



CONTACT



Charlestown & Garden Suburb Uniting
Church Multi-Centre Congregation

4 February 2024

From Rev Tom

Unfortunately, I cannot check my facts on this as my NBN Internet is disconnected at the moment and the temporary wireless replacement has decided to barely work today. So hopefully my memory is being reliable! I read a few days ago that the United States and Australia (and probably other countries) have withdrawn financial support to the United Nations. The reason given for the withdrawal is because of an accusation from Israel that 12 employees of the United Nations working in Gaza have provided some sort of support to Hamas. A few statistics (remember I am relying on memory). Hamas attacked Israel. It is alleged that some 1,000 people died in the attack (I am not sure of the civilian/military mix). In response Israel has allegedly killed 26,000 people of which it is claimed 2,000 are Hamas soldiers. At the same time infrastructure has been destroyed to the extent that the majority of the citizens in Gaza are starving. The largest percentage of those killed of the 26,000 people are women and children. I read this morning that the Israeli Minister for National Security leads a festival celebrating the removal of Palestinians from Gaza and the resettlement by the Israeli people. The last statistic that comes from memory is there are about 1,200 UN workers in Gaza. So, 12 out of 1,200 is 1%. It is clear that Israel is committing unquestionable genocide on millions of people, with most residents now experiencing some levels of starvation. The UN is working to provide relief for the Palestinians in this intolerable circumstance. Yet, Australia has withdrawn funds to the United Nations based on an accusation from Israel who has clear intention of genocide. Their accusation is limited to 1% of the United Nations workers, and I am not sure of what the accusations in a very messy environment. Have we ever defunded the police force when we find we have some bad police? Before any accusations are even proven? Of course, this is only a tiny part of the sheer horror that we are simply watching taking place in Gaza. The evil and insanity of it all is beyond comprehension. What do we do? We can write letters to our Foreign Minister who initiated the withdrawal of funds pleading human decency! Another action goes back to the core of our Christian faith – prayer. Some years ago, I wrote about a practice I have in the morning. It is perhaps an odd practice but it is component to my prayer life. The practice includes, just before having my shower, pouring some cold water over my head. At the same time, I say, “Lord, have mercy!” and I wish help for humanity (I told you it was weird!). The shock of the cold water seems to break for a moment my self-assured mental grip, and the prayer is a confession that I am in utter reliance on God. It is in that moment of complete felt sense of reliance on God that I have the greatest feeling of the efficacy of my prayer. These days in that prayer Gaza is close to mind. I am not suggesting people replicate my prayer. I am reinforcing that we have atomic bomb weaponry at our disposal. Let’s use that power to pray for the alleviation of 100s of thousands of people from suffering, and the alleviation from the blindness, of the Israelite people who are perpetrating this horror, to their evil!



DIARY

Thursday 1 February

10.00am Morning tea in the Community - common seated area opposite Butcher at Charlestown Square

Sunday 4 February – Epiphany 5

9.00am Worship Service Leader and Preacher: Rev'd Tom
Isaiah 40: 21-31; Psalm 147:1-11,20C; 1 Corinthians 9:16-23; Mark 1:29-39

Monday 5 February

10.00am Garden Suburb Nursing Home Pastoral care visitation
1.30pm SFED on Zoom

Tuesday 6 February

10.00am Morning tea in the Community at Lake Macquarie Square

Thursday 8 February

10.00am Worship Service at Garden Suburb Aged Care
10.00am Morning tea in the Community - common seated area opposite Butcher at Charlestown Square
1.30pm Bible Study at Garden Suburb Church

Friday 9 February

6.00pm Ladies Night at Kahibah

Saturday 10 February

10.00 Friendship Circle to meet at Belmont 16Footers

Sunday 11 February – Epiphany 6

9.00am Worship Service Leader and Preacher: Rev'd Tom
2 Kings 2:1-12; Psalm 50:1-6 2; Corinthians 4:3-6; Mark 9:2-9
2.00pm 2024 SRE Dedication Service at The Willows, Warners Bay Uniting Church

Tuesday 13 February

10.00am Morning tea in the Community at Lake Macquarie Square

Wednesday 14 February

10.00am Ladies Fellowship at Charlestown Church
4.30pm Ash Wednesday gathering at Garden Suburb

