



# Dunedin Methodist Parish

*Finding Good in everyone Finding God in everyone*

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

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## PARISH BULLETIN

16<sup>th</sup> SEPTEMBER 2012

### WORSHIP FOR SUNDAY 23<sup>rd</sup> SEPTEMBER 2012

9.30am	Mornington	Y@M
9.30 am	Mosgiel	S Pole
11.00 am	Glenaven	Y@M
11.00 am	Wesley	G Watson
1.00pm	St Kilda	TBA
4.00pm	Broad Bay	No Service

### MOSGIEL MID WEEK SERVICE

Wednesday 19 September at 2.00pm. Everyone welcome.

### SOLOMON, SHEBA AND THE ROCK CHURCHES OF ETHIOPIA

The Parish Open Education programme offers on Wednesday 19 September a fascinating insight into a branch of the Christian Church we know little about. The Ethiopian Christian Church claims an ancestry older than the time of Christ. The son of Solomon and Sheba is said to have brought it into being and it claims both Jewish and Christian ancestry. Its churches hewn out of solid rock are marvels, brilliantly shown in a BBC film on one of the Lost Kingdoms of Africa. The session led by Colin Gibson begins at 7.30pm (\$5), and is preceded by the usual excellent meal catered by Judy Russell (\$15). Book your place at the table by ringing 455 3727 or signing in at Mornington.

## **Y@M SERVICE – THE GOSPEL OF MARK**

Youth at Mornington will be presenting a service based on the Gospel of Mark over the next couple of weeks. This week we will be at Mosgiel and Wesley. Next week at Mornington and Glenaven. We will be using a variety of presentation styles to cover all sixteen chapters of Mark – don't miss it! (**Mark** it in your diary!)

## **MOSGIEL METHODIST CHURCH**

AGM Meeting to be held after Church, Sunday 23<sup>rd</sup> September 2012. Ladies a plate please. Please send reports to Elaine Merrett by Monday 17<sup>th</sup> September. Thank you.

## **MORNINGTON WOMEN'S FELLOWSHIP**

The September Meeting will take place on Wednesday the 26th of September - in the Church Lounge at 2 p.m. The Guest Speaker will be Mrs Gillian Vine - the subject - European Gardens. Please remember the Fellowship of the Least Coins. All Welcome.

If you are into reading & knitting you may like to read - "Knit One, Purl a Prayer" A Spirituality of Knitting by Peggy Rosenthal - you will find it in Dunedin Public Libraries - City Library - 1st Floor - at 248.88 ROS. In America there are a lot of Knitting Prayer Groups. I found this in a copy of Touchstone this year & suggested it for the Library

## **TEACHER REQUIRED - AMANA CHRISTIAN SCHOOL MOSGIEL**

At the retirement of the School Principal at the end of Term 3, the Taieri Christian Schools Association Inc. is calling for expressions of interest in: A TEACHING/ADMINISTRATION position or a TEACHING POSITION For Term 4 or next year. This private, interdenominational Christian School caters for Years 1 to 8 and is expanding up to Year 13. It is registered for overseas students. The school has a strong values curriculum using Interact and ACE, a high level of academic achievement and a happy, well-disciplined safe environment. The school, based in the main street of Mosgiel, is in it's twelfth year. For expressions of interest, please contact the Chairman 03 467 2276 fax 03467 2236 by the end of September 2012.

## **HAPPY BIRTHDAY**

To Liam Bennett who celebrates a Birthday on the 18<sup>th</sup> September.



**MORE PICTURES** from the recent **MWF Victorian Party** at Mornington Church. Part of the **HAPPY CROWD** of Victorian Women, some waving flags and others singing patriotic songs. The Weston Family, **ANNABELLE, CHRISTINA & KRISTEN** made a big impression and found all their Victorian garb in their wardrobes at home. Sisters **ROBYN & LYNLEY** wowed the crowd with their song "Two Little Maids."



### **Story from the Mission**

I have been working with a woman whose two young children (3 and 2) attend preschool and nursery. Due to a chaotic lifestyle, that involved taking in friends and family members in a caring manner to help them out, left her with unpaid power bills water and gas disconnected and overdue rent arrears. All of this resulted in her inability to provide the basic needs for her children and they were removed from her care. Although essentially she was a good Mum and loved and cared for her children, her big heart and choice of associates put her children at risk at times, which lead to a rather transient lifestyle when her home became unliveable without power and hot water. Her children were removed into family care. Through the process of Family Group Conference and support from myself and Family Start, Mum was given a list of expectations that had to be dealt with before CYF would consider the children's return to their Mother. Through careful monitoring and support Mum had adhered to and completed all the tasks that were set out for her. She had changed her choice of friends and soon realised the people she was helping were in fact not friends, she sort help for her emotional state and received counselling for issues from her childhood, she found a settled and happy relationship with a lot of family support and has been committed to doing everything to get her children back in her care.

The reason I write this story is not to defend my client, as I also agreed the children should be removed from her care through the events and circumstances that led her to this position at the time, but to highlight the value of being transparent and honest with any human that's life is for whatever reason in chaos. CYF had set criteria she had to meet before the next FGC to regain custody of her children. My clients understanding was that because she had adhered to and completed all relevant criteria set out in her plan she would be regaining care of her children. She had prepared for this and set up rooms to accommodate their return. During the first 6 months her CYFS worker had left her job and she was assigned a new case worker. This case worker never met her but phoned her once to arrange a date to review and set up another FGC. I had made numerous attempts to make contact with this CYFS worker myself to express the good progress and changes she had made during this period and left messages asking for a return call.

