



# CONTACT

Charlestown & Garden Suburb Uniting  
Church Multi-Centre Congregation

2 April 2023



**The SFED group**, for quite a few months, has been reading and discussing the book “The Spirituality of Age” by Robert L. Weber and Carol Osborn and more recently we have been particularly interested in the Appendix to the book “Twelve Exercises for Seekers”.

As Christians, I’m sure we have no desire to stagnate, but would rather grow spiritually as we engage in our spiritual journey. However, as we age, many people often struggle, feeling disengaged and even worthless, and this is often based on facts that physically and mentally they can no longer do the work they once could. This can be quite discouraging and even depressing. BUT it doesn’t have to be this way - we can share a curiosity and a passion for life as it unfolds during the various stages, including as we get older! We can have favourite spiritual exercises that can provide us with wells of knowledge, comfort, clarity and inspiration.

Every fortnight, a description of a spiritual exercise will appear in the Contact and will be repeated the following week, so that those who do not view the Contact until the following Sunday or later, will have an opportunity to practise the exercise and to consider any questions that may be included. You may like to share your experience and insights of the exercise with a friend or around the morning tea table, after Church. Some exercises you might dismiss as “not your cup of tea”, but others may become a favourite for you to practise regularly.

On the 5th and 12th April, the first exercise will appear in Contact, and the following Sunday i.e. 16th April, you will have an opportunity to share. Feedback will be presented the following Sunday i.e. 23rd April, as well as the previous Wednesday i.e. 19th April the new Exercise will be in Contact. The series will continue in Contact for 24 weeks.

Why are we doing this you may ask?

Jesus said in John 10:10 “I came that they may have life, and may have it abundantly (or to the full)”.

The more we do our spiritual exercises, the more understanding we gain of God’s nature and gifts to us, and the more gratitude we can express and gain a sense of God’s presence with us.

Recently, in Love to the World, the commentary said this: “At times it is difficult to have the words or name tangible hopes in our life. We just know there is more; more love, more joy, more peace that is possible with God.....God hears our “worthless groans”.

SFED hopes that you will try these exercises as they appear in Contact, and give feedback as to how the experience was for you.

Sue Warren on behalf of SFED

# DIARY

## **Thursday 30 March**

10.00am Morning tea in the Community – Smelly Cheesecake Café at Charlestown Square  
1.30-2.30pm Bible Study at Garden Suburb

## **Sunday 2 April – Palm Sunday**

9.00am Worship Service and Baptism  
Leader & Preacher – Rev Tom Stuart  
**with Children's Corner**

Isaiah 50:4-9a, Psalm 118:1-2,19-29, Philippians 2:5-11, Matthew 21:1-11



## **Monday 3 April**

10.00am Pastoral Care Visit to Garden Suburb Aged Care Facility  
7.00pm Holy Week reflection at Hamilton Uniting Church – led by Rev Tom Stuart & team

## **Tuesday 4 April**

10.00am Morning tea in the Community – Frankie & Co Café at Lake Macquarie  
7.00pm Holy Week reflection at Hamilton Uniting Church – led by Rev Garry Derkenne

## **Wednesday 5 April**

7.00pm Holy Week reflection at Hamilton Uniting Church – led by Rev Rob Hanks

## **Thursday 6 April**

10.00am Morning tea in the Community – Smelly Cheesecake Café at Charlestown  
4.30pm Maundy Thursday Service at Garden Suburb Uniting Church

## **Friday 7 April**

9.00am Good Friday Service at Charlestown Uniting Church

## **Saturday 8 April**

10am Friendship Circle meet for morning tea at 16 Footers Club at Belmont



## **Sunday 9 April – EASTER DAY**

9.00am **Worship Service including Holy Communion** – Leader Sue Warren,  
Preacher – Rev Tom Stuart

*Acts 10:34-43, Psalm 118:1-2, Colossians 3:1-4, John 20:1-18*

## **Monday 10 April**

No Worship service at Woodlands

## **Tuesday 11 April**

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

## **Wednesday 12 April**

10.00am Charlestown Ladies Fellowship Morning tea at Redhead Cafe

## **Thursday 13 April**

10.00am Morning tea in the Community – Smelly Cheesecake Café at Charlestown Square

