

DUNEDIN METHODIST PARISH

Finding Good in everyone Finding God in everyone

www.dunedinmethodist.org.nz



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PARISH BULLETIN 18 February 2024

WORSHIP FOR SUNDAY – 25 February 2024

9.30 am	Mornington	M & J Hardy
10:00 am	Mosgiel	D Poultney
11:00 am	Glenaven	G Hughson

JOINT SERVICES IN 2024 - All at 10am

Mornington, May 19th

Pentecost - Guest Preacher Rev Peter Taylor President of MCNZ.

Mosgiel, June 30th

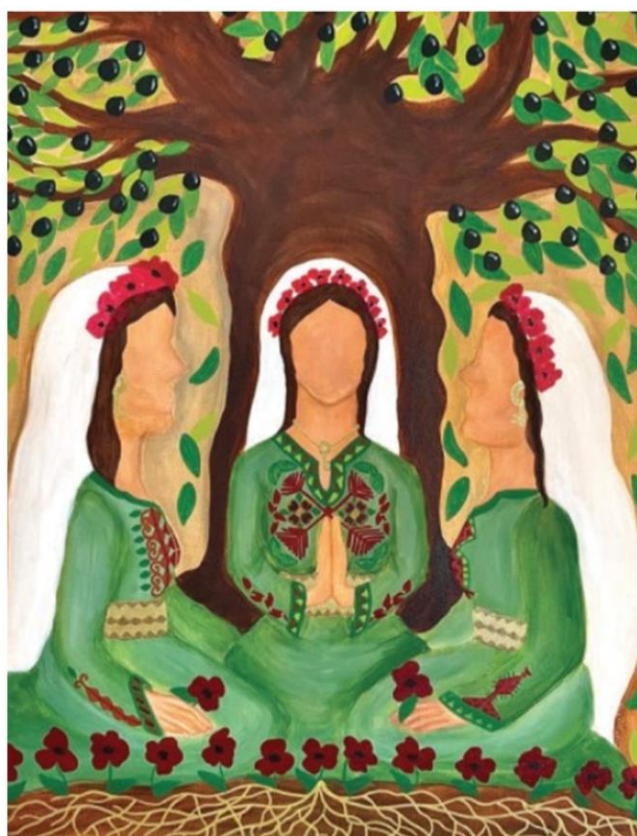
Glenaven, September 29th

Mornington, December 29th

MEETING OF THE MORNINGTON METHODIST WOMEN'S FELLOWSHIP. Wednesday 28th February in the Mornington Methodist Church at 12 noon.

All members and friends of the Mornington Methodist Church are invited to join in our social lunch to start off our year. Please note we will be meeting at 12 noon for a light lunch. This will be provided for you by the committee.

Please bring along to share in general conversation, a photograph, or a memory of summer holidays.



World Day of Prayer

Friday 1st March 2024

**“I Beg You... Bear
With One Another in Love”**

*A service prepared by the
WDP Committee of Palestine*

The Mornington Women's Fellowship hope to join this as a group outing.

Please let Andrea or Joyce know if you are interested.

Date Friday 1st March 2024
Time 10am for morning tea - Service 10:30am
Where St John's Roslyn Anglican Church

HEADLINES FROM PARISH COUNCIL

Parish Council met on Wednesday 14th, these are some of the key points from the meeting.

- Plans have been drawn up for the strengthening work and the next step will be seeking council consent .
- Synod is funding a new roof for the hall at Mosgiel Church. Work is expected to start in three weeks.
- Methodist Mission Southern is in a strong position and this is reflected in the Board working on a ten year Strategic Development plan.
- St Kilda Tongan is looking to expand their hall and believes it can fund this.
- Following a review of the trial of having joint services at 11.00 am it has been decided to revert to joint services at 10 am with refreshments to follow.
- The renovation of the Queen's Street property is taking a little longer than anticipated, it will be a boon to our finances when we are in a position to retenant it.

LENT STUDY

There will be a Lenten Study group meeting on Fridays over Lent (though not Good Friday) at 3pm in Mosgiel Church. I have ordered a book called Loving my Neighbour for our Lenten Study, hopefully it will be here on time but if it isn't I will prepare some material for the first session.

