



# CONTACT



Charlestown & Garden Suburb Uniting  
Church Multi-Centre Congregation

**5 July 2026**

## **From Rev Tom**

I walked into our lounge room the other night to find my granddaughter watching an animated children's show. I paused for a moment and quickly realised the story had reached its climax. A pack of coyotes had captured some chickens and were about to make them their dinner. Then a cow arrived to rescue them. Fortunately for the cow, reinforcements soon appeared and together they fought off the coyotes. It was all fairly tame – you might call it "violence lite." Near the end, the cow was about to strike the lead coyote, but instead stopped, told him to leave and never return, and everyone lived happily ever after.

I found myself thinking, "This is a children's show."

Those who were at church a couple of weeks ago may remember my reflection on what theologian Walter Wink called the *Babylonian Myth* and the *myth of redemptive violence*. At its heart is the assumption that the world is divided between the good and the bad, and that, in the end, the good must use violence to defeat evil and save the day.

Once you begin to notice it, you see this story everywhere - in films, novels, television, politics and even children's entertainment. Repeated often enough, it quietly shapes the way we see the world. It teaches us to divide people into heroes and villains and to believe that victory over our enemies is the path to peace.

I sometimes wonder whether we are seeing the consequences of this in our public life. When I watched Pauline Hanson belittle a journalist for asking questions she did not like, many people seemed delighted. They saw a champion giving an opponent what they deserved. Good triumphing over evil. Yet, in seeking victory, the behaviour itself became demeaning. So powerful is this story that many celebrate conduct they would condemn if the roles were reversed.

Perhaps this also helps explain the appeal of figures such as Donald Trump. When people lose confidence in institutions, they often become less interested in how someone wins than simply that they defeat the perceived enemy. The ends begin to justify the means.

Social media amplifies the same pattern. Whether on the political left or the right, progressive or conservative, people too easily ridicule those who think differently. Winning the argument becomes more important than understanding another person. The cycle simply continues.

My parents taught me something much simpler: treat everyone with respect.

My Christian faith has helped me understand why that matters so deeply. Every one of us is capable of great good and great harm. Every one of us also bears the image of God. When I choose to treat another person with dignity, I reduce the likelihood that I will become part of the problem, while increasing the possibility that they might respond to the dignity they have been shown.

**Continued over.....**

The Christian story offers a profoundly different vision of reality. It begins by declaring that creation is good. It recognises that all of us fall short of that goodness, yet it also proclaims that the way back is not through domination but through love. That does not mean becoming passive in the face of injustice. Rather, it is the way of courageous, non-violent resistance - standing against whatever diminishes human dignity while offering alternatives that free both ourselves and others from the cycles of fear, domination and scarcity. It is a way marked by grace, justice, generosity and hope.

## DIARY

### Thursday 2 July

10.00am Morning tea in the Community – common seated area at Charlestown Square  
1.30-2.30pm Bible Study in Dudley Room

### Sunday 5 July – Pentecost 6

9.00am The Divine Worship  
Leader and Preacher: Rev'd Tom  
*Genesis 24:34-38, 42-49, 58-67; Psalm 45:10-17 or Song 2:8-13; Romans 7:15-25a; Matthew 11:16-19, 25-30*

### Monday 6 July

10.00am Pastoral Care Visit to Garden Suburb Aged Care Facility

### Tuesday 7 July

10.00am Pastoral Care Visit to Garden Suburb Aged Care Facility  
Morning tea in the Community at Lake Macquarie Square

### Wednesday 8 July

10.00am Ladies Fellowship at Milson St Hub

### Thursday 9 July

10.00am Morning tea in the Community – common seated area at Charlestown Square  
**No Bible Study during School Holidays**  
11.30am Memorial Service for Geoff Greaves

### Friday 10 July

6.00pm Ladies Night at Kahibah



### Saturday 11 July

11.00am Charlestown Friendship Circle at Milson St Hub

### Sunday 12 July – Pentecost 7

9.00am The Divine Worship  
Leader: Kathy and Preacher: Rev'd Tom  
*Genesis 25:19-34 or Isaiah 55:10-13; Psalm 119:105-112 or Psalm 65 (1-8), 9-13; Romans 8:1-11; Matthew 13:1-9, 18-23*

### Tuesday 14 July

10.00am Morning tea in the Community at Lake Macquarie Square

### Thursday 16 July

10.00am Morning tea in the Community – common seated area at Charlestown Square  
**No Bible Study during School Holidays**

# THE PRAYER PAGE



## Prayer is the Voice of Faith

### Pastoral Prayer Points

- \* For the Greaves family after the death of Geoff on Monday
- \* Tom's Mum as she recovers from her hip operation
- \* Tom's family as they mourn the death of Tom's mother's sister
- \* Pray for Marion Box
- \* Prayers for Grahame Beeton and family
- \* Those who are mourning loved ones
- \* Mert has moved to Narla Village – continue to pray for Mert and Pam
- \* Robyn and Geoff Greaves
- \* Jacqueline Fenwick now home
- \* Rene Kelly
- \* Glen and Marion
- \* Valmai
- \* Janice and Don Wright
- \* Kelly
- \* Tony Sellen
- \* Vicki
- \* Pam and Ken
- \* Lyn Benson
- \* Jean
- \* Isabella
- \* Eileen Dunn
- \* Max
- \* Don Humphries

