



CONTACT



Charlestown & Garden Suburb Uniting
Church Multi-Centre Congregation

9 March 2025

From Rev Tom

Two weeks ago, I put a note in Contact about plans to put a large TV screen in the foyer. Well, that (huge) TV is now sitting in its box on the stage in the hall. The next step is to attach it to the wall above the Uniting Church label on the eastern wall. It will then be connected to the internet. Once all that is done we will set up an account with www.yodeck.com. Using this website, we can design info screens, and notices, use fills like a clock, the weather, and so on. We then stream the material from the website to our screen. This is part of a larger mission! In my Neos work time, I tried to make connections in the community and endeavoured to find a place where we could invite people to gather. This is part of a concept called placemaking. It is about building community. It has been a challenge. I then realised that we already have people coming to the Charlestown Church, throughout the week. They typically arrive as independent groups. They have little, to no awareness of the other activities in our facilities. Why not change that? Why not help the groups recognise that they are part of something bigger, that each group is part of a larger group, a larger group that includes us, the church? This is where the TV comes in. The intention is for the TV to display all the things happening at 24-26 Milson St and the wider work of the congregation. As people walk in and out they are encouraged through what is on the screen to get a sense of the larger thing they are connected with. Along the way, with all this, we discovered we can apply for funding from the presbytery to help develop our project. So right now, we are preparing an application to employ a community engagement worker. It is likely to be for about 1 day a week at this stage. Their task will be to connect with each of the community and congregation groups, get photos and info and prepare to have all of that info displayed on the screen at the times the church is being used. We also plan on a major update of the website. The update will involve a shift from focussing only on the church to communicating all the things that are happening on our property. So, people will be encouraged, when finding out what is happening in their group, to go to our website. Further, and we will have to see how things go, it could develop into where our "Contact" is not just a contact for our congregation, but for all the groups – our little community newsletter. Again, it is all in the planning stage, but watch this space.



DIARY

Thursday 6 March

- 10.00am Morning tea in the Community – common seated area opposite Butcher at Charlestown Square
- 1.30-2.30pm Bible Study at Garden Suburb Church
- 6.00pm **Hunter Community Alliance 2025 Assembly at The Great Hall, Uni of Newcastle**

Friday 7 March

- 10.00am **World Day of Prayer at Charlestown Church**

Saturday 8 March

- 12noon Friendship Circle – Lunch at Swansea RSL Club – All Welcome

Sunday 9 March – The First Sunday of Lent

- 9.00am **Divine Worship**
Leader: David Chegwiddden and Preacher: Rev'd Tom Stuart
Opening Praise with Kathy
Deuteronomy 26:1-11; Psalm 91:1-2, 9-16; Romans 10:8b-13; Luke 4:1-13

Tuesday 11 March

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

Wednesday 12 March

- 10.00am Ladies Fellowship at Charlestown

Thursday 13 March

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

Friday 14 March

- 6.00pm Ladies Night at Kahibah

Sunday 16 March – The Second Sunday of Lent

- 9.00am **The Holy Communion**
Leader and Preacher: Rev'd Tom Stuart
Genesis 15:1-12, 17-18; Psalm 27; Philipians 3:17 - 4:1; Luke 13:31-35 or Luke 9:28-36 (37-43a)

Monday 17 March

- 10.00am Garden Suburb Nursing Home Pastoral Care Visitation

Tuesday 18 March

- 9.00am Needlework n Natter
- 10.00am Morning tea in the Community at Lake Macquarie Square

Thursday 20 March

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

LOOKING AHEAD

Saturday 5 April – Family Fun Trivia Night & Auction – CCEA SRE Fundraiser 7.00pm

Saturday 12 April – A Men's Breakfast – Give me the Mountain

THE PRAYER PAGE



Prayer is the Voice of Faith

Pastoral Prayer Points

- * Those who are mourning loved ones
- * Ange
- * Kim
- * Janice and Don Wright
- * Kelly
- * Laraine Chegwiddden
- * Tony Sellen
- * Vivianne
- * Vicki
- * Pam and Ken
- * Lyn Benson
- * Jean
- * Fred Bryant
- * June Locker
- * Ryan Walpole
- * Kathryn Gray
- * Jacqueline Fenwick
- * Isabella
- * Eileen Dunn
- * Pam and Mert
- * Enid Power
- * Max
- * Don Humphries

Maintained by SFED and Enid Power

Congregational Prayer Points

- Church Council
- John Lewis and his work with Wesley Mission in Windale and Hamilton South
- 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

