

Opoho Signal

The newsletter of Opoho Presbyterian Church

50 Signal Hill Road, Opoho, Dunedin 9010



December 2022 – January 2023

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

Editorial

As for most of you, Christmas cards with snow and glitter, and robins and red-robed choristers were part of my childhood, even though immediately after Christmas we would be packing our togs and shorts and sunhats to head off camping.

Don and I were in Wellington last week while we attended a Presbyterian conference. Like Dunedin, Wellington has some tree-lined streets. In Wellington, the tree of choice is the hardy pohutukawa. They are just starting to come into flower. Over the next weeks, in the lead-up to Christmas, the streets and bush-covered hillsides all over the region will be patched with red-crimson red, rather than the scarlet of our own beautiful rata. In Wellington, the pohutukawa truly signals the approach of Christmas. When we lived there it was the first flowers of the pohutukawa, rather than the neighbourhood Christmas lights, that made me pause and think, ‘Ah, we are at that time of the year again.’

And I love ‘that time of the year.’ I love the stories at the heart of the Christian celebration. The joyful, hopeful, awkward, audacious story of God coming to live among us in Jesus Christ. I love that it is an unashamedly human story. There is the birth of a baby at the centre of it, a little boy who will need to be looked after and loved. I love too that, after God, it is the women who take the lead in these stories. They are the ones responsible for grounding the plans of God, for bringing them to birth.

And in our own Kiwi celebration of the season, I look forward to the gatherings, at church, with family and friends and others. I look forward to carols by candlelight and hush, to starry summer nights and being outdoors on long warm, summer days. (This year I am looking forward to our community carol sing, *Sing Your Heart Out*, on the afternoon of 11 December.)

All of these things, along with the rich memories of past Christmases, come together in that ‘Ah, we are at that time of the year again.’ Dunedin doesn’t have much pohutukawa to herald Christmas and there are no big rata near our place, but I made a discovery when I walked past St John’s Roslyn yesterday. It was windy and all over the footpath there were leaves in red and green and gold – beech leaves. An advent moment on the streets of my neighbourhood!

May God grant you your own reminders of the coming Christmas season and all that is important in it, and may God use your actions and words to herald to others the hope, peace, joy, and love that flow from the Christmas story.

Have a very blessed Christmas,

Clare Lind

Parish Council News

The meeting of the Parish Council on 24 November had a short agenda and was completed in what was probably record time (40 minutes).

Property and Finance Committee business (also see their update below) included news of the resignation of Brian Cunningham from the Committee after more than 30 years of loyal service on the Committee and its predecessor, the Deacons' Court. Thank you and well done Brian!

The Council has agreed to continue with our current seating and mask arrangements at services but will monitor the situation over the coming weeks and will advertise any changes.

Gregor Macaulay on behalf of the Parish Council

Property and Finance Committee Update

Another busy month with a multitude of small, medium, and big activities under way. Our Farquharson Street neighbours Jason and Michael have planted out shrubs and are caring for our church side of the fence and plan to help with some tree pruning. Leon from over the road has helped with the disposal of our old fridge. We have been reviewing storage under the stage and plan for a working bee in the new year to review and remove surplus items. A



generous donation of chairs, fridge, picnic table, and coffee table has kept us busy. You will notice that there are matching chairs in the Morrison Lounge (*left*), a picnic table in the garden, and a new fridge in the kitchen. In the church, a plaque is now on the wall under Gisela's wonderful rug and some wobbly pews have been secured.

Wish List:

- Fellowship Group would love to have some “nesting” side tables that we could use for our afternoon teas – always a special part of our monthly gathering.

- Do you have any small cushions that we could have in the Morrison Lounge to go with the chairs with arms – some people may find this provides additional back support

Hall Bookings: Good to have Scottish country dancing and the Opoho School disco using our facilities. For 2023, a “Steady as You Go” weekly exercise class is under discussion.

Please let us know if you have any health and safety or maintenance issues you need to bring to our attention.

Miriam Vollweiler (Committee convener)

Donations to Opoho 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](mailto: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

Presbytery Report

Presbytery met at the Cromwell and Districts Presbyterian Church on 4 and 5 November. Central Otago is where the thyme grows, and it doesn't really stand still – it is buffeted by the wind. Southern Presbytery is also buffeted by the winds of time, how much longer do we have?

A congregation such as Opoho where the same numbers continue to come back might be beginning to look healthy.

When Southern Presbytery meets there's a wide range of people: and yet we sit together around tables to eat, discuss and make decisions.

