



Dunedin Methodist Parish

Finding Good in everyone Finding God in everyone

www.dunedinmethodist.org.nz

Find us on Facebook: **Dunedin Methodist Parish**

Presbyters:	Rev. Siosifa Pole	455 2923
	Rev. Dr. Rod Mitchell	477 3700
Parish Stewards:	Mrs Hilda Hughson	487 6226
	Mrs Earlene Owens	489 8146
	Dale Meredith	467 2070
Tongan Steward:	Mr Kaufusi Pole	455 0096
Parish Office:	Siosifa: parish@mmsouth.org.nz	466 4600
	Katrina: admin@mmsouth.org.nz	
Parish Prayer Convenor	Elaine Merrett: elaineross@xtra.co.nz	489 7663
Pastoral Convenor	Beryl Neutze	476 7447
Mornington:		

PARISH BULLETIN

1st Oct 2017

WORSHIP FOR SUNDAY 8th October

9.30 am	Mornington	MLT (H Hughson)
10.00 am	Mosgiel	S Pole &MLT
11.00 am	Glenaven	
1.00 pm	St Kilda	TBA

GAMES NIGHT 7 October. This has now been **CANCELLED**.

MOSGIEL METHODIST WOMEN'S FELLOWSHIP - Note change of date. This is to be held on **Tuesday 10 October at 1:30pm**. Fellowship and games afternoon.

**THE OTAGO COMBINED CHRISTIAN GROUPS
STUDENT NETWORK** WARMLY INVITE YOU TO
OUR AWESOME "TAKE A BREAK" QUIZ NIGHT!



WEDNESDAY OCTOBER 4th 7pm-9pm Venue: Elim Church Conference Room, 67 Harrow St

<https://www.facebook.com/events/190882298121016/>

After the success of the CCG Ball in semester one, we are excited to present our second and final event for the year! Come along for a great evening of quizzing, fellowship, food, and fun!

Teams of about 6 people, and you can come with a team, or as an individual/smaller group, and we'll sort you out on the night! If you're wondering whether you're invited or if this event is for you: you are and it is! Students and young adults involved in any churches/Christian groups in Dunedin, and anyone else, are all welcome.

We know it's getting close to exam time, but we hope you can come and enjoy the night as a much deserved study break!

Besides, who's to say we won't throw in some helpful revision questions for you anyway... ;)

Where: Conference Room, Elim Church, 67 Harrow Street

When: 7pm, October 4th

Cost: Free!

If you have any questions, don't hesitate to contact

prestidge.lucy@gmail.com

About CCG: Since 2000, the Otago Combined Christian Groups network has aimed to build relationships and unity between Christian groups and churches in order to better demonstrate God's love on campus.

<http://otagoccg.co.nz/>

<https://www.facebook.com/events/190882298121016/>

IT'S A SAD, SAD SIGHT for the remaining members of the former Wesley Church in Hillside Rd, having to watch the demolition of their once-beloved Church. The bulldozers have done their work, and all that is left is an impressive pile of bricks, currently pored over by foragers looking for the



undamaged ones and chipping away at what's left of the grouting on others, so as to render many of them serviceable for use again. At very least, that is a hopeful sign in an otherwise forlorn landscape.

Those of us who were not involved with Wesley in its hey-day are not so sentimental, consoling ourselves with the thought that the fate of Wesley has been sealed for some years, and at long last a derelict church can make way for something that in due course will serve the community in a way that the old church no longer could.

Wesley was a landmark where it stood in a once strategic site opposite the Railway workshops. Both have had to surrender to the often cruel demands of redundancy on one hand and progress on the other. For our part, as a Parish we must distinguish urgently where our future lies. We cannot afford to leave more of our precious churches to waste away as relics from a better time.





Intensive Literacy & Numeracy (Prison): Our tutor had a student who first came to him for Pre-hospitality but was struggling with the work. He left, came back to Tony for Step Up, completed that and also has completed our new cleaning course. His Numeracy went up two steps, and Literacy by one step. He has worked hard, and not only improved his skills but also his attitude and willingness, and he asked if there were any more courses he could do with the mission and Tony – now he is looking at polytechnic, a great advance from our first interactions.

If you would like to support the Mission's work with a donation, please visit www.givealittle.co.nz and search for The Methodist Mission.

FACE TO FACE for David Poultney to be held in the Mornington Methodist Church on **Saturday 7 October**. This will be a late afternoon tea starting at **4pm**. Please bring a plate of finger food snacks. We will have a **formal meeting at 6pm**, led by Peter Taylor the Synod Superintendent. Everyone welcome.

MEMORIAL SERVICE FOR LINDA HELEN WILSON - All are welcome to attend a memorial service hosted by Dunedin Quakers and Otago Polytechnic, to remember Linda and to give thanks for her life. It will be held at the Hub, Otago Polytechnic, 5pm Tuesday 3 October. Light refreshments will follow the service. Please use the Forth Street entrance. Elizabeth Duke will be introducing the service – then, after Robert has shared (following Quaker practice) there will be the opportunity for others to share.

INSTALLATION OF THE ANGLICAN BISHOP for the Dunedin Diocese was on last Friday at St Paul's Cathedral. Rev Dr Steven Bendord was inducted as the 10th Bishop of Dunedin. Myself and Greg Hughson were present to represent our church on this special occasion. This is an important relationship to maintain and respect.

