



Dunedin Methodist Parish

Finding Good in everyone Finding God in everyone

www.dunedinmethodist.org.nz

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PARISH BULLETIN

20th July 2014

WORSHIP FOR SUNDAY 27th July

9.30 am	Mornington	R Mitchell
9.30 am	Mosgiel	L Rankin (Pulpit Sunday)
11.00 am	Glenaven	R Mitchell
11.00 am	Wesley	G Watson
1.00 pm	St Kilda	TBA

MORNINGTON METHODIST WOMEN'S FELLOWSHIP The July Meeting will take place on Wednesday 23rd July, in the Church Lounge at 2 p.m. Our Guest Speakers will be Margaret & Brian Connor & their subject: WWI Battle Scenes in France & Belgium. Please remember your small change for the Fellowship of the Least Coin. All Welcome.

EXPLORERS GROUP meets on Sunday 27th at 4.30pm in the Mornington Church Lounge. All interested people are most welcome to join us.

A CONCERT NOT TO BE MISSED - On Saturday 26 July, 7.30pm at Knox Church, the City of Dunedin Choir performs Mass of the Children by John Rutter, Rejoice in the Lamb by Benjamin Britten and Dance-Song to the Creator and Three Spirituals by New Zealand composer David Hamilton, together with Columba College's senior choir singing their Big Sing numbers. Tickets from Knox Church Office, Beggs or City Choir (476-2426) cost \$40 (waged), \$30 (unwaged) or \$10 (students). Children are free.

AS A TOKEN CELEBRATION OF MATARIKI, Maori New Year, Wednesday night's monthly dinner at Mornington was a great success. The diners had a choice of two soups, Kanga (sweet corn) or Ngohi (seafood). The main course could be described as a european-ised version of the fabled "pork & puha." There was a Poaka (pork) casserole and a mixture of Puha (greens), together with roasted Parareka (potato) Kumara and Uwhi (yams).

Perhaps we should have made more of the Matariki occasion. Traditionally, Matariki was a time to remember those who had died in the last year. But it was also a happy event – crops had been harvested and seafood and birds had been collected. With plenty of food in the



storehouses, Matariki was a time for singing, dancing and feasting. Well, at least we feasted, and were happy to do so. Photos show some of the 31 diners who were literally squeezed into the Church lounge.



STORY FROM THE MISSION

From Little Citizens: The children have been showing a great interest in investigating and experimenting both inside and out, this has seen us explore mixing through setting up a discovery tray where the children can experiment with colour mixing or test out what happens when other ingredients are added for example baking soda and vinegar, milk and oil etc.

Through having this available throughout the day the children have been building on their turn taking skills as they work together to decide whose turn it is and what they might add next.

This has seen lots of conversations and discussions around what they have noticed while predicting what might happen if they added certain ingredients together.

"To carry out their scientific "wonderings," children need time to explore and discover scientific concepts in risk-free, playlike settings. When children are interacting with materials, observing, questioning, thinking, making predictions, and experimenting to confirm their ideas in a meaningful setting, they are making maximum use of the brain's capacity for learning" (Bredekamp & Rosegrant, 1993).

This has also seen us identify the need for more resources that provide the children with greater and richer opportunities to explore and discover.

PRAYER GROUP MEETING

Those who wish to be part of the parish prayer group will have our first meeting on Wednesday 23rd of July, 7pm, at Wesley hall. Please come for a time of prayer together for our parish.

Thank you, Siosifa



A slip-up in this week's Connections roster has given us the opportunity to print an edited version of Wednesday's Open Education address

by Laura Black. Our thanks to Laura for what was a timely and prophetic address, so very relevant in this the 2014 election year. Laura's script was not a flowing, connected piece of prose, but succinct bullet points, with the occasional "grenades" thrown in. We have not made changes - the meaning is clear enough for those who have ears to hear and minds to understand.

"Poverty or Justice: A Time to Choose"

The opposite of poverty is not wealth, it is justice.

There are several kinds of rockstar economy. Young, creative, full of promise and energy. Or ... old, raddled, stale, and selling nostalgia, with outrageous ticket prices. So its election year. And there seem to be two competing narratives: The stuff we've just talked about and the alternative: (political leaders will say) its not as bad as elsewhere and the bulk of us are ok and those that aren't get support and could do more to help themselves, and anyway have you seen the poverty in India, that's not real poverty (Monty Python sketch) And yet ... there is hard evidence to be able to say more people are struggling than before. We've slipped down almost every OECD ranking. There's a meanness in our civil discourse around those who do not have enough (for whatever reason).

