

DUNEDIN METHODIST PARISH

Finding Good in everyone Finding God in everyone

www.dunedinmethodist.org.nz



Find us on Facebook: **Dunedin Methodist Parish**

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PARISH BULLETIN

7 June 2020

WORSHIP FOR SUNDAY 14 June 2020

9.30am	Mornington	Marcia Hardy
10.00am	Mosgiel	David Poultney
11.00am	Glenaven	Helen Watson-White
1.00pm	St Kilda	TBA

DATES TO REMEMBER



PREACHING AND LEADING WORSHIP in June a preaching plan was almost complete just as we went into lockdown, all that is left of it is June and that has had to be tweaked as the Vice President will not be able to be with us on Sunday 21st and, until Level One, we will not be scheduling joint services. The Preaching plan for June is as follows, a July August plan is being prepared.

7th June

Glenaven	David Poultney
Mornington	David Poultney
Mosgiel	Elaine Merrett

14th June

Glenaven	Helen Watson White
Mornington	Marcia Hardy
Mosgiel	David Poultney

21st June

Glenaven	Rod Mitchell
Mornington	Rod Mitchell
Mosgiel	David Poultney

28th June

Glenaven	Donald Phillipps
Mornington	Donald Phillipps
Mosgiel	David Poultney

CONGRATULATIONS to Rachael Masterton. Rachael has completed a course in Funeral Celebrancy. Just as she does with her Marriage Celebrancy work I am sure she will bring her giftedness and care to this important and sensitive task. Well done Rachael.



STORY FROM THE MISSION

COVID19 has changed the world, and it is changing Aotearoa.

Pundits are settling on at least 2 years of direct economic hit which, say it quickly, still sounds like a lot.

For those of us in social services there is, unfortunately an awful historical precedent to draw on as we now move to thinking beyond the immediate for the people we seek to serve.

The reforms of the late 1980s and early 1990s; known to be the 40 year old source of the issues that dominated New Zealand's last general election – a doubling in child poverty, increases in inequality, education's "long tail", atomisation of communities, our suicide rate (particularly young men), our now "permanent" underclass, and exponential landing of all that on our Māori and Pasifika communities.

This period also helped grow the gangs, launched a teenage pregnancy boom, and caused our appalling house prices, now the better part of poverty in New Zealand.

Unemployment at the peak of the "reforms" was 11%. Mind that number. It means one in every nine people of working age who wanted work, couldn't.

Minister of Finance Grant Robertson will only have that the unemployment rate by Christmas this year will be “at the low end of the 15-30% range” being suggested by economists. At minimum, **half again** as bad as at the peak of the 1980s.

One in six out of work. Not for days, but months and years.

Government has been spending one billion dollars a week on COVID19 – increasing total government expenditure by 60%. No government can afford that for long.

While there will be spending on mass-work (“infrastructure” building) and attempts to refloat retail and tourism (that may lead inadvertently to more house price spikes); there may also be cuts in government spending.

It is important to begin planning NOW to prevent, to catch, to heal, the damage COVID19 will create in communities, our families, ourselves.

We will have to throw everything we have at it. There will be difficult decisions for all of us and all social services as we come to grips with this changed world.

Our Methodist values and your support in this work will mean the world.

We can and we will make a difference.

Laura Black

Kaihautū Director

Methodist Mission Southern



Last Sunday, it was so good to be able to return to worship at Mornington Church. During the time when we were not able to gather for worship, I was very grateful for the weekly worship material provided via e mail by David Poultney, and for weekly Parish Zoom meetings which kept us connected. Thank you David. Hilda and I also enjoyed sharing in worship each Sunday during lockdown with the Takapuna Methodist Church, via a live-streamed service each week. After six weeks, we felt like we knew our Takapuna friends well! The services were led by Rev Peter Norman. Many creative members of the congregation contributed readings, prayers, stories, and reflections. It was a visual and spiritual feast each week to enjoy.

