

# DUNEDIN METHODIST PARISH

*Finding Good in everyone Finding God in everyone*

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



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## PARISH BULLETIN

25<sup>th</sup> April 2021

### WORSHIP FOR SUNDAY 2 May 2021

9.30 am	Mornington	R Mitchell
10.00 am	Mosgiel	G Hughson
11.00 am	Glenaven	D Poultney
	St Kilda	TBA

### DATES TO REMEMBER

Tues 4<sup>th</sup> May 2021 @ 7.30pm – Mornington Leaders Meeting  
 Thurs 6<sup>th</sup> May @ 7pm – Faith Thinking Course, University of Otago

**MORNINGTON LEADERS' MEETING:** Tuesday 4th May 7.30 p.m.

## **FAITH THINKING COURSE**

**Going Deeper into 1 Corinthians** with Professor Paul Trebilco, Theology Programme, University of Otago. 7-9pm, Thursday May 6, 13, 20. Burns 7. This Course costs \$20. To enrol please go to:

<https://www.otago.ac.nz/continuingeducation/index.html>

Faith Thinking courses are jointly organised between the Theology Programme and some Dunedin Churches, and supported by Continuing Education at the University of Otago.



My father will die very soon.

He has four competing conditions; idiopathic pulmonary fibrosis, a high susceptibility to strokes, a pre-leukemic blood condition, and heart disease. He stopped talking a week or so ago, has almost stopped eating, and everywhere other than bed is now too painful for him.

He is in Glasgow so the problem of hospitals and hospices being COVID-19 reservoirs has been a hugely complicating factor, and when he does get an (until very recently, rather rare) home visit from a medical professional they are have worn the kind of gear normally used for cleaning up hazardous material spills.

He is ill enough that were he in New Zealand he would be in a hospice, and were he a resident of the Netherlands, Luxembourg, Canada, Belgium, Québec, or Colombia, he would almost certainly have taken up the option of euthanasia by now.

They live in a two storey Victorian house that is crumbling at the edges, and my stepmother wrenched her knee a month ago (her physio appointments have been by phone)..The bedrooms are upstairs, kitchen and everything else on the ground floor.

This situation will be playing out for thousands of families in the UK right now, so: no complaints. That is not the point of this piece.

This is: for 30 of my 54 years, my father and I were estranged; in the absolute “never darken my doorstep again” way of people (in this case, me) who are unable to stay healthy and in relationship. (As recently as 10 years ago being asked in a workshop along with a dozen other people to imagine a happy time in childhood left me struggling to stay present in the room.)

Of course, we have both changed in the last 40 years. Career success, a new marriage and second daughter, time, and no doubt some of the havoc I wreaked on my way out the door, have mellowed him.

For me, well, I have grown too: the people I have rubbed up against and who have rubbed up against me, the opportunity to learn and learn again, the experience of being forgiven for trespasses, time and achievements, these have left me more robust and less fearful. (And recognising, not always happily, that in many ways I am my father’s daughter: a similar drive, a similar iconoclasm, a similar strength in morality, and, regrettably, very similar self-indulgences!)

The rapprochement that has been managed in these last years has been built, I think, on three generousities. My father’s apologies, careful and thoughtful, and (I know) quite costly to compose and deliver. And I have given the contact I could, because there are things and times in which we should do what we can, not what we like, or which makes us comfortable.

And thirdly, my sister's, caught in the crossfire since the age of 5, persistence in loving us both, forever gently stitching up small, tiny, *nano*-filaments, of connection through her, carrying for us both a sense of family we could both connect to, eventually.

So, not a *happy* family. But, a peaceable one, just, in time.

Laura Black