

Motueka Uniting Parish
Newsletter
Apr-May 2012

“To be Christ Centred and Community Focused”

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Editorial:
Are You Happy or Fulfilled?

A person can do nothing better than to eat and drink and find satisfaction in their own toil. This too, I see, is from the hand of God, for without God, who can eat or find enjoyment? To the person who pleases God, is given wisdom, knowledge and happiness, but to the sinner God gives the task of gathering and storing up wealth to hand it over to the one who pleases. This too is meaningless, a chasing after the wind (Ecclesiastes 2:24-26).

In the Garden of Gethsemane

Before the dawn of Easter
There came Gethsemane ...
Before the Resurrection
There were hours of agony ...
For there can be no crown of stars
Without a cross to bear,
And there is no salvation
Without FAITH and LOVE and PRAYER,
And when we take our needs to God
Let us pray as did His Son
That dark night in Gethsemane -
'THY WILL, NOT MINE, BE DONE'.

Helen Steiner Rice

Sometime ago, I spoke about the connection between happiness and gratitude. It was a rather superficial expose of the topic so in this editorial I would like to explore some of the thinking behind that brief précis. In his latest book, philosopher, Alain de Botton opines, “I don't believe that happiness is a very good word or a very useful thing to aim for. I prefer words like fulfilment. I think a good life is compatible with a great deal of confusion and suffering and headaches, and I think the focus on happiness can be in danger of just missing things ... I think the best thing you can do to cheer someone up is to say something pretty dark to them, which is something that the happiness movement

can't quite grasp."

While Christians are often criticised for always appearing to be happy, Christianity cannot be described as a happiness movement and I do not believe the *telos* of Christianity is solely happiness. However, happiness can be the evidence of a relationship with God. As the above passage from Ecclesiastes suggests, the person who pleases God, finds wisdom, knowledge and happiness. The verbal form of the Hebrew word which has been translated "happiness", means to consider fortunate, be happy, be blessed. The formula "happy/blessed is..." occurs many times in the First Testament and can be found in the author of Matthew's beatitude statements (Matthew 5;3-12). The Greek word *makarios* can be translated blessed, happy and fortunate.

Happy/blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

Happy/blessed are those who mourn, for they will be comforted.

Happy/blessed are the meek, for they will inherit the earth.

Happy/blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they will be filled.

Happy/blessed are the merciful, for they will receive mercy.

Happy/blessed are the pure in heart, for they will see God.

Happy/blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called children of God.

Happy/blessed are those who are persecuted for righteousness' sake, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

Happy/blessed are you when people revile you and persecute you and utter all kinds of evil against you falsely on my account.

Rejoice and be glad, for your reward is great in heaven, for in the same way they persecuted the prophets who were before you.

It may seem rather paradoxical for those who mourn, to be happy at the same time, but I believe the author of Matthew is saying, no matter the circumstance of a Christian, in God there is always something to be thankful for. This is reiterated by the writer of the letter to the Thessalonians, "give thanks in all circumstances; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you" (1 Thess. 5:18).

Therefore Christians appear happy because they have learned how to be grateful, they thank God, they are thankful for life, they give thanks for the created order, they give thanks for the food they are about to eat, they can envisage the realisation of God's realm here on earth and are grateful for that. As they continue to walk in the way of Jesus, Christians begin to discover there is always something to be thankful for and being thankful, or grateful, is a precursor of happiness.

Of course the words "happiness" and "fulfilment" are signifiers waiting to be packed with meaning. Therefore, the meaning I pack into the word happiness is different from the meaning de Botton packs into the word happiness. I link the word happiness with gratitude and thankfulness, whereas de Botton links happiness with fulfilment and self-realisation. In recent times, there has been a preference, in philosophical circles, to use the word fulfilment in place of the word happiness. This is indicative of a resurgence in the reading and attempted signification of Greek thought.