## **Saturday 15 April**

8.00am Men's Breakfast at Charlestown

## **Sunday 16 April – Easter 2**

9.00am Worship Service – Leader & Preacher Rev Tom Stuart

*Acts 2:14a, 22-32, Psalm 16, 1 Peter 1:3-9, John 20:19-31*

## **Tuesday 18 April**

10.00am Morning tea in the Community – Frankie & Co Café at Lake Macquarie  
7.00pm Stories: Hope and Possibilities with Tim Costello at Hamilton Uniting Church

## **Wednesday 19 April**

9.30am Kid's Fun Day at Charlestown

## **Thursday 20 April**

10.00am Morning tea in the Community – Smelly Cheesecake Café at Charlestown Square



# THE PRAYER PAGE

*And so I urge you: carry on an ongoing conversation with God about the daily stuff of life, a little like Tevye in Fiddler on the Roof. For now, do not worry about 'proper' praying, just talk to God."*  
Richard J. Foster



## Pastoral Prayer Points

- \* Jacqueline Fenwick and family following Bob's death
- \* Peter Ferguson going to Rehab
- \* Isabella in Rehab at Warners Bay
- \* Eileen Dunn
- \* Glenn, Donna and girls
- \* Sue and Warren
- \* Cat and Ezra
- \* Enid Gaynor
- \* Gloria and John Booth
- \* Tony and Nan
- \* Mert and Pam
- \* Judith and family
- \* Ashley (in Respite) and Lorraine (DVT)
- \* Ken MacDonald (home from hospital) and Sharon
- \* Rhonda White and family (after death of Bert)
- \* Enid Power
- \* Fred Bryant
- \* Max

## Congregational Prayer Points

- Neos and Tom's role week by week
- Project Reconnect
- Worship Services
- Lease of Whitebridge property
- Cathy Beeton and SRE classes
- Worship Committee

## Wider Community Prayer Points

- Upcoming State elections
- Victims of floods, earthquakes and fires
- Wilfreda's orphanage
- The situation in Ukraine

Maintained by SFED and Enid Power

**Sunday morning**

**2 April**



**Daylight Savings  
Time Ends**

**Set your clocks back 1 hour**

# Children & Family Worker Update



## Hi Everyone

**This Sunday we WELCOME** to our Charlestown Church Jamee-Leigh and Brayden Spinks who bring their 3<sup>rd</sup> daughter Olive Jean Florence for her Baptism. We have also had the pleasure of being involved in the Baptism of Olive's 2 sisters Ezme-Rose and Maya. What a joyous way to celebrate Palm Sunday.

I pray blessings over Olive and her family today, and to the Spink family and friends and to all our congregation members this Palm Sunday and throughout the Easter Season.

*'May your hearts be filled with new hope and your souls with happiness'*

**It will be a busy time this week** with 3 Easter assemblies across 3 schools, unfortunately, 2 of my schools are not able to have Easter Assemblies because of other commitments but I have included the Easter Message into their earlier lessons.

Cathy



## Bullet Proofing Yourself Against Depression

### Depression is a serious and tricky illness

**Unfortunately, it can also go unrecognized for a long period of time – often especially true for men.**

People suffering with depression can become really good at covering the symptoms or making excuses. Some may not even realise that there's a problem. But 1 in 8 men will experience depression, and blokes make up an average seven out of every nine suicides every single day in Australia.

Learn about ways to "bullet-proof" yourself against depression: recognise the signs, get in early and make a difference, keep yourself staying more mentally healthy.

Gwenda Brownell (almost-retired psychologist) will help us understand how depression shows up differently in men, and present strategies that help with keeping the "black dog" away.

### **A Men's Breakfast**

at Charlestown Uniting Church - 24 Milson St

**8am Saturday 15<sup>th</sup> April**

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*

**By Wednesday 12<sup>th</sup> April 2023**

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

## *A PASSING THOUGHT...*

Remember way back...no, back further than that...when each day you attended Sunday School, you received a small (very) card with a text of Scripture and a coloured picture to accompany it? At the Congregational Sunday School, to which we were duly bundled off, when you had saved up a whole heap of these little cards, you could trade them in for a larger one to hang on your bedroom wall. My first 'big' card, with its text, has always remained with me; "Your word is a lamp unto my feet and a light to my path" – Psalm 119:105.

Following on from the other Sunday, this week we are looking at Jesus saying: "**I AM the Light of the world.**" (See text below) Jesus spoke these words in the section immediately after the woman who was caught in adultery – so, where was he at the time?



