



CONTACT

Charlestown & Garden Suburb Uniting
Church Multi-Centre Congregation

14 August 2022



From Rev Tom

Last week and next week the New Testament lessons come from Hebrews. They are talking about faith. Faith, we are told, is the assurance of things hoped for, the conviction of things not seen (Heb 11:1). In my sermon last week, I described how faith is component to everything we do in life. Even as I sit into a chair I have faith that it will carry my weight. We don't realise that faith is involved until we have an experience that undermines our faith. This is particularly true in relationships. Have someone tell you a lie and you find out about it and it is very hard to trust that person again. Another aspect of faith for Christians is believing something to be true even as we do not see the reality or outcome. One element of this is in relation to the many seemingly unanswerable questions that are out there in life. We live in a world that is rather intolerant of unanswerable questions. In fact, it is one of the reasons why so many have given up believing in God. A belief in God includes too many unanswerable questions. Who is God? Where is God? How is God present to us? Is God good and if God is good why do bad things happen? Can you prove God exists? At the last Spiritual Direction training weekend, the presenter offered words by Rainer Maria Rilke, from his book "Letters to a Young Poet". In this thoroughly elevating modern classic, Rilke makes a beautiful case for the importance of living the questions, embracing uncertainty, and allowing for intuition. In a 1903 letter to his protégé, the 19-year-old cadet and budding poet Franz Xaver Kappus, Rilke writes:

"I want to beg you, as much as I can, dear sir, to be patient toward all that is unsolved in your heart and to try to love the questions themselves like locked rooms and like books that are written in a very foreign tongue. Do not now seek the answers, which cannot be given you because you would not be able to live them. And the point is, to live everything. Live the questions now. Perhaps you will then gradually, without noticing it, live along some distant day into the answer."

This is particularly sage advice in a time of uncertainty. When will the pandemic end? Rilke seems to suggest that the real answers that are of the greatest value are found in the struggle we have that invokes the question. What are the questions that arise in you? What do you learn about yourself when sitting with the questions? How do you live into these questions? I tried going through my questions, and found the process quite revealing.



DIARY

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

Tuesday 30 August

9.30am GCK (Grandparents, Carers & Kids) at Garden Suburb
10.00am Morning tea in the Community – Frankie & Co Café at Lake Macquarie Fair

Thursday 1 September

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



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
- * Ashley and Lorraine
- * Avril Hill
- * Ron and Marion Box
- * Vicki
- * Enid Gaynor
- * John Cooper
- * Mert and Pam
- * Marion and Glen
- * Fred Bryant
- * Catherine
- * Enid Power
- * Jean Townsend
- * Wilma Birch
- * Tony and Nan
- * Brian Doherty
- * Eileen Dunn
- * Tom and Cathy
- * Ken Macdonald

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
- Woodland Services

Wider Community Prayer Points

- Mayoral meeting with Hunter Community Alliance on 8th September at Garden Suburb
- People of Tibet as Dalai Lama is looking for a successor
- New organiser for HCA Helen Fielder-Gill and Callen as he hands over the reins

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



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 20th 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 17th 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.....

SFED group are currently reading a book entitled

Spirituality of Ageing: A Seekers Guide.

If you have any thoughts or insights from your own experiences, let us know, as we each experience God's presence differently and where God is.

In the near future we aim to share insights from this book and your thoughts as well.

Talk to your elder about this.





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

Waratahs at the Willows

Come and enjoy

The Waratah Male Voice Choir with a programme
including Gospel, Musical Shows and modern songs.
Musical Director Annette Phillis and Accompanist Wendy Church



2pm Saturday

10 September 2022

Warners Bay Uniting Church at

The Willows - 342 Hillsborough Road, Warners Bay

Donation \$20

Supporting Christian SRE (Scripture) in our local high schools provided by the
Charlestown and Warners Bay Christian Education Associations Includes a
delicious afternoon tea, served at the conclusion of the performance.