There is nothing wrong with Greek thought, there is much in our world today for which we must give the ancient thinkers credit. Alain de Botton has picked up on Aristotelian thought, it was Aristotle who originally linked happiness with fulfilment and self-realisation. For Aristotle, happiness is to be identified, above all, with the fulfilment of one's human potentialities. However the downfall to this theory is that it promotes little or no regard for the other. The point I am making is that one cannot be happy unless that happiness is based on gratitude and thankfulness and that means an appreciation of and thankfulness for the other.

Let us further explore the meaning of the word fulfilment as de Botton uses it. Fulfilment for de Botton is all about the well-being of self. In other words, this conception centres on the idea of self-fulfilment, which I understand as nature-fulfilment or fulfilment of self. While it is important that each of us be given the opportunity to try and reach our potentialities, the pursuit of self-fulfilment can lead to the exercising of unhindered wills and desires. It can be very individualistic and the end does not justify the means. While the pursuit of self-fulfilment can lead to self-centredness, it can also lead to disillusionment and disappointment when we put all our emphasis on fulfilment and expect that to be an

attainable goal. I believe the key here is balance, in being to grateful and thankful we allow ourselves to be happy and experience happiness in our daily lives as we work toward achieving any goals we may have set for ourselves. Someone once said “there really can be joy in the journey” and what did Jesus teach? “I have said these things to you so that my joy may be in you” (John 15:11) and again in 1 Thessalonians we find the imperative, “rejoice always”. As a spiritual person, I simply do not believe we will ever reach and maintain fulfilment, to be truly human means we have evolved to seek more, to learn more, to do more, to be more... in that quest to 'fill in' and "complete" ourselves, but most importantly in that quest to realise God's realm here on earth.

I give thanks for the writings of Alain de Botton and others because they pose new challenges, stimulate new thoughts and new ideas and there add much as we all journey together.

*Shalom
Peter*

A visit to the Jewish Holocaust Centre

During a recent trip to Melbourne, a highlight was a visit to the Jewish Holocaust Centre, where we saw their unique display featuring documents and artefacts from Melbourne Holocaust families.

On entering, a guide appeared to show us around the centre, and we realised that she was a survivor. She was a young Polish teenager when the war started. I purchased a booklet she had written, where she described how she was on the run for 6 or 7 years. She wasn't able to speak of her experiences until over 40 years after she found freedom in Palestine.

Another guide we spoke to, from Lithuania, had actually been born in one of the camps and had been smuggled out where she lived with a family and was also able to survive.

As we left the Centre, I spoke to another guide who rolled up her sleeve and showed me the prison number forever etched in her skin.

I think we mostly associate these atrocities with affecting the Jews, but it was disturbing to realise that other groups of people were also affected: Jehovah's Witnesses, homosexuals, communists, Freemasons, handicapped and gypsies.

One of the important aspects of the centre is to encourage school groups to visit and learn that these things really did happen to real people.

Well worth a visit: Jewish Holocaust Centre
13-15 Selwyn Street
Elsternwick, Melbourne, Victoria 3185
www.jhc.org.au

Last year, I visited the Jewish Museum—also worthwhile visiting.

Jewish Museum of Australia
26 Alma Road
St Kilda, Melbourne, Victoria 3182

Bev & Ernie Dyke

Parish Council

- To give leadership in the spiritual life of the congregations and in discerning the mind of God for the mission of the Parish.
- To arrange regular services of public worship and the manner and frequency of the celebration of the sacraments.
- To provide for the oversight, care and welfare of the Parish Community.
- To provide and maintain the land and facilities for the Mission of the Church within the Parish.
- To be concerned for the Mission of the wider Church.
- To share the organisational and practical work of the Parish with the congregations.

· To form Work Groups with responsibility for specific areas of the above purposes.

Parish Council joins with the Minister in the leadership of the parish.

