



CONTACT



Charlestown & Garden Suburb Uniting
Church Multi-Centre Congregation

21 April 2024

From Anne Threlfo

We are created to be in relationship. Relationship with God, with other people, with all of creation, and with ourselves. Psychologists, anthropologists, archaeologists, sociologists, and historians could all provide evidence of the human wiring for connection. God's very nature is one of relationship as evidenced in the divine dance of Creator, Redeemer, and Sustainer (or Father, Son, and Holy Spirit in gendered language terms). If we look to Jesus, the one who provides us with the example of how to be human, we see that his ministry flowed from his relationship with God, and was conducted within the framework of relationships; with his disciples, in close friendships with Mary, Martha, and Lazarus, and with others who travelled with him.

Why, oh why then, are relationships often so challenging?! Why do we so frequently misunderstand each other? Why do we find other people irritating at times? These challenges also seem to be a universal human experience, even for Jesus, which perhaps provides a clue as to why he placed relationships at the core of his life and teaching: *Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind and with all your strength.....Love your neighbour as yourself. There is no commandment greater than these.* Mark 12:30-31

I recently had a conversation with someone who reminded me that we are not necessarily required to understand another person, but just to love and accept them. For me, it feels much easier to love the person who irritates me if I have a little insight and understanding of why the other person is the way they are, and the characteristics and aspects of me that are reactive. There's nothing wrong with having an understanding and involvement of our thinking mind in the business of navigating relationships. Indeed, a depth of self-knowledge and relational insight are part of the transformational process. However, I was challenged to consider that useful as "understanding" may be, it is no substitute for simply (or maybe not so simply) accepting and loving the person in front of you just as they are in the moment of encounter; no questions asked, no judgement, no explanations.

What does Jesus have to teach us about relationships? Most importantly, we see that Jesus's connection to the Creator God was the fountain from which all else flowed. What about his connection to people who came to him with a need? Did Jesus want to know whose sin caused the blind man to be blind? No, he loved him, healed him and helped him find his voice. Did Jesus want to know why the five thousand in the crowd had failed to plan ahead and bring food? No, he loved them and fed them. Did Jesus investigate the circumstances of how the woman came to be caught in the act of adultery? No, he loved her, saved her and humbled her accusers. Did Jesus enquire how the Gerasene demoniac came to be living naked amongst the tombs? No, he loved him, clothed him, healed him and left him in his community to testify to the love which had restored him.

I am sure I will go on feeling the challenge of being in relationship with others, just as others feel the challenge of being in relationship with me! However, the conversation with my friend reminded me that the basis of every connection in life is not in my understanding, but in the love of God.

DIARY

Thursday 18 April

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

Saturday 20 April

8.00am A Men's Breakfast at Charlestown Church – Kairos Prison Ministry

Sunday 21 April – Easter 4

9.00am Worship Service. Leader: David Chegwidde & Preacher: Rev G Perry
Acts 4:5-12; Psalm 23; 1 John 3:16-24; John 10:11-18

Tuesday 23 April

10.00am Morning tea in the Community at Lake Macquarie Square

12.00pm Garden Suburb Ladies Fellowship

Wednesday 24 April

9.30am Holiday Kids Club

Thursday 25 April – Anzac Day

No morning tea in the Community on this day



Sunday 28 April – Easter 5

9.00am Worship Service. Leader & Preacher: Rev Tom Stuart
Acts 8:26-40; Psalm 22:25-31; 1 John 4:7-21; John 15:1-8

Monday 29 April

1.30pm SFED

Tuesday 30 April

10.00am Morning tea in the Community at Lake Macquarie Square

Thursday 2 May

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

1.30-2.30pm Bible Study at Garden Suburb

Sunday 5 May – Easter 6

9.00am Worship Service. Leader & Preacher: Rev Tom Stuart
Acts 10:44-48; Psalm 98; 1 John 5:1-6; John 15:9-17

