



CONTACT



Charlestown & Garden Suburb Uniting
Church Multi-Centre Congregation

25 October 2026

From Anne Threlfo

We recently went to see “NAZA”, the documentary by two Israeli filmmakers, which examines Israel’s military operations in Gaza through the testimonies of 24 Israeli soldiers and intelligence personnel. It was filmed in secret conversations on Tel Aviv rooftops. “Naza” is the term for collateral damage; if a suspected Hamas operative is targeted, there may be a “Naza” of 20, meaning that the deaths of 20 people is acceptable in order to kill the targeted individual. Testimony was given indicating that “Naza” was very often much higher than 20, and at least one of the interviewees conceded that they are involved in an act of genocide. The film is confronting with disturbing questions about how ordinary people become part of systems of violence, and how the suffering of others can be reduced to statistics and administrative decisions.

In the same week I saw the film, one of the readings in “With Love to the World” was from Joshua 24. In verse 13 God reminds the Israelites: *So I gave you a land on which you did not toil and cities you did not build; and you live in them and eat from vineyards and olive groves that you did not plant.* Here is a reminder that what we possess is not always the product of our own efforts, nor something to which we can claim an unquestionable right. Verse 14 goes on: *Now fear the LORD and serve him with all faithfulness.....* The Israelites, as we are, were called to recognise that their security and prosperity are gifts of grace, received through circumstances and the labour of others. Their possession of the land carried a responsibility: to remember the God who gave it, to practise justice, and to live in faithfulness to God’s purposes. Grace is not a licence for entitlement; it is an invitation to humility and gratitude.

So, in regard to the current situation in Israel and Palestine, what does it mean to claim a land as one’s own while another people experience death, dispossession, occupation, displacement and the destruction of their homes and communities? All our lives are built upon the labour, sacrifices and histories of others and the grace of God, and it seems to me that making claims of privilege that deny the dignity or life of another person is the very opposite of what God asks of us; the God whose image we all bear.

How do we as Christians react to this ongoing tragedy? Maybe we need to be willing to speak about the actions of the Israeli government while making it quite clear that the Jewish people are not collectively responsible for the decisions of their government. Antisemitism is never acceptable. Equally, we can condemn the atrocities committed by Hamas, without treating the Palestinian people as responsible for Hamas. The dreadful suffering of Palestinian civilians demands our compassion, our prayers and our active concern for justice. We cannot choose one people over another, but to insist that every human life bears the image of God, and that no people should be denied their humanity, safety or freedom.

NAZA has challenged me to stay engaged with what’s happening, and not remain silent because speaking is uncomfortable – hence this reflection! I recognise also that however I respond, it is from a position of great privilege. I come back to Joshua’s reminder that I am the recipient of grace and that my role in my own prosperity and security is minimal.

DIARY

Sunday 25 October – Pentecost 22

- 9.00am The Divine Worship – Communion Service
Leader: Margaret and Preacher: TBA
Deuteronomy 34:1-12; Psalm 90:1-6, 13-17; 1 Thessalonians 2:1-8; Matthew 22:34-46
- 10.45- **A month of Prayer for the Way Ahead** at the Milson St Hub – more
11.30am information further in Contact

Tuesday 27 October

- 10.00am Morning tea in the Community at Lake Macquarie Square

Thursday 29 October

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

Sunday 1 November – All Saints Day

- 9.00am The Divine Worship
Leader and Preacher: Rev'd Tom Stuart
Revelations 7:9-17; Psalm 34:1-10, 22; 1 John 3:1-3; Matthew 5:1-12

Monday 2 November

- 10.00am Pastoral Care Visitation at the Garden Suburb Aged Care Facility

Tuesday 3 November

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

Thursday 5 November

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

Sunday 8 November – Pentecost 24

- 9.00am The Divine Worship
Leader and Preacher: TBA
Joshua 24:1-3a; 14-25; Psalm 78:1-7; 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18; Matthew 25:1-13

Tuesday 10 November

- 10.00am Morning tea in the Community at Lake Macquarie Square

Thursday 12 November

- 10.00am Morning tea in the Community – common seated area at Charlestown Square
10.30am **Worship Service at Garden Suburb Aged Care**
1.30-2.30pm **Advent Bible Study in the Dudley Room at Milson St Hub**

