



# CONTACT



Charlestown & Garden Suburb Uniting  
Church Multi-Centre Congregation

**26 April 2026**

## **From Anne Threlfo**

I am currently re-reading Cynthia Bourgeault's "The Wisdom Jesus", and discussing points which arise with my friend in our regular Monday afternoon Zoom meet-ups. "The Wisdom Jesus" is a book I first read in 2016. When I look back at my reading log, I noted at the time that reading this book was a turning point in my spiritual life. So, what was, and remains so significant about this book and what it stirs in me?

The primary question posed by Bourgeault is "Why did the first disciples follow Jesus?" Whatever it was, it had nothing to do with the crucifixion or resurrection. They hadn't happened yet. Obvious really! Like all great questions, it's there hidden in plain sight.

The fisherman and tax collectors of first Century Palestine seemed to be responding to something magnetic or charismatic about Jesus; something which felt so right or true or "other-worldly" that he was impossible to ignore. It was a realisation about Jesus which couldn't be rationally explained. It certainly must have seemed quite irrational when a group of people left behind their families and livelihoods to follow an itinerant rabbi they barely knew.

It seems to me that the times the disciples seemed to "get" what Jesus was saying, or experience some insight into who Jesus was, usually had more to do with their heart than with their heads. Peter trusted Jesus enough to walk on water toward him, but the moment he noticed the wind and the rough water, that is, his head got involved, he began to sink. In last week's reading, we heard the story of the road to Emmaus. The disciples were recounting the last few days feeling fearful and despondent, and it was only later in the day that their eyes were opened and they recognised Jesus. I'm sure that this was more than their physical eyes!

The simple question posed by Bourgeault has led me to view a relationship with Jesus as so much more than transactional. The crucifixion and resurrection are the ultimate lived demonstration of Jesus's divine nature, his self-emptying and teaching. Jesus repeatedly asks in scripture, and to us today, "Who do you say I am?" Or put another way, "Who or what do you recognise in me?" The fishermen of Galilee understood something about Jesus, even if they couldn't have put it into words. So did the Samaritan women at the well. She recognises that Jesus is not talking about H<sub>2</sub>O when he offers her water. She "sees" that Jesus is not an ordinary man, and he knows that she knows, thus revealing to her that he is the Messiah.

This question of who or what I recognise in Jesus continues to resonate. Perhaps what I recognise is not something I can fully explain. In staying with the question, I find "right beliefs" much less important, while Jesus's example of self-emptying love becomes an invitation to walk the same path.

# DIARY

## Thursday 23 April

- 10.00am **Anzac Service at Garden Suburb Aged Care Facility**  
10.00am Morning tea in the Community – common seated area at Charlestown Square  
1.30-2.30pm Bible Study in Dudley Room

## Sunday 26 April – Easter 4

- 9.00am The Divine Worship  
Leader: Kerrie and Preacher: James Cox  
*Acts 2:42-47 Ps 23 1 Pt 2:19-25 Jn 10:1-10*

## Tuesday 28 April

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

## Wednesday 29 April

Office closed

## Thursday 30 April

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

## Saturday 2 May

- From 9am Paths of Peace at Jesmond Park UCA – see more information further in Contact  
11.15am **Friendship Circle Mother's Day Celebration at Hunter Wetlands – see further in Contact for more details**  
7.00pm **Family Fun Trivia Night and Auction – CCEA SRE Fundraiser at Hunter Christian Church – see further in Contact for more details**

## Sunday 3 May – Easter 5

- 9.00am The Divine Worship  
Leader and Preacher: Rev Tom Stuart  
*Acts 7:55-60; Psalm 31:1-5, 15-16; 1 Peter 2:2-10; John 14:1-14*

## Monday 4 May

- 10.00am Pastoral Care Visit to Garden Suburb Aged Care Facility

## Tuesday 5 May

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

## Thursday 7 May

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

## Friday 8 May

- 6.00pm Ladies Night at Kahibah

## Saturday 9 May

Friendship Circle

## Sunday 10 May – Easter 6

- 9.00am The Divine Worship  
Leader: Beryl Gaul and Preacher: Rev Tom Stuart  
*Acts 17:22-31; Psalm 66:8-20; 1 Peter 3:13-22; John 14:15-21*

# 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

Maintained by SFED

### Congregational Prayer Points

- the role of Piteeri, our new Communications Coordinator for the Milson St. Hub.
- Tom and Cathy's trip to Parkes for Project Reconnect
- Tom's mother's 98<sup>th</sup> Birthday
- 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 Brunkerville 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

# Children & Family Worker Update



This week all schools have returned, some Monday some not until today Wednesday.

Could I ask you to pray for the school in your local area, for the principal & staff, for the students & parents. Pray for a good term, one that enables the whole school to be one of harmony & inclusion.

Cathy



## It's Time to Update our Directory!

A lot has happened since our last Directory was issued in December 2023 - two church buildings sold and many people have moved house and/or changed to mobile only (no landline) - and have new or changed email addresses. No action is required from the people who have not changed their details and do not want to add/delete/change emails or phone numbers.

The Directory is only published in paper form to protect it from being exposed to search machines on the Internet. We only include details that people specifically tell us to put in - and do not use informally obtained information.

If you want to add your name to the Directory or alter any existing details in the Directory please complete one of the Change Forms available at the Church - the next time you are there.

Unless you object - your email address will be used to send the weekly Contact and other Church material.