Thursday 15 February

10.00am Morning tea in the Community - common seated area opposite Butcher at Charlestown Square
1.30pm Bible Study at Garden Suburb Church

Saturday 17 February

8.00am Men's Breakfast at Charlestown

Sunday 18 February – Lent 1

9.00am Worship Service Leader and Preacher: Rev'd Tom
Genesis 9:8-17; Psalm 25:1-10; 1 Peter 3:18-22; Mark 1:9-15



THE PRAYER PAGE



Pray that the Australian Church can model today, the example of the early Christians, in making space for all people to flourish in community.

Pastoral Prayer Points

- * Vivienne Butcher and family as they mourn the death of her mother
- * Tony's recovery after a fall
- * Graeme at home and organising rehabilitation
- * Jean recovering from Pneumonia
- * Fred Bryant in hospital
- * June Locker
- * Ryan Walpole in rehabilitation
- * Kathryn Gray
- * Those in our Congregation who have lost loved ones in recent months
- * Mac
- * Jacqueline Fenwick
- * Peter Ferguson
- * Nola in hospital
- * Isabella
- * Ashley
- * Janice Wright
- * Eileen Dunn
- * Mert
- * Judith and family
- * Lorraine Pepper
- * Enid Power
- * Max

Maintained by SFED and Enid Power

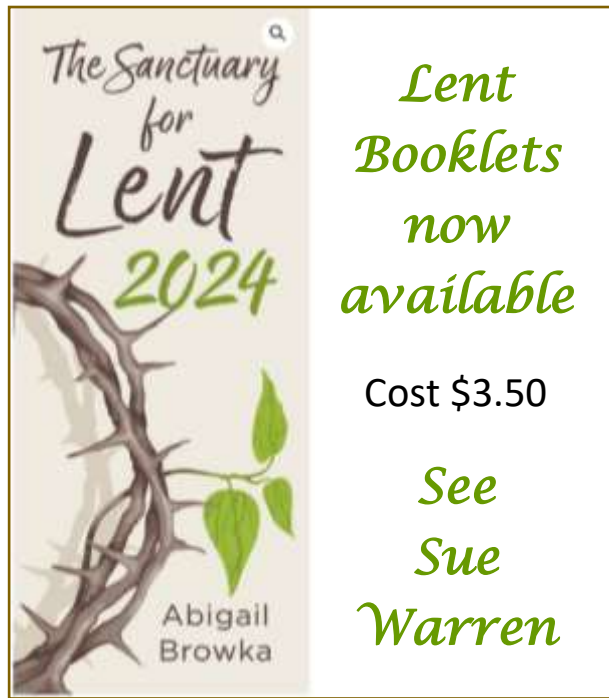
Congregational Prayer Points

- Church Council
- Project Reconnect
- Worship Services
- Cathy Beeton and SRE classes
- Worship Committee

Wider Community Prayer Points

- those affected by climate change in Australia eg floods, droughts and fires
- Tom and NEOS as he follows ideas and opportunities including with Wesley Mission at Windale, Hunter Community Alliance, Greater Charlestown Sustainability Group
- Hunter Community Alliance's arrangements towards the Founding Assembly in April 2024 , as approaches are made to encourage politicians to attend and give support to local initiatives to reduce emissions
- The situation in Israel and Gaza
- The situation in Ukraine and other trouble spots
- Fabian, Wilfreda and children for finance to flow in to enable all the eligible children to go to High School





COMMON GRACE

Follow up Aboriginal Sunday with Common Grace

Continue walking with us in friendship to pursue justice, healing, and flourishing for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

Sign Up with your email at www.commongrace.org.au

Resources include:

- Ways to engage on January 26, 2024
- 2024 Lent Series “Surprising Hope”

You may also wish to support Common Grace financially. Bank details:

Account Name: Christians for Justice Ltd
BSB: 633-000
A/c: 152 835 336

**SAVE
THE
DATE**

The 2024 SRE (Scripture) Dedication Service
will be held at 2.00pm on Sunday 11th February 2023
at The Willows - Warners Bay Uniting Church
342 Hillsborough Road Warners Bay

Bring a
Friend!



