



Dunedin Methodist Parish

Finding Good in everyone Finding God in everyone
www.dunedinmethodist.org.nz

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Mornington:		

PARISH BULLETIN

26th June 2016

WORSHIP FOR SUNDAY 3rd July

9.30 am	Mornington	D Phillipps
9.30 am	Mosgiel	N Winskill & S Pole
11.00 am	Glenaven	D Phillipps
11.00 am	Wesley	S Pole
1.00 pm	St Kilda	TBA

OTAGO-SOUTHLAND SYNOD MEETING - On Friday 1st of July, 7-9pm and Saturday 2nd of July at Invercargill Methodist Church. I would like to encourage members of the Synod from the parish to attend. Those who wish to go please let me know so that I can arrange transport. Siosifa Pole.



LIFE MATTERS SUICIDE PREVENTION TRUST QUIZ NIGHT

Tuesday 12th July 7pm Event page:

<https://www.facebook.com/events/990741664379742/>

Organise a team (4 to 6 people) and come have a fun night at the Mosgiel RSA, 6 Church St, Mosgiel. Tickets are \$5 per person, payable on the night. Please register your team as soon as possible with Nikki on 0273431099 or by emailing her via events.mmrsa@vodafone.co.nz. All the money raised will go towards paying for the traffic management required for the Dunedin Hopewalk on Saturday the 13th of August.

HOPEWALK Event page:

<https://www.facebook.com/events/1795184507368422/>

HOPEWALK is a walk to bring greater awareness around suicide and promote the suicide prevention agencies who are doing their best to provide information and support around suicide related issues.

Our hope is to remind those who feel like they are by themselves – you are never alone.

The parade will start at the School of Dentistry and will finish at The Octagon where will have a minute of silence to remember and mourn suicide victims, followed by some entertainment.

Further information: Greg Hughson greg.hughson@otago.ac.nz

Ph. 027 212 1048 <https://www.facebook.com/LifeMattersOtago/>

EXPLORERS GROUP - We meet this Sunday (26th) at 4.30 pm in the Mornington Lounge for an AGM and more besides.

Parish Links

MOSGIEL METHODIST CHURCH

As many of our readers will be aware, there are increasingly greater needs for assistance to families in our communities who are struggling with day to day living costs.

The volunteers in the Mosgiel Community Food Bank have become so busy they seldom have time to make themselves a drink. Some of our ladies became aware of their situation and decided it would be nice to provide morning teas as a pleasant respite for the volunteers. This has been ongoing for some time and has been greatly appreciated.

The members of our congregation are most generous with donations to the food bank. It is good to know that through our generosity and thought for those in need, we can help to make life a little easier for someone, somewhere.

ACKNOWLEDGMENT OF WOMEN MINISTRY

It is always an honour and privilege to be asked to chair the Women's Fellowship meetings or to speak to them on certain themes. Last year I was invited by the Mosgiel Women's Fellowship to speak at their meeting about my trip to the two Conferences that were held in Samoa and in Tonga. On Wednesday, the Mornington Women's Fellowship invited me to chair their AGM and also to speak about my experiences on the two Conferences that I shared with Mosgiel Women's Fellowship. During my time with these two women's fellowships I realized how much they offer through their ministry not only to our parish but also to our wider community and even to the world. They have projects that they offer financial help to the most vulnerable people of our community and also the world. On behalf of the parish I would like to commend our women for the ministry that they offer in the name of Christ. Thanks, Siosifa

BISHOP RICHARD RANDERSON proved an effective and attractive speaker at last week's Open Education programme at Mornington. Just as rewarding was the ecumenical audience that came to hear him, drawn by his well earned reputation as a challenging theologian, prepared to tackle the tough issues. "God in the 21st Century" was his title, and he shared something of his own pilgrimage from young curate to bishop, both leading the Anglican Church and challenging establishment theology along the way. A single copy of his book "Slipping the Moorings" is currently on sale at Mornington (\$20) and he cited the following para as the kernel of what he has to say

"Popular preoccupation with the question of the existence, or otherwise, of a supernatural being diverts us from the real question about God. That question is what we experience at the heart of life. something which, while being ultimately a mystery, nonetheless gives us a sense of connection to all life, people, and creation; something experienced in the nature of love, something which changes our lives and calls us to be agents of change for the wellbeing of others and the earth that sustains us."



PRAAYER REQUEST - Please continue to pray for those who are sick in the parish. We have quite a few that need your support through prayer. Please also pray for the home alone and the frail.

TALANOA OCEANIA CONFERENCE - It was a wonderful experience to be present at the Talanoa Oceania Conference that was held at Wesley Hall, Trinity Methodist Theological College, Auckland from 10th-11th of June. The theme of the conference was “JustUs 2 justIce”. The emphasis was on the word “Justice”. Presenters and speakers presented their papers, addressing the issue of justice from various areas. For example, gender and sexuality, Bible and Theology, children and poverty, climate change, injustice that women face in ministry, just to name a few. Those who want a more detailed report of the conference might turn on to the Talanoa Oceania Conference website.

CAN YOU HEAR THE CRY?

