

DUNEDIN METHODIST PARISH

Finding Good in everyone Finding God in everyone

www.dunedinmethodist.org.nz



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PARISH BULLETIN

11th April 2021

WORSHIP FOR SUNDAY 18th April 2021

9.30 am	Mornington	R Mitchell
10.00 am	Mosgiel	D Poultney
11.00 am	Glenaven	G Davis
	St Kilda	TBA

DATES TO REMEMBER

Sun 11th April, 2.30 pm, Dn Interfaith Council mtg
 Sun 18th April, Harvest Festival - Mosgiel
 Wed 21st April, 7.30 pm, Open Education - Mornington

DUNEDIN INTERFAITH COUNCIL MONTHLY MEETING THIS AFTERNOON

- The April meeting of the Dunedin Interfaith Council will be held at 2.30pm-4pm this afternoon Sunday 11 April at the Dhargyey Buddhist Centre, 22 Royal Terrace. The spiritual theme for reflections will be 'Patience'. Everyone is welcome. Please bring a small contribution (vegetarian) towards afternoon tea.

SUNDAY 18TH APRIL will be the Harvest Festival / Autumn service at Mosgiel. You are encouraged to bring produce to give to the Food Bank.

SUNDAY 18TH APRIL. On the Preaching plan the worship leader at Glenaven had been left as TBA, the service will be taken by George Davis.

FAITH THINKING

On Wednesday April 14, 7:00 - 8:15pm we are offering a Free "Faith Thinking on Zoom" session: "A case study of an evangelical congregation that has coped in a creative way with the challenge of LGBTQ+ issues" by Rev Dr Lynne Baab, Author and Former Jack Somerville Senior Lecturer in Pastoral Theology, Theology Programme, University of Otago.

Some further details: An evangelical congregation in Seattle wanted to welcome LGBTQ+ people as well as make space for members who hold a conservative interpretation of the Bible on that topic. Through a congregational discernment process, God led them to a unique policy. Lynne Baab, a member of that church who has lived for more than a decade in New Zealand, explains how this model works.

To register go here:

<https://www.otago.ac.nz/continuingeducation/index.html> and click on "Register online". Note - the session is free but you need to register so that we can email you the Zoom link (which will be sent to you, along with instructions).

Going Deeper into 1 Corinthians with Professor Paul Trebilco, Theology Programme, University of Otago. 7-9pm, Thursday May 6, 13, 20. Burns 7. This Course costs \$20. To enrol please go to:

<https://www.otago.ac.nz/continuingeducation/index.html>

Faith Thinking courses are jointly organised between the Theology Programme and some Dunedin Churches, and supported by Continuing Education at the University of Otago.

OPEN LECTURE - Centre for Theology and Public Issues, Theology Programme, University of Otago,

Faith Leadership in extraordinary times, by Chris Clarke, CEO, Wilberforce Foundation. Thurs April 22, 5.15-6.30pm, Archway 2

All welcome

OPEN EDUCATION: THE HEALTH SYSTEM

On Wednesday April 21 at 7.30pm we welcome a special Open Education guest, The Right Honourable David Clark, former Minister for Health and Minister for Commerce in the present Government. I have asked David to talk to us about his experiences and learnings leading the Department of Health over a period of two years. Is the system 'broken' as its critics claim? What are its strengths, its weaknesses, its achievements and its big problems? We are on the verge of hearing of major reforms to be announced by the new Minister, Andrew Little. As the criticisms and complaints fly, is there a way ahead to address the huge challenges posed by Covid, staff shortages, funding problems and the clamour over mental and physical health shortcomings in the present system? Can any health system lay claim to showing the kindness to others our Prime Minister has set as a principle value for our society?

Don't miss this opportunity to be informed and to put questions in a moderate church environment. You are asked for a koha of \$5, with any profits to go to a designated charity.

THE EASTER SERVICE AT MORNINGTON was doubly blessed as RHIANNON COOPER and her partner SCOTT BIZET sang George F Handel's "I know that my redeemer liveth" as a duet. They are a splendidly matched pair and their positioning just under the pitched roof beside the grand piano projected their voices in powerful harmony. And thanks to Colin for the sensitive accompaniment. The congregation would gladly support their return to augment our equally splendid choir (but not to replace it!)

(Rhiannon is working on her Masters in the Music Dept at O.U. while Scott is also doing Masters, but in Classics. Good wishes to them both for the busy and demanding year ahead.) KR





LIVING LIFE FROM INSIDE OUT

Easter for this year is behind us, although many say Easter should last all year. How did we celebrate this most important Christian Festival? Cultural pressures and local events might have influenced the way we spent our time over this extended weekend. Maybe the entertainment and the commercial life has been attractive to us, or it was a chance for a few days away, or a must-see sporting event? The way we fill in our time is our choice.

There is ever more pressure coming from the commercial world to extend the shopping hours over Easter! Who really wants that? We are not shopaholics.

The name of our Christian festival, 'Easter,' came from a bygone culture when the early Christians decided to take over the pagan festival of 'Eoster', the celebration of coming of Spring. (Northern Hemisphere remember)

Now, as modern-day Christians, how do we see ourselves as followers of Christ, the man who had more influence on culture, on the way we live, than any other person, before and since? As Christians, Jesus Christ is central to our understanding of God and hence ourselves and the world we live in. Jesus Christ was and is the exemplar of spirituality.

Before the coming of Jesus there was no clear expression of the Spirit. In the Hebrew Books the name "Ruark", conjured up for the people a picture of the powerful energy of God in the world. God's breath created, inspired, gave leadership, empowered, revealed. To the

prophets, Jesus coming as the Messiah, was anointed with God's Spirit. We, today are also anointed with God's Spirit.

Many early cultures believed there was a 'great spirit' or a number of spirits that led them and the people did not want to offend the spirits. They would often, through their wise man or witch doctor seek permission to cut down a tree or cultivate the land, fearing they would be encroaching on the spirit/s habitat, in a special tree or on a hill, on a mountain top or a cave. Some 'primitive' peoples still believe and worship the spirits. We have moved a long way, our worship/religion has, like most of life, evolved to what most, believe its peak. I think it is, like us, still evolving.

Thomas Keating, theologian and writer, realized that in order to contribute positively to the way of the world we each need to be on a personal spiritual journey. He wrote, "We live lives in relation to a false self, the self that is created and conferred on us by culture."

Theologian Frederick Buechner put it another way, "We live our lives from outside in, rather than from inside out."

There is much in that idea, but realistically aren't our lives shaped, primarily by outside influences? 'We are creatures of our culture,' is often said. Culture changes over time and we change along with it, adding our piece in our own small way but not often giving much thought to the direction we are heading. If there is something in our culture, we don't like we can attempt to change it, but before we can do that, we need a radical change within ourselves, a spiritual change perhaps.

Another way of putting it is, 'clean out the garbage that culture has pumped into us in order that we can give back better.'

The Easter Jesus challenges us to a change of heart – to move on living our lives from the inside out.

Our big challenge today is to be exemplars of Christian values, to live out that which we have been taught and that which we preach – the teachings of Jesus Christ - to live in the spirit. Can we be spiritual people? Spirituality transcends normal experiences

“Be Kind.” Those words from our Prime Minister, during the deeper times of the pandemic, is how we should always live.

A spiritual person is a kind person, as a follower of Jesus we cannot be anything else but kind, towards ourselves, towards others, towards all creatures, towards our planet and the whole of the universe.

As Christian and/or spiritually religious people, let kindness be your guiding light. Recognize that we all have the spark of love that is God within us, and learn to honour that love so that we live our lives from the inside out.

Gordon Abernethy 11.4.21