Maintained by SFED

### Congregational Prayer Points

- Preparation of NREMA application being prepared by SFED and Church Council
- Piteeri
- Major upgrades to the Project Reconnect website
- Worship Services
- Cathy Beeton and SRE classes
- Church profile and preparations for Tom's retirement
- Worship Committee

### Wider Community Prayer Points

- Jesmond Park-Wallsend-Shortland
- 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 those in conflict zones in the world





### **It is with great sadness**

that we announce the death of Geoff Greaves on Monday 29<sup>th</sup> June.

Our deepest sympathy and love are with Robyn, Lynelle and Lachlan and families.

A Memorial Service will be held at the  
Milson St Hub, 24-26 Milson St, Charlestown, 2290

Commencing at 11.30am on Thursday 9 July



### **Friendship Circle**

Will meet on 11<sup>th</sup> July at Milson  
St Hub at 11am for soup and  
damper

**All Welcome**



### **Charlestown Ladies Fellowship**

Will meet on Wednesday July 8<sup>th</sup> at  
10am

You are welcome to come and join us  
for morning tea and a chat

**ALL WELCOME**



Hi everyone,

I hope you've had a good start to this winter season 😊

Here's some updates about the Milson St Hub:

- **Signage** - Our 2 new signs for out near the street will look like this (one will have the Sunday service time on it too)
- **New Hirer** - We have a new weekly hall hirer starting next month, Tantrum Youth Arts, a theatre charity for young people with a disability which is very exciting
- **Christmas Carols** - I have created a wonderful new collaboration with Lake Macquarie Council at The Place, & will be launching the first annual Charlestown Christmas Carols & Family Gingerbread House-Making Competition, to be held at The Place in early Dec. (date TBC). A new Pride Choir from Adamstown Uniting will be singing, & hopefully also the Hummingsong choir that Anne is in
- **Website** - I am filling up the Milson St Hub website with beautiful photos of the Charlestown community & it's looking good!
- **Picnic Area** - The grassy area out the front is being transformed into a welcoming picnic area for the community to use & Paul is organising the installation of a permanent picnic table. Our generous neighbour, Jeff, has been helping by chopping off the lower branches of the trees to create more visibility from the street. The vegetation at the base of the trees (closest to the church entry door) will be removed to create a bigger grass area for people to gather & sit on. Hopefully this will become a comfortable & attractive area for outdoor events, & also an option for the parents who wait while their kids attend a class in the hall, or who use the carpark during school drop-off & pick-up times
- **Team** – A new volunteer team is beginning to form. This 'Milson St Hub Crew' will help people who connect at The Hub to feel welcome & to experience a sense of belonging

Piteeri

# WANT TO SAVE ON ELECTRICITY BILLS?



This Inspiring Australian Initiative is supported by the Australian Government

**THURS. 30/7  
3-4:30PM**

- Kids, come & ride our bike that generates enough electricity to turn lights on!
- Switch from Gas to Electric and save \$2400-\$4000 p.a.
- Learn a bit about rebates, batteries & solar

**ALEC ROBERTS**  
Chairman of CLEANaS

24 Milson St.  
Charlestown

Bring the kids!  
Afternoon Tea provided



The Greater  
Charlestown  
Sustainable  
Neighbourhood  
Group



Text Piteeri to  
book your spot:  
**0493 094 231**



**NAIDOC  
WEEK  
50 YEARS  
DEADLY  
5-12 JULY 2026**

## Walking the Way: Discerning Spirit, Telling Truth, Seeking Solidarity

**Saturday 18 July, 10.30 - 2.30pm**

Toronto Uniting Church, 118 The Boulevard, Toronto

Join us, with Aboriginal Christian leader Mikenzie Ling, to yarn about the spirituality of First Nations people.

An amazing opportunity to deepen our appreciation and understanding of culture, faith and practice.

Arrive anytime from 10.00am.

Program starts at 10.30am with a Welcome to Country and smoking ceremony.

Morning tea and lunch will be provided.

Registration is free, but please register to help us with preparations.

<https://tinyurl.com/bdz8p467>

## A Prayer for Venezuela

A devastating earthquake has struck Venezuela, causing widespread loss and displacement. Families have been separated, homes damaged, and communities left in grief. In response, Rev Pablo Nunez has written a prayer for all who wish to join the Uniting Church in praying for the people of Venezuela. Rev Nunez is the Moderator-Elect of the Uniting Church Synod of NSW & ACT.

