



Dunedin Methodist Parish

Finding Good in everyone Finding God in everyone

www.dunedinmethodist.org.nz

Presbyters:	Rev. Siosifa Pole	455 2923
	Rev. Dr. Rod Mitchell	477 3700
Parish Stewards:	Dr George Davis	453 6540
	Mrs Hilda Hughson	487 6226
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PARISH BULLETIN

8th SEPTEMBER 2013

WORSHIP FOR SUNDAY 15th SEPTEMBER

9.30am	Mornington	R Mitchell
9.30 am	Mosgiel	G Watson
11.00 am	Glenaven	R Mitchell
11.00 am	Wesley	G Watson
1.00pm	St Kilda	TBA
4.00pm	Broad Bay	R Mitchell

OPEN EDUCATION: BENJAMIN BRITTEN

This year the world celebrates the centenary of Benjamin Britten, one of England's greatest composers. Professor Colin Gibson talks about and illustrates with new DVDs Britten's life and music for the Christian Church, works like the *War Requiem*, *A Ceremony of Carols*, *The Burning Fiery Furnace*, *Noah's Flood* and *St Nicolas*. Mornington Methodist Church, Galloway Street, Wednesday, September 18, at 7.30pm, koha \$5. A pre-session meal will be offered by Judy Russell at 6pm (ring 455 3727 or register at Mornington), \$15. Please tell any of your friends with an interest in music.



MEDITATION WITH FATHER DONAGH O'SHEA

Fr Donagh O'Shea OP, an Irish Dominican retreat director and teacher of prayer and meditation, will be in Dunedin from 18-23 September.

Each morning from Wednesday to Saturday 18-21 September, Donagh will celebrate **MASS** (and give a talk about **PRAYER AND MEDITATION** after mass) at **HOLY NAME** church at 8.30 am. From Wednesday to Friday also at Holy Name, Donagh will give talks on **MEDITATION AND PRAYER** after each Mass; and in the evening at 5.15 pm, on these same days, there will be a talk and a time of meditation. (*Together these events, morning and evening, may form a time of retreat*)

Day of Retreat.

Donagh will lead a day of retreat at St Patrick's Centre, 42 Macandrew Road, South Dunedin on Saturday 21 September from 10.00am to 4.00pm. Numbers will be limited so if you wish to attend please email your name to alafair@kinect.co.nz and ask for a form to fill in.

STORY FROM THE MISSION

I have just been down at Little Citizens meeting with Delaine. Just before the end of our conversation, one of the children's mother popped her head in the door. She was proudly showing off what she had just made at the Hub cooking class. She had ice-cream containers with meatballs, biscuits and meringues. She was so chuffed that she recited the meringue recipe to us before going on to tell us about the chocolate cake she made last week. It was really nice to be a part of that exchange between mum and Delaine. It felt like we were the full package to that family.

WILDFLOWERS - a fund raiser.

A list is in the foyer at Mornington for you to purchase packets of WILDFLOWER SEED at \$5 per packet. We'll purchase the number of packets ordered at a significantly lower price, and you'll buy them at \$5 as a contribution towards the very high costs we are facing to earthquake strengthen our buildings to the required standard. Yes, you can say it's a drop in the bucket but it's a start. The wildflowers will make great gifts for your family, friends or neighbours. SIGN THE LIST TODAY. THANKS



120TH ANNIVERSARY OF NEW ZEALAND WOMEN WINNING THE VOTE (1893 – 2013)

To commemorate this historic achievement, Mornington Methodist Women's Fellowship invites members of the Parish to a presentation, written and performed by Marion Kitchingman:

ANNIE JANE SCHNACKENBERG

Mornington Methodist Church

Wednesday 25 September 2013, at 2.30pm

Afternoon tea will be served in the church lounge after the performance.

Mrs. Annie Schnackenberg was a Methodist, an active member of the Pitt Street Wesleyan Church, Auckland. She was also a founder member of the Women's Christian Temperance Union (WCTU), the organization that spearheaded the votes for women campaign, led by Kate Sheppard.

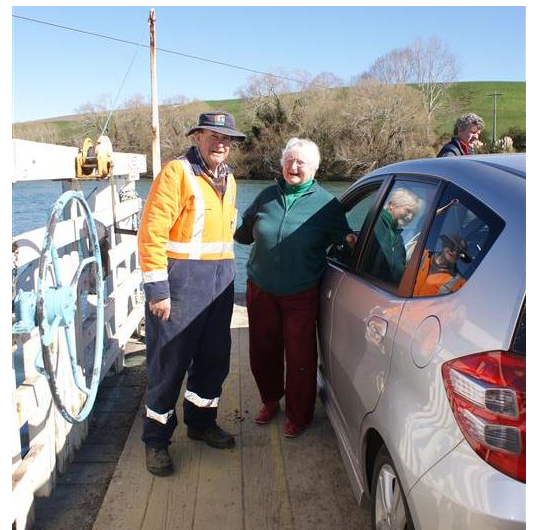
PUNTERS FOR A DAY - Not at

Wingatui and not at Forbury Park.

