

DUNEDIN METHODIST PARISH

Finding Good in everyone Finding God in everyone

www.dunedinmethodist.org.nz



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PARISH BULLETIN

13 June 2021

WORSHIP FOR SUNDAY 20 June 2021

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

DATES TO REMEMBER

Wednesday 16th June – Open Education, 7.30pm (Mornington Church)

OPEN EDUCATION

Now in his nineties, David Attenborough is passionate about the impact we humans are having on the planet. He has recently made a number of powerful and poetic films about the beauty and diversity of life in the natural world, and our threat to it all. A Perfect Planet is one of the finest of them, and Open Education takes up the theme of Climate Change and what is happening to our environment by showing this important Attenborough documentary on Wednesday 16 June at 7.30pm in the Methodist church, Galloway Street. Your koha of \$5 (or more) will go to the Department of Conservation's efforts to save some of our own precious wild life. Do come along and enjoy a warm night at the movies! Sorry—popcorn not allowed.

STORY FROM THE MISSION



Corrections Foundation Skills

Foundation Skills give learners the tools and the confidence to communicate clearly. Recently a learner, as part of their work, drafted a letter to the Parole Board that would provide an insight into what he had achieved and what he hoped for the future. Colin has worked closely with this learner for over six months, and the way the learner approached this letter showed a maturity and a depth of understanding that indicated he had come a long way since he first started in the Foundation classes. He drafted a letter that was meaningful and insightful with a vision for the future - this is the context for which Foundation Skills programme is designed.

If you would like to support the Mission's work with a donation, please visit www.givealittle.co.nz and search for The Methodist Mission



IMPATIENCE - A GIFT FROM GOD?

At least one of the more prominent political interrogators has the, for me, most irritating habit of asking her prey whether they will promise to do this or that thing. I can easily accept that there are questions that demand a quick answer because they relate to crucial events within society – how long does matter. We need to know when something important is going to happen. But when it is a large and still theoretical issue, it would be careless, or irresponsible, to set a date when much is at stake.

On the other hand there are just such matters. An issue comes to the point of negotiation, again and again and little is resolved. Like the situation that has arisen, after many months, in respect to pay rates for nurses. They have been in the front-line, as it were, for so long, and have reason to feel that the justice of their claims has not been taken seriously by their employing bodies. These latter might want more time, but without the pressure of impatience will anything be achieved. It was encouraging, therefore, to hear the Minister of Health voice his understanding of the nurses' decision to take stop-work action.

In the struggle for justice there's a paradox, a psychological one. It demands both impatience and patience - impatience about injustice, and patience about justice. So why not be impatient about justice?

A famous example of this occurred at the end of the 19th century, concerning an army officer accused of treason. To some the falsity of the accusation (as proved to be the case) was such that they decided to involve the whole of their country in setting matters right. A prominent novelist/journalist, Émile Zola, wrote an article entitled "J'accuse!" and, as a result, threw France, into crisis for the sake of one man.

The establishment of justice involves not only revisions in opinions but also revisions in institutions – but governments, and lots of ordinary folk, don't like the boat being rocked. It's not necessarily a betrayal of social justice to tread carefully and tenaciously. Having scruples, being prudent, isn't of itself a weakness. Tenacity is what patience looks like in the middle of a struggle.

A contemporary writer has already suggested that historians will record the early decades of the 21st century as being a time when we became an unforgiving world – made up of furies, in search of guilt and shame, sanctimonious and unforgiving. One strident part of that world is made up of Christians who want more people to become Christians like themselves. But it is not only Christians. of course, who see their way of thinking as the only way.

Is not the very heart of justice the acknowledgement that the one least like us is nevertheless human like us. If we are charitable towards our neighbour, it is not because they are alien beings. We act out of solidarity because we are like them, and they are like us. The victim must not be the only one who understands the nature of oppression – all must learn. Our charity to a victim is to enable them to help themselves - human dignity demands it.

There is a very puzzling saying of Jesus: "I have come to bring fire to the earth, and how I wish it were blazing already. There is a baptism I must still receive, and how great is my distress till it is over." Are not those the words of someone impatient for justice. Jesus believed intensely that his task was God-given - a task set by a loving God. How was he going to achieve any sort of justice in his life given the tools he had – a dozen or so friends who didn't really understand him. He couldn't do it alone. But the baptism of fire he finally received is changing the world, has changed us. We are his 21st century friends – do we want his justice for ourselves.

Donald Phillipps