



Dunedin Methodist Parish

Finding Good in everyone Finding God in everyone

www.dunedinmethodist.org.nz

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PARISH BULLETIN

21st October 2018

WORSHIP FOR SUNDAY 28th October

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

Dates to remember:

24 Oct	2.00 pm	Mornington MWF outing – meet at Mornington Church
24 Oct	7.30 pm	PF&R Committee meeting – Mission building
28 Oct	2.30 pm	Dunedin Musical Society Concert - Mornington Church

MORNINGTON METHODIST WOMEN'S FELLOWSHIP - outing to Wal's Garden Centre Mosgiel, Wednesday 24 October. Meet at the Church 2.00pm for transport.

THE PF&R COMMITTEE will meet on Wednesday 24 October, at 7.30 pm at the Mission building.

DUNEDIN MUSICAL SOCIETY CONCERT at 2.30pm Sunday 28 October at the Mornington Methodist Church. There will be items from the Scottish Fiddle orchestra and voice and piano items. It will be a great concert for about one hour and costs only \$2 for an adult and children are free. All welcome.

TRUFFLE FUNDRAISER – the Mornington Toy & Games Library are having their annual fundraiser of yummy truffles, but they will be packaged slightly differently this year. The truffles will be smaller, bite size pieces and packaged in environmentally friendly boxes. A box of 18 truffles sell for \$5.00 per box. If you'd like to order these tasty treats and freeze them for Christmas (or eat them now!) call Rebecca Neaves on 488-4372. Thank you.

IT WAS A SIGNIFICANT MOMENT in last Sunday's service at Mornington when, after two months of planning and discussion, we raised the West Papuan Morning Star flag in Mornington Church. (One might even be tempted to think that with a name like ours, a Morning Star flag is very appropriate here!) WENSISLAUS FATUBUN proved to be a credible ambassador for the liberation movement, a humble, quietly spoken man who walks the talk of justice and freedom for his country, and spends six months of every year treading the corridors of power at the UN and in other countries lobbying for international support, and then, when in his own country, treading a dangerous path to witness for the cause in the hostile environment created by the Indonesian overlords.

Appropriately the profits from this week's meal and open education event will be channeled to the local group, West Papua Support Dunedin, who will decide how the money should be best spent. *PHOTO Bruce & Marjorie Spittle, "Wensi" and Rev Rod Mitchell with the Morning Star Flag.*



STORY FROM THE MISSION

Client Support Worker: An elderly man in his 90's (Frank) was referred to the service by his lawyer. The reason for referral was to help Frank apply for the Resthome Care Subsidy through Work and Income, and to support Frank to get his home ready for the Real Estate agent to sell. Frank has no family and his lawyer is based in the North Island.

Frank's move to the Resthome was as a result of him having a fall at home and being hospitalised. On meeting Frank he was aware of what was needed to be done and was happy to have someone to go over things with him. The Work and Income forms were quite lengthy and required time as Frank had to recall a lifetime of travel, employment and residencies. This allowed Frank to reflect on his life and as a worker I felt privileged to have heard his journey. I acknowledged this with Frank as

the next part of supporting Frank was to help him clear out his home ready for sale.

The Resthome Manager and the team had begun the process with Frank in getting his home sorted in preparation for the Real Estate agent. This was an ask from Frank's lawyer. However Frank felt he was a bit behind the 'eight ball' with the decisions being made and he wasn't sure what he had agreed to in relation to his belongings. Frank stated this was due to him not feeling 100% after coming out of the hospital. Once we had completed Frank's Work and Income forms he asked if I could help him get some clarity around this.

After speaking with Frank it was clear he had a preference of who he wanted to come into his home to appraise his belongings, and that once this had been done he was happy for the Salvation Army to come and grab the remaining items. I asked the Resthome Manager to join us so Frank could hear where they were up to with the removal of his things. Frank was able to say what he wanted to happen and this was put in place. Together with the Manager and Frank we were able to help Frank move through this transition in his life respectfully and with transparency.

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.



THE JOURNEY TO HERE

This is a slightly condensed version of a recent talk given to Mornington MWF

I am a child of England in the mid 60s, and as was still there and then overwhelmingly the case I was baptised according to the rites of the Church of England. Now I was literally a babe in arms so have only what

I've been told to go by. It was a cold winter's afternoon, I was one of a dozen or so children being "done" that afternoon. I was not happy but apparently when the baptismal waters hit my forehead this crying wriggling baby became quiet and still. Apparently the priest said this was clearly a sign that I was destined for a life of great holiness. I suspect I simply went in to shock!

Little did he know.

But truth to tell there was nothing in my family background which would suggest a career in the church lay ahead for me. My parents were Anglican, well if pressed that's what they would say but we never went to church.