With Guest Speaker

John Lewis

Missional Communities Leader

Community Changing Communities

Charlestown Uniting Church - 24 Milson Street

8am 17th February

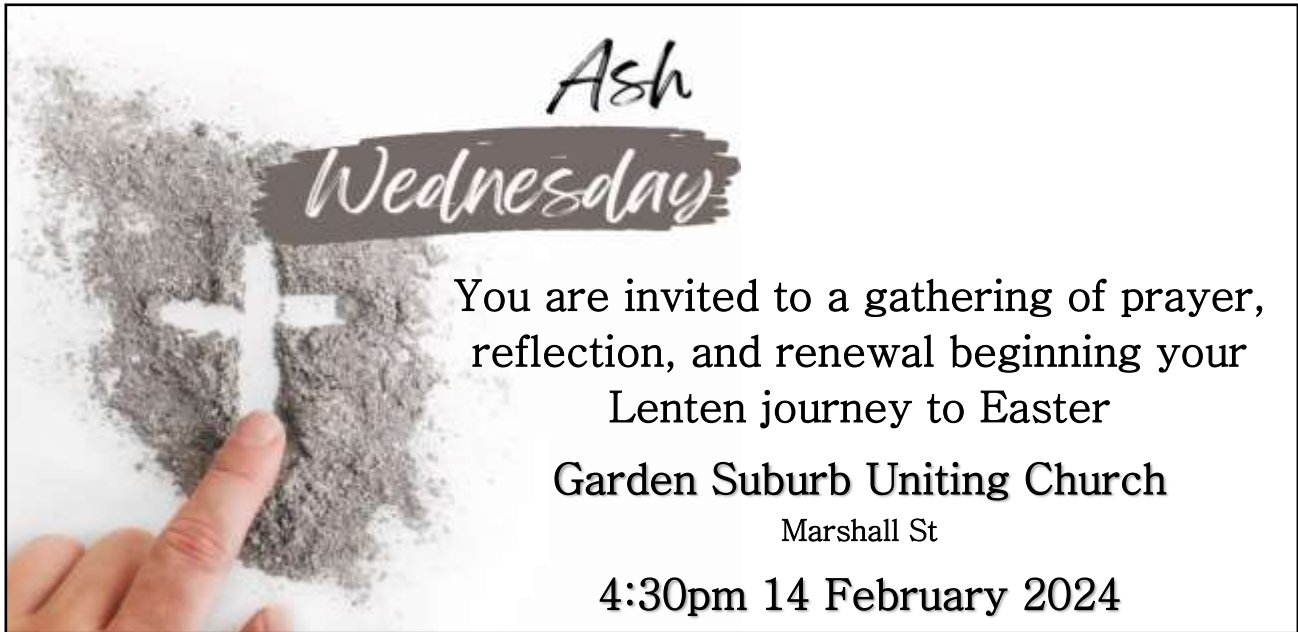
Cost \$12 RSVP to Paul Russell

0411 236047 pmraus74@gmail.com By 14th February 2024

Come and hear Wesley Mission's John Lewis talk about their new initiative - Missional Communities.

In Newcastle and the Hunter this has meant working within community housing projects in Windale and Hamilton South and alongside the community services team in Newcastle West. They work to build communities promoting well being and resilience whilst giving people appropriate and relevant ways to explore faith.

John has previously remotely supported projects like this in countries around the world. Having lived and worked in Newcastle for 20 years John is enjoying seeing how communities in his own town are experiencing the transformative power of community development to change lives.

A graphic for Ash Wednesday featuring a hand drawing a cross on a white surface with grey ash. The text 'Ash Wednesday' is written in a cursive font, with 'Wednesday' on a dark brushstroke background.

*Ash
Wednesday*

You are invited to a gathering of prayer,
reflection, and renewal beginning your
Lenten journey to Easter

Garden Suburb Uniting Church
Marshall St
4:30pm 14 February 2024

Gardening at Charlestown

Over the years we have had many dedicated people keep the gardens looking great at Charlestown - together with regular paid tree and bush trimming, mowing and edging.

We are currently arranging to have the whole site - front and back - sprayed with weedkiller (except the garden beds!)



