



# CONTACT



Charlestown & Garden Suburb Uniting  
Church Multi-Centre Congregation

**5 April 2026**

## **From Rev Tom**

These days, when I write this message, it goes to the church office for Jenny to include in the *Contact* newsletter. It is sent out by email on Wednesday, and some people read it that very day. When I first began ministry with this congregation nearly fifteen years ago, it was different. Jenny would prepare and print it, and it would be handed out on Sunday. Now, only a few people still receive the printed version.

But in this particular week of the year, the days between Wednesday and Sunday make an enormous difference. On Wednesday, we are only at the beginning of the drama - Jesus' betrayal, torture, crucifixion, death, and, ultimately... resurrection. But for those who read this on Sunday - it is all done. We are already standing in the shining glow of the good news: Jesus is risen!

So I am writing this reflection in the middle of the mess, while the drama is still unfolding. The worst - and the best - is yet to come.

It reminds me of something I realised many years ago when reflecting on the other characters in Jesus' story - the disciples. On the day of the resurrection, they were in hiding. Why? Because they were afraid they would be next. And then there is that wonderful moment when Mary goes to the tomb and meets the risen Jesus. But despite this extraordinary encounter, the next moment he is gone again. Mary runs to tell the disciples, but they are so afraid they will not even open the door.

For Jesus' followers, the good news came in the middle of the mess. A bit like me writing this message - I am writing for Easter right in the midst of the storm. We hear and know the good news, but the drama is still unfolding.

And when we look around at the world, we can see that we too are in a mess. Wars, political turmoil, economic uncertainty, and the deep anxiety of nations - it is not just something happening far away anymore. The turmoil of the world has a way of becoming personal for us all.

So arriving at Wednesday of Holy Week, already knowing the joy of Resurrection Sunday while the story of the Passion is still being lived through, is very much like the journey of the disciples - and like our own journey of faith. It seems this is the way it is.

The good news is not, "and they all lived happily ever after." The good news is that hope is found in the middle of the mess. That may not always feel comforting, but it is vital. Because in the middle of it all, we already know the outcome: love wins.

That will be our theme in these coming days. We will walk with Jesus on that ghastly journey and see that the merciless savagery inflicted upon him became the anvil upon which God worked out ultimate salvation. And as we reflect deeply on that, perhaps we will be able to look at our own world and our own lives more clear-eyed, and still say, no matter how dark it becomes: God has not finished yet. Christ is risen. Love has won.

# DIARY

## Thursday 2 April – Maundy Thursday

10.00am Morning tea in the Community – common seated area at Charlestown Square  
1.30-2.30pm **Bible Study at Charlestown Church – ALL WELCOME**

## 7.30pm Maundy Thursday Service

Leader and Preacher: Rev Tom

*Exodus 12:1-4, (5-10), 11-14; Psalm 116:1-2, 12-19; 1 Corinthians 11:23-26;  
John 13:1-17, 31b-35*

## Friday 3 April – Good Friday

9.00am Good Friday Service

Leader and Preacher: Rev Tom

*Isaiah 52:13 – 53:12; Psalm 22; Hebrews 10:16-25 or  
Hebrews 4:14-16; 5:7-9; John 18:1-19:42*



## Sunday 5 April – Easter Day

6.00am Sunrise Service at Redhead Bluff

9.00am The Divine Worship

Leader and Preacher: Rev Tom

*Acts 10:34-43 or Jeremiah 31:1-6; Psalm 118:1-2, 14-24; Colossians 3:1-4 or Acts  
10:34-43; John 20:1-18 or Matthew 28:1-10*

## Monday 6 April

10.00am Pastoral Care Visit to Garden Suburb Aged Care

10.30am Memorial Service for June Locker

## Tuesday 7 April

10.00am Pastoral Care Visit to Garden Suburb Aged Care

10.00am Morning tea in the Community at Lake Macquarie Square

## Wednesday 8 April

10.00am Charlestown Ladies Fellowship at the Church

## Thursday 9 April

10.00am Morning tea in the Community – common seated area at Charlestown Square  
**No Bible Study during the School Holidays – will resume on the 23 April**