Paul Trebilco told us about the house church at Colossae who sang the hymn in Colossians chapter one – perhaps a group about twenty people who met in a back room, under pressure from the society around them – maybe something familiar to Southern Presbyterians?

Our second speaker, Susan Jack, the Southern Medical Officer of Health, told us about her life in the mission organisation Servants to Asia's Urban Poor, and reminded us that we will receive family, houses and fields, and trouble in this life – this is something Southern Presbyterians may have to get used to.

Jordan Redding introduced the Presbytery to Eco-Church, which includes Knox, Flagstaff and Opoho and led us in honouring the anniversary of Parihaka, which has a legacy in Otepoti Dunedin.

Kerry Enright addressed us as a Presbyterian member of Presbyterian Support Otago in light of the accusations of abuse in care that are directed against Presbyterian Support Otago and the Presbyterian Church.

It is hoped that his statement to Presbytery will be made available; if so, we will put it on our community noticeboard.

Robin McPhail introduced the Presbytery to the International Rural Churches Association and their next in-person conference at Dubuque Iowa.

Ministry Committee tells us that we have a decreasing number of National and Local Ordained Ministers, and that one of best ways to discern if a person has a calling to ministry is to tap them on the shoulder.

Property Committee tells us that the Synod Road Show is coming up, and if we are interested in the future of our buildings it sounds like a good thing to send Property and Finance Committee people to.

There are churches with structural problems in their buildings and their electrical wiring, and there are questions about buildings in the future of our mission.

At the moment the Presbyterian Church is about congregations who meet in buildings, what will the future bring?

This business meeting of Presbytery under Central Otago blue skies and sun was about the work of Presbytery, and we will meet again in a plenary session in May 2023.

Andrew Smith

Tetra Pak Recycling

It is good to see that the bin in the hall foyer is being used. It is important that the cartons are cut on three sides, with corners pulled out, and thoroughly rinsed. That is necessary so they can go through the machine that turns them into wall board. The result should look like this:



Marian Weaver

Bug Day Out Haiku

Beaded Butterfly

Beaded Butterfly
Lives in the magical clouds,
Eats small birds of prey.

Harriet

Bob the Bee

Busy Bob the bee,
Nectar in his nectar bags,
Loves flowering trees.

Ferg



Bob the Bee on the Bug Hotel



*Want to sing your favourite
carols and get into the
spirit of Christmas?*

*Neighbours, friends, children, everyone
everywhere welcome*



Opoho Presbyterian Church

invites you to a

**“Community carols
sing your heart out”**

at the church 50 Signal Hill Road

Sunday 11 December from 2pm to 2.45pm

- followed by afternoon tea and nibbles
- Christmas gift ideas sales table

*We invite you to bring a koha for
the Otago Community Hospice & a can for the Foodbank*

Poems Prayers Psalms Prose – Opoho Writers’ Group

Wednesday 7 December, 7 p.m.

Trying out a new in-person venue:
Marine Science tea room, first
floor, **310 Castle Street.**



Directions:

310 Castle Street is a square brick building (the old nurses’ home) located almost on the corner of Frederick Street and the one-way south, between Cumberland and Hayward Colleges. You can park in the spots between Cumberland and Marine Science. There is a door on the south side of the building, facing Cumberland’s front door. A large propellor is stuck to the wall next to it, so you can’t miss it!

I will meet you there at about 7 and let you in.

The tea room has cups, plates, tea, coffee-like powder, milk, sugar, and hot water. Some of us might bring a small seasonal plate of something to share.

You can reach me on 027-606-3552 if there is any problem or question.

Abby Smith

Keeping in Touch at Opoho Church

Opoho Church has a website, 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

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

Fellowship Group

We look forward to our Christmas gathering at 2 p.m. on Thursday 8 December, at Chris Young's home. All are welcome. Please wear your mask.

Gaynor Haig spoke about her life story at our November meeting, and it was fascinating to learn so much more about her life. Music has been an important part of Gaynor's life – she began learning piano at age eight and hasn't stopped. After teacher's college, Gaynor was the head of music for 17 years at Columba College and has played for 13 musicals. For 10 years Gaynor worked as a funeral celebrant and grief counsellor at Hope and Sons. Something Gaynor didn't know until she talked at Fellowship Group is that she is related to Chris Young.

As always, a delicious afternoon tea was provided by Chris and Miriam.

An important part of Fellowship Group meetings is our participation in the Fellowship of the Least Coin, as we give our least coins at each meeting.

