



Dunedin Methodist Parish

Finding Good in everyone Finding God in everyone

www.dunedinmethodist.org.nz

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PARISH BULLETIN

27th May 2018

WORSHIP FOR SUNDAY 3rd June

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

Dates to remember:

30 May 7.30 pm PF&R Committee meeting

4 Jun 2.00 – 4.00 pm Our People Our Heritage – Mornington Hall

THE PF&R COMMITTEE will meet on Wednesday 30 May, at 7.30 pm at the Mission building.

THE TIGHT FIVE - The District Superintendent, the Parish Superintendent, and three Parish Stewards were all on hand for a photo opportunity at the Parish service last Sunday. Together, these five represent the special blend of authority, ordained and lay, bequeathed from our Methodist heritage, for the government of our parish.



The occasion was a rare and welcome visit from Rev Peter Taylor of Invercargill, our D/S, in the role preacher. We shall not soon forget his appeal from Ezekiel 37 (the Valley of Dry Bones) to "let these bones live", an appeal few of us would not take to heart as we are driven to think seriously about the future of the Parish and the individual faith communities within it - Glenaven, Mornington, St Kilda and Mosgiel. Are they just dry bones from the past, or can they be energised, recharged with new purpose and direction to be the body of Christ in the secular world of Dunedin City? Will these bones live?

We cannot duck the question, so thanks to Peter for raising it (again).

PHOTO Siosifa Pole, Earlene Owens, Peter Taylor, Dale Meredith and John Hardy (newly appointed Parish Steward).

MORNING-TEA ROSTER - Mornington Church are in need of more Volunteers to take a turn at doing the Morning-tea each Sunday. If you are able to help please contact Helen Messervy Ph.476 2850 as soon as possible. This invitation does of course include the men of our congregation. Thank you.

OUR PEOPLE OUR HERITAGE

On Queens Birthday, join us to generate some ideas about how we can capture and share some of the amazing stories of our people and places. Let's celebrate our heritage, share our faith and remember what makes each of us special in the eyes of God. We have people, places of worship, creative works of music, art and craft, memorials. We have supported many great projects over the years and, together, joined in many activities expressing our faith in action. Let's find fun and effective ways to share, to create a legacy of who we are and what we are about, for the future. Anyone interested from across the wider Parish is welcome. Let's do it! Contact Dale Meredith 467 2070 for more information. Monday 4 June 2-4pm, Mornington Church Hall.

THANK YOU - I would like to convey my thanks to all those who contributed to our Parish combined service last Sunday. Thanks to those who brought a plate to share, to the two choirs, Colin Gibson for his music expertise, the Bible reader, the story teller, and for Rev Peter Taylor for his inspiring message. Thanks everyone for the lovely fellowship that we shared together.

A SHORT REFLECTION on Bishop Michael Curry's sermon at Prince Harry and Lady Megan's Wedding from Rev Dr Leslie Griffiths in London:

There IS balm in Gilead. (The Royal wedding and that sermon!) On a world stage, at the heart of the British establishment, in a place where kings have been buried and where many thousands of "homilies" have been preached, one black man set out his stall for a world revolution. He astonished polite Brits into listening mode, he commanded the space, he opened up the scriptures, dug deep into his people's history, laughed at himself and endeared himself at the very same time, and preached Good News to one and all. It was brilliant. It was all the things you and I have talked about down the years - all rolled up into a 13 minute address that, without saying so, said NO to Trump

and NO to fat profit and YES to love, and YES to the capacity of love to reach into the deepest parts of human experience, the dark parts, the hurting parts, the wicked memories, the dehumanising forces that hold us all in thrall.

That's what the preacher did yesterday. "Shall we have curry?" will forevermore be invested with new meaning.

But all his fine preaching would have been as nothing without a stage from which to preach, without a platform from which to proclaim his message, without an occasion which would gather the world's population into his audience.

And that was provided by Windsor, by British ceremony, by a boy called Harry and a girl called Megan. We were set the scene for a new world. We were given a lived example of MLK's famous dream.

The gospel choir, the black preacher, the Welsh hymn, the co-mingling of our beloved Queen and all her courtiers with people of colour sitting in the best seats, that haunting solo voice that accompanied Megan's entry to the church, the bride's mum on the arm of Charles our next king, prayers by our Jamaican chaplain to the Queen and a Coptic bishop, the marriage of two fighters for justice, - all this counted in "framing" the sermon and giving it wings. Everything was of one piece and, for once, the world was a good place to live in. The power of symbols to turn prose into poetry, theory into practice, dreams into reality - it was all there. But I can't unstitch the preaching from the fabric of all that was happening yesterday. The Queen's silent presence was as powerful a sermon as the preacher's fiery words. Generosity was on display, less was more, hearts were touched, and fire burned in the hearts of us all.

Meanwhile, another dozen young Americans were being shot to death in Texas.



STORY FROM THE MISSION

Milton Hub (Client Support Work):

A father (Scott) self-referred to our

service late last year as he was feeling frustrated about not being included in the plans and decision making around his 2 teenage boys.

