



CONTACT

Charlestown & Garden Suburb Uniting
Church Multi-Centre Congregation



16 June 2024

From Rev Tom

The Old Testament lesson for this coming Sunday is 1 Samuel 15: 34 – 16: 13. It is an interesting story with lots of nuances which then invites wondering about the nature of God, the nature of our relationship with God, and how God's will is realised through our lives. It is the story of the failure of Saul as King of Israel, and the selection of the new king to take Saul's place. The element I find interesting in reading the passage on this occasion is the reference to "the Lord was sorry that he had made Saul king". The passage also records Saul's grief. Then there are these words, "The Lord said to Samuel, "How long will you grieve over Saul? I have rejected him from being king over Israel"". Then the passage describes the process of God choosing David as the new king. But even the process is interesting. God advises Samuel to invent a scheme to deceive Saul. This would allow Samuel to find a new king without Saul realising. The final nuance to this story is that the selection of the king did not go at all according to the way Samuel expected. The father Jesse called upon each of his sons, each having characteristics befitting a king. But God does not choose any of these (7 sons in total). Confused Samuel says, "Are all your sons here?" and Jesse reveals there is a son who is out in the field keeping the sheep. I have heard lots of speculation as to why David was not with his brothers, the most radical being that David was possibly an illegitimate child. As I read the passage this time, I felt a "YES" developing inside me! The "Yes" refers to the shemozzle that is so often experienced in the journey of seeking to live out the will of God. I don't want to pretend I have any sure methods of discerning the will of God. Great spiritual masters have taught about this, from St Ignatius of Loyola, the founder of the Catholic order called the Jesuits, to the remarkable George Fox, founder of the Quakers, also called the Society of Friends (their stories are worth looking up!). What I would like to focus on today is the fraught pathways we journey as we seek to do God's will. It never ceases to amaze me how, as I endeavour to live out the will of God both as an individual and as part of a community of faith (CHaGS and the UCA), I have experienced wonderful moments and at other times the pit of despair. I have experienced lots of times grieving failure. At other times I have experienced complete perplexity as to why something, or someone, has shone out and become an instrument of serving God's great purposes when I thought it would fail. The bit that really grabs my attention on this occasion is the cunning devised between God and Samuel to prevent Saul from derailing the new work of God through David. I am reminded of a podcast series that was initiated by Richard Rohr titled "Everything Belongs". I don't know why but I have this continuing expectation that living according to God's will would have clear definition, goals and procedures would be clear, and everything would go according to plan. But my take from this story is that actually it is messy, and everything is included. And I am glad about that because that is exactly how I experience it. It means that even my journey, our journey, is part of the outworking of God's will. According to this story that is exactly what achieving God's purposes looks like – mistakes, grief, opposition, cunning, the unexpected ... and the list goes on. The only thing that reaches around all of this and gives it any sort of singularity is that it is all held within divine love. This story encourages us. We are on a journey with God, and God's will WILL be done. All the same we will experience the breadth of human experience, from the highest to the lowest. And all of it belongs!



DIARY

Wednesday 12 June

10.45am **Charlestown Ladies Fellowship to Hoyts Theatre to see *Unsung Hero***
All Welcome

Thursday 13 June

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

10.30am Service at Garden Suburb Aged Care Facility

1.30-2.30pm Bible Study at Garden Suburb Church

Friday 14 June

6.00pm Ladies Night at Kahibah

Saturday 15 June

8.00am **A Men's Breakfast – A life at Sea with Senior Chaplain Murray Lund**

Sunday 16 June – Pentecost 4

9.00am Service of Holy Communion. Leader and Preacher Rev Tom Stuart
1 Samuel 15:34-16:13; Psalm 20; 2 Corinthians 5:6-10; Mark 4:26-34

