



Dunedin Methodist Parish

Finding Good in everyone Finding God in everyone

www.dunedinmethodist.org.nz

Presbyter:	Rev. Siosifa Pole	455 2923
Parish Stewards:	Dr George Davis	453 6540
	Dr Richard Cannon	477 5030
	Mrs Fay Richardson	489 5485
Tongan Steward:	Mr Palanite Taungapeau	456 3144
Parish Office:	Siosifa: parish@dmm.org.nz	466 4600
	Sarah: sarahc@dmm.org.nz	

PARISH BULLETIN

9th October 2011

WORSHIP FOR SUNDAY 16th OCTOBER 2011

9.30am	Mornington	K Russell
9.30 am	Mosgiel	S Pole
11.00 am	Glenaven	K Russell
11.00 am	Wesley	S Pole
1.00pm	St Kilda	TBA
4.00pm	Broad Bay	No Service

MORNINGTON METHODIST WOMEN'S FELLOWSHIP SPRING OUTING

This will be on Monday 10th October and we are going to visit Fuschia House at 5 Lees Street, Dunedin. Afternoon tea will be supplied and it will cost \$5.00 each. Transport will be organised nearer the time.

THE KRAZY KITCHEN UTENSILS MEAL AND CONCERTINO

The much-used Mornington Methodist kitchen needs a variety of kitchen utensils, so we're offering a Judy Russell three-course meal with entertainment, on Wednesday, 19 October, starting at 6pm, to raise the necessary dosh. Cost \$15 single, \$25 for a family. Ring Judy (455 3727) or sign in at Mornington. We need tongs, large and slotted serving spoons, an ice-cream scoop, jugs and basins, a fish slice, an egg beater (whisk), wooden spoons, a large saucepan and sharp kitchen knives. Any offers of new equipment welcome.

PF&R Committee Meeting Thursday 13th October, at the Mission, 7.30.

WESLEY LEADERS MEETING - To be held 18th October at 10.30am.

HAPPY BIRTHDAY to Amelia Meredith-Vaughan who celebrates a birthday on 10th October.

SYMPATHY

On behalf of Wesley Methodist Church and the wider Methodist parish, I would like to express our sympathy and condolences to the family of Meryl Dickson who passed away on the 1st of October 2011. Her funeral was held at the Gillions Funeral Services chapel on Wednesday 5th of October. Meryl was a much loved member of our wider Methodist parish. Thank you to Elaine Merrett for taking the service and the support of members from the wider parish.



Carter has been my hero ever since I shook his hand, and there he was on the front page of the ODT World Focus two Mondays ago, the same right hand waving benignly, his face wreathed in a friendly smile.

No, not Dan Carter, he of the admirable abs, the pristine jockeys and the damnable groin strain. Not him, though I confess to sharing to some degree the wave of national grief at the current state of the said groin, and the irony that an inch or two of ligament in a somewhat private crevice of the great pivot's anatomy, should in the minds of many of us be the difference between winning or failing in our long heralded quest to wrest the Rugby World Cup. Perish the grief. Fifteen other groins are in good shape, sufficient to guide us successfully to our rugby destiny!

My Carter hero probably knows nothing of rugby and cares even less. He's Jimmy Carter, the 39th President of the United States, and the sight of his 87-year-old hand displayed so prominently in the local paper prompted me to suggest to Judy I should cut out the picture and pin it in the toilet, repository for many other items of family memorabilia.

The hand of Jimmy Carter is the same hand that shook the hand of Ken Russell in September 1979 when I was one of some 400 guests at the White House on the occasion of the visit of the 4th Assembly of the World

Council on Religion and Peace. (I, the only New Zealander). The President, with Rosalynn, warmly greeted each one of us personally, ushered us into a large meeting room, ordered the reporters and the security out and the doors closed, and addressed us with remarkable candour on the daily frustrations he faced on being a practicing Christian in the office of President, and a would-be peacemaker as Commander in Chief of the world's most powerful military force. His unquestionable sincerity ensured 400 other would-be peacemakers from some 40 countries and some 13 different world faiths left the White House profoundly moved, convinced we had been given an unforgettable insight into the soul of a humble man for whom the enormous power of his office weighed heavy.

