

Opoho Signal

July 2021

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



A detail of *The Adoration of the Magi* in the Mariapfarr Altarpiece, Austria – note the Child with curly hair (see footnote to editorial, although that refers to a wall painting) and Joseph peeking around the door

July 2021

Interim Moderator: The Rev. Ed Masters
cell phone 027 637 9818

Parish Clerk: Philip Somerville phone: 03 473 8862
email: psomer39@gmail.com

Worship Services at Opoho:
Every Sunday at 10 am

Other services are listed in the Calendar on the back cover.

Editorial

During lockdown I translated a novel by an Indonesian philosopher-writer who reflected on the lack of clarity in many of our experiences – ‘we can find light hidden in darkness’ he wrote, and this idea came back to me when I found a new account of the origin of *Silent Night* on an Austrian website. For a long time we depended on an increasingly romantic story, generated by Franz Xaver Gruber, the composer, and his descendants. But documents discovered in 1995 helped recreate a more historical account, and re-discover Father Joseph Mohr who wrote the words, a man whose light was shrouded in the darkness of poverty, prejudice, war, and the illness that brought early death. Mohr, of course, had no descendants to keep his story alive.

In this issue.....	Page
Editorial	2
Parish Council and Church News	5
Reminders	6
Refugee Sunday.....	7
Interfaith Matters.....	7
Opportunities for Service	10-11
A Prayer	12
Fellowship Group.....	14
Operation Cover Up.....	15
Bible Book of the Month.....	15
The Rubbish Challenge	16
Presbyterian Support Foodbank	18
Keeping in Touch.....	18
Opoho Signal contact details	18
Lectionary, 4 July to 22 August 2021	19
Calendar for July and August 2021.....	20

Joseph Mohr was born in Salzburg in 1792, the son of a solo mother, Anna Schroiber and a soldier, Franz Josef Mohr, who deserted his post and disappeared. A kinsman, the state executioner, became Joseph’s godfather. This grim association, and his illegitimate status, were lifelong handicaps. He was barred from school until a Benedictine monk heard him sing and got him into the elite monastery school where he flourished.

Mohr also frequented the Collegiate Church where Michael Haydn was choirmaster, and where there were German elements in both liturgy and music – an initiative of Archbishop Colloredo, Mozart’s nemesis. Wars interrupted Mohr’s study, but he completed both university and seminary before being ordained in 1815 and sent to a mountain parish, Mariapfarr, altitude 1200m and totally cut off for months each winter. Here he met his Mohr grandfather, and the parish priest, Fr Joseph Stoff, initiated him into a Catholic community that retained many old customs and used elements of German in both liturgy and singing.

When the war ended, the Bavarian army looted Mariapfarr as they retreated, but peace had come and verses 4 and 5, which we do not sing, embody Mohr’s vision of Jesus for all the peoples of the world and a universal redemption. When mountain life proved too much for lungs weakened by the poverty of his childhood, Mohr was transferred to the parish of Oberndorf, where the priest, Joseph Kessler, born in Mariapfarr, also mixed Latin and German in worship and preached in German. There Mohr met Franz Gruber, schoolteacher and organist. This location suited Mohr’s health, but by now the traditionalists were on his trail. They had denounced Colloredo to the Vatican as a secret Protestant, and spread exaggerated stories about Mohr’s birth and his association with the executioner. Kessler was replaced by a traditionalist. But Mohr and Gruber persisted and at the Christmas Eve mass in Oberndorf, 1818, *Silent Night*, set in German for two male voices and guitar, was sung – words written in 1816 in Mariafarr,

musical setting by Gruber and the first documented use of a guitar in formal worship.

For the rest Mohr, overshadowed by his social handicaps, assisted in 11 parishes before – at last – being appointed parish priest of Hintersee and later Wagrain where he put what resources he had into building a school to enable younger sons of farming families to train for other work. There he died in 1848, of consumption, leaving insufficient money for a proper funeral. As the Austrian commentator Hanno Schilf observed, ‘He left the world as poor as he had been when he came into it’, and yet out of this darkness of poverty and prejudice he left a gift of light and enlightenment – if only we would sing all the verses!

