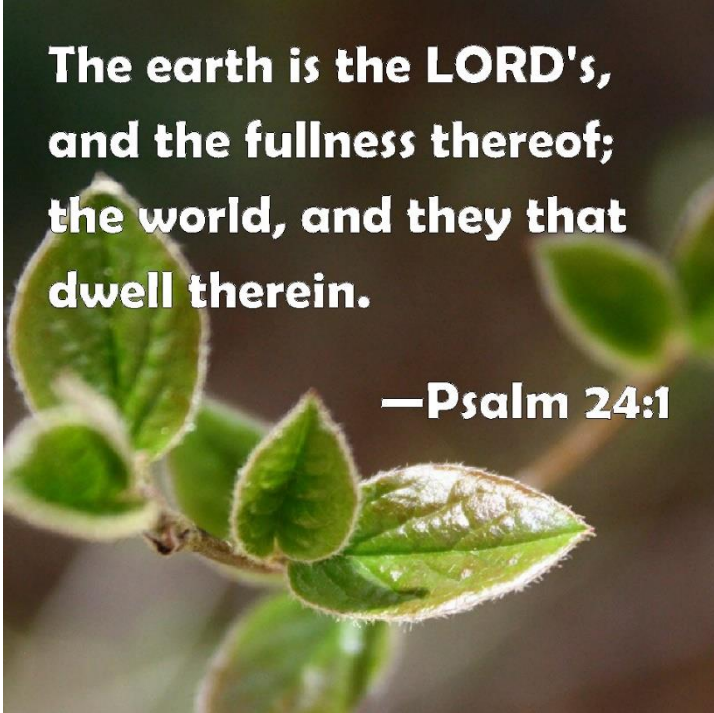


# Ōpoho Signal

The newsletter of Ōpoho Presbyterian Church

50 Signal Hill Road, Ōpoho, Dunedin 9010



**The earth is the LORD's,  
and the fullness thereof;  
the world, and they that  
dwell therein.**

**—Psalm 24:1**

**April 2024**

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

## **Editorial**

Last year I spoke to the congregation about the introduction of some National Policy Statements (NPS) about biodiversity, and how documents at national level provide the basis for District Plans to have provisions to protect special areas for flora and fauna. Last year, after 15 years of development, the NPS Indigenous Biodiversity (NPSIB) was enacted. Areas for protection are called “significant natural areas” (SNAs). SNAs tend to be in the high country or in coastal areas. Most SNAs identified for protection are remnants of wider areas that have been turned into pasture or forestry. There are SNAs in District Plans already, as they are provided for in the Resource Management Act 1991.

The Associate Minister for the Environment (Andrew Hoggard) has just announced that Councils will be told not to activate the parts of the NPSIB in their District Plan reviews that provide for new SNAs. He also wants a review of existing SNAs in District Plans (that have been in place sometimes for decades). His rationale for this is that having SNAs protection is a confiscation of private property, and hinders development, and that the people most concerned about conservation are the property owners.

It is fair to say that there are many rural landowners who care about the natural values on their land, and work to maintain or enhance those values, but, like any human group, there are those who do not. It is because of the latter that identification and protection of SNAs is required.

Natural values once destroyed are very difficult to reinstate. Indigenous vegetation is not simply of trees and shrubs or grasses clustered together. They are an entire ecosystem including complex soil layers and processes with fungi, bacteria, invertebrates and other small or wriggly things that we don’t usually see, plus the lizards, insects, and birds that we do see. So reinstating them is complex and takes decades, and seldom happens.

The photo on the next page is an example. Most high-country farmers have low density grazing of tussocks lands with merinos, such that the tussocks endure. The farmer who owns the land shown below ploughed around 450 hectares under, in a lizard protection area, with what was hillsides of waving tussocks.

At the same time the Coalition Government has introduced legislation for Fast Tracking projects including roads, mining, dams and infrastructure. That process gives the ultimate decision about whether a project will go ahead to a Minister of the Crown. The project will be considered by a panel of experts, but a Minister can override that advice.