On the first day of the Jewish Feast of the Tabernacles, golden lamps were lit in the temple courtyards as a reminder that God led the Israelites through a pillar of fire for forty years in the desert (Numbers 14:14). Now, on the last day, the greatest day of the Festival, the lamps were extinguished to mark the end of the week of celebration. To get it in complete context, we look at John 7:37-39, as there are the other stories that come in between, but this is where the 'action' was happening!

From the text below, you will see that a whole argy-bargy developed between Jesus and his 'friends' the Pharisees! Who is this dude, they wanted to know?!

As with all good preachers, Jesus leaves his audience divided. Those watching the lamps being snuffed out in the Temple courtyard know that he is claiming to be someone far greater than the Jewish rabbis.

In the movie, "The Matrix", near the end, Morpheus says: "I'm trying to free your mind, Neo, but I can only show the door. You're the one who has to walk through it."

Jesus, our Saviour and our King, tells us to walk in His Light – to come through the door of darkness into His Glorious Light, for Jesus tells us quite plainly that, ultimately, everything done in 'darkness' will be subjected to His Light and Judgement. For we have been told by Jesus; "Let your light so shine before others, that they may see your good, and give glory to God in heaven." (Matthew 5: 16). Sadly, many good folk in Church (any Church) still do things in 'darkness' and refuse to come out, completely, to the Light of Christ. Dear reader, of course, this situation doesn't really apply to you and me...or does it...?

Bishop Thomas Ken (1692) wrote a wonderful hymn but, sadly, like so many has fallen 'out of fashion'. Nevertheless, I leave you one verse that has stuck by me, even yet, for a possible meditation, this week.

*"Direct, control, suggest this day,  
all I design, or do, or say,  
that all my powers, with all their might,  
in thy sole glory may unite."*

See you in Church!



## John 8:12-20

New Revised Standard Version

### Jesus the Light of the World

<sup>12</sup> Again Jesus spoke to them, saying, 'I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will never walk in darkness but will have the light of life.' <sup>13</sup> Then the Pharisees said to him, 'You are testifying on your own behalf; your testimony is not valid.' <sup>14</sup> Jesus answered, 'Even if I testify on my own behalf, my testimony is valid because I know where I have come from and where I am going, but you do not know where I come from or where I am going. <sup>15</sup> You judge by human standards; I judge no one. <sup>16</sup> Yet even if I do judge, my judgement is valid; for it is not I alone who judge, but I and the Father who sent me. <sup>17</sup> In your law it is written that the testimony of two witnesses is valid. <sup>18</sup> I testify on my own behalf, and the Father who sent me testifies on my behalf.' <sup>19</sup> Then they said to him, 'Where is your Father?' Jesus answered, 'You know neither me nor my Father. If you knew me, you would know my Father also.' <sup>20</sup> He spoke these words while he was teaching in the treasury of the temple, but no one arrested him, because his hour had not yet come.



## Charlestown Friendship Circle

Saturday 8<sup>th</sup> April, 10.00am

at the 16 Footers Club, Belmont for

Morning Tea

All Welcome





Charlestown Ladies Fellowship

Wednesday 12<sup>th</sup> April

Morning tea at Redhead Cafe

Leaving the Church at 10.00am

*All Welcome*



**stories**

Hope and Possibilities  
a world in need : gambling reform

**Tim Costello**

with music from Heather Price

**APRIL**

**18**  
2023

**7pm Tuesday 18th April 2023**

**Hamilton Uniting Church**

150 Beaumont St, Hamilton

Information m: 0407401833

e: ucahambro@bigpond.com

**ALL  
WELCOME**





# Palm Sunday *Picnic for Peace*

speakers... music... solidarity... protest...

**1pm Sunday 2nd April 2023**  
**Civic Park, Newcastle**  
King and Auckland St - bring a chair or blanket  
*All Welcome*

acting for peace justice for refugees



further information email: [lekaniko@gmail.com](mailto:lekaniko@gmail.com)

## Some of our Church Contacts:

### **Minister**

Rev Tom Stuart

M: 0427 625 502

E: [tom@thestuarts.id.au](mailto:tom@thestuarts.id.au)

### **Children & Families Resource Worker:**

Mrs Cathy Beeton

M: 0409 445 933

E: [Cath4858@gmail.com](mailto:Cath4858@gmail.com)

Mrs Cathy Beeton is also our Safe Church Contact Person

### **Administration:**

P: 4943 4019

E: [office@charlestown.unitingchurch.org.au](mailto: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>

Worship Services: <https://tinyurl.com/CHaGS-YouTube-Link>