*God of mercy,  
God who hears the cry before it becomes words,  
God who stands with those whose knees tremble  
and whose hearts have forgotten what safety feels  
like,*

*Today we lift before you the people of Venezuela.*

*We pray for families standing outside damaged  
homes,  
for those searching through dust for treasured  
memories,  
for those wondering what tomorrow will look like.*

*Lord, hold them.*

*We especially pray for the children.*

*For children who do not understand why the  
ground beneath them moved.  
For children who are frightened by every  
aftershock,  
who ask questions that adults cannot answer,  
who simply want to sleep without fear.*

*Wrap them in your peace.  
Place gentle people around them.  
Protect their laughter,  
because laughter is holy.  
Protect their dreams,  
because hope is your gift.*

*We pray for families, for parents and  
grandparents,  
carrying burdens too heavy for one heart alone.  
Give them courage that rises with the morning,  
strength that does not depend on circumstances,  
and companions who remind them that they are  
not alone.*

*We remember those who mourn.  
The broken-hearted.  
The injured.  
The displaced.  
The exhausted emergency workers.*

*The doctors, nurses, firefighters, volunteers and  
neighbours  
whose hands become your hands.*

*May they know that every act of compassion  
is a quiet resurrection.*

*God, awaken your Church.*

*Not simply to pray,  
but to become the answer to its own prayers.*

*May your people cross borders of politics,  
ideology and fear.*

*May we see not strangers,  
but sisters and brothers.*

*Not statistics,  
but beloved children made in your image.*

*Give us generous hearts,  
open hands,  
and feet willing to walk towards suffering  
instead of away from it.*

*Teach us again  
that love is never merely an emotion.*

*Love builds.*

*Love feeds.*

*Love shelters.*

*Love listens.*

*Love stays.*

*Jesus,  
you knew what it was to weep with those who  
wept.  
You knew what it was to carry hope into places that  
seemed beyond repair.*

*Walk now through every village,  
every city,  
every hospital,  
every shelter,  
every home.*

*May your Spirit whisper peace louder than fear,  
hope stronger than despair,  
and life greater than loss.*

*Until the day when every tear is wiped away,  
and all creation stands renewed in your embrace.*

*In the name of Christ,  
our refuge,  
our peace,  
our hope.*

*Amen.*

## MEN'S BREAKFAST on 2 June

The Men's Breakfast Video of **Ruth Boydell**, an end-of-life doula, from the 2 June is now available on line.

Click to view <https://vimeo.com/1205181017?fl=ip&fe=ec>

Also attached to the emailed Contact is the .pdf of all her slides - some of the list you may find useful.

I will print a few copies of the slides on to paper and leave in the foyer for anyone who is interested.

If there are none left on Sunday, please let Jenny know on Wednesday, 4943 4019 and I will print you a very special copy.



**Warmest Birthday greetings to Gloria Booth and Margaret Catterall – who are both turning 90!! Congratulations!!**



# anything but Ordinary

A deep dive into the  
Abrahamic Stories

|           |                                                       |                                                                                                  |
|-----------|-------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 25 June   | <b>Pentecost 13</b><br>Gen. 22:1-14                   | <b>A command out of the ordinary</b><br>(Abraham is ordered to kill his son)                     |
| 2 July    | <b>Pentecost 14</b><br>Gen. 24:34-38,<br>42-49, 58-67 | <b>A marriage arrangement out of the ordinary</b><br>(Isaac marries Rebekah)                     |
| 9 July    | <b>Pentecost 15</b><br>Gen. 25:19-34                  | <b>A betrayal out of the ordinary</b><br>(Jacob steals the birthright of Esau)                   |
| 16 July   | <b>Pentecost 16</b><br>Gen. 28:10-19a                 | <b>Encountering the divine out of the ordinary</b><br>(Jacob and the ladder)                     |
| 23 July   | <b>Pentecost 17</b><br>Gen. 29:15-28                  | <b>Another marriage: it's the wrong sister!</b><br>(Jacob, Leah, and Rachel)                     |
| 30 July   | <b>Pentecost 18</b><br>Gen. 32:22-31                  | <b>A wrestling match out of the ordinary</b><br>(Jacob at Peniel)                                |
| 6 August  | <b>Pentecost 19</b><br>Gen. 37:1-4, 12-28             | <b>A brotherly plot out of the ordinary</b><br>(Joseph, his dream, and the plot by his brothers) |
| 13 August | <b>Pentecost 20</b><br>Gen. 45:1-15                   | <b>A family reunion out of the ordinary</b><br>(Joseph and his brothers in Egypt)                |

Thursday nights 7pm on Zoom  
See [tuc.org.au](https://tuc.org.au) for more details

Register Here:

<https://tuc.org.au/ministries/weekly-bible-study>

The studies are led by John Squires and Elizabeth Raine. If you would like to get a feel for what they are like, recordings of studies from previous years are also available on the same page.

## **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

### **Communications Coordinator:**

Piteeri Michail

M: 0493 094 231 E: [Piteeri.m@outlook.com](mailto:Piteeri.m@outlook.com)

### **Administration:**

P: 4943 4019 E: [office@charlestown.unitingchurch.org.au](mailto:office@charlestown.unitingchurch.org.au)

24 Milson St, Charlestown NSW 2290

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### **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>