



# CONTACT



Charlestown & Garden Suburb Uniting  
Church Multi-Centre Congregation

**28 July 2024**

## **From Anne Threlfo**

I am currently reading “Wholehearted Faith” by Rachel Held Evens with a group of friends. In the chapter we read this week, Held spoke about her changing views of God, sin and God’s relationship with creation.

Change is a constant and inevitable part of life, often bringing with it challenges, growth, and transformation. When it comes to spiritual beliefs, change can be particularly profound, touching the deepest parts of our identity and worldview.

Evens grew up in a conservative evangelical environment, where faith was often presented as a set of fixed doctrines and absolute truths. However, as she matured and encountered different perspectives, her beliefs began to evolve. This process of change was neither simple nor easy. It involved questioning long-held convictions, grappling with doubts, and sometimes facing criticism from her faith community. Yet, Evens embraced this journey of change, seeing it not as a departure from faith but as a deeper exploration of it.

It seems that embracing questions and doubts is a natural or inevitable part of spiritual growth. Evens spoke about how doubt is not the enemy of faith but rather a companion to it. This perspective encourages an open-minded and humble approach to spirituality, where changing beliefs are seen as part of a dynamic and living faith rather than a sign of weakness or failure.

Evens also highlighted the role of community in navigating change. For her, engaging with diverse voices and being part of a faith community that allowed for questioning and growth was crucial. She found that change was more bearable and meaningful when shared with others who were also on their own spiritual journeys. This communal aspect of faith provides support, accountability, and a broader perspective that can help us navigate the complexities of changing beliefs.

It seems to me that a change in spiritual beliefs, or the way we experience and know God, can lead to a more authentic and compassionate faith. By moving beyond rigid doctrines and embracing a more expansive understanding of God and spirituality, Evens found a faith that was more inclusive, loving, and justice-oriented. I hope that I too can claim to be moving in this direction.

In reflecting on change in relation to spiritual beliefs, Rachel Held Evens reminds us that faith is not static. A transformational faith journey involves continuous learning, unlearning, and relearning. Her life and work encourage us to be open to change, to embrace the uncertainties and questions that come with it, and to trust that such a journey can lead to a deeper and more authentic spiritual life. In doing so, we find that change, rather than being a threat to our faith, can be a profound expression of it.

# DIARY

## Thursday 25 July

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

## Sunday 28 July – Pentecost 10

9.00am Divine Worship Leader: Michael Smith  
**Reflections: Anne Threlfo, Warren Dixon, Michael Smith**  
*2 Samuel 11:1-15; Psalm 14. Ephesians 3:14-21, John 6:1-21*

## Monday 29 July

1.30pm SFED

## Tuesday 30 July

10.00am Morning tea in the Community at Lake Macquarie Square

## Thursday 1 August

10.00am Morning tea in the Community – common seated area opposite Butcher at Charlestown Square  
1.30-2.30pm Bible Study at Garden Suburb – James and Hebrews

## Sunday 4 August – Pentecost 11

9.00am Divine Worship **with Cathy's Children's Corner**  
Leader and Preacher: Rev'd Tom  
*2 Samuel 11:26-12:13a; Psalm 51:1-12; Ephesians 4:1-16; John 6:24-35*  
6.00pm Prayers for Peace at Choral Evensong – Christchurch Cathedral

## Monday 5 August

10.00am Garden Suburb Aged Care Facility Pastoral Visitation  
1.30pm SFED

## Tuesday 6 August

10.00am Morning tea in the Community at Lake Macquarie Square

## Thursday 8 August

10.00am Morning tea in the Community – common seated area opposite Butcher at Charlestown Square  
10.30am Worship Service at Garden Suburb Aged Care Facility  
1.30-2.30pm Bible Study at Garden Suburb – James and Hebrews

## Friday 9 August

6.00pm Ladies Night at Kahibah

## Saturday 10 August

11.30am Charlestown Friendship Circle – lunch at Lena's

## Sunday 11 August – Pentecost 12

9.00am Divine Worship opening with **Kathy's Praise Segment**  
Leader: Kathy Stuart and Preacher: Rev'd Tom  
*2 Samuel 18: 5-9, 15, 31-33; Psalm 130; Ephesians 4: 25-5:2; John 6: 35, 41-51*

