

DUNEDIN METHODIST PARISH

Finding Good in everyone Finding God in everyone

www.dunedinmethodist.org.nz



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

Presbyters	Rev David Poultney	974 6172
	Mobile phone	022 350 2263
	Office phone	466 3023
	Office email	parish@mmsouth.org.nz
	Rev Dr Rod Mitchell	027 647 7003 roddieg@xtra.co.nz
Parish Stewards	Mrs Jan Stewart	473 9141
	John Hardy	472 7377
	Ross Merrett	489 7663
Tongan Steward	Mr Kaufusi Pole	455 0096
Parish Prayer Convenor	Elaine Merrett	489 7663
		elaineross@xtra.co.nz
Pastoral Convenor	Beryl Neutze	477 7377
Mornington		
Parish Office		466 4600
		bulletins@mmsouth.org.nz

PARISH BULLETIN

13th December 2020

WORSHIP FOR SUNDAY 20th December 2020

9.30 am	Mornington	D Poultney/ J Clark
10.00am	Mosgiel	G Hughson
11.00am	Glenaven	D Poultney
1.00pm	St Kilda	TBA

DATES TO REMEMBER

Wed 16th Dec 12.00 noon – Orders of Service due at Mission Office

ORDERS OF SERVICE & BULLETINS OVER CHRISTMAS BREAK



The Mission Office will be closed from midday Wednesday 23rd December with the Administration team returning to work Thursday 14th January 2021.

Could you please ensure that your Orders of Service over this period (the dates 20th Dec through to 10th Jan) are sent (bulletins@mmsouth.org.nz) no later than **12noon Wednesday 16th December**.

The final bulletin for 2020 will be the 20th December edition and the first bulletin for 2021 will be 24th January.

Many thanks, Methodist Mission Administration Team

AT THE GLENAVEN SERVICE 11am-noon on December 13, Paul Gourlie will be telling us about the multicultural AoNZ Peace Embassy in Albany Street. Everyone at the Glenaven service is then invited to a pot-luck picnic at the Watson White house afterwards. Beware: parking is difficult at both places, so be prepared to park in North Rd to visit the church at 7 Chambers St, and in Cannington Rd for Helen and John's house at 5 Cairnhill St, Maori Hill. Hot and cold drinks will be available at both places, before the 11am service and after 12.30, at the house. Both occasions are very informal, so come and go as you wish or need to do, and bring anyone you like. Just email if that includes children: watsonwhite@xtra.co.nz. Please bring some cold finger-food, ready to eat on a plate or in a box. Thank you!

CONGRATULATIONS: We're sorry but last Sunday we printed the list of graduands honoured by the Mornington Womens Fellowship at their November meeting **without the photos** taken at the happy occasion. Here are two of them.



In the group photo
(from left) are:

Rhiannon Cooper, Tekiteki Veikoso, Fiona Cannon, Harrison Freeth, Christina Weston. Absent on the day were: Amy Jones and Heather Rhodes.

Photo 2 shows soloist Rhiannon Cooper with the flowers given to her after singing beautifully.





STORY FROM THE MISSION

Ōtepoti YTH

One of the rakitahi who came from a whānau where violence and neglect was common arrived at Ōtepoti YTH in the clothes they were wearing and their school uniform. It was a relief for this rakitahi to have a safe, warm and supportive place to stay. It is always difficult for rakitahi to manage their feelings, emotions and self-regulation when they have experienced violence and traumatic events during their life, just always being on high alert and in survival mode. So with consistent supports at the house, skilled external counselling, and time this rakitahi was able to complete their training course, work on their emotional wellbeing where they are able to have a plan and some self-management skills for when things happen that upset them. This rakitahi's caring and nurturing towards others side had an opportunity to develop and flourish – developing positive relationships with other rakitahi at the house and on their course. Their ability now to start to see a positive outlook for themselves. Having completed their course, they have now got themselves seasonal employment. A really positive outcome and a positive future for this rakitahi who now sees and values their own abilities, skills and having control of their life.

