

# Opoho Signal

The newsletter of Opoho Presbyterian Church

50 Signal Hill Road, Opoho, Dunedin 9010



*A dolphin and anchor in the mosaic floor of a Roman Catholic Church in Philadelphia.*

## September 2022

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

## Editorial

“When the coast is left and we journey on/ to the rim of the sky and the sea/ be the sailor’s friend, be the dolphin Christ/ lead us on to eternity.”

Many of you will recognise these words from Colin Gibson’s hymn “Where the road runs out and the signposts end”. Emeritus Professor Colin Gibson, that internationally-renowned hymn-writer from Dunedin and Mornington Methodist Church, is brilliant in note and word. Some of us will remember him coming to Ōpoho one evening about 15 or so years ago. He demonstrated via his thoughts and the piano something about the creation of these masterpieces.

I’ve vague memories of him saying Otago Harbour provided part of the inspiration for this hymn. You can picture “when the clouds are low and the wind is strong”. And when I sing “be the spirit bird hov’ring overhead” I picture the Royal albatross.

You can see why this is one of my favourite hymns. Like Abby, as she told us in the August service she led, I’ve wanted this piece for my funeral for some years.

Colin has me thinking, naturally, about metaphors for God and Christ. When there is so much mystery, so much unknown, symbols help us understand. They present us with images to assist us on our “way”.

Dolphins have for centuries been seen as the “sailor’s friend”, and stories abound of them leading mariners to safety. They feature in Greek mythology, and the symbol was soon taken over by Christians.

Often dolphins are drawn through an anchor or trident, including in Roman catacombs. This is to symbolise the hope of eternal life; in whatever way we interpret that these days. Sometimes, too, stylised dolphins represented Christians, just as fish did.

Dolphins as symbols represent qualities of Jesus – notably as protector and guide. They spoke to early Christians, and they speak to us today.

*Philip Somerville*

## **A Note from the Editor**



Andrea Johnston (left) took over as editor of the *Signal* in 2016 and carried on until 2019, when I succeeded her. However, she continued to do the formatting and printing of each edition (and filled in for me when I was on away on holiday). She has now handed the formatting and printing tasks over to me as well (hence some differences in the appearance of this issue as I get to grips with the technology) – although I am relieved to report that she will continue to compile the rosters of parish duties. I am sure that

all readers will join me and the rest of the Parish Council in thanking Andrea for her years of exceptionally capable service.

*Gregor Macaulay*

## **Parish Council News**

Another fairly brief report this month.

The Parish Council met on 17 August. Much of the business was routine, but an exciting development is the establishment of a permanent Environment Committee, with Marian Weaver as convener and four other members (Jane Anderson, Bronwen Strang, Benjamin Thew, and Sanel Tomlinson). There is scope for adding one or more further members, and any members of the congregation who might wish to be considered for appointment should contact Marian. The Committee's first job will be to draft an Environmental Policy for the parish and then to work through several other matters concerning the environment and sustainability.

The Council is cautiously optimistic that we might resume morning tea after services at some stage in September (we will take advice on when that can sensibly happen) and also plans to hold a barbecue after church on Sunday 2 October.

*Gregor Macaulay on behalf of the Parish Council*

## Property and Finance Committee Update



Our August meeting focused on budget planning, looking at our income and expenses. We look forward to sharing this work with you. To help this process we have been obtaining quotes for drainage work, looking at what painting and maintenance needs to be done, and thinking big for longer-term work – in particular, getting some quotes for roofing. We are preparing the budget plan to go to the Parish Council for review.

You might have noticed our mailbox getting a paint job, the drains getting a hammering in the heavy rain (with John cleaning the sump – left), fire exit signs going up, and our minister having her laptop computer replaced. Please let us know if you have ideas, concerns or are aware of any health and safety issues.

***Miriam, John, Benjamin, Judy, Michael, Sanel, Brian***

## Opoho Presbyterian Church: Electronic Donations

If you are not already an electronic donor and would like to donate in this way the account details are:

Opoho Presbyterian Deacons' Court,

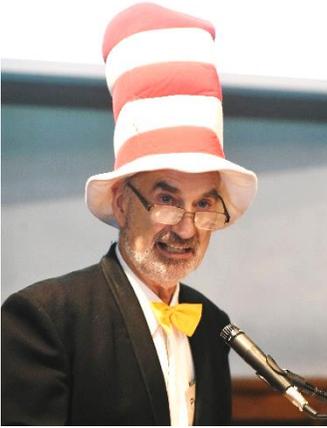
ANZ bank, Account Number 06 0909 0010868 000.

