



# CONTACT

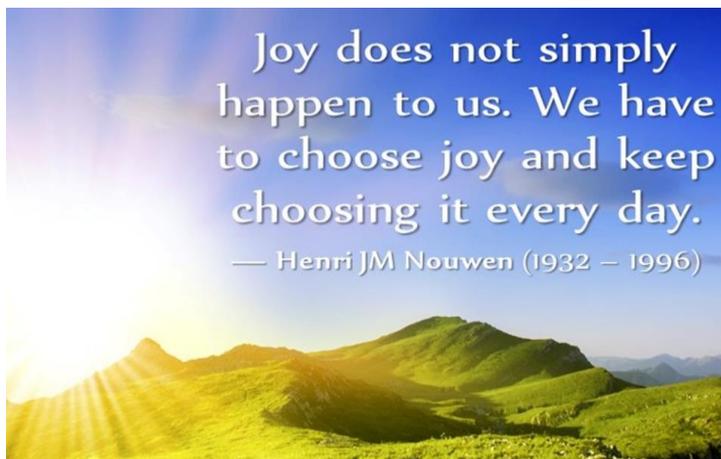
Charlestown & Garden Suburb Uniting  
Church Multi-Centre Congregation

7 August 2022



## From Rev Tom

Gratitude! I am reflecting today on how wonderful it is to be a part of a church, a congregation. This congregation! I am so used to being part of a congregation. So, I forget what it would be like not to be part of a congregation. What we have is community. What community is and does, or what people do and are in community, is mind blowing. Think of all that is done for the sake of this church community, and reaching out beyond. The amount of work people do as part of leadership. All the work people do to ensure we can experience worship together, these days without even being at the church. All the work people do in administration. All the work done in mission. All the work people do for their own spiritual growth, which flows back into the community. All the work people do to take care of buildings and property. But then, that is just the tip of the iceberg. Every visit by someone. Every phone call. Every conversation, and kind word. Every relationship, and thus the felt sense of friendship. Then, the thoughtfulness toward one another, including our prayers for each other. Every tiny element. Everyone contributes in some way. Everyone receives one way or another. Imagine if somehow, like a speech bubble in a cartoon, we could somehow visual the everything that goes into what creates community, our community. You and I are part of that. You and I are, we contribute, but we are also recipients of that. At its heart is love. What an extraordinary gift. Today I simply breath that in. I've been part of this congregation for 10 years now. For most in this congregation that is a shorter amount of time. But today I notice that the richness of my existence is, who I am is, a reflection of all the relationships, all the experiences, I have had with this congregation over those 10 years. Much of my tangible experience of God is my experience of this community – including everything that everyone is and does, in continually creating that community. On Sunday I remembered that in the book “Abandonment to Divine Providence” the author invites us to keep looking at our lives till we see Jesus. That is true for our community too – and Jesus is at its heart, and the centre of this great dynamic which is community, our congregation. And my response – gratitude.



# DIARY

## **Thursday 4 August**

10.00 am Morning tea in the Community – Smelly Cheesecake Café at Charlestown Square  
1.30pm – 2.00pm Bible Study at Garden Suburb

## **Sunday 7 August**

*Ninth Sunday after Pentecost*

**9.00am** **Worship Service** – Leader and Preacher – Rev Tom  
**Children's Corner with Cathy**

*Readings: Isaiah 1: 1, 10-20, Psalm 50: 1-8, 23-24, Hebrews 11: 1-3, 8-16, Luke 12 :32-40*

## **Monday 8 August**

10.00am Worship Service at Woodlands

## **Tuesday 9 August**

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

## **Wednesday 10 August**

10.00am Charlestown Ladies Fellowship – Morning Tea and Games

## **Thursday 11 August**

10.00 am Morning tea in the Community – Smelly Cheesecake Café at Charlestown Square  
1.30pm – 2.00pm Bible Study at Garden Suburb  
11.00am Communion Service at Garden Suburb Aged Care Facility