The boys lived with their Mum who was having difficulty managing their challenging behaviours. The boys were truanting, getting into trouble and had come to the attention of Oranga Tamariki and the Police. Because the boys lived with their Mum, all the professional supports were focused on Mum and her needs. Scott felt this was unfair as he had a lot to offer as their father but no one was interested in what he had to say. Scott had begun to seek legal advice. Scott's relationship with his ex-partner ended a few years ago and the interaction between them both was changeable.

Scott informed the client support worker he had access with the boys every second weekend and was a 'present' father in their lives. Scott's family were very supportive of him and very inclusive of the boys. Scott disclosed he had a good relationship with his boys stating 'overall they are good in his care and will do what is asked'. Scott had spoken to his boys about their behaviours and they had told him they wanted to live with him. Scott felt that every time he brought this up with his ex-partner and the professional services involved he would be 'shut down' or pushed to the side. He believed coming to our office was his 'last resort' stating he needed to do something before his sons end up in prison. Scott stated this is not what he wants for his boys.

Scott and his family felt no one at Oranga Tamariki or the Police were listening to him or taking him seriously. Scott and his family also felt 'used' as they were not part of the decision making but they were part of the 'back up plan' ie, if Mum needed help she could ring Scott and/or his family to intervene. Scott stated he is always there for the boys and

he has been there as a ‘back up’ for their Mother when she has needed it. Scott stated he is more than happy to ‘step up to the plate’ and have his boys in his care before they ‘fall off the rails’.

The work around the family has been to support Scott at meetings, and to advocate for Scott where he felt overwhelmed by professionals who didn’t think he was capable to care for his sons. It has also been about fostering a working relationship between Scott and his ex-partner as they are both want the best for their boys.

The outcome for Scott is he now has the care of the boys. They are attending an educational course and no longer getting themselves into trouble. Scott has not had any phone calls from the Police and he reports the boys are behaving when they spend time with their Mother. The strengths this father has shown are his perseverance and commitment to his sons in the face of adversity.



THE WORK CONTINUES

It is likely that as you read this reflection, you will already have read in the Star and the ODT about the risk to the Mission’s Early Years Hub in South Dunedin.

As I write this sitting in the winter sunshine at home last weekend, it is not clear whether we will be able to pull a rescue package together, and even if we do quite what that will mean for the way the Hub operates.

The balancing act is with building security (and general cleanliness), opening hours, nature of use, and staffing costs – all semi technical and very “operational” decision making. But the reality is of a support service ...

... based in South Dunedin which is a community nearly 10,000 strong and which is at the 97th percentile for poverty in NZ (that is, only 3% of communities are poorer) ...

... with over 10,000 visits **every year** from our hoped for client group ...

... whānau and individuals with children aged pre-birth to six (ish) ...

... which we can do because the Hub is a welcoming space with a huge range of supports (nearly 40 different providers *and* Christine's famous muffins, the parish's gorgeous knitting, the babywearing table and more) so it feels like a universal service.

But with what are called “soft” outcomes. The Early Years Hub is a prevention service. There isn’t the kind of drama that Oranga Tamariki (CYFS) or Foodbanks experience because the Hub is there to prevent exactly that kind of wreckage from happening in the first place.

And because people rightly respond to the bottom of the cliff stuff with the greatest energy, it’s hard to raise money for soft outcome services. We’re just not quite urgent enough.

But. For the user groups that only started because the Hub existed, from the Korean Playgroup to the Parents with Mental Health Issues Support Group, and the groups who’ve seen the numbers of people accessing their services double or triple when they move to the Hub, it is simply the best place to be.

We have to be bold enough to think and chose more long term than we often do, from government budgets (and like a lot of people, my reaction two weeks’ ago was *is that it?*), to Church buildings, but especially social services planning.

Which is why in a time of uncertainty for one of our flagship programmes, I am choosing in this column to celebrate.

From the Mission’s most recent report to Parish Council, here is some of the good news all of which happens now because of careful thinking and planning undertaken years ago:

Our Dunedin Youth Transition House Is now FULL (all young women) with a waiting list. When we have this one bedded in, we hope to approach MSD about opening one in Invercargill (by the end of 2018 with any luck).

We have signed a lease on a property for our Milton Little Citizens and have started the fit out work for this expansion of our Early Childhood Service. We are hoping to open in early September and there is already some backlogged demand. It looks like the Ministry of Education may come to the party with financial assistance for the fit out. Milton has been struggling for a bicultural or bilingual center ever since the Kōhanga there closed.

Oceana Gold are firming up their offer of support for the Virtual Heartland Centre pilot to be run in Waikouaiti, Ranfurly, and Palmerston or Oamaru, delivering remote client support services and working with community based providers (likely including Tumai Ora). MBIE and W&I are showing some interest and we will keep them involved in the development, but even better, Oranga Tamariki are interested in the client support elements (in a way that may lead to funding for the Mission's social workers).

And Jimmy McLauchlan reports that we now have 28 ECE centres in Southland (6) and Auckland (22) participating in the next stage of our research into how best to support children's "executive functioning" development. Microsoft NZ are wanting to help out, as are the South Auckland Investment Board and the Southern Initiative (Auckland City Council), and we will try to get in front of Minister Martin (Associate Education, some ECE responsibilities) in the next month.

As we all worry about the future of the Hub, I'm hopeful that there's some comfort to be had that the work continues to be done well, creatively, with care and with rigour.

Laura Black