



CONTACT



Charlestown & Garden Suburb Uniting
Church Multi-Centre Congregation

1 February 2025

From Rev Tom

Across the globe, there are mounting signs that we are living through a period of profound social and political decline. Democratic norms are eroding as authoritarian forms of power gain ground, often justified in the name of security or national survival. The rule of law is weakened when it is applied selectively, bent to serve those in power rather than the common good. Truth itself becomes unstable as dishonesty, disinformation, and propaganda seep into political leadership and media, leaving societies without a shared account of reality.

Alongside this, accountability diminishes. Leaders rarely admit error, criticism is framed as betrayal, and loyalty is rewarded over competence or integrity. Social cohesion frays as polarisation deepens, communities fracture, and public discourse hardens into hostility. Violence and the threat of violence become normalised - sometimes overt, sometimes merely implied - as tools for maintaining control. Economic and fiscal manipulation quietly transfers wealth and risk upward, hollowing out trust in institutions. What emerges is not simply poor governance, but a moral inversion in which power is exercised "over" others rather than entrusted for the sake of the whole.

For Christians, the temptation in such a moment is either despair or frantic activism - the belief that if we just fight harder, shout louder, or seize control, we might reverse the tide. Yet Scripture offers a different lens. The writer to the Hebrews speaks of a great shaking, a removal of what can be shaken, "so that what cannot be shaken may remain" (Hebrews 12:27). Decline, in this vision, is not denied - but neither is it the final word. Shaking reveals what is ultimately real.

The Christian response, then, is not primarily to rescue a failing order, but to become deeply rooted in another one. Through prayer, worship, truthfulness, and non-reactive presence, the Church is called to embody a way of being that does not depend on dominance, fear, or control. This is a kenotic response - self-emptying rather than grasping - grounded in love, humility, and courage. It refuses binary thinking and enemy-making, even while naming injustice truthfully.

We may not be able to change the direction of the present decline. But we are invited to participate in what endures through it. As the shakeable structures fall away, the unshakable - faith, hope, love, and a people formed in Christ - becomes visible. And in that unveiling, even amid destruction, we are given reason to hope.

DIARY

Thursday 29 January

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

Sunday 1 February 2026 – Epiphany 4

9.00am The Divine Worship
Leader and Preacher: Rev'd Tom Stuart
Micah 6:1-8; Psalm 15; 1 Corinthians 1:18-31; Matthew 5:1-12

Monday 2 February

10.00am Pastoral Care Visit to Garden Suburb Aged Care Facility

Tuesday 3 February

10.00am Morning tea in the Community at Lake Macquarie Square

Thursday 5 February

10.00am Morning tea in the Community – common seated area at Charlestown Square
1.30-2.30pm **Bible Study at Charlestown Church – ALL WELCOME**

Sunday 8 February 2026 – Epiphany 5

9.00am The Divine Worship
Leader: David Chegwidden and Preacher: Rev'd Tom Stuart
Isaiah 58:1-9a (9b-12); Psalm 112:1-9 (10); 1 Corinthians 2:1-12 (13-16);
Matthew 5:13-20
2.00pm **SRE Dedication Service held at Cardiff Heights Baptist Church,
33-35 Main Rd Cardiff**

Tuesday 10 February

10.00am Morning tea in the Community at Lake Macquarie Square

Wednesday 11 February

10.00am Ladies Fellowship at Charlestown

Thursday 12 February

10.00am Morning tea in the Community – common seated area at Charlestown Square
10.30am Worship Service at Garden Suburb Aged Care Facility
1.30-2.30pm **Bible Study at Charlestown Church – ALL WELCOME**

Friday 13 February

6.00pm Ladies Night at Kahibah

Sunday 15 February 2026 – Epiphany 6

9.00am The Divine Worship
Leader and Preacher: Rev'd Tom Stuart
Exodus 24:12-18; Psalm 2 or Psalm 99; 2 Peter 1:16-21; Matthew 17:1-9

Monday 16 February

10.00am Pastoral Care Visit to Garden Suburb Aged Care Facility

Tuesday 17 February

10.00am Morning tea in the Community at Lake Macquarie Square

Wednesday 18 February – Ash Wednesday

Thursday 19 February

10.00am Morning tea in the Community – common seated area at Charlestown Square
1.30-2.30pm **Bible Study at Charlestown Church – ALL WELCOME**