## **Friday 12 August**

6.00pm Ladies night at Kahibah

## **Saturday 13 August**

10.30am Charlestown Friendship Circle Morning Tea at 16 Footers at Belmont

## **Sunday 14 August**

*Tenth Sunday after Pentecost*

**9.00am** **Worship Service** – Leader and Preacher – Rev Tom

*Readings: Isaiah 5: 1-7, Psalm 80: 1-2, 8-19, Hebrews 11: 29-12: 2, Luke 12: 49-56*

## **Monday 15 August**

10.00am Pastoral Care visit to Garden Suburb Aged Care Facility

## **Tuesday 16 August**

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

## **Thursday 18 August**

10.00 am Morning tea in the Community – Smelly Cheesecake Café at Charlestown Square  
1.30pm – 2.00pm Bible Study at Garden Suburb

## **Saturday 20 August**

8.00am Men's Breakfast with Gwenda Brownell – Social Justice 'Why Bother?'

## **Sunday 21 August** *Eleventh Sunday after Pentecost*

**9.00am** **Holy Communion** - Leader and Preacher - Rev Tom

*Jeremiah 1: 4-10, Psalm 71: 1-6, Hebrews 12: 18-29, Luke 13: 10-17*

## **Tuesday 23 August**

10.00am Morning tea in the Community – Frankie & Co Café at Lake Macquarie Fair  
12.00pm Garden Suburb Ladies Fellowship

## **Thursday 25 August**

10.00 am Morning tea in the Community – Smelly Cheesecake Café at Charlestown Square  
1.30pm – 2.00pm Bible Study at Garden Suburb  
4.00pm Finance team meet on Zoom

## **Sunday 28th August** *Twelfth Sunday after Pentecost*

**9.00am** **Worship Service** – Leader Sue Pepper Preacher TBA

*Jeremiah 2: 4-13, Psalm 81: 1, 10-16, Hebrews 13: 1-8, 15-16, Luke 14: 1-14*

# THE PRAYER PAGE

"Lord, give me your eyes and ears today as I move about in my neighbourhoods. Show me your heart and help me to love those people around me who are my neighbours" Karina Kreminski



## Pastoral Prayer Points

- \* Margaret Drinkwater
- \* Enid Hancock
- \* Judith Irvine
- \* Nita Thomas
- \* Avril Hill
- \* Ron and Marion Box
- \* Enid Gaynor
- \* Mert Leembruggen
- \* Fred Bryant
- \* Catherine
- \* Enid Power
- \* Jean Townsend
- \* Wilma Birch
- \* Tony and Nan
- \* Brian Doherty
- \* Eileen Dunn
- \* Bill Woodcock and family
- \* Jean Cowley's 90<sup>th</sup> Birthday this week

## Congregational Prayer Points

- The ongoing preparations for Neos Mission
- Praise for support and encouragement given by congregational members to each other
- GCK group and Cathy Beeton
- Our spiritual journeys

## Wider Community Prayer Points

- Homelessness in the Hunter
- Hunter Alliance's contact with local councils
- Those anxious about employment in the light of phasing out of coal in the Hunter

Maintained by SFED and Enid Power

## Hunter Community Alliance Contributions for yearly membership fee

As you are aware, our congregation is a member of the Hunter Community Alliance. This involves a membership fee of \$289. I forgot to mention last Sunday that you are invited to make a small contribution towards this cost. If you would like to donate, here are some options:

- Use the designated donation box in the foyer at Charlestown.
- Transfer funds to the congregation bank account, with reference "HCA member."
- Hand cash or a cheque to your Elder or a Church Leader.

Thank you.

*Anne Threlfo*

# Come Away

## Quiet Morning

Saturday 13 August

The Quiet Morning has been **CANCELLED**.  
Apologies to those who had registered to attend.



**Gwenda Brownell**, is the leader of the social justice team at Toronto Uniting Church. This team has led a variety of activities both advocating for and taking action towards bringing about social justice where unjust systems bring harm to people.

Taking hold of the near edge

## Social Justice

Why bother?

at Charlestown Uniting Church - 24 Milson St

**8am Saturday 20<sup>th</sup> August**

Cost \$12    RSVP: Paul Russell

pmraus74@gmail.com, or 0411 236 047

or sign-up sheet in the foyer.

