



CONTACT

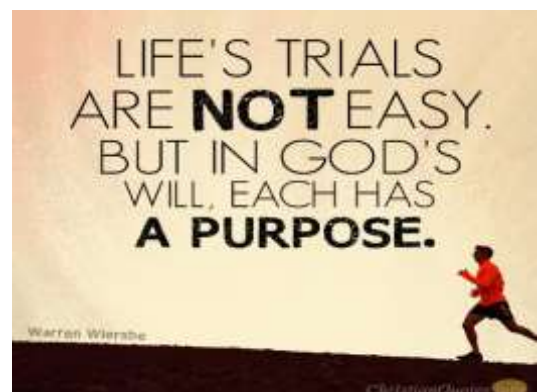


Charlestown & Garden Suburb Uniting
Church Multi-Centre Congregation

4 August 2024

From Rev Tom

It was a big week. Last week I attended a spiritual training event held at Garden Suburb Uniting Church. Participants were from the USA, England, Italy, and Singapore, as well as from numerous places around Australia (there was another person who is Finnish, but I gather she isn't living there at the moment, working for the UN). The purpose of the week was to explore what it means to participate in the transformative work of spirituality. Also, the time included practices that are intended to facilitate that transformation. So, now, do you get the new me! Mr Perfect now? Well, wouldn't it be nice! But what I did learn was something quite odd. It seems that spiritual growth has less to do with improving who you are and more about staying in the struggle. Even if I do somehow improve, whatever that means, something new presents itself. I experience a new challenge. I think in this congregation most of us are familiar with this. We experience it moving into old age. You would think that as we get older everything would get easier. We would get better at *doing* life. However, the reverse is true! We don't see as well. We don't hear as well. Our bodies to respond to our demands as effortlessly as when we were much younger. Our memory isn't as good. We don't adapt to new things as easily as we once did. We experience those closer to us becoming sick, or even dying. No, life doesn't work that way. It doesn't get easier. It gets harder. We don't get better at life. We get worse at doing life. That puts a big dent in making perfection as a goal. So this last week, one of the big learnings is the idea that the real alchemy of life is the struggle itself. It is doing this struggle, even as it gets harder, but at the same time becoming even more hopeful, getting stronger in perseverance, increasing in our patience, and ever more living in the state of love. I think I have known this to be true for a long time. But it was reinforced this week. I think I want to, more and more, shout this from the roof tops. The reason, is so we don't live in a state of bemoaning our circumstance. Rather, that as we open our eyes in the morning we might ask, "What challenges have you got for me today God? That I might grow in faith, hope greater, and love bigger."



DIARY

Thursday 1 August

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

1.30-2.30pm Bible Study at Garden Suburb – James and Hebrews

Sunday 4 August – Pentecost 11

9.00am Divine Worship **with Cathy's Children's Corner**

Leader and Preacher: Rev'd Tom

2 Samuel 11:26-12:13a; Psalm 51:1-12; Ephesians 4:1-16; John 6:24-35

6.00pm Prayers for Peace at Choral Evensong – Christchurch Cathedral

Monday 5 August

10.00am Garden Suburb Aged Care Facility Pastoral Visitation

1.30pm SFED

Tuesday 6 August

10.00am Morning tea in the Community at Lake Macquarie Square

Thursday 8 August

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

10.30am Worship Service at Garden Suburb Aged Care Facility

1.30-2.30pm Bible Study at Garden Suburb – James and Hebrews

Friday 9 August

6.00pm Ladies Night at Kahibah

Saturday 10 August – NOTE CHANGE OF OUTING FOR AUGUST

11.00am Charlestown Friendship Circle – Stockton trip and lunch – bring your Opal Card

Sunday 11 August – Pentecost 12

9.00am Divine Worship opening with **Kathy's Praise Segment**

Leader: Kathy Stuart and Preacher: Rev'd Tom

2 Samuel 18: 5-9, 15, 31-33; Psalm 130; Ephesians 4: 25-5:2; John 6: 35, 41-51

Monday 12 August

1.30pm SFED

Tuesday 13 August

10.00am Morning tea in the Community at Lake Macquarie Square

9.30–11am **Uniting in Books at Garden Suburb Uniting Church**

Tuesday 14 August

10.00am Charlestown Ladies Fellowship



Time for a Tidy Up!

