



Dunedin Methodist Parish

Finding Good in everyone Finding God in everyone

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Mornington:		

PARISH BULLETIN

5th March 2017

WORSHIP FOR SUNDAY 12th March

9.30 am	Mornington	S Pole
10.00 am	Mosgiel	Helen Watson White
11.00 am	Glenaven	S Pole
1.00 pm	St Kilda	TBA

LENTEN STUDY - Lenten Study Wednesday 8th March, Mosgiel Methodist Church, 7pm. The study will be based on a Book written by Liz Babbs, entitled, *Transformed by the Presence of Jesus*. She writes, "Transformed by the Presence of Jesus is an invitation to step inside Scripture to encounter Jesus through well-known characters in the Bible like Peter, Mary Magdalene, Lazarus ..." All are welcome.

PF&R COMMITTEE - The PF&R Committee will meet at the Mission building at 7.30 pm on Tuesday 7 March.

CHURCH PETITION - The Taiwi Strategy Committee of our church has requested to all Parishes in the Connexion to sign a petition for the Government to put more options on the table for regulating online pornography. They say, "Given New Zealand's acknowledged problems with sexual and family violence and the demonstrated harm caused by pornography that degrades, dehumanises, and demeans people..." Our Parish need to have a strong support on this petition by signing on the petition forms.

OPEN EDUCATION: THE LAMPEDUSA CROSS

We begin this year's series with a really special event. The Muslim community and the Syrian refugee families have been invited to the Mornington Methodist church on Wednesday 15 March at 7.30pm to share the story of the remarkable Lampedusa Cross, and of the people of Lampedusa who have borne the brunt of the refugee fleets sailing from North Africa to reach a haven in Europe. It is important that as many of our community as possible be there to welcome these people of another faith who are venturing onto strange territory for them. Please come if you possibly can.

We will run the usual pre-session meal for a charge of \$15 and please book ahead for that (ring Judy Russell at 455 3727). But we will also offer a simple after-talk supper for all the audience. Let us show that as a Christian community we welcome people of other faiths, and especially those with a terrible story of war and hardships we can scarcely imagine behind them as they try to settle in our city and make a new life for themselves.

A REPORT ON MORNINGTON - Our Connexional Mission Resourcing leader, Trevor Hoggart, has recently visited Dunedin and inspected all of our church buildings, with a view to assisting the Parish with its future planning. He reports on Mornington as follows, and this report will be discussed by the Parish PF&R Committee next week. If you have any comments, please pass them on to Colin Gibson or Ken Russell, respectively chairman and secretary of the Leaders' Meeting.

Mornington

Mornington church seems to be the main driving force for the life of the parish as a whole, but that is not intended to denigrate the very useful contributions being made at the other centres. Mornington has a congregation of about 50. Its premises are used by a local judo club. It has a thriving MWF group. The worship centre is of 1984 vintage, but without toilets or other ancillary services which are located in the older hall/Sunday School which may be potentially considered a heritage building, attracting a possible financial donation from the city council. The proposal is to spend \$340, 000 to strengthen the hall and generally upgrade it.

This part of the parish plan is probably the weakest, but there may simply be no better alternative. The parish is aware that even after spending a significant amount, there will still be no parking available at the site. In other respects too, the role the congregation would like to play in the life of the parish, city and synod may indicate that the present location does not ideally suit that vision. The parish plan to upgrade and strengthen the present location remains the best option – because there is no other alternative even on the horizon. Some would be happy, no doubt, to stay in Mornington, but others still dream of moving to a more suitable set of premises nearer the city centre.

If Mornington were to relocate to a city position, it would only be possible with strategic, long term connexional help. Dunedin is a significant location for Te Haahi if we are to remain a national church, but whether such connexional input (Mortgage with BOA, other

grants?), or working with other partners (The Mission?) could make such a vision possible remains to be seen.

If there is any remaining desire in the parish to test the feasibility of such a dramatic replanting of Dunedin Methodism that conversation should take place in the next 3 months. Time is of the essence to all these parish plans because building costs are rising at such a rate; the parish is keen to complete most works by the end of 2017, with the St Kilda hall earmarked for 2018. If any other plan were to be considered for Mornington, then it needs to be put in place at the earliest opportunity, for if such dreaming proves fruitless, we may leave it too long to afford to save what we currently have.

INTERFAITH AND INTERNATIONAL VISITORS in our services are almost commonplace these days, and the presence of Paul Gourlie (a New Zealand Moslem) and his young Japanese friend Natsuki, a Buddhist. at the Mornington service last Sunday, was hardly an unusual event. PAUL is a familiar and respected figure to local Methodists and he values the way our worship leaders relate to civic and national events (he stood for Council at the last election). NATSUKI HOMMA is studying Japanese and International Politics at Tokyo University and was in Dunedin on a short visit exploring the feasibility of coming to

Dunedin to pursue post graduate studies in the distinctive multi ethnic and interfaith community of our University.



BULLET POINTS FROM FEBRUARY PARISH MEETING:

1. Siosifa has written to Otakau Marae congratulating them on a well-organised and enriching Waitangi Day.
2. We discussed the visit of Rev Dr Trevor Hoggard, director of Mission Resourcing. He came on Feb 22 and was both supportive and helpful. He is recommending the parish keep the 15% levy which is usually retained by the national body when land and buildings are sold.
3. PF&R are talking about buying a people mover vehicle and have some funds for this. Tell us what you think. Would you use it?
4. Each congregation needs their own health and safety documentation.
5. Two members of the Tongan congregation attended a national youth camp at Ngaruawahia.
6. We will be going through the Stationing Process this year for a new minister for 2018.