Please put your name and the word “donation” in the data fields. Please let Judy Rodda know your mailing address so that an annual receipt for charitable donations can be sent to you. Her email is [opohopcbusiness@gmail.com](mailto:opohopcbusiness@gmail.com)

As well as regular outgoings, there are some major maintenance items in 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, or other special projects, please be in touch with Judy.

Thank you, ***Property and Finance Committee***

## DCC Candidate Meetings



Our big Dunedin City Council candidate meetings loom, the evenings of Sunday 18 September and Monday 19 September to be exact.

We're not sure how Covid will affect the turnout, but it could be large as it usually is. We are instigating a strict mask-wearing mandate – no mask no entry – but will not be able to maintain the usual Sunday morning “social distancing”.

At the same time, we will have to turn away and/or divert to the Morrison Lounge any overflow once we are comfortably full – no squishing or overcrowding.

Thanks in advance to the helpers because there will be several: Andrew on stag roarer, someone on data projector and someone else on sound, greeters and door people, a Morrison Lounge back-up person, and a couple of people with boxes for a koha opportunity. All money collected from attendees will go to the Dunedin Night Shelter Trust.

We also ask congregation members who attend if they might consider wearing name tags and hats for identification for questions anyone might raise.

*The Cat in the Hat is back, for more than a chat.  
Come listen to this and to that, for the knowledge you lack.*

*Philip Somerville*

## Presbyterian Support Food Bank



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

# The Environmental Protection Agency

The EPA came into being on 1 July 2011. The new agency was brought together from the staff and functions of the Environmental Risk

Management Authority, the Ministry for Economic Development, and the Ministry for the Environment. Since then, the Emissions Trading Scheme (which the EPA runs) has been updated.



**Environmental  
Protection Authority**  
Te Mana Rauhi Taiao

The EPA aims to give a high-quality service, over several different areas: chemical and biological hazards, natural and physical resources, and the emissions trading scheme. It is a young organisation and still has to work at its company ethos. Important too, are relations with other government agencies, sound decisions when acting as an appeal authority, and seeking to reduce costs.

Guidance in Māori matters is given to the EPA by its Māori advisory committee, Ngā Kauhauhū Tikanga Taiao. The EPA is actively seeking out conferences to attend to get their name and their mission out there both here in New Zealand and overseas. They believe that they that they have a key role to play in the overall resource management and broad environmental changes. Time will tell if they are right or not.

*Jane Anderson*

## Operation Cover Up

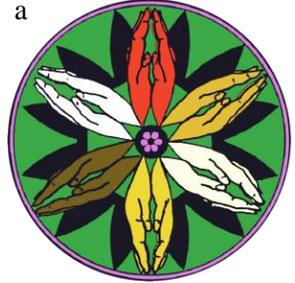
Please keep making peggy squares out of wool or a warm wool mix 20cmx20cm and drop them off at the church. Wool and instructions are in the bag on the back pew. Contact me if you need help at 027 473 6026 or [weavermariane@gamil.com](mailto:weavermariane@gamil.com)



*Marian Weaver*

## Fellowship Group

Chris and Miriam from Fellowship Group are looking forward to welcoming spring and having our meeting on **Thursday 8 September at 2 p.m.** after so many months of postponement. We have ordered a sunny day and will be meeting in the Morrison Lounge. All welcome (masks are required to be worn). An important part of Fellowship Group meetings is our participation in the Fellowship of the Least Coin, as we bring along our least coins for each meeting.



*Andrea Johnston*

## Interfaith Matters



The following paragraph is taken from the minutes of the 10 July meeting of the Dunedin Interfaith Council:

**“Ministry of Ethnic Diversity:** Colin McLeod, from St Patrick’s Basilica, drew to our attention that religion is missing from discussions with this new Government Ministry – no sense of faith. Buddhists have noted this too (Peter Small,

Buddhist Dhargyey Centre) and Secretary, Max Gillies (Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints) had heard similar from the Dunedin Multi-Ethnic Council (DMEC) and the Religious Diversity Centre (RDC). There will be multi-ethnic support, but no sense of religious diversity as part of this (Greg Hughson, Mornington Methodist, and Colin McLeod). We need to advocate and engage; maybe invite MP Ingrid Leary to our next meeting? (Our Chairperson, Diane Bellamy from St John’s Anglican Church, will invite her.) Ministry of Ethnic Diversity seems to have a disconnect with the religions of those ethnicities. The differences in faith and culture are not recognised.”

