



CONTACT



Charlestown & Garden Suburb Uniting
Church Multi-Centre Congregation

10 September 2023

From Rev Tom

I have been playing around with ChatGPT over the past couple of weeks. ChatGPT is an AI (artificial intelligence) portal/website. I have asked it lots of questions. As an example, I tried this question, "What was John Wesley's view on the importance of social justice?". Here is what the Artificial Intelligence response gave:

John Wesley, the founder of the Methodist movement in the 18th century, held strong views on the importance of social justice. His theological beliefs and practical teachings emphasized the need for Christians to engage in acts of social compassion and reform. Wesley's views on social justice can be summarized as follows:

1. **Social Holiness:** Wesley believed that true Christian holiness should not be limited to personal piety or individual salvation but should extend to social holiness. He argued that faith should be expressed through love for one's neighbours and active involvement in society to address social issues and alleviate human suffering.
2. **Concern for the Poor:** Wesley had a deep concern for the poor and marginalized in society. He believed that Christians had a moral obligation to care for the less fortunate and to advocate for their well-being. He famously said, "Do all the good you can, by all the means you can, in all the ways you can, in all the places you can, at all the times you can, to all the people you can, as long as ever you can."
3. **Social Reform:** Wesley was an advocate for social reform and justice. He spoke out against various social injustices of his time, including the harsh treatment of factory workers, the unequal distribution of wealth, and the mistreatment of prisoners. He actively campaigned for prison reform and education for the poor.
4. **Opposition to Slavery:** Wesley was a vocal opponent of slavery, and he wrote against the transatlantic slave trade and the institution of slavery itself. He considered slavery to be a moral evil and a violation of Christian principles.
5. **Education and Healthcare:** Wesley supported the establishment of schools and healthcare facilities for the poor. He believed that education and access to healthcare were essential for the well-being and empowerment of individuals and communities.
6. **Class Meetings and Societies:** Wesley's organizational structure for Methodism included class meetings and societies where members could discuss their spiritual lives, support one another, and engage in acts of charity and mercy within their communities.
7. **Preaching on Social Issues:** In his sermons and writings, Wesley addressed a wide range of social issues, including economic inequality, corruption, and the responsibilities of wealth. He challenged his followers to live out their faith in ways that promoted social justice.

Continued over

John Wesley's views on social justice were deeply rooted in his understanding of Christian faith and holiness. He believed that faith should be active and transformative, leading individuals and communities to work for the betterment of society, particularly for the most vulnerable and marginalized members of society. Wesley's emphasis on social justice continues to influence Methodist and other Christian traditions' engagement with social issues to this day.

I can see this could do me out of a job, except it is even more verbose than I am! If you want to try it out go to <https://openai.com/chatgpt>

DIARY

Thursday 7 September

10.00am Morning tea in the Community – common seated area opposite Butcher at Charlestown Square, just west of the Smelly Cheesecake shop.

1.30pm Bible Study at Garden Suburb

Saturday 9 September

10.00am Friendship Circle – Murray's Beach Cafe

Sunday 10 September – Land Sunday

9.00am Worship Service – Leader: Anne Threlfo Preacher: Rev Tom Stuart

Genesis 3: 14-19; 4: 8-16; Psalm 139; 7-12; Romans 5: 12-17; Matthew 12: 38-40

Tuesday 12 September

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

Wednesday 13 September

10.00am Ladies Fellowship – will be at the Charlestown Church

Thursday 14 September

10.00am Morning tea in the Community - common seated area opposite Butcher at Charlestown Sq

11.00am Worship Service at Garden Suburb Aged Care

1.30pm Bible Study at Garden Suburb

Friday 15 September

6.00pm Ladies Night at Kahibah

Sunday 17 September – Outback Sunday

9.00am Holy Communion Worship Service - Leader and Preacher Rev'd. Tom

Joel 1: 8-10, 17-20; Psalm 18: 6-19; Romans 8: 18-27; Matthew 3: 13- 4: 2

Monday 18 September

10.00am Visitation at Garden Suburb Aged Care

Tuesday 19 September

9.00am Needlework n Natter at Garden Suburb

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

Thursday 21 September

10.00am Morning tea in the Community - common seated area opposite Butcher at Charlestown Sq

