



CONTACT



Charlestown & Garden Suburb Uniting
Church Multi-Centre Congregation

29 September 2024

From Rev Tom

I made it back from trekking a section of the Great North Walk. It was much more strenuous than I anticipated, and glad for all the exercise I put in so to be able to complete the journey! It was wonderfully picturesque clambering down steep gullies and climbing up escarpments onto ridges looking across great reaches of Australian bush. I felt at times I could be experiencing what it was like for the First Nations people many thousands of years ago (except for the regular international passenger jets flying over on their way to Mascot airport!). Such experiences kept me pondering my journey about saying an Acknowledgement of Country at the beginning of worship. Two weeks ago, I described my experiences with the Indigenous community at Gloucester. Well, then I moved to Parkes. While at Parkes I again joined a reconciliation group. I also spent a fair bit of time with the site manager of Barrick Gold Mine at Lake Cowal (near West Wyalong). His name is Bill and he is a member of the Parkes Uniting Church. As part of his job, he worked closely with the Aboriginal Community and through Barrick's funded the creation of the Wiradjuri Study Centre at Condobolin (a wonderful place). I also met Richard Trudgen whose family lived at Canowindra, but he worked as a community development officer at Katherine, Northern Territory. Richard wrote a book called "Why Warriors Lie Down and Die". The book was about the tragic failure in communication between First Nations people and white settlers, a communication failure that continues today and results in the ongoing demise of our indigenous people. Reading that book helped me make sense of so much of the puzzlement I had back when I was in my 20s working as a Lay Pastor in Menindee. Anyway, in the midst of all this, I was asked to travel to Darwin to attend the Northern Synod and Northern Presbytery (they were the same geographic region) to give a presentation on Project Reconnect. I discovered there a large percentage of the Synod meeting were Aboriginal people. My understanding of who we are as a Uniting Church grew. We are not a church that has a mission to, or a justice policy for, Aboriginal people. We ARE Aboriginal people. First Nation people are a part of who we are. It so happened that at that meeting the proposals were about same-sex marriage, just like was happening in the rest of the Uniting Church at the time. The dignity with which the Aboriginal members participated in that debate made me wish the rest of the Uniting Church would come to Darwin and learn!! Sadly, when I came to Charlestown my connection with the Aboriginal community ended. Perhaps part of the reason is that I haven't made the effort. I certainly have felt all this time the absence of this as part of my life. Even though sometimes challenging, it has always been enriching. Then, a few years back I read the book, "Deep Time Dreaming". I have mentioned this book in my preaching. This book was wonderfully illuminating. It made me aware that white Australians spend so much time being afraid of the claims of First Nation people over dispossession. This has meant we have maintained an attitude of rejection of Aboriginals and their background. But this book helped me realise that if we embraced the Aboriginal story as part of the Australian story we would have something about which to be enormously proud. That is, an unbroken history of occupation of this land for some 70,000 years, with the remarkable stories of survival and flourishing that go with it. It is a unique story in all human history. I realised that rather than being in a state of tension with the Indigenous people of this land it would be far better to honour them and so have as our story one that truly connects us with the land.

Continued over.....

And there is the final connection - "Acknowledgment of Country". Recently I had a conversation with Rev Dr Chris Budden who pointed out that the "Acknowledgement of Country" is just that. It is foremost about the country, the land. Then, it is about those who have cared for the land, just as we all carry on in that caring. He pointed out the words of the Preamble to the UCA Constitution. It says, *1. When the churches that formed the Uniting Church arrived in Australia as part of the process of colonisation they entered a land that had been created and sustained by the Triune God they knew in Jesus Christ. 2. Through this land God had nurtured and sustained the First Peoples of this country, the Aboriginal and Islander peoples, who continue to understand themselves to be the traditional owners and custodians (meaning 'sovereign' in the languages of the First Peoples) of these lands and waters since time immemorial.* The significance now for me is that the "Acknowledgement of Country" truly connects us to this land, and particularly connects us with the God who created this land, which has sustained Aboriginal people since time immemorial. Not only does an Acknowledgement of Country give recognition to Aboriginal people, but it connects us all to this wonderful land and to the one who created it. It would be great if you read the Preamble of the UCA Constitution, which can be found here: https://uniting.church/wp-content/uploads/2024/06/Preamble_A4_New2024_Final.pdf

DIARY

Thursday 26 September

- 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 29th September – Pentecost 19

- 9.00am Divine Worship
Leader and Preacher: Rev'd Tom
Esther 7:1-6, 9-10, 9:20-22; Psalm 124; James 5: 13-20; Mark 9: 38-50

Tuesday 1 October

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

Thursday 3 October

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

Sunday 6th October – Pentecost 20

- 9.00am Divine Worship
Leader and Preacher:
Esther 7:1-6, 9-10, 9:20-22; Psalm 124; James 5: 13-20; Mark 9: 38-50

Monday 7 October

- 10.30am Garden Suburb Nursing Home Pastoral Care Visitation

Tuesday 8 October

- 9.30 – 11am Community Book Library at Garden Suburb
10.00am Morning tea in the Community at Lake Macquarie Square

Wednesday 9 October

- 9.30am Kids Club at Charlestown
10.00am Ladies Fellowship at Charlestown

Thursday 10 October

- 10.00am Morning tea in the Community – common seated area opposite Butcher at Charlestown Square
10.30am Worship Service at Garden Suburb Aged Care

THE PRAYER PAGE



Prayer is the Voice of Faith

Pastoral Prayer Points

* families whose loved ones have died recently especially Clarke and Monaghan families whose funerals occur this and next week.

