was started by members of St Mary's inspired by a study day on the subject of the common good. A wide range of people from different backgrounds – all local to Battersea, has been meeting regularly for the last couple of years to create fabric gifts for residents of Meadbank, our local care home. Each person that comes is valued as having something to offer, even if they have never crocheted before, no matter what their background. Together, this diverse group of people, created *goods* that are gifted to those in need. It is a beautiful coming together of people across difference to promote the flourishing of group that is often ignored by our society.

Various forces at work in our world have aligned to undermine the life of our communities, Battersea being no exception. Whether you are working, middle or upper class, these days, isolation is a disease that anyone can suffer from. We might even look as far back as the various acts of enclosure, whereby common spaces that facilitated a shared life, and shared wealth, have been disappearing. From the 16th century onwards, impoverished, landless peasants had no choice but to turn to the cities, to the sweatshops and the factories, to earn their crust; and ever since society has become increasingly atomised and fragmented. The idea of the factory assembly line, where people are reduced to mere automatons, reached a peak in the 21st century, where Amazon mooted the idea of [placing humans inside a cage](#) on top of a robot, minimising their pesky humanness and making them as robotic as possible. While the cage was never developed, the fact that it was even conceived was described by researchers as “an extraordinary illustration of worker alienation.”

At the heart of the church's response to the alienation and dehumanisation of the 20th and 21st centuries, has been the influence of [Catholic social teaching](#), and the idea of the common good. This is something that we speak about often as a church, and we have committed ourselves to promoting it in our [Mission Action Plan](#).





However, it bears repeating that at the heart of the idea of the common good is the notion that if even one person is prevented from flourishing, then the whole community is failing.

It is so easy to give lip service to the idea of the common good, while failing to let its core message really penetrate our hearts and minds; this is especially so if we ourselves, and those we tend to interact with on a weekly basis, happen to be flourishing.

Many members of St Mary's are flourishing and have sufficient material goods to get through the challenges of daily life. And if we didn't have a covenantal commitment to the people of Battersea, that might be all well and good. St Mary's would feel like a nice cosy club of reasonably happy people. But we do, in fact, have a covenantal commitment to *all* the people of Battersea, and while even one person is prevented from flourishing in their lives by societal circumstances beyond their control, there is still more that we are called to do.

The question of what we should do is an important one. Because I emphatically do not believe the answer "Give more money", or "lay on XYZ service to help the poor people". That comes from an *Us and Them* mindset that tends to create division from the get-go; what we need is a mindset of *Us all Together*. This is where [each member of the community](#) is seen to have gifts, skills, wisdom and insight to bring to the table – something of value to offer, to enrich the common good.

As Christians and members of the Church of England we have a covenantal commitment to the people in our parish – many of whom are not flourishing but are in fact in great need. We *do not* have a contractual relationship with these people, where we could seek to help them through offering a service – whether for a fee or as a charitable offer (something we give them from a position of wealth, security and beneficence). And because of our covenantal responsibilities, we must be committed to building relationships of mutual support and flourishing. This is how the common good will come about.

Perhaps this all sounds overwhelming and too difficult to make a dent in, but as I wrote recently, it comes down to the humble head of broccoli. If a healthy community can be thought of as a healthy head of broccoli, how can we help bring that health about? Well, a head of broccoli is made up of tiny *fractals*, all of which are the same shape; grow a lot of these together, and they form a beautiful vegetable. Community life is similar, because a healthy community is made up of healthy relationships.

May I encourage you today to consider stepping out and making a new friend? Don't try to start more than one; one is all it takes. But when we all do this together, paying special attention to those we don't normally associate with, we will begin to see a shift. Ask your new friend what he or she cares about, what changes they would like to see, and begin to dream together about how together we could work to realise our shared dreams for a better Battersea.

Peace & Love
Aaron



Welcome to St Mary's Weekly Newsletter. The Season of Lent is a wonderful opportunity to go a bit deeper in our faith. In his Ash Wednesday sermon, our Vicar said that 2021 wasn't the year for giving things up in Lent, given all that has been given up thanks to the pandemic. But we hope you will find a way of stretching yourself spiritually in the weeks ahead: a bit of bible reading, more regular prayer times, some study or a regular act of generosity.

St Mary's is open for public worship on Sundays at 9.30am and during the week and all services remain available online, on our website at the advertised time, or afterwards at [Facebook.com/stmarysbattersea](https://www.facebook.com/stmarysbattersea).

