



CONTACT

Charlestown & Garden Suburb Uniting
Church Multi-Centre Congregation



7 September 2025

From Rev Tom

The Jewish people's long history of displacement and exile gave birth to a powerful command: "love the stranger, for you were strangers in the land of Egypt." Having once been refugees themselves, they were called to remember their vulnerability and to respond with compassion. Jesus drew deeply from this well of wisdom, yet he also widened its scope. He called his followers not only to love the neighbour, but even the enemy. In the parable of the Good Samaritan, the one considered an outsider becomes the model of mercy. Jesus shows us that true love reaches across boundaries of ethnicity, religion, and fear.

How necessary this vision is in our time. For many years, refugees and asylum seekers in Australia have too often been described as threats or reduced to faceless numbers. Slogans such as "stop the boats" have shaped a story of suspicion and fear. Last weekend's immigration protests, fuelled by this rhetoric, revealed the bitter fruit of such stories - fostering fear, dividing communities, and giving rise to hate groups. These narratives do not enlarge our hearts- they shrink them.

And yet, we have also seen other stories told. After the Second World War, thousands of displaced Europeans were welcomed here. In the 1970s, Vietnamese families who arrived by boat were received with fairness and humanity. These moments of grace have enriched us as a people, shaping the vibrant, diverse society we now share. Even today, when leaders speak of migrants as "real people, real families" and acknowledge their contribution, we glimpse how compassion can take root when the story changes.

Jesus knew that the stories we tell and live by shape the soul. If we tell stories of fear, we build walls around our hearts. But when we tell stories of welcome, we begin to live into God's own hospitality. His call to love the neighbour and even the enemy is not an impossible ideal - it is an invitation to discover that our flourishing is bound together. To follow him is to live a larger story, one that honours the stranger as gift, and recognises Christ himself in their midst.



DIARY

Friday 5 September

7.00pm An Induction Service for Rev. Dale Yardy at Warners Bay Uniting Church
RSVP required (see notice further in Contact)

Saturday 6 September

10am-1pm **Faith Formation with Young People** at Warners Bay Uniting Church (see more details further in Contact)

Sunday 7 September – Pentecost 13

9.00am The Divine Worship
Leader and Preacher: Rev'd Tom Stuart
Jeremiah 18:1-11; Psalm 139:1-6, 13-18; Philemon 1-21; Luke 14:25-33;

Tuesday 9 September

10.00am Morning tea in the Community at Lake Macquarie Square

Wednesday 10 September

10.00am **Ladies Fellowship at Charlestown**
10.00am Wednesday Reflective Services at Adamstown Uniting Church

Thursday 11 September

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 Garden Suburb Bible Study

Friday 12 September

6.00pm **Ladies Night at Kahibah**

Saturday 13 September

12.00pm Friendship Circle to meet at Heritage Gardens Café, Ashtonfield for lunch (see notice further in Contact)

Sunday 14 September – Pentecost 14

9.00am The Divine Worship
Leader: Kathy Stuart and Preacher: Rev'd Tom Stuart
Jeremiah 4:11-12, 22-28; Psalm 14; 1 Timothy 1:12-17; Luke 15:1-10

Monday 15 September

10.00am **Garden Suburb Aged Care Pastoral visitation.**

Tuesday 16 September

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

Wednesday 17 September

10.00am Wednesday Reflective Services at Adamstown Uniting Church

Thursday 18 September

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



THE PRAYER PAGE



Prayer is the Voice of Faith

Pastoral Prayer Points

- * Those who are mourning loved ones
- * Mike Smith – cancer diagnosis
- * Lorraine Pepper in hospital on oxygen
- * Glen and Marion
- * Valmai
- * The family of Bev Guest
- * Graeme and Beryl
- * Mike Warren
- * Kim
- * Janice and Don Wright
- * Kelly
- * Laraine Chegwiddden
- * Tony Sellen
- * 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

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
- Tom and Kathy
- Worship Committee

Wider Community Prayer Points

- Margaret Jurd College and Darren Twist
the Principal
- Young people who struggle to participate
in our school system
- 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



Children & Family Worker Update



HAPPY FATHERS DAY to all our Dads, Granddads & Great Granddads, wishing you a relaxing day filled with all the things you love.

