



# CONTACT



Charlestown & Garden Suburb Uniting  
Church Multi-Centre Congregation

**7 June 2026**

## **From Rev Tom**

At the end of May you received a report outlining developments in the life of the congregation, progress regarding our church property, the employment of a communications coordinator, financial matters, and some indications of what may lie ahead. At our Church Council meeting yesterday, we took another significant step, and we wanted to share it with you as soon as possible.

Before I continue, I should say that what follows is not set in stone. As we continue to listen to one another as a congregation, our direction may need to change. As we share our ideas with the wider church, we may also be asked to rethink or reshape aspects of what we are proposing. That is simply the reality of where we find ourselves at present. Nevertheless, Church Council believes it is important that we journey together which means we keep you, the congregation, informed along the way.

The full story will take more than one of my Contact messages to tell, but let us begin.

First, we now have access to significant income generated through the investment of the proceeds from the sale of the Whitebridge and Garden Suburb properties. It is important to understand that we are not proposing to spend the capital received from those sales. Rather, the capital remains invested, and we are seeking to use a portion of the income generated from those investments. To that end, Church Council has approved an application seeking permission to use part of this income to continue developing the Milson St Hub.

The vision is to use our Charlestown property as a place that nurtures community across the greater Charlestown region through hospitality, connection, creativity, justice, and spiritual exploration, while fostering the emergence of a new faith community.

To support this vision, we are proposing the employment of both a community development worker and an ordained person (either a Minister of the Word or Deacon). The community development worker would focus on building relationships, partnerships, participation, and leadership across the Hub community. The ordained person would encourage spiritual exploration, nurture discipleship, help shape an emerging faith community engaged in God's mission, and continue ministry with the existing congregation. Half of this ordained position would be funded by the congregation, with the remaining half funded through the investment income from property sale proceeds.

If the necessary approvals are received, these developments could begin in early 2027.

It is exciting to imagine what may emerge. We may find ourselves participating in the growth of a new community and new expressions of faith and spirituality. Such a future will undoubtedly bring challenges. It will require us to continue providing leadership, wisdom, governance, and support within what could become a very dynamic and changing environment. Yet perhaps this is also an opportunity to experience the breath of new life and a new future growing from the foundations of a rich and faithful past.

# DIARY

## Thursday 4 June

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

## Sunday 7 June – Pentecost 2

9.00am The Divine Worship  
Leader and Preacher: Rev'd Tom  
*Genesis 12:1-9, Hosea 5:15-6:6; Psalm 33:1-12, Psalm 50:7-15; Romans 4:13-25;  
Matthew 9:9-13, 18-26*

## Tuesday 9 June

10.00am Morning tea in the Community at Lake Macquarie Square

## Wednesday 10 June

10.00am Ladies Fellowship at the Hub  
**Office will be closed**

## Thursday 11 June

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

## Friday 12 June

6.00pm Ladies Night at Kahibah

## Sunday 14 June – Pentecost 3

9.00am The Divine Worship  
Leader: David Chegidden and Preacher: Rev'd Tom  
*Genesis 18:1-15, (21:1-7) Exodus 19:2-8a; Psalm 116:1-2, 12-19, Psalm 100; Romans  
5:1-8; Matthew 9:35-10:8 (9-23)*

## Tuesday 16 June

10.00am Morning tea in the Community at Lake Macquarie Square

## Thursday 18 June

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

## Saturday 20 June

**8.00am Men's Breakfast – see more further in Contact**  
**12.00pm Friendship Circle meeting at Lake Cinema (see further in Contact for more details)**

## Sunday 21 June – Pentecost 4

9.00am The Divine Worship  
Leader and Preacher: Rev'd Tom  
*Genesis 21:8-21; Psalm 86: 1-10,16-17; Romans 6:1b-11; Matthew 10:24-39*

## Tuesday 23 June

10.00am Morning tea in the Community at Lake Macquarie Square  
**12.00pm Ladies Fellowship Wests Cardiff**

## 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

# THE PRAYER PAGE



## Prayer is the Voice of Faith

### Pastoral Prayer Points

- \* 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 in rehab at HVPH
- \* 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
- Life and Witness consultation on 21<sup>st</sup> June
- the role of Piteeri, our new Communications Coordinator for the Milson St. Hub.
- Major upgrades to the Project Reconnect website
- Worship Services
- Cathy Beeton and SRE classes
- Worship Committee

### Wider Community Prayer Points

- H.C.A. Loneliness and Isolation Symposium in May – Milson St. Hub Ministry
- Charlestown Uniting Church
- 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



## Life & Witness Consultation Questionnaires

Please collect a questionnaire **from the foyer at Charlestown as soon as possible.**

Please read it, complete the questions and return it by **Sunday 7 June.**

*The consultation team from Presbytery will attend worship on 21 June and meet with the congregation over morning tea.*

## SPIRITUAL PRACTICE OF THE WEEK

**Slowing:** Slowing is one way to overcome inner hurriedness and addiction to busyness. Through slowing, the sacrament of the present moment is tasted to the full.

**Practice:** People who are rushed often feel anxious about their lives. So when you wake up, before your head leaves the pillow, offer God three central concerns of the day. Ask him to care for these things as you go about your daily tasks. • When your worries creep in, return to the moment when you handed God your concerns.

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



**MEN'S BREAKFAST**  
**SAT. 20TH JUNE 8AM**

Charlestown Uniting Church  
24 Milson St.