**Snow tussocks in a lizard protection area after “development”**

On this topic, Shane Jones, one of the Ministers who will make fast track decisions said, “If there is a mining opportunity and it’s impeded by a blind frog, goodbye Freddy.”

The national legislation that we have, and District and Regional Plans, all go through a public submission and hearing process or select committee process where people with a wide range of views can put those views for consideration before a decision is made.

The Fast Track process can override all the NPSs, District Plans, Regional Plans, Conservation, Heritage and other Acts and Regulations that have been developed with public input.

This is scary stuff. I firmly believe that the Earth is our gift from God – and it has been around for a long time. In terms of land ownership, a human life is on average 80-90 something years, and land ownership is therefore a mere blip in the continuum of time. However, in that blip, severe destruction of natural values happens, such that those following have a mess to clean up, or face the loss of some values that simply cannot be reinstated.

In our urban setting, consider the landscape around Tumai, on Mt Cargill, Pine Hill and Signal Hill. Then imagine a windfarm on them, or a mine, forestry or a dense housing development, as these are all projects that can go through under fast-track legislation.

*Marian Weaver*

## Parish Council News

The Council met on 21 March.

Meegan Cloughley was appointed as a member of the Property and Finance Committee, formalising a previously unofficial arrangement.

The Council noted that that committee was considering options for insurance of our buildings – insurance is a major expense for the parish and various types of cover have different risks and benefits. It was also noted that, as a temporary measure, a rod has been mounted behind the burning bush window in the church. This is to support the glass, which is bowed, until a longer-term fix is made.

The Pastoral Care and Community Committee reported that a training event for pastoral visitors was to be held at the church. It has been scheduled for Saturday 18 May (see notice later in this issue).

*Gregor Macaulay on behalf of the Parish Council*

## Property and Finance Committee Update

A busy month with repairs completed in kitchen to taps and zip, ongoing garden work, and a clean-up of obsolete items in the basement. We continue to have ongoing use of our facilities and this month a Pilates group has started a regular booking. Currently we have Yoga on a Monday from 10 to 11 a.m., Steady as You Go on Tuesday from 1.30 to 2.30, a weaving group all Wednesday, and Pilates Wednesday 5.30-6.30. On average there are 40 people a week who are visiting the church facilities and we are receiving lots of positive feedback with people bringing items for recycling to add to the foyer plastic tops and Tetrapak collection station.

*Miriam Vollweiler* (Committee convener)



Sorting out the basement



Obsolete items on truck

And garden development continues with chopping, clearing, soil development, and planting:







## What happened next?

Years ago, when I was tutoring in early church history, and trying to find a way of bringing an authentic message to the Dunedin congregation I worked with, I suggested that we try to coordinate church history with the very earliest developments in Christian theology. At that time we had a New Testament professor who had studied the way early Christians had developed rules for how to read (Jewish) scripture. But nothing came of it. In the wake of the on-going theological controversy of that time people preferred to stick within their own 'silos' (to borrow a Dutch image). The period from the resurrection to the Council of Nicaea remains a blank. Where did early Christian doctrine come from?

In recent years the Belgian/Dutch theologian Edward Schillebeeckx, who was deeply troubled by the way Christian doctrine and symbolism no longer connected with the way European people think, made a massive review of what we do know. (My copy of his *Jesus; an experiment in Christology*, ET 1979, was a gift from Frank Nichol, who was certainly alert to the issue).

As the first disciples came to terms with the reality that Jesus was with them now in a new, non-physical, way, they struggled to catch hold of who this unique person was, and had been among them. Their only resource was the tradition within which Jesus lived: Jewish Scripture, tradition, and teaching, which offered a bewildering variety of possibilities. There were major variations between Palestinian (Aramaic/Hebrew language) and Hellenistic (Greek language) Judaism. Jewish models (and they had no others) for understanding the unique person they had known were many: the 'Davidic nationalistic' messiah who would restore Israel, the 'Son of David' messiah who would bring peace (*shalom*) and healing, the mysterious 'Son of Man' (a heavenly figure 'like a man'), the suffering righteous one, the prophet who would come at the end of days, 'the one who would come again.' And more.