*Please advise of any special dietary requirements*

**RSVP by Wednesday 17<sup>th</sup> August 2022**

*Please do not attend if you are unwell or have been to a Covid-19 hotspot in the previous 14 days.*

Our hope brings us to work in the small ways available to us for Australia to be a nation that is just, compassionate, inclusive and courageous.

From little things.....

# Children & Family Worker Update

## Hi Everyone

Another fun GCK group last Tuesday, it was such a lovely day, so we moved ourselves outside into the sunshine where the kids built a cubby house, we read stories, created with playdough, threw frisbees & blew bubbles. We also celebrated Solomon's 1<sup>st</sup> birthday. We will not be meeting again now until the 30<sup>th</sup> August as a number of us will be away in the next fortnight.



**SRE classes** are going along well. At Charlestown school I had a year 1 class for the first half of the year but, as this class is very small it has been combined with Kinder, leaving me free to teach the year 5/6 class, who have missed out for the past couple of years. It has been an interesting start with this class, with a number of children very familiar with the Bible & others having forgotten everything from their earlier lessons, but the advantage of starting half way through, is that I can pick & choose the lessons that I feel will fit the class best.

Hope you are all keeping well, stay safe & well through the week.

Blessings

Cathy



The number of Covid cases in the community, and indeed in our own congregation remains high. Therefore, the Church Council continues to require us to wear a face mask when singing is taking place. This will be reviewed at the September meeting of the Council.

Masks may be removed during other parts of the worship service



Morning Tea on the Deck (or in the shelter) of the 16 Footers at Belmont

Saturday 13 August at 10.30am

All are welcome so come and enjoy the fellowship. If you require transport contact Sue Warren on 0427 737 793



Wednesday 10 August

Meet at Charlestown Church at 10am for Morning Tea and Board Games

**Come and enjoy the fellowship!**



## Save the Date – Waratahs at the Willows

The Waratah Male Voice Choir with a programme including Gospel, Musical Shows and modern songs.

Saturday 10 September 2022 at 2pm  
Warners Bay Uniting Church



# Chairperson Report to Congregation

## **A REMINDER OF OUR VISION AND MISSION – FROM MISSION PLAN**

### *Our Vision*

- To respond to the love of Jesus by dying well
- To trust that from our letting go and death, new life will spring.
- To use the energy and resources we have now so that another iteration of the **Uniting Church in Australia** might grow in our place.

### *Our Mission*

- To establish a new ministry, connecting with the community, and arising outside the existing congregation.
- We will not require quick outcomes, but will provide time and space for a genuine expression of the Christian faith to emerge out of the ecology of this area in the context of patience, humility, love, and grace.
- At the same time, the present congregation remains committed to mission and life.

As you will recall, there had been a decision made last year to sell the Whitebridge property, which had led to a number of roadblocks. Things are moving now!

At the July Church Council meeting, the Council approved the **leasing** of the Whitebridge property in order to fund the new mission of our congregation.

A group of us have met with the Synod property team, who are currently approaching 4 different local agents to provide information and a quote to list and market the property to potential tenants. We expect to meet with Synod in a couple of weeks to appoint an agent. The process of finding a suitable tenant could take up to 7 months, so we won't need to completely vacate the property immediately.

The lease income from Whitebridge will be used to fund the new mission.

In regard to finances, we have lodged an expression of interest to the Synod Growth Fund for partial funding of our new mission for the next 3 years. We'll know this week if we have been accepted into the next round of applications.

There will be some governance issues for us to work through in conjunction with Presbytery so that funds set aside to sustain the new mission can be administered beyond the life of the current congregation.

## **“NEOS” – OUR WAY FORWARD**

The new mission has been named “Neos”, which is the Greek word for new. I'll use that name, just make speaking about it easier – but we don't have to be attached to that name!

From the beginning of 2023, the congregation will begin a transition period where initially, 25% of the Ministry Agent's time will be spent on Neos.

The proportion of the Ministry Agent's time spent on Neos will gradually increase, so that in 5 years - 2027, 100% of the Ministry Agent's time will be spent on Neos work. This will be funded by the leasing of 1, and eventually 2 of our properties.