The praying hands lotus, symbol of the Fellowship of the Least Coin



Andrea Johnston and Miriam Vollweiler

Interfaith Matters



Recently we had the Week of Prayer for World Peace which included a meaningful gathering up at the Mornington Methodist Church. Following this, the spiritual theme at the next Interfaith meeting was to be Connection. At the time I didn't link the two, but then I coincidentally came upon a wonderful article in the independent Catholic magazine, *Tui Motu*, by Christopher Longhurst, called *Praying Together*. A picture showed the present pope, Pope Francis, praying

with leaders of very different faiths, probably taken at a three-day religious summit which he attended in Kazakhstan in September of this year.

The article talks of prayer being “the ultimate spiritual act as it initiates a rapport with God and other spiritual beings through intentional engagement. When people of different faiths pray together, they ultimately unite in mind, heart and soul. They are in spiritual communion.....

“When religiously diverse people pray together, the long history of religious disunity is momentarily mended and the goal of religious unity is closer.

“In practice, praying together goes beyond interreligious dialogue. It is the highest form of interfaith relations as it forms part of the realm of interspiritual communion which can trigger interior transformation.

“According to Pa Henare Tate (a past Catholic leader), ‘persons in communion are changed in the act of knowing and loving each other’.”

There was the theme of Connection surely. So in the Opoho Presbyterian Church – sure we are of similar faith – may we work to build communion i.e. connection, between us all as we pray, just as we experienced at the Interfaith gathering at the Mornington Methodist Church not long ago.

Bronwen Strang

Operation Cover Up

So far four blankets have been completed since July which is great. Please keep knitting those squares. Donations of wool gratefully accepted too.

Contact me if you have any questions at 027 473 6026 or weavermariane@gamil.com

Marian Weaver



Let hope FLOW
this Christmas



DONATE TODAY
christmasappeal.org.nz



Christian World Service Christmas appeal pamphlets (including envelopes) are enclosed with physical copies of this newsletter and are also available at the back of the church.

Lectionary for December, January, and February

Sunday 4 December – 2nd Sunday of Advent			
Is 11: 1-10	Ps 72: 1-7, 18-19	Rom 15: 4-13	Mt 3: 1-12
Sunday 11 December – 3rd Sunday of Advent			
Is 35: 1-10	Ps 146: 5-10 <i>or</i> Lk 1: 46b-55	James 5: 7-10	Mt 11: 2-11
Sunday 18 December – 4th Sunday of Advent			
Is 7: 10-16	Ps 80: 1-7, 17-19	Rom 1: 1-7	Mt 1: 18-25
Saturday 24 December – Christmas Eve			
Is 9: 2-7	Ps 96	Titus 2: 11-14	Lk 2: 1-14, (15-20)
Sunday 25 December – Christmas Dawn			
Is 62: 6-12	Ps 97	Titus 3: 4-7	Lk 2: (1-7), 8-20
Sunday 25 December – Christmas Day			
Is 52: 7-10	Ps 98	Heb 1: 1-4, (5-12)	Jn 1: 1-14
Sunday 1 January – 1st Sunday after Christmas			
Is 63: 7-9	Ps 148	Heb 2: 10-18	Mt 2: 13-23
Friday 6 January – Epiphany			
Is 60: 1-6	Ps 72: 1-7, 10-14	Eph 3: 1-12	Mt 2: 1-12
Sunday 8 January – 1st Sunday after the Epiphany			
Is 42: 1-9	Ps 29	Acts 10: 34-43	Mt 3: 13-17
Sunday 15 January – 2nd Sunday after the Epiphany			
Is 49: 1-7	Ps 40: 1-11	1 Cor 1: 1-9	Jn 1: 29-42
Sunday 22 January – 3rd Sunday after the Epiphany			
Is 9: 1-4	Ps 27: 1, 4-9	1 Cor 1: 10-18	Mt 4: 12-23
Sunday 29 January – 4th Sunday after the Epiphany			
Micah 6: 1-8	Ps 15	1 Cor 1: 18-31	Mt 5: 1-12
Sunday 5 February – 5th Sunday after the Epiphany			
Is 58: 1-9a (9b-12)	Ps 112: 1-9 (10)	1 Cor 2: 1-12 (13-16)	Mt 5: 13-20
Sunday 12 February – 6th Sunday after the Epiphany			
Deut 30:15-20	Ps 119: 1-8	1 Cor 3: 1-9	Mt 5: 21-37
Sunday 19 February – Transfiguration			
Ex 24: 12-18	Ps 2 <i>or</i> Ps 99	2 Peter 1: 16-21	Mt 17: 1-9

