



# Dunedin Methodist Parish

*Finding Good in everyone    Finding God in everyone*

[www.dunedinmethodist.org.nz](http://www.dunedinmethodist.org.nz)

<b>Presbyters:</b>	Rev. Siosifa Pole	455 2923
	Rev. Dr. Rod Mitchell	477 3700
<b>Parish Stewards:</b>	Mrs Hilda Hughson	487 6226
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<b>Parish Prayer Convenor</b>	Elaine Merrett	489 7663
<b>Pastoral Convenor</b>	Beryl Neutze	476 7447
<b>Mornington:</b>		

## PARISH BULLETIN

17<sup>th</sup> July 2016

### WORSHIP FOR SUNDAY 24<sup>th</sup> July

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

**GLENAVEN SUNDAY 17 JULY MEMORIAL:** At noon today, after a shortened form of the usual 11am service at Glenaven, Sifa will preside at a memorial service for Trevor Webb (39-year-old son of Carolynne Labes), who died on June 19. Those in the wider parish who want to support Carolynne and her family are invited to the 12 noon service, and asked to bring a ready-to-serve plate of finger-food if they are staying for the refreshments after. The Methodists are the hosts for this occasion; no other funeral directors will be present. Inquiries Helen WW 467 2936.

## **TIME AND THE WONDER OF THE UNIVERSE**

Christians have in the Bible an ancient story of the life-cycle of the universe from Creation to the Apocalypse. On Wednesday 20 July, Open Education presents a film giving a truly astonishing modern account of Time and the lifespan of our universe from its beginning to its end, as scientists now understand it. Magnificent images, a compelling narrative, ideas to set you thinking about faith as well as science. Wednesday, 20 July, 7.30pm, at the Mornington Methodist Church (koha \$5). Book for the \$15 6pm pre-session meal catered by Judy Russell: sign in or ring 455 3727 by Monday 18 July.

**EXPLORERS GROUP** - The next meeting will be on Sunday 24 July at 4.30 pm in the Mornington Lounge.

**MORNINGTON METHODIST WOMEN'S FELLOWSHIP.** The July Meeting will take place on the 27th at 2 p.m. in the Church Lounge. We will continue thinking & working towards our NZ Special Project. Margaret Connor will help us make some of the hearts - ready for the Hopewalk. Please remember the Fellowship of the Least Coin.

**REMINDER: COMBINED CHURCHES SERVICE** - St Francis Xavier - Sunday 31 July at 4.30. Light tea to follow. Will look forward to seeing you all there.



**SYMPATHY** - On behalf of the Mosgiel Methodist congregation and the wider Dunedin Methodist Parish, I would like to convey our sympathy and condolences to Jack and Rennie Bremner for the death of Helen Bremner, a devoted wife and mother. Our prayer that God would bestow peace and comfort upon you during this period of grieving and mourning.

**THE MORNINGTON** Anglican/Methodist *C O N V E R S A T I O N S* are continuing, and like all the best conversations they are taking place in the context of eating and drinking. Last Sunday night the six from each congregation met at St Mary's over a superb meal prepared by the hosts, and the conversation covered every aspect of church life - surprising all of us with aspects of parish life that are not apparent from a casual visit to a service of worship. For example - the Methodists were not aware of the extensive participation of Anglican people in the regular distribution of fruit & veg into the community from three churches - St Thomas's, Green Is and Holy Cross. "It's huge" in fact. But neither were the Anglicans aware of the longstanding Methodist Explorers Group, and what they learned about it prompted an immediate interest. To summarise - these twelve people are enjoying their conversation, and it's planned to continue on Sept 11. It's all good !! Photo - a view from the table.



**BIBLE WITH ATTITUDE** - It has been a long but enriching journey for us who participated in the series of studies that we shared together. The material that was prepared by Rod was inspiring and thought provoking. On behalf of myself and Rod, I would like to thank all those who took time to participate in the seven sessions of studies. Our hope is that we all use this learning to further our understanding in our various ministries.



### **STORIES FROM THE MISSION**

*Next Step Training:* The celebration of Matariki at Next Step Training was a combined effort between the youth and adult students. The preparation and cooking of the food was undertaken by the adult students – the menu including roast mutton, roast potatoes, roast veges with gravy; and for dessert there was pavlova and apple crumble. The youth students were responsible for the setting up of the dining area including decorations and information regarding Matariki.