Don't forget to tell your family & friends about our **Family Games Night** next Saturday night, see flyer in Contact.

Everyone is welcome young & old, if you love card games or board games come along & join in the fun.

Wishing everyone a wonderful week.

Cathy





Uniting Church in Australia
The Hunter Presbytery
invite all members of congregations to a

PRESBYTERY GATHERING

THURSDAY 23rd October 2025

hosted by

Morpeth Uniting Church
98 High Street, Morpeth NSW 2321
10 am Morning Tea (provided)
10.30am Programme begins
An opportunity to meet Rob Floyd



National Director, Frontier Services
who will be the Guest Speaker
(Offering towards MUNCH (Food program of
Maitland Uniting Churches) and Frontier
Services)

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

with support of UCAF NSW/ACT Synod Committee



Charlestown Ladies Fellowship

Wednesday 10th September

Will be held at Charlestown Church from 10.00am

Come and join in Fellowship
with a cuppa, stories and a laugh

ALL ARE VERY WELCOME



Spiritual Practice of the Week

Forgiveness: To forgive is to condemn a wrong, spare the wrongdoer hatred, revenge and self-righteous indignation by joining them to Jesus's own forgiving heart.

Practice: In your imagination sit at the foot of the cross as Jesus is dying. Watch him holding the abuse, rage and sin of the whole world. Watch how he does not turn it back on those who deserve it. What does this mean to you in your relationships?

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



HUNTER ELECTORATE VIGIL

September 23rd 2025

Event by Toronto Uniting Church and Cessnock Bellbird Uniting Church

**At 3 Edward St, Cessnock NSW 2325, Australia (office of Dan Repacholi, MP),
2pm – 2.30pm**

This vigil is part of [#EndTheWaiting](#), a national campaign led by the Australian Churches Refugee Taskforce. Together, we are calling on the government to act now and grant permanent protection to refugees who have been trapped in limbo for over a decade.

Thousands of lives hang in the balance. Every day in limbo strips people of hope, dignity, and a future. No new laws are needed—just the political will to act. It's a choice between justice and delay.

As churches across Australia, we say: A fair go should be for all. "I was a stranger, and you welcomed me." (Matthew 25:35) These words must shape our nation's policies.

We are calling for:

- * A pathway to permanency for all asylum seekers failed by Australia's broken system, including those processed under Fast Track.
- * Work rights for all asylum seekers while their claims are processed.
- * One visa that lasts until a claim is resolved—ending the endless cycle of short-term renewals.

This is a peaceful, public vigil. People of all faiths (and none) are welcome. Let's gather together, raise our voices, and call for a permanent future for all.

Let us know you are coming by registering <https://www.trybooking.com/DESWY> or contact Rev Allison allisonf@nswact.uca.org.au or 0472 618 784

Charlestown Friendship Circle



Saturday 13 September

Meet at the Heritage Gardens Café at
Ashtonfield for lunch

Contact Sue Warren on 0427 737 793 if you would like
to come along and if you require transport

All Welcome

You're invited to a

QUIET MORNING:

An Introduction to Contemplation

Saturday 27 September 2025
9:30am – 12:30pm

Milson Street Hub (Charlestown Uniting Church)
24 Milson St, Charlestown

*Step away from life's busyness into stillness, reflection, and deep listening.
All are welcome, come as you are.*

Light refreshments will be available. \$10 optional donation. Register with
Anne Threlfo, annethrelfo@gmail.com



The Church Office will be closed on
Wednesday 17 September
as Jenny is on Annual Leave.



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>