



Dunedin Methodist Parish

Finding Good in everyone Finding God in everyone

www.dunedinmethodist.org.nz

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PARISH BULLETIN

2nd December 2018

WORSHIP FOR SUNDAY 9th December

9.30 am	Mornington	C Gibson
10.00 am	Mosgiel	D Poultney
11.00 am	Glenaven	R Mitchell
1.00 pm	St Kilda	TBA

Dates to remember:

14 Dec 12.00 noon Dec-Jan Orders due in to Mission Office

ORDERS OF SERVICE & BULLETINS OVER CHRISTMAS BREAK

The Mission Office will be closed from midday Friday 21st December and the Administration team return to work Monday 14th January 2019. Could you please ensure that your Orders of Service over this period (between 21st Dec & 14th Jan) are sent (admin@mmsouth.org.nz) no later than **12 noon Friday 14th December**.

The final bulletin for 2018 will be the 16th December edition and the first bulletin for 2019 will be 20th January.

Thanks everyone, wishing you a very happy Christmas.

Methodist Mission Administration Team.



STORY FROM THE MISSION

Next Step Training: Skills for Dads / Story Reading Dads (OCF):

The Skills for Dads group got off to an early start as they became a part of a discussion with the Social Investment Agency! They gave frank answers to the discussion questions, providing some very instructive and enlightening insights.

The classes were also honest and the discussions were pretty upfront. We had some guys who were very experienced dads, and some whose only child had been born while they were incarcerated. The sharing of ideas across the group was really encouraging, and they had a lot of fun

with the parenting game – a game devised by a Methodist Mission Southern staff member to get the participants thinking about specific parenting situations. One dad had recently lost contact with his sons, and was quite discouraged and disengaged with the sessions. We talked with him, asking if there were other family members who could help him to connect back with the boys. After some thought he realised there was someone who could help and made contact with them. One of the dads who had been adopted out as a baby, met his birth father for the first time the week before class started; others had never met their own dads but had really good step dad experiences.

This time we had mostly the same group for Story-reading dads, which was lovely. There were two new members in the class and they were warmly welcomed and supported by the group. One of the previous group who had been a bit distracted in his original class, really engaged with Story-reading Dads, commenting that he was enjoying it much more! One of the dads is a storywriter, and wrote a book for his daughter, leaving pages blank so she could do the illustrations. He also wrote a song for her and recorded that as part of his DVD. This was seriously cool. One of the other dads – a bit of a perfectionist – was dissatisfied with the suggested craft activities and decided to make a dream-catcher for his boys. This required a bit of research from the tutors and some practice so techniques could be demonstrated, but the result was that two dads made very lovely dream-catchers for their boys. Lots of parenting discussion happened over the glitter and paint... One of the new dads had never been to any programmes before and said how much he enjoyed Story-reading dads and that it was the highlight of his week.

Next Step Training: Literacy & Numeracy (Prison):

One heartening thing is the number of students at the prison who have been asking what other courses they can do run by the mission tutors. It seems that we are getting a bit of a name in the prison population for

being educators who are able to include all learners, and make things easier for them to understand. One of my guys said that he was never interested in school but if it had been like the work we did at the prison he would have stuck around as he finds the delivery of our information is far easier for him to understand, and he appreciated the feeling of one-on-one tutoring even though there are up to 6 in the room.

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.



ADVENT

At the conclusion of my creation story, God the Father, God the Mother and God the Son were reeling from the effects of the 'big bang', the cataclysmic result of some fiddling in the cosmic laboratory on the part of God the Son.

This is a brief outline of the advent of God the Son as he set out on his OE.

On the eve of his departure, over a heavenly cup of hot Whittakers' chocolate his parents briefed their son on his mission, reassuring him they would be expecting him to return to his cosmic home in the fullness of time. Of course many questions put to the divine parents. These were answered in a somewhat cryptic and oblique way, leaving the Son somewhat mystified but anxious to get started on this special mission. One thing was very clear, things weren't going too well on earth. It seemed the adult forms of the seed souls were behaving unacceptably, and the Parents were very concerned with the situation. Deep in his being, their son knew this was going to be a significant experience, the consequences reaching, well... probably into infinity.

"No pressure then!" muttered God the Son under his divine breath.
 "Well, here goes!"

Mary's pregnancy was something of a surprise, not just to herself and Joseph, but the entire village. Tongues were wagging as villagers whispered among themselves, surmising about the parentage and timing. The gossip became too much for Mary who decided to visit cousin Elizabeth, also pregnant with an unexpected but longed for child. This meant a rather uncomfortable donkey ride for Mary, but she was excited to visit her cousin. She was looking forward to exchanging experiences and having some 'girl time'— comparing 'baby bumps', hopes and dreams for their little ones.