Our Parish Council is made up of the work group convenors, co-convenors, the parish clerk and treasurer. Council is elected by the congregation at the annual meeting. Terms are for two years with members able to be re-elected. We meet every two months (normally the 3rd Thursday) with the work groups meeting in the intervening month. The Minister is the Chair of Parish Council and attends all work group meetings. We encourage feedback from the congregation and we give feedback by way of the newsletter. *Remember you elect members to make decisions on your behalf!*

Catherine Dunkley, Parish Clerk

Potluck Church Picnic

Sunday, 26 February, was a perfect day for our Potluck Picnic at 'Constentia', Jim Fry's property situated up Hoddy Road—we were given very clear instructions as to how to get there—so nobody got lost! Jack Churchill provided a bus for transport—thanks Jack—what a thoughtful idea—and those with cars provided transport as well—about 60 people attended.

We had a great day. We all took a plate and what a variety of food, it was amazing. Jim & Noela had tables and sun umbrellas placed in sheltered positions.

Our Tongan friends brought a guitar and sang—so in this relaxed atmosphere, we feasted on a banquet, yarned to friends—old and new—and wandered around the gardens—and the children played on the slope down to the sea.

What else can I say, apart from 'Thank-you, Jim & Noela', you made us all feel at home and thank-you for allowing us all to have a wonderful day on your beautiful property.

Jenny Hope

Annual Quilt Show

**19-21 May at Moutere Hills Community Centre,
Upper Moutere**

A display of quilts made by members of the
Motueka Quilting Connection
and an exhibition of small quilts made by
New Zealand Quilters.

Open 10.00 am—4.00 pm daily.

Admission \$3—includes complementary refreshments.

Morning tea and other supplies. Spare supplies are kept in the cupboard in the corner of the lounge—labelled "Supplies Cupboard". In here you will find toilet rolls, detergent, liquid soap, tea, coffee, sugar, etc. All unopened packets. Unopened packets of biscuits are kept in the locked cupboard next to this—due to theft of these in the past. Spare toilet rolls are also kept in the hall cupboard—under the sink.

When items are opened and everyday containers filled, any spare items of tea, coffee, sugar are to be placed in the containers provided in the bottom drawer of the kitchen area. Cordial powder is kept in a container in this drawer also. Spare cordial is now hidden—due to the fact that new packets are continually opened and left in the supplies cupboard! Also found lately—an opened packet of sugar and opened packets of biscuits in these cupboards. These will attract ants and mice, which we do not

want.

Notice something is getting low? Check the supplies cupboard first, then let Catherine (5267478) know, before it runs out.

Stitch & Chat:

The Stitch & Chat group meets at 2.00 pm in the Church lounge on the 1st and 3rd Tuesday each month. You are most welcome to come along and bring a friend. Phone Barbara for any queries, 528 7788.

Report from Marlene's Home Group:

A casual walk on a pleasant March evening was enjoyed by Marlene Greenland's Home Group. It was interesting to see the seat dedicated to Pat Jenkin, situated on a tiny island with a beautiful view. The next meeting of Marlene's group on Monday, 9 April, will be to view and discuss a DVD on the work of surgeon Ben Carson.

Come and enjoy this friendly group from 7.00 pm

Elizabeth's Home Group

We ask the hard questions and the easy questions and relate the scripture to our faith. Have you ever been bulldozed over? When were you a bridge for someone else? Why do good people suffer? How do we cope when bad things happen to us? Is the scripture helpful?

"God's power is strongest when I am weak" (2 Corinthians 12:9)

We meet on the 4th Thursday of every month at 2.00 pm.
You are welcome to attend.

Social/Community Issues:

There has been no Social Issues meeting so far this year. It seems the calendar has been rather full. However, in the near future, Constable Grant Heney will be speaking on Tasers, Police Photography and Crime Scene Investigation. Watch the Weekly Bulletin for further details.

St Andrews Choir:

Choir practices for 'Easter to Pentecost' Concert, at 2.00 pm Sunday, 22 April at St Peter Chanel Church. Sunday, 1 April Combined practice at St Andrews 11.15 - 12.30 noon.

