

DUNEDIN METHODIST PARISH

Finding Good in everyone Finding God in everyone

www.dunedinmethodist.org.nz



Find us on Facebook: Dunedin Methodist Parish

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PARISH BULLETIN

19 APRIL 2026

WORSHIP FOR SUNDAY – 26 APRIL 2026

9.30AM	Mornington Church	Rod Mitchell
10.00AM	Mosgiel Church	Ian Boddy
11.00AM	Glenaven Church	Susan Hamel

RADIO CHURCH

8.30am		Anne Thomson – Knox Church
	OAR 105.4FM	
	1575AM	
Live stream	oar.org.nz	

Please note you can now listen to RADIO CHURCH every Sunday on OAR 105.4FM, 1575AM or Livestream via oar.org.nz

Services at Mornington can be watched on YouTube:

<https://www.youtube.com/@morningtonmethodist1598>



UPCOMING event Dates

Notices



WOMEN'S BIBLE STUDY GROUP

I'm putting out the word on a group I'd like to start if there is support. We would meet once a month, most likely home-based, for coffee, conversation and a fresh look at the scriptures emphasising the contributions of women. Contact Rev Susan (022 657 8303) if you are interested and I'll set a date for the first meeting in May.

150th Year Celebration Booklets

Printed copies of the 150-day journey booklet are available, they will represent the run-up to our 150th year celebrations to be held in September 2026.

Rod Mitchell will have copies at church available for \$10. A bank account number will be given to anyone who pays by card.

Those people reading this bulletin outside Mornington Methodist church who might like a copy, please get in touch with Rod Mitchell at email: roddieg60@gmail.com with details of address and contact details.

Mornington Fellowship Subs

A reminder that NZMWF national subscriptions are due to be paid by the end of June 2026.

These subscriptions support the national work of the Fellowship, helping to connect women's groups across Aotearoa and assist with coordination, communication, and shared fellowship activities.

I will have my receipt book available at the two next Fellowship meetings for anyone who would like to pay the \$6 annual subscription.

This is entirely optional and there is no expectation for anyone to contribute.

From your Treasurer, Julie x



Mosgiel Reflection 19/05/2026

-Jesus belongs to the entire world.

This statement came from a significant speech by the co-leader of the Green Party, Dr Russell Norman. Initial commentary by David Kitchingman on thoughts by Dr Russell Norman in 2011.

A fellow member of the Methodist Liberal Society, Michael Dymond, sent the text and video link to me. He added that he had been moved to tears by the spirited relevance and power of Russell Norman's words. Then, the political commentator, Colin James, wrote under the caption, "Christian values seen as not just for believers" (*ODT*, 27.12.11, 4). He began by saying, "It can at times take an atheist to remind us of some of the true messages of Christmas". I also spotted "Passing Notes" by Civis, headed: "Norman's address deserves attention" (*ODT*, 7.1.12). I'm not keen on anonymous columns or editorials but at least Civis was open about not having voted for a Green candidate or for the Green Party. Yet he began his own assessment by saying, "It [the Address] has been described as "the best ever Christmas sermon preached by an atheist". Finally, there was a "Faith and Reason" column by Ian Harris, headed: "Values for all to share" (*ODT*, 13.1.12). Harris suggested that "there was much for Christians and non-Christians to learn from the wisdom of political leader Dr Russell Norman", adding that "unlike many who profess atheism, [Norman] was open enough to find much good in Christianity".

So what did Norman say? The full text is at <http://inthehouse.co.nz/node/11150>, but here are a few of his points at the beginning of the speech: "...The story of the incarnation of God in a baby born in a stable is remarkable even to me an atheist... It's a story that god decreed that...freedom and equality must characterise life here on earth...[what] I admire about the Christmas story is that it speaks to values I share... Mahatma Gandhi said: "I believe that Jesus belongs not only to Christianity but to the entire world, to all races and to all people. " Gandhi was right. The hopes and values Jesus Christ articulated during the course of his short life are too important to belong only to Christians. They belong to us all: believers and non-believers alike... I identify with the Christianity that teaches love and compassion towards each other, especially the most vulnerable... I identify with the Christianity that demands we live with truth and justice between one another... I identify with the Christianity that teaches an awe and respect for the natural world... Those values of love, generosity, and a reverence for nature should not sound so out of place in this Parliament. But the talk in here is dominated by a different kind of worship – one of economic growth at all costs...". There is an aspect to this that is both neglected and distorted by most Christians. I begin by hazarding a guess as to how most Christians and churches would respond to such statements as Gandhi in his time and now Norman has made.

There is, of course, much to support the assumption that the Church, the Bible, and Christianity are the conduits through which the Jesus legacy has been transmitted. There is ample support for it in the New Testament texts themselves, which after all were a product of the early, if not exactly the primitive, Church. Yet scattered here and there among them are ample hints (I' sure you can think of some) to suggest that a closed shop mentality runs the risk of disguising the authentic Jesus. All that we can safely say within the Church is that we own the most venerable and prevailing version of Jesus. That is not quite the same as owning Jesus altogether, and if it were, it would be a denial of his free spirit. When Gandhi adopted passive resistance, he picked up from under the noses of the British colonial power a trait of Jesus that had been smothered by western Christendom. So too, in the 19th century, much earlier than Gandhi, Te Whiti and Tohu employed similar tactics at Parihaka in Taranaki. Nothing in my childhood church life in New Plymouth gave me the slightest inkling of that particular Jesus influence, yet, with little thanks to the Church, the reverberations of it are still to be felt. Echoes sounded on Waitangi Day this last week during National Radio interviews with Taranaki Māori. While Russell Norman is likely to remain an atheist, he has, in his own way, made a leap of faith to identify with the hopes and values of the particular Christianity he caught a vision of at Christmas. But it takes two to tango.

It will take a giant leap of faith in the other direction for Christians to identify with a hope-filled and value-filled belief-free, Jesus-inspired commitment that struggles to be born all around us. Jesus belongs to us all: believers and non-believers alike. Are we capable of getting our heads around that? So far, not so good. But if, without burning our bridges to the glorious Gospel story, we could be bold enough to contemplate a Jesus without a godlike gloss as one other meaningful option for many, it would have a profound effect on our Church ethos, worship, and outreach. And what if we Christians turn down the invitation to tango? The aching gap between us and the rest of our contemporaries will go on widening relentlessly and an epoch-making opportunity will have been lost.

The values of freedom and equality seen in the Christmas message... the words "I identify with the Christianity that teaches love and compassion towards each other, especially the most vulnerable... I identify with the Christianity that demands we live with truth and justice between one another... I identify with the Christianity that teaches an awe and respect for the natural world... Those values of love, generosity, and a reverence for nature should not sound so out of place in this Parliament." Or indeed anywhere in this society.

Revised by Dr George Davis, April 2026.