



# CONTACT

Charlestown & Garden Suburb Uniting  
Church Multi-Centre Congregation

21 May 2023



## From Rev Tom

I wrote in Googlesearch, "How many times does the Bible say, 'Do not be afraid'?" The first link that came up said this: *It comes at us 365 times. God really, really wants us to be at peace.* Many people probably think the most common phrase in the Bible has something to do with "don't" or "thou shalt not" or maybe "love one another." The most repeated advice throughout the Old and the New Testaments is, "**Do not be afraid!**" You might already be familiar with a few Scripture verses where this loving exhortation is made: When the angel Gabriel appeared to Mary, for example, announcing that she would be the Mother of Our Saviour. Or when Joseph heard these words upon learning that he was to be the earthly father of Jesus: "Joseph, son of David, **do not be afraid** to take Mary as your wife, for the child conceived in her is from the Holy Spirit." (Matthew 1:20)

When Zechariah was told that his wife would conceive a child in her old age, "*he was terrified; and fear overwhelmed him.* / But the angel said to him, "**Do not be afraid**, Zechariah, for your prayer has been heard. Your wife Elizabeth will bear you a son, and you will name him John." (Luke 1:12-13)

There are many, many times beyond these Christmas verses when the Bible encourages us to not be afraid. At the Transfiguration of Jesus, the disciples fell to the ground and were **overcome by fear.** / But Jesus came and touched them, saying, "Get up and **do not be afraid.**" (Matthew 17:6-7)  
All together some form of **Do not be afraid** is repeated 365 times throughout Scripture!

Not bad! A "do not be afraid" for every day of the year!

I now make it a practice. When I feel some sort of fear or anxiety well up within me I deliberately recall the words, as if from the mouth of Jesus, "Do not be afraid!" The value of remembering those words is that in so many places in the Bible, not only is this an instruction, but we are given the reason why we need not fear. All the reasons given amount to the fact that there is nothing that can snatch us away from the love of God. So, in those moments of panic, fear, and anxiety, I slow down my breath, I represent to myself the very presence of Christ within, and I hear the words spoken to me again, "Do not be afraid"!



# DIARY

## **Thursday 18 May**

9.30am-2pm Presbytery Gathering at Morisset Uniting Church

10.00am Morning tea in the Community – Smelly Cheesecake Café at Charlestown Square

1.30-2.30pm Bible Study at Garden Suburb

## **Sunday 21 May – Easter 7**

9.00am Holy Communion Service – Leader & Preacher Rev Tom Stuart

*Acts 1:6-14; Psalm 68:1-10, 32-35; 1 Peter 4:12-14, 5:6-11; John 17:1-11*

## **Tuesday 23 May**

10.00am Morning tea in the Community – Frankie & Co Café at Lake Macquarie

12.00pm Ladies Fellowship at Garden Suburb

## **Thursday 25 May**

10.00am Morning tea in the Community – Smelly Cheesecake Café at Charlestown Square

1.30-2.30pm Bible Study at Garden Suburb

## **Sunday 28 May – Pentecost**

9.00am Worship Service – Leader Sue Warren, Preacher – SFED group

*Numbers 11:24-30; Psalm 104:24-34, 35b; Acts 2:1-21; John 7:37-39*

## **Tuesday 30 May**

10.00am Morning tea in the Community – Frankie & Co Café at Lake Macquarie

12.00pm Garden Suburb Ladies Fellowship

## **Thursday 1 June**

10.00am Morning tea in the Community – Smelly Cheesecake Café at Charlestown Square

1.30-2.30pm Bible Study at Garden Suburb

## **Sunday 4 June – Trinity Sunday**

9.00am Worship Service – Leader & Preacher Rev Tom Stuart. Children's Corner with Cathy

*Genesis 1:1-2:4a; Psalm 8; 2 Corinthians 13:11-13; Matthew 28:16-20*

## **Monday 5 June**

10.00am Visitation to Garden Suburb Aged Care Facility

## **Tuesday 6 June**

10.00am Morning tea in the Community – Frankie & Co Café at Lake Macquarie

## **Thursday 8 June**

10.00am Morning tea in the Community – Smelly Cheesecake Café at Charlestown Square

1.30-2.30pm Bible Study at Garden Suburb

11.00am Worship at Garden Suburb Aged Care Facility

Next Sunday, 28 May is  
Pentecost Sunday.  
If you are able, please  
wear something **RED**.



# THE PRAYER PAGE

“The value of persistent prayer is not that God will hear us, but that we will finally hear God.”