Friday, 6 April, St Andrews' Choir to sing for Good Friday. Warm up at 9.10 am.

Sunday, 8 April, St Andrews' Choir to sing for Easter Sunday. Warm up at 9.10 am. Choir practice after Church as well.

Sunday, 15 April, Combined practice at St Peter Chanel 11.15 - 12.30 noon.

Tuesday, 17 April, Combined practice with the Motueka Band 7.30 - 8.00 pm at Band Rooms.

Sunday, 22 April, warm up practice at 1.00 pm at St Peter Chanel. Concert at 2.00 pm.

Your attendance at these practices will contribute to a successful celebration concert. Thank you all.

Rejoice! Rejoice!

	8	9.30	am	Easter Sunday Service "A New Conversation"
	15	9.30	am	Family Worship. Children's Church.
	22	9.30	am	Family Worship.
	29	9.30	am	Family Worship.
MAY	6	9.30	am	Family Worship. Communion (front) Mother's Day
	13	9.30	am	Family Worship. Peter on holiday. Christian Education & Worship Work Group to lead Service.
	20	9.30am		Family Worship. Children's Church. Norma George to lead Service. Wesley Day.
	27	9.30am		Family Worship.

Need a drink of water during a service? A jug of water and some glasses will be available in the foyer for those requiring a drink during a service. Door stewards will assist you.

Womens Fellowship 2012

Meets on Wednesday, 18 April at 2.00 pm at Jean Cottom's. The May meeting will be on Wednesday, 16 May at 2.00 pm in the Church lounge—special project. For further information, or if you need transport, contact Pat Moses or Barbara Loveridge.

Stillpoint:

Stillpoint meets at 1.00 pm in the Church lounge on 24 April and 22 May.

Elizabeth Clark

•**Prayer Chain:** for prayer required, please contact Pat Moses on 528 9802 or Rev Peter Norman.

Prayer Group:

Continues to meet on Monday afternoons, 3.30 pm, at Shirley Lockhart's home. Prayer is the essential ingredient for St Andrew's Church and members, especially at this unsettled time—each Monday afternoon five pray-ers meet at Shirley Lockhart's home, praying for Church meetings, services and people. Please come and join us, even if you just listen and support—we need you.

Pat Moses 528 9802

Bible Study Group:

All are most welcome to attend each Tuesday, 10.15 am at Norma Hebden's home,

Parish Council: Meets in the Church lounge on Thursday, 19 April, at 7.30 pm.

Pastoral and Home Workgroup Meeting: 10.00 am, Monday, 7 May, in the Church lounge.

Christian Education and Worship Workgroup Meeting: 4.30 pm, Monday, 21 May, in Church Lounge.

Parish and Community Meeting: meets Thursday, 18 April and 16 May at 7.30pm

Property & Finance Workgroup Meeting: 7.35 pm, Thursday 26 April and 24 May in Church lounge.

Collect Stamps for Missions:

Please give to Norma Hebden or leave on foyer table.

Library:

Please remember to have a look at the books for loan in our Library (in the corner of the Lounge).

Rest Home Services:

Woodlands 10.45 am, Thursday, 5 April

Jack Inglis Friendship Hospital (JIFH)

JIFH 1.30 pm, Wednesday, 11 April

JIFH 1.30 pm, Wednesday, 25 April

JIFH 1.30 pm, Wednesday, 9 May

JIFH 1.30 pm, Wednesday, 23 May

DANCE & SING-A-LONG

Saturday 28 April 2012 7.30 - 11.00 PM

St Andrews Church Hall

Proceeds towards the St Andrews Caring Fund

Once again, David & Val Armstrong are providing their wonderful music free-of-charge, and the best way we can thank them for their generosity is to buy a ticket (\$10.00) and come along to the dance and enjoy yourselves.