



# CONTACT



Charlestown & Garden Suburb Uniting  
Church Multi-Centre Congregation

**28 June 2026**

## **From Rev Tom**

Life took a different direction than I anticipated this last week. On Saturday I received a call from my sister saying that my 98-year-old mother, who lives in Parkes, had fallen and been taken to Orange Hospital. The doctors discovered she had a broken hip and damage to a bone in her shoulder, though we are still not entirely clear about the extent of that injury.

There was a lot happening on Sunday, but everyone kindly encouraged me to leave after worship and head to Orange to be with Mum. When I arrived, she was experiencing delirium and was very anxious. It was a difficult night. By the time I returned to the hospital the following morning, Mum was already in theatre undergoing a partial hip replacement.

In the midst of all this, my cousin rang to tell me that Mum's sister had died that day.

Later, I was speaking with a member of Mum's congregation, someone who knows her well. Reflecting on the news, she said, "This isn't supposed to happen to your mum. She's lived such a long, wonderful, giving, faith-filled life."

Her words stayed with me. I found myself reflecting on Ecclesiastes 3: "There is a time for everything, and a season for every activity under the heavens: a time to be born and a time to die ... a time to tear down and a time to build ... a time for war and a time for peace." The Teacher does not sugar-coat life. He tells it as it is. There is joy and there is sorrow. There is gain and there is loss. There is laughter and there are tears. As someone once said, "A stick has two ends." If we experience one aspect of life, sooner or later we will encounter its counterpart.

The Teacher goes even further: "I have seen the burden God has laid on the human race." This is a strikingly honest observation. Life is not always easy. Even those who have lived long, generous and faithful lives are not exempt from frailty, grief, disappointment or loss.

Yet immediately after this comes another statement: "He has made everything beautiful in its time." Not every event is beautiful. A broken hip is not beautiful. Delirium is not beautiful. Death is not beautiful. Grief is not beautiful.

And yet Ecclesiastes invites us to see beyond the individual moments of our lives. It invites us to step back from the immediacy of our circumstances and glimpse something larger. It reminds us that each season, whether joyful or painful, is part of a greater whole.

The Teacher continues: "He has also set eternity in the human heart; yet no one can fathom what God has done from beginning to end." We will never fully understand the whole story. We cannot see from beginning to end. But perhaps we can occasionally catch a glimpse.

Sometimes it is found in the kindness of a nurse. Sometimes in the resilience we discover within ourselves. Sometimes in the way despair unexpectedly gives way to hope. Sometimes in a thoughtful text message, a caring phone call, or a friend who simply turns up when needed.

**Continued over.....**

These moments may seem small, but they can reveal something of the deeper reality that holds our lives together. Ecclesiastes invites us to open our eyes to a goodness that is larger than any particular season we are experiencing. A goodness that embraces both joy and sorrow, triumph and struggle. A goodness that gives us life, sustains us through life, and ultimately surrounds our lives. "He has also set eternity in the human heart."



## DIARY

### Thursday 25 June

10.00am Morning tea in the Community – common seated area at Charlestown Square  
1.30-2.30pm Bible Study in Dudley Room

### Sunday 28 June – Pentecost 5

9.00am The Divine Worship  
Leader: Margaret and Preacher: Project Reconnect  
*Genesis 22:1-14; Psalm 13; Romans 6:12-23; Matthew 10:40-42*

### Tuesday 30 June

10.00am Morning tea in the Community at Lake Macquarie Square

## **JULY**

### Thursday 2 July

10.00am Morning tea in the Community – common seated area at Charlestown Square  
1.30-2.30pm Bible Study in Dudley Room

### Sunday 5 July – Pentecost 6

9.00am The Divine Worship  
Leader and Preacher: Rev'd Tom  
*Genesis 24:34-38, 42-49, 58-67; Psalm 45:10-17 or Song 2:8-13; Romans 7:15-25a; Matthew 11:16-19, 25-30*

### Monday 6 July

10.00am Pastoral Care Visit to Garden Suburb Aged Care Facility

### Tuesday 7 July

10.00am Pastoral Care Visit to Garden Suburb Aged Care Facility  
Morning tea in the Community at Lake Macquarie Square

### Wednesday 8 July

10.00am Ladies Fellowship at Milson St Hub

### Thursday 9 July

10.00am Morning tea in the Community – common seated area at Charlestown Square  
**No Bible Study during School Holidays**

### Friday 10 July

6.00pm Ladies Night at Kahibah



# THE PRAYER PAGE



## Prayer is the Voice of Faith

### Pastoral Prayer Points

- \* Tom's Mum in Orange Hospital
- \* Pray for Marion Box
- \* Prayers for Grahame Beeton and family
- \* Those who are mourning loved ones
- \* Mert has moved to Narla Village – continue to pray for Mert and Pam
- \* Robyn and Geoff Greaves
- \* Jacqueline Fenwick now home
- \* Rene Kelly
- \* Nelda Marshall
- \* Glen and Marion
- \* Valmai
- \* Janice and Don Wright
- \* Kelly
- \* Tony Sellen
- \* Vicki
- \* Pam and Ken
- \* Lyn Benson
- \* Jean
- \* Isabella
- \* Eileen Dunn
- \* Max
- \* Don Humphries