Monday 17 June

10.00am Garden Suburb Nursing Home Pastoral Care Visitation

1.30pm SFED

Tuesday 18 June

9.00am Needlework n Natter at Garden Suburb

10.00am Morning tea in the Community at Lake Macquarie Square

Thursday 20 June

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

1.30-2.30pm Bible Study at Garden Suburb Church

Sunday 23 June – Pentecost 5

9.00am Worship Service. Leader: David Chegvidden and Preacher: Erica Henley
Deuteronomy 10: 16-19; Galatians 3: 26-29; Matthew 25: 31-46

Monday 24 June

1.30pm SFED

Tuesday 25 June

10.00am Morning tea in the Community at Lake Macquarie Square

12.00 Garden Suburb Ladies Fellowship

Thursday 27 June

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

1.30-2.30pm Bible Study at Garden Suburb Church

Offering Envelopes

If you would like a set of offering envelopes for the coming financial year please contact Julie Fenwick in the next couple of weeks.



THE PRAYER PAGE



As part of the Uniting Church 35 days of Prayer pray for Luga Brae Bronte Uniting Church and access the prayers available each day on line, by joining Uniting in Prayer 2024.

Pastoral Prayer Points

* those in our congregation whose loved ones have died in recent times

* Elaine Ross

* Vivianne

* Shirley Elkin

* Lorraine Pepper

* Vicki

* Lesley

* Judith Fuller battling cancer

* Pam and Ken

* Lyn Benson

* Graeme

* Jean

* Fred Bryant

* June Locker

* Ryan Walpole

* Kathryn Gray

* Jacqueline Fenwick in Lingard Hospital for a couple of weeks

* Isabella

* Janice Wright

* Eileen Dunn

* Mert

* Judith and family

* Enid Power

* Max

* Tom and Kathy

* Don Humphries

Congregational Prayer Points

- Give thanks for the sale of Whitebridge property
- pray for guidance and discernment missional use of buildings into the future
- Project Reconnect
- Worship Services
- Cathy Beeton and SRE classes
- Worship Committee

Wider Community Prayer Points

- pray for orphanage as they deal with the aftermath of floods
- Tom and Neos
- HCA and ongoing issues of homelessness, affordable housing and climate change
- Praise for the attendance and results obtained from the Founding Assembly of HCA
- Those affected by climate change in Australia eg floods, droughts and fires
- Pray that a cease fire agreement will be negotiated between Israel and Hamas and that there will be relief from all the suffering
The situation in Ukraine and other trouble spots





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:

16 June 2024 – Maitland Region- Bolwarra Uniting Church

Church Bolwarra Uniting Church meets each Sunday at 9am with a regular attendance of approximately 20 people and concludes with fellowship over a cuppa in the hall afterwards. Our services are mostly traditional which reflects the older demographic of the congregation. We are trying new things to build our church and we are finding people in our community are showing interest. Our Leaders are stepping up and taking occasional services with a modern twist with the support from Rev Neil Smith. The Leaders are also working with Rev Dr Rod Pattenden to help develop a Sunday evening service each month.

Prayer: We pray for the Leaders of Bolwarra Uniting Church and Rev Neil Smith as they work together to progress the church. We pray for Rev Dr Rod Pattenden as he works with the Leaders to hold a monthly evening service and we pray that we are able to interest the younger generations in the community to come along. Amen.



Announcements in Sunday Worship

Does your group have a meeting or activity you would like announced?

Is there something in the broader Uniting Church or community worth announcing?

If you would like an announcement slide included in our Sunday notices, please contact Anne Threlfo: annethrelfo@gmail.com or 0439 754 376.

Sunday Worship Time to Remain at 9am

Information collected from members of the congregation indicate no strong desire to move our service time. There were several who indicated a strong preference for 9am, a few who indicated a preference for 9.30am, many who indicated that time was not a factor in their inability to attend, and a majority who indicated no strong preference either way. Therefore the Church Council decided that the time for Sunday worship would remain at 9am. Thank you all for your feedback.



