



Dunedin Methodist Parish

Finding Good in everyone Finding God in everyone

www.dunedinmethodist.org.nz

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PARISH BULLETIN

30th SEPTEMBER 2012

WORSHIP FOR SUNDAY 7th OCTOBER 2012

9.30am	Mornington	D Phillipps
9.30 am	Mosgiel	K Russell
11.00 am	Glenaven	D Phillipps
11.00 am	Wesley	K Russell
1.00pm	St Kilda	Comb. Wesley
4.00pm	Broad Bay	K Russell

EXPLORERS GROUP

Will meet 4-30pm on Sunday 30th September in the Mornington Church Lounge. All welcome

BECOMING LIFE WISE WITH OPEN EDUCATION

The Mornington Methodist Church, Galloway Street, invites you to join a conversation on life experience as several 80 year-olds (and more) discuss what they have seen and learned in their lifetimes. An Open Education programme of the Dunedin Methodist Parish, on Wednesday 17 October, starting at 7.30pm (the charge of \$5 includes supper). A pre-session meal catered by Judy Russell commences at 6pm (\$15). Book your place in advance by ringing Judy (455 3727): we can guarantee that the food won't be as mature (did someone say 'old'?) as the speakers!

BROAD BAY CHURCH

Will meet at 6.00pm on the first and third Sunday's as from 7th October 2012 through the Summer until 17th March 2013.

THANK YOU

On behalf of Naomi and my family I would like to convey to everyone in the parish our sincere thanks and appreciation for your financial help, thoughtful prayer, and pastoral care during the death of Naomi's youngest sister. It was your care and love that gave us the energy to cope with this great loss in our family. Our presence in Tonga means a lot to the family of Naomi's youngest sister and the whole of the Tongan community. May God bless you all and your families.

PRAYER REQUEST

We have a lot of sick people in the parish and they need our Prayers. It is through our prayers that we commit them to God and at the same time connect us with them. In our prayers we assure that they are not alone. Please Pray for the sick, the frail, and the lonely.

HOLIDAY

I will be away from work from the 2nd to 8th of October on Holiday. While I am away the Parish stewards: George Davis, Richard Cannon, and Hilda Hughson will look after the administration of the parish.



WHO BENEFITS?

Over the last month the ODT has reported on what the government is thinking about welfare:

- Drug testing on way for jobseekers (28/8/12)
- Poverty line measurement not a priority: Bennett (16/8/12)
- Crims on run to lose benefits (5/9/12)
- \$78b for a lifetime of benefits: report (12/9/12)
- Beneficiary education move shocks childhood experts (12/9/12)

You could be excused for thinking *by golly, this would be a good time to not be on welfare*, and you'd be right! Because if you were on a benefit, you'd probably be thinking: *well ok, but where are the jobs?*

Looking a little bit further than the ODT, The National Business Review (yes, really) has an answer: *Get used to higher unemployment say economists* (17/8/12). Radio New Zealand takes a good punt at it too: *Manufacturers criticise govt for failing to stem job losses* (11/9/12) and *NZ economy lost jobs* (13/9/12).

Casting our net wider (for there are an inestimable number of fish in this sea!) we find in the (statistically rotten-to-the-core) national standards results published this week educational achievement tracks with family poverty. Not that this wasn't known already – the OECD published just last week on this very matter, explaining that the resources at home that feed learning (literally and figuratively) are crucial to success at school.

It's now possible to say these – entirely accurate – things about poverty in New Zealand:

- Poverty is associated with lack of work;
- Poverty recycles itself, poor parents generally raise poor children and poor children generally become low-income adults ...
- Low inflation and high interest rates (NZ's congenital condition) cause a high exchange rate, which hampers our export economy, which produces ...
- Higher levels of unemployment.

So who benefits when the government sets about so ferociously blaming those on welfare for their plight?

Michel Sandel, the American philosopher and Harvard Professor, has said that *It isn't just that [inequality] is unfair to those at the bottom; it's that too great a gap between the haves and the have-nots hollows out civic life. It diminishes the possibility that we can share and live a common life, sufficient to foster shared values, sufficient to the kind of life and the kind of citizenship wherein we can deliberate about common purposes and ends.*

Prof Sandel is suggesting, very strongly, that no-one wins when the government tries to leverage political benefit from high welfare needs. Yet they keep doing it. Why is that?

For the record, the Council of Trade Unions has just this month published its list of 10 Actions to Reduce Poverty in New Zealand. They are:

1. Raise the minimum wage aggressively, now.
2. Increase incomes to households reliant on welfare benefits.
3. Provide GOOD jobs.
4. Create the conditions for good employment practices and job creation.
5. Provide strong public health programmes and services.
6. Ensure access to low cost, good quality housing.
7. Make sure children have good nutrition and enough food.

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8. Build education and skill levels, and the rewards for them.
9. Reinststitute the 38% tax rate for very high earners, while reducing the rate of GST.
10. Provide low-cost access to essential public services (e.g. electricity).

To find out more take a look at

<http://union.org.nz/news/2012/ten-actions-reduce-poverty-new-zealand>.

Laura Black

Story from the Mission

My story this month relates to my attendance at two workshops - Te Oranga Tonu Tunga (TOTTs) which is the Maori Mental Health Provider based at Wakari Hospital, and Korkori Centre - Dr Nicole Koop speaking about Maori suicide.

After listening to these two providers, I recognised the need for all people to have a sense of belonging, of who they are, and where they fit - not only in their family but also in society. As a result of this we created a theme for the afterschool group based on family trees at Arahina.

This was a complex planning event as several children live with step parents, foster parents, adopted parents, and 'caregivers', with several access options; some of whom live with one parent one week then the other parent the next week. I downloaded several templates for the 'family tree' I sent a letter home to all parents notifying them we would be completing our family tree over this coming term, this was so parents would be prepared for some of the questions that would arise from this.

We engaged all children after explaining the concept of family tree, and there are no right or wrong answers. One particular child had known his father's first name, but no other information, as a result of this activity he had discussions with his mother and has decided to pursue contact with this father; we have been very careful to monitor and support the family through this process making the child aware that his Father may not want to have contact; Mum agreed to make contact first.

The outcome of this is this boy now has contact with his Dad via txt once per month as a starting point. He now says he has a father for the first time, a real father; He is OK that he does not see him, but can be like other kids and say he does have a Dad; he just doesn't live with them. This child's behaviours have changed for the good, due to I believe a sense of belonging to 'two families'.