Surely faith should be recognised as a possible element of ethnic diversity. It will be interesting to see whether any change might take place. I hope to keep us informed.

*Bronwen Strang*

## “Don’t be stupid! Jesus isn’t here”

Sanel Tomlinson has passed on the following article from a South African website.



Tert told the story of the day he had breakfast with a former homeless person, and Herman wrote it down:

*“You see”, said the former homeless person, “I was an alcoholic for 18 years. Eight of those years I was living on the streets. I lost my job, my fiancé kicked me out; I basically lost everything. Then, just the other day, I was standing at the traffic lights at Village Mall again, waiting and hoping that someone would give me a little something. Many little somethings add up to a bread and a bottle.*

*A man stopped next to me and looked at me. “Meet me on the other side,” he said to me and I jogged to the other side of the road. I was expecting more than a little something, otherwise he would have given me 2 rand and driven on. But instead, this man prayed for me. I was used to this too. But this man didn’t pray for my soul or the alcohol. He prayed that the Lord would save me from my depression.”*

*“Then I said to him that he was not praying right. I wasn’t depressed. He simply smiled, gave me a 100 rand note, and drove away. I immediately went to buy a bottle and spent the rest of the day under a tree.*

*The next morning, I didn’t immediately feel like a drink. The afternoon and evening came and went and I still didn’t feel like a drink. My craving was gone. Completely. For the first time in 18 years, I went to sleep without having had a drink.”*

*“The next morning my craving was still gone. I thought and thought and thought. About myself; where I was at that moment; where I had come from;*

*where I was going. And about God in particular. You know, people say miracles don't happen anymore, but I believe that the prayer from the previous day had healed my alcoholism, because never again had I ever craved a drink.*

*I realised a few things in my life would have to change drastically. Firstly, I had to stop begging and find a job. A permanent job. But it's difficult.*

*Eventually, I went to one of the churches down the street here and pushed the button at the gate. A woman answered. 'Can I speak to the minister or the pastor or a counsellor, please,' I asked. 'Do you want food?' she asked. 'No.' 'Do you want counselling?' she asked. 'No, I just need some advice'. 'Man, there's no one here who can help you.'*

*And without even thinking about it, I asked her: 'But can I talk to Jesus Christ then, please?' Angrily she answered: 'Don't be stupid! He's not here.'*

*You know, as I walked away, I realised she was right. He wasn't there. Ministers and pastors and church people are too busy for me and for people like me. They think that a hit and run outreach once in a blue moon, maybe handing out food parcels and clothes, is enough. Nobody is really interested in us. Not all of us are bad. You know, the Lord can't be kept behind palisade fences until Sunday. He is not in people with fences around their hearts."*

This story touched me deeply and I wondered if I was living this command: ...  
**Look on victims of abuse as if what happened to them had happened to you.**

## **Scripture**

Hebrews 13:1-8

## **Reflection**

Do you have compassion for suffering people?

Are you doing something about it?

Do you really make a difference in other people's lives?

## **Prayer**

Lord, may I never be where people say You aren't. May I take You with me everywhere and be Your hands and feet for people who are being abused and who are suffering. Amen.

## Keeping in Touch at Opoho Church

Opoho Church has a website, [www.opohochurch.org](http://www.opohochurch.org), where 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 the editor, Gregor Macaulay, at [gregor.macaulay@outlook.com](mailto:gregor.macaulay@outlook.com)

**We recognise that not everyone has access to email, but if you currently receive a physical copy of the *Signal* and could cope with just an email version, please ask to be added to the email list – we might save a few trees!**

## Questions before Dark

Day ends, and before sleep when the sun dies down, consider your altered state: has this day changed you? Are the corners sharper or rounded off? Did you live with death? Make decisions that quieted? Find one clear word that fit? At the sun's midpoint did you notice a pitch of absence, bewilderment that invites the possible? What did you learn from things you dropped and picked up and dropped again? Did you set a straw parallel to the river, let the flow carry you downstream?



