



Dunedin Methodist Parish

Finding Good in everyone Finding God in everyone

www.dunedinmethodist.org.nz

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

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PARISH BULLETIN

25th March 2018

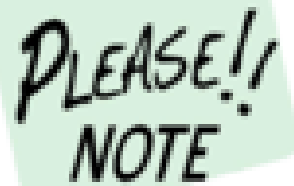
WORSHIP FOR SUNDAY 1st April

9.30 am	Mornington	G Abernethy
10.00 am	Mosgiel	S Pole
11.00 am	Glenaven	G Abernethy
11.30 am	St Kilda	S Pole

Dates to remember:

25 March	4.30pm	Explorers Group – Mornington
28 March	7.00pm	Lenten Studies continue, Mosgiel Church
28 March	2.00pm	Mornington MWF - Mornington Church
28 March	7.30pm	Open Education - Mornington Church
30 March	8.45am	Mosgiel Walk of the Cross
30 March	9.30am	Mornington Churches Good Friday Walkabout

DUE TO THE OFFICE being closed on Good Friday, please ensure all bulletin notices for Sunday April 1st are in to Katrina before lunch time on **Wednesday 28th March**. Many thanks.



**PLEASE!!
NOTE**

EXPLORERS MEET POPE FRANCIS: The Explorers group will meet for their first session this year on Sunday 25 March at 4.30pm at Mornington Methodist Church. All welcome, as they say—and we mean it! Our topic is Meeting Pope Francis. Intrigued? Come along and find out what it's all about.

LENTEN FINAL STUDY - Will be next week, Wednesday 28th and that will be the Study six for those who will attend.

MORNINGTON MWF: The March meeting will take place on the **28th March at 2 p.m.** in the Church Lounge. The Guest Speaker will be Prof Colin Gibson, his subject being " Beatrix Potter goes to Church". If you are a fan of Peter Rabbit & friends - come along & hear if they went to Church also. All welcome.

OPEN EDUCATION BEGINS AGAIN - On Wednesday March 28 (note the later date), at Mornington Methodist Church, Galloway Street, commencing at 7.30pm, we welcome our first speaker for the 2018 programme of Open Education, David Tombs, Howard Patterson Professor of Theology and Public Issues at the University of Otago. David's topic is the curse of domestic violence and abuse in New Zealand society. This is your opportunity to hear a first-class speaker discussing a social issue which concerns us all. Invite a friend or bring a group. Koha \$5 or a larger donation to the Women's Refuge. Before the talk, at 6pm, Judy Russell will provide a top quality meal at a very reasonable price (\$15). Sign in for the meal at Mornington Methodist, or ring 455 3727 to book your place at the table.

MOSGIEL WALK OF THE CROSS: Friday 30th March leaving HOLY CROSS Church Street at **8:45am** walking 5 stations arriving at St Lukes Gordon Road to start the GOOD FRIDAY SERVICE at 10:00am.

GOOD FRIDAY MORNINGTON CHURCHES' WALKABOUT: The arrangements for the Good Friday walk for Mornington churches are as follows: We gather at the Presbyterian Church, Maryhill Terrace, at 9.30am, then make our way to St Francis Xavier Catholic Church, Benhar Street, at 9.50am, then to St Mary's Anglican Church, Whitby Street, at 10.20am, finishing our walk at the Methodist Church at approximately 10.45am, where, after a short service we will share hot cross buns and morning tea/coffee.

ST KILDA CHURCH EASTER CAMP - St Kilda church will have a joint Easter Camp with Oamaru Tongan Methodist Church in Oamaru. Both the youth and their parents will leave Dunedin on Friday 30th for the start of the Camp and return on Monday 2nd of April. Please pray for those who travel for a safe journey.

CHRISTIAN BROADCASTING ASSOCIATION APPEAL - Is during Easter Season. Some of you have received the envelopes. They help to spread the message of Easter across to more than 300,000 people in New Zealand.

SYMPATHY - On behalf the Mornington congregation and the Dunedin Parish, I would like to convey to Dorothy and Ian Pearce our sympathy and condolences for the death of Dorothy's twin sister Barbara Hardcastle. It is our prayer that may God's peace and comfort be with you during this period of mourning and grieving.



REGISTRATIONS ARE NOW OPEN for the South Island Ministry Conference – 15th & 16th May 2018. You can register online at:

<http://www.etchurch.co.nz/conference>

We look forward to seeing you there.

CONFERENCE FOCUS We aim for this to be a place of *real people* sharing their story, both the joy & the pain. *Experienced* people in ministry sharing from their journey. *Great opportunities* for kicking around crunch issues and sharing good ideas. Heaps of *fun and encouragement*. *Worshipping together* & encouraging one another in prayer & fellowship.

- *Wide range of workshops that are small enough for in depth discussion*
- *Great opportunity for team building – bring others from your church*
- *Celebration Dinner – appreciating all you give in serving Christ*
- *All Welcome – this is not just for Ministers and Pastors – invite your teams*
- *Manna Christian Stores Bookstall*

