



Dunedin Methodist Parish

Finding Good in everyone Finding God in everyone

www.dunedinmethodist.org.nz

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PARISH BULLETIN

8th June 2014

WORSHIP FOR SUNDAY 15th June

10.30 am	Mornington	C Gibson
9.30 am	Mosgiel	D Phillipps
11.00 am	Glenaven	C Gibson
11.00 am	Wesley	D Phillipps
1.00 pm	St Kilda	TBA

MOSGIEL'S "PENTECOST SERVICE" - "COFFEE, CAKE & THE HOLY SPIRIT" at Mosgiel Presbyterian Church, 11 Church Street, SUNDAY 8th JUNE at 7:30pm. Let's celebrate the gift of the Spirit: Who Strengthens us - YES!, Who shows us the way - YES!, Who gifts us so we can do our bit - YES!

POT-LUCK LUNCH AT GLENAVEN JUNE 8: All welcome to lunch around 12 noon on Sunday 8 March, whether or not you are attending the 11am service. Drinks will be available; please bring a plate of finger-food to share..

SPECIAL PARISH COUNCIL MEETING

There will be a Special Parish Council Meeting at 7.30 pm on Wednesday 11 June at Mornington Church. This meeting is to reflect on the outcomes from the Parish Meeting on 31 May and also to hear from a realty agent and a structural engineer on the processes involved in selling church properties and in strengthening church buildings. All Parish Council members are encouraged to attend.

DUNEDIN INNER CITY MINISTERS' ASSOCIATION: WEEK OF PRAYER FOR CHRISTIAN UNITY. You are warmly invited to attend an ecumenical service for Pentecost Sunday 8th June.

“Has Christ been divided?”

Sunday 8 June 7pm at First Church, 415 Moray Place, Dunedin

We will use the order of service prepared by the churches of Canada for the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity. The Canadian churches have also prepared a brief video to introduce the service - you can see that here: <http://vimeo.com/79786881>

As part of the service, there is an offering of 'spiritual gifts' - the gifts that each of our congregations brings to enrich the body of Christ. We want a symbol of these gifts to be shared within the service. What would your congregation bring as a symbol of the gift God gives to the whole body of Christ and to the city through you?

MUSICAL SOCIETY CONCERT Sunday 15 June, 2:30pm at Mornington Methodist Church. Hear talented young pianists Modi and Boen Deng playing concertos with teacher Tom McGrath using two pianos. Also some lovely vocal works. All are welcome to this concert. Adults \$2, Children free.



ANNUAL HOLIDAY

I will be on holiday from the 3rd to the 17th of June. Rod Mitchell will be on holiday at the same time. We will both be overseas during this time. While we are away Rev Donald Phillipps will take care of the pastoral responsibility in the parish. The parish stewards will work together with Donald during this time. Thank you, Rev. Siosifa Pole.



HAPPY BIRTHDAY to Matthew Gray, who turns 9 on 9th June.

STORY FROM THE MISSION

From Little Citizens: Teachers in the Tui Room work with the two to three and half year olds - on Wednesday last week an incident had them reflecting. A teacher had filled a child's cup with water, listened to the very loud, "No I can do it," and promptly watched him pour the water on the table, take control the of the jug, pour his own drink and look at the teacher as if to say, "See I told you I could do it." The teacher put her head in her hands and laughed (quietly what else could she do - she had probably cleaned up several spills in the last five minutes, though this one could have been avoided), not at the child but their own actions. In a room where teachers work with children who strive for independence the teacher had poured the drink without thinking. Teachers strive for continuity in their practices within the Tui room – this highlights that everyone is always reflecting and learning. The lesson for the teacher is to slow down and think a little more about their actions. But most importantly to celebrate each child's growing independence, confidence, determination and self belief. And just to finish the story - after refilling the cup the child promptly jumped up from the table to source a cloth and cleaned up the water with no prompting from anyone.

SOME IMPORTANT RESULTS of the Parish Meeting on Dunedin Methodist futures held at Wesley Hall on Saturday 31 May 2014.

A widely representative group of 48 Dunedin and Mosgiel Methodists met to consider 3 key questions which related to the future of the Dunedin Methodist Parish. Within that number were 7 facilitator/recorders and one motivator. The meeting was tightly structured and ran from 9.30am to 3.30pm. Our thanks to the Wesley people for the use of the facility and to all who shared with their talents of facilitating the meeting, providing food and presenting it.

The three key questions under scrutiny were: 1. What strengths can we contribute which will help sustain the life of the parish? 2. My passion is/passions are(state or write them) and is there a way these can be used to enliven the Church? 3. Given our desire for a viable Methodist future, what creative, radically new ideas need to be explored that might lead to growth?

One clear result in the meeting was the enthusiasm for all to be engaged and tolerant of all the different ideas put forward. There was agreement to the suggestion of Rev Greg Hughson, that for the principal purpose of the meeting, the third question and its responses were more important than the others. Consequently, only the third question responses were voted on. Attendees were asked to place a mark on up to three ideas which had been written on 4 sheets and culled from the 6 groups. Question 3 responses (108 in total) were undertaken by approximately 90% of those who remained to 2.30-3.00pm.