* Janice and Don Wright

* Cathy Beeton

* Kelly

* Laraine Chegwiddden

* Tony Sellen

* Nelda Marshall

* Vivianne

* Shirley Elkin

* Lorraine Pepper

* Vicki

* Pam and Ken

* Lyn Benson

* Jean

* Fred Bryant

* June Locker

* Ryan Walpole

* Kathryn Gray

* Jacqueline Fenwick

* Isabella

* Eileen Dunn

* Pam and Mert

* Enid Power

- Max
- Tom and Kathy
- Don Humphries

Maintained by SFED and Er

Congregational Prayer Points

- Church Council
- Elections for Church Council
- John Lewis and his work with Wesley Mission in Windale and Hamilton South
- 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

- Children in the orphanage as MPox is spreading rapidly in Kenya. Pray for vaccines to arrive soon and Pray for Wilfreda
- Tom on holidays as well as Neos ministry
- 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:

29th September 2024 – Scone Uniting Church

Scone Congregation includes the rural worship centres of Scone, Rouchel and Bunnan. The Scone Uniting Church meets each Sunday at 9:30am with approximately 25-35 people in attendance. Rouchel has an average attendance of 2-8 people who meet for a monthly service. Bunnan has just begun to meet after a 3-year hiatus. The Scone congregation is an aging congregation but welcomes a number of Asian and Pacific Islander worshippers who are employed locally. On a weekly basis, there is a Monday Bible Study group, a Tuesday Open Door coffee morning, and a Saturday English Language Conversation class. The Pacific Islander (Pasifika) attendees also hold regular services, mostly on Saturday evenings in conjunction with a Brazilian church.

Prayer: We pray for the members of all worship centres and their families. May the centres of worship be places of welcome and hospitality in their communities. We pray for God's guidance for all who lead us and may they be faithful to God and to His Word. We also pray that we will be open to God's leading in this changing world, and that we will be sensitive to opportunities in the path forward regarding Mission and Ministry, and the use of our properties and other resources. Amen.

Spiritual Practice of the Week

Contemplation: Contemplation is about waking up. To be contemplative is to experience an event fully, in all its aspects. It comes from a desire to wake up to the presence of God in all things.

Practice: Take a contemplative walk with Jesus. Express your intention to be alone with God.

- Enjoy moving your body. Smell the air. Take in the sights. Appreciate God's good handiwork within and without.
- Love God for his gifts and goodness to you.

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

Church Council Elections

Please support your Church Council by nominating someone for the vacancies on the form to be found on the foyer table



Children & Family Worker Update



Our Holiday Kids Club will be held on the **9th of October** at **Charlestown Church**, our theme is 'come to the party'.

Last chance to register this week!!!

Cathy

Soft Plastics Update

Both Woolworths and Aldi now have bins at the front of their Charlestown stores.

The box will stay in the foyer for the present as the Woolworths bin says it is a trial and some people seem to be using it as a rubbish bin so the trial may be deemed unsuccessful.



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

Next day will be 8th Oct. 9.30am to 11am

then every 2nd Tuesday of the month



Charlestown Friendship Circle

Saturday 12 October

Will be at Murray's Beach Café at

12 noon for lunch.

All Welcome



Bring a
Friend!

MEN'S BREAKFAST



With Guest Speaker

Gwenda Brownell

Taking hold of the near edge

Social Justice

Why Bother?

Charlestown Uniting Church - 24 Milson Street

8am Saturday 19th October

Cost \$12 RSVP to Paul Russell

0411 236047 pmraus74@gmail.com By 16th October 2024

Our Speaker will be **Gwenda Brownell**, 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. 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



Charlestown Ladies Fellowship

Wednesday 9 October

Will be held at Charlestown
Church from 10.00am

Join in fellowship

ALL WELCOME

Margaret Jurd College



BY HELPING MJC,
YOU WILL HELP TO
CHANGE THE LIVES
OF OUR STUDENTS.

At MJC we are so much more than your typical school. As part of our service students are supported in many ways that help them succeed during their education and beyond.

To support our efforts, the help we receive from donors and sponsors varies greatly. From business-ready clothes so our students feel prepared for interviews or formal attire to be worn at our end of year celebrations, to donations that provide meals for students so they are ready to learn at school.

Your donation, be it a little, or a lot, can make a huge difference to our students.

Donate today by emailing donations@mjcs.wa.edu.au

Some of our Church Contacts:

Minister

Rev Tom Stuart

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Administration:

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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>