



CONTACT



Charlestown & Garden Suburb Uniting
Church Multi-Centre Congregation

27 September 2026

From Rev Tom

I find myself wondering about the future. There is plenty to worry about. Climate change continues to unfold. Artificial intelligence is developing at extraordinary speed, accompanied by warnings about where it might lead. Around the world our politics seems increasingly divided and angry. Faced with problems that require cooperation, we often seem to retreat instead into self-interest, tribalism and blame. Sometimes I wonder whether the social order we have taken for granted is more fragile than we imagine.

Of course, people have wondered such things before. Recently I have been reading Paul's letters again and wondering what it must have felt like to live in his world. The Roman Empire appeared immensely powerful, but it was also violent, unequal and politically unstable. Paul and those first small Christian communities had virtually no capacity to change the direction of the Empire. Yet somehow Paul found hope.

Part of that hope was undoubtedly his expectation that Christ would return. Two thousand years later, we cannot quite inhabit that expectation as Paul apparently did. But perhaps there is something deeper in Paul's hope. In Romans 8 Paul doesn't pretend everything is all right. Quite the opposite. He describes the whole creation as "groaning". We ourselves groan. We don't even know how to pray as we ought. And then comes an extraordinary sentence: "For in hope we were saved. Now hope that is seen is not hope." Paul doesn't know how things are going to turn out. Perhaps Christian hope is not the belief that everything will turn out the way we want. Perhaps it is not optimism at all. It is discovering how to live when the outcome is unknown.

Paul's response was to create communities that attempted to live differently: communities in which the usual divisions of race, status and gender were overcome; where people carried one another's burdens; where the strong cared for the weak; where enemies were not repaid with hatred. They could not control the Roman Empire. But they could decide what kind of people they would become within it.

Perhaps that is our task as well. We don't know what the world will look like in twenty, fifty or a hundred years. There are good reasons for concern. But Christian hope does not require us to know the outcome. It asks something much more immediate: In the world as it actually is, what kind of people shall we become?



DIARY

Thursday 24 September

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

Sunday 27 September – Pentecost 18 – Migrant and Refugee Sunday

9.00am The Divine Worship
Leader: Sue Warren and Preacher: Laraine Chegwiddden
Exodus 17:1-7; Psalm 78:1-4, 12-16; Philippians 2:1-13; Matthew 21:23-32

Tuesday 29 September

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

Thursday 1 October

10.00am Morning tea in the Community – common seated area at Charlestown Square

Sunday 4 October – Pentecost 19

9.00am The Divine Worship
Leader and Preacher: Rev'd Tom Stuart
Exodus 20:1-4, 7-9, 12-20, Isaiah 5:1-7; Psalm 19, Psalm 80:7-15; Philippians 3:4b-14; Matthew 21:33-46
10.45- **A month of Prayer for the Way Ahead** at the Milson St Hub – **more details to**
11.30am **come.**

Monday 5 October

10.00am **Pastoral Care Visit at Garden Suburb Aged Care Facility**

Tuesday 6 October

10.00am **Pastoral Care Visit at Garden Suburb Aged Care Facility**
10.00am Morning tea in the Community at Lake Macquarie Square

Thursday 8 October

10.00am Morning tea in the Community – common seated area at Charlestown Square

Friday 9 October

6.00pm **Ladies Night at Kahibah**

Saturday 10 October

8.00am **Men's Breakfast at the Milson Street Hub** – The Nigerian Church, Persecuted Yet Vibrant – Why? See further in Contact for more information.