Simon Rae

Simon has also provided the following footnotes to his article.

- My source: Hanno Schilf, ‘Josef Mohr: der Ursprung von *Stille Nacht, Heilige Nacht* (a 2018 video lecture for Mohr’s 225th birthday) also two BBC-TV presentations in the late 1990s.
- Google ‘Stille Nacht’, which will provide texts, translations, ms facsimiles, comment and performances.
- Joseph Mohr’s signed score, *Weynachts-Lied*, set for 2 voices and guitar, now in the Salzburg Museum, has 6 verses. We sing verses 1, 6 and 2, in that order, in English.
- Of the other verses, verse 4 is problematic for moderns, dominated by male imagery which probably reflects Mohr’s joy (registered officially as ‘without family’) in finding his elderly grandfather, and perhaps uncles, in Mariapfarr; but it concludes: ‘Jesus [for, or identified with] the peoples of the world’(2x).
- Verse 3 (literal, prose): Silent Night, Holy Night, which brought salvation to the world. From the golden heights of heaven

mercy’s abundance was revealed to us, Jesus in human form (2x)

- Verse 5 (literal, prose): Silent Night, Holy Night, already long ago planned for us, when the Lord sets free from wrath, beginning from the ancient time of our forefathers, a time of preservation promised for the whole world(2x)
- BBC-TV identified a wall painting of a Christ child ‘with curly hair’ that Mohr would have known, and ‘O wie lacht/how he laughs’ shows a keen observation of the habit of small children to chuckle to themselves long before they are old enough to explain why.
- At the end of a long war and much suffering Mohr witnessed to a promised peace and ‘preservation’ (Schonung) for all the peoples of the world, manifest in the Christ child – a counter to religious tribalism.

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### ***Parish Council and Church News***

The Parish Council’s June meeting was the last led by Interim Moderator Ed Masters (First Church minister). We’ve appreciated his skills, knowledge and wisdom during our time without a minister.

The Council put on record its thanks to Rachel Judge (Mosgiel/North Taieri minister), as convener of the Ministry Settlement Board. She has guided this process with thoughtfulness and ability.

Our busy Property and Finance Committee has had lots on its plate. We see the new heating (at last!) in place in the church. Hopefully, by the time this is published it will be working and we can match the warmth of the air with the warmth of our greetings.

The Treasurer reported a fantastic donation from within the congregation – \$20,000 – which will cover the cost of the heating and then some and put us on a stronger financial footing as we enter a new ministry.

Treasurer Judy presented financial figures clearly laid out. Offerings have stayed down from budget, but there will be a surplus this year because of not having the costs of ministry. That surplus provides a vital little buffer for the next year or three.

We welcomed Julie Mander to her first Parish Council meeting. Her introduction had been delayed until the end of her service on the Ministry Settlement Board.

We are looking at holding a special social function this month (July) as we get to know Clare. Details will be advertised as soon as possible via email and at services.

We bid a sad farewell to Graeme Munro this month. He has been an important part of the congregation for several years now and will be sorely missed. His leading of services and communion on the first Sunday of each month has been particularly invaluable and a stellar contribution.

His last service before leaving will be on 4 July, so come along if you can and bring something for a special morning tea. Graeme is leaving for Lower Hutt where he can be close to family. His three daughters and families are all in the North Island.

**Philip Somerville**



**Reminders!**

**Thursday 8 July, 7 p.m.**

**Service of induction of the Rev. Clare Lind as our new minister**

**Saturday 24 July, 5 p.m.**

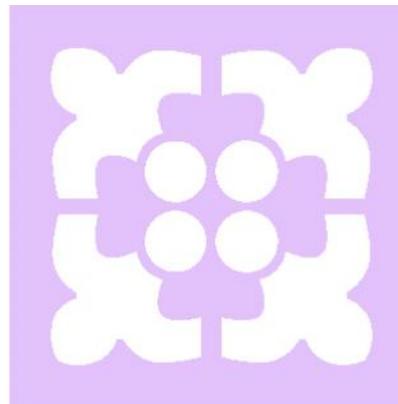
5 p.m.: Parish pot-luck meal and poetry evening

**Sunday 22 August**

Pot luck lunch in the Hall, following morning worship.



