



Dunedin Methodist Parish

Finding Good in everyone Finding God in everyone

www.dunedinmethodist.org.nz

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PARISH BULLETIN

28th OCTOBER 2012

WORSHIP FOR SUNDAY 4th NOVEMBER 2012

9.30am	Mornington	K Russell
9.30 am	Mosgiel	G Hughson
11.00 am	Glenaven	K Russell
11.00 am	Wesley	G Hughson
1.00pm	St Kilda	Comb. Wesley
6.00pm	Broad Bay	G Hughson

EXPLORERS GROUP

Explorers Group meets on Sunday Oct 28th at 4-30pm in the Mornington Church Lounge. All interested people most welcome.

CELLISTS OF OTAGO

The Cellists of Otago proudly present a concert featuring international artists Anna Leese - soprano, and Heleen du Plessis - cello. The concert will be held in St Hilda's Collegiate Chapel on 28 October at 2.30pm. (Please note the starting time.) This will be a "not to miss" concert. Doors will open at the school at 1.30pm to accommodate an expected full house. Admission \$15 per adult, \$10 per student (with I.D.) \$5 per child.



TRADE AID DUNEDIN TRUST BOARD ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING.

The Annual Meeting will be held on Tuesday 30th October, 2012, at 5.45pm, in the Brian Arnold Room, Dunedin Community House, 283 Moray Place.

In addition to the formal reception of reports and accounts, our youngest City Councillor, Jinty MacTavish will speak on:

"A young person's vision for the future of New Zealand's first Fair Trade City".

All welcome.



HAPPY BIRTHDAY

To the following children:

- Patrick Boyes who turns 11 on the 29th October
- Claudia Pienaar who turns 6 on 31st October

TAIERI CHRISTIAN CARE TRUST – CHRISTMAS FOOD PARCELS

It is time to make up the Christmas food bank list again. If you have any clients that you would like to receive a Christmas parcel please email your list to me by the 23rd of November.

Please remember to include number in family, address, phone number and age of children so we can give a gift appropriate to their age. Address and phone numbers allows us to contact them if they are being slow in picking up their parcel.

The clients are asked, by the referring agency (you), to pick up their parcel from 10am-12pm on Friday 21st Dec at the Methodist Church Hall. If, as the referring agent, you plan to deliver your parcels to your clients please pick up the parcels on Thursday Dec 20th of Dec between 10 -12 mid-day. Note the 2 days please.

Michelle Kerr, Co-ordinator of Taieri Christian Care Trust,
a.m.kerr@xtra.co.nz, Telephone 4862743.

SIX OCTOGENARIANS were “put under the pump” at Mornington Church last week as the last of the 2012 Open Education programme. Audrey Paterson, Ian Bartlett, Olive Bain, John Angel, Jeanette Gibson and Donald Phillipps answered a wide range of questions from Question Master Colin Gibson under 4 headings MEMORIES OF THE PAST; GROWING UP IN THE FAITH; GROWING UP AS A HUMAN BEING; and THE FUTURE. A very good crowd was present and the 80-year-olds proved once and for all there is plenty of life and spark left in all of them. It was a great night. Pictures show the panel as assembled for the discussion, and a happier group gather around their “birthday cake. PS Donald Phillipps made much of the fact that he is younger than the rest - his 80th birthday is next month!



TODAY'S LECTIONARY READINGS INCLUDE Mark 10: 46 - 52 - the story of BLIND BARTIMEUS. Here is Prof Bill Loader's commentary on the passage.. . . . So *what about Bartimaeus? He is twice named (10:46): 'son of Timaeus' and 'Bartimaeus' - which also means 'son (Aramaic: bar) of Timaeus, meaning something like: son of the precious or worthy one. Probably more symbolism! But what about the real person under all this symbolic development? What if I am visually impaired, partially or fully blind? I cannot be reduced to a symbolic prop. What must it be like with all these words about blindness and songs about recovering sight when you know you are blind and will never see? There are many ways of being ignored, treated as someone who does not matter, or made into a stereotype. Is it possible to truly belong as a person with a disability in a community?*

Bartimaeus is typically sidelined - on the side of the road. On the other hand, it was also the only place to be for beggars, strategically located outside the city gate to appeal for help to passers-by. These were the nobodies of society. When he raised his voice (10:47), people were quick to remind him he was a nobody (10:48). With the persistence which can characterise the desperate, the man does not shy away from being a nuisance. Jesus responds, hears his request, heals him. 'Your faith has saved you' must mean in Mark: you believed I could do this; so I can do it and will. He went with Jesus on the journey - back to more symbolism.

A nobody in the world's eyes, a sidelined person, a blind beggar, becomes the hero of faith. This is typically Mark at his subversive best. Mark can do this because he knew such stories. Jesus did not sideline people. Jesus responded to what were seen as the 'hopeless cases' of his day. Did Mark or an earlier story-teller perhaps make up the name to emphasise the point?

Whether at the symbolic level or at a literal level, the story illustrates an approach to people which is central to Jesus' teaching. How do we retell the story without sidelining blind people today? That is easier said than done. If we play up the miraculous we heighten the pain where healing is not happening and may be impossible. Piety can easily race by in the euphoria of symbolism and then the only abiding message is: we are irrelevant - and you are irrelevant.

Despite the inevitable exaggerations it is likely that Jesus did perform healings. It is too difficult otherwise to explain the strength of the tradition.

