



Dunedin Methodist Parish

Finding Good in everyone Finding God in everyone

www.dunedinmethodist.org.nz

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PARISH BULLETIN

26th June 2011

WORSHIP FOR SUNDAY 3 JULY 2011

9.30am	Mornington	S Pole
9.30 am	Mosgiel	K Russell
11.00 am	Glenaven	S Pole
11.00 am	Wesley	K Russell
1.00pm	St Kilda	Comb. Wesley
6.00pm	Broad Bay	K Russell

EXPLORERS GROUP

Meets Sunday 26th June at 4-30pm in the Mornington Church lounge.
All welcome.

DUNEDIN METHODIST PARISH WEBSITE – AN UPDATE

Take another look at our Dunedin Methodist Parish website at www.dunedinmethodist.org.nz and look under Recent News for the latest Parish Bulletin, under Latest Articles for sermons, Connections articles, or browse the photos. Joan was responsible for looking out for items, taking many of the photos and putting all this information on the web so it is another of her lasting legacies to us.

The website was developed by Blair Hughson (Core Development) and he is the webmaster and host of the site. Jenny Winter is the overall coordinator for the parish and now Mary Thompson (Mornington) will be the administrator that adds new information to the website.

To keep the website relevant and vibrant it needs contributions from parish members; articles, sermons, photos should be in electronic form and emailed to Mary Thompson at maryt@actrix.co.nz Please also make suggestions for other things you might like to see on the website.

ABOUT PEOPLE

The sympathy of the Parish is extended to both the family of Shirley Bulger on the death of her husband, Bruce Bulger, and also the family of Nancy Edwards for her death. Shirley is member of Mosgiel Methodist Church and Nancy Edwards was a member of Wesley Methodist Church

HAPPY BIRTHDAY

To Harrison Freeth who celebrates a birthday on 30th June.



GIFTS IN REMEMBRANCE OF JOAN ROBERTSON

Ian Robertson has given two books to Mornington Church in memory of Joan. They are: *50 Things to Make and Do* by Usborne; and *Back & Beyond, New Zealand Painting for the Young and Curious*, by Gregory O'Brian. These books will help us remember Joan's interest in art and her support of our children and youth.

OTAGO DISTRICT METHODIST WOMEN'S FELLOWSHIP ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Held at Wesley Methodist Church,
Saturday 9th July 2011



NOTE CHANGE OF DATE

10.30	Welcome
11.00	AGM
12.30	Lunch - finger food lunch Soup, tea/coffee provided
1.30	Speaker

Our Speaker will be Leanne McKinlay from Mosgiel. Helping in Christchurch.



THE BIBLE - from Creation to Noah, with still time for hymns, prayers, and an offering. And what's more, for some, all done and dusted inside the divinely ordained hour for the worship of Almighty God.

There is not a preacher or Bible scholar of any repute who would attempt such a thing lest they be accused of trivializing the solemn weight of holy writ.. two accounts of creation,... Adam and Eve in the garden of Eden,... Cain and Abel ...Noah and the flood ... and that most doubtful of all genealogies, the one most preachers of the Old Testament prefer to ignore, the murky connection that attributes the curse of Noah on Ham and his son Canaan on the dark skinned people of the African continent.

Yet such was the canvas on which the kids of Y@ M (Youth at Mornington) presented their dramatization to the Dunedin Parish over two Sundays May 22 & 29. Ambitious? Yes. Impertinent? Not by any means.

The significance of what these teens achieved was summed up by one member of the Glenaven congregation when he said that their presentation tackled issues that have puzzled adult Christians for generations, He was not wrong.

So, did they ask all the questions and give all the answers? Of course not. Neither do even the most exhaustive works of biblical scholarship. The last word is far from being written or spoken on the earliest books of the Bible covering a time sometimes referred to as pre-history, stories from the Hebrew tradition grappling with the elusive mysteries of beginnings, the emergence of human consciousness, and of moral imperatives.

What the younger members of our small Dunedin faith community did was to showcase the fact that a group of today's kids, learners in a scientific education system that pays scant regard to the relevance of the mythologies so inseparable from the traditional understanding of the Judeo-Christian faith, can approach controversial material in Genesis with eyes wide open, drawing their own conclusions in the sure knowledge that their findings will be welcomed and respected by the community of which they are an invaluable part.

It has not always been so, and indeed, in many strident authoritarian communities of today's Church, a presentation of the kind delivered with such exuberance by our youth would not be tolerated if for no better reason than that it challenged the fundamental thesis on which many of those communities are founded viz the inerrancy of all scripture as the inspired literal word of God

A quick examination of the script of the presentation confirms just how challenging was the dialogue in preceding weeks out of which their presentation came -

- an acknowledgement that the accounts of creation in Genesis 1 and 2 are in conflict, that analysis, comparison and rationalization are required of the serious bible student if a coherent theology of creation is to be held today
- an acceptance that many of the Bible's most important truths are conveyed through the vehicle of myth, of poetry, of story, conveying not dogma but fluid ideas and concepts, and requiring imagination and flexibility for contemporary understanding (Adam, Eve & the Snake) (Cain & Abel)
- an understanding that the Bible is not a book of one level, but is a multi-layered record of a nation's search for truth in God, ascending as it does to great heights of aspiration, but equally, descending to the depths of bigotry, prejudice and hate. (the curse of Canaan). While it is the duty of good religion to name its achievements, it is equally a duty to name its errors and admit its faults.

We should affirm our Y@M leader, Ginny Kitchingman, for the far-sighted leadership she brings to bear in pulling aside the shutters that make the Bible an impossible book for many young adults searching for a credible base for faith, and doing it with rare blend of candour and humour.

Earlier this month (June 12) our Superintendent, Siosifa, treated us to an invaluable insight into the genius of contemporary oceania theology. He instanced the contrast of rock and sand. In traditional theology rock has been the *good* - standing firm, immoveable, a sure foundation. By contrast sand has been the *bad*, a shifting foundation, unsure and unreliable. Siosifa offered a different perspective.....

....."sand from an Oceanic perspective symbolises flexibility, openness, tolerance, and acceptance. The Dictionary defines 'sand' as 'small loose grains of worn or disintegrated rock.' Although this definition still links sand to rock, it is in a different fashion. The nature of sand is losing and opening. These grains are not lying individually but collectively with open spaces. Their strength comes from their connectedness and their openness. When the big waves roll down onto the sands they sink quietly because they find spaces to enter, but when they reach the rock they produce violent noises and cruel confrontations."

Siosifa's point is well made. For a change, let the Church (and its youth) rest the Bible in the forgiving sands of Oceania, and see what riches, what treasure, can result for a generation where too much truth is lost in the mad smashing and hurtling of competing dogmas upon the hard and impenetrable rocks of fundamentalist religions.

Ken Russell