**Refugee Sunday**



During the service she led on 20 June, Marian Weaver noted that the day was Refugee Sunday. The recognition of the day reminded Simon Rae of the slogan of the English Reformed Church (founded 1607), Amsterdam, a congregation of the Church of Scotland and the Protestant Church of The

Netherlands: **Within these walls let no-one be a stranger.**



**Interfaith Matters**



Below is an example of the sort of contributions that come at Interfaith meetings, built around the spiritual theme for that meeting. I have taken this from the minutes of 2 May this year:

**Theme: Dignity**

Again, as with “patience” of the previous month, there were many

parallels between the different faiths, under the theme of dignity.

In Islam the Caliph, or Vice Regent of God, holds this dignity. Good deeds bring dignity and a higher level of honour. The story of Mary and Jesus in the Koran shows the dignity of Mary, as she returns from the desert to her village with the baby. She is in a state of fast but the people recognise the child.

In the Tibetan Buddhist tradition, a Buddhist Master, on the side of the road filthy and in rags, shows great dignity as young women walk by with a scornful attitude. In song he shows he is actually in a good state – for dignity is an internal quality – it can't be bestowed on anyone, it depends on Karma.

Hinduism is founded on non-violence and being kind to other living creatures. There is a dignity of living and this continues after one passes away.

In Judaism there are duties to others and duties to God and oneself; good works, charity and not causing harm are important. Also in Genesis 1 God created humans in God's likeness; God exists in every single human and we are to treat others as we treat God.

Baha'ullah, the founder of the Baha'i faith, wrote when in banishment in Baghdad "Noble have I created thee. Why dost thou abase thyself?" He promoted human rights; dignity is part of divine creation. There is inherent nobility in every human being because they are made in the image of God. The journey begins at conception and goes through life and after, which means there is the concept of dignity as we raise our children who are made in the image of God. The task of every person is to see to the needs of every other human being.

In the Christian New Testament from Romans, God doesn't show favouritism. There is truth and the right way and we all do what we shouldn't; it is not for us to judge others. In Matthew 15, Jesus, when healing lepers and the woman with a bleed, reframes dignity, and the lack of it as a spiritual condition. At an Anglican service the vicar said Heaven is where God is, and where God is is not fake or loud or showy. The ultimate symbol of dignity is Christ dying on the cross. In counselling work with clients, dignity is very important – civility and silence to protect the adult ego space and protect their

own and the dignity of others.

In the world terrible things are still being carried out by people against each other, e.g. torture in Syrian prisons. We need to start with dignity from a personal standpoint for change. The nine Catholic tenets of faith all come back to dignity, for humans are made in the likeness of God. God as the second person of the Trinity is Brother, the likeness of God. For Quakers, dignity comes from God; there is both social and material dignity. George Fox talked of the presence of God in everyone being a well-known quality – valuing the person within. Material dignity is ensuring the poor and needy are provided for, be it in housing or whatever they need. From a Latter Day Saints talk on difference and dignity, everyone is created different with no monopoly on what is wise and beautiful. In human connection we climb out of ourselves and meet the dignity of others.

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Can you see why I enjoy immensely hearing these contributions?

***Bronwen Strang***

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Reminders!

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Saturday 24 July, 5 p.m.

5 p.m.: Parish pot-luck meal and poetry evening

Sunday 22 August

Pot luck lunch in the Hall, following morning worship.