Maintained by SFED

### Congregational Prayer Points

- Preparation of NREMA application being prepared by SFED and Church Council
- Piteeri
- Major upgrades to the Project Reconnect website
- Worship Services
- Cathy Beeton and SRE classes
- Church profile and preparations for Tom's retirement
- Worship Committee

### Wider Community Prayer Points

- Jesmond Park-Wallsend-Shortland
- Margaret Jurd College and Darren Twist the Principal
- Orphanage in Kenya and Wilfreda
- Neos ministry
- Those affected by climate change in Australia eg floods, droughts and fires
- Prayer for those in conflict zones in the world



## Life and Witness Consultation – thoughts afterwards

What a fruitful morning to share our story as a congregation with the Presbytery team last Sunday morning! A big thank you to all who were able to stay for morning tea and contributed to the discussion.

In case you missed all the names, the team comprised of -

Rev Stephen De Plater, Rev Rod Pattenden (both retired ministers),

Jan McGeachie from the Property and Finance committee and

Jenny Mathieson who is the Hunter Presbytery secretary.

Their questions over morning tea guided the conversation and I appreciated the variety of voices who responded and elaborated on points raised. We were able to speak of our current missional service and pastoral care of the people within the church and to the community and our emerging plans for the future. There was also a chance to hear where there were frustrations and burdens, some of which we can address, some beyond our control.

Over lunch, the Presbytery team delved a little further with our plans for the future. Church Council learnt of extra resources available through Presbytery and the team members offered their help in paperwork for future plans.

Their interview with our Rev Tom Stuart will take place soon and then the Presbytery Life and Witness Consultation Team will write up a report to include the results of our surveys and the interviews to share with the Synod, Presbytery and ourselves.

Kerrie Dixon

Acting Chair Church Council





Hi everyone,

There's some exciting collaborations developing with some of the wonderful groups that hire the hall 😊

The first one coming up will be on Thurs. 30/7, 3-4:30pm, held in the church.

This will be targeting the same families who came to the Easter Egg Hunt, as well as school families, & locals who want to learn how to save on their electricity bill.

We're very privileged to be partnering with the Greater Charlestown Sustainable Neighbourhood Group, CleanaS, the Sustainable Neighbourhood Alliance Lake Macquarie. Alec Roberts, the Chairman of CleanaS, will be presenting some great information & tips.

Please book in if you'd like to join us & help spread the word!

Hope you're all staying warm,

Piteeri

## WANT TO SAVE ON ELECTRICITY BILLS?






This Inspiring Australian initiative is supported by the Australian Government

- Kids, come & ride our bike that generates enough electricity to turn lights on!
- Switch from Gas to Electric and save \$2400-\$4000 p.a.
- Learn a bit about rebates, batteries & solar