10.30am Worship Service at Garden Suburb Aged Care

## Friday 10 April

6.00pm Ladies Night at Kahibah

## Saturday 11 April

11.00am Friendship Circle – Lunch at Charlestown Bowling Club

## Sunday 12 April – Easter 2

The Divine Worship

Leader: Kathy Stuart and Preacher: Rev Tom

*Acts 2:14a, 22-32; Psalm 16; 1 Peter 1:3-9; John 20:19-31*

# THE PRAYER PAGE



## Prayer is the Voice of Faith

### Pastoral Prayer Points

- \* Those who are mourning loved ones
- \* Elaine Ross and Family
- \* Family of June Locker
- \* Pam and Mert (care facility placement being sought)
- \* Robyn and Geoff Greaves (the latter being much improved)
- \* Jacqueline Fenwick in hospital
- \* 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

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### Congregational Prayer Points

- Church Council meeting on Tuesday
- Easter Services
- 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
- Pray for Adamstown 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 world



Milson Street Hub

Families in Charlestown say a big thank you for all the money you generously donated for Easter Eggs!

We had lots of fun & melting eggs in the sun at our first annual Milson St Hub Easter Egg Hunt 😊

Cathy, Tom, Jan, Sue, Kathy & I were in fine form as 28 kids from 6 local schools arrived early & busting to start before 3:15pm!!!!



Some great conversations were had, including between Tom & local dad Eric, about a shared love of motorbikes.

There were also some lovely reconnections.

Great to have Anne Ferguson & her granddaughter Alyvia there.

The carpark engagement plan is working, with the majority of parents hearing about it when they used the carpark (good job Cathy & Tom!).

Cathy also got the word out through scripture classes & there was a group of kids who heard that way.

The kids were so happy & 3 of them didn't want to leave!

One of the parents even made a donation because they felt so grateful.

Look out for the facebook post about it, with more photos on there.

I am starting to form a team from the congregation & community, for these kind of happenings.

Please let me know if you'd like to join - **0493 094 231**

Now for the next Milson St Hub event! Piteeri



## Children & Family Worker Update



Well what a wonderful Easter Egg Hunt on Tuesday afternoon.

Thank you Piteeri for organising this great event, which we hope will be an annual event, as one child said when he left "See you next year", so it seems like the children also hope so.

I have had a great week of Easter SRE Lesson my last lesson at Valentine was a 'QUIZWORX' presentation, so very little work for me which was great. I have added a photo of the presenters, another SRE teacher & myself at the end of the show.



Praying you all a very Happy Easter, may family & friends be with you as you celebrate the Risen Lord in whatever you do.

Cathy



## **Ladies FELLOWSHIP**

**Wednesday 8 April**

**Will be held at Charlestown Church  
from 10.00am**

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

**ALL WELCOME**

## Holy Week and Easter Services



Palm Sunday 29 March – 9.00am

Maundy Thursday 2 April 7.30pm

Good Friday 3 April – 9.00am

Easter Day 5 April – 9.00am

Charlestown Uniting Church

**MEN'S  
BREAKFAST\***

8AM SAT. 18  
APRIL  
\$12  
RSVP: PAUL  
0411 236 047  
PMRAUS74@GMAIL.COM

GUEST SPEAKER  
**STEVE DOOKER** of  
CatholicCare will  
be talking about  
providing support  
when Gambling  
causes harm

24 Milson St.  
(Please advise of special  
dietary needs, by Wed. 15/4)

## SPIRITUAL PRACTICE OF THE WEEK

**Examen:** The Examen is a practice for discerning the voice and activity of God within the flow of the day. It is a vehicle that creates deeper awareness of God-given desires in one's life.

**Practice:** Find a quiet moment to reflect on your day or week. Open your palms and ask the Holy Spirit to show you the moment for which you are least grateful. What made that moment difficult?

- Be with your feelings; don't try to change them or make them acceptable. Offer them up to God. Talk to him about them.
- Where was God in this moment? You may want to thank God that he is always ready to be with you and talk to you.