God the Son was 'over' being bumped around as Mary's donkey plodded along the heavily rutted road. It was a relief when his mother decided to stretch her legs and walk for a while. Eventually the journey was over and in spite of the fact that their voices were muffled God the Son could hear the excitement in the voices of his mother and aunt as they exchanged greetings. He picked up snippets of conversation which he couldn't make much sense of it, except that apparently his name was to be 'Jesus'.

Months passed, and the baby Jesus steadily developed and grew. When he was awake , to pass the time he loved listening to his mother as she talked. He learned to tell when she was stressed because her speech became very muffled due to her raised heart beat and the sound of blood rushing through her blood vessels.

This particular day was one of 'those' days. He picked up the words “travel, donkey” and “census”. " Oh no!" thought Jesus, "not another donkey ride, I'm over donkey rides and it sounds like Mummy is too AND I'm all squashed in this womb with absolutely no view!!” Bump, bump, bump along the road they journeyed. “Oh boy, we're not called baby bumps for nothing!” thought Jesus wryly. The little family trudged on: “Are we there yet?” asked Jesus ...for the 120th time. Nobody answered.

Apparently Joseph had neglected to book ahead, so conversation was minimal and clipped. The vibes weren't good. "Not a great start" thought Jesus as he squirmed to make himself more comfy. Eventually the bumping stopped, and Jesus heard an unfamiliar voice. It didn't sound friendly. A door slammed and the bumping resumed. Same thing happened again, and again. Jesus heard his mother say something about a stable being better than nothing.

They bumped along for a few more minutes and stopped...more strange voices, then Jesus heard his dad say, "It will have to do, we'll take it". A few bumps later and...yesss....they were here!! Jesus could just about hear his Mum rolling her eyes.. It WAS a stable, but at least they could rest in a safe place. Well, as safe as a stable full of animals could be (and it was rather whiffy; warm...but whiffy). There was plenty of fresh hay, so Joseph, anxious to regain brownie points, set about making a comfy bed for them all. They settled down for the night.

"OOOOOH!...I've got to get out of here" thought Jesus as he tried to get more comfortable in the womb without a view, "time to leave!" Things started to happen. Jesus felt tremendous pressure as his body was squeezed in a rhythm that was becoming more and more intense with each passing hour. Suddenly the lovely warm fluid that had been absorbing the worst of the bumping and jiggling, was disappearing very quickly...That was a bit of a surprise, but it did give him more room to adjust his position as waves of pressure slowly but surely pushed him downwards. He heard his mother cry out as the same waves overwhelmed her. "Golly, this isn't much fun for her either" thought Jesus, "whose idea was this, what on earth were my God Parents thinking!?" "How could they have ever thought this was a good idea?"

Eventually—what seemed like an eternity later—Jesus was aware of something cold on his head; pressure forced his head into the dim light of the stable. Another couple of waves of pressure and ..whoosh...Jesus

was lying on a bed of hay and yelling at the top of his lungs “ Is that ME making all that noise ?” He felt himself being scooped up by a pair of eager hands and placed in his mother's arms. “ This is more like it!” thought Jesus, after he had recovered from all the surprises. It was such bliss to be able to stretch his arms and legs.

There was a bit more kerfuffle as someone sorted out the cord issue, then he was able to concentrate on getting to know his adoring mother, who was busily counting fingers and toes and things. Joseph bent over Mary and the baby, stunned but marvelling at the thing that had just happened.... A cosmic event of infinite importance.

“Phew! “ thought Jesus, “that was different”, and made a mental note to suggest some design modifications in the whole birthing thing when he returned to his God Parents. “What on earth am I here for?” mused Jesus. “I guess it will become clear in the fullness of time, but Mummy, I'm so hungry; where's some food?”

Happy birthday baby Jesus!!

...And so the story continues. Embedded in Jesus consciousness lay an 'inner knowing', which would gradually become fully known, motivating the many extraordinary experiences of his big OE.

This creative cosmic event reminds us that divine mystery transcends time and space, in spite of humanity's materialism, scepticism and indifference. The birth of every infant is a timeless reminder that God, the creating energy and life force, does indeed 'move in mysterious ways wonders to perform.'

Trish Patrick

SERVICE ARRANGEMENTS FOR DECEMBER

Please take careful note of the service arrangements for Mornington and Glenaven for December. Arrangements for January 2019 will be published shortly.



9 December 9.30am Mornington Methodists attend St Mary's service under Anglican leadership; 11am Glenaven service (Mitchell).

7pm Combined Mornington churches Carol service at Mornington Methodist (Mitchell)

16 December 9.30am Mornington service (choir presents Christmas music); 11am Glenaven service (both services led by David Poultney)

23 December 9.30am Mornington service; 11am Glenaven service (both services led by David Poultney)

24 December Christmas Eve service at Glenaven (10.30 supper for 11pm start) (Poultney and Mitchell)

25 December 10am Combined Glenaven and Mornington service at Mornington (Poultney)

30 December 10am Combined Methodist Parish service at Mosgiel (Poultney)

