



Dunedin Methodist Parish

Finding Good in everyone Finding God in everyone

www.dunedinmethodist.org.nz

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PARISH BULLETIN

16th September 2018

WORSHIP FOR SUNDAY 23rd September

9.30 am	Mornington	D Poultney
10.00 am	Mosgiel	E Merrett
11.00 am	Glenaven	H Watson White
1.00 pm	St Kilda	TBA

Dates to remember:

Today	2.30 pm	Musical Society concert – Mornington Church
19 Sept	7.30 pm	Open Education: Mr Bach's Magnificat – Mornington
26 Sept	2.00 pm	Mornington MWF – Church Lounge
30 Sept	10.00 am	Combined Service – Glenaven
30 Sept	6.30 pm	Ecumenical service – St Fancis Xavier Church

MUSICAL SOCIETY CONCERT today 2.30pm at Mornington Methodist Church. Some great performers. All welcome. Cost \$2.

OPEN EDUCATION: MR BACH'S MAGNIFICAT - In 1723 Johann Sebastian Bach moved to Leipzig to take up the post of Music Director. Keen to impress his new congregations and his employers, the Town Council, two months after his appointment he composed the most brilliant setting of Mary's Song, the Magnificat, ever written. Join Emeritus Professor Colin Gibson on Wednesday, 19 September, at 7.30pm in the Mornington Methodist Church, Galloway Street, as he tells the story that lies behind this wonderful piece of music and plays big-screen excerpts from DVD recordings by famous conductors. Your koha of \$5 goes to support Syrian refugee families. Sign in at Mornington or ring 455 3727 to book your place at the tasty pre-session meal laid on by Judy Russell (\$15).

MORNINGTON METHODIST WOMEN'S FELLOWSHIP - The September Meeting will take place on Wednesday 26th at 2p.m. in the Church Lounge. The Guest Speaker will be the Rev. David Poultney. His subject will be."Consider Your Call – my Journey to
Please remember The Fellowship of the Least Coin, your yearly Subscription & be prepared to answer yes/no for the October Meeting which will be our Spring Outing to Wal's. All Welcome.

METHODIST CONFERENCE - Conference is not far away, David will be in Christchurch for Conference from Friday 28th September to Wednesday 3rd October.

FIFTH SUNDAY - Colin Gibson will be leading a combined service on 30th September at Glenaven at 10am. You are encouraged to bring a plate to share over Morning Tea afterwards. I am advised it would be best to bring food which do not require reheating.

ON SUNDAY 30TH SEPTEMBER at 6.30 pm the Anglican, Catholic, Methodist and Presbyterian churches in Mornington are sharing in an ecumenical service at St Francis Xavier Church, 36 Mitchell Avenue; all welcome.

DEPARTMENT OF THEOLOGY AND RELIGION – UNIVERSITY OF OTAGO
Information session about theology courses for people who are interested in studying Theology with the Department of Theology and Religion at the University of Otago will be held on Tuesday 25 September, 3.30pm, Humanities Common Room – Room 1W9 - Arts Building, University of Otago, Albany Street (Go up the stairs beside Burns 2). This will be a chance to hear about the many courses and programmes the Department offers. All welcome!

Christian theology and science - The University has a Pre-Christmas Summer School from Nov 12-Dec 15, 2018. The Department of Theology and Religion is offering a paper on Christian Theology and Science (CHTH235/335). The paper will be taught over five weeks by means of 1 x 3-hour and 1 x 2-hour class each week. Distance students can participate through the Zoom videoconference facility. Lectures will also be recorded and available for later viewing. Prerequisite: at 200-level is any two 100-level papers in any subject. At 300-level: any two 200-level papers in any subject.

For further information contact theology@otago.ac.nz or 03 479 8901

FAITH THINKING - Working Effectively in Culturally Diverse Situations: Building your cultural awareness. Presented by Dr Sheryl Silzer, Wycliffe Bible Translators. Monday 8 October, 7:00-9:00pm, Tuesday 9 October, 7:00-9:00pm, Burns 7, University of Otago. Cost for this course is \$10. For further information and to enrol go to www.otago.ac.nz/continuingeducation/what-we-offer/otago692057.html. Please pay on the night.