We find traces of all these 'models' for understanding who Jesus was in the Gospels, and it was in a Jewish context that people began to search for the most apt 'redemptive analogies'. There was no universal consensus, and the Christian movement in various places developed some models and ignored others. And it went on since then, with cries of 'heresy!' and rejection sometimes taking the place of the openness for debate that is characteristic of Jewish theology.

Where this leaves us is that we need to search for ways of explaining the person and work of Jesus ('Christology') that make sense for our modern contemporaries. The default position long defended in the West, 'that the Father sent the Son to die to take away the Father's wrathful judgement and set us free' ('substitutionary atonement') no longer works. The French/American social philosopher, René Girard, who returned mid-life to active Catholic faith, argued that any sacrifice involves violence against the victim and so must be set aside.

We have plenty of other models, in scripture and tradition, to call on. He saw Jesus' suffering and death as a non-violent stand against violence – a 'prince of peace' who would not allow his disciples to defend him, or respond violently against his arrest, unjust trial, and execution – offering redemption from a world of violence. This does not change the recorded events, but it gives us another way to understand Jesus. It is urgent, and there are signs around us that many are doing this, in ministry and individually. As Aquinas said centuries ago, if we preach a message that does not make sense to our hearers it promotes mockery not faith. If we are puzzled by the decline of the church and Christianity in the western world we may find a clue here. Perhaps after Easter we could review for ourselves, what came next..., and how we can talk about it.

*Simon Rae*

## **Our Church Community**

We hear and read of so many groups and activities connected with our church apart from the services (though sometimes connected with them) that it is perhaps helpful to see them listed together:

Editing and delivering the *Opoho Signal*

Driving members to church and bringing them home

Fellowship Group

Writing Group

Abby's Jam Palace

Operation Cover Up

Hall bookings and other organisations using the facilities

Pastoral Care Team

Christian Development Committee

Our Place Task Group

Pastoral Care and Community Committee

Property and Finance Committee

Interfaith contact

Preparing rosters

Music and Choir

Website and Facebook administration

Working bees in the buildings and garden

Barbecues

Fairs

Seed Bank Exchange

Morning tea and coffee

People who hug

Flower arrangements

Food for Presbyterian Support

Church and Hall cleaning

It's amazing how many there are, and I've probably forgotten something because all I do is sit in church!

*Gisela*



## Roster Notes

The new rosters appear to be bedding in well, and it's good to see one or two new faces on some of the rosters. We also appreciate the assistance of several people who not regular members of the church but are happy to be involved.

**Door Duty:** I am pleased to report we now have updated door instructions, thanks to Gregor who is informally co-ordinating that roster. Whether you are new or old to this role, please take the time to review the instructions.

**Sound and Data Projector:** John Roxborough is available to help for both oldies and newbies.

**Morning Tea:** These instructions are awaiting updating. Any volunteers to draft? And/or to co-ordinate this roster? We could still do with one or two extra people on the morning tea roster. Remember that this is an equal opportunities church – no special experience, skill, or training is required for the role – just a willingness to help out. Simple instructions on working the dish washing machine are on the wall, and home baking is not required. (Shop biscuits are available in the kitchen). You can volunteer on your own, or with someone else.

**Cleaning** Instructions for cleaning hall and church also need updating. It might be a good idea to have several heads together on this. One of the issues that has arisen is how often particular cleaning tasks need to be done – especially in the hall. And whether or not a two-week period is the optimal time period for these rosters. Any volunteers to co-ordinate discussion in consultation with cleaning volunteers and the Property and Finance Committee would be very welcome.