Wednesday 22 February – Ash Wednesday			
Joel 2: 1-2 12-17 <i>or</i> Is 58: 1-12	Ps 51: 1-17	2 Cor 5: 20b-6: 10	Mt 6: 1-6, 16-21
Sunday 26 February – 1st Sunday in Lent			
Gen 2: 15-17 3: 1-7	Ps 32	Rom 5: 12-19	Mt 4: 1-11

Presbyterian Support Food Bank



There is usually greater use of the Food Bank over the Christmas-New Year period. You can bring donations of goods (nothing frozen or perishable) to church or you can make a cash donation for the Food Bank via their website www.psotago.org.nz



Coming Events at Opoho Presbyterian Church December 2022 and January 2023

4 December ~ Sunday	10 a.m.: Worship, the Rev. Clare Lind, Quarterly Communion
7 December ~ Wednesday	7 p.m.: Poems Prayers Psalms Prose – a friendly writing group, 310 Castle Street (directions elsewhere in this <i>Signal</i>)
8 December ~ Thursday	2 p.m.: Fellowship Group, Chris Young's house
11 December ~ Sunday	10 a.m.: Children's service – Opoho Kids' parents 2 p.m.: Community Carol Singing in church
14 December ~ Wednesday	7.30 p.m.: Property and Finance Committee, Morrison Lounge
15 December ~ Thursday	7.30 p.m.: Parish Council, venue TBC
18 December ~ Sunday	10 a.m.: Worship, the Rev. Clare Lind – Nine Lessons and Carols
24 December ~ Saturday	11.30 p.m.: Christmas Eve service, the Rev. Clare Lind
25 December ~ Sunday	10 a.m.: Worship, the Rev. Clare Lind – Christmas Day
1 January ~ Sunday	10 a.m.: Worship, the Rev. Clare Lind, Communion
8 January ~ Sunday	10 a.m.: Worship, Mary Somerville
15 January ~ Sunday	10 a.m.: Worship, John Roxborough and Gregor Macaulay
20 January ~ Friday	Material due for February <i>Opoho Signal</i>
22 January ~ Sunday	10 a.m.: Worship, the Rev. Anne Thomson
29 January ~ Sunday	10 a.m.: Worship, Abby Smith and Music Group

Deadline for next *Opoho Signal* – Friday 20 January

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

Coming Events at Opoho Presbyterian Church February 2023

5 February ~ Sunday	10 a.m.: Worship, the Rev. Clare Lind, Communion
6 February ~ Monday	Waitangi Day – public holiday
8 February ~ Wednesday	7.30 p.m.: Property and Finance Committee, Morrison Lounge
9 February ~ Thursday	7.30 p.m.: Christian Development Committee, Morrison Lounge
12 February ~ Sunday	10 a.m.: Worship, John Roxborogh and Gregor Macaulay
16 February ~ Thursday	7.30 p.m.: Parish Council, Morrison Lounge
19 February ~ Sunday	10 a.m.: Worship, the Rev. Clare Lind
20 February ~ Monday	Material due for March <i>Opoho Signal</i>
26 February ~ Sunday	10 a.m.: Worship, the Rev. Clare Lind, Harvest Thanksgiving



Pause.

This can be a hectic time.

We can get so busy we lose track of who we are,
and what matters most to us.

Advent might be what you need.

How about 15 minutes a day when you don't have to do
anything, or be anyone? That's what we're offering - so you
can be at your best for those you love and the things you
care about.



Nov 28 - Dec 23

Weekdays 12-12:15pm

Space, Poetry, Music,
Prayer, Mindfulness.

Led by Rev Malcolm Gordon



First Church *of* Otago

*The following is adapted from a 2018 Advent reflection by Justin Welby,
Archbishop of Canterbury.*

Advent is the season when we wait and prepare ourselves to celebrate the coming of Christ. Each of us will have different experiences of waiting this Advent – from joy and excitement, to anxiety and sadness. But who we are waiting for is the same. We are waiting for Jesus, who brings each of us hope, healing, comfort, forgiveness, guidance, renewal, and love. Throughout the Bible, the prophets tell us that waiting is part of how we make space in our hearts for God. This Advent, may we have the courage to wait, the faith to know what we are waiting for – and the grace to receive what God has in store for us.