



CONTACT

Charlestown & Garden Suburb Uniting
Church Multi-Centre Congregation

4 December 2022



From Rev Tom

Advent! Definition: "The coming or arrival of something or someone that is important or worthy of note." So, as we are in the Christian season of Advent we note those who designed our "liturgical calendar" are encouraging us to "prepare" for the coming or arrival of someone that is important - Jesus! You may have heard before some preacher, in helping you do your preparation, use the analogy of having someone come and stay at your home. In this case this visitor is going to stay for a while, bringing plenty of clothes, perhaps even a little bit of furniture, even if just a bedside table. If your place is like ours the cupboards and draws in the spare room are already full. They are full of the items which we don't access so often. Wanting to create space for our guest I will have to start by spending some time cleaning out the wardrobe. On opening the wardrobe door, I first pull out some unused blankets. Under that are a couple of spare pillows. I notice an old hockey stick, and squash racket, pressed into the corner. When did I last use those? Holding them against the wall is a box. Oh yes! It is a box full of photo albums. Remember those things. They existed before digital cameras, and smart phones. Remember? Have a few? Many? Anyway, in my preparation for my guest I actually end up sitting on the floor looking at old photos. Gladly I have deliberately given myself plenty of time to prepare, so I can afford to let go of "efficiency" and do some reminiscing. (Really, how long ago was the last time I played squash! Back to the...) Wedding photos! Baby photos! MY baby photos. There is mum, dad! And look grandma, and photos of our huge family Christmas gatherings. There is my sister Margaret. She was my dragon sister. In a good way. Incredibly protective of her younger brother. I will never forget my times with Margaret. In 2011 I travelled to Canada to sit with her in the final days of her life. Another sister, Kerriean, came too. What memorable conversations we had, though they were not really about anything at all. Back to the photos! There are lots of photos of my Dad too. He was an unfailing support and guide. "Come as you are" was his song! To everyone really. A tear is rolling down my cheek remembering! I love my sister, I love my Dad. This year as we prepare for the coming of Jesus, we are going to create some space to do some remembering. In years past we have had a Blue Christmas Service. Know the song, "I'll have a blue Christmas without you"? This year our Blue Christmas service will be part of our morning worship. The plan is to hold it on Sunday 18th, the week before Christmas. Of course, in our remembering we will remember, re-experience, the love we share with our loved ones, though they are no longer physically with us. There is indeed sadness, but in our sorrow we find that even greater and deeper experience - love. So, as we open the door to Jesus we do so with both a tear, and a smile, looking forward in hope. This hope is now part of us, as we remember that in our joy, and grief, love has filled our past. Perhaps you could start doing your remembering ... now!



DIARY

Thursday 1 December

10.00 am Morning tea in the Community – Smelly Cheesecake Café at Charlestown Square
1.30pm Bible Study at Garden Suburb

Sunday 4 December – Advent 2

9.00am Worship Service – Leader & Preacher – Rev Tom Stuart
with Children's Corner

Isaiah 11:1-10, Psalm 72,1-7,18-19, Romans 15:4-13, Matthew 3:1-12

Monday 5 December

10.00am Visitation at Garden Suburb Aged Care

Tuesday 6 December

10.00am Morning tea in the Community – Frankie & Co Café at Lake Macquarie
3.00pm Church Council meet at Charlestown

Wednesday 7 December

4.00pm – 7.00pm Kids Advent Workshop at Charlestown

Thursday 8 December

10.00 am Morning tea in the Community – Smelly Cheesecake Café at Charlestown Square
11.00am Worship at Garden Suburb Aged Care
1.30pm

Saturday 10 December

8.00am Men's Breakfast at Charlestown
TBA Friendship Circle

Sunday 11 December – Advent 3

9.00am Worship Service – Leader & Preacher – Rev Tom Stuart

Isaiah 35:1-10, Psalm 146:5-10, James 5:7-10, Matthew 11:2-11

Tuesday 13 December

10.00am Morning tea in the Community – Frankie & Co Café at Lake Macquarie

Wednesday 14 December

10.00am Charlestown Ladies Fellowship meet at Poppies Café for Christmas Gathering

Thursday 8 December

10.00 am Morning tea in the Community – Smelly Cheesecake Café at Charlestown Square

Sunday 18 December – Advent 4

9.00am Holy Communion and **Blue Christmas** Service – Leader & Preacher – Rev Tom Stuart

Isaiah 7:10-16, Psalm 80:1-7,17-19, Romans 1:1-7, Matthew 1:18-25

CHRISTMAS BOWL

Christmas bowl envelopes are available on the table at the church.

If you don't attend church in person but would still like to donate you could give online or we can put an envelope in with your mailout.