On Refugee Sunday we celebrate the contributions of refugees in our community and remember the men, women and children displaced or forced from their homes by persecution, torture, death, rape and war. Each day 42,500 people who once led ordinary lives, leave their homes in a desperate search for safety. The tragic stories of those lost in the Mediterranean Sea which receive the headlines are a fraction of the total. Under international law, refugees are entitled to protection and assistance – the global community is obligated to meet their basic human rights.

Last year 59.5 million people found shelter in a foreign land or were displaced within their own country. Most face a long wait – average stay in a refugee camp is 17 years – with few opportunities. The pressure on resources is immense – UN agencies have cut services. ACT Alliance is determined to make sure refugees themselves are central to their efforts to provide relief, shelter, education and other long term support.



FINDING THE PATH

Sunday week ago I gave a reflection in Church which posed the notion taken from Sioux Indian anecdotes about the “path of a true man”. Those of you who were present or those who can recall the plot of the film *Dances With Wolves* might remember that these words were said to Lieutenant John Dunbar a.k.a. Dances With Wolves by the tribal priest Kicking Bird once Dunbar had learned some of the culture of the tribe. I proposed that in the Great Plains there occurred a clash of two worlds: the natural world of the Sioux (now called Lakota), and the world of the white man. The first was conservative and protective of the environment and the second was aggressive and exploited the natural world. Yet the latter, the white world judged the native Sioux world to be “uncivilised” and not worth keeping.

In the address I made the remark that the Indian notion of true humanity was akin to what we hope to achieve in our life – following the path set by the life of Christ and hoping to learn the ways of God. Perhaps we can take this idea deeper.

A “path” exists between two points and suggests that it has been previously traversed – from where we are to where we hope to arrive. Someone has gone before and laid out the ground and perhaps shown the way to go. Proverbs Chap 4 v. 18 refers to “The path of the just is as a shining light, that shineth more and more unto the perfect day.” (Also in the Koran, Sura 1, a supplication is made for believers: “Guide us in the straight path, in the path of those whom Thou has blessed...”) The notion of a path from which straying leads to ruin is not uncommon. In Matthew’s Gospel, Ch 7 v. 13 the familiar notion of a broad path or way is spelled out: “Wide is the gate, and broad is the way, that leads to destruction, and many there be that go in...” and its corollary is found in the next verse: “Straight is the gate, and narrow the way, which leads unto life, and few there be that find it.”

More frequently in the Bible the word “way” rather than “path” is used as in Proverbs: Psalm 5 v.8 “Make thy way plain before my face” or Matthew again, Ch 3, v2: The voice of one crying in the wilderness, Prepare ye the way of the Lord, make his paths straight.”

On the one side we are guided to fix our direction or way by the “path” which has been taken before, and we are told that the journey is straight but probably difficult. On the other channelled by the threat that the less desirable way, which seems to be chosen by many, is wide but leads to destruction. The choices seem plain and sensible to one raised in the environment of the Church, but what do they mean to the outsider, to one who does not believe in or understand the Christian message of salvation and redemption?

It must seem strange to many living outside the culture of religion that people still worship an invisible God, and follow the teachings or path of Christ. In a land where there are plenty of resources to share there seems less dependence on the Almighty. But stop there.

This land might be a land of plenty with beautiful landscapes but it has its ugly side: one where poverty is evident, where the split between the poor and the extravagantly wealthy is growing daily, where abuse of children is far too prevalent, where suicides are unfortunately frequent, and where unemployment is hidden but very real, and housing is unaffordable for many. This strong and evident undercurrent in New Zealand society is rapidly becoming a norm, and many good people seem to be powerless to act in any way which can change the situation. The politicians of the 1930s faced a similar situation as New Zealand was emerging from the Great Depression. Many of them were motivated by a vital set of Christian values which led them to act positively for the poor, ill, unemployed and poorly housed in that society. I firmly believe that we are in a similar situation of emergency today.

The question is what can we do? The options are difficult. Today is not 1937 even if our social problems are the same. At this time our present Government seems unable or unwilling to act forcefully for the good of the underprivileged. The Christian way is straight and we are instructed we should be generous and charitable if we have money and other resources. There are signposts for modern Christians. Some of them are old and nearly forgotten – the Apostles and the Nicene Creed, each imbued with obsolete language but containing truths which one should not ignore.

There are other signposts: the example of the older people. This signal piece of culture is much more a part of NZ Maori and Pacifica culture than it seems of pakeha or white culture. Indeed we are taught salutatory lessons about respect for the elderly by Pacific and now people of Middle Eastern cultures entering our country. Old ways, traditional foods, polite customs seem built into some of the refugees entering our land. It seems to me that different but acceptable ways of living are being presented to us as visible signposts here in Aotearoa.

Ultimately, not just our Church society but our personal fate is bound up in how we face up to the present societal problems. If we sit on our hands and do nothing or very little, we face self-judgement. The Bible tells us that action is rewarded – helping the sick, being generous to the poor, visiting the prisoner, lifting the depressed. “When you do this to the least of these, you do it to Me.”

George Davis, 23 June 2016.