



# CONTACT



Charlestown & Garden Suburb Uniting  
Church Multi-Centre Congregation

**31 March 2024**

## From Rev Tom

The day I am writing this is Holy Wednesday. The Gospel Lesson for today is John 13:21-32. This is part of the “Last Supper” scene and focuses on the betrayal of Jesus by Judas. Just as Jesus dismisses Judas to go and finalise his treacherous plans Jesus says, “Now the Son of Man has been glorified, and God has been glorified in him.” This seems such a puzzling thing to say. If Jesus had said, “Now the Son of Man will be glorified” it would be much easier to understand, we would presume he is pointing toward the resurrection. But “Now the Son of Man has been glorified” challenges interpretation. A thought that presses on me more and more each time we traverse the Easter season is that, as it were, we celebrate the wrong day. We perceive the miracle of Easter in the wrong element. We have inverted the message of Easter and thereby destroyed much of its contemporary power, and lost the wisdom that it sheds on our experience of life. When Jesus was talking about his glory he was not at all referring to his resurrection. His glory was not a party trick we wake up to on Easter Sunday. The glory is the betrayal by his closest allies. His glory is the apparent failure (as seen by everyone around him) of his earthly mission. His glory is in the complete denial, and misrepresentation of his supremely life-giving, and uniquely generous message. His glory is his suffering and final death. We are desperate for a good news story that makes us winners. In that way we all rush to Easter Sunday. We write off the travail of Jesus' journey as something done for us so we get the prize at the end. But that is to misinterpret Jesus, and it is to misread the nature of our journey. So much of the essence of Jesus glorified in his suffering is brought into focus in the words of Richard Rohr, “The pain you don't transform you transmit!” The unique characteristic of Jesus is that he transforms everything. He becomes God, or reveals himself as God, by way of having all the possible evil poured out on him, that denies anything and everything of good in him, and yet he transmits none of the resulting pain. He transforms it all in his commitment to love and love becomes his essence, or is his essence. In so doing the resurrection is not the reward, it is an inevitability. Love is not destroyed, love transforms. So how does this change the way we respond to life? Well, the invitation to us is to become the counterpoint to the world's way of seeing things. It is not for Christians to win, in the worldly sense of winning. It is for us to completely be free of identification with outcomes so that we simply love endlessly, even as the world appears to rebuff, abuse, and ignore our love. It is to transform all the pain that is felt by us and love in return. That is what to win is. It amounts to dying in the eyes of virtually every other human being and our own. The Greek words for this are *agape* and *kenosis*. The eternal winning is to experience failure but to still love, to still hope, to still have faith. This way betrays no one and particularly doesn't betray God. Resurrection becomes an inevitability! Of course, even as Jesus beckons us into this way of life none of us achieve this (a camel through the eye of the needle stuff) but even our failure is caught up in what Jesus has already done. Somehow even our struggle, and failure, to love ends up all being part of the good (Romans 8:28).

# DIARY

## **Thursday 28 March – Maundy Thursday**

- 10.00am Morning tea in the Community - common seated area opposite Butcher at Charlestown Square
- 1.30pm Bible Study at Garden Suburb Church
- 7.30pm Service at Garden Suburb

## **Friday 29 March - Good Friday**

- 9.00am Service at Charlestown



## **Sunday 31 March – Easter Day**

- 9.00am Worship Service with Holy Communion.  
Leader & Preacher Rev Tom Stuart  
*Acts 10:34-43 or Isaiah 25:6-9; Psalm 118:1-2, 14-24: 1  
Corinthians 15:1-11 or Acts 10:34-43; John 20:1-18 or  
Mark 16:1-8*



## **Monday 1 April**

- 10.00am Garden Suburb Nursing Home Pastoral Care Visitation

## **Tuesday 2 April**

- 10.00am Morning tea in the Community at Lake Macquarie Square

## **Thursday 4 April**

- 11.30am Memorial Service for Ashley Pepper at Charlestown Church
- 1.30pm Bible Study at Garden Suburb Church

## **Sunday 7 April – Easter 2**

- 9.00am Worship Service. Leader & Preacher Rev Tom Stuart  
*Acts 4:32-35; Psalm 133; 1 John 1:1-2:2; John 20:19-31*

## **Monday 8 April**

- 1.30pm SFED

## **Tuesday 9 April**

- 10.00am Morning tea in the Community at Lake Macquarie Square
- 2.00pm Memorial Service for Nola Kennerley at Charlestown Church

## **Wednesday 10 April**

- 10.00am Ladies Fellowship

## **Thursday 11 April**

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

## **Friday 12 April**

- 6.00pm Ladies Night at Kahibah



# THE PRAYER PAGE



Please join with each other as a congregation, to commit to praying at meal times, for the needs mentioned below.

