



# CONTACT



Charlestown & Garden Suburb Uniting  
Church Multi-Centre Congregation

**14 July 2024**

## From Rev Tom

The Ephesians reading this week says “Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us in Christ with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places,” (1:3). The rest of the passage goes on to describe all the ways we as Christians are blessed by God. But I have a confession to make. Every morning when I wake up my grizzling or fear begins. Before my eyes even open it is like a groan emerges, “Oh no! Today!” and something negative comes to mind.

The other day I was travelling with a fellow who is now in his mid-seventies. While this fellow was driving he described the spiritual teacher he had while he was young. He said that his spiritual teacher had an illness that meant that all of one lung had to be removed and half of his other lung had also to be removed. So, this spiritual teacher lived with only a quarter of normal lung capacity. The fellow speaking to me said that this man, who he called Mr Adie, taught him many wonderful things. But the biggest impact that Mr Adie had on him was that despite this terrible impost on his life Mr Adie never spoke of anything but gratitude for his life, and even gratitude for his every breath. If anyone had cause to complain, it was Mr Adie. But on the contrary, it seems when Mr Adie woke in the morning he gave thanks to God. I heard another person also speak of this about Mr Adie. But the other person said something even more amazing. After Mr Adie died the other person discovered that Mr Adie had found out after his operation that the doctors had made a mistake. The removal of all but a quarter of his lung capacity was unnecessary (this information came from Mr Adie’s son). Mr Adie did not tell anyone about this tragic error, nor did he try to gain any compensation. Rather than Mr Adie telling this sad story to everyone he met, he transformed this great pain in his life. This suffering of his meant that every breath was a battle for life. So, he began to give thanks for every breath. That gratitude for each breath turned into gratitude for everything.

I have actually been doing this for a while, but these days my waking moments have become a spiritual practice. That spiritual practice is simply this. When I wake my old habit is not far away. There is some negative thought. But that negative thought has itself become a reminder. It is a reminder to thank God that I woke up today. It is to thank God for the day that is ahead. It is to thank God that I am heading into today surrounded by the love of God. And I remember the delight that I go into the day inspired by that love. Maybe as I keep doing this I will one day be able to write as effusively as the Apostle Paul about the unending benefits that pour out on me because of God’s love through Jesus Christ our Lord.



## Study Leave

Rev Tom will be on study leave from Monday 22 July to Sunday 28 July (inclusive), so won’t be available during this time.

If you require support or assistance during this time, please don’t hesitate to get in touch with Anne Threlfo, Julie Fenwick or your Elder.

# DIARY

## Thursday 11 July

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

## Friday 12 July

- 10–11.45am Grief, Loss and Change at Toronto Uniting Church  
6.00pm Ladies night at Kahibah

## Saturday 13 July

- 12.30pm** Charlestown Friendship Circle – Soup and Movie at Charlestown Uniting Church  
**(Note change of time)**

## Sunday 14 July – Pentecost 8

- 9.00am Worship Service. Leader: Margaret White and Preacher: Rev'd Tom  
*2 Samuel 6:1-5, 12b-19; Psalm 24; Ephesians 1:3-14; Mark 6:14-29*

**Congregation Meeting following the Service**

## Monday 15 July

- 10.00am Garden Suburb Aged Care Pastoral Visit

## Tuesday 16 July

- 9.00am Needlework n Natter at Garden Suburb  
10.00am Morning tea in the Community at Lake Macquarie Square

## Thursday 18 July

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

## Sunday 21 July – Pentecost 9

- 9.00am Holy Communion Service. Leader and Preacher: Rev'd Tom  
*2 Samuel 7:1-14a; Psalm 89:20-37; Ephesians 2:11-22; Mark 6:30-34, 53-56*

## Tuesday 23 July

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

## Thursday 25 July

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

## Sunday 28 July – Pentecost 10

- 9.00am Leader and Preacher: TBA  
*2 Samuel 11:1-15; Psalm 14. Ephesians 3:14-21, John 6:1-21*

## Monday 29 July

- 1.30pm SFED

## Tuesday 30 July

- 9.00am Needlework n Natter at Garden Suburb  
10.00am Morning tea in the Community at Lake Macquarie Square

## 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

# THE PRAYER PAGE



As part of the Uniting Church 35 days of Prayer pray for Luga Brae Bronte Uniting Church and access the prayers available each day on line, by joining Uniting in Prayer 2024.

