

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

20 August 2023

WORSHIP FOR SUNDAY

27 August 2023

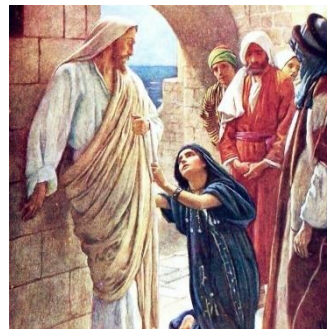
9.30 am	Mornington	D Phillipps
10:00 am	Mosgiel	G Davis
11:00 am	Glenaven	D Phillipps

MORNINGTON METHODIST WOMEN'S FELLOWSHIP MEETING.

All church members and friends are invited to our afternoon of Fellowship on Wednesday 23rd August, at 2pm in the Church Lounge.

Our guest speaker will be Greg Hughson who will present on his hobby Photography; with pictures of his recent travels and adventures.

We look forward to you all joining us for this sociable afternoon.



Negotiating With “The Other”

By Rev Susan Hamel

The reading from Matthew today reminded me of something I’ve been wanting to talk about for a while—the meaning of othering. The “other”, as a concept in opposition to the “self”, was first written about by the German philosopher Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel (1770-1831) and later greatly expanded upon by other philosophers, social critics, and psychologists. Today the Oxford Dictionary defines “othering” as *a process whereby individuals and groups are treated and marked as different and inferior from the dominant social group.*

But what does othering have to do with Matthew?

The Canaanite woman cries out to Jesus for help. He brusquely ignores her, and the disciples want him to send her away. Finally, he says to her, “I was sent only to the lost sheep of the house of Israel.” When she begs him, on her knees, for help, he all but calls her a dog!

While this is all very in keeping with Matthew, which was written for a Jewish community, to my eyes it seems very difficult to

reconcile with what I believe about a loving Jesus. The Canaanites were traditional enemies of the Jews—they were “the other,” marked as inferior, certainly not worth saving. So, Jesus is doing nothing wrong according to the traditions of that time, though he has ignored and insulted a person who humbly asked for his help. And yet such is her love and faith that she persists in her entreaties, and Jesus *changes his mind!* He now sees her differently. Not as someone lesser, but as someone to be admired, loved, and included. He marvels at her faith and heals her daughter.

Far too often our traditions train us to treat the “other” with fear and to regard “them” as “dirty” and “less than” who “we” are. Fearful tradition-keepers in any age are concerned that interaction with the “other” will pollute and confuse their understanding of who they are. Even we, as a church, consider ourselves different (superior?) to Jews, Muslims or even Baptists, though we all claim to worship the very same God.

It is easy to ignore, to humiliate, to send away. Even Jesus, steeped in the traditions of his people, is guilty of it. I am also guilty. I see people who look different, act different, sound different and I judge them. As a light-skinned European, I am part of the dominant social group of this country. It’s an easy place to be—there is no challenge in going with the flow of popular judgment. But I, like Jesus, am trying to change, to break out of the traditional hierarchy of colonialism; to, as the Quakers say, find that of God in every person. Because our survival as a species very much depends on our ability to respect and care for all the other living beings on this planet and our survival as church means we must be inclusive—no more othering!