A sizeable group of Mornington people took the PUNT across the Clutha River at Tuapeka Mouth last Saturday. And what a great day out it was, blessed by fine warm weather. The route took them on the round trip to Balclutha up through Clydevale, across the river to Beaumont, down to Lawrence for a luncheon stopover, and then tramping through disused railway tunnels before heading home via Milton. Thanks to Cam Weston for planning the day. The punt



itself is the only similar operational one in the southern hemisphere. It has no engine but crosses the strongly flowing river by means of the skill of the puntman and two ingenious rudders. Pictures show Judy Russell befriending the happy puntman, and a group of equally happy punters mid-stream, Sally Weston, Rebecca & Alastair Neaves, Rachael Hanna and Greg Hughson.



OTAGO TERTIARY CHAPLAINCY TRUST BOARD 50th ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATIONS

You are warmly invited to attend the Otago Tertiary Chaplaincy 50th celebration dinner which will be held at Salmond College on Wednesday 27th November beginning at 6pm. The Chaplaincy Trust Board was established in 1963 and has worked to serve the University, the Polytechnic and the former College of Education throughout the last 50 years. For this reason the board is holding a special dinner featuring a variety of musical items and an after dinner speech by Colin Gibson who served on the Trust Board for many years. Tickets can be purchased from Carol Clarke. Please RSVP to Carol Clarke (contact details below) by October 15th, 2013. It would be wonderful to have you in attendance. Please forward this invitation on to others who may be interested in attending.

Ticket Secretary Contact details and ticket purchasing details

Tickets (\$65 each) can be obtained from Carol Clarke, Student Services Divisional Office, Clocktower, University of Otago, PO Box 56, Dunedin 9054. Ph 03 479 5752, email carol.clarke@otago.ac.nz . When you order your tickets please supply a residential address, by email, phone or post. Carol will post the ticket or tickets to you.

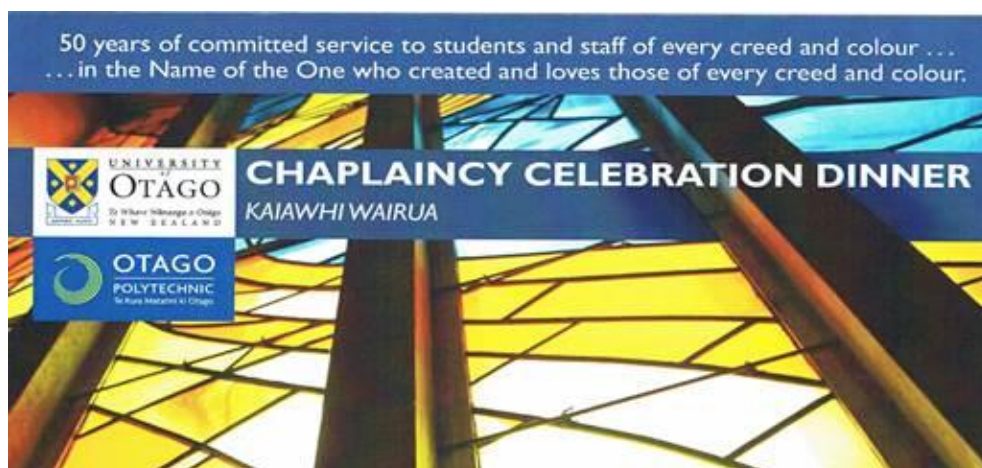
Payment options:

1. (preferable): electronically into the Otago Tertiary Chaplaincy Trust Board BNZ University of Otago bank account 02 0929 0132985 00 using the narration "50th Dinner" to identify your payment.
2. Cheque made out to "Otago Tertiary Chaplaincy Board" to Carol Clarke.

Greg Hughson greg.hughson@otago.ac.nz

Mike Wright chaplain@op.ac.nz

www.otago.ac.nz/chaplain





WE WELCOME ON BOARD KATRINA. Katrina is an existing valued member of the Mission team, who will now take on the added responsibility of the Parish work. For all future notices please contact Katrina by either phoning the Mission office 466 4600 or email admin@dmm.org.nz

HOLIDAY

I am taking a one week holiday, starting from Tuesday 10th until Monday 16th of September. While I am away, Rod Mitchell will be Acting Superintendent of the Parish. Siosifa Pole.



Flora and Fauna Sunday (Within the Season of Creation)

Hi Jo

Yes, in case you didn't know, that's what today is, or at least could be. You never know these days. Next Sunday might be Flotsam and Jetsam Sunday, and the week after probably Second Cousins Sunday. But I shouldn't be so tough on modern times. After all, it's a fair while since today was first called Sun-day and tomorrow Moon-day instead of plain today and tomorrow.

So why Flora and Fauna? Surely every Sunday has both, just so long as the flower roster team (peace be upon them) continue to decorate the church, and a few aphids manage to hitch a ride. But the bug – no, the bright idea (in principle, I support it) started in 2008 when the Lectionary decided to add a new option, a “Season of Creation...in response to a growing concern in Christian communities over the way human beings have treated God's earth”.