## **WHAT WILL THE MINISTRY AGENT BE DOING IN THE 25% OF TIME?**

The nature of Neos is that we remain open to where God is working.

Here are some examples of where we will start:

- Hunter Community Alliance – attend meetings of the strategy team, connecting with other member organisations, facilitate training, involvement in listening campaigns, co-chair, relational meetings
- Exploration of local community – “The Place”, Neighbourhood Centre, community organisations and not-for-profits.
- Morning tea in the Community activity
- Training – eg, Karina Kreminski's course, UME

## WHAT WILL BE THE CONSEQUENCES FOR THE CURRENT CONGREGATION OF A 75% MINISTRY AGENT?

These are examples:

- The Minister will be relieved from preaching 1 Sunday per month – use of lay preachers, other clergy, Project Reconnect, lay worship leaders. Worship team already looking at options.
- Minister relieved of writing Contact messages every week – alternate with laity or other sources.
- All the fellowship groups which are lay lead – no change
- Decrease attendance at meetings – lay leaders already convene these groups
- Ministry agent provides Spiritual Direction only to new contacts
- There may be activities which rely on the Minister which we let go or do differently

## IN 5 YEARS' TIME 100% OF THE MINISTRY AGENT'S TIME WILL BE DEVOTED TO NEOS. WHAT WILL THAT MEAN FOR THE EXISTING CONGREGATION?

- The existing congregation will have a life, a ministry in supporting Neos in whatever ways are appropriate to our circumstances – certainly prayer, and other activities, ministries, and worship.
- The congregation will presumably still have an income from offerings, so will have options in employing a part time ministry agent, or pastoral carer, for example, in addition to lay leadership.
- The Hunter Presbytery are beginning an intentional focus on Mission (with employment of Rev Rod Pattenden as Strategic Mission Consultant and Presbytery training from Rev Cameron Eccelston from UME), so new options are likely to develop.

Our congregation certainly faces some challenges, not the least of which will be the changes ahead, including the letting go of properties, and activities. Many of our leaders, carry a heavy workload, which can't continue indefinitely. And in the last year, we have farewelled some beloved members of our congregation.

We can be grateful to God for so much:

- Our financial situation, although declining is better than we might have expected.
- Our fellowship groups continue to provide support and connection for our congregation and beyond.
- Our new "Morning Tea in the Community" is already leading to conversations with members of our community – see Sue's article in today's Contact.
- We have an effective pastoral care network
- We continue to live stream our worship services and provide DVD and booklet resources to others. Note that the technical crew are working on ways to streamline this process, even to the extent of the data and livestreaming being a one person operation should the need arise.
- We can be very grateful to God for each other, for prayer support, practical assistance and the opportunity we have to be walking alongside each other on this path where God continues to beckon us into something new and transformation.

*Anne Threlfo*

31 July 2022



Uniting Church Synod of NSW and the ACT  
The Uniting Church in Australia 

## The Hunter Presbytery Gathering



Everyone is invited and all are welcome

**10am Tuesday 6th September 2022**

(morning tea from 9.30am) BYO LUNCH

**'Hamilton Hive' Community Hub**

**150 Beaumont St, Hamilton**

(next to Hamilton Uniting Church)

**Guest Speaker – Rev Jon Owen**

Pastor and CEO – The Wayside Chapel

10 minute walk from Hamilton Railway Station

Those requiring a lift contact Phillip Wrightson

p: 0412563287 e: [ucahambro@bigpond.com](mailto:ucahambro@bigpond.com)





Charlestown  
& Garden  
Suburb

**Hunter  
Community  
Alliance**



The Hunter Community Alliance has invited **Mayor Kay Fraser** to meet with the 22 member organisations of the Alliance in order to follow up commitments made by the Mayor prior to last year's Local Government elections. These commitments concern a number of initiatives addressing the homelessness and climate emergencies. The meeting will seek to identify ways the Alliance, Mayor and Council can work together to make the policy commitments come to fruition.

The meeting will take place on

**Thursday 8 September at 3pm**

at

**Garden Suburb Uniting Church**

You are invited to attend, lend your support and witness the Community Alliance at work.

For more information, contact Rev Tom Stuart or Anne Threlfo

**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

**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

**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>