David



LIVING IN THE MOMENT

Mindfulness comes in all sorts of forms, its Zen Buddhist origins clear in Rod Mitchell's Connections article last week. I have a different take on it, that is not like the Buddhist idea of detachment, but rather its opposite. It seems to me there is a richness in every moment that is wasted if we don't grasp it. Carpe diem/Seize the day...

Because we don't know what will happen tomorrow, or even in the next half-hour, I have come to believe it's a good thing to live in the present, rather than always harking back to the past – or, at another extreme, working up a fruitless anxiety about the future. Of course the past is important. It has formed the way we live in the present, and for Maori, past and present are inextricably joined, with the tupuna/ancestors invoked to be present alongside mourners at a tangi, – and on every ceremonial occasion. What I mean is that living in the present is a choice you can make. Deciding to do it can help you realize that its opposite (living with guilt or regrets over things you've done or not done, or being eaten up by anxiety and nerves) is a choice too, something you (and only you) can change.

What's the difference between living in the present and living in the moment? You can do both, actually, but spending a day in the present is more achievable. Living in

the moment for every minute of every day is not something anyone – except perhaps contemplative monks – would choose or be able to do. That's because of the difference between a minute (simply a measurement of time) and a moment, which is of indeterminate length and can be highly charged with emotion and meaning. A good example of a heightened moment is the experience Peter and the other disciples have in the episode (Mark 9:2-9) called the Transfiguration, where they see Jesus transformed in a vision, conversing with Moses and Elijah on a hill-top.

Living in the moment is, of course, a luxury many people do not have. The people of the Ukraine, and of Gaza, for instance, are forced to live in the present because there's no other option. For thousands, their past lives – and their native land – lie in ruins; it's likely they cannot conceive of some other peaceful place where they might be able to live in the future. Large numbers of people are on the move, living and suffering in the moment with each step along a very long road. News photographs of their experience have come to symbolize the dispossession and chaos of their situation, as did a famous shot of a child running, burned by napalm, in the Vietnam War. A reporter's camera can capture one of these moments of agony and freeze it forever.

And the same goes for a moment's experience of ecstasy, like the one described in last week's gospel reading. Peter is so excited to be given a vision of Jesus talking with Moses and Elijah, that he cries out: "Rabbi, it is good for us to be here; let us make three dwellings, one for you, one for Moses, and one for Elijah." He wants to

capture the experience, preserve it for the glorious moment that it is. But then suddenly it's over...

For me – and I know I'm not alone in this – capturing the moment is the whole aim of photography, and taking photos becomes very close to a form of meditation. In the practice of mindfulness, we are encouraged to focus on the here and now, and appreciate all the dimensions of the present, because very soon it is going to be past. The purposeful gaze shows up details and qualities that we'd ignore if we weren't looking at them so intently. You could even call it a form of prayer, in which thankfulness plays a large part. I'm not a news photographer (that's a different skill) but mindfulness has turned me into a student of the natural world.

I'm not alone in that, either. I know of at least three Dunedin men who have taken up nature photography in retirement from their different jobs: one is an ordained Methodist minister, another was an Anglican bishop, in charge of a large southern diocese. The third, a practising Catholic and peace activist, turned his hobby into a way of earning a living, publishing books about Otago's wildlife and other attractions.

They would probably agree with me that this practice makes one humble, because we set out to capture a moment in a cosmos that is so vast, it takes your breath away. We didn't set out to capture the divinity, but I find that in focusing closely on the exquisite beauty of the world around me – as my husband does with his flowers – I can perceive just a hint of the wairua/spirit, the mauri/life-principle in all things. Because it is such a contrast with the negative ideas and images on the news, it pulls me up short with recognition of what good is also

there, just below the surface; and because a captured moment is just an infinitesimally small part of the Universe, I allow myself to feel its full force. In its richness it makes me more able to face the awful truths about our human condition, including the very worst things that human beings can do to each other. It helps me counter these things, knowing there's more to life than endless tragedy and waste. I'm not meaning to document history, or claim a superior theology, just witnessing to some everyday form of divine joy, and as long as the natural world lives on, I believe something of that joy is accessible to anyone. Just for a moment.

Helen Watson White