We will be welcoming visitors from other congregations to events soon, to be held in the Dudley and Kearsley rooms at Charlestown. This provides us with an opportunity to tidy these rooms, and discard anything which is no longer useful.

Is there anything in either of these rooms which belongs to you, or which you can make use of? In particular there is a giant guitar amplifier looking for a home. Please let Paul Russell, Anne Threlfo, or Cathy Beeton (for kid's equipment) know by Sunday 18 August if you want to claim anything. After that day, we'll repurpose what we don't need.



THE PRAYER PAGE



Prayer is the Voice of Faith

Pastoral Prayer Points

- * those in our congregation whose loved ones have died in recent times
- * Laraine Chegwidden
- * Tony Sellen
- * Liz and Peter
- * Nelda Marshall
- * Mike Warren
- * Elaine Ross
- * Vivianne
- * Shirley Elkin
- * Lorraine Pepper
- * Vicki
- * Judith Fuller battling cancer
- * Pam and Ken
- * Lyn Benson
- * Jean
- * Fred Bryant
- * June Locker
- * Ryan Walpole
- * Kathryn Gray
- * Jacqueline Fenwick
- * Isabella
- * Janice Wright
- * Eileen Dunn
- * Pam and Mert
- * Judith and family
- * Enid Power
- * Max
- * Tom and Kathy
- * Don Humphries

Congregational Prayer Points

- Church Council
- pray for guidance and discernment
missional use of buildings into the future
- Project Reconnect
- Worship Services
- Cathy Beeton and SRE classes
- Worship Committee

Wider Community Prayer Points

- The orphanage
- Tom and Neos
- HCA and ongoing issues of homelessness,
affordable housing and climate change
- 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





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:

4 August 2024 – Morisset Uniting Church

Morisset Uniting Church, known as “Church in the Trees” seeks to be a place where people can draw near to nature and to God in an accepting community of Christ Jesus. We reach out to the wider community through our Op Shop, Over 55s Expo, hiring our facilities, the Open Kitchen meals, and involvement with other groups and charities. We are in the process of constructing a Bush Chapel along with other ideas for service and growth.

Prayer: We pray that the worship, witness and service of Morisset Uniting Church will bring many into the presence of God. We pray for each person to be aware of their blessedness as they interact with others, blessing each one with good news, in the name of Christ. Amen.

Something
new and
exciting!!!

Uniting in Books

Love reading new books
Like to have a chance to find new books
Exchange your books for something different
Join us for our new & exciting
Community Book Library
At Garden Suburb Uniting Church
Cnr Prospect Rd. & Marshall St
Commencing the 13th August 9.30am to 11am
then every 2nd Tuesday of the month



Children & Family Worker Update



I would like to send out a big **THANK YOU** to all who supported me by purchasing sweets or donating to 'The Bloody Long Walk' last Sunday, we raised \$300.00 towards a Cure for Mito.

It is so encouraging to have such fabulous support behind me. The walk is in 3 weeks' time, I may need your prayers on the day to help get me over the line.

There has been another **Safe Church Training** organised for Sunday the 25th 12.30pm at Garden Suburb, if you have your name down on the wait list for GS you should hear about this otherwise watch for the flyer & register straight away as many people are keen to do it locally.

Have a great week,

Cathy

CHANGE OF OUTING FOR AUGUST



Charlestown Friendship Circle

Saturday 10 August

Meet at Church 11.00am for a trip to Stockton,

Ferry ride, lunch and tram ride

BRING YOUR OPAL CARD

All Welcome





SOUL CARE 2024 CONFERENCE

12-13 September 2024 | Wesley Mission, Sydney

Also Online

Explore Mindfulness practice and research as a template for advancing spiritual care

We are thrilled to be joined by Associate Professor Nicholas Van Dam and Dr Cullan Joyce for their keynote session *Mindfulness practice and research as a template for advancing spiritual care*.

