



Dunedin Methodist Parish

Finding Good in everyone Finding God in everyone

www.dunedinmethodist.org.nz

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PARISH BULLETIN

16th June 2019

WORSHIP FOR SUNDAY 23rd June 2019

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

DATES TO REMEMBER

19 June	7.30 pm	Reading the Bible as Waters Rise
26 June	2.00 pm	Mornington Women's Fellowship
26-27 July	Coming Up	Finding Faith in Secular Times

READING THE BIBLE AS THE WATERS RISE - Our next Open Education speaker is Dr Emily Colgan, of Trinity College, Auckland, who has been studying what the ancient texts of the Bible have to say about the natural environment, put into the modern context of climate change. This is a significant subject for us all these days, as the Pacific Ocean begins to inundate the islands and extreme weather events cause major damage everywhere in the world.

Join us at **Mornington Methodist Church, Galloway Street, on Wednesday 19 June at 7.30pm** (koha \$15). Bring a friend to hear an excellent speaker. There will be the usual pre-talk dinner, professionally catered by Judy Russell (\$15, for bookings ring 455 3727)

MORNINGTON METHODIST WOMEN'S FELLOWSHIP:

Our June Meeting will take place on the 26th June at 2 p.m., in the Church Lounge. The Rev. David Poultney will give us a short Devotional message before chairing the Annual General Meeting. This will be followed by the Monthly Meeting. Please remember the Fellowship of the Least Coin.

COMING UP – FINDING FAITH IN “SECULAR TIMES” - What can we learn about Christian witness from the experiences of recent converts to Christianity?

Dr Lynne Taylor, Sommerville Lecturer in Pastoral Theology, Theology Programme, University of Otago, *Friday 26th July, 7-9pm Saturday 27th July 9am-12.30pm*, Dunedin City Baptist Church, 19 Main South Road, Concord, Dunedin. Each Course costs \$20. Please register online at www.otago.ac.nz/continuingeducation



STORIES FROM THE MISSION: FIT for purpose

We live in a world of acronyms, which can be confusing. At MMSouthern we have quite a few acronyms in use, so here's an explanation of some of them: FIT (formerly PCOMS) and ORS/SRS. FIT stands for Feedback Informed Treatment. It means we

ask the client to give us feedback, and that shapes the way forward as we work together. The feedback comes in the form of the Outcome Rating Scale (ORS) and a Service Rating Scale (SRS). These give a quantifiable measure on how the client is feeling about aspects of his or her life at that point in time. These scales are applied at different points as the work continues and practitioners, with the client, can see shifts in the way the client perceives how the work is going.

The Service Rating Scale gives feedback on how the client feels about the way he or she is being treated, how a session could be more useful; whether we're doing a good job for the client from their point of view. It gives feedback to the practitioner which allows them to adjust the way they work and engage with each client.

The Outcome Rating Scale provides feedback on shifts in the client's experience. It shows whether we are providing useful service where the client can see positive change in their lives (or not), and it gives the client control of the process.

The feedback processes ensure that any service is indeed FIT for purpose. FIT gives a quantifiable indication of change, allowing the client and practitioner together to determine when a particular piece of work is completed for a client and giving them closure. It also provides valuable collated data for our own feedback to funders.

These tools are also being provided by MMS for other niche service providers across the region such as data storage and analysis support together with training for staff through the Integrated Services Hub

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.

WEST PAPUA - readers of the weekly Bulletin who are aware of the West Papuan flag displayed in the Mornington Church foyer, and have noticed frequent information pieces printed in the Bulletin promoting West Papuan independence from Indonesia, may be tempted to think that there are those in the Parish who have been hoodwinked into supporting a minority cause of little importance among the more pressing issues of our time.

A RECENT STATEMENT from the World Council of Churches, May 27, 2019, following a representative and comprehensive visit to West Papua, reaffirms all the concerns that have been consistently shared with New Zealand people by those of us advocating on behalf of indigenous West Papuans suffering the grim realities of Indonesian occupation. Here is a summary of the WCC statement.

