

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

14th March 2021

WORSHIP FOR SUNDAY 21st March 2021

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

DATES TO REMEMBER

Wed 17 th March	7.30 pm	Open Education	Mornington church
Sun 28 th March	4.30 pm	Explorers	Mornington Church
Fri 2 nd April		Walking the Cross	

A RARE OPPORTUNITY - OPEN EDUCATION 2021 begins with a presentation by Dr Najib Nafraie, former Foreign Minister of the Afghan Government, now resident in Dunedin, in which we learn at first hand of the challenges confronting modern Islam as (like our own faith) it faces the 'new normal' world. Don't miss this chance to listen and ask questions of a leader in a community still reeling from the mosque attacks in Christchurch. The Royal Commission report on those attacks has just been published, providing another point of interest. Come along to the Mornington Methodist church, Galloway Street, on Wednesday 17 March at 7.30pm and bring a friend; spread the news. A koha of \$5 will help us cover costs.

QUIET DAYS FOR SPIRITUAL RETREATS - You are invited to a quiet time apart with God in the lovely environment of St Margaret's Anglican Church, 4 Seaview Terrace, Brighton. A brief sharing at beginning and end, then a silent time. You use the time and facilities as best work for you. Bring your own lunch. A koha is appreciated.

Friday March 26, April 23, June 25, July 23, August 27 and October 22. You must register: contact Maureen Harley (021) 107 1401 or (03) 456 0573 or maugernz@gmail.com.

CALLING ALL EXPLORERS - Our first meeting for the year will be held in the Mornington Methodist church lounge, Galloway Street on Sunday 28th March, from 4.30 to 5.30pm. An opportunity to air and share our individual theological grumbles, groans and grouches gracefully. Try us, if you are doing some thinking about your own faith or the state of the world. We are an up-front, friendly bunch, our conversations are informal and we welcome all comers and all shades of opinion. And bring a friend.

GOOD FRIDAY EVENT - 2nd April Good Friday walking the cross between the Mornington Churches. Starting with Catholics; then Presbyterians; then Methodists; and ending with Anglicans. *Rod.*

PARISH WEBSITE



Dunedin Methodist Parish Website

<http://www.dunedinmethodist.org.nz/>

Our website has recently been up-dated, especially with information about our churches and the contact details for David Poultney. This is where you can read and download copies of the Parish Bulletin (News), re-read Connections articles (Articles), and find details of up-coming events (Events). Some recent photos kindly supplied by Greg Hughson have been added to the Photo galleries.

Our website has the potential to archive and record our parish activities for posterity, so if you have any photos of your church activities to add to the website, please email them to me; maryt@actrix.co.nz

Thanks, Mary Thompson

LENTEN STUDIES - Each THURSDAY @ 2pm at 40 Forth Street, Mosgiel. All very welcome PLEASE COME TO SUPPORT DAVID as he puts a lot of effort into our studies which helps us to centre on EASTER.

FAITH THINKING EVENT

Seeing Jesus as a Victim of Sexual Abuse: Biblical, Pastoral, and Theological Perspectives. Professor David Tombs, Centre for Theology and Public Issues, Theology Programme, University of Otago. Friday 26 March, 7:00-9:00pm and Saturday 27 March, 9:00am- 12.30pm, The Gathering Area, Knox Church, 449, George Street, Dunedin

This Course costs \$20. Numbers for this course are limited to 40. Faith Thinking courses are jointly organised between the Theology Programme and some Dunedin Churches, and supported by Continuing Education at the University of Otago. To enrol go to: <https://www.otago.ac.nz/continuingeducation/index.html>



STORIES FROM THE MISSION

Ōtepoti YTH

One of the rakatahi has recently transitioned successfully into independent accommodation. He was living at the family home but when he let his family know he was Transgender, they struggled to understand and told him to leave home.

This young rakatahi came to Ōtepōti YTH shy, anxious and apprehensive. His journey while at the Transition house has been transformative for him. He has found staff and other rakatahi who support and engage with him as an amazing young person. He has transformed into a confident and happy rakatahi who knows who he is,

and has developed a wide range of support networks and supportive friends. He has taught staff about differing gender identities and widened their understanding of all peoples. When he felt ready and confident enough to move into independent living accommodation, he found a very nice place. He left the house to a lot of tears and hugs with residents and staff and thanked everyone for help and support he had while at the house saying that he would remember this time with us all for the rest of his life.