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



WAITING2020

When I hear the ancient cadences of the nativity story, my mind luxuriates in the beauty of the archaic language form, the poetry, the (seeming) romanticism, and the familiarity of the narrative. I have these idealised images of babies, donkeys, snowy nights, stars in a velvety midnight blue sky, a cosy stable, animals etc. the stuff of Walt Disney movies. Taking the story to a more contextualised place, for me, requires a conscious shift in my thinking, feeling and perception, helping me block out the more superficial aspects of the season and reflect on the message that sits behind those 'christmas card' images.

As Rev David has reminded us, Advent is about waiting. Waiting for an event of deep importance. Pregnancy and birth are challenging even today, but in biblical times infant/maternal mortality rates would have been appalling, so it would have been an event fraught with the usual dangers of pregnancy and child birth in that time. The weeks leading up to Jesus's birth are as significant as the actual birth for, without this waiting time there could be no birth to celebrate. Leaping to the events of Christmas day deprives us of the opportunity to reflect on the riskiness of those eventful weeks and what that might mean for us in 2020.

Any pregnant woman will tell you that the experience of 'waiting' for the birth can seem interminable, especially if plagued with morning sickness etc. Waiting patiently for something truly significant is not easy, and for Mary this pregnancy was significant with a capital S.....Her first pregnancy, and with the paternity in question. What a tumultuous time this must have been for her. I wonder if her visit to cousin Elizabeth was to escape the wagging tongues and village gossip. It must have been such

a relief to have the sympathetic ear of her pregnant cousin and be able to share their common experience and compare baby bumps. However one can only guess at the all the discomforts and issues surrounding this particular pregnancy.

The Luke nativity text states 'She brought forth her first born son'. Matthew simply announces the birth. Sitting behind those bald declarations is a process fraught with danger to both mother and baby. We are not told any detail, (perhaps because biblical texts were written by men, and women's issues were of no interest or significance) but all must have gone well. It is a constant source of amazement to me that any baby survives the birthing process given the potential for disaster, miraculous though it is.

Geopolitically these were anxious times for the people of Judea. Their country was under occupation, and herein lay potential difficulties for the little family. A census had been ordered by the authorities so Mary and Joseph were obliged to travel to their home town to register. This meant a donkey ride along bandit-ridden routes. Imagine being heavily pregnant sitting on a donkey, bumping along, exposed to the elements, then trying to find accommodation having reached your destination. I guess even a smelly stable full of animals (doing what animals do!!) would be a welcome sight, but hardly the ideal place to give birth. Mary's pregnancy was an intensely human event with a significant difference. This baby's birth and life would deeply influence the course of history, and the lives of countless individuals.

For us, this advent season comes at the end of a very disrupted year. Uncertainty and upheaval have affected us all. Separation, economic and employment uncertainty, and health concerns to name a few, has been our lot. For some depression and isolation have been all too real. It would be easy to be cynical and dismissive of Christmas, especially this year, but the Nativity story is the counterpoint to the years events. It feels like we too are waiting. Waiting for this pandemic to be over so we can get on

with the stuff of living 'normal' lives. We have been fortunate compared with other countries but we are probably only a couple of 'slip ups' away from another bout of restrictions. Unemployment and poverty issues have been exacerbated and travel limitations continue. So we wait. Sometimes with impatience, sometimes with good grace. But wait we must.

The birth of every infant, the creation of new life in all its forms, is a reminder of God's creative energy. (Who or whatever you deem God to be.) It is Her resounding affirmation of the intrinsic goodness embodied in all creation and the possibilities contained therein. In spite of our often mindless behaviour and destructive tendencies, hope undergirds all. Not a superficial kind of hope, but a steadfast hope, deeply held and grounded in the fundamental goodness of creation.

Advent is the beginning of a new church year. We look back at the events of the past months with a mixture of relief, possibly some regrets, maybe sadness, perhaps joy, but do we look forward with hopeful anticipation to the coming year? It will not miraculously be Covid-free. Problems and difficulties will still be with us, but let's be mindful that whatever the year brings

'We are not alone, we live in God's world.-.who has created and is creating, who has come in Jesus, the Word made flesh, to reconcile, and make new'.

This is the hope of Christmas.

Trish Patrick.