



Dunedin Methodist Parish

Finding Good in everyone Finding God in everyone

www.dunedinmethodist.org.nz

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PARISH BULLETIN

18 March 2012

WORSHIP FOR SUNDAY 25 March 2012

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

MWF Special Project

Mums and kids, that's mums in the Gaza Strip and our church kids.

Wednesday March 28th at 7.45pm. Speaker will be Joyce Whyman who is a member of St Johns. It will be at Mornington Methodist Church hall.

MWF are most welcome and there will be a gold coin collection for St John. Joyce will give a a background of life in the Gaza Strip with a powerpoint presentation and DVD.

Explorers Group meets on Sunday 25th at 4-30pm in the Mornington Methodist Church lounge. The main topic for discussion will be preparation for the Explorers Church service set down for April 15th. All interested people are very welcome to attend.

COMING UP: A HARVEST FESTIVAL with a difference!

A HARVEST OF SONG AND WORD will be offered across two services on 18 March, at Mornington (9.30 - 10.20am), Glenaven (11 - 11.50am). Worship at Mornington will include some new words to old tunes; a different service at Glenaven will be based on negro spirituals;

There will be morning tea as usual after the Mornington service and (also as usual) before the 11am service at Glenaven Church, Chambers Street, North East Valley. The in-between time has been slightly extended so the preacher can meet with people at both churches and those who wish can come to both services, arranging themselves a ride if need be. The Glenaven service will be followed by a pot-luck lunch at 12 noon, the Broad bay service that was to be held at 6pm is postponed to Sunday 15th April. Keeping the HARVEST theme, please bring a packet or can of food to the pot-luck meal, so we can take a hamper to the food bank after. ALL WELCOME! BRING A FRIEND...

OPEN EDUCATION: YOUTH AT RISK

The first of the Parish Open Education programmes offered this year at Mornington Methodist Church, Galloway Street, will deal with the disturbing problem of young people who physically harm themselves and in some cases commit suicide. Much more of this happens in our own community than is ever reported in newspapers or on television. We will bring some expert presenters who can offer information and suggest ways in which we might help to reduce the incidence of this troubling feature of modern youth culture. The session will be held at 7.30pm on Wednesday, March 21, in the church. The charge is \$5, which covers supper as well. As usual we offer a splendid pre-session meal catered by Judy Russell, commencing at 6pm, for a charge of \$15. Book a place by ringing Judy at 455 3727 or signing up (at Mornington only).

MORNINGTON**WOMEN'S****FELLOWSHIP**

The next Meeting for Women's Fellowship will take place on the 28th March, at 7.45 p.m., in the Church Lounge. This is our Special Objective Meeting. The Speaker will be Mrs Joyce Whyman. The subject - "Eye Hospital in Jerusalem". Please remember your subscription (if you have not done so); collections - Fellowship of the Least Coin; Our Special Objective; & the Eye Hospital. All Welcome.

A Story from the Mission

Had a young Mum come and visit my office feeling isolated, lonely and frustrated with life and conflict with her partner and his family. Mum has a three year old boy and lives apart from the Dad but they are still in a committed relationship. She has very little contact with her immediate family and very little support. Mum really wants to do some sort of study to improve her chances of a decent job once wee man goes to school. Her partner and his parents are resistant for her to do this because it will create a debt. We talked openly about HER hopes and dreams and what she wants out of life for herself and her son. We discussed options and looked at job questionnaires on line to get an idea of her interests and possible career options. We talked about study being an investment rather than a debt and I encouraged her to talk with her partner pointing out the pros for the future. She became very excited at the prospect of being eligible and capable of committing to study and felt in her heart this was something she wanted to do regardless of what others thought. Mum took away a collection of study options and criterion to look over, phone numbers of people to contact to ask specific questions, and a huge smile and a can do attitude.

Sympathy

Our condolences and sympathy go to Susan and the family for the death of their beloved mother Margaret Edith Wilson (known as Peg). Your grief is our grief as well because of what Peg has done for our church. She served the church faithfully for many years in many capacities. We thank God and the family for having her in the life of the church. We only pray that God's peace be upon you in your sorrow and find hope in your future.

PARISH EASTER STUDY: FINDING A VOICE

Session 2, '*Chasing the dream or fulfilling the calling*' will be held next Tuesday, March 20th at 7.30 pm in the Mornington Methodist Church. Extracts from the movie, *The King's Speech*, are used as a starting point for Bible study. Everyone from throughout the parish is very welcome to attend; come to just one or two if you cant make it to all the sessions.



