

DUNEDIN METHODIST PARISH

Finding Good in everyone Finding God in everyone

www.dunedinmethodist.org.nz



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PARISH BULLETIN

27 February 2022

WORSHIP FOR Sunday 6 March 2022

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

DATES TO REMEMBER

Wednesday 2nd March (Ash Wednesday) – Silent Meditative Session, 1pm
Mornington Church

Thurs 3rd March @ 2.30pm – Lenten Bible Study at the Mosgiel Church

LEFT OR LOST cushion in GREEN COVER WITH HANDLES Name inside. If found please phone 489 7663 or 021141 829.

A SACRED SPACE ON ASH WEDNESDAY

On Ash Wednesday, Wednesday 2nd March, I will be running a largely silent and meditative hour long session at Mornington Church from 1pm. It will begin and end with words but most of the time is silent for your reflection, prayer or simply relaxing in the quiet. The working name for this session is Eremos or wilderness.

I may go on to arrange other sessions over Lent. David

LENTEN BIBLE STUDY

There will be a Bible Study course held at Mosgiel Church starting on Thursday 3rd at 2.30pm. I appreciate some might not want to make the journey or are wary of meetings due to the present situation with Omicron. I am happy to email resources to you on request, just let me know. David



Please do
Join Us

- Read our stories about the Mission's impact.
- Hear about the Mission's work.
- Be part of our community.
- Support us in prayer, word or deed.
- Keep up to date with future events.

Email or ring Julie to join - julier@mmsouth.org.nz — Tel: 027 267 8140





WHY LENT?

The season of Lent is about to begin. The first day for us is Wednesday, March 2nd and it continues for forty days, not counting Sundays. You might know that Lent is a solemn observance, reminding us of Jesus' forty days spent fasting in the wilderness. The Gospels tell us that Jesus was tempted by Satan three times during this time of trial and overcame these temptations by quoting scripture. The Lenten season is traditionally a time of penitence and fasting, of giving up pleasures, of preparation for the high holy days of Easter. Fasting, or abstaining from food, has a long history within the Abrahamic faiths and is found in many early Christian traditions, especially those relating to baptism.

The word Lent comes from the Old English word *lencten*, meaning spring season. It might refer to the lengthening of days in spring. The earliest mentions of Lent as a forty day fast are in the Council of Nicea (325 CE) and by St Athanasius (298-373 CE). The dates vary between modern-day denominations but all end by Holy Saturday.

Nowadays Lent is not as important as it once was. Most of us would rather focus on the joys of Easter (all that chocolate...) that get caught up in the somberness of Lent. But still, when we come to church we will see the altar dressed in purple, the symbolic colour of Lent. Why purple? It was the most expensive dye to make, involving the deaths of many laboriously gathered snails. Only royalty could afford purple cloth, and as the story goes in the gospel of Mark, the soldiers dressed Jesus in a purple robe and mocked his kingship. By choosing purple as the colour of Lent, the early church turned this mockery on its head and made it a shining part of the Lenten observance, honouring the one called "King of the Jews" on his cross.

Lent is a time for repentance and spiritual discipline. The focus on the past has been giving up meat, wine and dairy either for the entire forty

days or just Fridays that fall in the Lenten period. Sexual abstinence was also considered holy. Although these disciplines are still valuable, I'd like to suggest that there are other things we could give up that would create not only spiritual discipline but renewal in our culture and environment.

1. Give up a grudge or angry thoughts you are holding towards someone and offer them the hand of forgiveness.
2. Give up feeling annoyed towards the unvaccinated and others with whom we disagree. Instead show them compassion and try to understand their point of view.
3. Give up buying goods that you don't need. Try going the whole forty days without buying any new clothing, consumer electronics or expensive toys. Save money and donate it to charity instead.
4. Give up exploiting the environment. Try to drive less and cut down on your carbon footprint in other ways too. Get out your bike or take the bus.

These sacrifices, in our world of abundance, are as difficult as abstaining from food was in the past. They may even set you on a path of less consumption overall. For Lent can mean something holy all year round if we let it. I'd like to close with these words of St Augustine (354-430 CE, Sermon 205):

Christians must always live this way, without any wish to come down from their Cross—otherwise they will sink beneath the world's mire. But if we have to do so all our lives, we must make even a greater effort during the days of Lent. It is not a simple matter of living through forty days. Lent is the epitome of our whole life.

Susan Hamel