



COMMON GROUND COMMITTEE

ANNUAL REPORT

2023 – 2024

MORE PROGRESS.
LESS DIVISION.

LEADERSHIP / BOARD OF DIRECTORS

CGC is a nonpartisan, nonprofit 501(c)(3) citizen-led organization dedicated to bringing healing to the national challenges of polarization and incivility. Free of political agenda and financial influence, CGC focuses on bringing light, not heat, to public discourse.

BRUCE BOND *Co-founder & CEO, Board Chair*

ERIK OLSEN *Co-founder, CFO, Board Member*

DON HOLTZ *Board Member*

CHIP HORNER *Board Member*

INEZ MAUBANE JONES *Board Member*

GINA LINDQUIST-BAILEY *Board Member*

URSULA MUELLER *Board Member*

BARRY PERSKY *Board Member*

A MESSAGE FROM OUR FOUNDERS

Dear Friends,

The U.S. has become a landscape of ideological silos. We might live within the same borders, but the terrain of polarizing beliefs doesn't offer much of an ecosystem for cooperation. This divisive climate makes it difficult to speak to one another, much less accomplish anything on the policy level. As we head into a critical and volatile election year, prioritizing the need to make progress on our most important issues via productive conversations among citizens and leaders becomes more crucial than ever. Progress requires finding common ground, which only happens when we commit to listening to and understanding those who disagree with us.

Not only do we know it's possible, but we are seeing it happening and are grateful to have it supported by people like you.



Your commitment to moving beyond conflict to progress helps us to model and cultivate the conversations at all levels that ultimately make a difference. That commitment is yielding results.

We know people are listening. In the past year, we've seen tremendous growth in the number of people tuning in to our panels and podcasts tackling the tough issues—climate, race, media, and more. Our biweekly “Let's Find Common Ground” podcast discussions with citizens and thought leaders now reach over **270K subscribers**. Downloaded episodes have more than doubled in the past year alone to more than **475k downloads**. Our social media work directly connects us with **81,000 followers** on Facebook, Instagram, X, LinkedIn, and YouTube. And our public forum event webcast, in partnership with New York's 92nd Street Y, reached **30,000 viewers** at home, who, on average, watched the hour-long program for over 40 minutes.

Moreover, our public forum events that feature luminaries such as James Carville and Reince Priebus, Will Hurd, and Chris Murphy have found a new relationship with WETA, the PBS affiliate in Washington, DC, who have been running our forums in prime time. We are truly excited to share the news that our forums will soon be distributed through the National Education Telecommunications Association, making our programming available to **every public television station in the country**.

We are particularly pleased and grateful to report that your political leaders are listening, too. Our Common Ground Scorecard—the first tool to allow voters to compare how candidates and elected officials for Congress, Governorships, and the Presidency rank on bipartisanship—has gained incredible traction, with **politicians now approaching CGC** for advice on raising their score. Forty-two members of Congress and two Governors have affirmed they do and will abide by the Ten Attributes of a Common Grounder, our model for progress-focused discussion and debate.

As we close in on our next Presidential election, we can enable an elevated level of discourse bolstered by an electorate that values a healthier Democratic landscape. By supporting CGC, you are part of the active solution to revitalize the voters formerly known as the exhausted majority, showing that it is possible for them and our political leaders to come together in civility to solve tough problems.

Your support of CGC allows that to happen, to make a difference for our citizens, our leaders, and our country.

We believe that we change the country by changing the conversation from conflict to progress. And we encourage you to join us as our work continues to accelerate the momentum for progress that is quietly building across our nation.

With gratitude,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Bruce Bond & Ed Olsen". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

HOW DIVIDED ARE AMERICANS?

On average, Democrats and Republicans are farther apart ideologically today than at any time in the past 50 years (Pew Research Center analysis of Voteview, March 2022). Pew Research also indicates that congressional Democrats and Republicans are further apart ideologically than at any point during the past five decades.

But these factors alone do not tell the whole story.

While deep divisions still exist, we are starting to see the tide turn. At this critical juncture it is imperative we do not let up.

Research also indicates that on a wide range of issues and policies, Americans from both parties can find agreement. Further, two-thirds of Americans say they are more likely to vote for a candidate willing to compromise with others in order to get results, over a candidate who constantly fights for the values without getting results (The Georgetown Institute of Politics and Public Service's Battleground Poll).

There is a deep yearning in the country to move beyond our current culture wars and address the deep issues we are facing. The media is also taking notice. New programming such as Common Ground segment with Brett Baier and Judy Woodruff Presents: America at a Crossroads.

