



Hurstville 1905
New Church



The New Church Newsletter

Hurstville Society August 2026

Our Spiritual Home

By Rev. HyunJin Yang

*“Blessed are those who dwell in Your house; They will
still be praising You.”*

(Psalm 84:4)

Hi, friends. First off, this is not an article on a theological subject but a write-up on my recent visits to several churches in Japan during my vacation back in May, following the regional clergy meetings that were held in Tokyo.

During this time, I, with my wife, YoungHee, visited several churches in remote areas about a 3-hour drive away, to the west of Tokyo.

As we walked into these churches, little did we know that we had just stumbled upon some of the most iconic churches in the province. It was a unique experience, as most travelers expect traditional shrines and temples in Japan rather than churches.

■ Karuizawa Kogen Church

Located 1,000 meter above the sea level, Karuizawa was once a quite mountain village, a far cry from the bustling tourist place it is today.

It was only after the arrival of Canadian Anglican missionaries in 1886 that this highland retreat transformed into a unique hub for the introduction and establishment of Christian cultures and churches.

Among several churches built since that time was Kogen church that was built in 1921. I found it interesting that the church was built around the same time as the Hurstville New Church was built on Dudley Street.

One thing I noticed was that it didn't appear to be an active Christian community but rather a popular tourist venue. It is not

surprising given that less than 2% of the population in Japan are Christian. (The image above is the pastor's office, located right next to the church building).



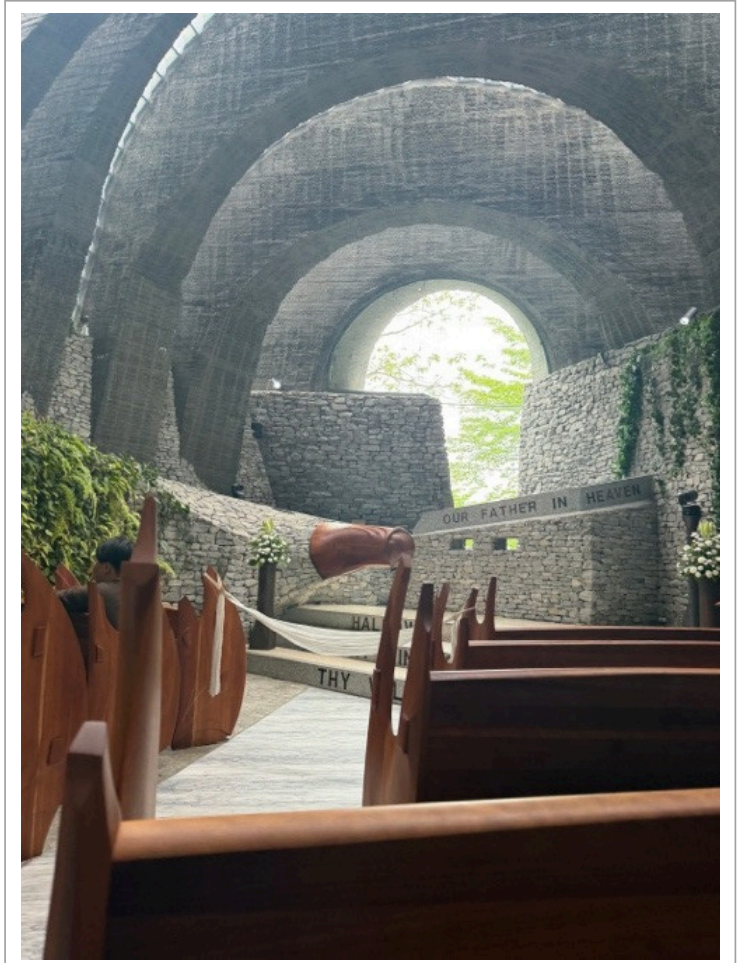
Uchimura Kanzo Memorial Stone Church



Located just a 10-minute walk from the Kogen Church is the stunning Stone Church. Built in 1988, this architectural landmark has become one of the area's most iconic chapels.

The interior of the chapel was unlike anything I had ever seen, with its unique architecture spiraling downward and stretching deep towards the other end of it

During my visit, I couldn't gather much information about the church itself or what its active Christian community is like. My visit for about an hour left me with the impression that this famous chapel functioned as a famous tourist place and as a wedding place, rather than an active, spiritual home for the local Christians.





■ Karuizawa Shaw Memorial Church

Located further into the forest on the opposite side of Karuizawa is a chapel named after the Canadian Anglican missionary, Alexander Croft Shaw. This church was built in 1895.

Shaw was the first Christian missionary to visit the mountain village in 1886; he fell in love with the area and sparked a Christian movement there.