## Pastoral Prayer Points

- \* Family and friends of Nola
- \* Lorraine Pepper and family following Ashley's death
- \* Judith Fuller battling cancer
- \* Pam and Ken
- \* Les as he recovers from heart surgery
- \* Those in our Congregation who have lost loved ones in recent months
- \* Peter
- \* Tony
- \* Graeme
- \* Jean
- \* Fred Bryant
- \* June Locker
- \* Ryan Walpole
- \* Kathryn Gray
- \* Jacqueline Fenwick
- \* Care facility be found for Nola
- \* Isabella
- \* Janice Wright
- \* Eileen Dunn
- \* Mert
- \* Judith and family
- \* Enid Power
- \* Max

Maintained by SFED and Enid Power

## Congregational Prayer Points

- pray for each other as we experience our Easter reflections and services
- pray for the successful sale of the Whitebridge property
- pray for guidance and discernment with regard to property and Mission Plan
- Project Reconnect
- Worship Services
- Cathy Beeton and SRE classes
- Worship Committee

## Wider Community Prayer Points

- pray that HCA will be able to obtain attendance from political leaders to the Founding Assembly at the great Hall in April
- pray for Tom as he engages with other leaders from the community and other denominations, in his NEOS work.
- 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
- Thanksgiving for all orphanage children at school thanks to generous donations
- Rohingya people in Bangladesh where 7000 people homeless





# 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:

## 31st March 2024 - Bulahdelah Uniting Church

We are a congregation of approximately 35 regular attendees, including a few young families. We have a small, yet healthy Sunday School, and a fortnightly Youth Group which includes a few youths from church families, plus up to 8 or 10 from the local community.

**Prayer: We pray for our local Christian youth, that they may continue to grow in grace as they face the challenges of life through their teenage years. We also pray for those young people who don't yet know you, that through the love they experience around them amongst their Christian peers and leaders that their minds and hearts may be open to You. May they all grow in courage and wisdom in this wonderful but difficult world we live in. We also pray for our Youth Group leaders, that you would equip them with wisdom, courage and integrity as they reflect Christ's love to those under their authority. Amen.**

We mourn the passing of our dear friend

*Nola Kennerley*

and hold her loved ones in our hearts and prayers  
Details of the celebration of Nola's life to be advised

We mourn the passing of our dear friend

*Ashley Pepper*

and continue to hold Lorraine and family in our prayers  
A Memorial Service for Ashley will be held on

Thursday 4 April at 11.30am  
At Charlestown Uniting Church



The Hunter Community Alliance

# Founding

# Assembly

## 6.15 for 6.30pm

Food trucks 5.30pm

Wednesday 10th April

The Great Hall—University of Newcastle

**Over 100 people participating  
from The Uniting Church so far  
gather 6.15pm in The Great Hall  
register for latest details**

<https://events.humanitix.com/hca-founding-assembly>

## T Shirts

pre-order closed 19th March

Do you require  
transport?

Can you offer  
transport?

Add your name to  
the sheet in the  
Charlestown foyer,  
or contact Kerrie  
Dixon, Anne  
Threlfo or Rev Tom  
Stuart.

## Children & Family Worker Update



Holiday Kids Club will be held on the 24<sup>th</sup> April at Charlestown Church.

Registration forms are available in the church foyer or contact Cathy on 0409445933

*Sending Easter Blessings to  
All*



Cathy

# Being A Welcoming Church

# Welcome

We're glad you're here!



## Resources for hospitality and welcome



Is your church ready to welcome newcomers? Here is a workshop opportunity to develop principles and strategies that give welcome and hospitality to visitors to your church who may, in the future, become members. Led by experienced pastor Rev Neil Smith, this workshop will give you clear strategies that can be developed in your congregation that give real impact as a welcoming community of faith. Participants will be asked to attend a church of another tradition as part of their preparation and research, and to have the experience of being a newcomer themselves. This workshop will provide an excellent resource for church leaders and elders and help you turn your Sunday worship into a form of community engagement.