Concern and Solidarity for West Papua

We are alarmed that the observations by (our visiting team) indicate persistently high levels of violence and human rights violations, including recently in the Nduga Regency resulting in the displacement of many people from remote communities in the Highlands area. (Our visitors) remarked on the very heavy military-security approach of the Indonesian authorities in the region, and its consequences in terms of conflict and associated human rights violations. We are also gravely concerned by reports of the accelerating deforestation and environmental degradation in West Papua, especially in light of the importance that these forest areas have for Indigenous Papuan people's traditional livelihoods and culture, and their global significance with regard to the challenges of climate change and extinction of species.

The prevalence of sexual and gender-based violence in West Papua, and the disproportionate impact of the conflict and human rights situation in the territory on women and girls, are matters warranting further specific attention by the ecumenical movement and national and provincial authorities.

Overall, reports received and observations made by (our visitors) indicate that the present situation in West Papua exhibits clear characteristics of

systemic marginalization – including through transmigration and demographic shifts – and discrimination against the Indigenous Papuan population, and of their exclusion from the development process currently taking place in their own territory, which is in any event unsustainable and destructive both of the environment and traditional livelihoods.

"Let justice roll down like waters, and righteousness like an ever-flowing stream."

Amos 5: 24 (NRSV)



DARE TO BE WISE

"Dare to be wise", an English translation of the motto of the University of Otago, Sapere Aude, has featured prominently in the events celebrating our University's sesquicentenary. The motto is also that of the University of New Brunswick, Fredericton, New Brunswick, Canada, which was founded 84 years before the University of Otago in 1785 and their website translates their motto as "Dare to know." Another educational institution with the same motto is Wesley College, an independent, co-educational, open-entry school in Melbourne, Australia. Established in 1866, the school was the first registered school in Australia and resulted from a decision of the colonial government of Victoria, in the wake of the Victorian gold rush, to grant land and funds to four religious groups, including the Wesleyan Methodist Church, for the purpose of establishing colleges in Melbourne. In 1854, the government offered the Wesleyans 10 acres facing St Kilda Road. Major benefactor Walter Powell encouraged other Wesleyan Methodists to bridge the gap in funds between the government grant and that required to build the school which was officially opened on 11 January 1866, three years before the founding of the University of Otago in 1869 by an ordinance of the Otago Provincial Council.

Otago is New Zealand's oldest university and the new University was given 100,000 acres of pastoral land as an endowment and authorised to grant degrees in Arts, Medicine, Law and Music. It opened in July 1871 with a staff of just three Professors, George Sale who taught Classics and English

Language and Literature, John Shand who had responsibility for Mathematics and Natural Philosophy, and Duncan Macgregor who covered Mental and Moral Philosophy and Political Economy. They were joined in 1872 by James Gow Black as Professor of Natural Science. As well as “dare to be wise”, the University’s website gives an alternative translation of “have courage to be wise”.

The original use of the phrase *Sapere aude* appears in the First Book of Letters (20 years before the common era [BCE]), by the Roman poet Horace; in the second letter, addressed to Lolius, in line 40, the passage is: *Dimidium facti, qui coepit, habet; sapere aude, incipe*. (“He who has begun is half done; dare to know; begin!”). The phrase is the moral to a story in which a fool waits for a stream to cease flowing, before attempting to cross it. In saying, “He who begins is half done. Dare to know, begin!”, the Roman poet Horace suggests the value of human endeavour, of persistence in reaching a goal, and of the need for effort to overcome obstacles.

In his 1784 essay, “Answering the question: what is enlightenment?”, Immanuel Kant, an influential German philosopher and an exponent of the idea that perpetual peace could be secured through universal democracy and international cooperation, described the Age of Enlightenment as “Man’s release from his self-incurred immaturity”; and, with the phrase *sapere aude*, he charged the reader to follow such a program of intellectual self-liberation, by means of reason. The essay by Kant was a shrewd, political challenge to men and women, suggesting that the mass of “domestic cattle” have been bred, by unfaithful stewards, to not question what they have been told about the world and its ways.