1.30pm Bible Study at Garden Suburb

Sunday 24 September – River Sunday

9.00am Worship Service – Leader: David Chegidden Preacher: Christine Pepper

Genesis 8: 20-22; 9: 12-17; Psalm 104: 27-33; Revelation 22: 1-5; Matthew 28: 1-10

Tuesday 26 September

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

12.00pm Ladies Fellowship at Garden Suburb

Wednesday 27 September

Kids Club – 'The World Around Us'

Thursday 28 September

10.00am Morning tea in the Community - common seated area opposite Butcher at Charlestown Sq

No Bible Study during the School Holidays

THE PRAYER PAGE



"God speaks in the silence of the heart.
Listening is the beginning of prayer."

Mother Teresa

Pastoral Prayer Points

- * Kerrieann (Tom's sister)
- * Ryan Walpole
- * Kathryn Gray
- * Glenn Pepper and family
- * Sharon MacDonald and family
- * Gloria Booth and family
- * Tony Sellen and family
- * Anne
- * Mac
- * Jacqueline Fenwick
- * Peter Ferguson
- * Nola
- * Isabella
- * Ashley in hospital with pneumonia
- * Janice Wright
- * Glenda O'Donahue
- * Eileen Dunn
- * Mert and Pam
- * Judith and family
- * Lorraine Pepper
- * Enid Power
- * Fred Bryant
- * Max

Maintained by SFED and Enid Power

Congregational Prayer Points

- Tom and Kathy
- Pray for congregational members participating in the spirituality of Age exercises each week
- Project Reconnect
- Worship Services
- Lease of Whitebridge property
- Cathy Beeton and SRE classes
- Worship Committee

Wider Community Prayer Points

- Consequences of climate change around the world
- Preparations for Voice Referendum – truth telling will be an important priority
- The situation in Ukraine and other trouble spots
- Fabian, children and Wilfreda suffering heart failure
- Tom and NEOS as he follows ideas and opportunities including connections with Wesley Mission at Windale

**If you are viewing next week's
Service (10 September) online – it
would be helpful if you have your
Bible with you**



Children & Family Worker Update

Hi Everyone

Our next Holiday Kids Club will be held on the 27th September our theme is 'The World Around Us' weather permitting I hope to be able to go out for a bit of an adventure walk with the children exploring the world around us & collect some items to be part of our craft. We are very lucky to now have

6 young people, who used to be part of our Holiday Kids, volunteering to be junior helpers & this is why I feel we can venture out having these enthusiastic young people wanting to be involved with Holiday Kids. I will be meeting with the junior helpers before the day to go over the plans for the day so they will be prepared.



Holiday Kids Club rego forms will be in the foyer from this weekend.

Sue Walpole is a big part of our Holiday Kids Club, and we will miss you Sue but please know we will be praying for you & your son Ryan as Ryan recovers from his injuries in Royal North Shore Hospital.

Hunter Presbytery has done a 'First Third of Life' survey with the UC churches across the Hunter. Our church was quote *'Based on the figures given, your congregation has been identified as one of 13 congregations within the Presbytery which has numbers of children and young people, and activities of significance and interest.'*

As a result of this I will be having a conversation with a representative from the Presbytery as to what activities we have & how they are run & if & how the Presbytery can be of help. I look forward to this conversation & will update you of any support we may receive.