Spirituality and spiritual care are often present in health settings but face challenges from secular organisations due to varying understandings and implementations. Though rooted in spiritual traditions, mindfulness meditation gained acceptance through collaboration with empirical researchers. The development and acceptance of mindfulness provide insights that can enhance evidence around spiritual care practices.

Join us for this informative session that will discuss the practical implications of integrating contemplative research with spiritual care and highlight how contemplative practices support person-centred care and allow for diverse beliefs and the need for collaborative efforts between researchers and practitioners.

Information and registration here:

<https://www.nswact.uca.org.au/calendar/soulcare-2024-12-13-september/>

Early bird registrations end Saturday 20 July – on site \$129, online \$49



Uniting Church The Hunter Presbytery

PRESBYTERY GATHERING

THURSDAY 29th AUGUST 2024

Salamander Bay Uniting Church
174 Salamander Way, Salamander Bay 2317

10 am Morning Tea
10.30am Programme begins

*Note New
Speaker*

Guest Speaker

Rev Graham Perry

The Hunter Presbytery Minister

Offering shared between

Flying Padre based at Broken Hill and
Yaacaaba Centre, Port Stephens

(This service provides early intervention support and
counselling services to assist vulnerable people
who are at imminent risk of homelessness)

Bring your own lunch. Tea and coffee provided.
Sales Table with Greeting Cards etc.

Supported by UCAF The Hunter Presbytery Committee.



City of Newcastle would like to
invite you to attend this event as
part of our Empowering
Newcastle program

Hunter Renewable Energy Transformation

Saturday 17 August, 9.30 to
noon, City Hall

Join NSW Environment
Minister, Penny Sharpe and
Lord Mayor Nuatali Nelmes to
hear about the renewable energy
transformation in the Hunter
and opportunities for us all to be
part of our net zero future

[Register for events here](#) or
email sustainability@ncc.nsw.gov.au
v.au for more information.



A commemoration of Hiroshima Day

6pm Sunday 4 August 2024

peace

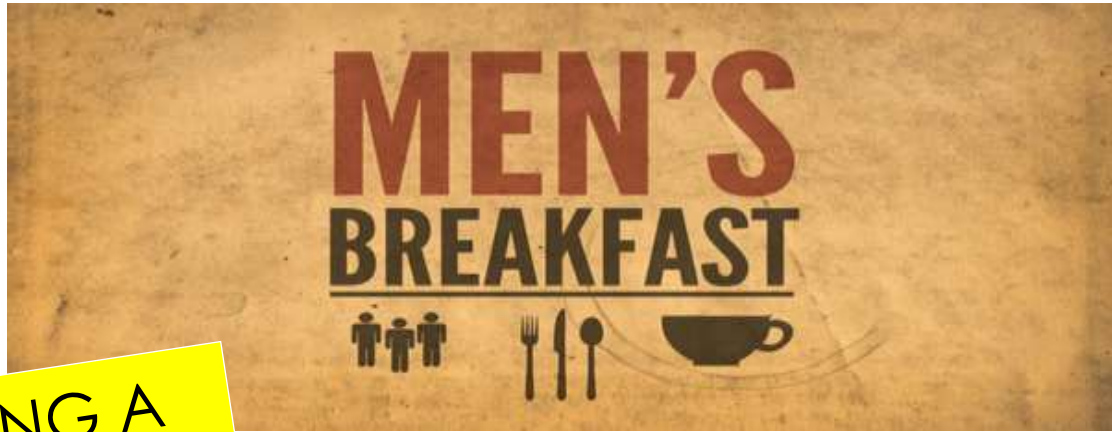
Prayers for Peace at Choral Evensong

Christchurch Cathedral, Church St, Newcastle

The guest preacher will be Rev Nicholas Edwards, St James Anglican Church, Morpeth
People of all faiths are warmly invited to share in this annual service of commemoration
as we remember those who have suffered as a result of war, and join together in
prayers for peace in the world.