Saturday 21 February

8.00am Men's Breakfast at the Milson St Hub (Charlestown Church)

THE PRAYER PAGE



Prayer is the Voice of Faith

Pastoral Prayer Points

- * Those who are mourning loved ones
- * Family of Enid Power
- * Margaret, Barbara and Lily
- * Beryl
- * Rene Kelly
- * Nelda Marshall
- * Lorraine Pepper
- * Glen and Marion
- * Valmai
- * Janice and Don Wright
- * Kelly
- * Tony Sellen
- * Vicki
- * Pam and Ken
- * Lyn Benson
- * Jean
- * June Locker
- * Jacqueline Fenwick
- * Isabella
- * Eileen Dunn
- * Pam and Mert
- * Max
- * Don Humphries

Congregational Prayer Points

- Church Council
- John Lewis and his work with Wesley Mission in Windale and Hamilton South
- Pray for the ministry of our new appointment as Communications Coordinator for the Milson St Hub - Piteeri Michael who commences on 17th Feb.
- Project Reconnect
- Worship Services
- Cathy Beeton and SRE classes
- Tom and Kathy
- Worship Committee

Wider Community Prayer Points

- Margaret Jurd College and Darren Twist the Principal
- Orphanage in Kenya and Wilfreda
- Neos ministry
- Those affected by climate change in Australia eg floods, droughts and fires
- Prayer for the situations in Israel, Palestine and Ukraine

Charlestown & Garden Suburb Uniting Church

BRING A
FRIEND!

MEN'S BREAKFAST



Guest Speaker

Rev Garry
Dodd

from Mission
to Seafarers



8:00 AM

SATURDAY 21 FEBRUARY 2026

Milson St Hub (Charlestown UC), 24 Milson St Charlestown

RSVP Paul at pmraus74@gmail.com or 0411 236 047 by 18 February

Children & Family Worker Update



Thank you for all your thoughts & prayer leading up to the HCSRE Expo next Monday, almost at the finish line, please keep praying especially on Monday as it will be a very big day with over 100 participants plus guest speakers & presenters.

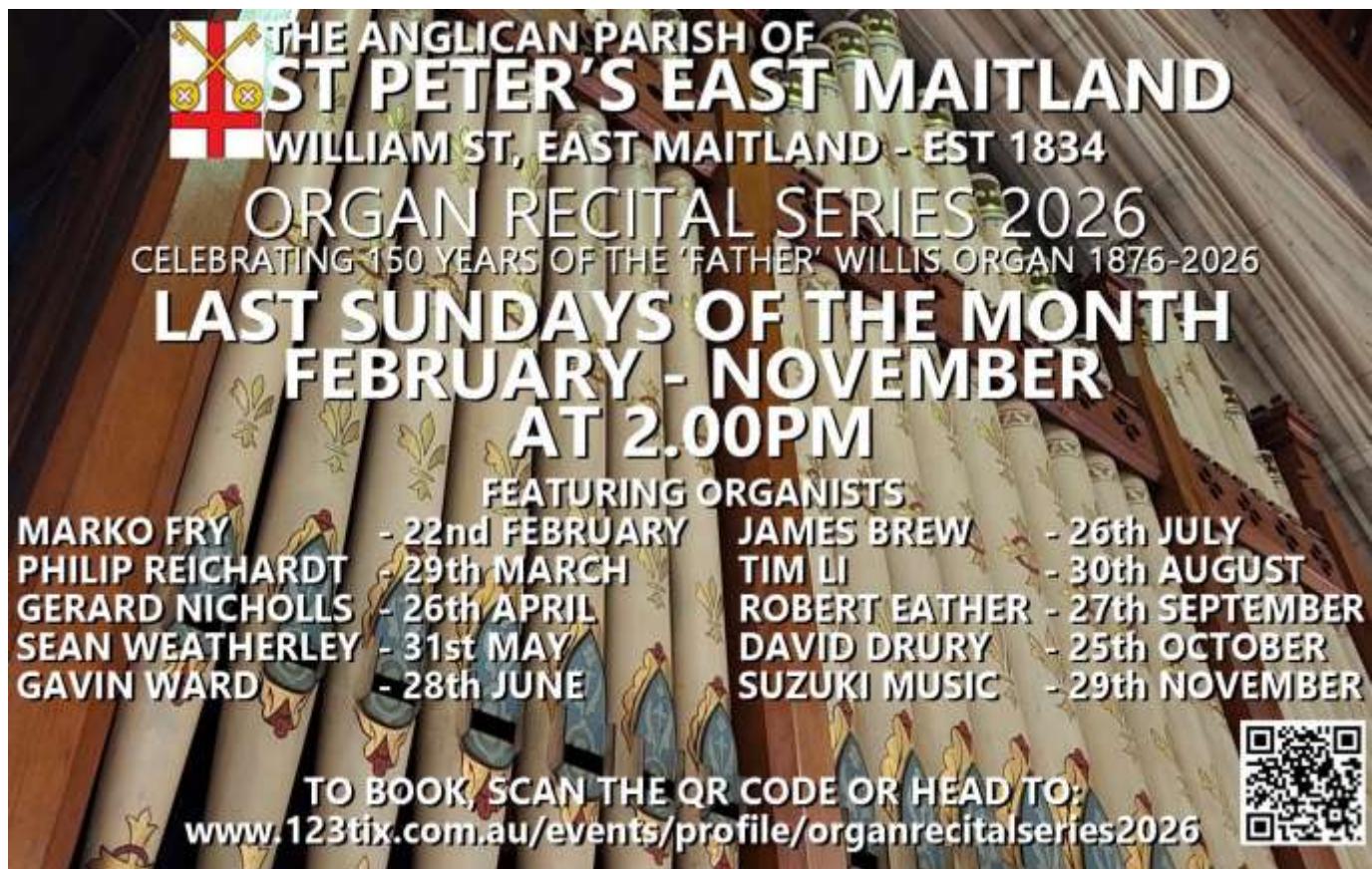
Don't forget the **SRE Dedication Service** on Sunday the 8th of February 2pm at Cardiff Heights Baptist Church. It means a lot to the SRE teachers to know you support them in their mission of teaching SRE across Newcastle & Lake Macquarie schools.