Leading up to May 24th, Wesley Day, via social media I sent around a few invitations to friends to join the 10am live-streamed service from Takapuna. One person who chose to join in on that day was Professor Kevin Clements. Kevin was inspired by participating in the on-line Takapuna service to post a thoughtful reflection on his facebook page, which hundreds of people have since read and commented on positively. It turns out that Kevin's father, Rev Les Clements' last Parish was Takapuna Methodist, and his funeral was also held there. Les Clements was a conscientious objector during the second, world war, and was sadly dismissed from the Methodist Church of NZ for his pacifist stand. He was later re-instated. Unbeknown to me, Takapuna Methodist Church has very special significance for Kevin. Here is what Kevin wrote on his Facebook page after watching the Wesley Day service broadcast live from Takapuna Methodist Church on May 24th:

"Today the 24th May, Wesley Day. For Methodists this is the commemoration of when John Wesley went to a service at St Paul's Cathedral in London and afterwards slipped into a Moravian Prayer Group at Aldersgate where he "felt his heart strangely warmed". From that moment on, he and his brother Charles propounded a **theology of grace** - by which he meant that if you were open to love, love would come in, warm your heart and sustain you through all of life's ups and downs. Both John and Charles had plenty of highs and lows in their lives. This same grace continues to be available to everyone open to love.

Brennan Manning writes: "God loves me just as I am and not as I should be. God loves me beyond worthiness and unworthiness. God loves me beyond my fidelity and infidelity. God loves me in the morning sun and the evening rain without caution, regret, limit or breaking point. No matter what I do, God will not stop loving me. And this is grace."

John R. W. Stott : "Grace is love that cares and stoops and rescues."

Samuel Rutherford: "Grace grows best in winter."

Reinhold Niebuhr: "All men and women who live with any degree of serenity live by some assurance of grace."

I'm mentioning all this because my Dad was a Methodist Minister and Greg Hughson sent me a link to today's service at Takapuna Methodist Church which is where my Dad had his last ministry and where we bade our final farewells to him. But I'm also mentioning it because Methodism gave me hymns, community and a lifelong commitment to justice, peace and a social gospel. It shaped my conviction that said there could never be any peace anywhere in the world as long as anyone was poor, excluded, marginalised, oppressed, or afflicted. So thanks John Wesley!

Your theology of grace, love, justice and peace subliminally informs all that we try and do in peace research, and in all our work for the non-violent transformation of conflict.” (end)

Kevin’s words remind me of how we are all deeply interconnected on this planet. Within a few months, a tiny virus from a bat in Wuhan China can wreak havoc internationally, infecting (currently) over six million humans. A racist murder by a Minneapolis Police officer can quickly bring about huge peaceful protests internationally, as well as rioting, destruction, chaos and further death throughout the United States of America. Intriguingly, the teaching of Jesus of Nazareth, 2,000 years ago can be connected to Florida USA Police kneeling in prayer on May 31st and asking for forgiveness from the protestors whom they had been sent to control. In their “weakness” through openly acknowledging their (police-collegial) need for forgiveness, these officers avoided further violence and bloodshed, and opened the door for dialogue and healing.

In 2012, I spent one week on study leave at Eastern Mennonite University (EMU) in Virginia, USA. I came away greatly inspired by staff of the wonderful EMU Centre for Justice and Peacebuilding. I highly recommend their courses for anyone considering a future career in politics, or for any current American (or other) political leaders who need to enhance their Justice and Peace building skills. I wonder how President Trump would respond to an invite to enrol in Peacebuilding 101 at EMU?

The ethos and ethical practice of our NZ National Centre for Peace and Conflict studies, based here in Dunedin, can be traced back via Professor Kevin Clements to Rev Les Clements, to Rev John Wesley and back to Jesus. Hundreds of students from all around the world have come - and will continue to come - to Dunedin to study Peace and Conflict Studies! Thanks be to God for all the current and historical justice and peace connections between us, and for all the opportunities we have to say no to racism, hatred and violence.

Rev Greg Hughson