



CONTACT



Charlestown & Garden Suburb Uniting
Church Multi-Centre Congregation

10 December 2023

From Rev Tom

Yesterday I had a “Relational Meeting”. A foundational element of Community Organising is the relational meeting. Community Organising has an aspiration to build power in the community, to achieve desirable goals. Power is a fraught dynamic in our world, particularly when expressed in the form of “power over” others. So, in Community Organising the goal is to have “power with” others – to achieve the common good. To achieve “power with” means to understand those with whom you are developing power, to develop solidarity and connection. This leads to a definition of power as “the number of people with whom you have a meaningful relationship”, the amount of connection one has with others. So, the relational meeting is a foundation of Community Organising, and I had a relational meeting with a young woman who works for CDAH (Community Disability Alliance Hunter). CDAH is an organisation for people with disabilities run by people with disabilities – it is a peer support organisation. This young woman has cerebral palsy and autism. I wondered about the impact autism had on her. We met in a café and she said, one aspect of autism is that she has no control over the information that she attends to. So, while she is listening to me she is also listening to the conversation at the table next to her, and listening to the woman behind the counter as she is talking to customers. She said that it is enormously challenging trying to deal with all that information coming at her at once. She asked me what I was up to. I told her about Neos. I told her that Neos was about discovering what God is doing in the community. I said it was letting go of all my religious definitions and observing the Spirit of God in the raw. She wondered how that might be. I said, well, it is Advent at the moment. I explained about how Advent is a time of expecting the presence of God. I said that over the next four-week period we look at four ways we experience how God became present to humanity, how God will become present in the future, and how God becomes present to us right now. Those four ways are the themes consecutively for each Sunday, and about which we can reflect in the following week. The first theme is hope. When we look around us, and in us, when we see hope, whether it is in a religious form or just spontaneously emerging in any circumstance, there is the presence of God. The next week we look at joy. Again, when we experience real, deep joy, wherever we discover it, there is the presence of God. Then there is love. It doesn’t require if to be wrapped up on the religious baggage. Where there is love, so there is God. And finally, there is peace. As we continue this exploration, this reflection, over the four weeks, hopefully the biggest discovery is that each of these elements don’t come from outside of us – perhaps if that is what we think we will be sorely disappointed. Rather, they are the place from where we begin. As we see the world from the place of hope, joy, love, and peace, then we will see it all around. Then we will realise that all is in God, and is God. This young woman told me she wanted some of that. She asked me what was on during Advent, where she could go, to hear more about that, experience some of that for herself!



DIARY

Thursday 7 December

10.00am Morning tea in the Community - common seated area opposite Butcher at Charlestown Sq

Friday 8 December

6.00pm Ladies Night at Kahibah

Saturday 9 December

12 noon Friendship Circle Christmas Luncheon at the Pricter's

Sunday 10 December – Advent 2

9.00am Worship Service – Leader: Sue Pepper Preacher: Rev'd Tom

Isaiah 40:1-11; Psalm 85:1-2, 8-13; 2 Peter 3:8-15a; Mark 1:1-8

Tuesday 12 December

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

Wednesday 13 December

12 noon Ladies Fellowship Christmas Lunch at Poppies

Thursday 14 December

10.00am Worship Service at Garden Suburb Aged Care – Carols and Communion

10.00am Morning tea in the Community - common seated area opposite Butcher at Charlestown Sq

Sunday 17 December – Advent 3

9.00am Holy Communion Service – Leader and Preacher: Rev'd Tom

Isaiah 61:1-4, 8-11; Psalm 126: 1 Thessalonians 5: 12-28; John 1:6-8, 19-28

Monday 18 December

10.00am Garden Suburb Nursing Home Pastoral Care Visit

Tuesday 19 December

9.00am Needlework n Natter

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

Thursday 21 December

10.00am Morning tea in the Community - common seated area opposite Butcher at Charlestown Sq

Sunday 24 December – Advent 4

9.00am Worship Service – Leader: Michael Smith and

Preacher: PR Rev'd Sharron Hollis

2 Samuel 7:1-11,16; Psalm 89:1-4, 19-27; Romans 16:25-27; Luke 1:26-38



Sunday 24 December – Christmas Eve at Garden Suburb Church

Christmas Family Service

Isaiah 9:2-7; Psalm 96: Titus 2:11-14; Luke 2:1-20

Monday 25 December – Christmas Day

9.00am Worship Service Leader and Preacher Rev'd Tom

The Communion of Christmas

Isaiah 52:7-10; Psalm 98; Hebrews 1: 1-12; John 1:1-14



Sunday 31 December – Christmas 1

9.00am Worship Service – Leader and Preacher Rev'd Tom

Isaiah 61:10 - 62:3; Psalm 148; Galatians 4:4-7; Luke 2:22-40

THE PRAYER PAGE



Pray that the Australian Church can model today, the example of the early Christians, in making space for all people to flourish in community.

