

DUNEDIN METHODIST PARISH

Finding Good in everyone Finding God in everyone

www.dunedinmethodist.org.nz



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PARISH BULLETIN

13th September 2020

WORSHIP FOR SUNDAY 20th September 2020

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

DATES TO REMEMBER

Tuesday 15 September @ 7pm – Mosgiel Methodist Church Leaders Meeting
 Wednesday 16 September @ 7.30pm – Open Education @ Mornington Church
 Wednesday 30 September @ 7.30-9pm – 2020 Peace Lecture
 Sunday 18 October – Mornington AGM

MOSGIEL METHODIST CHURCH LEADERS MEETING

Will be held in the church on Tuesday 15 September at 7pm.

MORNINGTON CONGREGATION AGM will be held after church on Sunday October 18th. Could all reports please be sent to me by Friday September 18th to allow time for printing and circulating to the congregation.

Marjorie Spittle

Chairperson Leaders' Meeting

OPEN EDUCATION: TALKING WITH IAN HARRIS - On Wednesday, 16 September, in Mornington Methodist Church, starting at 7.30pm, Open Education is sponsoring a visit by Ian Harris, Wellington journalist and popular theologian. Ian is well known through his columns in the Otago Daily Times and Touchstone, and he is a thoughtful, engaging and interesting speaker. Although we cannot provide the usual dinner, and Covid precautions (signing in, social distancing) will be in place, this will be an excellent opportunity to share in something different and stimulating. The usual koha of \$5 will obtain, and all profits will go to support Dania, a war-blinded Palestinian refugee woman moving into new accommodation.

THE PEACE LECTURE FOR 2020 - An event not to miss! The 2020 Peace Lecture will be given by New Zealand's former Prime Minister and Administrator of the United Nations Development Programme, Helen Clark. "Seeking Peace and Hope together in the Age of Covid: A Conversation with the Rt Hon Helen Clark." St David Lecture Theatre, University of Otago (off Castle Street North), Wednesday 30 September, 7.30-9pm. Sponsored by the Dunedin Abrahamic group and the Otago Tertiary Chaplaincy team.



STORIES FROM THE MISSION

Literacy & Numeracy – OCF (Otago Corrections Facility)

Students have been busy completing required assessments and gaining credits for themselves.

Students often say that coming into the programmes building is the place that feels the closest to a 'normal world' to them and that the learning environment is a lot less intimidating than what they have been used to in the past. Some feedback from students on completed assessments:

- *Thanks again you make this very enjoyable to pick new things up and learn, thank you.*
- *For Libby, you're a very good tutor. Well done.*
- *Very good tutor, highly recommend.*
- *Our tutor is very good at teaching and very patient when we don't understand and she is never angry or cross. Our tutor made this work easy to learn and enjoyable.*
- *[The Tutor] is real helpful, makes it easy to learn things.*
- *Far better than the teachers I had at school. Very happy with the tutor.*
- *Very good tutor, highly recommend.*
- *Really good tutor, she makes learning easy.*
- *I'm finding the tutor very helpful and easy to understand.*
- *Everything was explained well.*
- *It was fun to bounce ideas off everyone in the learning process. Awesome buzz.*
- *The unit standard was good. I enjoyed it. It was really helpful having a good teacher who helped me understand what was required before I started. Thank you.*

Ōtēpoti YTH (Youth Transition House)

Currently there are five rangitahi at YTH – four female and one male; four Māori (three Kai tahu) and one European. One further rangitahi has been transitioning into the house and will be fulltime on Monday next week (Female and European).

One of the rangitahi is at school and all the others are on various training courses.

Having four females in the house is an interesting dynamic - we seem to have been going through a large number of towels, shampoo, conditioner, and moisturiser. And hot water! The iron and ironing board has been seeing some use though – a great sense of pride in the rangitahi appearance is throughout the house.

One of the rangitahi has spent the last few weeks up north with his wife and child reconnecting. He has a goal to move back up there to live and study.

We have been working on improving our transition processes for rangitahi who join the house. The first week tends to be the toughest for them. During this time all the emotions and feelings they have been supressing starts to surface. This is the first place they have been in a very long time where they have felt truly safe and been able to let their guard down. The Supervisors are outstanding at supporting our rangitahi with this, providing or finding supports and listening to where they want to go next so they can be the change agents in their own lives.