I have lost count of the number of Americans I have heard deliver their verdict on Jimmy Carter as the worst President of the post-war years. That assessment is based on a number of rationales, some more credible than others that he failed to win a second term; that he failed to order the bombing of Teheran when Islamist militants occupied the US Embassy; that his attempt to rescue embassy staff held hostage failed dismally with the deaths of 8 US soldiers when a helicopter went down in a sandstorm. There are others, but his unforgivable failure in the eyes of Americans at the time, and since, was that he was perceived as weak. Yet, despite an avalanche of international acclaim for the former peanut farmer from Plains, Georgia, evidence out of America continues to suggest his motives are regularly questioned, and his role as a roving ambassador for justice and reconciliation in many corners of the earth is ridiculed.

In fact, the perspective of thirty years paints the achievements of Jimmy Carter with a lustre that none of the other "stronger" occupants of the White House can emulate. He kept his country at peace. Not a bomb was dropped on America's enemies during his term. He kept Israel and Egypt at the negotiating table for 13 days for the Camp David Accords, one of only two peace treaties Israel has ever signed. He was the first to normalize relations with China, and formed a working relationship with the Soviet Union. Through the Panama Canal Treaty he established a basis of friendship and trust in the region to the benefit of succeeding generations. And as for his subsequent role as humanitarian, benefactor, peace-maker, and advocate on behalf of some of the world's most oppressed and poverty-stricken people, his name outside the borders of America is legendary, some say to be spoken in the same breath as Ghandi and Nelson Mandela.

Inevitably comparisons are being drawn with Barack Obama. supposedly a lame duck president dogged by the same weaknesses that

bedeviled Carter. The phrase the *Carter Syndrome* is being increasingly used to disparage Obama's failure to implement many of the campaign promises that rolled him into office. The ODT article quoted a prominent writer from the American scene, Walter Russell Mead "the conflicting impulses influencing how this young leader thinks about the world threaten to tear his presidency apart, and in the worst scenario turn him into a new Jimmy Carter." He went on to list "scattered ambitions, his lack of grand vision, his outsider's discomfort with the ways of Washington, his fumbling economic policies, and above all, his supposed lack of toughness."

I was one who followed the progress of the 2008 election that saw Mr Obama elected, and I entered emotionally into the world-wide euphoria at his success. Indeed, on more than one occasion I wrote of it in these columns. Now, almost 3 years later I have to acknowledge that along with millions of others I have experienced repeated disappointment. Despite the enormous power and influence of his office he has not been the peace President he vowed to be; America's dirty wars continue; the would-be champion of the rights of Palestine has been all too silent; he has not taxed the rich for the benefit of the poor; he has made little difference to the appalling privileges enjoyed by the high priests of the banking industry; and far from changing the culture of Washington, he has been overwhelmed by it.

But realistically what could I have expected? I have many a time thought back to the illuminating heart-to-heart to which this lone New Zealander was privy in the White House 32 yrs ago, and were I and several hundred other would-be peacemakers given a presidential audience today, would Barack Obama corral us together as did Jimmy Carter, and plead with us to understand the impossibility for any man of liberal, reconciling convictions being able to make progress on his political dreams. Does this make him the lame-duck his critics insist he is - or is it something deeper, an indictment of the capitalist military coalition that continues to be the reality that determines the way that America is, whether under Democratic or Republican leadership?

Are the critics right, that Barack Obama, like Jimmy Carter before him, should never have stood for the presidency, and the people of America should not have been so naïve as to elect him?

I trust that is not the longer-term judgment of history, but I fear it may be. As for the *Carter Syndrome*, Barack Obama has a long way to go before he can claim the same mantle of peace maker, of a president morally strong enough to resist the myriad of daily expectations that he act and legislate with the same bullying authority of his predecessors in office.

Ken Russell