**FRIENDSHIP CIRCLE**  
**MOTHER'S DAY CELEBRATION 2026.**



**“FEASTING WITH FRIENDSHIP.”**

***An invitation is issued to ALL members of the church to join us for our Annual Mother's Day Outing.***

***The Place*** – The Hunter Wetlands Centre – 1 Wetlands Place, Shortland.

***Date*** - Saturday May 2nd May 2026.

***Time*** –11-15 am for 11-30 am for Morning Tea. An interesting talk will follow. Lunch will be at 12-30pm. To be bought at cafe.

For those interested, there is a guided tour at 10-30am for the energetic. There is an entry fee of \$5 to the Wetlands. Approximate duration of tour is 45 minutes. Please phone Grahame on 0402335410 if interested.

Consider Car Pooling. Meet at the church if you need a lift. Please notify Sue Warren on 0427737793.

Please let your seasonal hosts extraordinaire for the day, Grahame Pricter and Noel Drinkwater know by phoning 0402335410 or 0428431169 to book your “Feasting with Friendship.” RSVP 23rd April 2026.

I/We, Will be//will not be attending the ***“Mother's Day Dinner, “Feasting with Friendship.”*** on Saturday 2nd May 2026.

# FAMILY FUN TRIVIA NIGHT & AUCTION CCEA SRE FUNDRAISER

LET THE  
GAMES  
BEGIN!



BYO Snacks  
(Nut free zone),  
Drinks, Tea & coffee  
for Sale

SATURDAY 2<sup>ND</sup> MAY 7PM AT  
HUNTER CHRISTIAN CHURCH  
20A HILLSCREST PRD, HIGHFIELDS

TABLES OF 8 OR INDIVIDUAL TICKETS AVAILABLE  
(\$20 PERSON - UNDER 16 FREE)

Enquiries & booking  
Contact : Merise Downey  
0413 886 796  
merise\_downey@aapt.net.au

Come and take part in a  
silent auction to raise money  
for SRE at  
Whitebridge High

## DATE FOR THE DIARY

Let's get a CHaGS table together!



## Friendship Circle

All Welcome to join us for Lunch at  
Charlestown Bowling Club at 11.00am on the  
11 April

All Welcome

### News about the change from The Hunter Presbytery to The Northern Presbytery

There are currently 12 Presbyteries in the NSW/ACT Synod of the Uniting Church. A decision was made at the Synod meeting in July 2025 to transition from twelve to three Presbyteries. We are in the 'transition' phase now and your Presbytery leaders are taking part in consultations about a model of Presbytery staffing that is aimed at improving equitable support for congregations across geographic, demographic, cultural and other factors.

#### Important dates are:

**June 30th** The Hunter Presbytery will cease to be a legal and business entity

**July 1st** The Northern Presbytery will come into being as a legal and business entity

**From July 1st** an interim period where committees begin to change and staff are recruited or designated to their roles

**August 25th** The final meeting of The Hunter Presbytery

**August 30th** Services of celebration for the life of the Hunter Presbytery and joyous hope for The Northern Presbytery

**September 1st** 3P Day - The Northern Presbytery begins!

Some are calling it The 'Great' Northern Presbytery!

Jenny Barnes

Chair of The Hunter Presbytery

17/3/26

# Lake Mac Op Shops - Bus Tour!

Wednesday, 22nd April 8.45am - 3.30pm

## \$36 per person includes:

- Visits to 7 different charity op shops
- Morning tea and bistro lunch
- Air-conditioned coach transport
- All are welcome (ladies, men etc)

## Bring:

- Own drinks (for the day)
- Comfortable walking shoes
- A large, soft bag (duffle, striped etc) for your shopping, clearly marked with your name (will be stored in the underneath compartment of coach)

## Tickets:

[www.trybooking.com/DJSJB](http://www.trybooking.com/DJSJB)



Seats are limited



Any profit made on the day will go directly to  
St Luke's Uniting Church mission projects. Enquiries: Alison 0435 653 531

## 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

### Communications Coordinator:

Piteeri Michail  
M: 0493 094 231  
E: [Piteeri.m@outlook.com](mailto:Piteeri.m@outlook.com)

### Administration:

P: 4943 4019  
E: [office@charlestown.unitingchurch.org.au](mailto:office@charlestown.unitingchurch.org.au)  
24 Milson St, Charlestown NSW 2290  
PO Box 449, Charlestown NSW 2290

### 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>