



# Dunedin Methodist Parish

*Finding Good 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 Hilda Hughson	487 6226
<b>Tongan Steward:</b>	Mr Kaufusi Pole	455 0096
<b>Parish Office:</b>	Siosifa: <a href="mailto:parish@dmm.org.nz">parish@dmm.org.nz</a>	466 4600
	Sarah: <a href="mailto:sarahc@dmm.org.nz">sarahc@dmm.org.nz</a>	

## PARISH BULLETIN

3<sup>rd</sup> MARCH 2013

### WORSHIP FOR SUNDAY 10<sup>th</sup> MARCH 2013

9.30am	Mornington	C Gibson
9.30 am	Mosgiel	S Pole
11.00 am	Glenaven	C Gibson
11.00 am	Wesley	S Pole
1.00pm	St Kilda	TBA
6.00pm	Broad Bay	No Service

### MINI GOLF CHALLENGE

On 17<sup>th</sup> March 2013 an invitation is extended to all church members enter into the Dunedin Methodist Mini Golf Challenge. The 18 hole course at Wal's Fun Land, Bush Rd (West end) Mosgiel is the location for this event. It is planned for church members, of all ages, to join in this challenge, in groups of up to 5, commencing at 2:00p.m. The objective is to have fun and enjoy company of fellow church members while advancing around the course with the least strokes possible. The cost for a round is \$7:00/adult and \$4.50/child. If golfing is not your chosen sport you can come and enjoy the surroundings and the café nearby. If you are interested in participating please advise Cam Weston ph 454 5600 so numbers golfing can be advised to the facility.



### MOSGIEL MWF

Tuesday 5<sup>th</sup> March at 1:30 pm **in the Church.** Our Speaker is Christine Thomas from our Mission HUB and all other Mosgiel Church Groups have been invited. Our Church Members most welcome.

## QUEENSTOWN SYNOD

I would like to see a strong support from the Dunedin Methodist Parish at the Synod meeting and the School of Theology in Queenstown on 16<sup>th</sup> – 18<sup>th</sup> of March. So I ask you who are available to please attend this wonderful occasion of sharing and learning. We can arrange a van for our going when we know the number.

## BIBLE STUDY

I have got the material to start a Bible Study during this Lenten Season. The book titled for this Bible Study is *Transformed by the Presence of Jesus* by Lizz Babbs. Please those who would like to participate contact me so that I know the number. We will decide the venue when I know the number of those who would like to take part.

### ***You're invited ...***

To the Otago Southland Synod and School of Theology  
Lakelands Park, Queenstown 16-18 March  
(Synod 16-17 March and School of Theology 17-18 March).

Ron Malpass and Margaret Poynton from Interchurch Council for Hospital Chaplaincy are coming to take a session on Pastoral and Hospital visiting on the Saturday afternoon.

### **Everyone welcome (not just Synod members).**

Synod is subsidising this weekend to ensure that anyone who wants to come can come.

Synod Fri – Sun = \$50 p/p or Sat – Sun = \$40 p/p

Synod & School of Theology = \$70 p/p or (\$90 if there from Friday night)

Day visitors \$10 p/p per day

For a registration form please email Rachael Masterton

[rmasterton@actrix.co.nz](mailto:rmasterton@actrix.co.nz) or ring 03 4764867, or ask your Minister.

Any questions, please contact Rachael Masterton.



**HAPPY BIRTHDAY** to Celia Cannon who turns 9 on the 5<sup>th</sup> February.

### **STORY FROM THE MISSION**

A young man who had been a student at Approach and moved on last year to study Foundation Skills at Otago Polytechnic part time to start with, came in to visit to share his success and future goals. He completed the Foundation course at Otago Polytech and has been accepted into Aoraki Polytech for the Media Studies course. This is an enormous success for him and a credit to his work and determination to reach his goal. In addition, he is now independent living, flatting now with two other people.



‘Hushed was the evening hymn, the temple courts were dark, the lamp was burning dim before the sacred ark, when suddenly a voice divine rang through the silence of the shrine.’ I wonder how many of us recognize this vivid scene from a Victorian hymn once much sung in our services. ‘The old man, meek and mild, the priest of Israel slept; his watch the temple child, the little Levite, kept, and what from Eli’s sense was sealed the Lord to Hannah’s son revealed.’

Of course Victorian piety masks the unpleasant details of the biblical story on which these verses are based. The aged Eli might actually have been having nightmares; in defiance of his authority his sons were behaving as outrageously as some more modern priests have done—though the biblical writer adds that God himself was leading them on to nasty death, ‘for it was his will to slay them’. We only need to read further in the *Book of Samuel* that God came and stood forth and spoke three times to the little boy who is the hero of the scene to know that we are dealing with pious imaginative fiction, not Victorian, but Jewish and ancient.

The simple faith-filled ordinary child, the sinful priestly children. The very good and the very bad starkly contrasted. It is a repeated pattern in human stories of all kind, starting with Cain and Abel and going well beyond the Tale of the Elder Brother and the Prodigal Son. And the beginnings of Samuel’s story are dressed in even more pious fiction. His mother—another Sarah, Abraham’s wife—childless for years, vowing in the temple to dedicate any child born to her to the Lord, miraculously conceives a child, names her boy Samuel (‘meaning ‘I have asked him of the Lord’) and true to her vow places him in priestly care.

And then she sings. O how she sings! ‘My heart exults in the Lord...The bows of the mighty are broken, but the feeble gird on strength...he brings low, he also exalts, He raises up the poor...The Lord will judge the ends of the earth; he will give strength to his king, and exalt the power of his anointed.’ Actually there is no king of Israel yet, no anointed one. It was going to be the grown-up Samuel’s later task to introduce the very first Jewish King; and modern biblical scholarship strongly suggests that the writer of this legendary birth story, needing an impressive emotional peak simply put into Hannah’s mouth a pre-existing psalm by an unknown poet never gathered into the later Book of Psalms. That’s how writers work. They appropriate or invent good words—like Henry V’s noble speeches in Shakespeare’s play.

Or like the song of Mary, the Magnificat, perhaps the most famous recorded speech by a woman in the whole of the Bible. One that has rung down the centuries and inspired great composers, great artists and great social reformers. For when Luke wrote his story about another wonderful child miraculously born to another childless mother, his mind went to Hannah’s Song, a song from another age, another Testament. A song praising a God who lifts up the humble poor and brings down the pride of the mighty. And without all the modern fretting about copyrights and plagiarism and historical ‘fact’, he wonderfully symbolized what he wanted to convey to his listeners and later to his readers: that Jesus was the new Samuel, the new anointed one, the overthrower of corruption and the abuse of power in high places, the divine sponsor of the poor and the lowly, the saviour of humankind from themselves. (Is it necessary to remind ourselves that Mary and Elizabeth were both illiterate peasant women, realistically incapable of such eloquence and unable to record what ever might have been said between them.)

The connections I have traced from a Victorian hymn back to the sixth-century Book of Samuel and forward to the Gospel of Luke written about 80 years after the death of Christ are not intended to ‘debunk’ the Bible, though they call into absolute question the idea of divine authorship. Stories can inspire faith and art and prompt noble acts just as much as historical ‘facts’ can: indeed they are probably more likely to do so than the bare narrative of what happened. And if that is so, our stories, yours and mine, may yet move future generations to deeds of faith, hope and love we cannot imagine. What shape is your story taking? Will you be proud of what it sings to future generations?

**Colin Gibson**