Monday 6 May

10.00am Garden Suburb Nursing Home Pastoral Care Visitation

1.30pm SFED

Tuesday 7 May

10.00am Morning tea in the Community at Lake Macquarie Square

Wednesday 8 May

10.00am Ladies Fellowship at Charlestown

Thursday 9 May

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

10.30am Worship Service at Garden Suburb Aged Care

1.30-2.30pm Bible Study at Garden Suburb

Friday 10 May

6.00pm Ladies Night at Kahibah





THE PRAYER PAGE

Pastoral Prayer Points

- * Family and friends of Pat Foster
- * Family and friends of Edward Mordue
- * Family and friends of Nola
- * Lorraine Pepper in rehab at Shortland Hospital
- * pray for Lesley's recovery after surgery
- * Judith Fuller battling cancer
- * Pam
- * pray for Ken as he undergoes an operation on the 3rd May
- * pray for Lyn Benson following surgery
- * Family and friends of Vivianne
- * Les as he recovers from heart surgery
- * Sue Pepper now home from hospital
- * Those in our Congregation who have lost loved ones in recent months
- * Gloria
- * Peter
- * Tony
- * Graeme
- * Jean
- * Fred Bryant
- * June Locker
- * Ryan Walpole
- * Kathryn Gray
- * Jacqueline Fenwick
- * Isabella
- * Janice Wright
- * Eileen Dunn
- * Mert
- * Judith and family
- * Enid Power
- * Max

Please join with each other as a congregation, to commit to praying at meal times, for the needs mentioned below.

Congregational Prayer Points

- pray for the successful sale of the Whitebridge property
- pray for guidance and discernment for missional use of buildings into the future
- Project Reconnect
- Worship Services
- Cathy Beeton and SRE classes
- Worship Committee

Wider Community Prayer Points

- Praise for the attendance and results obtained from the Founding Assembly of HCA
- pray for victims and families affected by the recent tragedies in Sydney
- those affected by climate change in Australia eg floods, droughts and fires
- pray that a cease fire agreement will be negotiated between Israel and Hamas and that there will be relief from all the suffering
- The situation in Ukraine and other trouble spots
- Thanksgiving for all orphanage children at school thanks to generous donations
- Rohingya people in Bangladesh where 7000 people homeless



The Hunter Presbytery Prayer Diary



This diary provides an opportunity to pray each week for congregations in the Presbytery. By praying together, we can encourage one another in mission, as we grow in faith and unity and develop understanding and relationships across the region. Each week there will be information and a prayer for each of the congregations in the Hunter Presbytery. This week we pray for:

21 April 2024 – Caves Beach Uniting Church

Caves Beach Uniting Church has an elderly congregation blessed by God's love. We are aware of the increasing challenges and uncertainty faced by many within our community. We feel the need to share God's love and provide ways and means for others to come to church and experience comfort and security. We sense this is the time to act so we support the step of faith being led by our Church Council to provide ways and means to outreach to the community.

Prayer: May God bless our proposed mission outreach and may the Holy Spirit be present in all our Church Services and activities. May all we do be to God's glory. We ask this in Jesus' name. Amen.

Children & Family Worker Update



Our Holiday Kids Club is next Wednesday (still some spots left if you know of any interested children) our theme is 'Come join the Circus' a fun theme with circus craft like clowns & tightrope walkers, face painting, circus food, hot dogs, popcorn & icecream.

Playtime with twirling plates, juggling balls, walking stilts, tight rope walking & much more but how does this teach the children about Jesus you say. Our message in church time will be 'Daniel & the Lions' Den' & tight rope walking (rope on the floor in case you are thinking high) & stilts, the trick is to keep your eyes up & focus, just as Peter walked on the water needed to keep his eyes up & trust Jesus. And as always, we sing grace before our lunch which the children all know so well.

Please pray for our Holiday Kids Club team on Wednesday & for the children that they will have a wonderful day & go home full of amazing stories for their parents.

Cathy



I've Spent Time in Prison!

Kairos Prison Ministry started in Australia in the early 1990's. It is an interdenominational Christian ministry to and for prison inmates and their families. The mission of Kairos in Australia is to bring Christ's love and forgiveness to all incarcerated individuals, their families, and those who work with them, and to assist in their transition to becoming productive citizens.