You can also tell us about changes by email "signed" by yourself. In this case please put ALL the details you want in the directory not just your changed details

Surname - Street Address - landline phone number - and for each person - their name, email address and mobile number -

and email to [office@charlestown.unitingchurch.org.au](mailto:office@charlestown.unitingchurch.org.au) with subject line **2026 Directory**

Any questions - ask Paul Russell on 0411236047





Hi everyone,

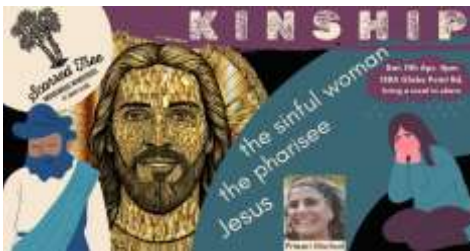
I'm now 2 months into the role at Milson St Hub & am feeling very grateful for the goodwill & kindness that you have welcomed me with, as a congregation. These photos capture that I think, especially the willingness to get involved, laugh together & the capacity for cheekiness, which is just so important these days.

I'm happy to say that I have received some new information about the rules regarding the flexibility of my hours & am now hoping to join you one Sunday morning.

I'll work out a suitable date with Tom & let you know ahead of time.



I've been chipping away at our new website & helping with the branding, so that all of our Hub activities will match our key message – a place of welcome, where the local community can feel safe & included.



I'm trying to work from home more often, which Tom has encouraged, to help me get on top of admin., branding, emails, texts, calls, setting up meetings, creating strategy documents & reports, & to reflect on what's working well & planning more of that.

I've been getting to know our lovely neighbours, on every side of our building, as well as the community leaders who hire the hall. After listening carefully to community feedback, I've decided to focus in on 2 upcoming collaborative events with the hirees of the hall:

- An afternoon tea consultation for all hirees to come together & voice their ideas for their communities' needs for using the hall & outdoor space/carpark. I am hoping that the CWA leaders, Mel & Dianne will be the key partners for planning & organising
- A 'How to Save on Your Electricity Bill' Charlestown community information session with the Greater Charlestown Sustainability Neighbourhood Group

On a personal note, I've been trying to work out if I'm brave enough to prepare for some winter ocean pool swimming regularly. I haven't swum much since I started my new roles, & am missing it!

I was invited by Uncle Ray Minniecon (the elder in the middle of the photo) to speak at Scarred Tree Indigenous Church in Glebe last Sat. & it went really well. My partner, the grey-haired guy at the back, & 2 of his daughters came to support me & Josh, a man who calls me 'mum' (next to me in the photo) was also there.



Please keep me in your prayers, that I will know God's will & have the power to carry that out 😊 Piteeri

## SPIRITUAL PRACTICE OF THE WEEK

**Rest:** Entering into rest depends on honouring our God-given limits. By paying attention to the physical, mental and spiritual needs of the body, we learn when and how to rest.

**Practice:** Write down what a perfect day of rest and recreation would look like to you. • Is it within the realm of possibility? Plan when you can take this day or a version of it. Schedule it on your calendar.

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



Charlestown Uniting Church **Men's Breakfast** held on Saturday 18 April

The Video from last Saturday morning is now available.

Our Guest Speaker was Steve Dooker - Proving Support when Gambling Causes Harm - click [here](#) to view it.

Save the date for the next **Men's Breakfast** on 20 June at 8am called Rest Assured - Preparing for the Inevitable.

Enquiries and to give ideas for suitable future speakers - contact Paul Russell  
0411236047

**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!

### PLEASE NOTE:

The Office will be closed on  
Wednesday 29 April – Jenny is away.  
(A small Contact may be sent out)





# 2 MAY 2026

## PATHS OF PEACE

What power there is  
in feet walking in the same direction,  
hearts carrying the same intention,  
the rhythm of unity,  
the practice of making space  
for the divine,  
for ourselves,  
for one another ....  
Walk with us the path of peace.



[WorldLabyrinthDay.org](http://WorldLabyrinthDay.org)

**JESMOND PARK UCA  
15 ROBERT ST.**

**REVS YVONNE  
GHAVALAS PERRY &  
GREER HUDSON**

**9-12 CHURCH OPEN  
FOR "QUIET"  
WALKING**

**12-1 BRING AND  
SHARE FINGERFOOD  
LUNCHEON**

**1 WALK AS ONE @ 1**

### WORLD LABYRINTH DAY

is an annual international event sponsored by The Labyrinth Society. Every year on the first Saturday in May thousands of people around the world participate in this moving meditation for world peace and celebration of the labyrinth experience.

I'm hearing a lot about how heavy and weary and hopeless people are feeling in the chaos and darkness and uncertainty of these times.

We'd love to have you walk with us - and with others across the world - in solidarity and shared longing for peace.

There are different ways to participate - from enjoying your own quiet moment, to sharing food and story at a long table, to what will be a messy moment of beautiful community depending on how many of us are walking together at 1.

You are not alone. You are welcome. We walk together in hope. 2 May.

Rev Yvonne Ghalvas Perry

# Navigating Climate Grief:

Finding hope  
in changing times

**a workshop with Mandy Cox,**  
grief counsellor, educator, professional member of  
Psychology for a Safe Climate

Conversation, connection and learning to  
strengthen and help navigate the pain and  
challenges of grief, stress and overwhelm that  
confront us in our changing world.

10.30 am - 12.30pm  
Sat 16<sup>th</sup> May  
Toronto Uniting Church

*No admission charge but  
donations are welcome*

Please Register:  
<https://www.trybooking.com/DLGTD>



We feel and see the changes as our world warms and grieve the losses of species and glaciers and so much more. Find some help to navigate the change and the grief with Mandy Cox, outstanding grief counsellor on 16th May at Toronto Uniting Church, 118 The Boulevard.

Register here: <https://www.trybooking.com/events/landing/1568817?>

## 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>