I was though from an early age, and with no encouragement at all, fascinated by religion. I envied those of my friends who were in churchgoing families even if they envied the fact I wasn't.

I started going to church at about the age of 16, a very odd form of adolescent rebellion really. By 16 I was aware of my sexuality and how isolated that made me. We have become accustomed and very quickly to how mainstream Gay and Lesbian people are 5 years or so into marriage equality we see the sky has not fallen in and most people are more offended by homophobia than they are by Gay people. This has not always been so, it certainly was not so in small town northern England in the early 80s.

I think I finally went to Church hoping for acceptance and really for a kind of safe place in ways which neither school or home were. I initially went to a Methodist Church but that didn't last. The new minister – a probationer fresh out of college – had been very influenced by an evangelicalism that bordered on fundamentalism. He would make the sort of emotional appeal – think altar calls – which have never sat easily

with me and back then were cripplingly mortifying. So I moved on – to Roman Catholicism – where I found the liturgy more attractive than what had often been an overly long preaching style and appeals to sentiment. I was received into the Church, I went to study Theology – it seemed to me I had a vocation to the priesthood.

While at college I had a diversion, my chaplain was a Benedictine, a member of a monastic community and encouraged me to make a retreat there.

I guess in a sense I fell in love, not with a person but with a way of being. The long periods of silence, the reflection, the devotion to study, the round of offices – the services of prayer – and the celebration of the Eucharist.

So when I graduated I entered into monastic life and after the novitiate began studies for the priesthood.

And I loved it – well part of me did. I came to a growing awareness that yes, I did want this but also it was all kind of convenient. The sexuality of a priest or monk was beyond question, a none issue – again how things have changed between then and now! Part of me was there in order to cover my dis-ease, in retrospect I am shocked that this had not been picked up on in the candidating process. What was becoming clear to me was that I was ok, that what I felt was ok and I had to be honest about it. So I told the Abbott, the head of the community. His immediate response was to ask if I'd been "interfering with any of the boys on the school." And no I hadn't but since then two people I knew have been to prison and others have been cautioned by the police. What was clear to me was I needed to go, I wasn't expecting a life of – and you'll have to forgive me – gay abandon. I had little clue how any of this would work out but I sensed my time there was coming to an end.

So needing something to do and to make a living I applied to train as an RN specialising in psychiatry. On qualification I moved to work in a hospital in the English Midlands, I fairly soon met Darren and my career went very well. I went from new graduate to Senior Charge Nurse in 5 years. Then of course we got itchy feet and came here. In all this time I had been a fairly conscientious lay Catholic. I went to Mass regularly, Confession from time to time, I gave to good causes, was a volunteer for a church charity. But I was becoming disengaged, not least as the Church seemed to be heading in a more conservative direction. Not only were women not to be ordained any discussion of it was meant to be clamped down on, the English bishops withdrew their support for a support organisation for GLBT Catholics. We had “an objective moral disorder,” which sounds distressingly close to the medical textbook definition of psychosisopathy.

Not long after the move to New Zealand, with all the changes that involved I just stopped, I became a none. I drifted for a year and a bit I think. But I missed it, or something. Not long after we came to Dunedin I found an ad in the *Pink Paper*, which is what Dunedin Gay people read before the internet told us everything, for this parish. The advert described the parish as open, inclusive and encouraging of questions. The rest, as they say, is history.

But a history in need of some fleshing out.

Over the next couple of years things were happening for me both in terms of my being here and in terms of my professional life. I was encouraged fairly early on to try for lay preaching, which I did. Not long after people started here and there to ask if I was considering ministry. At the same time my professional development had got as far as contemplating a Ph D, I had an interview with my would be supervisor who cast things in a different light for me. First of all she said I was possibly the most brilliant student she had seen in 20 years, which is

always nice to hear, but then I would find myself failing in Nursing. It did not, at a deep level interest or engage me.

The truth was I had always been aware of something missing, of an incompleteness, I could not have stayed in monastic life and was glad I left but part of me mourned for part of it.

I wish I had an epiphany moment to tell you, the big A ha or even an improving story of a scandalous life transformed by “the call.” I called this little talk the journey to here, in truth it has been the journey to myself.

After Trinity College I spent 5 years in the Hamilton parish, I was ordained in my first year there at Durham Street, the last time Conference was in Christchurch. Then I had 4.5 years in Nelson. It is always what you don't know, in both cases the aftermath of the Christchurch earthquakes was to play perhaps a defining role in my time there. In Hamilton it fell to me to close the first church outside Christchurch to close due to falling below seismic standard requirements. In Nelson I came to a parish again struggling in the wake of Christchurch.

Whatever our shard future brings, let's hope for solid ground!!!!

David Poultney