



# Dunedin Methodist Parish

*Finding Good in everyone Finding God in everyone*

[www.dunedinmethodist.org.nz](http://www.dunedinmethodist.org.nz)

<b>Presbyter:</b>	Rev. Siosifa Pole	455 2923
<b>Parish Stewards:</b>	Dr George Davis	453 6540
	Dr Richard Cannon	477 5030
	Mrs Hilda Hughson	487 6226
<b>Tongan Steward:</b>	Mr Kaufusi Pole	455 0096
<b>Parish Office:</b>	Siosifa: <a href="mailto:parish@dmm.org.nz">parish@dmm.org.nz</a>	466 4600
	Nat: <a href="mailto:natv@dmm.org.nz">natv@dmm.org.nz</a>	

## PARISH BULLETIN

25 March 2012

### WORSHIP FOR SUNDAY 01 April 2012

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

### MWF Special Project

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

Wednesday March 28<sup>th</sup> 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.



## MORNINGTON'S OWN LEPRECHAUN

paid a welcome visit to the service last Sunday, bringing gifts in green for the youth of the Church, hats, beanies, jackets and other paraphernalia associated with the Irish heritage. The leprechaun - otherwise known as Rachael Hanna - also brought a host of stories and facts to remind us of St Patrick and his remarkable ministry in Ireland. It was an enjoyable presentation with some surprising information, among which was the fact that early colour associated with the Irish saint was not green but blue.

Sacrilege !!



## A Story from the Mission

Several stories from clients upon my return to Arahina about being isolated over the Christmas Break because there are no other services open. This seems to be a common theme not only in Mosgiel; I've had discussions with 3 clients about having a circle of friendship support group over the breaks. Just a simple phone call or a visit by invitation only would suffice. This came about as one person had a medical incident, another experienced a family violence issue (elder abuse), and the other a serious illness. All three people did not know where to go for help and decided to wait until Arahina was open to seek support. We now have an open forum where guest speakers can come and inform clients what to do in an event of a medical emergency; what is elder abuse and what can you do; and that other people within the Methodist Mission are available to help also.

## Memorial Service

The Tongan Community in Dunedin is Glad to welcome anyone who wish to join with them in the Memorial Service of the Late King George Tupou V, the king of Tonga.

The service will be at Wesley Methodist Church

At 6pm on Sunday 25<sup>th</sup> of March 2012.

There will be supper in the hall after the service.







I am reading *Together*, by Richard Sennett, about the “rituals, pleasures and politics of cooperation” and have for the first time met the idea of dialogic conversation as an alternative to consensus.

Most of us will be familiar with the idea of consensus decision making – that talking continues until the points of agreement, of sameness, are found and then used as the basis for moving forward. Consensus emphasises commonalities, encouraging us to downplay differences, and is a great way to control and minimise hurtful conflict.

But sometimes consensus minimises the seemingly irrelevant so much that significant things can be put aside because they are only important to one or two of the group. In statistics these are called outliers; and they are frequently excluded because leaving them in would wreck the common ground.

Yet outliers bring valuable information, and some of them are important. Consider John Wesley, an outlier if there ever was one ... the courage to be different, to pay attention to the inconvenient can sometimes create a greater wisdom.

For those like me who have spent (probably far too much) time in community group committee meetings, consensus decision making has come to feel more like the embrace of the bland, than a revolutionary approach to connexion. The race to get everyone to agree with me often takes over!

In the rush to avoid conflict, diversity can be lost. They that speak loudest, or have the most piety, the most victim points (especially in feminist groups!), or who are more fearful; dominate. Inconvenient facts are brushed away. Groupthink can eventuate.

Dialogic conversation, however, prioritises the appreciation of difference; driving a careful listening and comprehension of the other's position and argument; of analysis and interpretation, and asks for reflection before responding.

Sennett suggests that dialogic conversation permits a different kind of collaboration – that of joining together to tease out the greatest understanding of each other. It is a conversation that requires silences, celebrating the richness and depth of gesture and tone and those blessed, blessed, outliers.

And this makes a lot of sense: I don't know about you, but I certainly don't learn much from hearing what I already know, or by having my gaps in knowledge and understanding confirmed ...

Within the Methodist tradition, of course, there is the guidance of Wesley's sermon on the Catholic Spirit. While many read the sermon as an invocation to what is the same in us, it is equally, a recognition of the differences.

Wesley wrote [*by saying*] "*If it be give me thine hand*"; *I do not mean, "Be of my opinion"*. Nor does he ask that we become *indifferent to all opinions*, or without discernment. In many ways Wesley is posing the question: do we need more than the ability to talk with and listen to each other to decide to do so? And his answer is a resounding: no!

So these dialogic skills, what are they? The term comes from a Russian philosopher Mikhail Bakhtin who coined it as a literary theory: *The dialogic work carries on a continual dialogue with other works of literature and other authors. It does not merely*

*answer, correct, silence, or extend a previous work, but informs and is continually informed by the previous work. Dialogic literature is in communication with multiple works. This is not merely a matter of influence, for the dialogue extends in both directions, and the previous work of literature is as altered by the dialogue as the present one is.*

Sennett, a musician, notes that there is always the choice for the “author” as to whether or not to be influenced, but asks how the choice can be made without close and open-hearted engagement?

The key dialogic practices are *listening by closely attending to and interpreting what others say before responding, making sense of the gestures and silences as well as declarations; even holding ourselves back in order to observe well.*

It is the art of managing disagreement not by ignoring it, but by listening to the detail, the motivation, the experiences, and the needs, that sit behind disagreement, before (re)affirming or changing one’s own mind.

**Laura Black**