Central Otago Parenting Through Separation: This August we have delivered courses in the Central

Otago Area; one each in Alexandra and Queenstown and have held two in Dunedin, all with good attendance rates. We have had requests from

Queenstown Family Court Lawyers to receive ongoing emails of upcoming events to refer to their clients. Follow up feedback produced some interesting quotes this month:

- “It showed me where I want to be; and what I don’t want to become”
- “The course is for information not counselling”
- “Having been separated for some time I was surprised at how much I got from the course – it was more than just a “tick that box exercise”.

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.



LITTLE CAN BE HUGE 1 Samuel 17

I was asked whether the story of David and Goliath is true. My answer was, ‘No and yes’. ‘No’ in the sense of ‘it-happened-just-like-it’s-written’ in 1 Samuel 17; and ‘Yes’ in the sense that sometimes the daring courageous little one does triumph over the powerful well-endowed big one.

David was a guerrilla leader who toppled the reigning king (Saul), and then ruled in his stead. David, as king’s do, then had his ‘spin doctors’ create stories to legitimize his monarchy and to magnify his prowess. So the stories about his rise to power – humble shepherd, specially chosen by God, incredible warrior – need to be read with this in mind. That said there may have been a Philistine called ‘Goliath’. But I doubt it.

More important though is the myth. As the recent advert says, ‘little can be huge’. Little can sometimes beat big. Sometimes. Not usually though. For big has lots of resources and power and alliances and bureaucracy, and little doesn’t.

The David and Goliath myth tells us firstly about fear. Fear is like a contagious disease. It gets under the skin and inside you and shuts you down. And it affects/infects others around you. Fear is a mix of rational thought [yes, Goliath was a very big strong man] and the emotions it evokes. Fear tells us to run, hide, protect oneself...

Secondly, the myth tells us that overcoming fear begins in the mind and the heart. A little person decides to stand up, speak out, and have a go. This is called courage. It's a close cousin of foolishness. A courageous person is still very frightened but the fear does not shut them down. They have a trans-rational, mental strength that is sometimes called self-belief.

Thirdly, the myth tells us that for little to beat big, little often modifies or changes the rules of engagement. Goliath trusted the technology of armour, a shield and a sword. David assessed the deficiencies of that technology – namely the speed of the warrior would slow down when encumbered with all that heavy stuff; and instead David chose a simpler speedier technology – no armour and a slingshot.

Fourthly, the myth tells us that little has to be prepared to lose. The odds are not on little's side. David in all likelihood would have been killed, and in his heart he would have known it. Yet he went into the confrontation anyway.

Lastly, the myth tells us that just like how fear is contagious, so is courage. David's actions emboldened the Israelite army. Stories of courage embolden us still today.

Paul Tillich, the great existentialist theologian of the mid-20th century, wrote a book called *The Courage to Be* in which he defines courage as the self-affirmation of one's being in spite of the threat of non-being. So, for example, fear is a threat of non-being and the courage to be is what we can use to combat it. Courage is what Christians call faith.

In July 1992 the photograph of Vedran Smailovic appeared in the New York Times Magazine: middle-aged, longish hair, great bushy moustache. He is dressed in formal evening clothes, sitting in a café chair in the middle of a street. In front of a bakery where mortar fire struck a breadline in late May, killing 22 people. He is playing his cello. As a member of the Sarajevo Opera Orchestra, there is little he can do about hate and war – it has been going on in Sarajevo for centuries. Even so, every day for 22 days he has braved sniper and artillery fire to play Albinoni's profoundly moving Adagio in G Minor. I wonder if he chose this piece of music knowing it was constructed from a manuscript fragment found in the ruins of Dresden after the Second World War? The music survived the firebombing. Perhaps that is why he played it there in the scarred street in Sarajevo, where people died waiting in line for bread. Something must triumph over horror.