Our speaker Stuart Bell, active in Kairos since 2004 working in the Hunter to provide courses to inmates in Cessnock and St Heliers Prisons. Stuart will give an understanding of what this ministry is aiming to achieve for the inmates and their families.

A Men's Breakfast
at Charlestown Uniting Church - 24 Milson St
8am Saturday 20th April
\$12 RSVP: Robert White whiterigg@westnet.com.au
or 4943 2096
Please advise of any special dietary requirements
By Wednesday 17th April 2024



Donations gratefully requested for support of
the Cancer Council

Bring your friends

Contact Sue Warren on 0427 737 793 for further details.

FRIENDSHIP CIRCLE
MOTHER'S DAY CELEBRATION 2024



“REPAST WITH THE REPTILES?”

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 4th May 2024.

Time –11-15 am for 11-30 am for Morning Tea. There will be a new Art Exhibition for all to see on the day. There will be a demonstrated talk on reptiles during M/T. Lunch will follow ordered from the café with M/T.

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 0402 335 410 if interested..

Consider Car Pooling. Meet at the church if you need a lift. Please notify Sue Warren on 4944 7793.

Please let your seasonal hosts extraordinaire for the day, Grahame Pricter and Noel Drinkwater, know by phoning 0402 335 410 or 0428 431 169 to book your “Repast with the Reptiles.” RSVP 28th April 2024

I/We, Will be//will not be attending the ***“Mother's Day Repast with the Reptiles”*** on Saturday 4th May 2024.

Small is Beautiful



Thriving as a small Church



Presbytery Minister Graham Perry and Saltbush Scattered Community Minister Yvonne Ghavalas invite you to a time of deep listening and sharing together the challenges and opportunities of being a small church. Yvonne has worked extensively across intergenerational, multicultural, and depleted resource contexts as a social worker, high school teacher, and minister. She is passionate about creating authentic places of belonging through prayer, play, and ancient spiritual practices. Come and find inspiration together in this real and down-to-earth gathering which will include worship, Holy Communion, and sources of support for thriving small communities

Saturday 11th May 2024
10am - 1pm \$20/15 conc.
East Maitland Uniting Church - 35 William St

Details and registration here: <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/small-is-beautiful-thriving-as-a-small-church-tickets-865935605707?aff=oddtcreator>

FAMILY FUN TRIVIA NIGHT & AUCTION CCEA SRE FUNDRAISER

LET THE
GAMES
BEGIN!

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



SATURDAY 4TH MAY AT 7PM AT
HUNTER CHRISTIAN CHURCH
20A HILLSCREST PRD, HIGHFIELDS

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

Enquiries & booking
Contact Hunter Christian Church
02 4942 1351
info@hcc.org.au

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

These masterclasses have relevance for those involved in various leadership roles in our congregation. Sessions are online and free. More information and registration here: <https://nswactuca.eventsair.com/min-masterclasses-2024/mm-reg/Site/Register>



You are warmly invited to *Ministry Masterclasses*, a free online monthly forum designed to support active ministry leaders by exploring contemporary perspectives and fostering networks of support and collaboration. *Ministry Masterclasses* are ideal for ministers and pastors who are keen to build networks and gain new insights from thought leaders.

The first Ministry Masterclass begins on **Wednesday 24 April**, 2:00pm-4:00pm, with a Preaching Refresher with Ockert Meyer, Lecturer in Theology and Preaching at United Theological College.

Other Upcoming Masterclasses

- **Wednesday 22 May** - Technology and Worship with Craig Mitchell, Presbytery Minister - Church Development at Port Phillip East Presbytery
- **Wednesday 19 June** - Evangelism Conversation with Ben Gilmour, Director of Vital Leadership, and Pablo Nunez, Minister at Ballina Uniting Church
- **Wednesday 24 July** - Music and Worship with Tash Holmes, Uniting Creative, and Rev. Radhika Sukumar-White, Ministry Leader, Leichhardt Uniting Church
- + more great sessions to come!

Please note all sessions will run from 2:00pm-4:00pm. Registration is free and sessions are run online via Zoom. You are warmly invited to register for as many sessions as you'd like to attend.

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>