## Pastoral Prayer Points

- \* those in our congregation whose loved ones have died in recent times
- \* Laraine Chegwiddden
- \* Tony Sellen home from hospital
- \* Liz and Peter
- \* Nelda Marshall
- \* Mike Warren
- \* Elaine Ross
- \* Vivianne
- \* Shirley Elkin
- \* Lorraine Pepper
- \* Vicki
- \* Lesley
- \* Judith Fuller battling cancer
- \* Pam and Ken
- \* Lyn Benson
- \* Jean
- \* Fred Bryant
- \* June Locker
- \* Ryan Walpole
- \* Kathryn Gray
- \* Jacqueline Fenwick home from hospital
- \* Isabella
- \* Janice Wright
- \* Eileen Dunn
- \* 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:

## 14 July 2024 – Maitland – East Maitland Uniting Church

East Maitland is a congregation of between 25 and 35 regular worshippers. Our services are a blend of Zoom and face-to-face services. During Covid, we commenced Zoom services, and this has continued to be a very important part of our worship as it enabled us to reconnect with people who were no longer able to get to worship services, for a variety of reasons, as well as maintaining contact with our regular members. During Covid we increased our church membership, welcoming several new families to our congregation. These people have become active members. The Fellowship Group continues to provide meals for Carrie's Place, a local Support Group for people involved in Domestic Violence and Homelessness. A fortnightly Newsletter is produced and distributed.

**Prayer: The ongoing worship services, including the Zoom component, as this will be offered to people in the other centres. The 'Open Table' gathering, led by Rev Dr Rod Pattenden, targeting people under 60, and held monthly on a Saturday afternoon / evening, including a shared meal. The work of the Leaders' Group as they discuss, plan and implement the components of East Maitland's Mission Plan.**



## Gaza – You Can Send Aid

We heard recently from Erica Henley of the partnership between Operation Hope, and the UK registered charity "Refugee Biryani and Bananas". This partnership is delivering much needed food aid to families in Gaza.

Each family size box of non-perishable food costs \$60

Each semi-trailer costs \$60,000

Each semi-trailer carries 1,080 food boxes

Please help us reach more malnourished children and their families.

To donate safely use this link: <https://tinyurl.com/46vjatan>

You can also support the Gaza appeal by purchasing beautiful handmade gifts:

<https://operationhopeaustralia.square.site/s/shop>

# Children & Family Worker Update



As this contact is being put together, printed or sent out via email, Holiday Kids Club will be in progress.

The theme is **Charlestown Crazy Olympics** at Garden Suburb church, 16 children are registered to attend & enjoy a day full of crazy fun.

The sun should be shining & outdoor games will be a big part of the day, even if still a little wet underfoot.

Next week I will include some photos of our activities.

Thank you to all who help to bring this day together & especially my junior helpers.

Cathy



## On Saturday 13 July

Meet at Charlestown Uniting Church  
at **12.30** for a Soup and  
Movie afternoon

Please bring a small plate of  
food for afternoon tea

All Welcome







You are warmly invited to *Ministry Masterclasses*, a free online monthly forum designed to support active ministry leaders by exploring contemporary perspectives and fostering networks of support and collaboration. *Ministry Masterclasses* are ideal for ministers and pastors who are keen to build networks and gain new insights from thought leaders.

The fourth Ministry Masterclass is coming up on Wednesday 24 July, 2:00pm-4:00pm, with *Contemporary Music and Worship* with Tash Holmes, Uniting Creative, and Rev. Radhika Sukumar-White, Ministry Leader, Leichhardt Uniting Church.

#### **ABOUT THE SESSION**

Music has the ability to lift our worship and enable people to experience God's presence in ways that go beyond words. But because it is so special and powerful, the music we choose and use is often at the focus of disagreements within our churches.

In this session, we will explore liturgical and pastoral considerations for developing and refreshing your congregation's music ministry.

