



# 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 Chegwiddden 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

Maintained by SFED

### 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



## 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 8<sup>th</sup> 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/organrecitalseries2026](http://www.123tix.com.au/events/profile/organrecitalseries2026)



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 MOYLANS RD  
FOSTERTON

15 minutes from Dungog

# Free Open Day

## Saturday 7<sup>th</sup> 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](http://www.fostertonretreat.com.au)

0490 663 228 or 0439 500 909

[www.facebook/fostertonretreat](https://www.facebook.com/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](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

#### **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

#### **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>