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

## Opportunities for Service 4 July - 22 August 2021

|               | Morning Tea                          | Door Duty                       | Readers         |  | Prayers            | Music                  | Hall Cleaning                  | Church Cleaning             |
|---------------|--------------------------------------|---------------------------------|-----------------|--|--------------------|------------------------|--------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| <b>July</b>   |                                      |                                 |                 |  |                    |                        |                                |                             |
| 4 July        | Marian Weaver<br>Jane Bloore         | Michael Ovens<br>Mark Ranby     | Maurice Andrew  |  | —                  | Gaynor Haig            | Shona and Philip<br>Somerville | Chris Young                 |
| 11 July       | Judy Rodda<br>Kirk Hamilton          | Andrew Smith<br>Benjamin Thew   | Jane Anderson   |  | Daniel Larsen      | Guitarists and Singers | Benjamin Thew                  | Judy Rodda<br>Kirk Hamilton |
| 18 July       | Daniel Larsen<br>Bronwen Strang      | John and Mary<br>Somerville     | Hamish Spencer  |  | Benjamin Thew      | Gaynor Haig            | Benjamin Thew                  | Judy Rodda<br>Kirk Hamilton |
| 25 July       | Abby Smith<br>Hamish Spencer         | Marian Weaver<br>Daniel Larsen  | Andrea Johnston |  | Andrew Smith       | Music Group            | Bronwen Strang                 | Mulders                     |
| <b>August</b> |                                      |                                 |                 |  |                    |                        |                                |                             |
| 1 August      | Sanel and Rudie<br>Tomlinson         | Jenny Bunce<br>Shona Somerville | Gaynor Haig     |  | —                  | David Murray           | Bronwen Strang                 | Mulders                     |
| 8 August      | Meegan and Pam<br>Cloughley          | Jane Bloore<br>Gregor Macaulay  | Andrew Smith    |  | Mark Ranby         | Guitarists and Singers | Andrew Smith                   | Christine Cleugh            |
| 15 August     | Christine Cleugh<br>Shona Somerville | Sanel and Rudie<br>Tomlinson    | Bronwen Strang  |  | John<br>Roxborough | Gaynor Haig            | Andrew Smith                   | Christine Cleugh            |
| 22 August     | Daniel Larsen<br>Jane Bloore         | Abby Smith<br>Hamish Spencer    | Rudie Tomlinson |  | Marian Weaver      | Music Group            | Jane Bloore                    | Meegan Cloughley            |

**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.

The following prayer by **Abby Smith** was used in the service on 27 June.

*Slow Down*

Lord we pray to you from a world in trouble:

Where forests and birds, mountains and tigers, seas and fish,  
grasslands and bugs are being destroyed or are already gone.

Where monoculture and pesticides and urban sprawl and exotic  
plantations make a new landscape, replacing yours, O Lord.

And we don't know how to stop, or even slow down.

**Lord, Hear Our Prayer.**

Lord we pray to you from a people who have lost their hearts:

Who do not know each other, and do not understand themselves.

Where sharing and kindness are seen as weakness.

A people divided. On the one hand, slaves and the abjectly poor:  
with no resources, no prospects, no education and no hope.

And on the other hand, people who seem to have everything but no  
idea how to live: sick and unhappy, heavy and weighed down  
with meetings and markets, possessions and paranoia.

And we don't know how to stop, or even slow down.

**Lord, Hear Our Prayer.**

Lord we pray to you from a planet finding a new equilibrium.

Surrounded with consequences we can neither stop nor explain,  
we choose "business as usual,"

Despite all the evidence that we are killing ourselves and each  
other, destroying nature on which we rely, and changing  
everything forever.

And we don't know how to stop, or even slow down.

**Lord, Hear Our Prayer.**

We struggle to find words, Lord.

Help us. Guide us. Challenge us. Comfort us.

Out of the depths of fear, madness, division, loss, sickness, and  
sorrow, we call to you. We reach towards you.

Lord of all, hear our voice.

Christ, listen to us.

Spirit, come to us.

Let there be light, warmth and shelter.

Let there be kindness, healing, and community.

Let there be reason and hope and love.

Help us to stop, or at least to slow down.

**Lord, Hear Our Prayer.**

Lord, return to us like the sun does, every time.

Christ, lead us in the darkness.

Spirit, shine like the stars of midwinter.

Show us the way.

Teach us to stop, or at least to slow down.

**Lord, Hear Our Prayer.**

Amen

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Fellowship Group

2 p.m. on Thursday 15 July in the Morrison Lounge.

Fellowship Group normally meets on the second Thursday of the month at 2 p.m. in the Morrison Lounge (but on the third Thursday, 15 July, this month). You are all very welcome to come along.

At our June meeting, we were privileged to hear Jenny Clarke, the retiring Opoho School Principal, talk about her teaching career.