# THURS. 30/7

# 3-4:30PM



**ALEC ROBERTS**  
Chairman of CleanaS

**24 Milson St.**  
**Charlestown**  
Bring the kids!  
Afternoon Tea provided



An Australian Government Initiative



The Greater Charlestown Sustainable Neighbourhood Group

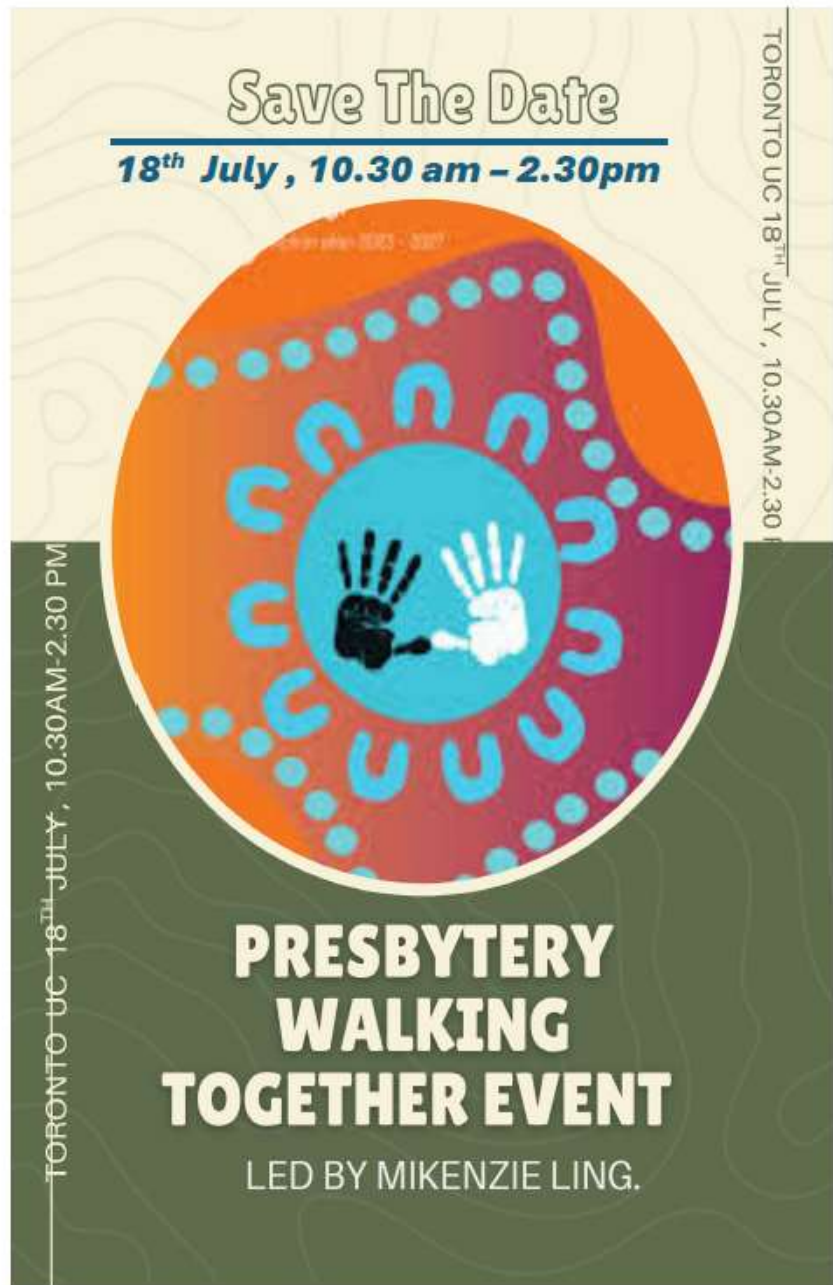






Text Piteeri to book your spot:  
**0493 094 231**





### **LAST CALL- Updating Our Directory!**

Thanks to all the people who have sent emails or filled in change forms since we started this update process.

Please let us know by form (available in foyer) or email of any changes at all since your entry in the December 2023 version – regardless of whether you have advised our Administrative Assistant meantime.

Doing this will give permission to print the latest information in the directory exactly as you want.

Any Questions – ask Paul Russell 0411236047



# anything but Ordinary

A deep dive into the  
Abrahamic Stories

|           |                                                       |                                                                                                  |
|-----------|-------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 25 June   | <b>Pentecost 13</b><br>Gen. 22:1-14                   | <b>A command out of the ordinary</b><br>(Abraham is ordered to kill his son)                     |
| 2 July    | <b>Pentecost 14</b><br>Gen. 24:34-38,<br>42-49, 58-67 | <b>A marriage arrangement out of the ordinary</b><br>(Isaac marries Rebekah)                     |
| 9 July    | <b>Pentecost 15</b><br>Gen. 25:19-34                  | <b>A betrayal out of the ordinary</b><br>(Jacob steals the birthright of Esau)                   |
| 16 July   | <b>Pentecost 16</b><br>Gen. 28:10-19a                 | <b>Encountering the divine out of the ordinary</b><br>(Jacob and the ladder)                     |
| 23 July   | <b>Pentecost 17</b><br>Gen. 29:15-28                  | <b>Another marriage: it's the wrong sister!</b><br>(Jacob, Leah, and Rachel)                     |
| 30 July   | <b>Pentecost 18</b><br>Gen. 32:22-31                  | <b>A wrestling match out of the ordinary</b><br>(Jacob at Peniel)                                |
| 6 August  | <b>Pentecost 19</b><br>Gen. 37:1-4, 12-28             | <b>A brotherly plot out of the ordinary</b><br>(Joseph, his dream, and the plot by his brothers) |
| 13 August | <b>Pentecost 20</b><br>Gen. 45:1-15                   | <b>A family reunion out of the ordinary</b><br>(Joseph and his brothers in Egypt)                |

Thursday nights 7pm on Zoom  
See [tuc.org.au](https://tuc.org.au) for more details

Register Here:

<https://tuc.org.au/ministries/weekly-bible-study>

The studies are led by John Squires and Elizabeth Raine. If you would like to get a feel for what they are like, recordings of studies from previous years are also available on the same page.

## **Some of our Church Contacts:**

### **Minister**

Rev Tom Stuart

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

### **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

### **Communications Coordinator:**

Piteeri Michail

M: 0493 094 231 E: [Piteeri.m@outlook.com](mailto:Piteeri.m@outlook.com)

### **Administration:**

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

24 Milson St, Charlestown NSW 2290

PO Box 449, Charlestown NSW 2290

### **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>