Its relevance is another question - very relevant for the fortunate ones healed, very significant as a symbol of recovery and renewal, notable as fulfilment of biblical images of hope. But where the focus falls on the achievements, the cry from the roadside must be heard: me, too! Why do you prattle on about all these wonders when you know well that I shall be like this for the rest of my life? How can you be so insensitive, unrealistic?

Honest caring which does not over-promise or load me with guilt at promises unfulfilled is what I want from the side of the road. I, too, am someone of worth. Of course, I want change where that can be done, but I don't want to be the stuff of your miracles and potential propaganda. I am not odd, stupid, a "case", a need - I'm a person, not a discounted person or a person to be discounted.

We need to listen to Bartimaeus. Thank God he spoke up.

Story from the Mission

My thanks to Keith our new board member who met with me to discuss an MSD application for Social Workers in Schools in Southland. Keith has great insight into the area and pulled out all the stops to gather information from several of the schools about why and how a social worker would be useful to them. This was very valuable in compiling the application which is for 3 F/T equivalent social workers to work in schools in Invercargill, Nightcaps, Gore, Mataura and Bluff. I think we will be up against some stiff opposition as Anglican Care and Barnardos already have contracts for SWiS in Invercargill. However it was a useful exercise in completing the new format application forms that are being used by MSD. They are quite prescriptive in format and layout and (obviously in a move to save MSD costs) each application has to comprise of 10 copies – not an inconsiderable amount. Certainly time consuming in collating and binding and hugely costly in terms of paper and photocopying. Just another cost NGOs will have to bear if they require funds from government departments.



CREATING AN IMAGE

If ever the nature of modern-day leadership was shown up for what it is, that moment occurred on the Tv news last Sunday evening. We were introduced, as if it should be for us a matter of importance, to a New Zealand hairdresser, whose current priority is to ensure that the Republican candidate for the US Presidency, Mitt Romney, always appears well-groomed – at least so far as his hair is concerned.

I admit to having had suspicions that Mr Romney's hair may be, in truth, less dark than it appears. But what does concern me is that it is now essential, in matters of political leadership, that the image she or he projects, rather than the content of his or her policies and plans, is so great a priority. When the image is in contrast to what is known of the reality, then I think we're in serious trouble.

Years ago Ron Wood introduced me to a book of modern parables - *The Innovator*, by G.William Jones. It seems appropriate to share one of these with you – called *The Image Behind the Image*.

In the village of Tecoaatl, the Conquistadores tore down the temple of Tlaloc atop the tallest pyramid and erected in its stead the small but magnificent Chapel of the Holy Virgin. When Father Anselmo finally arrived in the strange, steaming jungles, he found a touch of home in the familiar surroundings of the altar, nave, chancel, and in the beautiful image of the Holy Virgin affixed to the wall behind the altar. He was well pleased to celebrate the Mass in the little chapel day by day before the small group of faithful soldiers, some of whom were always present.

But when the garrison was off on a combat mission far to the south, Father Anselmo soon grew tired of celebrating the Mass in an empty chapel, so he went among the natives to invite them to come and

worship with him. He found them a recalcitrant lot, however, who preferred to continue worshipping Tlaloc, even though his image had been smashed by the soldiers. Father Anselmo explained that the Holy Virgin would make their crops grow even better than had Tlaloc, since she was real and Tlaloc was only an image fashioned by men's minds and hands. But still the natives refused to enter the chapel.

Seeing the priest's untiring efforts to fill his chapel, the old *cacique* (or headman) of the village said to him one day: "I know how you can fill your temple to overflowing with my people."

"How?" asked the priest eagerly.

"I have noticed, in my secret visits to your place of worship, that the image of your Holy One is flat on the back where it touches the wall. In my house I have a fine image of Tlaloc, which is also flat on the back. If you would pull your image out from the wall just a bit, and if we were to put the image of Tlaloc there - the images back to back - then my people would come."

"But that would be unfitting!" protested Father Anselmo.

"Why?" asked the old *cacique*, "when your image will entirely hide the smaller image of Tlaloc from view, and only my people will know it is there at all? To outward appearances nothing will have changed, except that your empty chapel will be full of reverent worshipers."

Mused by the vision of the chapel full of reverent worshipers, Father Anselmo consented.

Now, with a full chapel every time he celebrated the Mass, Father Anselmo was happy. The old *cacique* was happy. And the throng of natives, flocking to the chapel daily with their offerings of maize, fruit, and chickens, were happy too.

In fact, it would take a strange and cynical man indeed not to be happy over such a pleasant situation as that!

The trouble is, I think I am one of those strange and cynical people who are not happy with image-makers. Particularly when they try to convince me that the personality they want to project is at odds, for example, with what we already know about them

2000 years ago, the image-makers of the time turned Jesus of Nazareth into a rabble-rouser, an enemy of Rome, and a blasphemer. Throughout those 2000 years, the followers of Jesus have continued to be his image-makers – and how many of them have been near the mark?

Today I'm thinking of Jesus as the founder of the Church. There's an image for you – and many among us would take it for granted. Just like our understanding that John Wesley founded a Church. It would be infinitely nearer the mark to say that what he began was a movement.

But I wonder – and on this Reformation Sunday I especially wonder - whether we are up to the challenge of re-forming ourselves as pilgrims on a journey. Pews and pulpits are fixtures – too many fixtures hamper our freedom – and Jesus calls us to be free.

Donald Phillipps