



Dunedin Methodist Parish

Finding Good in everyone Finding God in everyone

www.dunedinmethodist.org.nz

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PARISH BULLETIN

9th February 2014

WORSHIP FOR SUNDAY 16th February

9.30 am	Mornington	R Mitchell
9.30 am	Mosgiel	S Pole
11.00 am	Glenaven	R Mitchell
11.00 am	Wesley	S Pole
1.00 pm	St Kilda	TBA

CONGRATULATIONS On behalf of the Dunedin Methodist Parish, I would like to congratulate Rev Peter Taylor and Rachael Masterton on their role as the Co-Superintendent of the Otago-Southland Synod. We had eight members of the Parish present at their Induction Service to show our support for them. We wish them God's blessing in their new role.

CELEBRATION On behalf of the Parish I would like to acknowledge the achievement of Earlene Owens, Fay Richardson, and Allison Walls of their certificates in Lead Worship One from Trinity Theological College. Their certificates were received with joy last Sunday at the Mosgiel Methodist Church service.



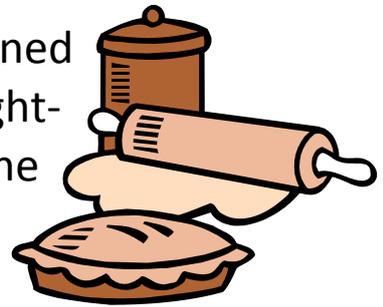
THERE ARE MANY SIDES TO OUR LIFE AS CHURCHES, and early February is a time that sees us back in familiar surroundings after various “holiday” experiences. For some it’s been a complete break from Church. For others, we ventured into

churches outside our Parish, perhaps in the North Island, even in other countries. We are mobile people these days. Pictures show a well attended service at Wesley on the last Sunday of the year, where Naomi Pole holds the children in thrall with a great story. And Rod Mitchell serves communion at Mornington last Sunday, assisted by David Patrick and Avis Foote. However far afield our travels take us, it’s always good to “home”. “In this familiar place, I know the mystery of your grace.”



HELPERS NEEDED THIS TUESDAY 11th Feb Helpers of all ages are needed to put the Otago Combined Christian Group's *Scarfie Guide* (and other goodies) into 3,500 College packs for the Otago University Students Association (to distribute to all first year students in our residential colleges) on **Tuesday 11th February 2014, from 9am in the old gym** on Cumberland Street at the PE school, directly across the road from the OUSA offices (near the Otago Museum). We need as many people as possible. Lunch will be provided by OUSA. Could you please e mail Mike Bagge (purplecherries2000@gmail.com) by Monday 10th 9am (preferably earlier) to let him know how many people will be coming from your Church or group. Please come, even if for an hour or two. The more people we have helping the quicker we get this job done.

BAKING AND FRUIT NEEDED The Otago Combined Christian Groups network will have a daytime and night-time presence in a large Scripture Union tent on the Museum Lawn during University of Otago Orientation week (17th -22nd February), on the corner of Albany and Cumberland Streets. Please visit our tent. We plan once again to distribute information about local Churches and Christian Groups, along with baking and fruit! Please deliver baking and fruit throughout Orientation week to the new University Chaplaincy Offices on the eastern end of the new mezzanine floor in the University Union building (signposted from downstairs). Inquiries: Greg Hughson 479 8497



PARISH COUNCIL MEETING

Just a reminder of our first Parish Council meeting for this year on the 12th of February at Broad Bay Church, 7.30 pm. All members of the Parish Council are expecting to be present. Thanks



HAPPY BIRTHDAY to Freddie Sussman who turns 13 on 12th February.

STORY FROM THE MISSION

Adult student attending Approach Community Learning National Certificate in Employment Skills course 2013 had applied twice to Second Hand Retail clothing outlet with no success; however, there was an opportunity to apply once again under new



management. *Adult Student* was extremely nervous and afraid because she had failed twice before. After a lengthy discussion, some strategies on promoting herself, acknowledging her skills, a 'dummy' interview, partnered with her desire to be in the rag trade, now felt empowered and was looking forward to attending the interview. [This was the afternoon of her ACL graduation]

Our worker received a txt from her at 3pm that day to say she was successful in the position, and was absolutely delighted with herself. She will indeed be an asset to the outlet.