Having done no prior research and just wandering in the town, YoungHee and I happened to see a sign of church. But it was not until we had paused a few times to consider turning back. We were not particularly tired, but being unprepared and caught in the rain shower, we didn't feel like to go any deeper. But something drew us before eventually the church sign appeared before us. Upon seeing the sign, I guess, my occupational instinct tapped me on the shoulder, urging me to go for it.

Within a few minutes, we spotted the church. No one was around. But the doors were not locked. And we did not hesitate to enter. It was at 4:55 PM, just before the doors shut for the day with the church set to close at 5:00 PM.

■ Someone's Spiritual Home

Sitting in the quiet chapel, which was slightly bigger than our church back at Hurstville in Sydney, I felt a welcoming embrace.



It felt as if the space were telling me, “You are welcome to stay, pray, and seek the Lord’s presence here.” The chapel gently invited me to take a deep breath and regroup.

Leaving the chapel and the peaceful moment that it offered as the closing time promptly approached, I wondered how many visitors this wonderful place welcomes each day. Does this place see regulars gathering for Sunday worship services? Do other people, just like us, stumble upon it and experience a moment of reverence?

One thing I could vaguely picture was how this place must have served countless people over the years as a place of worship and a spiritual home.

It also made me think of our church back in Hurstville and of how it can serve as a place of worship and reverence, as well as a spiritual home for anyone who stumbles upon it.

The Kogarah Storehouse Donation Report (July 17)

Twice a year, the Hurstville Society contributes to local communities by sharing donations to the Kogarah Storehouse. The Storehouse helps around 140 local people who need support every week. They give out non-perishable snacks, cereals, and toiletries. Because demand is growing, some people unfortunately miss out on their packages some weeks. For the reason, the donations we delivered were greatly appreciated.



For the record, this delivery was the largest one we've made, of the drop offs I've been part of. Besides the ones on the table, we had another trolley full of items yet to be unpacked. What a great success. A big thank you to the Dudley Street neighbors for their regular contributions and to our generous cash donor, as well. Lastly, Skye Horner for loading the donations into the car and helping with the delivery the entire time!

We will begin collecting our next round of donations in late November and make the delivery in mid-January next year.

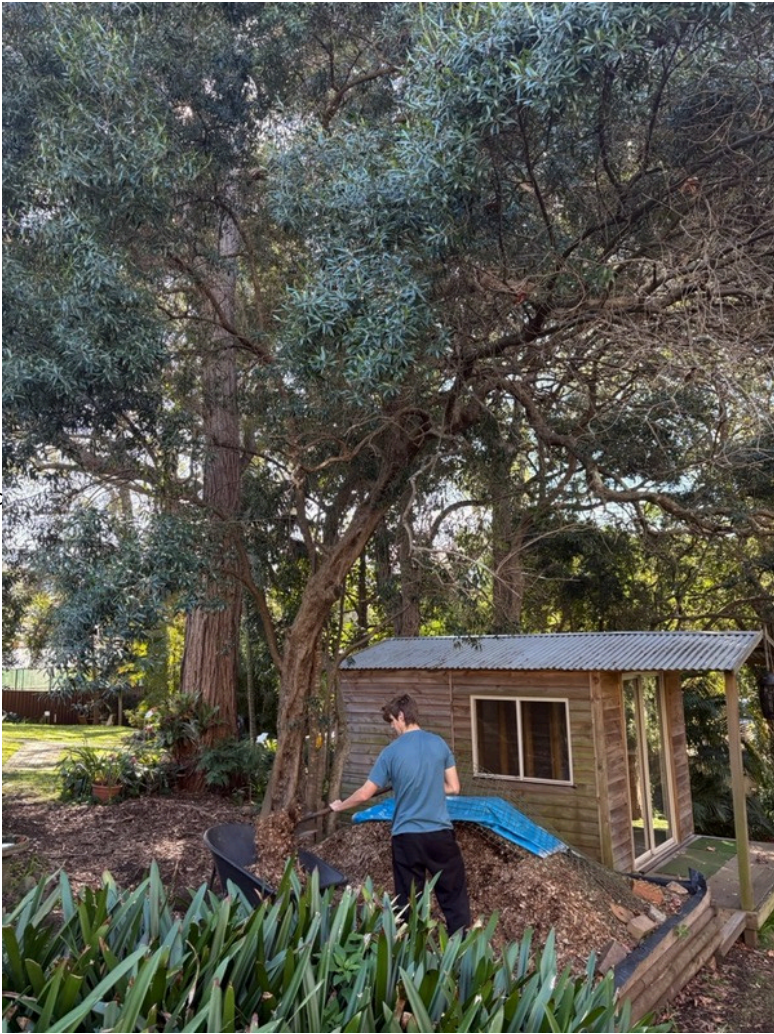
HyunJin

Work Party (July 26)



At our recent quarterly work party, we've had the biggest crew in a while—nine! The nine working bees picked up various work on the church grounds. A sunny day with temperatures at 20 degrees made it ideal for catching up on gardening. Aside from some weeding work, some helped transplant a lemon tree to the front of the manse. Murray sprayed weed killer on the outside church porch.