**\$12 RSVP by 17/6**  
Paul  
pmraus74@gmail.com  
**0411 236 047**  
Please advise of special dietary requirements

**REST ASSURED – PREPARING FOR THE INEVITABLE**

Guest Speaker: **Ruth Boydell**, an end-of-life doula who had a life-changing 'near miss' that prompted her to explore death & dying. Ruth will share about support for nearing end of life & practical planning

- Wills
- Power of Attorney
- Guardianship
- Advance Care Directives
- Supporting families emotionally, practically, & ritually
- Hosting a local Death Café with the Threshold Choir



## Friendship Circle

Will meet on 20th June (note change of date) and will go to Lake Cinema at 12 noon.

The film is The Devil Wears Prada 2.

All Welcome

### PLEASE NOTE

The Office will be closed on Wednesday 10<sup>th</sup> June – Jenny is away!

Save The Date

**18<sup>th</sup> July, 10.30 am – 2.30pm**

TORONTO U.C. 18<sup>TH</sup> JULY, 10.30AM-2.30 PM

**PRESBYTERY WALKING TOGETHER EVENT**

LED BY MIKENZIE LING.

TORONTO U.C. 18<sup>TH</sup> JULY, 10.30AM-2.30 PM



## Ladies FELLOWSHIP

Wednesday 10 June

Will be held at Milson Street Hub from 10.00am

You are welcome to come and join us for morning tea and a chat

**ALL WELCOME**

## June: Becoming

Following Pentecost, the liturgical calendar moves us into Ordinary Time: an ordered sequence of weeks between the major feast days of the Christian year which give Christian communities the opportunity to reflect on the ongoing work of the Holy Spirit, to embody the mission of Jesus, and to grow in our discipleship.

### 7 June – Pentecost 2

**Genesis 12:1-9, Psalm 33:1-12, Romans 4:13-25, Matthew 9:9-13, 18-26**

Ordinary Time explores our Spirit-led call into God's future.

Genesis frames this as a summons into holy unsettlement in which Abram leaves behind land, kinship structures, and inherited security for an as-yet-unseen promise from God. Paul insists that this promise is not a prize for the deserving, but a grace that creates a people sustained by God's faithful presence.

Thus, Jesus' embodies God's desire for mercy over sacrifice in 1) his table fellowship with tax collectors and "sinners" and 2) healings that cross boundaries of status, gendered vulnerability, and ritual expectation.

A liberation lens points to God's promises as public, and to blessing as the disruptive vocation of challenging systems that determine who is "clean", credible, or welcome at the table. Discipleship requires movement from certainty, status, and gatekeeping to practices of mercy in Yahweh's strange economy of grace where Jesus' touch undoes deathly social scripts and restores dignity to bodies long written off.

### 14 June – Pentecost 3

**Genesis 18:1-15, (21:1-7); Psalm 116:1-2, 12-19; Romans 5:1-8; Matthew 9:35-10:8, (9-23)**

Hospitality becomes holy work as Abraham and Sarah offer welcome to weary strangers through concrete gifts of water, bread, shade, and attentive presence. Yet, the good news of God's promise is hard for Sarah to hear in the reality of her "written off" body; her laughter holds together desire, disappointment, and the vulnerability of long waiting for unanswered prayers.

Meanwhile, Paul proclaims a peace grounded in Christ's love for us "while we were still weak," the Psalmist pours out his gratitude to Yahweh who has "rescued me from death, my eyes from tears, and my feet from stumbling," and Jesus is so moved with compassion for the "harassed and dejected" crowds that he sends his disciples out to visit, listen, proclaim good news, and heal while making themselves dependent on the welcome of community for food and shelter.

God meets people at the margins of possibility – barrenness, weakness, hopelessness- to form mission-shaped communities through shared tables, peace, risk, and even the laughter that is part-hope and part-despair.

### 21 June – Pentecost 4

**Genesis 21:8-21; Psalm 86: 1-10, 16-17; Romans 6:1b-11; Matthew 10:24-39**

In texts that refuse easy reading, Hagar and Ishmael are expelled into the wilderness by household rivalry and power, confronting how enslaved peoples and their children are used and discarded within patriarchal culture.

The Psalm's plea for pity holds space for honest prayer when survival is uncertain.

Paul's baptismal imagination names a break with the death-dealing systems that have enslaved us: as we are joined to Christ's death, we are raised to a new allegiance which puts an end to the ruling powers of our own lives.

Jesus prepares his disciples for the resistance that they will encounter in responding to his "take up the cross" call – both externally against their solidarity with the marginalised, and, internally, as temptation to flee the consequences of costly truth-telling.

This is the long obedience of liberation in which we learn to see the God who sees, choose solidarity over self-protection, and trust that new life is found where the world says, "There is no water."

28 June – Pentecost 5

**Genesis 22:1-14; Psalm 13; Romans 6:12-23; Matthew 10:40-42**

One of Scripture's most disturbing narratives (the binding and near sacrifice of Isaac) meets lament amid anxious waiting, a baptismal exhortation to resist sin's dominion, and Jesus' teaching on receiving "little ones." Together, they ask what kind of God we proclaim, what kind of obedience we commend, and what kind of community discipleship produces.

Genesis 22 has multiple interpretations but must not be domesticated into an endorsement of unquestioning obedience. The story itself turns on the angel's "*Do not lay your hand on the boy*"

and the provision of an alternative. Any reading that sanctifies intended harm endangers the vulnerable, especially those already subject to coercive religious, domestic, or institutional power.

Discipleship here is about discernment: recognising voices that sound "religious" but produce death, and choosing, instead, practices that protect life. We should name safeguarding as gospel work, honour the "how long" protest of our hearts as prayer, and measure worship by its mercy. Matthew's "cold water" image invites small, consistent acts as resistance to cultures of harm.

***These Lectionary Reflections were prepared by Rev. Yvonne Ghavalas***

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

#### **Minister**

Rev Tom Stuart

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#### **Children & Families Resource Worker:**

Mrs Cathy Beeton

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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:**

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24 Milson St, Charlestown NSW 2290

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#### **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>