We have another client who needs to have specific clothing requirements to attend a course in 2014, and has approached the retail outlet and asked if the *Adult Student* would be able to fit her out, our worker will take the student down there and leave her and return in an hours' time. We think it is a credit to Approach Community Learning, that this client has been successful in securing employment, and is able to 'give back' to her community.

MORNINGTON PASTORAL CARE GROUP LEADERS : A meeting with Rod to discuss the purpose and working of the Pastoral Care Groups will be held in the lounge on Sunday 23rd February at 11.15am to be followed by a pot luck lunch. If unable to attend please let Beryl know Ph 4767447



COVENANT AND CENSUS

At the beginning of each year it is traditional that Methodist people pause to reflect on their covenant relationship with God. Methodist Parishes around the world will often offer a special Covenant service. This is a sacred and prayerful communion service within which we have the opportunity to ponder the significance of God's loving offer to be in relationship with us, and for us to respond by reaffirming our promises to love and to serve God. A few days ago, as a nation we paused to reflect on the significance of the Treaty of Waitangi. For many Christians, this Treaty is best described as a covenant agreement, with sacred and deeply spiritual significance for everyone living in Aotearoa-NZ. In our Methodist Church of NZ Mission statement, we declare that the Treaty of Waitangi shall guide our mission as followers of Christ in this land. It is the Treaty of Waitangi which establishes our nation, and our Methodist Church, on the basis of a power-sharing partnership between Maori and Tauwiwi. Promises were made when the Treaty was signed in 1840 to protect the rights of Maori to ownership of land and all those cultural ways that were then, and still are now, precious to the identity of being Maori. Many of these 1840 promises were broken as thousands of early settlers subsequently moved in, assuming superiority of culture and creed. The signing of the treaty by Maori was strongly advocated by Methodist Missionaries in 1840, with the intention of protecting Maori interests and identity from exploitation and destruction. It is good today, that as a result of the work of the Treaty of Waitangi commission and a willingness to address past injustices, the Covenant expressed in this sacred Treaty has come alive again as a powerful force for healing, restoration and renewal.

God's covenant with Abraham (See Genesis 15 and Genesis 17:1-14) became a model for later covenants between David and Noah. Joshua and Ezra, also established covenantal relationships with God which defined the parameters of the divine-human relationship. Mosaic Law undergirds, sustains and is at the heart of Judaism's historic and ongoing covenant relationship with God. The purpose of all spiritual covenants is to bind the two parties together in a firm and binding relationship. A specifically Christian covenant is established between people and God as a response to the "new commandment" of Jesus, to love one another. "A new commandment I give you: Love one another. As I have loved you, so you must love one another. By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another." (John 13:34) When we make, or renew our covenant relationship with God we are responding to God's love, promising to orientate our entire being and life around love for God and one another. Others will know we are Christians, followers of the Way of Jesus, by the quality of the love we express towards each other within the Church, and way beyond the Church. A Christian covenant prioritises a focus on love rather than obedience to specific laws. Spirit-led loving behaviour towards other people and the whole of creation, ideally will flow from hearts which are in a sincere and loving covenantal relationship with our Creator.

Last Wednesday's Otago Daily Times boldly announced "Religion in decline in Dunedin". This conclusion was drawn from Census data. The number of Otago Methodists in 2013 is down to 2,481 from 3,060 in 2006. "People of Christian Religion" in Dunedin is reported to be down to 49,353 from 57,978 in 2006. So what. These figures in no way indicate that religion is in decline. A more meaningful statistic, would be to know the number of people (of all faiths) who do their best each day to live their lives guided, enriched and sustained by a healthy, ever-deepening and loving covenantal relationship with God. Such "census data" is known only to God. God's love is available to everyone. Even when we do not respond, God still loves us. This eternal love of God is

not in decline, and never will be! God longs for and awaits our response. Here is the Methodist Covenant prayer:

I am no longer my own, but yours.

Put me to what you will, rank me with whom you will;

put me to doing, put me to suffering;

let me be employed for you, or laid aside for you,

exalted for you, or brought low for you;

let me be full,

let me be empty,

let me have all things,

let me have nothing:

I freely and wholeheartedly yield all things

to your pleasure and disposal.

And now, glorious and blessed God,

Father, Son and Holy Spirit,

you are mine and I am yours. So be it.

And the covenant now made on earth, let it be ratified in heaven.

Amen.

Greg Hughson

University Chaplain