Friday 13 November

- 6.00pm Ladies Night at Kahibah

Saturday 14 November

- 9am-12.30pm **Quiet Morning at the Milson St Hub** (see more further in Contact)

Sunday 15 November – Pentecost 25

- 9.00am The Divine Worship
Leader and Preacher: TBA
Judges 4:1-7; Psalm 123; 1 Thessalonians 5:1-11; Matthew 25:14-30

Tuesday 17 November

- 10.00am Morning tea in the Community at Lake Macquarie Square

THE PRAYER PAGE



Prayer is the Voice of Faith

Pastoral Prayer Points

- * Pray for Marion Joyce and family
- * Pray for Brian Cox who is in rehab
- * Gloria
- * Anne Hall
- * Jean Witherspoon
- * Pray for Janice Wright and family
- * Robyn Greaves and family
- * Marion Box
- * Prayers for Grahame Beeton and family
- * Mert and Pam
- * Jacqueline Fenwick
- * Rene Kelly
- * Valmai
- * Kelly
- * Tony Sellen
- * Vicki
- * Pam and Ken
- * Lyn Benson
- * Jean
- * Isabella
- * Eileen Dunn
- * Max
- * Don Humphries

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Congregational Prayer Points

- Month of October, Prayer for the Way Ahead 10:45 am each Sunday
- NREMA application
- Major upgrades to the Project Reconnect website
- Worship Services
- Cathy Beeton and SRE classes
- Church profile and preparations for Tom's retirement
- Worship Committee

Wider Community Prayer Points

- Churches to pray for this month are north Lake Macquarie, Port Stephen's, Raymond Terrace and Scone
- pray for Catherine Pepper who has recently been appointed Associate General Secretary, Strategy and Governance for the Assembly of the UCA. Pray that she may receive wisdom and grace as she fulfills her role which is involved with preparing the church for the future in the areas of strategy and governance.
- 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

Church Council Elections

The following people were elected to the positions indicated at the meeting of the Congregation last Sunday:-

Church Council Chair - Kerrie Dixon

Treasurer - Lesley Clulow

Passionate Worship - Margaret White

Intentional Faith Development - Lorraine Pepper

Presbytery Representative - David Chegwidan

We express our thanks for their willingness to serve and contribute to the life of the Congregation in this way.



SPIRITUAL PRACTICE OF THE WEEK

Sobriety: Healthy babies are born sober. They don't crave what is not good for them. Sobriety is living in a state of independence from unhealthy mind and body altering substances and attachments.

Practice: Consider what soft addictions you rely on to get through the week. Let them go for a season and turn to God instead.

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

An invitation for you to give thanks to God for loved ones who have died during the last year

ALL SAINTS' DAY

SUNDAY 1ST NOVEMBER 2026 AT 9AM

YOUR LOVED ONE WILL BE REMEMBERED WITH AN ESPECIALLY PREPARED CANDLE WHICH YOU OR A FAMILY MEMBER WILL BE INVITED TO LIGHT.

AS YOU ARRIVE IN THE FOYER, PLEASE COLLECT YOUR CANDLE FROM THE USHER.

Please contact Beryl Gaul with the name of your loved one, or with any enquires.



**Milson St Hub
24 Milson St
Charlestown**



CHARLESTOWN & GARDEN SUBURB UNITING CHURCH

A Month of **PRAYER** *for* **THE WAY AHEAD**



DATE:

SUNDAYS IN OCTOBER

4 October – Walking in the neighbourhood or sitting on verandah – prayers for community

11 October – Moving around the building – MSH users, groups, worship, new staffing

18 October – Congregation Meeting – conversational prayer, relationships

25 October – Sitting at new picnic table – mission, car park users



TIME:

10.45AM – 11.30AM



VENUE:

Milson St Hub
24 Milson St, Charlestown

All are welcome!