### **Story from the Mission – Continued**

This never happened. The day before the FGC I get a call from the said CYFS worker returning my calls to say the children would not be returning to my clients care. I asked if she had met with her to explain this as her understanding and expectation was that she had done everything to their satisfaction and had provided a space to have her girls back. The answer was 'no' she had not met with her but had phoned her to set up the date for FGC and that she felt from her notes on my client she was not ready to have the girls in her care and that CYF would be attempting to secure permanent custody with their family placement and the likeliness of her getting her children back in future was very slim.

I expressed my concern that my client had a completely different understanding and asked the question how they could make such a judgement call and assumption on someone they had not met or engaged with. I explained my take on open, honest and transparent practice and that I felt they were doing a complete injustice on someone that had made a huge amount of progress and made significant personal and positive changes for the better of herself and her children. I was not arguing the fact that right now was the right or wrong time for the children to be returned but the blatant dishonesty and disregard to a human being whilst holding such a powerful position without acknowledging or taking the time to meet, greet and assess where she is now.

Subsequently my student and I visited my client at home late that afternoon to let her know what the process and outcome of the FGC was going to be the next day to prepare her for it in an honest and transparent manner. This was met with absolute grief, disbelief and raw emotion. Something that brought my student to tears! I struggle to understand how SOME people in positions of social justice, care and protection and support agencies cannot uphold and treat individuals with the basic human rights of respect and honesty regardless of how hard and unfair something may be or seem.



## **What's all this about a day of rest!**

John Wesley and Samuel Johnson were near contemporaries – Wesley the elder by eight years. Both were masterful men, but in different ways. Each had a reasonable opinion of the other. They knew some of the same people and in mid-18<sup>th</sup> century London their paths naturally crossed. Temperamentally, however, they were at opposite poles, and there is a nice statement by Johnson recorded in Boswell's life: 'John Wesley's conversation is good, but he is never at leisure. He is always obliged to go at a certain hour. This is very disagreeable to a man who loves to fold his legs and have out his talk as I do.'

Reading Wesley's journal, for example, is, literally, breath-taking. The man is never still. I turned to it, when thinking about a subject for today, in case (for example) anything remarkable happened 250 years ago exactly – September 16<sup>th</sup> 1762. Well, he was in Cornwall for the umpteenth time – and every day he would preach three or four times and ride miles and miles. He visited Gwennap Pit for the first time in 1762, for example. And some time during each 24 hours he would write up his Journal, and, as well, maintain his Diary in his personal brand of short-hand. If his Journal is exhausting, his Diary is even more so. Again and again, when one wonders what drove the man, there is that repeated formula: 'necessary talk', or 'religious talk' or, sometimes, 'necessary religious talk.' For heaven's sake, did John Wesley never relax!

So how about these well-known words of W.H.Davies as a corrective:

What is this life if full of care  
 We have no time to stand and stare?  
 No time to stand beneath the boughs  
 And stare as long as sheep, or cows.  
 No time to see, when woods we pass,  
 Where squirrels hide their nuts in grass.  
 No time to see, in broad daylight,  
 Streams full of stars, like skies at night...

Partly, this contribution originated in last Sunday's lesson from Mark's Gospel. Jesus was trying to get away from not just the crowds, but even from his disciples. Why would he want to do this? It's not the only time, by any means, in the accounts of his ministry, that Jesus sought privacy. I don't know what the consensus is among NT scholars, but I have a feeling that they naturally think that Jesus was always (as he supposedly said at the age of 12) 'about his father's business.

Being a popular *rabbi* who told great stories, and did so with an authority unlike that of the other teachers of his time, meant he was a public figure. He was even more so, because he had a reputation as a healer. There was, simply, no escaping the crowds, even across the borders into Gentile territory. I have a feeling that Jesus knew someone in that part of the world, and had sent a message saying that he would like to come and stay for a while.

Did it have to be a 'business holiday' as one Marcan commentator suggests, during which time Jesus reflected 'upon the scope and course of His ministry.' Why shouldn't he, like any human being, want a break from it all – time to take a breath and gather his strength. There were, of course, no paid holidays those days, but were there not times when there needed to be a pause in the relentless grind?

I go back to something that, I have long believed, enables us to see a more relaxed Jesus. If, as is more often than not assumed, Jesus' ministry lasted three years, there are simply not enough events recorded in the four Gospels to fill up every single day. It is, in my opinion, no detriment whatsoever to Jesus' ministry to describe it as part-time. There were seasons of the year more favourable for the gathering of crowds, for example.

The creation story ended with a seventh day, when a satisfied Creator looked on what had been achieved and thought it very good. In that way the keeping of the Sabbath was given its divine justification – it was to be a day of rest, as the good God had rested. It was to be a 'holy' day – but it may be worth reminding ourselves that 'holiness' and 'wholeness' and 'health' come from the same root meaning.

And what did we good Christians do with the Sabbath. What, especially, did we good Methodists do with it. We filled it right up with things to do. If

Sundays seem to be a chore, then that's because we made them so. I wonder what we might be able to do to correct that emphasis on duty and turn our worship and our church life as a whole into some much less structured, much more free.

The Gospels, naturally, don't speak about Jesus on holiday. They are a concise summary of all the things that he did that were remembered, along with some reflections about who he was – conclusions drawn from the sum total of these experiences. I think, though, there was a more relaxed Jesus who, even like the great Dr Johnson, liked to fold his legs and have a good yarn with his friends.

***Donald Phillipps***