

Opoho Signal

March 2022

via email

Opoho Signal

Newsletter of the Opoho Presbyterian Church

50 Signal Hill Road, Opoho, Dunedin 9010

website: www.opohochurch.org

Facebook: Opoho Presbyterian Church



March 2022

Minister: The Rev. Clare Lind

cell phone 021 0276 1962

email: opohominister@gmail.com

Parish Clerk: Hamish Spencer

cellphone: 021 279 7986

email: opohoclerk@gmail.com

Editorial - Life in an Unforgiving World

One of the consequences of our ultra-connected world today is that we get to know about things very quickly. Sometimes this speed is good – tsunami warnings, even earthquake warnings come to mind. But too often rapidity rides with its old friend, half-truth. We think we have learned about what has happened, or is about to happen, only to find out, maybe some time later, that the situation is more complicated, or “nuanced” as the latest jargon has it.

We have long known, of course, that many accounts – most, probably – are inadequate descriptions of actual events. How often did we read the newspaper story about something we were involved in, even marginally, realising from the word go that the message wasn't quite right? These old-fashioned news media outlets, just like our more modern ones, had to condense in order

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to fit the ¼ page (today's soundbite), and in doing so, they necessarily omitted some of the contextual detail.

It seems to me, however, that such inaccuracy in the news is more problematic than it used to be. Partly, the change is because today's news is not confined to a daily broadsheet or nightly news bulletin. We – the global we – respond, posting about it on Facebook, emailing it around our friends or tweeting about it. The story is amplified, especially if it is one that causes us outrage, and the rapidity of the original account is compounded. Within hours, millions around the world believe they are informed experts about the latest newsworthy triviality (for, in so many cases, sadly, the incident really is trivial in the larger scheme of things, probably not even qualifying as a nine-day wonder, let alone making it into a pub-quiz question in twelve months' time.)

Accompanying rapidity and half-truth, the third spy in this battalion of sorrows is our rush to condemn. We are outraged, pronouncing our unnuanced judgment in 280 characters or fewer. Others take up the charge, and the jury of our peers convicts. The trial has taken maybe a few hours.

But what about our Christian duty to forgive? Or the commandment to love our neighbour unconditionally? We live in a very unforgiving society, I know. The news-media trial I describe above plays out all too frequently, with some prominent person – often an entertainer or sportsperson – adjudged guilty of some horrific transgression and forever condemned (with their Wikipedia page updated to remind us, should we forget).

I am not here to defend the indefensible like some latter-day Rumpole. But I do wonder whether we should pause to consider two things. First, do we really know the full story? Second, and far more importantly, what are we wanting from our public figures? Do we expect everyone to be a saint, committing no wrong? Don't we all make mistakes? Surely, when the stars inevitably fall from grace, we should at least try to be forgiving and loving. Doing so by no means endorses their crime, assuming for the moment they are guilty. And, of course, if the case is complicated – and I

suggest it probably will be – there is an even greater need to hold back. After all, we can all acknowledge, “There but for the grace of God go I!”

Hamish Spencer

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**Parish Council and Church News**

The Parish Council resumed its normal monthly meetings on 17 February and agreed to approve the parish’s membership of EcoChurch.

Andrew Smith was appointed as the parish’s commissioner to the Synod of Otago and Southland’s AGM to be held in April.

An update on Government guidelines for places of worship in response to Covid was received. The parish will continue to follow official guidelines in the interests of all of our members, and will inform everyone as soon as possible if any changes to how we meet become necessary.

When Philip Somerville was appointed as Acting Parish Clerk in August 2020 and as Parish Clerk in March 2021 it was on the understanding that the situation would be reviewed a few months after Clare’s ministry with us began – he did not wish it to be a permanent position. At the February meeting, the Council recorded its appreciation of Philip’s wisdom, commitment, sensitivity, and knowledge of the parish in the Clerk’s role. It also appointed his replacement: Hamish Spencer. Hamish’s email address for parish matters is [opohoclerk@gmail.com](mailto:opohoclerk@gmail.com).

**Gregor Macaulay on behalf of the Parish Council**

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John Allen



Past and present Opoho members made up a good proportion of those present at John Allen’s funeral on 11 February in the Ross Chapel, Knox College (John was a former resident and life fellow of the College). John died on the evening of Waitangi Day, aged 92.

Graeme Munro led the well-crafted service based on instructions (couched as ‘suggestions’) from John. Maurice Andrew shared information about and memories of John since

they first met as students at Knox in 1954, and Graeme spoke about John’s ministry in several parishes. Philip Somerville and Matthew Jack were amongst the pall bearers.