So there's something there. But which is it: Poverty or Inequality – because they are quite different things. Does it matter if there are a few unbelievably wealthy people if everyone else is ok? Michel Sandel, a Frenchman said in 1997 that *It isn't just that it is unfair to those at the bottom; it's that too great a gap between the haves and the have-nots hollows out civic life. It diminishes the possibility that we can share and live a common life, sufficient to foster shared values, sufficient to the*

kind of life and the kind of citizenship wherein we can deliberate about common purposes and ends. And we find the inequality movement addressing things like executive pay levels, the living wage etc. There is an argument that can be made that despite what the inequality movement says: it is actually a middle class movement, not so much interested in the poor as in the middle group who are struggling now more than ever. Think about it: if you ask a poor person are they more likely to identify a shortage of resources in their own life (as the main problem) or that others are earning “too much more” than them. No they are not. And there is a rhetoric of envy and of resentment that populates social media when inequality is discussed that is uniquely middle class. The arguments that inequality is inherently damaging to social outcomes for all of society has taken significant hits – Wilson and Pickett have not yet been able to respond well to accusations that their data is immensely flawed. Which isn’t to say that there isn’t a mammoth MORAL issue with inequality. But at the practical level, the data about poverty, however, is VERY settled. The political problem, of course, is that the poor struggle to speak for themselves and are increasingly disempowered in our political processes. They are not sexy. And they are easily blamed by the right for their own circumstance. So I’d like to lay a couple of those arguments to bed before we move on ...

Myth or inspiration?

As if people were machines ...

As if it were about temperament rather than opportunity, and access to opportunity.

As if intergenerational deprivation didn’t have marked neurological impacts (cultivated concern vs protecting kids from adulthood concerns / average number of words / ability to navigate the system on behalf of the child / short term adaptations around food drugs and alcohol / the health impacts of poor housing / the impact of poor health and nutrition on school achievement

What this tells us, if anything, is about the level of resentment felt by “kiwi battlers” and how it impacts their political thinking. The solution to resentment, of course, is love. Recognition. Empathy.

(We hear it said) "anyone can." But can everyone? Can everyone be a millionaire in the sense / meaning of wealth that phrase has today? And really ... actually, can ANYone? Something like 90% of US billionaires are heirs. Social mobility is at its lowest since the interwar years. We know now an enormous amount about how both poverty and wealth are inherited. As are the capabilities to be poor and rich ... The wealthy have access to the assumptions of privilege and ease, resources, but also expectation. Its called “cultivated concern.” Poor children experience 1,000,000 fewer words in conversation with them by the age of 5. Parents try to protect their children from adulthood for as long as possible. Because its so awful. Children don't learn to delay gratification by choice. They loose the single biggest hallmark of teenage resiliency before they even get to school.

Three decades ago NZ had relatively low levels of child poverty. Today, the best figures suggest that following on from the massive increase in child poverty after Rogernomics and Ruthenasia, between 130,000 and 285,000 children live in poverty roughly 12.5-27% depending on how it is measured. The figures work like this:

- Income poor children: 265,000
- Children in families experiencing hardship: 200,000
- Children both income poor and in families experiencing hardship: 100,000
- Children experiencing hardship but not income poor: 100,000
- Children not in hardship but income-poor: 165,000
- Total across all categories (but removing double-ups): 365,000

Forgetting morality – although we should not. Forgetting the impact on the children themselves – although we should not. The impact on us all ... (is)

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Productivity costs – children growing up poor are likely to be less productive in later life -> lower future wages -> higher chance of benefit reliance

Crime costs- children growing up poor are more likely to be prone to crime

Health costs – children growing up poor are more likely to have poor health across their lifetime Low level of “paying it forward” – taxation income from a high earning base

In New Zealand the cost across wages, crime, health and welfare, is estimated by Pearce at 4.5% of GDP. That’s around \$7bn a year at current figures.

It can make your head hurt ...Poverty thinking. Crises are often symptoms. The workforce has an agenda. Why the living wage can't work Half of all school leavers will perform below average – workforce requirements The tradeoff between employment and inflation. Happily we don't have to solve the problem. We just have to tell those who can or should which problems it is we want solved!

Because its election year after all ...

Methodism as a movement, not a destination but a journey

Poll-lead politics They're cynical because we let them be

And that's about how we are silent and cede the ground.

"Perfection is the enemy of the good" – Voltaire

A critical mass is the smallest amount of fissile material needed for a sustained nuclear chain reaction. So how can WE lead THEM?

Laura Black