Sunday 11 October – Pentecost 20

9.00am The Divine Worship
Leader and Preacher: Grahame Pricter
Exodus 32:1-14; Psalm 106:1-6, 19-23; Philippians 4:1-9; Matthew 22:1-14
10.45- **A month of Prayer for the Way Ahead** at the Milson St Hub – **more details to**
11.30am **come.**

Tuesday 13 October

10.00am Morning tea in the Community at Lake Macquarie Square

Thursday 15 October

10.00am Morning tea in the Community – common seated area at Charlestown Square

THE PRAYER PAGE



Prayer is the Voice of Faith

Pastoral Prayer Points

- * Gloria
- * Anne Hall
- * Jean Witherspoon
- * Pray for Janice Wright and family
- * Robyn Greaves and family
- * Marion Box
- * Prayers for Grahame Beeton and family
- * Mert and Pam
- * Jacqueline Fenwick
- * Rene Kelly
- * Glen and Marion
- * Valmai
- * Kelly
- * Tony Sellen
- * Vicki
- * Pam and Ken
- * Lyn Benson
- * Jean
- * Isabella
- * Eileen Dunn
- * Max
- * Don Humphries

Maintained by SFED

Congregational Prayer Points

- Month of October, Prayer for the Way Ahead 10:45 am each Sunday
- NREMA application
- Major upgrades to the Project Reconnect website
- Worship Services
- Cathy Beeton and SRE classes
- Church profile and preparations for Tom's retirement
- Worship Committee

Wider Community Prayer Points

- Northern Presbytery, Millers Forest, Morisset and Muswellbrook congregations
- pray for Catherine Pepper who has recently been appointed Associate General Secretary, Strategy and Governance for the Assembly of the UCA. Pray that she may receive wisdom and grace as she fulfills her role which is involved with preparing the church for the future in the areas of strategy and governance.
- 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 world

Church Council Elections

Several of our councillors are coming to the end of their term – Lesley Clulow (Treasurer), Kerrie Dixon, Lorraine Pepper and Margaret White.



We have vacancies in the areas of SFED, Passionate Worship, Risk Taking Mission and Service, Radical Hospitality, Church Council Chair and Treasurer.

Please prayerfully consider if you could serve in this way, or if there is someone in the Congregation you would like to encourage to be nominated for these roles.

A member of Church Council will be able to provide a form if you would like to nominate someone and they agree to be nominated.

The election will take place after worship on 18th October.

SPIRITUAL PRACTICE OF THE WEEK

Discernment: opens us up to listen to and recognize the voice and patterns of God's direction in our lives.

Practice: To discern where the Holy Spirit has been recently working in your life, answer the following questions:

- * For what am I longing?
- * What themes keep recurring in my life?
- * Where am I struggling?
- * What is most life-giving to me? What is least life-giving?

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

STAMP COMMITTEE

Thank you!!

Your recent contribution of stamps for sale by the Committee is very much appreciated. Many thanks for your support.

Sales to date for 2026 = \$9,000





CHARLESTOWN & GARDEN SUBURB UNITING CHURCH

A Month of **PRAYER** *for* **THE WAY AHEAD**



DATE:

SUNDAYS IN OCTOBER

4 October – Walking in the neighbourhood or sitting on verandah – prayers for community

11 October – Moving around the building – MSH users, groups, worship, new staffing

18 October – Congregation Meeting – conversational prayer, relationships

25 October – Sitting at new picnic table – mission, car park users



TIME:

10.45AM – 11.30AM



VENUE:

Milson St Hub
24 Milson St, Charlestown

All are welcome!

The way ahead for the Charlestown congregation has many decisions to be made and so we are very intentionally requesting prayer for God's guidance in the days and months ahead.

- In the week commencing October 4 prayer is requested for our mission to the neighbourhood and in the Charlestown community.
- Week 2 will concentrate on the Milson St Hub users and spaces,
- Week 3 on conversational prayer with each other
- Week 4 to pray for users of the car park and surrounds.

In addition to the above, each week we want to uphold our coming needs for Tom's replacement next year, Jenny's replacement, our Community Engagement position and the financing of the above as well as guidance regarding the skills needed in these roles.

Prayer is powerful as we are calling on the Holy Spirit to guide us and strengthen us for the way ahead.

Please plan to join us in this month of prayer.

Church Council

The Nigerian Church, Persecuted Yet Vibrant - Why?

Michael Nwanguma, was born and raised in Nigeria before migrating to Australia in 2012. A Christian, he has lived in several regions of Nigeria, gaining firsthand experience of the country's diverse cultures and Christian traditions.