TAUKAKAPA: A MOUNT EVEREST EXPERIENCE

Our family was fortunate to have a time out from our busy life in the Parish ministry last year. I have to thank the members of the Parish



for giving us that space to relax and to reflect on the importance of family. As usual, we always try to find somewhere in the country that can give us that space. We found it this time in the

Waitaki Valley. We enjoyed our time in two places - the townships of *Otematata* and *Omarama*. The first four days we spent at *Otematata* and we spent the rest of our holiday at *Omarama*. Those eight days were full with exploration, discovery, excitement, endurance, and learning. Because we aimed to explore the natural surroundings of the *Waitaki* Valley we planned to travel each day a long distance on both tar-seal and gravel roads to various destinations. We travelled up the hills and down the valleys to those destinations. At one point we lost our way and ended up in an unknown place in the country, which reminded us about the nature exploration. However, we endured and at the end we found our destination. Our destination was a popular sight-seeing place, known in the *Waitaki* Valley as the Clay Cliffs.

Clay Cliffs is about 10 km west of Omarama. The Clay Cliffs are huge pinnacles and ridges with deep, narrow ravines separating them. The Clay Cliffs are made of layers of gravel and silt, deposited by rivers flowing from glaciers existing 1-2 million years ago. When we arrived there it was windy and raining. This meant that the way to the Clay Cliffs would be slippery - for it was muddy - but it didn't deter us! Everyone was determined to walk up to the Clay Cliffs. When we arrived, Naomi decided to climb up one of the lower pinnacles. The girls decided to climb too. I was standing worried about whether they would safely reach the top, which they did. As I was watching them determined to reach the top of this pinnacle, I asked myself whether I would climb. At the end I decided to climb too. When we descended it was dangerous in the same way as we climbed up. We arrived safely at the foot of this pinnacle and on our way home, Kakala said to me, "This is our Mount Everest Experience dad." I asked her, "Why do you think that this is our Mount Everest experience?" She answered, "Because it was so difficult and too dangerous." I responded to her, "You are right Kakala but it was exciting when we reached to the top." Kakala replied, "That's right Dad!"

This conversation perhaps reflects the kind of experiences that mountaineers and explorers have when they climb Mount Everest, the tallest mountain in the world. No one ever reached to the summit of Mount Everest until Edmund Hillary and Tenzing Norgay did on the 29th of May 1953. It was a mixture of fear, exhaustion, and frustration but also of joy, excitement, and triumph. Striving to the summit of Mount Everest articulates the experiences of those who are aiming high in their personal endeavour. Aiming high is not an easy adventure. It is a combination of endurance, courage, vision, and determination. It is also involved frustration, uncertainty, risk but also joy, fulfilment, and self-belief as the experience of those who reach to the top of the pinnacle. As Madeleine Albright writes, "As you go along road in life, you will, if you aim high enough, also meet resistance....But no matter how tough the opposition may seem, have courage still and persevere."

Aiming high depicts the Tongan notion of '*taukakapa*', literally meaning 'stretch and touch'. It is a word that derives from picking of fruits from fruit trees like coconut, mango, orange, kuava, tava, and many other tropical fruit trees that grow in Tonga. It is a difficult task for climbers to pick the mature and ripe fruits from any fruit tree. In some instances, climbers have to climb to the highest point of a fruit trees or stretch out to the edge of a branch to pick a ripe mango or an orange fruit. When the climber is stretching out to pick the fruit either from the highest point - or from the edge - it is possible that he or she may fall down. It is not a nice feeling when you fall from a mango, coconut, or orange tree. I had that experience myself a few times, and I can tell you it is not nice! But that is the risk that anyone who wants the best fruits from fruit trees has to take. *Taukakapa* envisions determination and courage to strive for the best in the midst of challenges and obstacles. It insists on taking risks in order to achieve a better future and to make a positive contribution.

The notion of '*taukakapa*' elaborates a vision which evokes perseverance, determination, self-belief, and hope. When someone does their best to achieve that vision, it can be the pinnacle of his/ her journey - and that's inspiring. We are in the beginning of Lent, a Christian Season that began on Ash Wednesday and will conclude at the sun-down on Holy Saturday. During Lent, as Christians, we remember the sacrificial life and ministry of Jesus as he began his journey from Galilee and ended up on a cross on Golgotha (Place of a Skull). It was not an easy journey, for he was tormented and mocked, but he endured right to the end. The end was not on the cross. Three days later his tomb was found empty. Christ was risen from the dead. During Lent, we are reminded of our own discipleship as we attempt to follow the footsteps of Christ. These footsteps of Christ in our lives ideally will bear the marks of justice, love, compassion, peace, and hope. We are called to follow Christ not only to the highest point, but also to the lowest point. The lowest point is the edge or the margin, where the most vulnerable people of our society live, namely the poor, the neglected, the homeless, and the widower. The *Taukakapa* concept encourages us not only to aim high in our personal endeavour, but also drives us to reach to the edge and the margin of our society with the love of Christ and touch them with compassion. If we can do this during Lent, this will be our Mount Everest experience.

Siosifa Pole