



Dunedin Methodist Parish

Finding Good in everyone Finding God in everyone

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Mornington:		

PARISH BULLETIN

18th June 2017

WORSHIP FOR SUNDAY 25th June

9.30 am	Mornington	Helen Watson White
10.00 am	Mosgiel	S Pole
11.00 am	Glenaven	Helen Watson White
1.00 pm	St Kilda	TBA

THANK
You!

THANKS to all you wonderful people who handed in your copies of our *CONNECTIONS* book. We now have a good little supply for future needs. Ken Russell

PRAYER REQUEST - Please continue to pray for the future of the Parish and all those who are unwell during this time of Season. We have a lot of sick people around the Parish and they need our prayerful support.

A MATARIKI INVITATION: Everyone who is at Glenaven at 12 noon on Sunday 25 June is invited to a pot-luck lunch from 12.15 at the Watson White house, 5 Cairnhill St. Maori Hill. Maps available at Glenaven, and hot and cold drinks provided at the house. Please bring a plate of ready-to-serve finger-food on a midwinter Christmas theme. Enquiries: Helen and John 467 2936 or (preferably) watsonwhite@xtra.co.nz

THE JUNE MEETING OF THE MORNINGTON METHODIST WOMEN'S FELLOWSHIP will take place on the 28th June in the Church Lounge at 2 p.m. This is our Annual Meeting - which will be chaired by the Rev. Shirley Ungemuth, followed by the monthly meeting. Helen will talk about the up's & down of a very interesting life - focusing on her travels. PLEASE REMEMBER - The Fellowship of the Least Coin & also Social Services Collection for the Dunedin Methodist Mission Family Support Fund.

PASTORAL CARE MORNINGTON: At the Pastoral care meeting on 7th May the Pastoral Care groups were reviewed and some changes made due to the loss of some church members and the arrival of some new ones. The Pastoral care Leaders will make contact with their group members to ensure everyone knows which group they are in and who they can contact if there is a need. Group Leaders will be responsible for snow cancellation notification and members can check with them if in doubt. Thanks to Andrea for the use of Fushia House for our meeting and for the lovely lunch she provided .

EXPLORERS GROUP - Next meeting: Sunday 25 June, Mornington Lounge, 4.30 pm. The guest speaker will be **Rev Alec Clark** of the Dunedin Anglican Diocese, on **THE DEGREE OF CHANGE FACING TODAY'S CHURCH**. Is there a more urgent/important issue facing the Church we love?? We doubt it. Methodists, Anglicans, whatever, a wide welcome to all interested. Enquiries Ph Ken Russell 455.3727.

BIBLE AND INTERPRETATION - As soon as Rod is back from his leave we will inform the worship leaders and Lay Preachers about the date and time that we will have the workshop on *Bible and Interpretation*.



RECENTLY, I have been researching the poems and rhymes of Beatrix Potter. You know, the lady who wrote those wonderfully comfortable stories about Peter Rabbit and Benjamin Bunny and Jemima Puddleduck—oh, and Tom Kitten who was almost made into a roly-poly pudding.

Beatrix grew up a solitary child in a Victorian family where, confined to the nursery, she saw little of her father or mother, and when she grew up her parents (themselves the children of cotton-mill millionaires) disapproved of the first love of her life, a professional publisher, because he was 'in trade'. Finally, risking their wrath, she became engaged to Norman Warne, the youngest son of the publishing firm which had printed her first tales, but in the very year in which she was working with him to publish her first book of nursery rhymes he suddenly died, and she was left on her own for eleven years. Beatrix Potter knew a lot about loneliness. Many of her first stories began as illustrated letters to the large family of her greatly-loved former governess; for much of her mature life she had to live through the fulfilled lives of others. Yes, Beatrix Potter knew a great deal about loneliness.

Fortunately, she eventually found another life partner in a solid, good-natured English Lakes District lawyer, William Heelis, and became Mrs Heelis—though they had no children. The pair settled into the busy life of farming (she became famous for her prize flock of Herdwick fell sheep), and together they learned the rhythm of the seasons. Springtime and the new lambs, summer and autumn, when the sheep were left to graze on the high-country pastures, and winter, when thick snow forced the animals down to their Hill Top farm gates, seeking shelter and dry feed.

Did you know that Beatrix Potter was a poet as well as a story-teller? And that among many other poems she wrote one about a young sheep driven down by a winter snowfall to its farmhouse refuge, arriving in the growing darkness, only to find the big gate closed and

barred. Perhaps it was a straggler, a late arrival; the other sheep, seemingly, were already safely in. And there it stands, bleating plaintively, alone in the snow, on the wrong side of the big immovable farm gate. Out on the hills it can hear a fox yapping alarmingly. (Foxes were the predators of the fells, picking off such stragglers as one-year-old lambs for their prey.)

‘Oh who will come open this great heavy gate?
The hill fox yaps loud and the moon rises late;
There’s snow on the fell, and the flock’s at the farm’—

Into those lines Beatrix Potter pours all her imaginative sympathy for the shivering, terrified young animal, all on its own. She knows this world. She knows how it feels to be on your own in a dark and threatening world.

So she adds another voice to the poem—just one line—

‘Little black hoggie, we’ll keep thee from harm.’

That is her own naturally loving and deeply human voice: the voice of her maternal instincts, her protective concern for the one lost sheep.

Did I just slide over into a Jesus parable there? Do I need to point a moral, make the connection? We live in a winter world of gates and barriers and walls—think of Trump’s boasted fortress....to keep out the migrants and the refugees and make America great! A world where the madness of civil war and the inflictions of drought and desperate poverty have brought down a moral ice-age for millions of human beings. A world where wealth and privilege declare, ‘Shut the gate! Keep them out!’

Will yours be the voice that calms and reassures:

‘Little black hoggie, we’ll keep thee from harm.’

And will you help to unbar and swing open the great heavy gate?