The small lemon tree planted across from the manse was originally a gift from Huiling to YoungHee. After moving it around in a pot to find the best sunlight, YoungHee finally decided to plant it permanently in a sunny spot. Let's hope that we will see it bear fruit someday!



Another major project we took on was mulching the tennis court trail, which runs through the backyard garden. Kristen, Liam, and Ralph teamed up for the work—Liam shovelling the mulch from a mulch station next to the shed and transporting it over to the trail. Kristen spread it out once it was dumped. Later on, HyunJin and Huiling helped finish the rest of the job.

We got more done than what's listed here. Hard work aside, our new pizza place is really growing on us! The place we used to order from had tasty pizza, but it was pricey and not very filling. This new place seems to have it all—taste, quantity, and a reasonable price. J Let's look forward to our next work party!



Society News

■ A Lovely Meet-Up at on the Central Coast (April 14)



You bet that this is a late update, but it is certainly one that cannot be missed! On April 14, six New Church/Swedenborgian folks in the local area met up on the Central Coast.

To be fair, two of the six might not strictly be considered 'local' being from Sydne, while the other four hadn't even realized they lived just ten minutes down the road from each other! The six folks were Michael and Kerry Lockhart, Keven and Erlinda Attwater, and Murray and Lori Heldon. Here is how it all winded up happening. Kevin and Erlinda moved from Port Macquarie down to the Central Coast more than a year ago. Almost a year passed when Kevin discovered that there were a couple of people living in the area who were life-long New Church members by reading about them in our Newsletter report on the Journey Program that ended back in March this year. As it turned out, it was Michael and Kerry who were living right in the area.

Once they touched base, they were excited to meet up. They got together at a local café on the Central Coast. Murray and Lori were also invited to join. We hear that the meet-up went wonderfully, and they are looking forward to the next one. It is awesome how things come together like that.

■ Tree Lopping across the church property (June 2)

About ten trees across the church premises were either cut down or trimmed. The decision was made since some of the trees were posing potential safety risks or becoming a nuisance. For example, we recently saw several palm trees drop large branches directly onto some of the pathways we use. One day it was on the pathway at the front of the church, and another day, it was on Ralph's car! Fortunately, the car was not damaged, but we can imagine it could've gone way worse. See the photos below for the record. By the way, they are not staged but taken following the incidents. So, a total of three palm trees were cut down.



Some trees just needed trimming. Two trees had grown to the point where their branches were encroaching on the power lines running from the main line to the houses—a palm tree across from Baringa and an olive tree in front of the manse.

The lopping crew did a good job! See a photo of a man cutting down one of the palm trees from all the way up.



What's Coming Up Beyond Our Regular Services?

■ Monthly Reading/Discussion Group on *Married Love*

Just a quick heads-up that our doctrinal class is moving from monthly to quarterly. This means our next class won't be until October.

Instead, we will continue our newly introduced monthly reading and discussion group on *Married Love* (or *Love in Marriage*)! The month August will be our second month. Following our July reading on 'The Joys of Heaven,' our August reading will be 'Marriages in Heaven' (Paragraphs 27–44, which is about 18 pageslong). Reading one paragraph a day will be a wonderful way to complete the material this month.

By the time this newsletter is sent out, our first monthly meeting will have already taken place on Wednesday, July 29. We have yet to decide the dates and times for the following monthly meetings, but they will be announced as soon as they are settled.

By the way, it is not too late at all! if you are considering joining the reading and discussion group. Simply let HyunJin know at pastor@hurstvillenewchurch.com or phone him about your interest and any other enquiries.

■ Society Meeting + Property Trust AGM (Augst 23)

Note that we will have our next Society meeting and Property Trust AGM held after church service at Baringa on August 23.

■ Pastor Visits Canberra (August 29-30)

Pastor HyunJin will make a two-day trip to Canberra to work with two groups over the weekend. On Saturday, he will visit Heulwen and Barrie Ridgway for a Holy Supper service. Excitingly, this marks his second visit within a four-month period. On Sunday, he will lead a formal Sunday service, followed by Holy Supper at Philip and Eleanor Richards' place. This will be the first time that he is taking a two-day trip to Canberra. He can look forward to spending more time in fellowship with the groups.



■ Lay-Led Service at Hurstville (August 30)

While the Pastor is away for the weekend, our church service at Hurstville will be held as a lay-led service instead. Everything will be same including social, tea time following the service. So, come and join!

♥ Happy ♥
♥ Birthday ♥

Happy Birthday to Emily Kermond,
Rhonda Hall, Rebekah Horner,
Larah Walsh, Lily Heldon,
Ralph Horner.



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