The Way Ahead Prayer Month

Week 4 -

Apart from praying for staffing for next year and for a clear sense of mission within the Milson St Hub, below are some prayer points for this week as we focus on mission in our car park and with immediate neighbors -

*Car park users

* MSH- a place of welcome, a safe place, a place where community is built and people will have a sense of belonging.

* Hospitality will be evident

* Safety for all in the car park

* Immediate neighbors, those who park in the street

* For activities that may be held for children



QUIET MORNING

Living Water

**A Time of Spiritual
Nourishment**

9am - 12.30pm

Saturday 14 November 2026

Milson St Hub, 24 Milson St, Charlestown

Optional Donation \$10 Light refreshments will be available

Please RSVP by 11 November using QR code



All are welcome to join in this peaceful morning of reflection, prayer, and spiritual renewal. Through quiet moments, Scripture, creativity and reflection, we will draw near to God and be refreshed by God's living water. Come and pause, be still, and allow your spirit to be nourished and renewed.

Register using the QR code, this link: <https://events.humanitix.com/living-water-a-time-of-spiritual-nourishment> or contact Anne Threlfo.

Advent **BIBLE STUDY** *Hope Peace Joy Love*

Thursdays 1.30pm - 2.30pm

12 November - 3 December

**Enquires:
Anne Threlfo**

**Dudley Room
Milson St Hub**

All Welcome

This is a 4-week Bible Study series for Advent. All are welcome.

Summary of current and proposed (at the present moment) employee structures for the CHaGS congregation

Explanatory notes:

MSH = Milson St Hub (Charlestown Uniting Church property)

NEOS = the new mission to the community

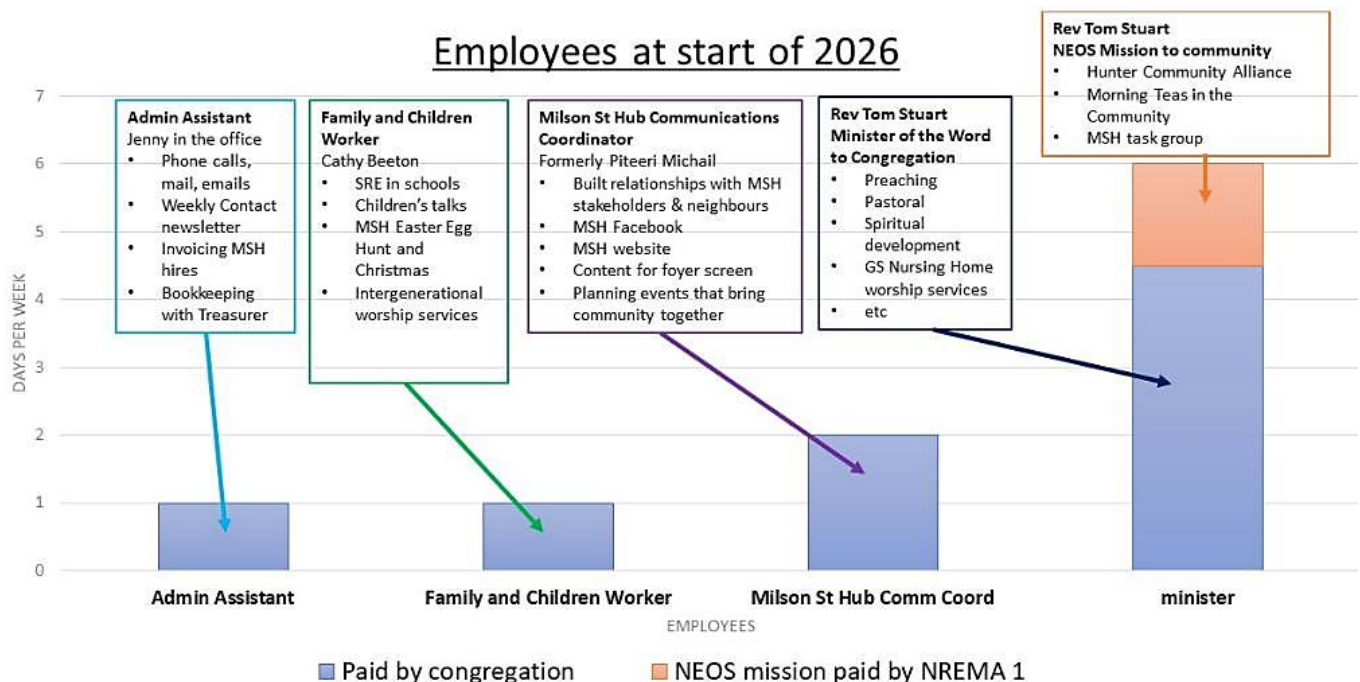
CDWA = Community Development Worker & Admin position

