



# Dunedin Methodist Parish

*Finding in everyone Finding God in everyone*

[www.dunedinmethodist.org.nz](http://www.dunedinmethodist.org.nz)

<b>Presbyter:</b>	Rev. Siosifa Pole	455 2923
<b>Parish Stewards:</b>	Dr George Davis	453 6540
	Dr Richard Cannon	477 5030
	Mrs Fay Richardson	489 5485
<b>Tongan Steward:</b>	Mr Palanite Taungapeau	456 3144
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## PARISH BULLETIN

**15<sup>th</sup> May 2011**

### WORSHIP FOR SUNDAY 22<sup>nd</sup> May 2011

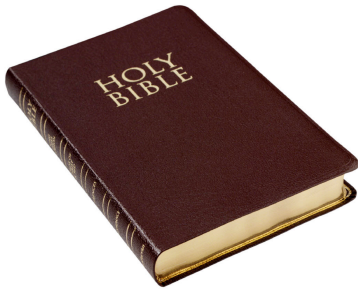
9.30am	Mornington	Y@M
9.30 am	Mosgiel	S Pole
11.00 am	Glenaven	Y@M
11.00 am	Wesley	S Pole
1.00pm	St Kilda	A Ikahihifo
6.00pm	Broad Bay	No Service

### OPEN EDUCATION: BEETHOVEN'S MUSIC FOR THE CHURCH

On Wednesday May 18 at 7.30pm in the Mornington Methodist Church, Galloway Street, Colin Gibson will give an illustrated talk on Beethoven's religious music, as part of the Methodist Parish Open Education programme. Beethoven was an astonishing composer in all that he did: his Solemn Mass and Ninth (Choral) Symphony are among the masterpieces of Western music. The charge of \$5 includes a light supper. As usual, a pre-talk meal will be catered by Judy Russell at a charge of \$15; book at the Mornington Church or with Judy (455 3727). This is the fourth in a popular series which has included Vivaldi, Bach, Handel and Mozart.



*Beethoven*



### **HOME GROUP BIBLE STUDY**

Tuesday 17<sup>th</sup> May at 7.30 pm at the home of Dot and Ian Pearce.

“How can I know what God wants me to do” Study no. 3 (Investigate your options)

Tel. Ian..453 6312 or Geoff..473 0193

### **SPIRITUALITY AND ART;**

A discussion of the recent Evolve Art Award and the links between art and spirituality in 21<sup>st</sup> century New Zealand.

7.30pm Tuesday 17<sup>th</sup> May in the Mornington Methodist Church lounge.

### **UNIVERSITY OF OTAGO OPEN LECTURE**

**Friendship in the Facebook Age: A Christian Perspective** by Lynne Baab, Department of Theology and Religion, University of Otago.

Burns Lecture Theatre 1, University of Otago campus.

**Wednesday 25 May, 5:15 pm**

### **MISSION BRIEFING ON THE GOVERNMENT BUDGET**

**7.30pm Monday 23<sup>rd</sup> May**

Bill English presents his second budget on Thursday 19<sup>th</sup> May. He is already promising cuts and tightening of Government expenditure across a range of social and educational programmes. Come and hear about the impact of the budget as the Mission sees it: Lockerbie St entrance, Middleton Road Community Centre.

Please RSVP to Sarah on 466 4600 or [sarahc@dmm.org.nz](mailto:sarahc@dmm.org.nz).



## PARISH PART-TIME MINISTRY POSITION

Rev Ken Russell has received a letter from the Pastoral Committee confirming their original decision that it does not agree to him being part of the Ministry Team in the Dunedin Methodist Parish. The Parish Council will be meeting in the near future to discuss the implications of this decision for Ministry in the Parish.

## YOUTH SERVICES COMING UP – GENESIS: TROUBLE IN THE KINDY

Over the next two weeks [Y@M](#) (Youth at Mornington) will be leading the service at the following venues:

Next Sunday (22 May): 9.30 am at Mornington and 11.00 am at Glenaven

Sunday 29 May: 9.30 am at Mosgiel and 11.00 am at Wesley

The service is based on the first ten chapters of Genesis and explores some of the strange goings on in the stories of the beginning of things. It will be a bit different - so come along get a fresh look at some of these old stories.

**A LITTLE JAPANESE TEA CEREMONY** - if you have not already done so, check out ( again) Elizabeth Brooke-Carr's marvellous article reprinted from *Connections* in the current edition of TOUCHSTONE. Elizabeth writes beautifully and perceptively, and its good to see the quality of her work being recognised in our Church newspaper.

## THANKS

Joan Robertson sends her thanks for the many kind greetings and good wishes from her church friends. Tests are ongoing so no progress report yet.



**HAPPY BIRTHDAY** to the following children who are celebrating a Birthday:

19<sup>th</sup> May – Mia Pienaar

21<sup>st</sup> May – David Cannon



Is the Methodist Church a liberal church?

