Christian Revival: Our post-liberal hope?

Pusey House, Oxford

11th and 12th March 2026

Organised in partnership with the Danube Institute.

The long post-war consensus in the West—politically defined by liberal democracy, economically by globalisation, and morally by a shared repudiation of past horrors—has broken down.

In its place, a new cultural and moral moment is emerging. In this post-liberal moment, some suggest that a trans-denominational Christian restoration is gathering force—intellectually, spiritually, and culturally. The work of various contemporary thinkers, such as Rod Dreher, Paul Kingsnorth, and Iain McGilchrist, point toward a renewal that is not merely reactionary but creative: a re-enchantment of the world through the recovery of Christian metaphysics—not as private consolation, but as public truth.

This conference will gather some of the leading voices in this emerging renewal to ask:

· What form is this Christian re-enchantment taking?
· How should faith engage political life in a disenchanted world?
· What does it mean to be Christian after secularism?
· Can the Christian tradition not only criticise but also lead?

Wednesday
11th March 2026

Morning Divine Service (*optional*):
7:30–8:00 - Morning Prayer.
8:00–8:30 - Mass (Anglican).

A light breakfast will be served in the Hood Room to those who attend Morning Prayer/Mass.

Theme I: Liberalism and its Discontents

Understanding the disintegration of the liberal order and its moral, philosophical, and spiritual consequences.

9:30–10:20 - *Registration, coffee and tea*

10:20–10:30 - Welcome from the Principal of Pusey House, the Director of the Centre for Theology, Law and Culture, and Dr Calum Nicholson.

10:30–11:30 - Panel 1: From Consensus to Confusion: The Collapse of the Post-War Moral Order

A session to examine the historical and philosophical roots of the post-war consensus, and how its liberal-democratic, procedural, and negative moral foundations became untenable.

Moderator: István Kiss (Danube Institute).
Speaker: Mary Harrington (Contributing Editor at *Unherd*),
Title: Digital re-enchantment is not necessarily Christian revival.

Respondents:
John O'Sullivan (Danube Institute).
Rupert Shortt (Von Hügel Institute, Cambridge University).

11:30–12:00 Coffee and Tea

12:00–1:00 – Panel 2: Conversion and Conviction: Personal Journeys as Public Theology

This panel will consider recent conversions to Christianity against the backdrop of crumbling liberal certainties and progressive assumptions about the decline of traditional religious faith.

Moderator: Bishop Graham Tomlin (Centre for Cultural Witness).

Speakers:

Andrew Hawkins (Whitestone Insight)
Rod Dreher (Danube Institute)
Nicholas Naquin (Danube Institute).

1:00–2:00 - Lunch break.
(A light sandwich lunch is provided for speakers and staff).

2:00–3:15 - Panel 3: Post-Secularist Hope? Competing Visions of the Future

A panel to consider whether the West is open to re-enchantment—or a new, harsher secularism, or to other religions? What are the cultural and metaphysical fault lines?

Moderator: Emma Trimble
Speakers:

[TBC]
Graham Tomlin (Centre for Cultural Witness)
David Oldroyd-Bolt (Danube Institute)

3:15–3:45 Coffee and Tea

Theme II: Recovering the Sacred: Christian Re-Enchantment

Exploring the intellectual, theological, and cultural foundations of the emerging Christian restoration.

3:45–5:15 Panel 4: Christianity and the Re-Sacralisation of the Public Sphere

A panel to examine the resurgence of liturgical practices, monastic models, the necessity of the parish, and the sacramental imagination as responses to the disenchantment of modernity, alongside Christian metaphysical claims about creation, order, and transcendence.

Moderator: Imogen Sinclair **(St Mary's University, Twickenham).**

Speakers:

Fr Marcus Walker (St Bartholomew the Great, Smithfield)
The Rev'd Professor Andrew Davison (Regius Professor of Divinity, University of Oxford)
Esme Partridge (Theos)
The Rev'd Fergus Butler-Gallie (Vicar of Charlbury with Shorthampton).

5:30–6:15, Evensong (optional – all welcome!)

Fr Sam Wells (Vicar of St Martin in the Fields).

6:30–7:00, 6:30–7:00, **Chamber Concert: 'Dark Heart's Light'**

Music by Pärt, Holst, Liszt

7:00–7:30, Pre-dinner drinks in the Library (by invitation/booking).
7:30–10:00, Dinner in the Hood Room (by invitation/booking).

Thursday
12th March 2026

Morning Divine Service (*optional*):
7:30–8:00 - Morning Prayer.
8:00–8:30 - Mass (Anglican).
A light breakfast will be served in the Hood Room to those who attend Morning Prayer/Mass.

Theme III: Restoring the Christian Polis

Charting the practical and institutional pathways of renewal in politics, culture, and public life.

9:30–11:00 - Panel 5: The Hollow Centre: Technocracy, Rationalism, and the Crisis of Meaning

A discussion drawing on Iain McGilchrist's philosophical insights, Catholic Social Teaching, and the British political tradition to examine how technocratic governance, economic reductionism, and left-brain dominance have severed the West from deeper meanings and traditional loyalties, while undermining human dignity.

Moderator: Dr Calum Nicholson (Danube Institute)
Speaker: Dr Iain McGilchrist (Author and Neuroscientist)
Title: Why we need religion (and not just spirituality and good intentions)

Respondents:
Maurice, Lord Glasman (Labour Party).
The Rev'd Professor Joshua Hordern (University of Oxford).
The Rev'd Dr Matthew Burford (Stamford University).

11:00–11:30 Coffee and Tea

11:30–13:00 Panel 6 : The Challenge of Pluralism: is the Christian Foundation of the State a basis for National Renewal?

Christianity forged European civilisation and is the foundation of the open society. If secular liberalism has failed as a bulwark against competing belief systems and declining trust in politics, how should Christian leaders show the path to national renewal?

Moderator: John Ritzema (University of Oxford)

Speakers:

Diederik Boomsma MP (NL)
Iben Thranholm
Zsolt Nemeth MP (HU)
David Campanale

1:00. End of publicly accessible conference.

1:00–2:00 - Lunch break.
(A light sandwich lunch is provided for speakers and staff).