

Ōpoho Signal

The newsletter of Ōpoho Presbyterian Church

50 Signal Hill Road, Ōpoho, Dunedin 9010



August 2023

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Opinions expressed in the *Ōpoho Signal* are those of individual authors,
unless stated otherwise.

Editorial – in praise of walking and mind-wandering

One of my pleasures in life is walking from home in the early morning through the Botanic Garden and University to my work at the hospital. This 25-minute slow stroll is where my mind is in neutral and random thoughts flit in and out. Often, I'm walking with characters from books I have read, at times thinking about church activities I'm involved in. It's from this mind-wandering I make connections – a spark that becomes an idea and then an action.

Sometimes I stroll and deliberately notice things around me – the dewdrops on leaves, the sound of birds and the city waking up. At times my mind is blank and resting. I bike when I have end-of-day demands but I can't mind-wander as I navigate ever-changing traffic behaviour. Walking is my preferred method of transport.

It's a privilege to have this route to walk, to have this time and this forms a core base for my mental health and wellbeing. A book that has got me thinking is *Stolen Focus: Why You Can't Pay Attention – and How to Think Deeply Again* by Johann Hari. This book explores how technology impacts on focus and attention and has me re-evaluating my interactions with my cell phone and computer as I see my mind-wandering skills being eroded. I deliberately choose not to wear earphones when walking. I'm encouraged that Hari devotes a chapter to mind-wandering and explores the growing scientific evidence of its benefits.

One additional pleasure of my walk is looking for pinecones – I know all the likely locations to check and have been doing this for years, carrying a bag to put them in. Recently I met Simon Rae on my walk home and he was carrying a pinecone – clearly there are many of us who have discovered these delights.

Miriam Vollweiler



Parish Council News

The Parish Council met on 20 July.

A letter of thanks has been received from Presbyterian Support Otago for the parish's contributions for the food bank.

The cautious approach of continuing to encourage the wearing of masks at church was reaffirmed.

After a long break, a shared parish lunch is planned for after church on 20 August. Are there a few volunteers to help in the kitchen on that day?

Gregor Macaulay on behalf of the Parish Council

Property and Finance Committee Update

A freezing arctic night and your stalwart P & F team met in the Morrison Lounge on 12 July at 7.30 p.m. rugged up in coats and hat. Sanel beamed in from Auckland where it was at least 10 degrees warmer.

We have sent in the information requested by Synod for insurance re-evaluation and are waiting to hear the outcome. The accounts for the last three years have been audited and are being signed off and we are setting aside the August meeting for budget preparation. We are going to proceed with getting wifi and spend part of the meeting reviewing the costings and deciding on an option. We want to have this in place before the community election meeting in the church in October. The replacement of the rotten door in the back room was approved at the June meeting and we are waiting for the builder to come. We are keeping a watching brief on the entrance door to the hall as it is sticking – give it a hard push! It may be that we need to do some maintenance on it but we have noted it does resolve in the warmer weather.

Hall bookings continue to increase and the Steady as You Go exercise group on Tuesdays and weaving group on Wednesdays are our regulars and telling us they are very happy with this arrangement. The Lovelock Environment Group held their AGM in the Morrison Lounge and this always brings in people in the community who didn't realise what a lovely meeting space is on their doorstep.

Let your P & F team know of any ideas or concerns – Miriam, Judy, Sanel, John, Michael, Benjamin.

Miriam Vollweiler (Committee convener)

Donations to Ōpoho Presbyterian Church

Thank you to all those who participate in the life of our church and help make it possible to support its work. If you are not already an electronic donor through online banking and would like to donate in this way, the details are:

ANZ bank, Opoho Presbyterian Deacons' Court;

Account Number: 06 0909 0010868 000.

Please put your name and the word Donation in the data fields. It would be helpful if you could let our Treasurer, Judy Rodda, know, so that receipts for charitable donations can be sent to you. Her email is Judith L Rodda opohopcbusiness@gmail.com

As well as regular outgoings there are maintenance items on the building and grounds which we will be seeking to raise funds for over the next few years. If you are interested in supporting these, please be in touch.

We acknowledge that people's circumstances are personal, and that they vary over time and with things that happen in our lives. It is important to know that there will be times when it is appropriate to reduce your giving to the church, and you do not need to apologise for doing that.