Review of *Doing Theology Ourselves* by Neil Darragh

(Neil Darragh is a New Zealand theologian who is teaching at Auckland University School of Theology)

In the world of theology there is a major shift taking place from traditional and common theologies to “contextualise theology” in relation to the time and space of a particular type of people. Neil Darragh in his book entitled *Doing Theology Ourselves* insists that as people of our own time and place we can produce our

own theology in relation to our context. Out of curiosity, the author saw that the theological concepts that he learnt in the past are anachronistic to the real issues that he now faces in Aotearoa, New Zealand. Therefore, he argues that in order to make our theology relevant and meaningful we need to challenge some of the embedded theologies. We have to deconstruct our theology in order to reconstruct it again ourselves to meet our individual context.

As a Christian, a theologian, a European, and a New Zealander, the author is writing from a background that expresses such a context. However, he clearly indicates that although he has a theological opinion on matters important to him, he doesn't rule out the theological points of view of others. He claims that each person should have the freedom to create a theology that is pertinent to his/ her context. Providing this freedom would make theology more profound and diverse.

The word 'theology' is derived from two words, "theo" means 'god' and 'ology' means 'reasons'. It generally refers to 'reasoning God' or 'understanding God'. It is obvious that our individual context shapes our understanding of God. Whether we know it or not, the influence of our family, our church, our community, our politics, and our society has embedded both our understanding of God and our practice of ministry. This is a common understanding because it is making theology contextual.

Because theology is determined by the people of a community, everyone therefore has the right to do theology. The assumption that only the academics are capable of creating or producing theology is a false claim. Everyone can create theology in relation to their individual context. Usually people have casual conversations on moral issues, about God, and about the Bible without realising that they are engaging in a theological discussion. Ordinary church goers are doing that at church, during morning tea, lunch time, at the car-park, and even at work

places. Expressing their individual point of view evokes lively theological discussion on a particular issue. In this type of environment everyone is valued and worth listening to. The author argues that our individual theological point of view will influence our faith and our ethics.

In the first chapter, the author suggests that there is a possibility for everyone to do theology. It certainly needs time and effort to create theology but the opportunity is available to everyone. Those existing theologies became a stepping stone. Our forebears in the faith already created various kinds of theologies that our practice of ministry has built upon. The author calls these existing theologies as 'implicit theologies'. Although these theologies have contributed to the life of the Christian community but they need to be challenged and re-interpreted to make them relevant for today. In doing so, theology will become contextualised to meet the demands of the community. When theology is out of context it is not only out of date but has no influence on the community. Theology has to address the real needs of the community.

In chapter two and three, the author deals with the importance of those who are doing theology on general issues that reflect in their own theology. These issues are apparently having two worlds. These worlds are 1) the worlds of our own personal belief that affects our personal understanding of God and 2) the world where we live that affects our practice of ministry. On one hand, the author claims that we inherited words such as revelation, Spirit, creation, life, community, etc that affect our understanding of God. On the other hand, are the issues that we face in our world such as health, housing, education, poverty, employment, etc which set the agenda for our practice of ministry. The author insists that we cannot have one without the other. However, he argues that to begin a genuine theological approach we have to begin from our contemporary world. He calls that approach as 'Our involvement'. In order to create a profound theological

concept we need to begin with our real life experience. It means we have to look for a real issue that affects our community, then use some biblical insight, and then look for a proper action that can restore life.

Writing from a Christian perspective, the author in chapter four carefully discusses the proper use of scripture as a tool for creating contextual theology. He is conscious of the ever present possibility of misusing scripture in various instances. This misuse will damage the practice of theology. He suggests that to have an understanding of the scriptures we must look to the world behind the texts or the context of the scripture before we apply to our own contemporary contexts. Because the world behind the text is different from ours, we need to interpret the text carefully to address the issues of our contemporary world.

It is obvious that the author is writing from a point of view that is not strange to many contemporary theologians. Because the community determines theology, therefore it is changeable. This opinion offers a powerful message to the Christian community that everyone can be a theologian. I tend to disagree with the author that the Bible is not the only source that helps us in creating our theology. There are sources in our local contexts that can assist us to shape a theology that is pertinent and relevant to our community and its needs. We also need to be aware that because everyone has the right to do theology we therefore have to be open minded to the diverse theological opinions that we have among us. Our individual contexts will shape our understanding of God and will determine the way in which we practice Christian ministry here in Dunedin and in Aotearoa-New Zealand.

Siosifa Pole