Cathy

Walking Together Training

Hosted by The Hunter Community Alliance

At Toronto Uniting Church, 118 The Boulevard, Toronto

Thursday 21 September – 5.30pm to 8.45pm

Cost: \$15 including dinner OR FREE

In this half-day workshop, participants gain a deeper understanding of who we are as a nation and how to take meaningful action towards reconciliation. The content covers the importance of a Voice to Parliament, how individuals and organisations can play a role in ensuring it is established, and why reconciliation is an ongoing journey that requires action from us all.

You'll learn about:

- The invitation to all Australians in the Uluru Statement from the Heart
- The importance of Voice, Treaty and Truth
- A Voice to Parliament – to the referendum and beyond
- The concept of 'Makarrata'
- Accepting the invitation in the Uluru Statement with purposeful advocacy that advances reconciliation in Australia

Tickets and more information here:

<https://events.humanitix.com/walking-together-training-hunter-sep-21st-toronto-uniting-church>



Ladies
FELLOWSHIP



Charlestown Ladies Fellowship

Wednesday 13th September

Will be held at the Church from
10.00am

Please bring refreshments and if possible invite a friend for a morning of fun and fellowship

ALL WELCOME

Charlestown Friendship Circle



Saturday 9th September at
Murray's Beach café at 10.00am for morning tea
and a wander around the area

If transport is needed contact
Sue Warren on 0437 737 793

Church Council has received a letter from Presbytery regarding the coming referendum.



Acting on advice from the Uniting Aboriginal and Islander Christian Congress, The Uniting Church's national Assembly has made a decision to support a "yes" vote, and encourages members of the Uniting Church to do the same.

The Hunter Presbytery is writing for two reasons. First, to encourage you to consider this matter seriously and, second, to explain why the Assembly is encouraging you to vote "yes".

The full letter can be read in the attachment included with this week's emailed Contact.

The Church Council at their last meeting were alerted to the increase in logging in areas that are part of upcoming legislation as a national park area. These areas are to be protected to save native species, particularly koalas. Several Uniting Church members are among the activists present in these areas trying to stop further damage. The Church Council is exploring ways to give voice to parliament to act quickly to protect our endangered species. We share this for your prayers.



See here for more information:

<https://www.smh.com.au/environment/conservation/minds-were-blown-these-scientists-were-stunned-at-what-s-happening-on-the-nsw-north-coast-20230831-p5e11w.html>

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

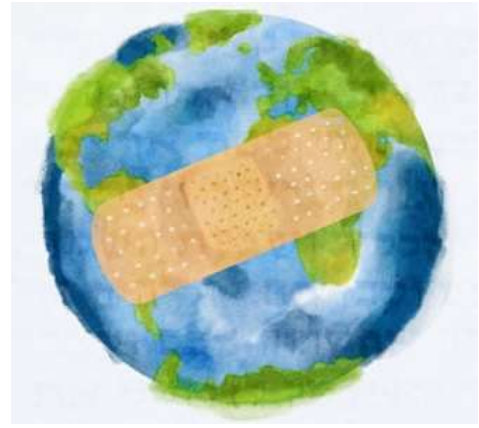
Keep up to date with happenings and info:

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>



To What Are You Called?

Think of someone you've met personally, or in literature or history, who illustrates the notion of tikkun, the Jewish belief that it is the individual's task to retrieve shattered shards of goodness and light and bring their contribution back to help repair the world. What adjectives, qualities and characteristics best describe the essence of the individual you chose as someone who represents tikkun to you? Take a moment to make a list of these descriptors before reading on.

Analysis

The list you came up with says as much about you as it does about the person you selected. The particular words you chose to describe someone who represents tikkun give you a vivid, concrete profile of the aspirations you hold in regard to what you aspire to awaken to. Not every word you put on the list may apply to you, but the list – as a whole – will provide you with interesting insights about yourself and what gives your life meaning and purpose, regardless of the circumstances you may face over the coming years. In fact, when it comes to retrieving shards of light – doing the sacred work of tikkun – it could well be argued that the greater the shadows with which you are confronted as you age, the greater the contribution toward repair of the world you have the potential to make.