Organised by Christians for Peace Newcastle

Contacts: George Garnsey 4934 2658 or Doug Hewitt 0431 935 097



BRING A
FRIEND!!!

With Guest Speaker

Michael Griffiths

**How does Poetry open us to the
Sacred?**

Charlestown Uniting Church - 24 Milson Street

8am Saturday 17 August

Cost \$12 RSVP to Paul Russell

0411 236047 pmraus74@gmail.com By 14th August 2024

Michael has recently retired from Australian Catholic University where he taught literature for 45 years. During that time, he also taught literature for the Sydney Clemente Program for the homeless and marginalised.

In all his teaching he has a special interest in the way the language of literature, especially poetry, can deepen our understanding of ourselves, of others and of our connection with the sacred. Brought up as a Catholic, Michael has been a long-time practitioner of the Gurdjieff Work and is also a Member of the Quakers.

He will explore with you some of his favourite poems and discuss the ways in which they can open doors onto the sacred.



WINTER WRITINGS

Overlooked...very often...but it nevertheless is a very important part of our Spiritual journey for without it, we are somewhat bereft! OK, so what are we rambling on about this week? None other than a book written with a beginning 3,500 years ago – **The Book of Psalms**. Often called “The Psalter”, it is the largest of the Biblical books...and for good reason! All through the centuries The Psalter has been the song book of the Church, only in latter years has the beauty of hymns and songs been developed as we have it today. Not only, more importantly also, the other books of the Bible are the records of God speaking to us – the Psalms presents us with the only book where we speak -directly – to God!

You see, the Psalms teach us how to relate to God in the bad times, in the dark times and when we are so utterly confused we find it hard to determine which side is up. You will have found that the text of psalmists (David wrote nearly half – the remainder written by Moses, Solomon, Herman and the other guys of the band) is often shockingly honest with God about how they feel because “life wasn't meant to be easy”. All of the Psalms have been tinkered with over the ages, endeavouring to obtain a more suitable text for the current age in which to express itself. Eugene Peterson is one such translator where he writes:

“I need a language that is large enough to maintain continuities; supple enough to express nuances across a lifetime that brackets child and adult experiences, courageous enough to explore all the countries of sin and salvation, mercy and grace, creation and covenant, anxiety and trust, unbelief and faith that comprise the continental human condition... Where will we acquire a language that is adequate for these intensities? Where else but in the Psalms? For men and women who are called to leadership in the community of faith, apprenticeship in the Psalms is not an option; it is a mandate.”



As with any book, we oftentimes need a context to find what it is we need at any particular time. The Book of Psalms may be divided into books and chapters as:

Psalms 1-41	shows us the character of God to enable us to sing about who God is.
Psalms 42-72	gives us a very definite example of just how to speak to God when times are tough.
Psalms 73-89	models how God would have you tell Him how you really feel.
Psalms 90-106	tell of God's dealing with us, His created sons and daughters to enable us to sing of His divine plan.
Psalms 107-150	enables us to sing and praise our response to our living God – the guy who made us!

Often, as we pray, we can feel as though we have to make our prayers to our heavenly Father/Creator sound 'polite', Oxford English, so to speak! No, it is the honest feelings of our heart that He wants to hear more than anything else without holding back...the Psalms gives us a pretty good example of that, wouldn't you say?!

Ending this writing you will see two examples of Psalm Two. The first is from the New Revised Standard Version (NRSV) of the Bible, the translation of which is used universally by the churches today. The second example is from a paraphrase of the Bible, “The Message”, written in a somewhat more modern/in your face style of writing showing how you are able to use the original text of a Psalm to express you emotions in a manner which fit more 'you'.

