

Annual General Meeting

26th March 2016

Reports

Chairperson (Gretchen Kivell)

It gives me pleasure to present this, my third Dunedin Sea of Faith annual report.

Dunedin Sea of Faith has access to a rich resource of interesting people to lead our meetings, including a diverse range of external speakers and valuable contributions from within our group, not forgetting our popular annual event where each person is invited to contribute on a chosen theme. Over the past year our sessions have been as follows:

March	Letter to my grandchildren	Margaret Feist
April	Ethics	Fred Fastier
May	Maori newspapers and religious discourses	Dr Lachlan Paterson
June	Peace & reconciliation in Northern Ireland	Prof. David Tombs
July	Interview with a Catholic Pastoral Leader	Amy Adams
August	A memorial for Archibald Baxter	Alan Jackson
September	Counsellor with Otago Community Hospice	Glenda Hall
October	What is Meaning?	David Kitchingman
November	What does Christmas mean to me?	All members attending
February	What bible stories might you tell your children?	Marion Christie

In September this year our meetings moved from 5-7 pm with a light meal from St Barnabas, to 3-5 pm starting with tea and coffee. Dispensing with meals was not a popular move, but it was in response to our slowly falling numbers at each meeting: we were marginally able to pay for the food (and sometimes not), but – more importantly – we are becoming short of members able to carry out the work involved. The change in time was an acknowledgement that members are principally out of the work force, and this was a trial of a new time.

Our thanks to Frances Smithson for organising the St Barnabas service, which was very fine, and to Marion Christie who did much of the fetching and carrying.

Our group is fortunate to be able to meet in the Highgate Church Halls, including the use of the kitchen. The convenience of the venue, its serenity and warmth, contribute significantly to the success of our meetings.

The Sea of Faith library, organised and annotated very ably by Ian Fleming, now resides in six boxes in my garage, and makes an appearance on occasion. It remains a valuable asset for our group.

It is with considerable sadness I record the passing of Margaret Feist, John Angell, and (very recently) Dr Evelyn Entwistle. All three were interested and interesting contributors to Sea of Faith.

Margaret Feist is particularly missed as a well-respected and long-standing member of Sea of Faith. Margaret and her late husband Don made a strong contribution to our meetings over many years.

I wish to thank all members of our committee for their willing support throughout the year: Frances Smithson, Ruth Morgan, Marion Christie and Alan Jackson. Particular thanks go to those on the committee with significant portfolios: Ruth Morgan, Treasurer; Alan Jackson for the monthly newsletter and other interesting e-mailings. I thank Ian Fleming, our webmaster; and Alan Jackson and Bruce Spittle for setting up the hall and electronics essential for our meetings.

It is my honour to present this 2016 Annual Report of the Dunedin Sea of Faith.

Gretchen Kivell

Newsletter (Alan Jackson)

The Newsletter appears ten times each year. It is distributed free to the 88 people on our e-mail list and it used to be distributed on paper and by post to anyone who asked for it. Last year we advised that anyone who wanted it sent by post would have to contribute a book of ten stamps and that has reduced the postal distribution from about 18 to nine (sadly - part of that reduction is accounted for by increasing frailty and some deaths). There has never been a charge for the Newsletter and so printing, envelopes, postage etc has been covered by our group's small bank surplus – shrinking every year – and by some useful donations.

So... the Newsletter will continue to be free via e-mail and in that medium can have additional items attached from time to time. If posted it will cost a book of stamps each year.

There are so many Newsletters from different groups that I am sure that many of those circulating don't get read – we are being overloaded with information.

We hope that our Newsletter can form part of the meditation, reflection, contemplation, personal thinking, prayer (whichever term we use) that we all try to fit into our lives. Increasingly we need 'time-out' from the bustle and the peace that comes from our quiet thinking.

Ian Fleming has done a valuable job of setting up a web site for our group and posting the Newsletter on it as well as links to other useful Sea of Faith sites. Ian is retiring from that job and we can recognise a job well done and be grateful for his service to us all. Thank you Ian.

Alan Jackson