As Philip said in a recent email, “[John] retired from the ministry, came to Dunedin and joined us at Opoho in 1994. He led services on occasions and took a full part in our church’s life. We’ve memories of him at every church study group over the years, coming thoroughly prepared and taking his copious notes. He would also beaver away in his unobtrusive way at working bees and share in many a considerate conversation. John’s life has been lived as a faithful servant of God, always caring, loyal and thoughtful.”

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**Plastic bottles again...**



I expect you have all seen the TV adverts for Coca Cola No Sugar and this new product is packaged in the same way as their older products, all of which are still on sale. This plastic causes devastation at sea. They sell hundreds of millions of these plastic bottles in New Zealand alone and about 40% of these enter the environment.

This plastic can kill birds as magnificent as the albatrosses. In the sea itself, it breaks down into microscopic pieces and then can enter the food chain. You may be eating plastic along with a tasty fish. So, when you go to the seaside this summer, spare a thought for the wildlife we are killing.

Greenpeace still have their petition running:  
[www.greenpeace.org.nz/plastic-bottles](http://www.greenpeace.org.nz/plastic-bottles)

**Jane Anderson**



**Something to Consider**

You enter a crowded bus that has just two seats left to choose to sit in – one beside someone like me or yourself but a stranger, and the other beside a young woman wearing a hijab, or a man in a turban or Buddhist robes, also a stranger.

All things being equal, such as position in the bus etc, which seat are you more likely to choose? No answers needed, but maybe we could think on this for ourselves.

**Bronwen Strang**



**Fellowship Group**

**No meeting in March**

Fellowship Group will not meet this month, with such high transmission rates of Covid.



*Fellowship Group in January 2022*

The February meeting was a small friendly catch up. We hope to meet again in April, with the focus on getting to know each other.

An important part of Fellowship Group meetings is our participation in the Fellowship of the Least Coin, as we bring along our least coins each month.

After a time of conversation, we have a cup of tea or coffee, accompanied by delicious baking (thank you Chris and Miriam), at around 3 p.m., and we finish by 4 p.m.

**Andrea Johnston**



**Jam Jam Jam**



Jam Stall last Sunday of the month after church in the hall.  
If you have spare fruit or spare jars, ring Abby or send her an email.

**Abby Smith** 027 606 3552, [abigailmarionsmith@gmail.com](mailto:abigailmarionsmith@gmail.com)



**Operation Cover Up**



Please keep making peggy squares out of wool or a warm wool mix, 20cmx20cm, and drop them off at the church. We send the blankets off in July so we have a few months left to get a good number ready. Three blankets have been completed so far.

Wool and instructions are in the bag on the back pew. Contact me if you need help at 027 473 6026 or [weavermariane@gmail.com](mailto:weavermariane@gmail.com)

**Marian Weaver**



**Poems Prayers Psalms Prose - a friendly writing group**



For writers of all kinds from Opoho and beyond  
Tuesday 12 April at 7 p.m.  
Zoom link 92395184583  
Password 403627

For more information, please contact  
Abby Smith: 027 606 3552, [abigailmarionsmith@gmail.com](mailto:abigailmarionsmith@gmail.com)



**Opoho Church Garden**



Two very successful working bees were held to make the church garden look good for the church picnic which was held on Sunday 20 February.

The first was held on Saturday 12 February. The weather wasn't very marvellous, although 5 people turned up, including the new neighbour, Michael, who lives beside the hall on Farquharson Street. He and Fiona Stirling have done a great job clearing the bank opposite the hall which was a host to long grass. They also relocated the compost bins so they are easier to access beside the steps.

The second working bee was held on Saturday 19 February when a team of 10 people got stuck into the garden, focusing on the area behind the church where the picnic was held – weeding, cutting back and lawn edges. Many thanks to Fiona Stirling for providing her trailer at both working bees.

At the picnic, people were asked to write their responses to two questions - "what do you enjoy about our garden?" and "what would you like to see in the garden?" The answers to these questions will help us develop and enhance our garden in the future.

On Sunday 27 February, which was the Harvest Thanksgiving service, Clare interviewed Selwyn Yeoman about Eco Church. This has given me some food for thought about how we can further develop our church property in a sustainable way.

The Property and Finance Committee is keen to hold monthly working bees, both inside and outside. Keep an eye out in the notices for the date of the next working bee.

**Benjamin Thew**





### Presbyterian Support Food Bank

To make a cash donation for the Food Bank, visit [www.psotago.org.nz](http://www.psotago.org.nz)

### Keeping in Touch

*Do you know...*

Opoho Church has a website, [www.opohochurch.org](http://www.opohochurch.org)

On the website you will find (among other things) links to recent sermons, downloadable copies of the Orders of Service for the two most recent Sundays, downloadable versions of the newsletter, and an on-line version of the Church Calendar.