This workshop is free. Register here:

[https://nswactuca.eventsair.com/min-masterclasses-2024/mm-reg/Site/Register?mc\\_cid=d57800415a&mc\\_eid=7b48e0875b](https://nswactuca.eventsair.com/min-masterclasses-2024/mm-reg/Site/Register?mc_cid=d57800415a&mc_eid=7b48e0875b)

### **Some of our Church Contacts:**

#### **Minister**

Rev Tom Stuart  
M: 0427 625 502  
E: [tom@thestuarts.id.au](mailto:tom@thestuarts.id.au)

#### **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>

#### **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

# Small is Beautiful 2



## Thriving as a small Church



Saltbush Minister Yvonne Ghavalas will lead a second workshop on thriving as a small church. At our first gathering, we considered how the unravelling of our traditional ways of being church might actually be the activity of the Holy Spirit inviting us to partner together in new ways. Small is Beautiful 2 will focus on creative worship with the seed parables in Mark's Gospel, conversation around the idea of "thriving" communities, and practising intentional community-building through relationship, inclusivity, justice, and discipleship. Morning tea and materials will be provided at no cost - please bring a +1 along with you if possible.

**Saturday 31st August 2024**  
**9am - 1pm**

**East Maitland Uniting Church - 35 William St**

Register here:

<https://www.eventbrite.com.au/e/small-is-beautiful-2-tickets-936103269077?aff=oddtcreator>

The Hunter Presbyter Uniting Church in Australia

# Practices That Transform Us

## Hear God's Word

Throughout the ages God has spoken to us through the written Word, the spoken word and the incarnate Word. The H disciplines address our need and desire to hear a word from God. Our world of printed as well as verbal noise can drown out the reality and wonder of God's Word. There are always other books to read and speakers to listen to. Of course God does use books and people to speak to us. But Scripture is a primary way that the Holy Spirit opens us up to the God who is beyond us.

1. **Bible Study** - Experiment with different ways of listening to Scripture.
  - a. Read the Bible out loud. Savour the words. Which words stand out for you? Keep these words with you all day.
  - b. Listen to the Bible on your phone, a tape or CD (including while driving or exercising).
  - c. Print a verse on a card and place it where you will see it throughout the day. Put a verse on your screen saver.
2. **Lectio Divina/Devotional Reading** - When you read Scripture, insert your own name into the pronouns that stand for you. What is it like for you to read Scripture in this personal way? • For example read Isaiah 43: 1-3. Insert your name in the blank spaces.

But now this is what the LORD says—

he who created you, \_\_\_\_\_,

he who formed you, \_\_\_\_\_:

Do not fear, for I have redeemed \_\_\_\_\_;

I have summoned \_\_\_\_\_ by name; \_\_\_\_\_ is mine.

When \_\_\_\_\_ passes through the waters,

I will be with \_\_\_\_\_;

and when \_\_\_\_\_ passes through the rivers,

they will not sweep over \_\_\_\_\_.

When \_\_\_\_\_ walks through the fire,

\_\_\_\_\_ will not be burned;

the flames will not set \_\_\_\_\_ ablaze.

For I am the LORD, \_\_\_\_\_'s God,

the Holy One of Israel, \_\_\_\_\_'s Saviour.

What is this experience of reading Scripture like for you?

3. **Meditation** - Take a walk in nature, meditating on the handiwork of God. The lilies of the field and the birds of the air spoke to Jesus of God's care (Matthew 6: 26-31). How does God speak to you in his creation?

OR

Meditate on the news. How is God speaking to you through current events? Is he inviting you to see the world through his eyes in some new way? Is he inviting you into prayer in a new way?

See over.....



4. **Memorization** - Begin by memorizing some of the choruses or songs that you enjoy. Sing the bits you remember. Listen again to the bits you forget. Write them out if it helps you. When you have committed the song to memory, notice when the song simply pops into your mind. Let the song be a way God enters into your life and speaks to you.

*“In the Bible God gives us revelations of himself which lead us to worship, promises of salvation which stimulate our faith, and commandments expressing his will which demand our obedience.*

*This is the meaning of Christian discipleship.”*

*John R. W. Stott*

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