



CONTACT



Charlestown & Garden Suburb Uniting
Church Multi-Centre Congregation

3 March 2024

From Rev Tom

I was talking to an agronomist who works in the Riverina this morning. He was telling me how the savvy farmers are disconnecting with the large corporations who usually buy their grain and onsell to international markets. These farmers realise that the middle handlers are forcing down prices at the farm gate and increasing their profits when selling on the grain and premium prices. He then said that farmers who even do better are those who team up with other farmers in this process. Working together means less stress on one individual, each farmer sharing their stories and responding to the same concerns. They spread the risks, and they increase their power entering the market economy. He said the problem is that farmers are so individualistic in their approach. It is so difficult to get them to work together. Their vision is so limited to their individual on-farm concerns. They fail to recognise the challenges they face with banks, corporate grain buyers, seed grain sellers, farm chemical corporations, and corporate machinery manufacturers, are shared by every other farmer. As they struggle individually they feel powerless in their negotiations with these massive corporate enterprises. He said he has found some exceptions where a group of farmers see beyond the boundaries of their own paddocks and team up with other farmers. Most farmers see the amount of energy involved in working with other farmers only as a cost. But the farmers that choose to work cooperatively experience far greater gains. This agronomist tells this as a story arising from his own experience just observing farmers that he connects with when helping them produce good crops. What is true on the farm is true for us all. It is true for the church. One of the great gifts of the church is our strength by being in community. Unfortunately, our social environment creates pressure in the opposite direction. As commercial corporations, and social service organisations, get bigger they are also relating to us at a more individual level, and so we are feeling more powerless. This is one of the reasons, even though churches are in decline, why they are so important. It is also the reason why even as churches are in decline we must not withdraw into ourselves. Many of the reasons for the decline of the church are because of what is happening in our society, we must not blame ourselves for everything. So, we must resist the forces that would disempower the community. This is one of the reasons why I believe so much that we need to support the Hunter Community Alliance (HCA), and in particular the HCA Founding Assembly. Governments, industry, and commerce are forgetting the essential value of thriving communities. Houses are no longer homes where families may thrive but are simply assets that create wealth. The coming HCA Founding Assembly addressed the issues that I have raised above. It is about individuals and organisations looking beyond their parochial boundaries for the common good. It is to push back the dehumanising forces that have been a part of life ever since societies began. We desist in the struggle at the peril of society itself. We are fighting the same battles that were voiced by the Hebrew prophets of long ago. It responds to the call of Jesus to love others as we love ourselves. I encourage you to figure out a way to be a part of the Founding Assembly, even if for those who no longer are mobile to have someone represent you, a family member, or a more able friend. See more about the details of the HCA Founding Assembly in this "Contact" edition.

DIARY

Thursday 29 February

- 10.00am Morning tea in the Community - common seated area opposite Butcher at Charlestown Square
- 1.30pm Bible Study at Garden Suburb Church

Friday 1 March

- 10.00am **World Day of Prayer at Charlestown Uniting Church**

Sunday 3 March – Lent 3

- 9.00am Worship Service Leader: Anne Threlfo Preacher: Rev'd Tom
Exodus 20:1-17; Psalm 19; 1 Corinthians 1:18-25; John 2:13-22

Monday 4 March

- 10.00am Garden Suburb Nursing Home Pastoral Care Visitation
- 1.30pm SFED on Zoom

Tuesday 5 March

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

Thursday 7 March

- 10.00am Morning tea in the Community - common seated area opposite Butcher at Charlestown Square
- 1.30pm Bible Study at Garden Suburb Church

Friday 8 March

- 6.00pm Ladies Night at Kahibah

Saturday 9 March

- 11.00am Friendship Circle at Warners Bay Hotel

Sunday 10 March – Lent 4

- 9.00am Worship Service Leader and Preacher: Rev'd Tom
Numbers 21:4-9; Psalm 107:1-3,17-22; Ephesians 2:1-10; John 3:14-21

Monday 11 March

- 1.30pm SFED on Zoom

Tuesday 12 March

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

Wednesday 13 March

- 10.00am Ladies Fellowship at Charlestown

Thursday 14 March

- 10.00am Worship Service at Garden Suburb Aged Care
- 10.00am Morning tea in the Community - common seated area opposite Butcher at Charlestown Square
- 1.30pm Bible Study at Garden Suburb Church

Sunday 17 March – Lent 5

- 9.00am Worship Service with Baptism Leader and Preacher: Rev'd Tom
Jeremiah 31:31-34; Psalm 51:1-12; Hebrews 5:5-10; John 12:20-33 or Psalm 119:9-16

Monday 18 March

- 10.00am Garden Suburb Nursing Home Pastoral Care Visitation
- 1.30pm SFED on Zoom

Tuesday 19 March

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

THE PRAYER PAGE



Please join with each other as a congregation, to commit to praying at meal times, for the needs mentioned below.