Corrections Intensive Literacy and Numeracy

Classes at OCF have been running smoothly as the learners settle into their learning. There are always things going on for all the men, so having them come to class and be able to put their heads down and focus on education is a real credit to them. There is a full pre-release class at present and have been really encouraged to see these men, in particular, set future goals for themselves and actively engage in conversations regarding services that are available to them and what community support is out there.

Finding accommodation is pretty difficult for a lot of them, but they are all actively trying to do what they can through corrections to get themselves sorted. It is such an exciting and anxious time for them, so all the support they receive through the Pre-release programme is well received.

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



I suppose that many of us have driven through the Town Belt, and enjoyed the rich greenery crowding both sides of the road. Have you

ever thought of it as one of nature's *life rafts*, this small pocket of native bush and its entourage of insects, slowly sinking in an ocean of concrete buildings and lifeless tar-sealed roads—or elsewhere in a sea of pasture land? That's how Anthony Harris, Honorary Curator at Dunedin's Museum sees it. Harris, one of New Zealand's most distinguished scientists, holds a life-long interest in insects, and he is horrified by what he and many others regard as a catastrophic world-wide decline in insect and other forms of life brought about by pesticide-based agriculture, the destructive clearance of natural habitats, and other planetary ills—for which we humans are almost entirely responsible.

In a recent contribution to the Otago Daily Times Saturday magazine he laments the destruction of yet another area of beautiful native forest, 'converted' to intensive dairy farming, and with it the extinction of one more of New Zealand's shrinking range of unique life forms. What struck me was his horror at the implications of what we are doing to our planet and our own life-support systems. He says, 'Insects keep the global ecosystem rolling down the highway of life. They may be less the canary in the global mine and more the linchpin that is falling out of the world's axle and will cause the whole bus, with everybody and everything aboard, to suddenly lurch and crash in a spray of sparks and a cacophony of metal grinding on chip seal. *Without insects, we face total ecological collapse and global famine.* It is being called the Sixth Mass Extinction. The Fifth Mass Extinction was the one that killed off the dinosaurs, 66 million years ago.' A fellow Harvard entomologist has reckoned that without insects and other land-based invertebrates, humanity would only last a few months. 'Land-based plants and animals would be next to go. The planet would fall quiet and still.'

Should this bother us? It should—and deeply—both as human beings and as people of faith. Don't we see this created world as sacred, as an intimately *connected* whole of infinite value, a little universe forever united in singing a hymn of cosmic praise to a loving God? Yet what are we and our greedy commercial culture doing to Earth and its life forms?

Listen to Anthony Harris again. 'Our culture, religion and laws are mostly anthropomorphic (centred on humanity's interests). . . Yet modern science provides irrefutable evidence that all species are related, and likely are of much the same value, the various species fitting together within ecosystems in a state of mutual dependence. . . As a biological species ourselves, we humans depend on the integrity of the environment and its constituent species for our survival. . . Other species, as well as ecosystems, must be recognised as having great intrinsic worth, being valued entirely for themselves, regardless of any benefits they may give (whether dead or alive) to humans. . . *Only by looking at the world through such a bio-centric lens will we see the colossal harm and destruction we are causing to ourselves and other life forms, and strive to stem this relentless lethal ruination, to save the planet.*

Harris's 'bio-centric lens' ought to be the glass through which we, as a community of faith, see the other inhabitants of the Earth. Let there be an end to the Genesis proclamation that we enjoy a God-given power over the fish, the birds and all animals—including Anthony Harris' precious insects. Rather let us take a leaf out of the Buddhists' book and learn to respect and value *all* forms of life. After all, so far as we know it is only on this tiny planet in a small corner of the cosmos that what we call nature has been able to establish itself and thrive. And here we are, 1% of the total bio-mass on Earth, absurdly, arrogantly, ignorantly, foolishly laying waste to all around us. Heaven help us if it takes a world-wide pandemic (Nature's revenge?) to remind us of our frailty.

Colin Gibson