*Jeanne Lohmann*

Jeanne Ruth Lohmann (1923-2016) was an American Quaker poet.

A brief biography/obituary may be seen at

<https://www.legacy.com/us/obituaries/theolympian/name/jeanne-lohmann-obituary?id=20712230>

## Lectionary for September and October

<b>Season of Creation – Wisdom in Creation, 1 September – 2 October</b>			
<b>Sunday 4 September – 13th Sunday after Pentecost</b>			
Jer 18: 1-11	Ps 139: 1-6, 13-18	Philemon 1: 1-21	Lk 14: 25-33
<b>Sunday 11 September – 14th Sunday after Pentecost</b>			
Jer 4: 11-12, 22-28	Ps 14	1 Tim 1: 12-17	Lk 15: 1-10
<b>Sunday 18 September – 15th Sunday after Pentecost</b>			
Jer 8: 18-9: 1	Ps 79: 1-9	1 Tim 2: 1-7	Lk 16: 1-13
<b>Sunday 25 September – 16th Sunday after Pentecost</b>			
Jer 32: 1-3a, 6-15	Ps 91: 1-6, 14-16	1 Tim 6: 6-19	Lk 16: 19-31
<b>Sunday 2 October – 17th Sunday after Pentecost</b>			
Lam 1: 1-6	Ps 37: 1-9 <i>or</i> Ps 137	2 Tim 1: 1-14	Lk 17: 5-10
<b>Sunday 9 October – 18th Sunday after Pentecost</b>			
Jer 29: 1, 4-7	Ps 66: 1-12	2 Tim 2: 8-15	Lk 17: 11-19
<b>Sunday 16 October – 19th Sunday after Pentecost</b>			
Jer 31: 27-34	Ps 119: 97-104	2 Tim 3: 14-4: 5	Lk 18: 1-8
<b>Sunday 23 October – 20th Sunday after Pentecost</b>			
Joel 2: 23-32	Ps 65	2 Tim 4: 6-8, 16-18	Lk 18: 9-14
<b>Sunday 30 October – 21st Sunday after Pentecost</b>			
Hab 1: 1-4, 2:1-4	Ps 119: 137-144	2 Thess 1: 1-4, 11-12	Lk 19: 1-10

### Deadline for next Opoho Signal – Tuesday 20 September

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)

## Coming Events at Opoho Presbyterian Church

*Physical gatherings may be subject to Covid alert level restrictions.*

4 September ~ Sunday	10 a.m.: Worship, the Rev. Clare Lind, Quarterly Communion
7 September ~ Wednesday	7.30 p.m.: Property and Finance Committee, Morrison Lounge
8 September ~ Thursday	2 p.m.: Fellowship Group, Morrison Lounge
11 September ~ Sunday	10 a.m.: Worship, Mary Somerville
15 September ~ Thursday	7.30 p.m.: Parish Council, Morrison Lounge
18 September ~ Sunday	10 a.m.: Worship, the Rev. Clare Lind 7-9.10 p.m.: DCC candidates' pre-election meeting
19 September ~ Monday	7-9.10 p.m.: DCC candidates' pre-election meeting
20 September ~ Tuesday	Material due for October <i>Opoho Signal</i>
25 September ~ Sunday	10 a.m.: Worship, the Rev. Clare Lind 3-5 p.m.: Children's Service/The Bug Day Out
2 October ~ Sunday	10 a.m.: Worship, the Rev. Clare Lind, World Communion Sunday, followed by a barbecue lunch
9 October ~ Sunday	10 a.m.: Worship, John Roxborough
12 October ~ Wednesday	7 p.m.: Poems Prayers Psalms Prose – a friendly writing group, via Zoom 7.30 p.m.: Property and Finance Committee, Morrison Lounge
13 October ~ Thursday	2 p.m.: Fellowship Group, Morrison Lounge 7.30 p.m.: Christian Development Committee, Morrison Lounge (or via Zoom if necessary)
16 October ~ Sunday	10 a.m.: Worship, the Rev. Clare Lind, followed by Annual Meeting
20 October ~ Thursday	7.30 p.m.: Parish Council, Morrison Lounge Material due for November <i>Opoho Signal</i>
23 October ~ Sunday	10 a.m.: Worship, the Rev. Clare Lind
30 October ~ Sunday	10 a.m.: Worship, the Rev. Paul Ranby