Pastoral Prayer Points

- * Geoff Greaves recovering after a fall
- * Les as he recovers from heart surgery
- * Those in our Congregation who have lost loved ones in recent months
- * Peter
- * Tony
- * Graeme
- * Jean
- * Fred Bryant
- * June Locker
- * Ryan Walpole
- * Kathryn Gray
- * Jacqueline Fenwick
- * Care facility be found for Nola
- * Isabella
- * Ashley and Lorraine
- * Janice Wright
- * Eileen Dunn
- * Mert
- * Judith and family
- * Enid Power
- * Max

Maintained by SFED and Enid Power

Congregational Prayer Points

- pray for each other as we experience the Lenten journey
- pray for the successful sale of the Whitebridge property
- pray for discernment in regard to our other properties
- World Day of Prayer on March 1st at 10am – our Church hosting it
- SFED
- Project Reconnect
- Worship Services
- Cathy Beeton and SRE classes
- Worship Committee

Wider Community Prayer Points

- pray that HCA will be able to obtain attendance from political leaders to the Founding Assembly at the great Hall in April
- pray for Tom as he engages with other leaders from the community and other denominations, in his NEOS work.
- those affected by climate change in Australia eg floods, droughts and fires
- The situation in Israel and Gaza
- The situation in Ukraine and other trouble spots
- Thanksgiving for all orphanage children at school thanks to generous donations
- Rohingya people in Bangladesh where 7000 people homeless





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:

3 March 2024 Hamilton Wesley Uniting Church

Hamilton Wesley Uniting Church meets each Sunday at 9:30am. The congregation operates a café, book shop and op shop in the church. Customers include some refugees stocking up on bed linen and crockery for the women housed in their facilities, university students, people in need. Life Dinners are held monthly at a hotel or café with focused topical discipleship discussions. Incredible Edibles is a social group for church members to meet each other in a casual atmosphere and to bring their partners who do not attend church. The Hive (previously known as Fellowship House) is community focused with the first floor totally occupied by Wesley Mission services, child, youth and family services, queer youth groups and an employment agency. The ground floor provides space for community activities and the rooms are booked for gatherings of various not-for-profit groups.

Prayer: Creative God, we pray for discernment through the process of Mission planning, inviting us to explore as a community, who God is calling us to be in this time and place. We pray for wisdom and guidance as a community of lifelong learners in discipleship, growing our following, worship and serving our community in mission, focused here and in Newcastle city. Amen.



World Day of Prayer

Friday 1 March

10am

Charlestown Uniting Church

This year's prayer focuses on Palestine. The program was written by a group of ecumenical Christian Palestinian women in response to the passage from Ephesians 4:1-7.

The artwork by Halima Aziz represents three Palestinian women praying together in nature in a peaceful place.



Charlestown Ladies Fellowship

Wednesday 13th March

Will be held at Charlestown Church
from 10.00am

For Morning Tea and a chat

ALL WELCOME

You are invited
to join with the



Friendship Circle

Saturday 9 March

Meeting at Warners Bay Hotel at
11.00am for Fellowship and Brunch

Let Sue Warren know if you are attending

0427 737 793

All Welcome

The Church Office will be closed on
Wednesday the 13th and 20th of March
as Jenny will be on holidays!





For more information
about the
**Hunter Community Alliance
Founding Assembly**

and to register
go to the following link:

<https://events.humanitix.com/hca-founding-assembly>

**HCA FOUNGING
ASSEMBLY**

**APRIL 10TH
6:30pm-8:30pm**

**GREAT HALL,
UNIVERSITY OF
NEWCASTLE**

REGISTER

The **Uniting Church** Hunter Community Alliance “Turnout Team” have calculated we are likely to have at least 150 Uniting Church members attend the Founding Assembly on the 10th of April. We know that will be by far the biggest turnout by any single organisation. We want to give opportunity to show that whole community of our commitment to building a better community in the Hunter. The best way to achieve that at such an event is to put that on display and the display board on the night is our bodies. So, while there is no requirement to wear a T-Shirt we are hoping lots of Uniting Church Members wear one on the night ... and it is such a great design ... to wear on other occasions!



Order Form

‘Uniting For the Common Good in the Hunter’ T shirt

We hope everyone who plans to attend HCA Founding Assembly April 10th at the University of Newcastle, will buy a t shirt to wear!

We know they will be useful at any gathering, rally, workshop or network where UCA people want to show ‘turnout’

Bank Details

Account Name Robert J Hanks
BSB 637000
Account Number 726784574

Unisex T shirt Size	SML	MED	LRG	XLG	2XL	3XL	4XL
Body width cm	47	52	56.5	61	64	68	75

Select size by laying a shirt you already own on a flat surface, measure it side to side and pick the next size up if you are in between

Your Order Details \$25 per T shirt

Name

Tshirt size:

ph:

email:

UCA Congregation:

Address:

T shirt collection will be before 10th April
 Details to be advised via the email you put on this form

HUNTER COMMUNITY ALLIANCE

FOUNDING ASSEMBLY

6pm Wednesday
10th April 2024
The Great Hall,
University of Newcastle

YOU ARE INVITED

Everyone in the Uniting Church across the Hunter is invited to participate in engaging National and State leaders to take action on these issues:

**"Just" Energy Transition in communities
Housing and Homelessness**

Registration/Event details soon!!!

*"This is the world as it is.
This is where you start"* Saul Alinsky



REGISTRATION IS NOW OPEN!

<https://events.humanitix.com/hca-founding-assembly>

If you wish to attend, and do not have internet access, please speak to Rev Tom Stuart or Anne Threlfo

Some of our Church Contacts:

Minister

Rev Tom Stuart
M: 0427 625 502
E: tom@thestuarts.id.au

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

Administration:

P: 4943 4019
E: office@charlestown.unitingchurch.org.au
24 Milson Street, Charlestown NSW 2290
PO Box 449, Charlestown NSW 2290

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