Cathy

SRE

The 2026 SRE Dedication Service

will be held at Cardiff Heights Baptist Church
33-35 Main Rd Cardiff
at 2.00pm on Sunday 8th February 2026



**THE ANGLICAN PARISH OF
ST PETER'S EAST MAITLAND**
WILLIAM ST, EAST MAITLAND - EST 1834

ORGAN RECITAL SERIES 2026
CELEBRATING 150 YEARS OF THE 'FATHER' WILLIS ORGAN 1876-2026

**LAST SUNDAYS OF THE MONTH
FEBRUARY - NOVEMBER
AT 2.00PM**

FEATURING ORGANISTS

MARKO FRY	- 22nd FEBRUARY	JAMES BREW	- 26th JULY
PHILIP REICHARDT	- 29th MARCH	TIM LI	- 30th AUGUST
GERARD NICHOLLS	- 26th APRIL	ROBERT EATHER	- 27th SEPTEMBER
SEAN WEATHERLEY	- 31st MAY	DAVID DRURY	- 25th OCTOBER
GAVIN WARD	- 28th JUNE	SUZUKI MUSIC	- 29th NOVEMBER

TO BOOK, SCAN THE QR CODE OR HEAD TO:
www.123tix.com.au/events/profile/organrecitals2026



If you enjoy organ music, you might like to mark these dates for 2026 on your calendar to join St Peter's Anglican church at East Maitland celebrate 150 years of their Willis Organ.



Ladies FELLOWSHIP

Wednesday 11 February

**Will be held at Charlestown Church
from 10.00am**

You are welcome to come and join us for morning tea and a chat every second Wednesday of the month, during 2026.

ALL WELCOME

208 MOYLANDS RD
FOSTERTON

15 minutes from Dungog

Free Open Day Saturday 7th February 10am - 3pm



Enjoy music & a free
sausage or

Bring a picnic lunch

*Swim- in the pool or the river
Bushwalk on the property*



Enjoy a Labyrinth walk
Try a reflective exercise

Celebrate 10 years with us

- Experience who we are & what we do
- Do a little- do it all

We'd love to know you're coming, but you can just turn up with family & friends.

**FOSTERTON
RETREAT**



Max & Bronwyn

www.fostertonretreat.com.au 
0490 663 228 or 0439 500 909 
www.facebook/fostertonretreat 

Friendship Circle



Will meet at the Church on
Saturday 24 February at 10.30am for
morning tea to make plans for 2026 and
to hear about Margaret and Noel's trip
to Vanuatu.

All Welcome

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>