NREMA = Non real estate mission application (or approval). NREMA 1 = funds from Whitebridge sales proceeds, currently being used to fund ¼ Minister position.

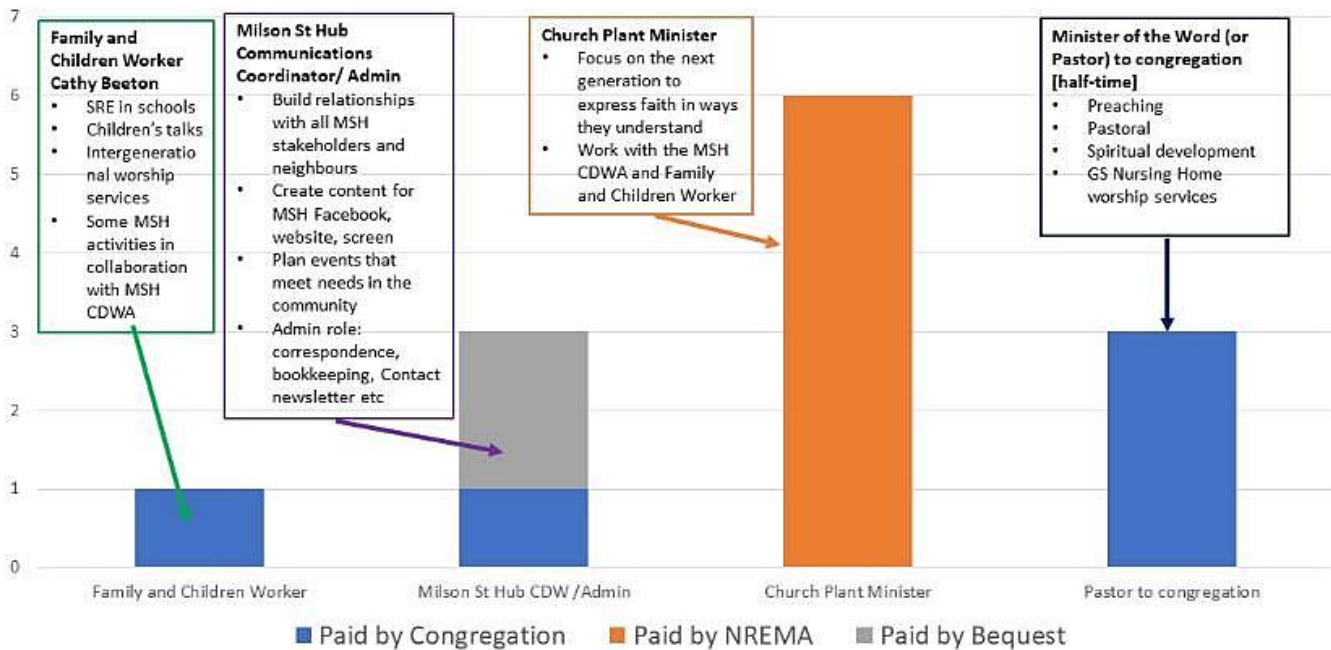
- It is hoped that a new NREMA application (to access both Whitebridge and Garden Suburb sales proceeds) will fund a full-time church plant minister with a missional focus particular to younger generations. Sales proceeds funds must be used for outward facing mission.
- The congregation is able to fund a half time minister or pastor for preaching, pastoral, spiritual development, engagement with mission etc, focusing on the existing congregation.

For more information or clarification, please speak with a member of the Church Council.

Thank you for your continuing prayers as we discern our way forward.



Employees in 2027



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 St, 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>