

## Danish and Scandinavian Christmas Services 2013



**Hamilton** the 30<sup>th</sup> of November at 11am at Hamilton South Baptist Church, 131 Ohaupo Road, Melville, Hamilton. After the Services there will be a shared lunch. If able please 'bring a plate' to share. For more information: <http://hamilton.danish.org.nz/>

**Auckland** the 1<sup>st</sup> of December at 4pm at the Danish House. All welcome. After the service there will be aebleskiver and glogg. For more information: <http://www.danishsocietynz.com/>

**Wellington** the 15<sup>th</sup> of December at 10am at Brooklyn Community Center, 18 Harrison St. Brooklyn. After the service there will be coffee/tea. **All welcome.** At 11am "Dansk juletraesfest" organized by Dansk Musikalsk legestue <https://www.facebook.com/groups/498141866906592/>

**Christchurch** Scandinavian Christmas service the 17<sup>th</sup> of December at 7.30pm at St Paul's Lutheran Church Christchurch, Burwood (Corner of Burwood/Travis Road). All welcome. After the service there will be supper and time to chat with fellow Scandinavians, St Paul's congregation and friends. If able please 'bring a plate' to share.

**Dunedin** the 22<sup>nd</sup> of December at 2pm at St Mark's Presbyterian Church, 304 Pine Hill Road, Liberton, Dunedin. Bring a plate to share for afternoon tea following the service. Coffee and tea will be provided.



## Church News November 2013

We go to the gym to stay fit and strengthen our bodies, we read books about management and how to develop a happy confident life and we go on restricted diets to cleanse our bodies and learn to fill them with real organic food free of gluten and dairy products.

Going to church is about strengthening our modesty and gratitude, something we all seem to have forgotten in our busy and sometimes too self-indulgent lives.



Why do I go to church? Perhaps you have never, or rarely, asked yourself that question. Maybe it is just part of your life, a tradition or a habit you have acquired. Maybe it gives you a much needed space for contemplation in a busy time. You may enjoy sitting together in church singing hymns and listening to the words. Perhaps you go to church because you love meeting some of the others who attend. Maybe you hope to get some inspiration for your life, or



maybe you come to go to communion and receive the Lord's blessing. Maybe you need to be reminded of God's love. Perhaps you feel an obligation to come, or maybe it is a mixture of everything.



Why do we go to church? Søren Ulrik Thomsen (Danish author) was once asked this question by the Danish newspaper Berlingske Tidende and responded:

"For me, the church is a place for personal closure in contrast to improvement. Today we are so preoccupied with coaching, lifestyle books and all sorts of therapy. I see the church service as a way to escape my self-centredness, the obsession with who I am as a person. In church I am simply a human being. In the church, we are all equal before God: We have all been given life as a gift, we are full of faults, and we shall die."

(Translated by AGM)

It is humbling to recognize that we as human beings are deeply dependent on both God and each other and that we can never rid ourselves of that dependence. Humility is a virtue, not a quality we hold all the time. Humility appears like kindness, patience and generosity in situations which arise between us. We may be humble in one situation and the absolute opposite in another.

There is an elusiveness in humility which is often expressed when we are occupied with matters or people other than ourselves. It may be one of our close friends who need us, a case we are engaged in, a great joy or a great sorrow that fills us, a beautiful mountain or a view that takes our breath away, or a conversation in which we feel the other person.

There is something self-denying in our relation to both God and to other people. The moments where I truly forget myself - because I am busy with someone or something else – are also the moments where I am, strange to say, perhaps most myself. Being humble and self-denying keeps us down-to-earth in our own lives. And it is said; it should be incredibly healthy with good grounding and to forget our selves for a while. Something we can also practice by going to church.

Hope to see you all at one of the coming Christmas services.

-Pastor Anja G. Mathiassen