The Way, My Way is the charming and captivating true story of a stubborn and amusingly self-centred Australian man who decides to walk the 800 kilometre-long Camino de Santiago pilgrimage route through Spain. He doesn't know why he's doing it, but one step at a time it will change him and his outlook on life forever. Based on Bill Bennett's best selling memoir of the same name, *The Way, My Way* has been described by Camino elder statesman Johnnie Walker as the most authentic film ever made about the Camino.



Spiritual Disciplines and Desires

- W**orship
- O**pen Myself to God
- R**elinquish False Self
- S**hare My Life with Others
- H**ear God's Word
- I**ncarnate Love of Christ
- P**ray



**OPERATION HOPE
Australia Ltd**

Special Guest Speaker

9.00am Sunday 23rd June,
which coincides with the end of Refugee Week for 2024,

Erica Henley.

Erica will talk about her charity "Operation Hope Australia" – which since 2016 has supported thousands of refugees and internally displaced people in Greece; Kurdistan in Nth Iraq; and now Palestinian families in Gaza.

Erica and her husband Kim will bring along some of their handcrafted wooden items to browse - you might find a special gift for someone.

A Life at Sea

Our speaker is Senior Chaplain Murray Lund recently retired Fleet Chaplain, Royal Australian Navy and current Reservist, is a Uniting Church Minister who has served as a Navy Chaplain for 25 years.

He has deployed on operations to the Middle East during the Second Gulf War, served ashore at the ADF Middle East Headquarters supporting personnel in Afghanistan, Iraq, Bahrain and Kuwait, and served on anti-piracy operational deployments to the Gulf and Africa coast. He has posted to HMA Ships Kanimbla, Success, Anzac, Melbourne and Choules and to Headquarters Joint Operations Command.

He was privileged to officiate at ANZAC Day Ceremonies at Gallipoli and Villers Brettoneux. Murray will be talking about the challenges and joys of life at sea, and the unique nature of serving Jesus in a secular war fighting outfit such as the ADF.

A Men's Breakfast

at Charlestown Uniting Church –
24 Milson St

8am Saturday 15th June

\$12 RSVP: Paul Russell

pmraus74@gmail.com,

or 0411 236 047

Please advise of any special dietary requirements

By Wednesday 12th June 2024

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

girls
NIGHT
Out!

Monday 1 July

7pm for tea/coffee and chat, 7.30pm start

“Christmas in July”

With guest speaker Kathy Stuart

At Garden Suburb Uniting Church
158 Marshall St, Garden Suburb

Please book with Sue Pepper 0425 375 528 or Cathy Beeton
0409 445 933

Children & Family Worker Update



The weather is cooling down & I pray you are all keeping warm & well, I am finding many of my scripture classes are low in numbers over the past few weeks, with many children off with colds, flu, covid or pneumonia. I know Redhead School has had a number of cases of pneumonia & even whooping cough, please pray for the children in our local schools, that they may stay well & avoid any serious illness.

Our next Holiday Kids will be the 10th July & our theme is Charlestown's Crazy Olympics as we prepare for the excitement of the upcoming Olympic Games, and bring in the Bible verse '[1 Corinthians 9:24](#) - Do you not know that in a race all the runners run, but only one receives the prize? So run that you may obtain it.' In our message time in the church.

This weekend is Starstruck weekend where many talented children from across schools in The Hunter will come together to sing, dance, perform drama, it again will be my pleasure to attend as a guest of Hayley Matchett who is a part of the drama team from Whitebridge High School and the Hunter Starstruck Ensemble. Our talented Hayley has been a part of our church since starting at Playcentre as an infant, continuing onto Messy Church & Holiday Kids, Hayley is now a team member of Holiday Kids & a most valuable one at that.

Cathy



Rev Dr John Squires and Rev Elizabeth Raine are again hosting an online Bible Study. The series is an exploration of the Gospel of Mark. The same topic is offered twice each week, so participate in the session that is most convenient for you. The times are:

Thursdays at 10am OR Thursdays at 7pm

DATE	THEME AND LINK	READINGS
13 June	Parables	Mark 4
20 June	Stilling the storm	Mark 4
27 June	Two Miracles	Mark 5
4 July	Sending the Disciples	Mark 6
11 July	John and Herod	Mark 6

The sessions are hosted by Tuggeranong Uniting Church, and sponsored by "With Love to the World".