The church also has a Facebook page (you don't need to belong to Facebook to see the page) [www.facebook.com/OpohoChurch](http://www.facebook.com/OpohoChurch)

This newsletter is emailed to all who have requested to receive it this way. If you are not already on the email list, and would like to be, please send an email to Andrea [andrea.johnston@columba.co.nz](mailto:andrea.johnston@columba.co.nz)

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

### Deadline for next *Opoho Signal* - Sunday 20 March 2022

Please send all material for the next *Opoho Signal* to:  
Gregor Macaulay, 88 Forfar Street, Mornington, Dunedin 9011  
Email [gregor.macaulay@outlook.com](mailto:gregor.macaulay@outlook.com)

### Lectionary readings, 6 March to 13 April 2022 in Year C, the Year of Luke

| Lent                                                   |                                         |                         |                                                                                         |
|--------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------|-------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Wednesday 2 March - Ash Wednesday</b>               |                                         |                         |                                                                                         |
| Joel 2: 1-2, 12-17<br>or<br>Is 58: 1-12                | Ps 51: 1-17                             | 2 Cor 5: 20b-6:<br>10   | Mt 6: 1-6,<br>16-21                                                                     |
| <b>Sunday 6 March - 1st Sunday in Lent</b>             |                                         |                         |                                                                                         |
| Deut 26: 1-11                                          | Ps 91: 1-2,<br>9-16                     | Rom 10: 8b-13           | Lk 4: 1-13                                                                              |
| <b>Sunday 13 March - 2nd Sunday in Lent</b>            |                                         |                         |                                                                                         |
| Gen 15: 1-12,<br>17-18                                 | Ps 27                                   | Phil 3: 17-4:1          | Lk 13: 31-35<br>or<br>Lk 9: 28-36                                                       |
| <b>Sunday 20 March - 3rd Sunday in Lent</b>            |                                         |                         |                                                                                         |
| Is 55: 1-9                                             | Ps 63: 1-8                              | 1 Cor 10: 1-13          | Lk 13: 1-9                                                                              |
| <b>Sunday 27 March - 4th Sunday in Lent</b>            |                                         |                         |                                                                                         |
| Josh 5: 9-12                                           | Ps 32                                   | 2 Cor 5: 16-21          | Lk 15: 1-3,<br>11b-32                                                                   |
| <b>Sunday 3 April - 5th Sunday in Lent</b>             |                                         |                         |                                                                                         |
| Is 43: 16-21                                           | Ps 126                                  | Phil 3: 4b-14           | Jn 12: 1-8                                                                              |
| <b>Sunday 10 April - Palm Sunday or Passion Sunday</b> |                                         |                         |                                                                                         |
| None or<br>Is 50: 4-9                                  | Ps 118: 1-2,<br>19-29 or<br>Ps 31: 9-16 | None or<br>Phil 2: 5-11 | <b>Palm</b><br>Lk 19: 28-40<br><b>Passion</b><br>Lk 22: 14-23:<br>56 or Lk 23: 1<br>-49 |
| <b>Holy Week</b>                                       |                                         |                         |                                                                                         |
| <b>Monday 11 April</b>                                 |                                         |                         |                                                                                         |
| Is 42: 1-9                                             | Ps 36: 5-11                             | Heb 9: 11-15            | Jn 12: 1-11                                                                             |
| <b>Tuesday 12 April</b>                                |                                         |                         |                                                                                         |
| Is 49: 1-7                                             | Ps 71: 1-14                             | 1 Cor 1: 18-31          | Jn 12: 20-36                                                                            |
| <b>Wednesday 13 April</b>                              |                                         |                         |                                                                                         |
| Is 50: 4-9a                                            | Ps 70                                   | Heb 12: 1-3             | Jn 13: 21-32                                                                            |

## Coming up @ Opoho Presbyterian Church

Physical gatherings may be subject to Covid alert level restrictions.