PRAYER REQUEST - As political parties are still negotiating of who will govern our nation, we need to pray for wisdom and vision in their discussion and decision. We also need to pray for ourselves to accept whoever will be our government.



WHY ON EARTH DO WE PRAY? A Few Thoughts.

The topic of 'Prayer' is a complex one.

We are exhorted to 'pray without ceasing, in everything give thanks for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you...' (1Thes.5 : 17,18). Having been raised in

an intensely Baptist family for whom the scriptures were literally the word of god, prayer was something I heard lots about from my earliest days. In 'Junior Christian Endeavour' at the age of seven,

we were taught how to pray in public extemporaneously. At prayer time, each of us had to say out loud, a sentence prayer (chain prayer).

By the time one reached the lofty heights of Senior Christian Endeavour, one was expected to be proficient at extemporaneous prayer, and be able to pray aloud when asked. Prepared prayers/liturgies were considered ineffective and definitely inauthentic, while extemporaneous prayer was believed to be superior because the Holy Spirit was doing the prompting. This was all 'very anxious making'

believe me ! The Wednesday night Prayer Meeting for me was fraught. Here were some highly experienced and expert pray-ers, mostly elderly christian gentlemen who had over the years developed a prayer style unique to themselves. They would use phrases which they would trot out with monotonous regularity. Some prayers were veritable sermons and a 'whose who' of the Baptist world. Each 'who' would be named and 'held up before the throne of grace', where they would be 'committed and commended' to the Lord. By the time I had plucked up courage to pray in the wake of these experts, everything that could possibly be prayed for had been. What was the point of repeating the same stuff. If God was listening he/she must have been bored rigid... I was!

But this was genuine prayer.

However, I had many questions about prayer.

How is prayer different from superstition?

Was this the only way to pray?

Did God listen only to extemporaneous prayer?...

Did it really work? If so, how?

I didn't dare voice these questions or misgivings. One was expected to follow the example and the accepted wisdom of the group.

I could see the gaping holes in this theology of prayer with its questionable assumptions. The elements of prayer, praise, thanksgiving, confession, supplication were to be done in the right order, using prayer language such as thee, thou, because this was God we were talking to, not just anybody! Not only that, it seemed that the more inconvenient the time to pray, the more efficacious it was eg, some ridiculously early hour of the day.

My current thoughts on prayer differ vastly from those of my child and young adulthood. I started doing a lot of reading about prayer and a whole new perspective opened up to me. David and I attended a Prayer workshop run by Spiritual Growth Ministries where we learned there are as many kinds of prayer as there are people. This was

extremely liberating. Suddenly the 'how' wasn't important. Whoever or whatever we perceived the divine to be, a personal yet'(w)holy other' being, or 'something out there'...whatever our faith position, it was OK. Prayer could take many forms. It was not simply praying a particular formula in a church setting or at home. It's a way of being in the world, being receptive to others and open to the numinous.

Praying, or being prayerful happens when we are having a conversation with a friend over a meal, or coffee, when we are moved by beauty, sadness, or humour. Acknowledging and silently saying 'thank you' is prayer. Responding to someones need is prayer.

There is certainly a place for liturgical or formal prayer in which we may find great comfort. Some prayers are profoundly meaningful and beautiful, yet it can be difficult writing prayers which are inclusive, attending the needs of all. Thankfully prayer language has changed over the years but I sometimes wonder if we should include more humour, because, assuming God is listening, wouldn't it make prayer more interesting? Does it have to be serious all the time? I love the T shirt Bev wears which says 'sudden prayers make god jump'.

Surely God delights in the prayers of children!

One of our little 'Grandies'(7yrs) was praying with Grandad and it included this confession.... 'God I have to say I used the 'f ' word twice today and I AM sorry but I can't promise I wont do it again'.. I loved his realism.

However we feel about prayer, it is part of our faith tradition and always will be, in some form or other.

We need to make space for it and listen to others thoughts about it. The saying ' confession is good for the soul' is true. This doesn't mean we have to grovel and squirm, but it does mean we need to own and take responsibility when we mess up. We speak of, and seek God's grace and forgiveness for our shortcomings, this too is healthy but

often difficult to accept because sometimes we find it hard to forgive ourselves! As for requests and prayers of supplication...I still feel uncomfortable at the potential for manipulative and selfish motivations. I was intrigued to hear victims of 'Irma' claiming that God had answered their prayers and their lives had been spared. The very next news clip was about a family of six who had drowned in their van while trying to escape the flood waters. I still have many questions around this type of prayer. Intercessory prayer presents a challenge too. Maybe its simply a matter of naming the issue and holding it in our consciousness rather than suggesting to God ways people or situations might be fixed. Perhaps we 'over-think' prayer in some ways.

Despite all the mystery and the unanswered questions, I believe our human need to communicate with something totally 'other' is inherent . Even someone who has never uttered a prayer in their life, when life is threatened, will often invoke the name of god or maybe try bargaining with the divine.

Whatever our thoughts about prayer, and in spite of the fact we live in a chaotic and often frightening world, we still have much to be thankful for and we need to express this. One of the twentieth century's great mystics said ' if the only prayer we ever utter is 'thank you', that is enough'

Amen to that.

Trish Patrick