*William McGill*



## Pastoral Prayer Points

- \* Dianne Greenwood now live at CA Brown Village
- \* Jacqueline Fenwick and family following Bob's death
- \* Peter Ferguson now home from hospital
- \* Nola
- \* Robyn and Geoff Greaves at Opal Rutherford Park  
Care Community
- \* Isabella continuing with rehab
- \* Ashley in hospital
- \* Janice Wright
- \* Glenda O'Donahue
- \* Linden
- \* Eileen Dunn
- \* Glenn, Donna and girls
- \* Sue and Warren
- \* Cat and Ezra
- \* Enid Gaynor
- \* John Booth and Gloria Booth
- \* Tony and Nan
- \* Mert and Pam
- \* Judith and family
- \* Lorraine Pepper
- \* Ken and Sharon MacDonald
- \* Rhonda White and family (after death of Bert)
- \* Enid Power
- \* Fred Bryant
- \* Max

## Congregational Prayer Points

- Neos and Tom's role week by week
- Project Reconnect
- Worship Services
- Lease of Whitebridge property
- Cathy Beeton and SRE classes
- Worship Committee
- Church Council as they pursue property options

## Wider Community Prayer Points

- The situation in Sudan
- New state elected parliamentarians
- Victims of floods, earthquakes and fires
- The situation in Ukraine and other trouble spots
- Fabian and the orphanage as they experience floods and extra people taking refuge at the orphanage as well as some children hospitalised with pneumonia

Maintained by SFED and Enid Power



**Make a note in your diaries for the next  
Men's Breakfast on Saturday 17 June at  
8am**

Garry Dodd, senior Chaplain for the Mission to Seafarers, Newcastle will be the speaker reflecting on 150 years of Service in Newcastle!!

More details to come.....



LAKE  
MACQUARIE  
CITY

Present

PUCCINI'S MASTERPIECE

# La Boheme

Warners Bay Theatre

JUNE 9, 10, 11, 14, 16, 17

## Starring

Ashlee Woodgate  
Joshua Oxley  
Tessa Hayward  
Adrian LI Donni  
Tristan Entwistle  
Sheridan Oxley  
Galatea Kneath  
Ian Fisher  
James Walker  
Malcolm Young

## Director

Stewart McGowan

## Conductor

Christopher Bearman OAM

## Music Director

Mercia Buck OAM

SUNG IN ENGLISH

Book tickets: [stickytickets.com.au](http://stickytickets.com.au)

## SPIRITUAL EXERCISE – THE MONK’S LADDER

One method of spiritual exercise that has been useful to many is found in the Western Christian mystical tradition. It was first described by Guigo II, Prior of the Carthusian monastery near Grenoble in France, Le Grand Chartreuse. This monk wrote a very brief piece called, “The Ladder of the Monks.” In it he described four steps for deepening the connection to God and self. In Latin the four steps are: *lectio, meditation, oratio, and contemplation*. Translated, they are “reading, meditation, prayer and contemplation.”

Put simply, the first step of the Monk’s Ladder is to select a passage from sacred literature, such as the scriptures, and read it slowly, as if you were biting into an entrée prepared by a fine chef. Then meditate on the passage as if you were slowly chewing the bite you had taken while beginning to appreciate the variety of tastes and their complexity. Next pray in reaction to the tastes and their complexity – perhaps a sigh of “Ahhhh!” Finally contemplate the experience by simply “savouring” the dish you are experiencing, without words.

You can apply the Monk’s Ladder technique to yourself by approaching your own life’s questions as sacred text. For example, you may find yourself asking any of the following:

**How am I to read the signs of the times as I age, and what am I to do in the face of them?**

**What is to become of me now that my physical health is changing?**

**What am I to do and what will I be now that my career is ending and familiar roles will no longer be available to me?**

**What am I to do with the suffering I experience at the loss of family, friends and peers?**

As you move through the questions arising in your life, the Monk’s Ladder technique encourages you to not just react to what you experience. You will be led to respond with deeper appreciation of the spiritual opportunities that are in store for you. Here’s what you can expect when you apply the Monk’s Ladder to your questions as they arise:

- You will listen more closely to what is really happening. You will slowly begin to hear that to which you are listening, in more attuned ways, without missing the subtleties and details.
- You will be invited to respond to your experience in a deeper way, reacting neither to our anxieties and fears, nor to your wishes and yearning for quick and easy answers.
- Finally, you will become more peaceful and content to rest in the moment, savouring the spiritual flavor of your experience.

Those more attuned and practiced in Eastern approaches to spiritual exercise will notice similarities to “mindfulness” practice. Both result in a deeper appreciation of what is happening in the moment, as you try to make sense of it and find the meaning for which you hunger in the midst of life’s perplexing and challenging questions.



**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

**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>

**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