*Jenny Bunce*



## **Donations to Ōpoho Presbyterian Church**

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

ANZ bank, Opoho Presbyterian Deacons' Court;

Account Number: 06 0909 0010868 000.

Please put your name and the word Donation in the data fields. It would be helpful if you could let our Treasurer, Judy Rodda, know, so that receipts for charitable donations can be sent to you. Her email is Judith L Rodda [opoho\\_pcbusiness@gmail.com](mailto:opoho_pcbusiness@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***

## **Church “Active Listening” Workshop**

Daniel Larsen, an experienced psychotherapist, will be leading pastoral visitors and anyone else in the church who might be interested in an “Active Listening” Workshop in the Morrison Lounge on **Saturday 18 May**.

Parish member Daniel led a similar workshop more than 10 years ago. The insights were enlightening, and the workshop was most appreciated.

We'll meet for tea and coffee from about 1.30 p.m. ready to start at 2 p.m. The workshop will last about three hours.

Because we will want a good indication of numbers let me know if you are planning to come as soon as you can, and at latest by *Sunday 12 May*. You are most welcome.

***Philip Somerville***

## Art Smith's Famous Chocolate Chip Cookies

Are cookies love? No. But sometimes love produces cookies.

*On Sunday 25 February, in the Lenten Series about family history, Abby Smith spoke about her parents' baking. Who can forget the tale of Abby's mother's duck fat cookies? Here is her father's chocolate chip cookie recipe, adapted by Abby for New Zealand conditions.*

1 cup brown sugar  
½ cup white sugar  
250g butter (=half a pound)  
1 teaspoon vanilla essence  
2 large (free-range) eggs  
1 teaspoon baking soda  
1 cup oats (=porridge)  
½ cup wheat germ

One packet of dark choc bits (use the Nestlé ones that cost more)

(OR use one large good-quality dark chocolate bar broken up into bits about ½-1 cm across)

2 cups of standard flour



1. Preheat oven to 180°C
2. Cream together the sugars and butter in a big bowl
3. Add the vanilla and eggs, stir till all mixed
4. Add the baking soda, porridge, wheat germ and choc bits, stir till all mixed
5. Stir in the flour, till all mixed. At this stage you should give some of the dough to family members to taste and/or try it yourself
6. Pop the dough in the fridge now if you have time, which makes the next step better. But there's no particular need if you need cookies now. Equally, you can freeze dough in a log-shape (in plastic or foil) and just slice off bits when you want to make a few cookies.
7. Make large spoonfuls (about the size of a golf ball) on a baking sheet
8. Cook for 8-9 minutes. They should look fluid in the middle, brown on the edges
9. Let them sit on the sheet for a few minutes, then move to a cooling rack
10. You can fit about 12-15 on a sheet at a time, so you'll need to do three batches
11. They are best warm with a glass of milk, but will last about a week in a cookie jar

# Poems Prayers Psalms & Prose – Ōpoho Writers' Group

**Thursday 18 April, 7 p.m.**

Marine Science tea room,  
first floor, **310 Castle Street.**

Please bring something to read to the group. It could be by you, or by someone else. It could be new or old. It could be finished or still in draft form. It could be poetry, psalm, prose, prayer, or something else. You could bring one

or two (or even three) items to share. We try to be flexible and kind, providing only the feedback you ask for.



We are an open group. Anyone can join us if what we do would be fun or useful or helpful. Though we are a bit churchy.

## *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 (legally!) in the spots between Cumberland and Marine Science. There is an entry 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 by the propellor at 7 and let you in.** Margaret, Andrew and I often run a car-pool from the northern end. We try to be finished by 8 p.m.

The tea room has cups, plates, a few spoons, tea, Milo, coffee-like powder, three kinds of milk, sugar, and hot water. Sometimes someone brings a small plate of something yummy to share. Don't worry if that's not your thing, there will be enough.