To join the online sessions, go to the homepage of Tuggeranong Uniting Church: <https://tuc.org.au/> and click on the link at the bottom left of the screen that says "Connect to Bible Studies on ZOOM"

Sale of Whitebridge Church

Please give any current keys you have for the Whitebridge church building or dungeon to Paul Russell by or on Sunday 16 June 2024.

A new set of building keys were issued in 2019 (they have numbers engraved on them) - so any building keys from before then are not required.

Dungeon keys were not changed since 2000.



AUCK 20 LAND 24 **WORLD CHOIR GAMES**

NEWCASTLE CHAMBER CHOIR

Kia Ora Tour Concert

JUNE 28TH **HAROLD LOBB HALL** **TICKET \$40**
7.30 PM **CNR AUCKLAND AND LAMAN STREETS** **CONCESSION \$30**

TICKETS AVAILABLE AT
WWW.TICKETEBO.COM.AU/NCCWCG2024
MORE INFORMATION AT NEWCASTLECHAMBERCHOIR.COM



WINTER WRITINGS



...it was 'er...she done it...

My goodness, who was she...and what dastardly thing did she accomplish?! Sorry, the answer will have to wait whilst we have a short commercial break from our sponsor.

Recently, during a Worship Committee Meeting, we had a discussion. From this it was decided that an article be written for Contact centred around different areas of our faith.

Other ideas for discussion will include: ***Are they really the Psalms of David?***

Is it really the Lord's Prayer?

Love within the Church, oh Yeah!

So that's June well and truly taken care of! Should you have a question for which you would like us to grapple -please write it down and give it to a member of the Worship Committee and we will endeavour to come up with an answer for you.

The "she" was Bertha, wife of Ethelbert King of Kent. What exactly had "she done" was to be instrumental in bringing the Christian faith to England. Bertha was a Christian princess from Paris whom, with her chaplain, Luidhard, took a major part in the conversion of a goodly part of Kent (the most sophisticated of the Anglo-Saxon kingdoms, then) to Christianity. Got that - so where does Augustine fit into the grand scheme of things?!

He was Italian by birth, a pupil of Felix, bishop of Messina and a companion to Gregory. Augustine became a monk, later a prior of the monastery of St. Andrew on the Celian Hill of Rome. In 596 he was chosen by Gregory (now Pope) to head a mission of thirty monks whom he sent to evangelize the Anglo-Saxons...no mean challenge, eh?!

Arriving in Gaul (ancient France) Augustine and his 'merry men' had more than second thoughts about proceeding any further – the Anglo-Saxons' reputation as fierce warriors was well known! No faxes, nor emails let alone mobile phones in those days...maybe a carrier pigeon... but Augustine sent a message to Pope Gregory seeking permission to call the mission off and come back to Rome. No deal, was the stern reply, so the party of 31 not so merry men landed in Ebbsfleet (Kent) during 597 and set about God's Business, as per his instructions, which as we know, then flourished throughout the country.



Augustine was responsible for the building of the first Cathedral in Canterbury with all his arrangements very closely modelled on those existing in Rome at the time.

So, you see, our Christian heritage - of whatever denomination - derives its source from the determination of faith by this Christian woman Queen Bertha. It would have taken sheer grit for Bertha to bring this all about – would you or I have the same courage today, I wonder?

Augustine became the first Archbishop of the English.

Continued over.....

And so...without 'er...where would our faith be...that is the question!

To conclude, here is an ancient prayer of the Church that you may care to use in your daily Devotions: ***Lord and heavenly Father,***

you have brought us safely to this new day;

keep us by your mighty power, protect us from sin,

guard us from every kind of danger,

and in all we do this day direct us in the fulfilling of your purpose,

through Jesus Christ our Lord – Amen.

Worship Committee

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>