Tickets available from

OR Contact Paul on 0411 236 047



A PASSING THOUGHT

Yep, there is yet another section of the Bible that so many Christians avoid; they see it as 'too hard to understand', 'too angry and bloodthirsty', 'oh so downright gloomy' and 'why bother with it anyway, it's just so ancient – not for today!'

Yet, wonder of wonders, our God has placed said section right, bang, in the middle of the Bible with twice as many chapters as the next longest book. He made it contain the longest chapter...and, then for effect, the shortest chapter! He has writers of the New Testament...including Jesus...quoting from it 75 times, with just as many indirect references! So, dear folk, please don't miss the many ways God is shouting to get your attention!!! Oh yes...this most valuable section of God's Word is, of course, The Book of Psalms (more commonly called The Psalter).

Often called "The Psalms of David" (as over half of the Psalms were written by him), though there is a bevy of other authors including Moses, Solomon, Asaph, the sons of Korah...

All, I repeat, **all** of the Psalms are music to God's ears, as it readily shows us how to speak to God in prayer...it doesn't pull any punches...often very raw...if we are being honest with God, isn't this how we should be? A writer of the fourth century, Athanasius, commented that this book of the Bible was unique...the rest of the Bible speaks **to** us, Psalms speaks **for** us! This being the simple reason why so many people in human history have loved to use this most precious of books.

If you are not at all familiar with the Book of Psalms, it is broken into five differing books:

Psalms 1-41 focuses on the character of God in order to teach us how to sing about who God is.

Psalms 42-72 teaches us how to sing when times are hard

Psalms 73-89 models how God wants you to sing out how you feel.

Psalms 90-106 charts the history of God's dealing with the human race so that we can learn to sing about God's plan with the human race.

Psalms 107-150 is a call for you to sing your response to God.



Make no mistake, dear friends, God's desire is for you to be able to develop a deeper relationship with Him. His heart desperately wishes that you can truly sing out to Him in the sort of worship songs/prayers that have always – and ever will be – sweet music to His ears!



By way of closing, two Psalms that have helped pilot my way for Quiet Days and for Retreats have been Psalms 84 and 27 respectively.

There is a great wealth of grace to be learnt from the Psalms. If you would like to learn more please contact The Rev'd Tom or Anne Threlfo.

News from our Glenrock Anglican neighbours - - NEW COMMUNITY EVENT

Craft & Chat on Thursdays

Commencing 18 August

11.30am - 12.30pm / 1pm

Glenrock Anglican, 34 Hexham St, Kahibah

Have you ever wanted to learn to knit or crochet or try a watercolour painting class?

Wool, needles and paints supplied or bring your own supplies if you have some.

We are also keen to hear from anyone who would like to teach a craft.

We ask for a gold donation and tea and coffee will be provided. All welcome. Hope you can make it!



For more info, please contact Dimity on 0407 290 425.

UNITING CHURCH SERVICE AVAILABLE FOR CHURCH VOLUNTEERS

Employee Assistant Program (EAP)

If you need some extra emotional support during a stressful time, you can access an experienced Psychologist for counselling, coaching and support, as well as referrals to other services. Appointments can be face-to-face, on the phone or on Zoom. More information at <https://nswact.uca.org.au/staff-intranet/employee-assistance-program-eap/> or ring 1300 360 364.

UNITING CHURCH SERVICE AVAILABLE FOR ALL CHURCH MEMBERS

Speak Out in Confidence

There may be a time when you hear, see or experience something which concerns you about the safety or well-being of our church. If you don't feel that you can discuss this with our congregation leaders, you can contact "Speak-Out" to voice your concerns. You will be able to speak to someone in confidence. More information at <https://nswact.uca.org.au/speak-out-in-confidence/>, ring 1800 951 145 or write to PO Box 895, Darlinghurst NSW 1300



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

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

Administration:

P: 4943 4019

E: 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>