The gardening volunteers have come and gone for various reasons - and we are currently not keeping up with the weeding and need a review of the plants we have and perhaps some updating.

If you are willing and able to put in a few hours on a regular basis to help keep things looking nice and/or have gardening expertise (to give advice) please speak with Lesley Clulow very soon.

Lesley Clulow and
Paul Russell for
the Charlestown
Property Committee



Bible Study

is commencing on Thursday 8 February at
1.30pm at Garden Suburb Church



All Welcome

Leaving Whitebridge Church

Whitebridge Church will soon be on the market by the expression of Interest process for about 5 or 6 weeks then moving to settlement some time later. We are confident of finding a buyer as this is a much more straightforward process than finding someone to lease an existing building with no formal carpark - there are quite a few potential uses for the site.

Meantime we still have plenty to do - vacating the site. Quite a bit of contents has already gone and the 85 plastic chairs are due to go to Canowindra UCA after its flood damage.

Wednesday next week (7 February) Lifeline will come and take their pick of what is left – however, if you are interested in anything please talk with Paul prior to then. He can save it for you but you will have to pick it up within a few days.

Some of the items are an electronic organ (working??) - beautiful Communion table - font - two steel storage cupboards - four drawer filing cabinet - kitchen table - box with steel liner to hold pot plants - large notice board on wheels – two 6ft and two 8ft folding leg Sebel tables - assorted other chairs - lengths of aisle carpet - stepped book shelf - small storage cupboard (held hymnbooks) – pull down screen with brackets - children's play table - large beach umbrellas (three?) - assorted cups, saucers, plates, insulated mugs etc.



Also (this has been canvassed a few times already) if anything is still there that is wanted in other centres please move them right away (tell Paul first) (6 plastic tables are going to Garden Suburb.)

Please talk with Paul Russell 0411236047 as soon as possible if you are interested in finding out more.



Children & Family Worker Update

HAPPY NEW YEAR to you all, yes & one month has already gone, but I am praying the rest of the year is a good one for you.



I had 2 weeks off over Christmas/New Year & returned to work for the baptism that took place on the 14th January, Logan Smithies, whose father Andrew was also baptised at Charlestown back in 1994.

Since returning to work I have been slowly getting back into it but everything will be full on from now on throughout February & March as I prepare for the return of Scripture into 5 schools. I am also a member of the Hunter Christian SRE committee & we have the SRE Coordinators Lunch & Evening events to run as well as a training day.

SRE

Along with this I will be preparing the stationary packs for Wiripaang School & checking everyone who needs to have their 'Working with Children Check' done, are up to date.

But at the end of the month I am booked on a 10 day Cruise to New Zealand, so will take time out to recharge my batteries before March & Easter & Holiday Kids club are upon us.

Have a good week. Blessings Cathy



Charlestown Ladies Fellowship

Wednesday 14th February



Will be held at Charlestown Church
from 10.00am

Join in fellowship

ALL WELCOME



Charlestown Friendship Circle

Saturday 10 February

Meeting at the Belmont 16Footers café for Fellowship and to discuss the plan for the year.

All Welcome

Some of our Church Contacts:

Minister

Rev Tom Stuart

M: 0427 625 502

E: tom@thestuarts.id.au

Administration:

P: 4943 4019

E: office@charlestown.unitingchurch.org.au

24 Milson Street, Charlestown NSW 2290

PO Box 449, Charlestown NSW 2290

Children & Families Resource Worker:

Mrs Cathy Beeton

M: 0409 445 933

E: Cath4858@gmail.com

Mrs Cathy Beeton is also our Safe Church Contact Person

Bank Account Details for the Charlestown Garden Suburb Multi-Centre Congregation:

Bank Account held with: Uniting Financial Services

Account Name: Charlestown Congregation General Account

BSB: 634 634 Account No.: 100030837

For Offering please put Ref: Offering

Keep up to date with happenings and info:

Webpage: <http://www.chagsuca.org.au>

Facebook: <http://www.facebook.com/CharlestownUnitingChurch>

Project Reconnect: <http://www.projectreconnect.com.au>

Worship Services: <https://tinyurl.com/CHaGS-YouTube-Link>