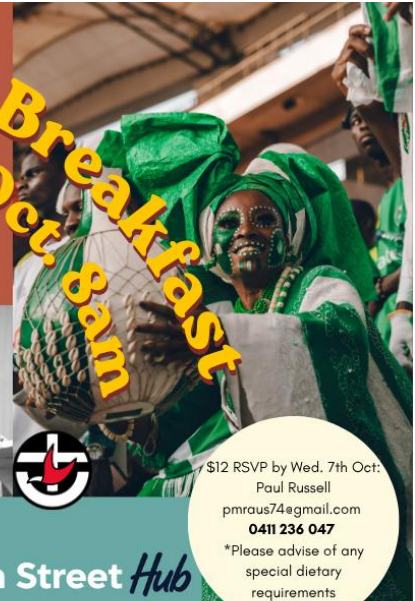
Michael will explore the remarkable growth of Christianity in Nigeria over the past 200 years, how resilient faith continues to shape Nigeria and influence communities around the world.



Men's Breakfast

Sat. 10th Oct. 8am

24 Milson St.
Charlestown



\$12 RSVP by Wed. 7th Oct:
Paul Russell
pmraus74@gmail.com
0411 236 047
*Please advise of any
special dietary
requirements



Milson Street *Hub*

Pride Faith Service

6pm, Sunday 25th October

A celebration and nourishment for one and all.



All sexual and gender identifications
and expressions - allies too.

All faith and spirituality expressions
- we really mean it: **ALL WELCOME!!!**

@ Adamstown Uniting Church

www.adamstownuca.org.au



ADAMSTOWN
UNITING CHURCH

Refugee Sunday – 27 September 2026

The Uniting Church in Australia welcomes the federal government's decision to maintain Australia's Refugee and Humanitarian Program at 20,000 places per year.

Rev Charissa Suli, President of the Uniting Church in Australia was among those who spoke out, adding the Church's voice to the campaign and calling for Australia to remain a place of welcome and compassion for people seeking safety.

Led by the Refugee Council of Australia, the campaign brought together refugee communities, churches, community organisations and advocates across the country to oppose a proposed reduction in Australia's humanitarian intake.

We give thanks to the Refugee Council of Australia for its leadership, and to everyone who raised their voice as part of this collective effort.

Together, our voices can make a difference.

The Uniting Church has a longstanding commitment to standing alongside refugees and people seeking asylum. We will continue to advocate for an Australia that responds to people seeking safety with compassion, dignity, justice and a generous welcome.

MEDITATION/REFLECTION/SHARING

JOHN MAIN 1926-2026

Father John Main inspired the global community of meditation.

John Main wrote **"The task of meditation is to bring all this mobile and distracted mind to stillness and concentration, to bring it, that is, into its proper service."**

Saturday, October 24th 9.30am to 12.30

Location: DoMN LIBRARY

(Corner Tudor and Parry St, Hamilton. **Parking behind Library off Tudor St and Sacred Heart Cathedral Car Park**)

DONATION: \$5.00

Morning Tea Provided at 9.30

RSVP by October 21st

annecuskelly@hotmail.com or 0407436808



Staying safe from scams



**A FREE practical session presented for
older people by the Council on the Ageing
New South Wales. Proudly supported by ANZ.**



Protect
yourself

Tuesday 6 October 2026
11:00am - 12:00pm
Community Hall
The Place Charlestown
Frederick Street
Charlestown NSW 2290

Scams are becoming increasingly sophisticated, and older people are often targeted. Knowing what to look for — and what to do — can make a real difference.

Join Council on the Ageing New South Wales for a free community session in Charlestown on *Staying Safe from Scams*, where we'll share practical tips to help older people recognise scams, protect their information and know where to seek help. Stay and have a cuppa and chat as well.

Event Details:

- Date: Tuesday, 6 October 2026 📅
- Time: 11:00 AM – 12:30 PM (with light refreshments afterwards) ⌚
- Location: Community Hall, The Place: Charlestown Community Centre, Frederick St, Charlestown NSW 2290 📍
- Free event 🆓

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 St, 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>