- Margaret Jurd College and Darren Twist
the Principal
- Young people who struggle to participate
in our school system
- World Day of Prayer on 7 March at
Charlestown Church
- Orphanage in Kenya and Wilfreda
- Neos ministry
- Those affected by climate change in
Australia eg floods, droughts and fires
- The situation in Israel and Palestine
- The situation in Ukraine and other trouble
spots



Church Council Communications after March Meeting

- We have a new cleaner (Yay!); Leanne Legg is coming to clean the Charlestown Church premises on Thursdays between 2 and 4pm.
- Rev Tom Stuart and his family are now living in their own home at Garden Suburb. As always, if you need to contact him, he is available by phone (0427 625 502) or email tom@thestuarts.id.au
- The vacant manse at 36 Milson Street, Charlestown is now under a Management Agency Agreement with Shiels Property who are preparing the publicity for the property to be rented out while the way forward is being negotiated.
- The minutes of our meeting on 4th March will read 'We recognise that we can no longer financially sustain two properties and have decided to relinquish the Garden Suburb property'. While we are sad that we have to make this decision, we are also looking ahead to focusing on our mission using the Charlestown property as a place of connection to our community. Activities in the short term will continue to be held at Garden Suburb.

Kerrie Dixon (Acting Chair of Church Council)

Holy Week and Easter Services



Palm Sunday 13 April

9am at Charlestown Church

Maundy Thursday 17 April

7.30pm at Garden Suburb Church

Good Friday 18 April

9am at Charlestown Church

Easter Day 20 April

9am at Charlestown Church

GIRLS NIGHT OUT AT GARDEN SUBURB



It is with a sad heart that the Girls Night Out team have decided that our Monday's GNO would be our last night.

We would like to thank all those who have been a part of GNO over the past 17 years, especially Anne & Margaret who had the inspiration & got us started, our various hostesses over those years & our guests. **It has been a wonderful 17 years**, 57 inspirational speakers & many talented musicians who all came together to make GNO at Garden Suburb the amazing night it has become & of course we cannot forget to make special mention of **Valmai Taylor** who delighted us with her floral arrangements every single night.

Thank you one & all it has been an honour to be part of this wonderful women's outreach activity, we have made many new friends & reunited with many friends from the past, we pray that even though we will not be meeting at GNO we can continue on with these friendships.



Spiritual Practice of the Week

Silence: Silence is a regenerative practice of attending and listening to God in quiet, without interruption and noise. Silence provides freedom from speaking as well as from listening to words or music. (Reading is also listening to words.)

Practice: Go into silence, placing yourself in the presence of God with the words "Here I am." • As distractions come to mind, let them go by imagining they are boats floating down a river. Let the current take the distractions away. Don't follow the distractions. Gently return to God repeating "Here I am." Let the current of God's Spirit carry you. • What is this like for you?

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



Charlestown Friendship Circle

Saturday 8 March

Swansea RSL Club for lunch

Meet at 12noon

All Welcome



Charlestown Ladies Fellowship

Wednesday 12th March

**Will be held at Charlestown Church
from 10.00am**

**Come have a cuppa and join in
Fellowship with stories and a laugh**

ALL WELCOME

PAINTING THE STARS

Science, Religion and an Evolving Faith

Join us for Painting the Stars, a seven-part DVD series that celebrates the communion of science and faith through the lens of evolutionary Christian spirituality.

Each session features insights from leading theologians and progressive thinkers, followed by a guided group discussion.

More Information

Di. 0402 107 772
Charmaine. 0414 386 145

**Commencing
Tuesday 11/03
from 7pm**

Session 1: 11/03 | Session 2: 25/03
Session 3: 08/04
Holiday Break
Session 4: 06/05 | Session 5: 20/05
Session 6: 03/06 | Session 7: 17/06

EFTPOS
available

€30 for all 7 sessions

\$5
per session

The Bridge
MIND BODY SPIRIT



Hamilton
Uniting Church

FAMILY FUN TRIVIA NIGHT & AUCTION CCEA SRE FUNDRAISER

LET THE
GAMES
BEGIN!