Key leaders will be meeting this week to discuss when to return us to a normal pattern of Sunday and weekday worship. It's likely you will be invited to join an online conversation to discuss this in the week commencing 1st March.

This Weekend: The First Sunday of Lent

Saturday

5.00pm Vigil Eucharist
Preacher: Canon Simon Butler (In Church & Online [Here](#))

Sunday

9.30am Holy Communion (Traditional Language)
(In Church & Online [Here](#))

11.00am A Service of the Word Small Choir (Online [Here](#); Church Open)
Preacher at both morning services: Canon Simon Butler
Readings: [Deuteronomy 26:1-11](#); [Psalm 91:9-16](#); [Mark 1:9-15](#)
Lent Sermon Topic: The Mystery of Good and Evil

Next Sunday: The Second Sunday of Lent

Saturday

5.00pm Vigil Eucharist
Preacher: Reverend Aaron Kennedy (In Church & Online [Here](#))

Sunday

9.30am Holy Communion (Traditional Language)
(In Church & Online [Here](#))

11.00am A Service of the Word with Small Choir (Online [Here](#); Church Open)
Preacher at both morning services: Reverend Aaron Kennedy
Readings: [Genesis 15:1-12, 17-18](#); [Psalm 27](#); [Mark 8:31-end](#)
Lent Sermon Topic: The Mystery of God's Glory



What's On This Week

The Church is open for private prayer from 9.30am to 1pm each weekday
The Parish Office is open 9.30am to 12.30pm Monday to Friday
*Aaron is attending an online Nuts & Bolts of Incumbency Course During this Week.
This is a requirement on him from the Bishop of Southwark.*

Monday 22 nd February	Prayer During the Day at 12.30pm Embracing Evangelism Course at 2.15pm Online First Communion Class at 5pm
Tuesday 23 rd February	Holy Communion at 12.30pm Junior Church Leaders meeting at 7.30pm Embracing Evangelism Course at 7.15pm
Wednesday 24 th February	Lectio Divina at 8.30am* Battersea Deanery Synod Meets at 7.30pm Leaders' Meeting to Discuss Church Reopening at 7.30pm
Thursday 25 th February	<i>Simon and Aaron both taking their day off today</i> Prayer During the Day at 12.30pm
Friday 26 th February	The Funeral of the late Brenda Long at 1.00pm
Saturday 27 th February	Vigil Eucharist at 5.00pm

Sunday Worship Pattern

Key leaders and coordinators are meeting this week to explore returning to our regular worship pattern on Sunday 7th March. We plan to give everyone a chance to gather online to ask any questions about that in the week commencing 1st March. Until then, the worship pattern will remain in its current 'pandemic format' for a week or two more, i.e. **Eucharists at 5pm on Saturday at 9.30am on Sunday and a Service of the Word at 11am (+a small choir).**



Lent Sunday Sermon Series 2021 The Mystery of God

Ash Wednesday 17 th February	The Mystery of Life and Death
Sunday 21 st February	The Mystery of Good and Evil
Sunday 28 th February	The Mystery of God's Glory
Sunday 7 th March	The Mystery of Sin, Suffering and Hope
Sunday 14 th March	The Mystery of Relationship & Reconciliation
Sunday 21 st March	The Mystery of Love and Sacrifice
Sunday 28 th March	The Mystery of Joy and Salvation

All Sermons Preached at both 8.30am and 11am (and available online in video & text)



Sunday Coffee Times:

Don't forget you can still meet others on Zoom after Sunday morning services:

10.15am: Meeting ID: 669 647 071;

Code: 7XNPO4

12 noon: Meeting ID: 396 594 507;

Code: 6JLUEP

Interim Parish Manager: David Britten leaves his role as Church Manager at the end of the week. The PCC has appointed **Felicity Brindle** as **Interim Church Manager** until at least Easter.

Art Commission: We now have covered almost the entire cost of the commission for Felicity Prazak's *Stations of the Cross*. If you would like to donate something towards them still, please contact Simon (vicar@stmarysbattersea.org.uk)

Lent 1-2-1 Conversations

The clergy like to ensure that they have plenty of time to give to helping you with your spiritual growth in Lent. Please feel free to approach us directly for a one-to-one conversation about life, faith, doubt and how to grow in faith and discipleship. Additionally, Simon is currently always in church on a Wednesday morning from 10am to 12.30pm and you are welcome to turn up for a more informal chat over a coffee.