The season, first devised by the Lutheran Church in Australia, picks up on the Orthodox tradition which celebrates September 1 as the first Day of Creation. It runs for six Sundays on a three-year cycle, incorporating St Francis of Assisi Day on October 4 (or 3). An ecumenical group now offers online resources from www.seasonofcreation.com. A couple of quotes: “The creatures of earth are our kin”; “We have treated planet earth as a garbage dump”. There’s little if anything to be seen of words like “evolution”. Overall, the liturgy is very biblical and Christological – the cosmic Christ is at the core.

I have to say that, after a promising initial impression, and despite the practical ecological encouragements, I find it personally disturbing. There’s much of value to rediscover in the Bible and Christian tradition of our intimate connections with the natural world, but I don’t believe we can be content with a rebore of the traditional approach to Creation.

“The Great Story” (a title suggested by Sir Lloyd Geering) can no longer be adequately told by a Christianity that claims it for itself. Wonderfully poetic Biblical imagery deserves to retain a place, but the full canvass must now include a comparable measure of the mind-boggling evidence that science continues to produce.

I want to suggest three areas in which standard Christian interpretations are inadequate on their own to fully convey the magnitude and mystery of the Great Story.

History

How old is old? Is Lloyd Geering old? Yes and No. At 95 no less, he’s just published his latest book, *From the Big Bang to God: Our Awe-inspiring Journey of Evolution*. Its contents make him seem not so much a spring chicken as a spring that hasn’t even begun to be sprung.

How old are the Bible and Christianity? Very old, according to some modern editions of Biblical aids featuring maps with titles such as “The Nations of the Ancient World”, as a backdrop to understanding Biblical times. Yet even a Psalmist knew a thing or two. “A thousand years in your sight are like yesterday, like” (if I may bring Psalm 90 up-to-date with the latest generation). So compared with history as a whole, the Bible is barely three days old. As for the Christian Story, it’s also just a minnow in comparison with the Great Story.

So how old is the universe? 6,017 years or 13.75 billion years? Exactly the former according to Archbishop Ussher, whose Biblical calculations were published in 1650, narrowing down the year of the Creation to merely 4004 BC. Approximately the latter according to a broad scientific consensus today.

Thanks to a steady exposure in recent decades to the rationale of the scientific enterprise, there wouldn't be too many non-fundamentalist Christians anxious about maintaining Ussher's literalist dependency on Biblical genealogies, etc. There is probably a general acceptance among mainstream churches that that kind of approach arises from an unfortunate misunderstanding of the nature of the Scriptures.

Nevertheless, many who have come to terms with such distinctions have yet to grasp the scope of the new dimension that science has "ushered" in. This is not simply a matter of grafting onto Biblical interpretation some factual extensions based on our modern knowledge of the physical world. Rather, it must lead to a reappraisal of our whole understanding of ourselves and the limitations imposed by our origins and cultural developments.

Destiny

It's not just a matter of recognising that we occupy a tiny speck on the timescale and landscape of evolutionary history. It's also a question of whether we count for anything in terms of purpose and design. "Predestination" and "evolution" don't make for comfortable bedfellows. "Chance", "mutation" and "luck" (good and bad) don't feature in theological wordbooks. Yet our quirky survival thus far really seems to defy the odds of a divine selection process.

We're the only surviving *Homo* species. Our nearest surviving cousins, the chimpanzees, number less than 200,000 in the wild (if I heard correctly on the "Planet without apes" radio interview last weekend). Our ancestors had to squeak through five mass extinctions in the past, and we can't be sure of surviving the sixth such period now under way.

And now it's being proposed that our very earliest ancestor at the organic molecular level may have only made it by being ferried via a meteorite blasted off the surface of Mars without any navigation system. So it may not only be men who are from Mars, but women as well, via Venus of

course. Was God on vacation at the time or delighting in a version of Russian roulette in which the barrels numbered 6^{100} ?

A certain aspiring politician has been accused this last week of “having been born without the requisite brain-chemistry for modesty”. But it may be that that condition is widespread within the population at large, and not least among those who subscribe to a strong sense of personal providence. We people of faith are slow to shrug off the conviction of having been purposefully guided every step of the way.

Theology

And now I’m about to get into even deeper water, so deep that it might match or exceed the depth of a hot fissure in a primordial ocean trench where an organic molecule might have first spluttered into life about 3 billion years ago. I’m renegeing and will surface, though if I do so too fast I might risk getting the bends.

You see, there’s a big question behind the Big Bang, and I’m not sure that I can provide the big answer, and certainly not right at the end of these “Connections”. If you can’t wait, then you could try reading one person’s answer. Geering’s *From the Big Bang to God* is quite short (186 pages), boldly comprehensive, and very readable, but take care with the implications of the title.

I’m not sure how I got into this stew via Flora and Fauna Sunday, but that’s the way of evolution – it takes some odd twists and turns. If I get a chance to start again I hope it might be on Bacterium Sunday.

David Kitchingman