## Monday 12 August

1.30pm SFED

## Tuesday 13 August

10.00am Morning tea in the Community at Lake Macquarie Square

## Tuesday 14 August

10.00am Charlestown Ladies Fellowship

# THE PRAYER PAGE



Prayer is the Voice of Faith

## Pastoral Prayer Points

\* those in our congregation whose loved ones have died in recent times

\* Laraine Chegwiddden

\* Tony Sellen

\* Liz and Peter

\* Nelda Marshall

\* Mike Warren

\* Elaine Ross

\* Vivianne

\* Shirley Elkin

\* Lorraine Pepper

\* Vicki

\* Judith Fuller battling cancer

\* Pam and Ken

\* Lyn Benson

\* Jean

\* Fred Bryant

\* June Locker

\* Ryan Walpole

\* Kathryn Gray

\* Jacqueline Fenwick

\* Isabella

\* Janice Wright

\* Eileen Dunn

\* Pam and Mert

\* Judith and family

\* Enid Power

\* Max

\* Tom and Kathy

\* Don Humphries

## Congregational Prayer Points

- Church Council
- pray for guidance and discernment  
missional use of buildings into the future
- Project Reconnect
- Worship Services
- Cathy Beeton and SRE classes
- Worship Committee

## Wider Community Prayer Points

- The orphanage
- Tom and Neos
- HCA and ongoing issues of homelessness,  
affordable housing and climate change
- Those affected by climate change in  
Australia eg floods, droughts and fires
- Pray that a cease fire agreement will be  
negotiated between Israel and Hamas and  
that there will be relief from all the suffering  
The situation in Ukraine and other trouble  
spots





## The Hunter Presbytery Prayer Diary



This diary provides an opportunity to pray each week for congregations in the Presbytery. By praying together, we can encourage one another in mission, as we grow in faith and unity and develop understanding and relationships across the region. Each week there will be information and a prayer for each of the congregations in the Hunter Presbytery. This week we pray for:

**28 July 2024 – Merriwa Uniting Church**

Merriwa is a rural centre with an active community of faith.

**Prayer: As a congregation we are praying for outreach into our community, the continuation of scripture in schools, and Godly, bible-based preaching in our services. Amen.**



## Conversations for Change: From Awareness to Climate Action!

What's the best way to get people involved in climate action? It's talking to them about it!

Join us on **Thursday 1 August, 7pm-8.30pm on Zoom** for our interactive workshop on how to have impactful conversations with people in your lives about climate change,

This training will explore how to have effective one-on-one conversations about climate change with your friends, families, and colleagues.

Find out how you can use your story and personal experiences to advocate for change, as well as research-backed insights on the best ways to talk about the big picture and how to handle common objections by connecting with people's core values.

This is a part of a series of trainings offered by the Uniting Advocacy team to support the Uniting Climate Action Network.

For more information contact Deepthi Mathew at [dmathew@uniting.org](mailto:dmathew@uniting.org)

Register here: <https://tinyurl.com/6y9xw5s2>

## Children & Family Worker Update



**Safe Church Training** – if you are involved in any children's or vulnerable people ministry or on the church council you are required to do the Uniting Church Training. Two days have been organised for the Hunter area, unfortunately the Training at Garden Suburb set down for the 24<sup>th</sup> August is now booked out but you can apply to go on a waiting list, the other is for Morpeth in October. If you have missed the one at Garden Suburb please book in for the one at Morpeth & put your name on the waiting list for Garden Suburb. If you need help with registering please don't hesitate to contact me.

**Well I am again doing the 'Bloody Long Walk'** in support of 2 year old Audrey, who has the most severe form of Leigh's Disease a Mitochondrial Disease. The walk is 35 km long leaving from Redhead crossing the suburbs & ending in Pacific Park Newcastle on the 25<sup>th</sup> August. I will be making some homemade sweets to sell in support of my walk, **I will bring some along to church on the 28<sup>th</sup> July**. I hope you are able to help support me by purchasing a bag or 2.