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



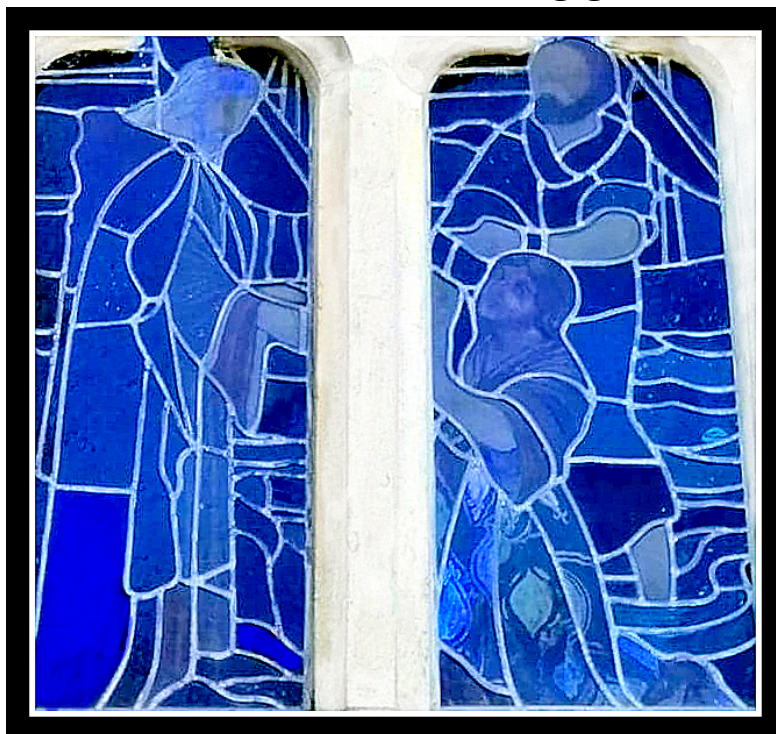
HIDE AND SEEK

When our granddaughters Alice and Evie come to Mornington Church with us, they love playing hide and seek with me after Church. They hide behind the organ. They hide behind the piano. They hide under the seats. When it is my turn, I hide in the same places. They find me. Every time they find me. And there is great rejoicing when one of them finds me! I also enjoy and value the experience of being found.

Earlier this week a few of us helped Rebecca prepare our Church to receive its new carpet. The old carpet has been in place since 1984 when our "new" Mornington Methodist Church was opened. When the old carpet was lifted, we found that the foundation undergirding our worship space is in fact, concrete. Each Sunday, we hear the scripture read - and the Word of God proclaimed - from people standing on hard rock, covered by a thin layer of carpet. Each Sunday, we sit on comfortable chairs, but the base on which our Church is built, is solid rock. This brings to mind the teaching of Jesus to build our lives on firm foundations. (Matthew 7: 24-27) As we go through life, we discover that those who have gone before us in the faith have laid foundations (physical and spiritual) of which we may be completely unaware, until the old layers are stripped away to reveal what lies beneath.

Some times it seems as if God is playing a game of hide and seek with us. Why is God so hard to find? Why would God hide from us? Some people today have given up trying to find God. Attempting to find God can be an exhausting process. Being open to the experience of being found by God is however, I believe, more important than trying to find God. Jesus refers to this spiritual dynamic in his story about the lost sheep. In this story, the shepherd leaves the other 99 sheep behind, to go in search of the one that is lost. There is a divine intentionality at work here. Our Shepherd God knows our need for fellowship and safety. God does everything possible therefore to find us and to bring us back to where

we need to be, to give us another chance. After the prodigal son had wasted his father's wealth, he ended up in a pig sty. He eventually came to his senses, realised what he had lost, and began the long journey home. In the story Jesus tells, the young man's father saw him far away and ran towards him, finding his son, embracing him, and bringing him home to celebrate. God does the same. Whenever we try to hide from or ignore God, God comes out of hiding to find us. Such redemption is real and true, in a way that is beyond the capacity of any scientific technique to prove or disprove. It has been found to be true in the experience of followers of Christ over the last 2000 years, and in my own experience. Being found by God is more transforming than finding God. When we allow ourselves to be found by God, we are met by a deep source of love, forgiveness and grace from which we can draw all the strength we need to love and care for ourselves and others. To be found by God we need to do more than open our minds, although that is important. When we come to worship, it is more about allowing ourselves to be found by God, than finding God. The first step is allowing ourselves to be found. The rest of life, in all its fullness, is our response to being found. The prodigal son and the lost sheep did their best to hide from God, but in the end they were found. I once was lost but now I'm found, was blind but now I see! Amazing grace indeed.



Last Tuesday I found two “lost” stained glass windows, located high up on the back wall of our Mornington Church hall. (see photo) These windows have been lost to most of us for decades. They are covered over on the inside of the Hall by Judo wall mats (!) so can only be seen from the outside. The scene portrayed in the windows is of Jesus calling the disciples, Simon and Andrew to leave their nets and follow him. (Matthew 4 vs 18-22). Colin Gibson tells me that this scene was intentionally chosen by A.H. Reed for his new Sunday School building. The message it sends is that we are all called to ministry of one kind or another.

In 1984 I candidated for ordained ministry from my home Parish of Saint Francis in Hamilton. During the whole year long selection process I had a picture poster of Matthew 4 vs 18-22 on my wall. It was very similar to this stained glass scene. I had a very real sense of Jesus calling me to leave my nets (actually it was a Biochemistry Lab) and to follow him, not knowing where I (or my family) would end up. I was unable to hide from or ignore God's call on my life, a call that came through many people. So I responded affirmatively and, in faith, I allowed my name to go forward. The rest is history. Seeing this same scene depicted in a relatively “hidden” place last Tuesday, took me back to 1984. The call of Christ is embedded, both in the “hidden” artistic infrastructure of our Mornington Church Hall, and in an open ongoing invitation to follow, serve and worship a loving God who will never give up on any one of us.

Rev Greg Hughson