THE PRAYER PAGE

And so I urge you: carry on an ongoing conversation with God about the daily stuff of life, a little like Tevye in Fiddler on the Roof. For now, do not worry about 'proper' praying, just talk to God."
Richard J. Foster



Pastoral Prayer Points

- * Lorraine Pepper
- * Donna and family
- * Mac and family
- * Cat and Ezra and extended family following the death of Scott
- * Family of Jean Townsend
- * Family of Ron Box, especially Marion
- * Family of Margaret Asplund, especially her daughter, Susan
- * praise for the fact Enid Gaynor is home
- * Anne Hall
- * John Trenholm
- * Nita
- * Gloria and John Booth
- * Vivianne
- * Lillian
- * Tony and Nan
- * Mert and Pam
- * Judith and family
- * Ashley and Lorraine
- * Ken and Sharon MacDonald
- * Wilma Birch
- * Enid Power
- * Fred Bryant
- * Max

Congregational Prayer Points

- Preparation for Neos
- Project Reconnect
- Worship Services
- Lease of Whitebridge property
- Tom and Kathy
- Cathy Beeton
- Worship Committee

Wider Community Prayer Points

- Flood Victims
- Pray for situations in China, Taiwan and North Korea
- Those experiencing drought in the Continent of South Africa
- Wilfreda's orphanage
- Those with financial difficulties in current conditions

Maintained by SFED and Enid Power



Children & Family Worker Update

Hi Everyone

Last Tuesday was our last GCK group, we celebrated with some Christmas craft & treats. I have added a few photos of Esther, Fletcher & Sullivan having fun.



Thank you to those who helped out with donations towards the Bibles, at the Charlestown School SRE Christmas Assembly 10 year 6 received a New Testament to take on with them as they start their new school life in High School.

This week I have 2 more Christmas Assemblies to do Charlestown East & Teralba & then the SRE school year is finished.

This Wednesday afternoon is our Advent Workshop & we have some great craft activities for the children to do & take home reminding them that Christmas is about the birth of Jesus. As well as great Christmas games, message & Christmas food to add to the fun.



Advent and Christmas Services



- Our 9am Sunday morning worship will continue at Charlestown throughout Advent, and will be livestreamed and recorded.
- The Sunday morning worship on 18 December will include Blue Christmas, as we remember those who are no longer with us.
- A Christmas Eve service will take place at Garden Suburb Uniting Church at 6.30pm.
- There will be a Christmas Day service at 9am at Charlestown, which will be livestreamed and recorded.

Covid Update

Covid-19 hasn't gone away! As you will have heard in news reports, there is currently an increase in Covid-19 cases, hospitalisations and deaths. This has prompted the NSW Synod of the Uniting Church to issue an information update.

What does that mean for us?

- **Wearing face masks**

The NSW Government **strongly recommends** the wearing of face masks in indoor public areas when you can't physically distance from others.

Our Church Council will consider at the December meeting whether we will make the wearing of face masks mandatory. In the meantime, please consider wearing a mask in our buildings, particularly if you are not able to socially distance.



- **Room Ventilation**

Improving ventilation has been proved to minimise the risk of transmission of the Covid virus. Please ensure that as far as practicable, windows and doors are open, and ceiling fans are on when a number of people are in a room.

- **Social Distancing**

Please social distance where possible.

Please contact me if you have any questions or concerns.

- **Other Covid safe measures**

- Stay at home if you feel unwell
- Continue good hand hygiene practices
- *Stay up to date with vaccinations*

Anne Threlfo

Ph: 4953 1300 Mob: 0439 754 376

Email: annethrelfo@gmail.com



Ladies
FELLOWSHIP

Christmas Gathering

All Welcome



Charlestown Ladies Fellowship

Wednesday 14th December

Meeting at Poppies Café in Oakdale Road at
10.00am

Please let Sue Warren know if you are coming on
0427 737 793

so that a table can be set aside



Seeing the Poor and Marginalised as part of the solution, not the problem.

Our Speaker will be **Simon Lynch**, who oversees Opportunity International Australia's work in Indonesia that currently serves over 1.4 million families.

Simon has worked in the Development and Micro Enterprise sector for over 25 years, having both established and developed organisations throughout Asia. He will share of his journey from the corporate scene into development, part of which included living in slums and volunteering with Mother Teresa, where he learnt that the key to good development is ensuring you build a person's dignity in the process. Through walking alongside people in poverty he discovered how incredibly hard working they are and when given a chance, they can turn a very small loan and some training into an ongoing income for their families.

A Men's Breakfast

at Charlestown Uniting Church - 24 Milson St

8am Saturday 10th December

Cost \$12 RSVP: Paul Russell

pmraus74@gmail.com, or 0411 236 047

or sign-up sheet in the foyer.

Please advise of any special dietary requirements

By Wednesday 7th December 2022

*Please do not attend if you are unwell or have been
to a Covid-19 hotspot in the previous 14 days.*



Christmas Party



*Will be held at Robyn and Geoff
Greaves house on
Saturday 10th December at
6.00pm*

All Welcome



*Please bring a plate of food and
let Robyn and Geoff know that
you will be attending*



Charlestown & Garden Suburb Uniting Church

Blue Christmas

Sunday 18 December 2022

9am - as part of usual Sunday worship

Charlestown Uniting Church
24 Milson Street



Remembering those who are no longer with us

Please invite anyone who has suffered a loss

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

Administration:

P: 4943 4019

E: 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>