BYO Snacks
(Nut free zone),
Drinks, Tea & coffee
for Sale

SATURDAY 5TH APRIL 2025

7PM AT

HUNTER CHRISTIAN CHURCH

20A HILLSCREST PRD, HIGHFIELDS

TABLES OF 8 OR INDIVIDUAL TICKETS AVAILABLE
(\$20 PERSON - UNDER 16 FREE)

Enquiries & booking
Contact Hunter Christian Church
02 4942 1351
info@hcc.org.au

Come and take part in a
silent auction to raise money
for SRE at
Whitebridge High

Cultural Training workshop with Kentan Proctor and Carol Proctor at **Bahtabah LALC**

- Tuesday **8 April**
- **9:15** for 9:30 start (till 12:30ish)
- **126 Lakeview Parade, Blacksmiths**

(use this address when navigating there NOT the official Pacific Hwy address)

Objective: Understanding we are always on Aboriginal Country by seeing our landscape from a different perspective. Learning how to integrate an indigenous lens into our lives and work.

Topic: Awabakal Dreaming, place names in Language, Caring for Country, bush tucker – tailored to who's in the room on the day.

Accessible for wheelchairs.

\$45

BSB 650 000

Acc 5211 14601

Acc name: GCSNG

Ref: Your name



Limited spots.

Contact Natalia Soeters if you plan on attending – Natalia's number - 0434 826 793



Plant Propagation Workshop

March 22nd 2pm to 4pm

Glenrock Anglican Hall Kahibah

Tickets: \$10 via Humanitix



Special rates available
greatercharlestownsng@gmail.com

Ecological Grief Retreat

"Allowing nature to nurture in the midst
of a changing climate"

Recognise transformative nature of grief
to move you into a place
of hope and action within the reality of
climate despair



Facilitated by
Mandy Cox

@

St Joseph's
Spirituality and
Education
Centre



Kincumber In-house Retreat

\$550

What to Expect

- Opportunities to reconnect with nature; reflect, listen and come together as a community to express the impacts that our changing climate is having on us

Retreat package includes

- Facilitation
- Accommodation
- Catering

For Bookings and more information visit:

<https://www.stjosephskincumber.org.au/whats-on/retreats/>

22 - 23
March, 2025



Fresh Expressions – Part 2 (see last week's Contact for Part 1)

Examples of Fresh Expressions?

It is usually small and simple and might have other names like micro-church, faith community, dinner church, Forrest church - there is so much variety. A Fresh Expression is different to a missional initiative. A missional initiative might not necessary be an intentional community - it may be a café for instance or a community garden. A Fresh Expression will always be intentional about moving people towards discipleship and faith and forming an intentional community.

This happens through careful listening to the neighbourhood as well as building solid relationships - **this could take years.**

New Three Step Pathway

We have a vision to see Fresh Expressions thrive in our Synod. This means they need to be free to start up, be supported, encouraged and financed by our structures and institution. We have a new three-step pathway!

EXPLORE

To know more about Fresh Expressions, come to our EXPLORE gathering that is held online twice a year. We encourage everyone to join and learn more about Fresh Expressions and hear stories of starting new initiative from those leading the gathering. The next Explore online session coming up on 6 November with Carolyn Meers – registration details can be found [here](#).

FORM

This is our training program for Fresh Expression leaders. There will be an apprenticeship/coaching model involving some teaching to help form leaders who want to lead Fresh Expressions communities. This is an evolving space so keep watching!

CONNECT

This involves a few things.

[Website](#) - A webpage focused on Fresh Expressions is currently in progress which will provide resources and connect you with the right people to help you start something new or get the information you need.

Connect groups- These groups are self-initiated and designed to support Fresh Expression practitioners. A list of them is available on our webpage. Connect groups come together to offer mutual support and encouragement through prayer, learning, or sharing the challenges and joys of mission. Group sizes can range from as few as 3 people to as many as 12.

Authentication- what does it take for a Fresh Expression to be seen and authenticated as a “church” in its own right? How do we “ordain” Fresh Expression leaders? How can we support presbyteries to support Fresh Expressions? How do we encourage traditional churches to plant Fresh Expressions? How do we grow Fresh Expression leaders? These are questions that need deep thinking and planning. We are wrestling with these questions currently and would love to hear from you if you have some ideas.

Currently, our Fresh Expressions steering team includes Andrew Smith, Christine Palmer, Leigh Gardiner, Will Small, and Rod Pattenden. They’re available for a coffee and chat if you’d like to discuss anything related to Fresh Expressions. We’d love to hear your thoughts!

Our vision is to see Fresh Expressions grow as a thriving movement within our Synod. We aim to support and nurture this community, knowing it’s challenging to embark on this journey alone. If you’re passionate about starting something new or want to be part of this evolving community, we invite you to join us. We’d love to have you on this journey!

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>