Have a great week,

Cathy



## Charlestown Friendship Circle

Saturday 10 August

Lunch at Lena's at Warners Bay 11.30am

And then

SRE Choir Concert at The Willows 2.00pm

All Welcome





# SOUL CARE 2024 CONFERENCE

12-13 September 2024 | Wesley Mission, Sydney

**Also Online**

## **Explore Mindfulness practice and research as a template for advancing spiritual care**

We are thrilled to be joined by Associate Professor Nicholas Van Dam and Dr Cullan Joyce for their keynote session *Mindfulness practice and research as a template for advancing spiritual care*.

Spirituality and spiritual care are often present in health settings but face challenges from secular organisations due to varying understandings and implementations. Though rooted in spiritual traditions, mindfulness meditation gained acceptance through collaboration with empirical researchers. The development and acceptance of mindfulness provide insights that can enhance evidence around spiritual care practices.

Join us for this informative session that will discuss the practical implications of integrating contemplative research with spiritual care and highlight how contemplative practices support person-centred care and allow for diverse beliefs and the need for collaborative efforts between researchers and practitioners.

Information and registration here:

<https://www.nswact.uca.org.au/calendar/soulcare-2024-12-13-september/>

Early bird registrations end Saturday 20 July – on site \$129, online \$49



Uniting Church The Hunter Presbytery

## PRESBYTERY GATHERING

THURSDAY 29<sup>th</sup> AUGUST 2024

Salamander Bay Uniting Church  
174 Salamander Way, Salamander Bay 2317

10 am Morning Tea  
10.30am Programme begins

### Guest Speaker

Rev Faaimata Havea Hiliau  
Moderator Uniting Church  
NSW/ACT Synod



Offering shared between  
Flying Padre based at Broken Hill and  
Yaacaaba Centre, Port Stephens

(This service provides early intervention support and  
counselling services to assist vulnerable people  
who are at imminent risk of homelessness)

Bring your own lunch. Tea and coffee provided.  
Sales Table with Greeting Cards etc.

Supported by UCAF The Hunter Presbytery Committee



City of Newcastle would like to  
invite you to attend this event as  
part of our Empowering  
Newcastle program

### Hunter Renewable Energy Transformation

*Saturday 17 August, 9.30 to  
noon, City Hall*

Join NSW Environment  
Minister, Penny Sharpe and  
Lord Mayor Nuatali Nelmes to  
hear about the renewable energy  
transformation in the Hunter  
and opportunities for us all to be  
part of our net zero future

[Register for events here](#) or  
email [sustainability@ncc.nsw.gov.au](mailto:sustainability@ncc.nsw.gov.au)  
for more information.



A commemoration of Hiroshima Day

6pm Sunday 4 August 2024

peace

## Prayers for Peace at Choral Evensong

Christchurch Cathedral, Church St, Newcastle

The guest preacher will be Rev Nicholas Edwards, St James Anglican Church, Morpeth  
People of all faiths are warmly invited to share in this annual service of commemoration  
as we remember those who have suffered as a result of war, and join together in  
prayers for peace in the world.

Organised by Christians for Peace Newcastle

Contacts: George Garnsey 4934 2658 or Doug Hewitt 0431 935 097



## Charlestown Ladies Fellowship

Wednesday 14<sup>th</sup> August

Will be held at Charlestown  
Church from 10.00am

Join in fellowship

**ALL WELCOME**

### **A Men's Breakfast**

## *How does Poetry open us to the Sacred?*

Michael Griffith has recently retired from Australian Catholic University where he taught literature for 45 years. During that time, he also taught literature for the Sydney Clemente Program for the homeless and marginalised.

In all his teaching he has a special interest in the way the language of literature, especially poetry, can deepen our understanding of ourselves, of others and of our connection with the sacred. Brought up as a Catholic, Michael has been a long-time practitioner of the Gurdjieff Work and is also a Member of the Quakers.

He will explore with you some of his favourite poems and discuss the ways in which they can open doors onto the sacred.