The income and expenditure of the church is examined each month by the Property and Finance Committee and reported to the Parish Council. The church's financial year runs to the end of June and an annual budget is presented to the congregation at the Annual Meeting. Thank you.

Property and Finance Committee

An Acrostic Poem

On 9 July, Anne Thomson's Chat Time was about acrostics and we read Psalm 145 responsively. In the original, the verses of that psalm begin with the letters of the Hebrew alphabet in sequence, and the translation we read cleverly used the letters of our 'Latin' alphabet in sequence. Anne suggested that the children might like to try writing acrostic poems, and Harriet Mander (and Mum) presented the editor with the following at morning tea.

Ōpoho community
Place of worship
Open space to all
Haven on the hill
Ordered by peace

Centre of praise
Helping people who hurt
Umbrella of love
Restoring hope
Christ's praises sung
Home of God

Plant of the Month Garden Update

Michael, our nextdoor church neighbour, has revitalised and planted out the garden on our side of the shared fence. Here's an update on this thriving specimen.

Fatsia Japonica. Common names include False Castor Oil Plant and Paper Plant among others. These specimens started out as self-sown seedlings in my mother's garden in West Otago. We kept them as house plants for a few years before I planted them in the church garden. They're in a nice, sheltered spot on the east side of the hall (they don't like too much in the way of sun or wind). They'll soon fill the space and help keep the weeds at bay. Plus, the large lobed



leaves will provide a nice contrast to the strappy leaves of the agapanthus and the fine leaves of the maple they are planted next to. Over time, they will form a clump of sparsely-branched stems. They can grow quite tall (4m or so) but it's easy to keep them to a size by cutting the taller stems off at ground level.

Miriam Vollweiler

Abby's Jam Palace



The Jam Palace – featuring marmalade – will be open for business after church on 27 August.

Abby Smith abigailmarionsmith@gmail.com 027 606 3552

Fellowship Group

On such a cold afternoon it was good to get together and have several hours together with friends. That's how Fellowship Group feels to us all. On 13 July Miriam talked about her three-month participation in the "Yummi milk study" which is looking at milk consumption in women from 60 to 80 years of age. This led on to a group discussion about milk consumption in our childhood and adult lives. Recollections of drinking unpasteurised milk from the farm cow, the neighbourhood milk delivery man ladling out milk into the home billy, school milk (a universal groan), the number of milk puddings and sauces enjoyed in childhood and dreams of clotted cream. Many in the group today did not drink milk in any quantity but ate yogurt and cheese in their diet. As usual we shared a sumptuous afternoon tea made in Chris's kitchen.



Miriam Vollweiler and Chris Young

On 10 August we are starting an hour earlier than usual at 1 p.m. and having a "soup kitchen lunch". Miriam and Chris are making large pots of soup and some goodies with Fellowship members bringing their favourite soup recipe to share. All are welcome to come and join us.

Interfaith Matters

Many of you may have known Kristan Mouat (right), the Co-Principal of Logan Park High School, who died recently and unexpectedly from heart issues. I hope you have read the lovely obituary written for her by her sister Justine. I knew her through Dunedin Interfaith as she was of the Brahma Kumari faith; also two of my three sons had the privilege of being taught by her.



Since she died, I have thought about her greeting “om shanti” to us at Interfaith meetings both at the beginning and the end. The word “om” is thought to constitute the divine in the form of sound. The word “shanti” means a deep and profound level of peace. It is the root of the word “shalom” in Hebrew or “salam” in Arabic. Originally, “shanti” came from the Sanskrit word “sham”, which means calm, soothing and happy. Doesn’t this match dear Kristan for those of us who knew her? And, for those who didn’t, isn’t it special in itself?

I would also like to share something my youngest son said about the care he received from Ms Mouat as his teacher: “When I talked about anything with her I sensed she really valued what I was saying, she really valued me for who I am, and that made me value myself more.” That is very special. Thank you Kristan.

Bronwen Strang

Our Ōpoho Book Bus

Every Thursday afternoon, Jo Howard, our book bus librarian, parks outside the church noticeboard for 2½ hours. Jo has been on the book bus for 25 years and has made many friends in the Ōpoho community. The bus is a meeting place and Jo is brought baking by some of her regular fans.

The new bus is warm and spacious and many of us call in there after the Fellowship monthly meeting. We are fortunate to have this wonderful service and Jo in our Ōpoho community.