Our proprietary research shows that our supporters want CGC to help in specific ways. A primary desire of our supporters and funders – people like you – is to restore hope in the country's future. To regain a sense of what is possible, and that progress can be made. You want a clear view of the issues and to understand a path forward that enables progress. Equally important, you want to hold leaders accountable for taking action and solving problems.

CGC has had a significant impact on these concerns

AND IS POISED TO DO MORE

EMPOWERING VOTERS

to support legislators who will seek common ground

- ★ The Common Ground Scorecard
- ★ Congressional members who affirm commitments to seek common ground
- ★ Our ongoing support of Congress's Problem Solvers Caucus

BUILDING UNDERSTANDING

on the issues and a path forward

- ★ Online portals that do a deep dive into climate change, bridging racial divides and polarization
- ★ Blog posts that inform and educate
- ★ Insights from event and podcast experts

INSPIRING HOPE

by demonstrating what good looks like

- ★ Events
- ★ Podcasts
- ★ Growth in attendance and viewership

TESTIMONIALS

What Donors and Supporters Are Saying About Common Ground Committee...

“

Our country is built on a balance of individualism and community, two good ideas, but right now we are out of balance. A focus and a reminder that democracy is built on compromise and respect versus winning at all costs is so important if we are going to realize the potential of our country. Common Ground Committee is building the consciousness and the structure to remind us that we are all in this together and that we can work together for the good of our country and our citizens.

AMANDA WEITMAN

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“

Our two-party system is caught in an endless loop to win voters, but not build up our ability to find common ground. That is, we are in an unending loop where each side regards the other as an inherently hostile opponent who is unfit to govern the country, or even to be considered American.

The Common Ground Committee stands almost alone in the public forum to emphasize the values this nation is founded upon: equality, the rule of law, equal opportunity, a government of, by, and for the People.

We must change the focus of the public mind from dwelling on hostile, exclusionary divisions to focusing on the common values and virtues that unite us. I don't know of any work underway for the future of this country that is more important than that of the Common Ground Committee.

DONNA BRAZILE

ABC NEWS CONTRIBUTOR

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“

What I most appreciate about the Common Ground Committee is the principle they bring to their work, and the professionalism with which they do it. It is rare to find a group so genuinely committed to doing good with practical expertise in driving change. They are a wonderful lesson in how to get good done.

MARK SAPPENFIELD

EDITOR, THE CHRISTIAN SCIENCE MONITOR

”

“

I love the work of the Common Ground Committee and I appreciate the Common Ground Scorecard, which is a tangible tool that helps voters evaluate the tone of discourse as another way to judge candidates. The Scorecard helps us realize we can have strong ideological positions without hating each other, and that the goal of policy discussions isn't to bicker endlessly but to solve problems.

SPENCER COX

GOVERNOR, UTAH

”

COMMON GROUND*Scorecard*

A unique digital tool for voters launched in 2020, the Common Ground Scorecard assesses the ability and propensity for a candidate to work across the aisle to find common ground that breaks gridlock.

Candidates are reacting to the Scorecard by affirming the commitment to be a Common Grounder. Local media's response has been enthusiastic with dozens of articles written to date.

CGC launched an improved version of the tool in July 2022 and a new page dedicated to the presidential election in spring 2023 in anticipation of increasing interest and response for this year's election season.

OVER
51,000
VISITS since
launching
in 2020



2/3 OF AMERICANS SAY...
they are more likely to vote for

a candidate
*willing to **compromise**
with others*

IN ORDER TO GET RESULTS

OVER

a candidate
*who **constantly fights**
for the values*

W/O GETTING RESULTS

See what officials are saying...

Abigail Spanberger CONGRESSWOMAN

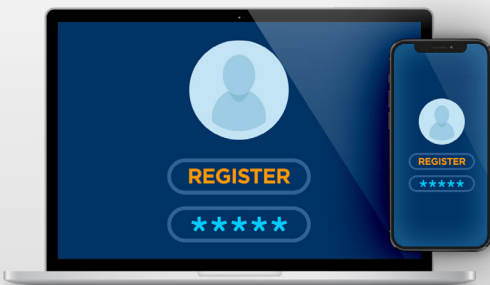
"Virginians expect me to find common ground on a wide range of issues — because that's how long-lasting progress is achieved and effective policies are delivered. With the release of the 2022 Scorecard, I'm proud to be recognized for my efforts to build consensus and actually get things done for the people I serve. I want to thank the Common Ground Committee for expecting more from America's elected officials and for encouraging good-faith cooperation between both parties in Congress. As I've said before, we achieve progress by governing — not grandstanding."

Don Bacon CONGRESSMAN

"Being bipartisan does not mean we compromise our values or the promises we made to our constituents. This scorecard has allowed us to share with our constituents that we are here to serve each of them, regardless of political ideology. Whether it is a passport issue, problems with the IRS, or understanding veterans' benefits, this scorecard gives our constituents the ease of mind knowing we are here to try and help resolve their issues with federal agencies."