The leading responses gained by amalgamating the same or similar responses from the groups were:

- 1. Use of modern technology – 18 votes**
- 2. Centralise all Dunedin churches in one location 15**
- 3. Vital outreach (incl. Good News) as a function of Dunedin Methodism 13**
- 4. Living the Questions and Alpha programmes 10**

Other responses which gained some traction were:

1. Tongans shift from St Kilda to Wesley site 7
2. Authenticity and livening of services 6 and
3. Closer links with the Mission 5

These responses, along with an analysis of the material garnered from tabled responses for questions 1 and 2 will be presented to the special Parish Council/PF&R committee meeting on 11 June. This special meeting will be chaired by Prof. Richard Cannon because Dr George Davis will be presenting the results of the 31 May meeting.



Seeking Spirit in a Scientific Age

We are all aware of the dramatic and rapid changes of the last five hundred years. What is more difficult is the understanding and categorising of these changes in a way that can enable us to live authentically and fully in an emerging world.

Ken Wilber is recognised as one of the key voices of our time and in his many books he has addressed the nature of these changes.

Prior to the most recent five hundred year period of our history, the influential disciplines of Arts, Morals and Science (which Ken Wilber refers to as "The Big Three") had been nurtured and parented by religious communities (in the West). Science, Arts, Morals and Spirituality were closely integrated. However, about 1500 C.E., the 'Big Three' began to grow away from the Churches, with a new-found sense of independence. This separation was anything but comfortable. Over the last 500 years, the Churches have retreated into a static religious spirituality that is growing increasingly detached from the evolving world.

One only needs to follow the often bitter disputes between scientific enquiry and the opposing dogmatic stance taken by various Church authorities to see this conflicting view. A sampling of issues from the most recent 500 years provides a range of examples: for example - astronomy, cosmology, evolutionary theory, birth control, same gender relationships, women in leadership, stem cell research (to name but a few). These debates confirmed a separation and distinction between spiritual and scientific matters - people had to choose which path they would follow. It seemed near impossible to have an integration of science and faith.

The point I want to stress is that the separation has come at a cost. The cost is that this separation has been at the expense of 'Spirit', which is unable to play a central role in our understanding of reality. The 'Big Three' and in particular scientific discipline have been so successful they have almost obliterated the 'spiritual' dimension from our human awareness of reality. For thousands of years the dominant philosophy - a religious outlook on life - was to acknowledge that reality was made up of matter, body, mind, soul and spirit. Over the last five hundred years this primary outlook on life has been seriously eroded.

Ken Wilber and many other people have written about and are researching this dismissal of 'spirit'. Their proposal is that healthy dynamic religious claims need to be able to stand in partnership with The 'Big Three' thus allowing the 'spiritual' dimension to add a credible contribution to the meaning and significance of reality.

Today, in the midst of our rapidly changing ways of life and thinking, we find ourselves at a time of needing to make seriously important choices. Now is the time to embrace a spirituality that is authentic for our scientific age. In making those choices, we might consider Ken Wilber's four different world views which have emerged during this 500 year period. The first three world views have emerged in such a way as to make it almost impossible to bring the 'Big Three' together in any creative way. A fourth worldview is just emerging which offers some encouraging signs.

TRADITIONAL WORLDVIEW [Pre 1600 C.E. but still strongly present today]

The world is an ordered existence governed by a higher authority. [Not necessarily divine]

People who see the world through this lens tend to value belonging, stability, order, security, conformity, and morality as defined by traditional values (in whatever tradition they were raised and socialized in—frequently religious but not necessarily) and tend to follow leaders

who are perceived as having positional and/or moral authority. In other words, people with this mindset tend to prefer leaders with an Authoritarian Leadership Style.

MODERN WORLDVIEW [1600 C.E. – Present]

The world is a playing field full of opportunity to achieve.

People who see the world through this lens tend to value opportunity, achievement, success, winning, status, and recognition and tend to follow leaders who are perceived to have the most expertise and ability to achieve goals. In other words, people with this mindset tend to prefer leaders with a Strategic Leadership Style.

POSTMODERN WORLDVIEW [1960's – Present]

The world is a diverse ecosystem where cooperation leads to synergy.

People who see the world through this lens tend to value personal growth, emotionally intimate relationships, equality, dialog, consensus, interdependence, inclusivity, sustainability, collaboration, and making a difference. They tend to follow leaders who are perceived as being aware, sensitive to the wellbeing of others, value consensus, and always treat others as equals. In other words, people with this mindset tend to prefer leaders with a Collaborative Leadership Style.

INTEGRAL WORLDVIEW [Just emerging 2000 -]

This mindset tries to see all previous worldviews as having both something of value to offer while hosting within them some unhealthy pathologies. Which means a major task for the church in the coming years would be to learn how to discern the difference between values of substance and cunning pathologies. This will require a style of Leadership embracing new depths of wisdom, spirituality and compassion.

The Church community prior to 1500 lived comfortably with a traditional worldview or what Charles Taylor in his large book 'A Secular Age' called the age of 'enchantment'. However we now live in

what Taylor calls an age of 'disenchantment', a global world where God's spirit is ever actively unfolding new possibilities while people argue about the existence or not of a living 'God' [Death of God debate]. In this kind of world, if the church remains frozen in a static traditional worldview, it will be in danger of being caught like a rabbit at night in the sharp headlights of life's exciting, forward, unfolding moment. In Mornington and Glenaven I am inviting members to continue to explore how a bigger evolutionary creation story, that still values and embraces the best from within the Bible, can provide an Integral framework to help Christians engage creatively with not only the 'Big Three' but with other religious traditions as well.

Rod Mitchell