Thinking for yourself and determining what is a wise response is not always easy. Starting to cross a stream rather than waiting for the stream to stop flowing may, in retrospect, turn out to be the wrong decision. Drowning by crossing streams was known as the New Zealand way of death. Even today, drowning affects all New Zealanders irrespective of age, ethnicity, gender or social economic status, and is consistently the third highest cause of unintentional death in New Zealand, surpassed only by road vehicle crashes and accidental falls.

When apparently knowledgeable and sincere experts have widely different views about how best to respond to a complex problem, it is very difficult, if not impossible for a lay person to know what is wise.

A seminar was recently held at Otago University by the Wise Response Society on “Tackling our Climate Emergency Head-On!” The motivation for the Seminar was the chronic lack of effective progress in reducing the green house gas emissions (GHG) responsible for climate change by governments everywhere. A motion passed unanimously at the meeting was: “We, who care about preserving a life-supporting planet, stand with all young people, appealing for the avoidance of a global climate catastrophe by effective GHG emissions reduction. This will require: by all nation states together, an unequivocal commitment to a pathway that delivers safe global limits; by our government immediately incentivising, provisioning and enforcing climate mitigation ahead of short-term economic and political considerations; and by each of us, a willingness to assess and voluntarily step down the GHG emissions footprint that supports our current life and work”.

The Wise Response Society may be daring to be wise by passing their motion. Their view is supported by many eminent authorities. Speaking at the recent Convocation ceremony, the Governor-General Dame Patsy Reddy noted that Otago students were already conscious of living at a critical junction in history, as climate change became more and more of an issue.

However, that a particular viewpoint is held by many eminent persons is no guarantee that it is correct. Galileo Galilei’s view that the earth was in orbit around the sun was investigated by the Roman Inquisition in 1615, which concluded that heliocentrism was “foolish and absurd in philosophy, and formally heretical since it explicitly contradicts in many places the sense of Holy Scripture”. He was tried by the Inquisition, found “vehemently suspect of heresy”, and forced to recant. He spent the rest of his life under house arrest. Galileo’s position turned out to be correct and the authorities were wrong.

The late Bob Carter, an Otago graduate in geology and a Professor at James Cook University, Queensland, considered that climate is a complex, dynamic, natural system that no one wholly comprehends and that there is no unambiguous evidence that dangerous or even measurable human-caused global warming is occurring. He considered that as climate has always

changed and always will, all countries needed to have sensible policies to deal with their natural climate hazards such as typhoons in Japan and bush fires in California. The geological record indicates that a rise in the atmospheric carbon dioxide level occurs several hundred years after the temperature rises rather than increasing carbon dioxide causing a rise in temperature.

The historical records describe marked changes in the weather occurring before modern industrial times. In approximately 540 AD, Procopius described the weather in Constantinople as, "The sun gave forth its light without brightness, like the moon, during the whole year and it seemed exceedingly like the Sun in eclipse, for the beams it shed were not clear, nor such as it is accustomed to shed." Similarly, further south, John of Ephesus recorded, "The sun became dark and its darkness lasted for 19 months. Each day it shone for about four hours, and still this light was only a feeble shadow ... the fruits did not ripen and the wine tasted like sour grapes. "Even further south, John, the Lydian, wrote, "The Sun became dim for nearly the whole year ... the fruits were killed at an unseasonable time."

Unless we have a sufficient understanding of the factors that affect a complex situation, such as climate, our remedial efforts may be misguided. Natural climate change will continue to occur in New Zealand, as in other parts of the world, and we need to respond and adapt to the natural events that we may experience such as warmings, coolings, droughts, floods, earthquakes and volcanic eruptions.

In his book, *Such is life: a close encounter with Ecclesiastes*, Lloyd Geering notes that wisdom is not an immutable body of knowledge, and that it is vain to imagine that it is. We must personally walk the path of wisdom for ourselves rather than expect to receive it from others ready-made. So the role of the sage was not to provide instant wisdom for the foolish and unlearned; the words of the sage says the Book of Ecclesiastes, were to be like a sharp goad forcing hearers to shake off their complacency and to pursue wisdom for themselves. Daring to be wise is not easy.