Despite disruptions in society, the reach and effect of CGC has been profound. Our events connected audiences with thought and political leaders from the left and right who expressed countless points of common ground on various issues.

LAST 4 CGC EVENTS



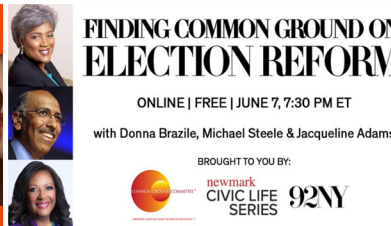
3,500+
registrations



30,000+
digital views



Distributed
on PBS



A Variety of Our Past Events

LET'S FIND COMMON GROUND PODCAST

Exploring paths to more progress and less division

EPISODE 57 Partner Series Featuring Kelly Johnston & Rob Persh CONVERGENCE Let's Find COMMON GROUND	EPISODE 88 Depolarizing America Featuring Will Hurd Let's Find COMMON GROUND	EPISODE 58 Depolarizing America Featuring Tony Woodlief Let's Find COMMON GROUND	EPISODE 59 Depolarizing America Featuring Diane Hesson Let's Find COMMON GROUND
EPISODE 60 Depolarizing America Featuring Will Hurd Let's Find COMMON GROUND		EPISODE 61 Climate Series Featuring Bill McKibben & Bob Inglis Let's Find COMMON GROUND	EPISODE 62 Climate Series Featuring Daniel Yergin Let's Find COMMON GROUND
EPISODE 63 Business Series Featuring Davia Temin Let's Find COMMON GROUND		EPISODE 64 Featuring Jillian Gluckert & Devin Carney Let's Find COMMON GROUND	EPISODE 65 Featuring Select Podcast Guests PRIMARY ELECTIONS & POLARIZATION Let's Find COMMON GROUND
EPISODE 66 Featuring Sophie Holtzman & Jackson Hoppe Let's Find COMMON GROUND	EPISODE 67 Business Series Featuring Simon Greer Let's Find COMMON GROUND	EPISODE 68 Depolarizing America Featuring Clare Ashcraft & Jackson Richter Let's Find COMMON GROUND	EPISODE 69 Partner Series Featuring Story Hinkleley & Mark Sappenfield Let's Find COMMON GROUND
EPISODE 72 Featuring Brian & Clare Ashcraft and Tania Israel Let's Find COMMON GROUND	EPISODE 73 Business Series Featuring Deb Mashek Let's Find COMMON GROUND	EPISODE 74 Featuring Select Podcast Guests Let's Find COMMON GROUND	EPISODE 75 Partner Series Featuring Simon Montlake, Ted Westall and Tom Hach Let's Find COMMON GROUND
EPISODE 78 Featuring Karoline Leavitt & Joe Mitchell Let's Find COMMON GROUND	EPISODE 79 Featuring Patrick Jansson & Ryan Basse Let's Find COMMON GROUND		EPISODE 76 Featuring Jackie Salitz & John Opdyke Let's Find COMMON GROUND
EPISODE 81 Featuring Rev. Dr. Laurica Edwards Scriven & Father Tim Holoda Let's Find COMMON GROUND	EPISODE 82 Depolarizing America Featuring Amanda Ripley Let's Find COMMON GROUND	EPISODE 15 Bridge Builders in Congress Featuring Rep. Bryan Fitzpatrick & Rep. Abigail Spanberger Let's Find COMMON GROUND	EPISODE 77 Featuring State Senator Choe Maxmin Let's Find COMMON GROUND
EPISODE 84 Featuring Frances Hogan & Rev. Anne Fowler Let's Find COMMON GROUND	EPISODE 85 Race Series Featuring Ted Johnson Let's Find COMMON GROUND		EPISODE 80 Featuring Kio Stark Let's Find COMMON GROUND
EPISODE 87 Depolarizing America Featuring G.T. Bennett MAYOR OF TULSA, OK Let's Find COMMON GROUND	EPISODE 89 Featuring Chloe Baldry Let's Find COMMON GROUND	EPISODE 90 Featuring Jordan Blashek & Christopher Haugh Let's Find COMMON GROUND	EPISODE 83 Featuring John Geer & Katie Carney Let's Find COMMON GROUND
		EPISODE 91 Partner Series Featuring Story Hinkleley & Mark Sappenfield Let's Find COMMON GROUND	EPISODE 86 Depolarizing America Featuring Judy Woodruff Let's Find COMMON GROUND
		EPISODE 92 Featuring Steve Hobbs & Michael Adams Let's Find COMMON GROUND	EPISODE 93 Featuring Richard Haass Let's Find COMMON GROUND