| <b>March</b>         |                                                                                                                                 |
|----------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 6 March ~ Sunday     | 10 a.m.: Worship, the Rev. Clare Lind, Communion                                                                                |
| 9 March ~ Wednesday  | 7.30 p.m.: Property and Finance Committee, Morrison Lounge                                                                      |
| 10 March ~ Thursday  | Fellowship Group will not meet this month.                                                                                      |
| 13 March ~ Sunday    | 10 a.m.: Worship, the Rev. Russell Thew                                                                                         |
| 17 March ~ Thursday  | 7.30 p.m.: Parish Council, Morrison Lounge                                                                                      |
| 20 March ~ Sunday    | 10 a.m.: Worship, the Rev. Clare Lind<br>Material due for April <i>Opoho Signal</i>                                             |
| 27 March ~ Sunday    | 10 a.m.: Worship, the Rev. Clare Lind                                                                                           |
| <b>April</b>         |                                                                                                                                 |
| 3 April ~ Sunday     | 10 a.m.: Worship, the Rev. Clare Lind, Communion                                                                                |
| 10 April ~ Sunday    | 10 a.m.: Worship, the Rev. Clare Lind – Palm Sunday                                                                             |
| 12 April ~ Tuesday   | 7 p.m.: Poems Prayers Psalms Prose – a friendly writing group, via Zoom (see elsewhere in this issue of <i>Signal</i> for link) |
| 13 April ~ Wednesday | 7.30 p.m.: Property and Finance Committee, Morrison Lounge                                                                      |
| 14 April ~ Thursday  | 2 p.m.: Fellowship Group, Morrison Lounge                                                                                       |
| 15 April ~ Friday    | Good Friday – public holiday                                                                                                    |
| 17 April ~ Sunday    | 10 a.m.: Worship, the Rev. Clare Lind – Easter Sunday                                                                           |
| 18 April ~ Monday    | Easter Monday – public holiday                                                                                                  |
| 20 April ~ Wednesday | Material due for May <i>Opoho Signal</i>                                                                                        |
| 21 April ~ Thursday  | 7.30 p.m.: Parish Council, Morrison Lounge                                                                                      |
| 24 April ~ Sunday    | 10 a.m.: Worship, preacher TBA                                                                                                  |
| 25 April ~ Monday    | ANZAC Day – public holiday                                                                                                      |

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***via email***

For the week leading up  
to, and including, Sunday:

## Opportunities for Service 6 March to 10 April 2022

|              | Morning Tea                     | Door Duty                        | Readers         | Prayers          | Sound and Data Projector | Music                      | Flowers        | Hall Cleaning  | Church Cleaning             |
|--------------|---------------------------------|----------------------------------|-----------------|------------------|--------------------------|----------------------------|----------------|----------------|-----------------------------|
| <b>March</b> |                                 |                                  |                 |                  |                          |                            |                |                |                             |
| 6 March      | Daniel Larsen<br>Allison Mulder | Jenny Bunce<br>Marian Weaver     | Rudie Tomlinson | --               | Sanel Tomlinson          | David Murray               | Allison Mulder | Michael Ovens  | Mulders                     |
| 13 March     | Meegan and Pam Cloughley        | Hamish Spencer<br>Abby Smith     | Mark Ranby      | Abby Smith       | Benjamin Thew            | David Murray               | Allison Mulder | Michael Ovens  | Mulders                     |
| 20 March     | Sanel and Rudie Tomlinson       | Jane Bloore<br>Benjamin Thew     | Gaynor Haig     | Meegan Cloughley | Hamish Spencer           | Singers and Guitarists (M) | Jane Bloore    | Chris Young    | Jane Bloore                 |
| 27 March     | Judy Rodda<br>Kirk Hamilton     | Shona Somerville<br>Andrew Smith | Hamish Spencer  | Benjamin Thew    | Kieran Somerville        | Music Group                | Jane Bloore    | Chris Young    | Jane Bloore                 |
| <b>April</b> |                                 |                                  |                 |                  |                          |                            |                |                |                             |
| 3 April      | Marion Weaver<br>Jane Bloore    | Michael Ovens<br>Mark Ranby      | Gregor Macaulay | —                | Sanel Tomlinson          | David Murray               | Judy Rodda     | Fiona Stirling | Judy Rodda<br>Kirk Hamilton |
| 10 April     | Abby Smith<br>Shona Somerville  | Daniel Larsen<br>Gregor Macaulay | —               | —                | —                        |                            | Judy Rodda     | Fiona Stirling | Judy Rodda<br>Kirk Hamilton |

**Thank you** so much to all who contribute now, and have contributed in the past, to these activities.

If you find you are unable to do your rostered duty, please arrange for someone else to take your place. Let Gregor know of the change, so that he can update the Order of Service and contact the right people for readings and prayers.

**Morning Tea:** Please arrange for one person to bring milk, and to take it home again afterwards. There are biscuits in a drawer in the kitchen. Home baking is welcome, too.

**Door duty:** Before you leave, please make sure all the doors are locked; all the lights are turned off; and any candles have been put out.

### **Easter Weekend (Sunday 17 April) and Anzac Weekend (Sunday 24 April)**

Please let me know whether you will, or you will not, be available over Easter and Anzac Weekends.

It is helpful to know when people **are** available, as well as when they are **not** available.

Thank you. Andrea Johnston Phone: 021-516-275. Email [andrea.johnston@columba.co.nz](mailto:andrea.johnston@columba.co.nz)