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

***Abby Smith***

## Harvest Thanksgiving

We had our annual harvest thanksgiving service on Sunday 25 February. The following day, Benjamin Thew delivered the goods donated for the service, together with some jars of Abby's jam and \$70 given for the donations of fresh produce, to the Presbyterian Support Otago Foodbank. Thank you to Benjamin and everyone who contributed.



## Operation Cover Up

Knitting continues for Mission Without Borders to provide woollen blankets and clothing to cold parts of the world where such goods are not readily available. As usual we need knitters to make squares – there's lots of wool available. Any queries please contact me at 027 473 6026 or [weavermariane@gmail.com](mailto:weavermariane@gmail.com)



*Marian Weaver*



## Interfaith Matters

I would like to flag (I was going to say “signal”) one thing that is at the beginning of the planning stages for later in the year that you may be interested in. This is to be a day when members of the public could together visit various faith communities in Dunedin, e.g. the Mosque, the Baha’i Centre, the Dhargyey Buddhist Centre, the Synagogue, Cathedrals, and Churches with a view to understanding more about each faith community and taking away the “I wonder what is in there” feeling. This won’t happen quickly but I shall keep you posted.



*Bronwen Strang*

## 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 wish to be added to (or deleted from) the email list, or **if you receive an emailed copy and don’t need a physical copy as well**, please send an email to the editor, Gregor Macaulay, at [gregor.macaulay@outlook.com](mailto:gregor.macaulay@outlook.com)

## Presbyterian Support Foodbank



You can bring goods (nothing frozen or perishable) to church on any Sunday or you can make a cash donation for the Foodbank via their website [www.psotago.org.nz](http://www.psotago.org.nz)

Non-food items such as toiletries are also acceptable.

## Fellowship Group

Our first gathering for the year on 7 March and finally a gorgeous warm day where we could leave the doors open and enjoy the sun. We caught up on each other's news, admired Clare's tapestry, and gave our thoughts about framing options. Our plans for future meetings are to have the DCC waste educator come and talk to us about the new bins and ways to enhance our waste minimisation practices.

*Miriam Vollweiler*

Clare and Jenny



## Gone to Seed

The Gone to Seed cupboard has taken another step toward completion with Tom painting a whio (blue duck) on the seed cupboard door.



## Lectionary for April and May

<b>Sunday 31 March – Easter Day</b>			
Acts 10: 34-43 <i>or</i> Is 25: 6-9	Ps 118: 1-2, 14-24	1 Cor 15: 1-11 <i>or</i> Acts 10: 34-43	Jn 20: 1-18 <i>or</i> Mk 16: 1-8
<b>Sunday 7 April – Easter 2</b>			
Acts 4: 32-35	Ps 133	1 Jn 1: 1- 2:2	Jn 20: 19-31
<b>Sunday 14 April – Easter 3</b>			
Acts 3: 12-19	Ps 4	1 Jn 3: 1-7	Lk 24: 36b-48
<b>Sunday 21 April – Easter 4</b>			
Acts 4: 5-12	Ps 23	1 Jn 3: 16-24	Jn 10: 11-18
<b>Sunday 28 April – Easter 5</b>			
Acts 8: 26-40	Ps 22: 25-31	1 Jn 4: 7-21	Jn 15: 1-8
<b>Sunday 5 May – Easter 6</b>			
Acts 10: 44-48	Ps 98	1 Jn 5: 1-6	Jn 15: 9-17
<b>Thursday 9 May – Ascension</b>			
Acts 1: 1-11	Ps 47 <i>or</i> Ps 93	Eph 1: 15-23	Lk 24: 44-53
<b>Sunday 12 May – Easter 7</b>			
Acts 1: 15-17, 21-26	Ps 1	1 Jn 5: 9-13	Jn 17: 6-19
<b>Sunday 19 May – Pentecost</b>			
Acts 2: 1-21 <i>or</i> Ezek 37: 1-14	Ps 104: 24-34, 35b	Rom 8: 22-27 <i>or</i> Acts 2: 1-21	Jn 15: 26-27, 16: 4b-15
<b>Sunday 26 May – Trinity</b>			
Is 6: 1-8	Ps 29	Rom 8: 12-17	Jn 3: 1-17