*Little Citizens:* We held our annual Matariki Dinner on 17th June. This event was very well attended with over 100 parents and children attending along with grandparents, aunties and uncles - it was a real whānau affair. The children had all their Matariki artwork displayed on the walls which the parents enjoyed. Speaking to our parents, they love the dinner and look forward to it each year. The dinner provides an opportunity to talk to other parents. A lot of the nursery parents are new to the centre and it was nice to see them all sitting together and chatting.



**TO FOLLOW...OR NOT TO FOLLOW  
THAT IS THE QUESTION.**

With fascination and interest I listened and watched Tony Blair responding to the findings of the Chilcot Report, a report he must surely have been secretly dreading over a number of years. The Inquiry seemingly left no stone unturned, taking six years to research and findings published in six sizeable tomes. The conclusions drawn leaving no doubt that the invasion of Iraq by Britain, USA was ill-advised. 'Lack of consultation with relevant entities, lack of transparency in process, lack of cabinet debate, challenge and rigour, the decision to invade has had tragic and far reaching consequences.'

Perhaps one of the most telling and chilling of Tony Blair's comments was his promise to George Bush that ...'we will be with you whatever'. The desire to 'follow' the US uncritically is not uncommon. Our struggle to be nuclear free deeply annoyed the US and many NZers, and I well remember Helen Clark on the receiving end of much criticism when she

refused to allow NZ to be part of the ill-advised Iraq invasion. Not much has changed. Our present government is not slow to follow the wishes of any power with economic muscle, be it USA, UK, Australia, Saudi Arabia, China to mention a few.

Being 'followers' of anything or anyone, demands of us certain responsibilities.

Uncritically following because someone is slick with their rhetoric and charming as well is tempting but potentially disastrous.

Several reasons we may abdicate our responsibilities might be...

- \*Feeling overwhelmed with information, or lack of it.

- \*Lack of time and resources.

- \*Feeling our voice doesn't matter because it won't be heard by those in the halls of power.

There are lots of reasons why we as individuals might not want to get involved ...all valid.

However, there may be far-reaching consequences if we default on due diligence and we must be prepared to live with the consequences of that. Brexit being a recent example of such a failure.

We as a church claim to be followers of Jesus and his way. Do we do this unquestioningly, relying on the claims of orthodoxy because we are familiar with that, (in spite of the fact that it's no longer working for us)? Or are we doing our own journey of discovery and asking the difficult questions, finding equally difficult, or perhaps no definitive answers?

Is the Connexion following good process when voting on influential roles with far-reaching consequences for the future? Are issues about Church governance being thoroughly debated around the parishes before decisions are made? Is necessary information disseminated in a timely way so people can do their homework and make informed



choices? Or must we submit to less than democratic and discerning decision making?

Getting back to Tony Blair. Clearly he sincerely believed his decision to invade Iraq to be the right one in spite of very convincing evidence to the contrary. The human brain is very good at enabling an individual to go to a place of denial when faced with difficult truths. Even when the UN were unconvinced that invasion was a good idea, Tony couldn't 'hear' that. He was convinced England faced a real threat because the Bush Administration told him so. This threat proved to be based on faulty intelligence. He did not see the importance of giving his cabinet the opportunity to rigorously debate the issues. His determination to follow the Bush administration, (and probably personal hubris,) clouded his judgement, even when presented with convincing alternative information to the contrary.

Jesus, when asked by a gentile woman for help because her daughter was ill, took the advice of the disciples (leadership) and told her to go away. However, the woman, bless her, stood her ground and told Jesus he was wrong. Very respectfully I'm sure!!! That must have set Jesus back on his heels, but HE LISTENED! and had the grace to think about her retort and, realizing the truth of her words, conceded she was right, praised her for her intestinal fortitude and faith, and healed her daughter. (Matt15:20-28)

A cataclysmic moment!!

Jesus, a JEWISH RABBI admitting he had been wrong to a GENTILE WOMAN! In front AND in spite of his followers. Wow!! He had humility and an impressive degree of self awareness which subsumed his male ego enabling him to see the truth of the situation.

I wonder if Tony will ever be able to do likewise?

Would we be able to do likewise?

Our General Elections are soon to be held. Whose leadership are we going to follow?

Whose policies are most aligned to foster gospel values of care and compassion, supported by an ethical economic system where justice and fairness for the most vulnerable are at the top of the pyramid rather than the bottom. Maybe this was what Jesus meant when he talked about 'the last being first and the first being last' ( Matt 20: 16 ).

Following any sort of leadership requires us to ask questions of it. If that leadership is worth its salt it will welcome questions and the subsequent debate and listen carefully.

It is the hallmark of authentic leadership and authentic following.

Trish Patrick