**8am Saturday 17<sup>th</sup> August** at Charlestown Uniting Church - 24 Milson St

**\$12** RSVP: Paul Russell [pmraus74@gmail.com](mailto:pmraus74@gmail.com),

or 0411 236 047

*Please advise of any special dietary requirements*



# Practices That Transform Us

## Pray

**Prayer is a word that describes a relationship.** Disciplines of prayer provide patterns for attending to God throughout the day. They open us to the divine dialogue through intentional encounter with the Trinity. The *P* disciplines open our gaze and hearing to God. In his book *The Way of the Heart*, Henri Nouwen quotes Theophan the Recluse: “To pray is to descend with the mind into the heart, and there stand before the face of the Lord, ever-present, all seeing, within you.” Prayer is sustained less by duty than by a desire to connect and grow in intimacy and communion with the holy Three. But prayer also moves us up and out into our world. In *Love in a Fearful Land*, Nouwen also writes, “Prayer is the way to both the heart of God and the heart of the world— precisely because they have been joined through the suffering of Jesus Christ. . . . Praying is letting one’s own heart become the place where the tears of God’s children merge and become tears of hope.”

“O” Pray. Ken will do this one on 28th July 1. Inner healing prayer No 1 2. Prayer of recollection No. 1 3. Conversational Prayer No.1 4. Prayer Walking No. 4 5. Welcoming Prayer No. 3

1. **Inner-Healing Prayer** - Take a “needs mending” inventory. Set aside time for several days or weeks to be in the presence of Jesus with your wounds. Gather a list of wounded places and tender relationships that need mending. Simply gather the list. Let it grow as other wounds come to mind. Leave it with God. At another time, come to God in a safe and quiet place where you can attend to the list in the presence of the great Physician. Breathe deeply. Inhale the closeness of Jesus. He is nearer than your own breath. Don’t hurry. Wait in his presence. • When you are ready, set the list before the Lord and wait. What *one* item seems to have your attention? (Attend to one wound at a time. Don’t move on to another wound until you sense that the time has come to do so.) Ask Jesus what he wants to tell you about this wound. Listen. What do you sense the Lord is saying to you? • Respond to Jesus. Trust Jesus to do what he needs to do. The fruit of healing may not be a big feeling of release at the time of prayer, but changed internal responses as time goes by. Over time you may notice that your internal responses to people and situations begin to shift. Talk to God about this.
2. **Prayer of Recollection** - Find a quiet place where you can sit comfortably before the Lord. Take some deep breaths, relaxing your body and quieting your mind. Offer yourself to God. Ask him to gather up the fragments of your scattered life and recollect your soul. Rest before him. When distracting thoughts come up, write down one word that expresses your distraction. Let the thought go and return to your rest in God. • After ten minutes look at the words you have jotted down. What stands out to you? What anxieties do you see? Where is your identity centered? • Confess that you are not called to control all that disrupts your life. Return these concerns to the Lord. Let him hold the concerns of your heart as you rest in him.
3. **Conversational Prayer** - When you find yourself talking to a Christian friend about concerns of your heart, suggest that the two of you pray together conversationally.

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4. **Prayer Walking** - When you are on vacation or in a natural setting, allow God to draw you into prayer for this particular place. Let your interaction with the created world lead you into prayer. Pray that the exquisite beauty of the world will not be snuffed out.
5. **Welcoming Prayer** - In the morning scan through your day. Anticipate the events and what will be good or hard. Welcome Jesus into these events before you enter your day and in the midst of the day.

*“O God, I want so to belong; teach me to accept. I want to be close; teach me to reach out. I want a place where I am welcome; teach me to open my arms. I want mercy; teach me to forgive. . . . I want life; show me how to die.”*

*Ted Loder*

These resources come from Calhoun, Adele Ahlberg. Spiritual Disciplines Handbook: Practices That Transform Us (Transforming Resources). InterVarsity Press. Kindle Edition.

## Some of our Church Contacts:

### **Minister**

Rev Tom Stuart  
M: 0427 625 502  
E: [tom@thestuarts.id.au](mailto:tom@thestuarts.id.au)

### **Administration:**

P: 4943 4019  
E: [office@charlestown.unitingchurch.org.au](mailto: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](mailto: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>