Is this man crazy? Maybe. Is his gesture futile? Yes, in a conventional sense, yes, of course. But what can a cellist do? What madness to go out alone in the streets and address the world with a wooden box and a hair-strung bow. What can a cellist do? All he knows how to do. Speaking softly with his cello, one note at a time, like the Pied Piper of Hamelin, calling out the rats (the demons) that infest the human spirit.

Most everyone in Sarajevo knows what a cellist can do – for the place where Vedran played has become an informal shrine, a place of honour. Croats, Serbs, Muslims, Christians alike – they all know his name and face. They place flowers where he played, commemorating the hope that must never die: that someday, somehow, the best of humanity shall overcome the worst - not through unexpected miracles, but through the expected acts of many. For courage too is contagious.

The David & Goliath and Vedran Smailovic stories are set in the context of war, and the fear it generates. But courage is not restricted to war, and neither is fear. The fears of isolation, failure, being misunderstood, deteriorating health, bullying, harassment, abuse, financial need, and

the same visited upon those we love, creep around our city and invade our homes and our minds. Fear comes unbidden into our lives. And it is as real as any Goliath.

I saw a quote the other day, “Sometimes real superheroes live in the hearts of small children fighting big battles”. I’ve met some of these superheroes.

While I see fear all around, I also see lots of acts of courage. I see courage when your body constantly aches, and your mind aches too, but you still get out of bed. I see courage when the world continues to frown at you, but you, sometimes crying inside, choose to respond with a welcoming smile. I see courage when you notice the six-year-old superhero, and you realize that she wants to see the superhero in you. You don’t feel like a hero, but she sees you as one. And so you try to be one for her. I see courage when you care enough for one who is deteriorating to put on the brave face that says you are coping. And the one you care for knows you are struggling and honours you for it. I see courage when you say no to another demand that comes as a request you really want to agree to. The strength to say no is the same strength love requires. I see courage when you risk speaking and smiling even though your memory has largely gone to sleep and you don’t have a clear sense of who you are, let alone who you are talking to.

May we always honour the small, and not-so-small, acts of courage in our midst. For such acts testify that the best in humanity will overcome the worst, even if we don’t always feel it or see it. And that too is faith.

- with appreciation, Glynn Cardy, St Luke's Presbyterian Church, Auckland. June 24, 2018

Preaching Plan - 2018

	MOSGIEL 10.00am	MORNINGTON 9.30am	GLENAVEN 11.00am	ST KILDA
September				
2	✠ David Poultney	✠ Rod Mitchell	✠ Rod Mitchell	+ <u>Palanite Taungapeau</u>
9	Rachael Masterton	David Poultney	David Poultney	
16	David Poultney	Rod Mitchell	Rod Mitchell	
23	Elaine Merrett	David Poultney	Helen WW	
30	Combined GLENAVEN 10.00am		Colin Gibson	
October				
7	✠ Donald Phillips	✠ David Poultney	✠ David Poultney	+ Marcia Hardy
14	David Poultney	Rod Mitchell	Rod Mitchell	
21	George Davis	David P	Rod Mitchell	
28	David Poultney	Colin Gibson	Helen WW	
November				
4	✠ David Poultney	✠ Rod Mitchell	✠ Rod Mitchell	+ <u>Palanite Taungapeau</u>
11	LMT (Merrett)	David Poultney	David Poultney	
18	David Poultney	Explorers Group	Explorers Group	
25	Gordon Abernethy	David Poultney	David Poultney	
December				
2	✠ Donald Phillips	✠ Rod Mitchell	✠ David Poultney	+ Marcia Hardy
9	David Poultney	Colin Gibson	Rod Mitchell	
16	David Poultney	LMT (Cannon)	LMT (Cannon)	
23	Rachael Masterton	David Poultney	David Poultney	
Christmas Eve 24 Monday	Combined at GLENAVEN Mitchell/Poultney			
Christmas Day 25 Tuesday	Combined MORNINGTON / GLENAVEN David Poultney MOSGIEL Elaine Merrett			
30	Combined at MOSGIEL David Poultney			