Jenny started at Opoho School in May 1990 as Deputy Principal, teaching in the junior team. Since 2000 she has been Principal, teaching in the senior team.



Jenny Clarke, retiring Principal, and Evelyn Brass, a founding pupil, share memories of Opoho School.

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, at about 3 p.m. we have a cup of tea or coffee, accompanied by delicious baking (thank you Chris and Miriam!) We finish by 4 p.m.

Andrea Johnston



Operation Cover Up

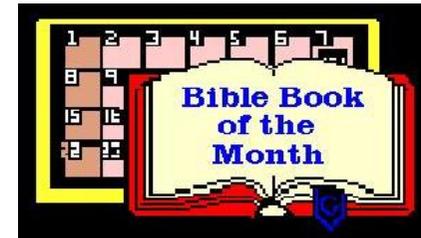
We will soon be sending this year's blankets away - so it's definitely time to start, or keep, knitting squares. Please use wool, not synthetic, as wool has more warmth.

Cast on 40 stitches in double knitting, knit 40 rows (or 20cm) in garter stitch and cast off. For other wool weights adjust to make 20 x 20cm squares.

A bag at the back of the church is topped up with wool if you need some. Money for shipping costs is also gratefully accepted.

Contact Marian: weavermariane@gmail.com 027 473 6026

Marian Weaver



This month we looked at *Jude* on 1 July. Next month we will look at *Revelation*, at 7.30 p.m. on Thursday 5 August at 129 Signal Hill Road. Ideally people should have read the book beforehand, but it isn't essential.

For more information please contact John Stenhouse at john.stenhouse@otago.ac.nz or Tui Bevin at 473 8677 or email mark.bevin@gmail.com

Tui Bevin

*The Rubbish Challenge:
10 Steps to Less Waste in 10 Months*

A resource for churches and whanau by the Rev. Silvia Purdie

More material and videos at

www.conversations.net.nz/rubbish-challenge.html

Step 6) July: Paper Towels

Bible verse: Luke 21: 1-4

Jesus saw a poor widow put in two small copper coins. He said, "Truly I tell you, this poor widow has put in more than all of them."

'Big Idea'

Paper towels are the biggest single item filling our rubbish bins. A paper towel is small and seems insignificant, but it adds up to a huge impact. Placing them into organic waste is a simple humble act of service.

Questions – *for reflection and discussion*

How do you respond to the idea that Jesus admires small acts of love?

How does this relate to how we deal with the rubbish?

Watch video at

www.conversations.net.nz/rubbish-challenge.html

Action Step for July

Set up a simple system to get paper towels into organic waste collection.

Each paper towel dispenser needs to have, right underneath it, a 'Paper Towel Only' bin, with no plastic bag liner, which gets emptied into the organic waste.

What other paper waste could be put into composting?

Prayer

Lord Jesus, your ways are humble and good -

May we be your hands in service to your world.

May we show your heart to care, even in little ways,
for others and for this earth you made so well.

Amen.





Presbyterian Support Food Bank

There is a year-round need for contributions for the Food Bank. Please leave contributions in the basket at the back of the church. Food items (but nothing frozen or perishable please) or other useful housekeeping items are welcomed.

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### *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)