WHERE East Taieri Church • 12a Cemetery Road - Mosgiel

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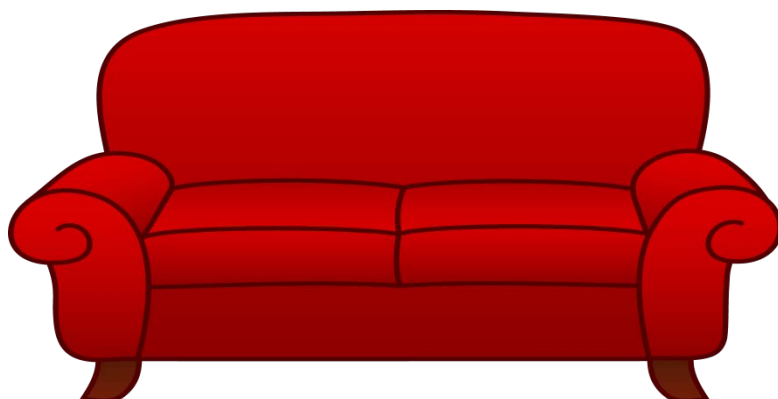
WHEN Tues-Wed 15,16 May 2018

PLEASE NOTE: The Workshops will be spread out over ET Church and The Hub so jackets & umbrellas may be required



STORY FROM THE MISSION

Little Citizens Kiwi room: We have a very special piece of furniture in the Kiwi Room, well used by teachers, tamariki, and families, and that is our sofa. It is a vital part of the whanaungatanga of our room. Parents (usually Mums) arrive in the morning and sit on the sofa and have a chat for up to half an hour. They talk to each other, or to us, about their children and their lives. We learn about the health and well-being of their tamariki, birth stories, medical events, family and home life. We can have 4-5 Mums chatting and sharing their stories, and it's wonderful. Last week two Mums who had children settling in the room were sharing how they felt when they walked out, leaving their children who sometimes were quite upset. It was reassuring for each of those Mums to have somebody else sharing their same experience, understanding and empathising with each other. Teachers' also share their own parenting stories and experience (where appropriate), and their knowledge as teachers, developing a community of shared experience, understanding and knowledge. The sofa plays a vital role creating the wonderful sense of belonging and community in the Kiwi Room.





AT A RECENT SERVICE, Marcia Hardy showed us a nostalgic Victorian picture of a little girl kneeling at her bedside, saying her prayers. Although that was not the point of the picture as Marcia developed it, it prompted in me the question, how do we get to know about religion? How does anyone, Christian, Muslim, Buddhist or whatever, acquire a sense of what it is to have a faith or become aware of what we call a spiritual dimension to life?

Since we are born into the world without any gene any scientist has yet discovered that carries DNA faith instructions, we must learn from the culture into which we are born. How does that work? How did you acquire your first awareness of religion?

Probably by unconscious imitation: being taken to church from babyhood and becoming accustomed to the rituals and words and actions of Sunday worship. More education probably came from attending Sunday School, where religious instruction was paramount, where songs were sung and biblical stories told, and later where some of the core values of our particular faith-community were spelled out for us. (And sadly that's often where it all ended.)

At school we might have encountered Bible in Schools programmes, those curious periods when regular schooling was technically suspended (because state education was secular and its secularity had to be guarded), and well-meaning volunteers, who sometimes included members of the teaching staff, told us more stories and discussed at a more mature level faith values.

After that, there were radio broadcasts and television programmes, carrying religious services and, more recently, hymn sessions—for those too aged or infirm to attend a 'real' church. And then there were

the books, hundreds of them on specific religious topics, if you could find the time to read and the money to buy them. Even secular news sessions carried information about some great Church festival, or visiting dignitary, or if you were lucky a royal wedding in a great English abbey.

Beyond that again, if you were alert enough you learned about religion by observing (or hearing about) the behaviour of other religious people; the kindness of a neighbour, the amazing charitable life of a Teresa of Calcutta or the principled actions of a Martin Luther King.

As for learning about faiths other than our 'own' Christianity, that came in bits and bobs of news, mostly through the secular media of our times or travel books about foreign places, where they professed such strange things about Allah or Buddha or Shiva or Confucius.

But the world has changed mightily. Modern families disintegrate, new secular communities for our young people emerge on Facebook or Twitter, church attendances drop rapidly, Sunday schools are closing down, national radio and TV is abandoning religious topics (no more Hymns on Sunday Morning), Bible in Schools is vanishing in the face of parental and teaching opposition, religious books are to be found in the Regent Book Sale in their hundreds. And we are more likely to hear news about the latest scientific theory of the universe or the most recent scandal of abuse in religious institutions than we are about the Pope's visit to South America or the dedicated work of our own church missions. Everywhere organised religion, the old-style denominations, is in competition with individualist spiritual advisers, religious gurus, and practitioners of this or that 'spiritual' therapy. And as the latest census will show, the 'Christian nation' of New Zealand has become a society of many faiths and thousands of the indifferent, among which Christians willing to declare their allegiance are rapidly becoming a minority group.

All this spells a massive decline into sheer ignorance of what religion is, let alone the beliefs and practices of faith communities, including our own. More dangerous still, uninformed labelling and sheer propaganda is creating a deep suspicion of all form of religion. All priests are child abusers, all Muslims are terrorists, Buddhists burn villages and drive out ethnic minorities, Hindus starve their people to feed their sacred cows, Southern fundamentalists are, every one of them, gun-carrying murderers, and what spoilsports we all are when it comes to sex or gambling or drilling for oil or making heaps of money. To which I might add, making heaps of money out of war—‘Trade wars are good and easy to win’, declared President Trump, just recently, and he can’t wait to make America great again by wiping out North Korea with a good ole US hydrogen bomb.

Is there any hope for change? What would you think of urging the introduction into the New Zealand educational system of a universal Religious Studies unit, which introduced the next generation to the major faiths now present in our society and the religious values which they embody? Or a combined effort on the part of our Churches to present through the social media an informed and contemporary image of the faith we claim to share? Or little Mornington and Glenaven and Mosgiel Methodist launching out to carry their own small candle into the deepening winter’s night of ignorance and confusion?

Colin Gibson