I most certainly hope so! Note the vociferous response ! A leading layman in our Church in central Auckland, once described me as “the quintessential liberal.” I was not sure at the time whether to receive the label as a compliment or a veiled criticism, that put into a situation where fair and balanced judgment between competing points of view were at stake, faith or reason, social or evangelical, I was so single minded in my passion for liberal interests that I had little capacity to see any other point of view.

Perhaps, having in mind the recent turn of events touching the ministry of this Parish, the jury is still out on that question.

My mind has been turned to this question in recent weeks, first by the experience to which I referred in last Sunday’s sermon, being invited by a fellow parishioner to grant him absolution in the name of Jesus, an invitation that it may reasonably be argued should not have come as a shock given my fifty years in the ordained ministry of the Church. Yet it did. Coming out of the protestant tradition such an invitation has never remotely been expected as “all in a day’s work,” especially coming from one who I had assumed was a fellow liberal. Rather too hastily I needed to re-examine the assumption that a liberal is one who has cast off, or outgrown, the need to grant, or receive absolution - which for him he defined as the restoration of a personal relationship with Jesus. It was for me a double-take. If it was good enough for my friend to dip deeply into his twenty years of immersion in Roman Catholicism, surely it was equally good enough for me to recall there was a time when wholeheartedly I stood as a Billy Graham counselor to represent a Jesus who was alive and available to grant the remission of sins to anyone who earnestly sought it.

The second prompting has come from following correspondence in Touchstone, and the passionate response of Silvia Purdie to those liberals who wrote critically of her “reversion” to the more evangelical experience of the once liberal faith she knew in younger years. I knew and appreciated Silvia as a switched on, up-front co-ordinator of Methodist youth, prominent in Conference affairs, a motivator and enthuser of young people, and never afraid to raise her voice for traditional liberal concerns for peace and social justice.. I knew something of her family heritage. Her father. Ernie Crane, was one of many liberal mentors who enriched me in Methodism,

It comes then as something of a surprise to me, and doubtless other Methodists of the era in our Church life to which I have referred, that Silvia has emerged from the pages of Touchstone, now a Presbyterian Minister in the Foxton-Shannon Co-Operating Parish, as an advocate for a passionate evangelical experience.. She writes in the May Touchstone (p.4) of being hurt by the Church - not alone in that, I suspect - but in the intervening years ( where and how I do not know) of growing into the realization that there was an aridity in her liberal inheritance, and she yearned to embrace something more, and I for one need to record my appreciation of her witness.

Silvia may now wish to renounce the word “liberal” but I trust she will not. What I do sense in her latest letter is a timely reminder to the rest of us liberals that to be both liberal and evangelical in the best sense of both words is not a contradiction in terms.

With Pentecost only a week or two away, we liberals should not be looking at semantics to rationalize, or somehow explain away the testimony of the likes of Silvia Purdie, “I need not just the moral teaching of a man (from) 2000 years ago. I need his Spirit . . . in my heart, and mind, and bloodstream.” Yes, Silvia, you speak to us all. The evangelical, heart-warming intensely personal dimension of the gospel, our relationship with the living Jesus, is not something any liberal can abandon without the loss of the fragrance and integrity that moved both Paul, Martin Luther , John Wesley and so many other pioneers of faith..

We are all indebted to Christchurch Methodist theologian Jim Stuart for his recent book “The Wesley Code.” Stuart has no problem marrying the evangelical with the liberal in bringing Wesley into the 21<sup>st</sup> century, indeed in a short essay in 2008 on the liberal theological tradition he summarises

the seven tenets of liberal faith, first of which is that *the liberal theological tradition is evangelical in spirit*.

We should abandon some of the fixed notions we Church people have of one another, liberals of evangelicals, evangelicals of liberals. Many of them are prejudices, outworn stereotypes that simply do not stand the scrutiny of Jesus.

I'll close this little piece with a remarkable insight, again from Jim Stuart. Describing his decision to leave his role in theological education in the US and come to Auckland to take up a new opportunity there, he says  
*"At the time, I wasn't sure what the outcome would be but I became more conscious of how central the metaphor of the journey is to the Christian faith. Christians are people on a journey leaving behind the past and entering an unknown future . . . . . Francis Asbury's advice to the Methodist circuit riders – advice which he had first received from John Wesley – came to mind again and again, 'Sit loose in the saddle'. If the Christian faith is a journey from the old into the new, from the past into the future, I wondered why Christians often settled for a comfortable pew, locking faith into confessions and creeds and asking for certainty rather than looking for the surprises of God's grace. The words of the old negro spiritual ran through my head, 'People get ready, there's a train a-coming, you don't need no luggage, just get on board, all you need is faith to hear the diesels running, you don't need no ticket, you just thank the Lord.' I had sung that song many times before as I marched through the streets of Philadelphia in the civil rights struggles. Now it took on a new meaning. I was on a new journey of faith."*

*Ken Russell*