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

Deadline for next *Opoho Signal* - Tuesday 20 July 2021

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

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| Lectionary readings, 4 July to 22 August 2021<br>in Year B, the Year of Mark |              |                |                    |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------|----------------|--------------------|
| <b>Sunday 4 July - 6th Sunday after Pentecost</b>                            |              |                |                    |
| 2 Sam 5: 1-5, 9-10                                                           | Ps 48        | 2 Cor 12: 2-10 | Mk 6: 1-13         |
| <b>Sunday 11 July 7th Sunday after Pentecost</b>                             |              |                |                    |
| 2 Sam 6: 1-5, 12b-19                                                         | Ps 24        | Eph 1: 3-14    | Mk 6: 14-29        |
| <b>Sunday 18 July - 8th Sunday after Pentecost</b>                           |              |                |                    |
| 2 Sam 7: 1-14a                                                               | Ps 89: 20-37 | Eph 2: 11-22   | Mk 6: 30-34, 53-56 |
| <b>Sunday 25 July - 9th Sunday after Pentecost</b>                           |              |                |                    |
| 2 Sam 11: 1-15                                                               | Ps 14        | Eph 3: 14-21   | Jn 6: 1-21         |
| <b>Sunday 1 August - 10th Sunday after Pentecost</b>                         |              |                |                    |
| 2 Sam 11: 26-12: 13a                                                         | Ps 51: 1-12  | Eph 4: 1-16    | Jn 6: 24-35        |
| <b>Sunday 8 August - 11th Sunday after Pentecost</b>                         |              |                |                    |
| 2 Sam 18: 5-9, 15, 31-33                                                     | Ps 130       | Eph 4: 25-5: 2 | Jn 6: 35, 41-51    |
| <b>Sunday 15 August - 12th Sunday after Pentecost</b>                        |              |                |                    |
| 1 Kings 2: 10-12, 3: 3-14                                                    | Ps 111       | Eph 5: 15-20   | Jn 6: 51-58        |
| <b>Sunday 22 August - 13th Sunday after Pentecost</b>                        |              |                |                    |
| 1 Kings 8: (1,6, 10-11), 22-30, 41-43                                        | Ps 84        | Eph 6: 10-20   | Jn 6: 56-69        |

## Coming up @ Opoho Presbyterian Church

| July                 |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |
|----------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 4 July ~ Sunday      | 10 a.m.: Worship, the Rev. Graeme Munro, Communion                                                                                                                                                                                               |
| 8 July ~ Thursday    | <b>7 p.m.: Service of induction of the Rev. Clare Lind as our new minister</b>                                                                                                                                                                   |
| 11 July ~ Sunday     | 9.45 a.m.: People-moving for chapel service at Dunedin Hospital ( <i>about four volunteers needed – contact Philip Somerville</i> )<br>10 a.m.: Worship at Opoho, Support Sunday, the Rev. Clare Lind with Tim Mephram from Presbyterian Support |
| 14 July ~ Wednesday  | 7.30 p.m.: Property and Finance Committee, Morrison Lounge                                                                                                                                                                                       |
| 15 July ~ Thursday   | 2 p.m.: Fellowship Group, Morrison Lounge<br>7.30 p.m.: Parish Council, Morrison Lounge                                                                                                                                                          |
| 18 July ~ Sunday     | 10 a.m.: Worship, the Rev. Clare Lind                                                                                                                                                                                                            |
| 20 July ~ Tuesday    | Material due for August <i>Opoho Signal</i>                                                                                                                                                                                                      |
| 24 July ~ Saturday   | 5 p.m.: Parish pot-luck meal and poetry evening in the Hall                                                                                                                                                                                      |
| 25 July ~ Sunday     | 10 a.m.: Worship, the Rev. Clare Lind                                                                                                                                                                                                            |
| August               |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |
| 1 August ~ Sunday    | 10 a.m.: Worship, the Rev. Clare Lind, Communion                                                                                                                                                                                                 |
| 5 August ~ Thursday  | 7.30 p.m.: Bible Book of the Month: <i>Revelation</i> , 129 Signal Hill Road                                                                                                                                                                     |
| 8 August ~ Sunday    | 10 a.m.: Worship, Abby Smith                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |
| 12 August ~ Thursday | 2 p.m.: Fellowship Group, Morrison Lounge                                                                                                                                                                                                        |
| 15 August ~ Sunday   | 10 a.m.: Worship, the Rev. Clare Lind                                                                                                                                                                                                            |
| 19 August ~ Thursday | 7.30 p.m.: Parish Council, Morrison Lounge                                                                                                                                                                                                       |
| 20 August ~ Tuesday  | Material due for September <i>Opoho Signal</i>                                                                                                                                                                                                   |
| 22 August ~ Sunday   | 10 a.m.: Worship, the Rev. Clare Lind, followed by pot-luck lunch                                                                                                                                                                                |
| 29 August ~ Sunday   | 10 a.m.: Worship, Gregor Macaulay, <i>Hymns by Sydney Carter and Fred Kaan</i>                                                                                                                                                                   |

*Opoho Signal*

*July 2021*

*via email*