Now at over 475K DOWNLOADS

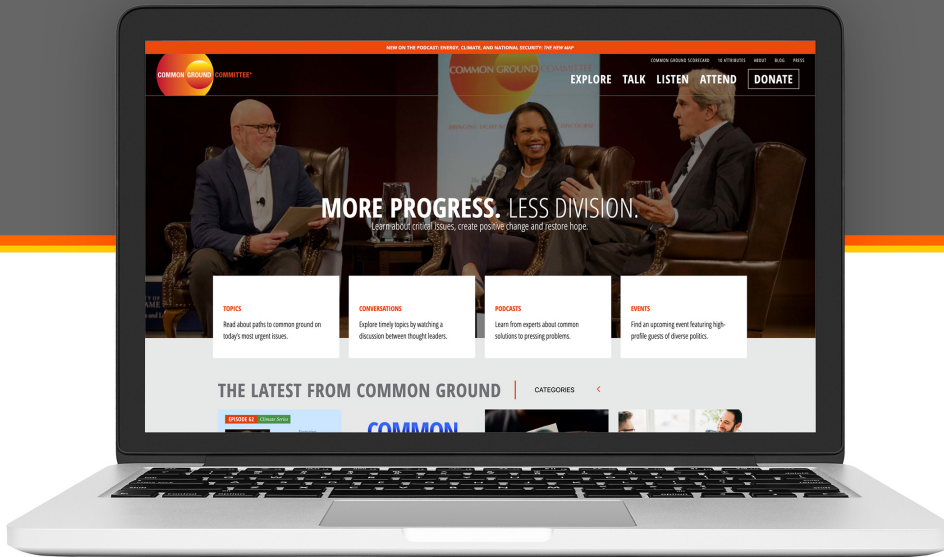
270K SUBSCRIBERS

The CGC website is a hub

OF DIGITAL CONTENT

61,000+ visits to the
CGC website
from 9/22 to 9/23

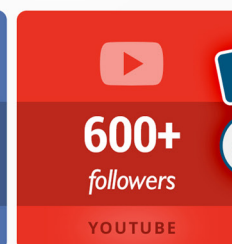
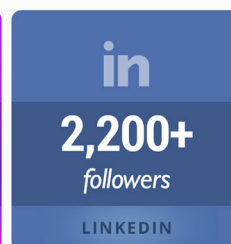
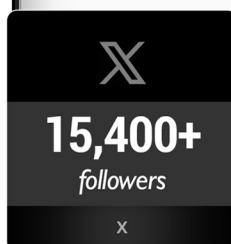
The site features portals that dive deep into the country's issues including climate change, elections, racial divides and polarization. Visitors can watch CGC events, listen to podcasts and read relevant blog posts.



CGC HAS A VIBRANT FOLLOWING ON...

Facebook, X, LinkedIn, Instagram and YouTube.

81,000+
total social following



COMMON GROUND COMMITTEE

IN THE NEWS

2023 - 2024

FIRST EDITION



MANCHIN RANKED MOST BIPARTISAN SENATOR AS HE FACES TOUGH 2024 PATH IN CONSERVATIVE WEST VIRGINIA

The centrist Democrat tops a list of all 100 senators compiled by the Common Ground Committee, a nonprofit dedicated to highlighting bipartisanship in U.S. politics.

FINANCIAL TIMES

CGC FEATURED IN PIECE ON CORPORATE RESPONSE TO DEMOCRATIC INSTABILITY

The article by Andrew Edgecliffe-Johnson explores how US business leaders mobilized to defend democracy following January 6th, but have since grown complacent before the public attacks on voting rights.

The Washington Post

CGC featured in story on panelist Chris Wallace & shuttering of CNN+

THE HILL

LAWS SHOULD UNITE, NOT DIVIDE

by Bruce Bond and Erik Olsen



TOXIC POLARIZATION IS POISONING AMERICA. HERE'S HOW TO STOP IT.

USA Today published a joint op-ed written by CGC's CEO and co-founder, Bruce Bond, along with other members of the bridging movement.

The Seattle Times

AN EFFECTIVE SCORECARD FOR POLITICAL ACCOUNTABILITY

by Bruce Bond and Erik Olsen

The Michael Smerconish Program

Common Ground Committee CEO Bruce Bond on The Common Ground Scorecard

FORTUNE

TUCKER CARLSON AND DON LEMON ARE THE PRODUCT OF AMERICA'S MEDIA LANDSCAPE. IT'S TIME TO MEET THE EXHAUSTED MAJORITY'S RISING DEMAND FOR POSITIVE JOURNALISM

by Bruce Bond and Tom Fishman



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or text the word CG to 53-555 to donate!*