Gone are the days where we may ask God to slay our enemies in the beds or the battlefields, being most explicate in the bloodcurdling language of the Psalms...but, sometimes, the dark thoughts of our hearts have to be given an airing to God before sin is able to be forgiven by the next step of confession...forgive us our sins as we forgive others...This is the stumbling block for many of our prayers, for they literally go nowhere past the ceiling of the room in which we are praying...if we haven't asked to be forgiven the 'dark' thoughts of our heart!



Should you have not used any of the Psalms in your daily prayers, may we suggest you use the following six examples as an introduction for you to The Psalter? It is a good practice, always, to start your time of prayers/meditation with an act of praise so, maybe, you might use these six examples for the next week...and see if it helps you focus on our Creator God more fully. If you haven't already, it is a great help to devotions to say the Psalm out loud...well, audibly...to enable God to "hear your voice".

Psalm 8 *Your glory is seen in all the world; what are we that you are mindful of us? Pray: for humankind and all the created order.*

Psalm 24 *You are the King of Glory, Lord Christ. Praise: to God on behalf of all creation.*

Psalm 67 *Let all the peoples praise you, O God, let all the peoples praise you. Pray: for the conversion of the nations*

Psalm 104
(verses 1 – 14) *O Lord my God, how great you are! Praise: for creation.*

Psalm 139 *Search me, O God, and know my heart. Pray: for all who try to escape from the loving demands of God.*

Psalm 147 *Cry out with joy to the Lord, all the earth: Alleluia. Thanksgiving: for Mother Church.*



We have headed each Psalm with its intension – at the end suggested how you may wish to pray/praise.

Below, are the two examples of Psalm Two mentioned earlier. See how you are able to use the Psalms as a 'framework' for your praise, without using the outmoded 'bits'.

Psalm 2 NRSV

1 Why do the nations conspire,
and the peoples plot in vain?
2 The kings of the earth set themselves,
and the rulers take counsel together,
against the Lord and his anointed, saying,
3 'Let us burst their bonds asunder,
and cast their cords from us.'
4 He who sits in the heavens laughs;
the Lord has them in derision.
5 Then he will speak to them in his wrath,
and terrify them in his fury, saying,
6 'I have set my king on Zion, my holy hill.'
7 I will tell of the decree of the Lord:
He said to me, 'You are my son;
today I have begotten you.
8 Ask of me, and I will make the nations your
heritage,
and the ends of the earth your possession.
9 You shall break them with a rod of iron,
and dash them in pieces like a potter's
vessel.'
10 Now therefore, O kings, be wise;
be warned, O rulers of the earth.
11 Serve the Lord with fear,
with trembling 12 kiss his feet,
or he will be angry, and you will perish in the
way;
for his wrath is quickly kindled.
Happy are all who take refuge in him.

Psalm 2 The Message

1-6 Why the big noise, nations?
Why the mean plots, peoples?
Earth-leaders push for position,
Demagogues and delegates meet for summit
talks,
The God-deniers, the Messiah-defiers:
"Let's get free of God!
Cast loose from Messiah!"
Heaven-throned God breaks out laughing.
At first he's amused at their presumption;
Then he gets good and angry.
Furiously, he shuts them up:
"Don't you know there's a King in Zion? A
coronation banquet
Is spread for him on the holy summit."
7-9 Let me tell you what God said next.
He said, "You're my son,
And today is your birthday.
What do you want? Name it:
Nations as a present? continents as a prize?
You can command them all to dance for you,
Or throw them out with tomorrow's trash."
10-12 So, rebel-kings, use your heads;
Upstart-judges, learn your lesson:
Worship God in adoring embrace,
Celebrate in trembling awe. Kiss Messiah!
Your very lives are in danger, you know;
His anger is about to explode,
But if you make a run for God—you won't
regret it!



Charlestown Ladies Fellowship

Wednesday 14th August

Will be held at Charlestown
Church from 10.00am

Join in fellowship

ALL WELCOME

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>