**Lectionary  
& Calendar**

## Coming Events at Ōpoho Presbyterian Church April and May 2024

1 April ~ Monday	Easter Monday – public holiday
7 April ~ Sunday	Daylight saving ends – clocks go <i>back</i> one hour 10 a.m.: Worship, the Rev. Paul Ranby, Communion
10 April ~ Wednesday	7.30 p.m.: Property and Finance Committee, Morrison Lounge
11 April ~ Thursday	2 p.m.: Fellowship Group, Morrison Lounge
14 April ~ Sunday	10 a.m.: Worship, the Rev. Anne Thomson
18 April ~ Thursday	7 p.m.: Writing Group, Marine Science tea room, first floor, 310 Castle Street 7.30 p.m.: Parish Council, Morrison Lounge
20 April ~ Saturday	Material due for May <i>Opoho Signal</i>
21 April ~ Sunday	10 a.m.: Worship, the Rev. Clare Lind
25 April ~ Thursday	ANZAC Day – public holiday
28 April ~ Sunday	10 a.m.: Worship, the Rev. Clare Lind After church: Abby’s Jam Palace in hall
4 May ~ Saturday	1.30-5 p.m.: ‘Active Listening’ workshop for parish visitors and other interested parishioners, Morrison Lounge
5 May ~ Sunday	10 a.m.: Worship, the Rev. Clare Lind, Communion
8 May ~ Wednesday	7.30 p.m.: Property and Finance Committee, Morrison Lounge
9 May ~ Thursday	2 p.m.: Fellowship Group, Morrison Lounge 7.30 p.m.: Christian Development Committee, Morrison Lounge
12 May ~ Sunday	10 a.m.: Worship, the Rev. Russell Thew
16 May ~ Thursday	7.30 p.m.: Parish Council, Morrison Lounge
20 May ~ Monday	Material due for June <i>Opoho Signal</i>
19 May ~ Sunday	10 a.m.: Worship, the Rev. Clare Lind
26 May ~ Sunday	10 a.m.: Worship, the Rev. Clare Lind

### Deadline for next *Ōpoho Signal* – Saturday 20 April

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

## **Stones**

The stones in Jordan's stream  
Perceived the dove descend  
In its lily of light:  
That glory entered  
Their interminable dream.

The stones in Edom's wilderness  
Observed the fiend  
Take five of their number  
And build a cairn thereof,  
And beckoning to Jesus  
He pointed to the stones and said:  
Make bread.

But because of his great love  
For the uniqueness of created  
things,  
The confraternity in disparity  
Of plant and rock, of flesh and  
wings,  
Jesus would not translate the stones  
Out of their immobile immortality  
Into that dynasty of death,  
Decaying bread:

The stones upon Golgotha's hill  
Took the shadow of the cross  
Upon them like the scorch of ice:  
And they felt the flick of dice  
And Jesus' blood mingling with  
his mother's tears;  
And these made indelible stains:  
And some of them were taken up  
And with curses thrown  
At that rejected throne,  
And others felt the clamorous butts  
of Roman spears:  
And the pity, horror, and love  
within them pent  
Welled out and shook the earth.  
And the veil was rent.

The great stones of the tomb  
Enfolded Jesus' body  
In silence and deep gloom.  
They had him to themselves alone,  
That shard of him, sinew and bone,  
Transient dust on their immortality.  
And now their inanimate heart  
Yearned over that shrouded form:  
And while three midnights passed  
They made of that tomb  
A womb:

The fragile bones renewed their  
strength,  
The flesh trembled and moved,  
The glory of the dove  
Re-descended from above  
And with the break of day  
The door was rolled away:  
The function of the stones was  
done:  
His second birth  
Achieved on earth,  
Jesus walked into the sun.

*William Jeffrey* (1896-1946)  
Jeffrey was a Scottish journalist.