**Saturday 27th April 2024**

**9.30am - 1pm \$20/15 conc.**

**East Maitland Uniting Church - 35 William St**

Details and registration here: <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/welcoming-seminar-tickets-865180186227?aff=oddtcreator>

# Hunter Community Alliance

Organising for the Common Good of the Hunter

## Table Talks

A lead up to the Founding Assembly

Sunday 7 April, 10.45am to 12.15pm

Charlestown Uniting Church, 24 Milson Street, Charlestown

At the Table Talks we will be hearing about issues are taking action on at the Founding Assembly. We will share our stories of how these issues impact our lives, and the lives of those close to us.

After attending the Table Talk you will know what you want as outcomes of the Founding Assembly, and what commitments you want from Chris Bowen (Federal Minister for Climate Change) and Rose Jackson (Minister for Housing), as well as a chance to connect with each other before the big event!

The Hunter Community Alliance brings together non-government and public interest organisations, including churches, unions, community services and climate and environment groups, who share a commitment to the common good.

Table Talks are how we tune in to visions, hopes and concerns that are felt widely and deeply in the Hunter.

**The program will be led by Natalia Soeters from the Hunter Community Alliance. Natalia is a member of the Alliance Climate Change research team.**

Register at Humanitix:

<https://events.humanitix.com/hunter-community-alliance-table-talk>

listen

affordable housing

community

transition

stories

climate change

coming together

environment

sustainable future

This table talk event is convened by [Charlestown & Garden Suburb Uniting Church](#), a member of the [Hunter Community Alliance](#)



# JOIN US FOR

**Holy Week - Church Crawl  
7.00 - 7.30pm**

**Monday 25th March  
Hamilton Uniting Church**

**Tuesday 26th March  
Adamstown Uniting Church**

**Wednesday 27th March  
Charlestown Uniting Church**



## **Holy Week at CHaGS**

### Palm Sunday

Sunday 24<sup>th</sup> March  
9.00am at Charlestown

### Maundy Thursday

Thursday 28<sup>th</sup> March  
7.30pm at Garden Suburb

### Good Friday

Friday 29<sup>th</sup> March  
9.00am at Charlestown

**RECYCLE**

**RECYCLE**

**RECYCLE**

### **Soft plastics plus**

I will be making another trip to the Resource Recovery Centre in the next few weeks and this time, as well as soft plastics, I will be taking quite a few x-ray films. If you have some stored at home that are no longer required, I am happy to pick them up as they are a bit awkward to carry.

They should **not** go in the general garbage, but are also a source of silver.

Julie Fenwick (0414411157)



**FRIENDSHIP CIRCLE**  
**MOTHER'S DAY CELEBRATION 2024**



**“REPAST WITH THE REPTILES?”**

*An invitation is issued to ALL members of the church to join us for our Annual Mother's Day Outing.*

**The Place** – The Hunter Wetlands Centre – 1 Wetlands Place, Shortland.

**Date** - Saturday May 4<sup>th</sup> May 2024.

**Time** –11-15 am for 11-30 am for Morning Tea. There will be a new Art Exhibition for all to see on the day. There will be a demonstrated talk on reptiles during M/T. Lunch will follow ordered from the café with M/T.

For those interested, there is a guided tour at 10-30am for the energetic. There is an entry fee of \$5 to the Wetlands. Approximate duration of tour is 45 minutes. Please phone Grahame on 0402 335 410 if interested..

Consider Car Pooling. Meet at the church if you need a lift. Please notify Sue Warren on 4944 7793.

Please let your seasonal hosts extraordinaire for the day, Grahame Pricter and Noel Drinkwater, know by phoning 0402 335 410 or 0428 431 169 to book your “Repast with the Reptiles.” RSVP 28<sup>th</sup> April 2024

I/We, Will be//will not be attending the **“Mother's Day Repast with the Reptiles”** on Saturday 4th May 2024.



## *I've Spent Time in Prison!*

Kairos Prison Ministry started in Australia in the early 1990's. It is an interdenominational Christian ministry to and for prison inmates and their families. The mission of Kairos in Australia is to bring Christ's love and forgiveness to all incarcerated individuals, their families, and those who work with them, and to assist in their transition to becoming productive citizens.

Our speaker Stuart Bell, active in Kairos since 2004 working in the Hunter to provide courses to inmates in Cessnock and St Heliers Prisons. Stuart will give an understanding of what this ministry is aiming to achieve for the inmates and their families.

**A Men's Breakfast**  
at Charlestown Uniting Church - 24 Milson St  
**8am Saturday 20<sup>th</sup> April**  
\$12 RSVP: Robert White [whiterigg@westnet.com.au](mailto:whiterigg@westnet.com.au)  
or 4943 2096  
*Please advise of any special dietary requirements*  
**By Wednesday 17<sup>th</sup> April 2024**

### **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>