Pastoral Prayer Points

- * Fred Bryant in hospital
- * Daniel Stuart (Tom's son) with post operative infection
- * Family and friends of Glenda O'Donahue
- * June Locker
- * Family and friends of Tom and Kathy
- * Ryan Walpole in rehabilitation
- * Kathryn Gray
- * those suffering with Covid
- * Those in our Congregation who have lost loved ones in recent months
- * Anne
- * Mac
- * Jacqueline Fenwick
- * Peter Ferguson
- * Nola in hospital
- * Isabella
- * Ashley
- * Janice Wright
- * Eileen Dunn
- * Mert
- * Judith and family
- * Lorraine Pepper
- * Enid Power
- * Fred Bryant
- * Max

Maintained by SFED and Enid Power



Congregational Prayer Points

- Church Council
- Project Reconnect
- Worship Services
- Cathy Beeton and SRE classes
- Worship Committee

Wider Community Prayer Points

- those affected by climate change in Australia eg droughts and fires
- Tom and NEOS as he follows ideas and opportunities including with Wesley Mission at Windsor, Hunter Community Alliance, Greater Charlestown Sustainability Group
- Hunter Community Alliance's arrangements towards the Founding Assembly in April 2024 , as approaches are made to encourage politicians to attend and give support to local initiatives to reduce emissions
- The situation in Israel and Gaza
- The victims and families of the earthquake in Afghanistan
- Consequences of climate change around the world
- The situation in Ukraine and other trouble spots
- Fabian, Wilfreda and children as Kenya experiences floods

Service for *Peace*



Bishop Michael Kennedy and the Diocesan Ecumenical and Interfaith Council invite you to a communal Service for Peace.

All denominations and faith backgrounds are invited to come together as we pray for peace in our world.

Date: Tuesday, 12 December 2023

Time: 5:30pm

Location: Sacred Heart Cathedral
841 Hunter St, Newcastle West



mn.catholic.org.au



Charlestown Ladies Fellowship

Wednesday 13th December

**Christmas Lunch at
Poppies at 12 noon**

ALL WELCOME

Let Sue Warren know if you are
attending 0427 737 793



Newcastle Chamber Choir's Christmas concert will showcase our best festive repertoire for our beloved home crowd.

For group bookings or assistance purchasing tickets, email us

at info@newcastlechamberchoir.com

www.newcastlechamberchoir.com

People Power Breakfast

Join David Barrow (37), Executive Officer of NSW Community Alliance as he shares his experience as a community organiser of 17 years.

NSW is a state where decisions are made by Martin Place.
How do we respond when not in the capital?

Expect vivid stories from David's experience, recent and not-so-recent history.

Expect insights; philosophical, political, and perhaps theological.

Expect to finish your brekkie with more fire in the belly and humour in the heart.

A Men's Breakfast

at Charlestown Uniting Church - 24 Milson St

8am Saturday 9th

December

\$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

By Wednesday 6th December 2023

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

Congregation Directory

**PRINTING
SOON!!!!**

Last call to let Paul know if you have any changes to make for the new Directory!

Please provide any changes by Friday the
8th December

Send an email to Paul Russell pmraus74@gmail.com - clearly stating the change - and signing with your name(s) as authorisation.

For brand new entries and if you do not have email access - please complete one of the Change Forms available in the foyer at Charlestown and give to Paul Russell or give to Jenny Cummings _ Admin Officer.

Any questions - ask Paul Russell 0411236047





**CHARLESTOWN FRIENDSHIP CIRCLE
CHRISTMAS IN THE WEST**

All are invited to the Annual Christmas Party of the Charlestown Friendship Circle to be held at

**Grahame and Lynne Pricter's Place
137 Cassinia Crescent, West Wallsend.**

On Saturday 9th December 2023

11-30 am to whenever!!

Cost: Approx \$10 per person on day.

This includes a BBQ Meal, Salads, Prawns, Desserts plus an assortment of festive nibbles on the table and pre dinner drinks.

Come and enjoy a time of Fun, Food and Fellowship

Please let Sue Warren know by Wednesday 6th December 2023 if you are attending **and if you need a lift.**

Let Sue Warren know if you have any special dietary needs.



Share God's love through the Christmas Bowl



Thank you for joining with churches across Australia as we share God's love through the Christmas Bowl.

Since 1949, the Christmas Bowl has brought together committed Australian Christians with dedicated local partners around the world to give hope to people uprooted by conflict and disaster. By sharing this tradition, you are helping build a world where all people have a safe place to belong. **Thank you.**



CALL: 1800 025 101 VISIT: christmasbowl.actforpeace.org.au

The Christmas appeal of Act for Peace, the international humanitarian agency of the National Council of Churches in Australia. ABN 86 619 970 188

If giving to the Christmas Bowl is part of your Christmas traditions, envelopes to put in the offering are available on the entry cupboard or you can make an online donation at

<https://christmasbowl.actforpeace.org.au/donate>

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>