Interested in Climate Change or in Refugees? Battersea Deanery Synod invites you to an open meeting this Wednesday at 7.30pm to hear from Nichola Thomas, who has recently joined the Diocesan Team to work on issues of justice, peace and creation. [Click here](#) (Passcode: 551403). All welcome.

For Your Prayers

The Sick and those in Need: Mary Paton, Lloyd Maxwell, Jeremy Edwards, Mrs Cheeseman, Father Archie, Anne Hull, Jean Hart, Lynn Day, Sarah Thomas.

The Recently Departed and their Families: Marily Thompson, Roy Evans, Diane Wright, Sheila Wigdor, Mary Jenkins, Anthia Kelly, Rosemary Thomas, Charles Cullimore, John Hart, Brenda Long, Brian Baldwin, Wendy Mulholland

Have You Joined St Mary's in the Past Two Years? Is this your Spiritual Home? There's no such thing as membership of the Church of England apart from saying that you're a member! However, we do have a list of 'members' called the Electoral Roll and this is the time of the year we invite those who are not yet on it to put their names on the Roll, signifying that in some way you belong to St Mary's. Electoral Roll Forms are available at the back of church and on the website. Please also use a form if you've changed contact details in the past 2 years.

Lent Booklets: Please take a free copy of the #LiveLent Booklet: God's Story, Our Story from church. This is a booklet of daily readings and reflections in Lent, exploring the connection we have between our own stories and the greatest Story of all time. There are enough copies for everyone at St Mary's.



SPRING STEPS FOR KLS

HELP US RAISE MUCH NEEDED FUNDS TOGETHER - LET'S WALK, RUN OR JOG
1 MILLION STEPS FOR KLS!



12th - 19th March 2021- find out more at
www.klsettlement.org.uk

Can you help us walk One Million Steps for KLS in just one week?

Walking regularly is one of the easiest ways to improve our mental health, as well as helping us stay active during lockdown. Most of us should be aiming to hit around 10,000 steps a day, but blame lockdown and the cold weather, many of us are moving less than we were a year ago. Why not get out and about this spring, help us to walk 1 Million steps in a week and earn much needed funds for KLS? Log your steps from anywhere in the world and join in the community effort to support KLS.

Sign up at bit.ly/2NkVYVJ

This is our first virtual fundraiser and a great opportunity bring our community together for a common goal. **We launch at noon on 12th March – the final tally will be at noon on 19th March 2021**

Together let's walk 1 Million steps – that's 500 Miles – for KLS!

Walk as many steps as you can manage, even just a few will make a huge difference. The average person walks around 100 steps in a minute. 5,000 steps – which is about 2.5 miles – will take you about 45 minutes. 10,000 steps – which is about 5 miles – will take you about an hour and a half. **A million steps is equal to 500 miles!**

Who can take part?

Everyone can take part from anywhere in the world so get your trainers on and walk for KLS. The clergy, along with the rest of the Coronavirus Angels leaders, are all taking part.

How to collect sponsorship?

It would be amazing if you could ask friends and family to sponsor your efforts. Simply visit our bit.ly/2NkVYVJ to find out how to join in. You can set up a sponsorship page as an individual or a team, maybe your office or school would like to set their own team step goal, walk in fancy dress or carrying an egg on a spoon!



Contacts

St. Mary's Church

The Parish Office, St. Mary's Crypt Battersea
Church Road London, SW11 3NA

Open Monday to Friday 9.30am to 12.30pm

Tel 020 7228 9648

office@stmarysbattersea.org.uk

Canon Simon Butler

Vicar (Day Off: Thursday Evening/Friday)

vicar@stmarysbattersea.org.uk

07941 552407

Reverend Aaron Kennedy

Associate Vicar for Community Development &
Mission (Day Off: Friday)

aaron@stmarysbattersea.org.uk

07815 180273

The clergy are always ready to visit, or to offer confidential pastoral care. Please contact them directly. If you hear that a member of the parish is unwell or needs a visit or a call from one of the clergy, please let the clergy know. They may not have heard and are grateful to be kept informed.

Giving To St Mary's

We invite and encourage everyone who considers St Mary's their spiritual home to make a financial contribution to our work.

The best way of doing this is through setting up a Standing Order, so that your giving doesn't depend upon how often you are able to get to church.

To do this, just use these details

Account Name: Battersea Parish Church PCC

Sort Code: 502101

Account Number: 82127468

To Gift Aid your Standing Order or one-off donation, please contact the Parish Office



You can now also give using this QR code (please indicate if you are able to Gift Aid)