



Dunedin Methodist Parish

Finding in everyone Finding God in everyone

www.dunedinmethodist.org.nz

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PARISH BULLETIN

12th June 2011

WORSHIP FOR SUNDAY 19th JUNE 2011

9.30am	Mornington	C Gibson
9.30 am	Mosgiel	S Ungemuth
11.00 am	Glenaven	C Gibson
11.00 am	Wesley	S Ungemuth
1.00pm	St Kilda	TBA
6.00pm	Broad Bay	C Gibson

Ecumenical Pentecost service – Sunday 12 June, 7 pm – St Joseph's Cathedral. Join the inner city churches in celebrating the coming of the Spirit and our unity in Christ.

MORNINGTON MWF - The next Meeting - being the Annual Meeting will take place on Monday the 13th June - in the Church Lounge, at 2p.m. The Speaker will be the Rev Donald Phillipps - " Cape Reinga and back". Please note our Annual Collection - "Social Services Collection" & also remember The Fellowship of the Least Coin.

MUSICAL SOCIETY CONCERT - 2.30pm, today (Sunday 12th June) at Mornington Methodist Church. Piano and Singing Items. Cost \$2.00.

PF&R Meeting Mission Office, 7.30pm, Thursday 16th June.

WESLEY LEADERS MEETING - Tuesday 14th June, 10.30am.

OPEN EDUCATION

This month's Open Education programme brings the dynamic Director of our Dunedin Methodist Mission, Laura Black, to talk about our social service work in a post-Budget world. Don't miss this opportunity to get an informed analysis of the changing world in which social services will have to be delivered and the Mission's strategies for helping those who need them. Mornington Church, Galloway Street, on Wednesday 15 June, at 7.30pm.

And don't miss out on Judy Russell's superb pre-talk meal starting at 6pm (any profits go to the Mission). Sign in at Mornington or phone Judy (455 3727) to book your place at the table. The meal costs \$15, the talk \$5.

HOME GROUP BIBLE STUDY.

The Home Group will meet on Tuesday 14th June at 7.30 pm at the home of Ian & Dot Pearce. The Study is entitled "How can we get to know what God wants us to do" Study number 5...Express your freedom....Tel Ian..453 6312 or Geoff...473 0193.

HEALTHY CHURCH, MISSIONAL CHURCH WORKSHOP

There will be a workshop run by our District Synod in June for all the parishes. The theme of this workshop is 'Healthy Church, Missional Church' conducting by Nigel Hanscamp (Director of Mission Resourcing). This workshop will be held in Invercargill on the 18th of June. This is a district event and I would like to see good representation from the parish attending this workshop. Thanks, Siosifa Pole (Parish Superintendent).

MOSGIEL FOODBANK:

Items required: Milo. Sugar. Coffee. Blankets. Soap. Toothpaste. Supplies of fresh vegetables welcomed. At present Foodbank has plenty of breakfast cereals and soup. Thank you.



ROCK CAN'T, BUT SAND CAN – AN OCEANIC APPROACH FOR UNITY

I am writing this article with due respect to the Tangata Whenua (people of the land) and also those who later resided in the land, the Manuhiri (the settlers), if I would ever cross over any boundary and violate anyone's privacy. As a native of Oceania it is a right protocol to acknowledge the presence of the people who first inhabited this

place, where I am working and practice my ministry. Hence, their efforts laid the foundation on which I begin my ministry. It is indeed an honour to be asked to contribute to this column of the 'Connection.' There is a Tongan saying, '*potopoto a niu mui pe*', which means, 'just a wisdom of a young coconut tree.' It is a humble reminder in advance that if I will make a mistake, remember that I am only a young coconut in the paddock.

Rock and sand are two important natural resources in Oceania. (I am intent to use the word 'Oceania' in this article instead of 'Pacific'. The word 'Pacific' is a word that the colonial empire imposed on the people of Oceania without consultation. It is a word that portrays the smallness of the island nations in the Pacific Ocean. On one hand, the term 'Pacific' identifies derogatory and powerlessness. 'Oceania' on the other hand depicts the notion of wholeness and equality. Oceania is actually the combination of the land space and the ocean. Land + ocean + underground = Oceania. Therefore, Oceania is not small as it has been claimed. Oceania is big and vast if compares to any of the world continents, c.f. 'Epeli Hau'ofa, "Sea of Islands," in *Inside Out*, 24-52). Most of the island nations in Oceania have these two unique resources (sand and rock) in their own make up. Aotearoa – New Zealand is part of Oceania and possesses rich natural resources of rock and sand. My family and I live at St. Clair, which is very close to the beach. Quite often I take a walk to the beach and enjoy watching the beauty of nature. At the beach I have been astounded by the elegance of sand and rocks. The sound of the wind and the coming of sea breezes create an atmosphere that is so natural and harmonious. In addition, the splendour of the open sea and its big waves rolling from the deep towards the land creates a wonderfully diverse melody of sounds.

As the waves roll toward the land some of them arrive on the sandy beach and produce quiet and peaceful sounds of harmony but the waves that arrive on the rocks not only produce a roaring sound but with such a commotion that is uncontrollable. As I keep on watching these lively experiences on nature I am reminded about human relationships and their complexity. Some are quite friendly and others are quite hostile. Then I ask some critical questions which lead me into some further questions. How can we deal constructively with confrontational issues? Can we live in harmony in the midst of our diversity? What is the appropriate way of dealing with our differences? These questions might not lead us to a final answer but at least can encourage further conversations on how to be more tolerant in our relationships with others who have different points of

views from ours. In order to lead us to a possible solution I see sand as a metaphor or symbol for building good relationships, in contrast to rock.

The Bible portrays a negative image of sand as inferior to rock. Jesus specifically told his disciples the story of the two builders (Matthew 7:24-25). The wise builder built his house on the rock for it is more stable and also able to confront the cruelty of nature, but the foolish builder built his house on the sand, which symbolises weakness and powerlessness. Some of the Psalms speak of rock as a metaphor for the mighty hands of God. For example Psalm 18:2, “The Lord is my rock, my fortress and my deliverer, my God, my rock in whom I take refuge.” For those who are in the Middle East, rocks can become shelters in a sandy storm and fortresses for when enemies attack. Using rock as a metaphor for God is pertinent for their context but for us in Oceania it is the antithesis, especially after the recent Christchurch earthquakes. It opens our eyes to know that rocks do not always protect houses but can also destroy houses and threaten lives.

Therefore, sand from an Oceanic perspective symbolises flexibility, openness, tolerance, and acceptance. The Dictionary defines ‘sand’ as ‘small loose grains of worn or disintegrated rock.’ Although this definition still links sand to rock, it is in a different fashion. The nature of sand is losing and opening. These grains are not lying individually but collectively with open spaces. Their strength comes from their connectedness and their openness. When the big waves roll down onto the sands they sink quietly because they find spaces to enter, but when they reach the rock they produce violent noises and cruel confrontations.

I believe If Jesus was growing up in Oceania he would use ‘sand’ in one of his parables as a metaphor for God’s unconditional love and acceptance, rather than rock. Rock can’t stop the waves but sand can, because it gives spaces. It is a reminder for us that in order to build strong relationships we must work collectively and allow spaces for others to function and to grow. The Season of Pentecost reminds us as well of the success of the early followers of Jesus because of their collective effort and their openness for others in the power of God’s Spirit. Rock can’t, but sand can.

Siosifa Pole