Miriam Vollweiler and Chris Young



Strength and Balance Class

Tuesdays at 1.30 pm, Opoho Church hall

Join us to improve your strength and balance. Falls are not a natural part of ageing. Falls ARE preventable! Steady As You Go© has been shown to provide continuous improvements in strength, balance, mobility, flexibility, and coordination.

When: Tuesdays @ 1:30 PM

Where: Opoho Presbyterian Church, Signal Hill Road

Cost: \$3 per class (*you are welcome to just turn up!*)

Want more information: text Chris on 027 3900257

Presbyterian Support Food Bank



Winter can be a tough time for some, with additional heating costs on top of normal household expenditure. You can bring goods (nothing frozen or

perishable) to church on any Sunday or you can make a cash donation for the Food Bank via their website www.psotago.org.nz. And non-food items such as toiletries are also acceptable.

Lectionary for August and September

Sunday 6 August - 10th Sunday after Pentecost			
Gen 32: 22-31	Ps 17: 1-7, 15	Rom 9: 1-5	Mt 14: 13-21
Sunday 13 August - 11th Sunday after Pentecost			
Gen 37: 1-4, 12-28	Ps 105: 1-6, 16-22, 45b	Rom 10: 5-15	Mt 14: 22-33
Sunday 20 August - 12th Sunday after Pentecost			
Gen 45: 1-15	Ps 133	Rom 11: 1-2a, 29-32	Mt 15: (10-20), 21-28
Sunday 27 August - 13th Sunday after Pentecost			
Ex 1: 8-2: 10	Ps 124	Rom 12: 1-8	Mt 16: 13-20
Season of Creation 1 September-1 October			
Sunday 3 September - 14th Sunday after Pentecost			
Ex 3: 1-15	Ps 105; 1-6, 23-26, 45b	Rom 12: 9-21	Mt 16: 21-28
Sunday 10 September – 15th Sunday after Pentecost			
Ex 12: 1-14	Ps 149	Rom 13: 8-14	Mt 18: 15-20
Sunday 17 September – 16th Sunday after Pentecost			
Ex 14: 19-31	Ps 114 <i>or</i> Ex 15: 1b-11, 20- 21	Rom 14: 1-12	Mt 18: 21-35
Sunday 24 September - 17th Sunday after Pentecost			
Ex 16: 2-15	Ps 105: 1-6, 37-45	Phil* 1: 21-30	Mt 20: 1-16

Operation Cover Up

Work on next year's blankets has begun – please keep knitting those squares. Donations of wool gratefully accepted too. Contact me if you have any questions at 027 473 6026 or weavermariane@gmail.com



Marian Weaver

Coming Events at Ōpoho Presbyterian Church

6 August ~ Sunday	10 a.m.: Worship, the Rev. Clare Lind, Communion
9 August ~ Wednesday	7.30 p.m.: Property and Finance Committee, Morrison Lounge
10 August ~ Thursday	1 p.m.: Fellowship Group, Morrison Lounge – this winter meeting is starting earlier as we are having a “soup kitchen” lunch
13 August ~ Sunday	10 a.m.: Worship, the Rev. Olivia Dawson
17 August ~ Thursday	7.30 p.m.: Parish Council, Morrison Lounge
20 August ~ Sunday	10 a.m.: Worship, the Rev. Clare Lind, followed by shared lunch Material due for September <i>Ōpoho Signal</i>
27 August ~ Sunday	10 a.m.: Worship, the Rev. Clare Lind After church: Abby’s Jam Palace, featuring marmalade, Church hall
3 September ~ Sunday	10 a.m.: Worship, the Rev. Clare Lind, Quarterly Communion
10 September ~ Sunday	10 a.m.: Worship, Abby Smith
13 September ~ Wednesday	7.30 p.m.: Property and Finance Committee, Morrison Lounge
14 September ~ Thursday	2 p.m.: Fellowship Group, Morrison Lounge
17 September ~ Sunday	10 a.m.: Worship, the Rev. Clare Lind
20 September ~ Wednesday	Material due for October <i>Ōpoho Signal</i>
21 September ~ Thursday	7.30 p.m.: Parish Council, Morrison Lounge
24 September ~ Sunday	Daylight saving begins – clocks go <i>forward</i> one hour 10 a.m.: Worship, the Rev. Clare Lind

Deadline for next *Ōpoho Signal* – Sunday 20 August

Please send all material for the next *Ōpoho Signal* to
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