

Ōpoho Signal

The newsletter of Ōpoho Presbyterian Church

50 Signal Hill Road, Ōpoho, Dunedin 9010



March 2026

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

Editorial

There is one aspect of being a Christian that I really struggle with, and have for many years, and that is forgiveness. It may be that my understanding of what forgiveness is has been warped by societal interpretations, by mainstream media, and also my own history. I googled what forgiveness is and I kept getting scientific answers such as ‘forgiveness is a conscious, deliberate decision to release feelings of resentment or vengeance’. I think my google has been spying on what sites I tend to visit if it is taking me to the logical and practical answers first, but that is beside the point. I wish it was that easy to understand what forgiveness is for me; the way that is it described above casts it is a gift for yourself, not for the person you are forgiving.

The word forgive holds power. If someone says to you, “I forgive you”, you get a feeling of relief and of peace, and you instantly thank the person, although as you walk away you may think, wait, what did I do wrong? Or maybe that is just me. When you say with intent to someone, “I forgive you”, you may have a feeling of a burden being lifted from your shoulders, your heart. I mean there are many words out there that hold power, but I find the word forgiveness one of the strongest. I try never to say “Please forgive me” in an offhand manner, I don’t feel I have that right to ask; it is something that the person that I have upset or offended must decide on their own – all I can do is apologise and take ownership for whatever it was that that I did. Actually, that leads me into my other part of forgiveness I struggle with: those who demand forgiveness without owning they have intentionally harmed.

I had a conversation with someone who had intentionally harmed me, and their last words to me were the demand that I had to forgive them. No apology, no ownership of actions or choices, just the absolute demand of something I must give them. If I didn’t know this person so well, I may have been able to see it was a way to help me move on and grow, but, alas, they were not asking for my benefit, but their own. That interaction alone has warped my understanding of forgiveness significantly; it has taken me years to untangle the knots and tangles around it, and will probably take many more years, but I have got to the point now where I can at least recognise that I can still dislike the person, can still think of them as a (two coffees later a suitable description for the editorial came) not nice person, and any forgiveness I may give has nothing to do with them. For years I didn’t say the lines in the Lord’s Prayer about forgiveness because I

knew I hadn't forgiven this person, and my brain went to tell me that if I am not able to say to God that I have forgiven those who have sinned against me, then I have no right to ask for forgiveness for any sins I had done. I finally began saying it with a caveat on my heart that excludes that person – it is spending time in the too-hard basket part of my brain at this time.

It is unfortunate that the concept of forgiveness has been so trivialised by social media, and society in general. It is something powerful that God gifted us. Okay, maybe I would have preferred better instructions around how to use it, and to understand it, but I do understand it is a gift from God, and for that I am grateful. I would really like to hear other people's interpretation of what forgiveness is, and if they also believe that it has power, or has been trivialised. Please, let me know.

I found the following and it spoke to me, I am thinking about making it into a poster to put on my wall, an affirmation to say each day:

Father, please forgive me when I allow anger and bitterness to fill my heart because I refuse to forgive someone who has hurt me. Teach me how to lay down my rights and choose to forgive in the same way You have forgiven me.

(Mary Southerland)

Meegan Cloughley

Parish Council News

The Parish Council held a retreat on the morning of Saturday 31 January to plan for parish activities in 2026. Much of the conversation centred on the roofing project and the asbestos problem in the church. Other events and activities during the year will probably follow the general pattern of last year.

The first substantive meeting of the Council for the year will be held on 26 February – after this issue of the *Signal* is published.

Gregor Macaulay on behalf of the Parish Council

Asbestos Issue

More asbestos sampling of the interior of the church and some treasured items has been done. It was good news that there was no contamination in the vestibule leading to the Morrison Lounge, the vestry, Gisela's woven wall hanging, the Millenium banner, the banner at the front of the church, Shona's nativity figures, or the music books alongside the organ. There is no contamination higher than two metres in the church. Three asbestos removal firms have been sent the updated asbestos testing report and asked to resubmit quotes, and we hope to have them soon.

Marian Weaver

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

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

Operation Cover Up

Knitted woollen squares (20cmx20cm) are still needed to make blankets.

Recently I picked up a large bag of squares in the Morrison Lounge that had around 55 squares in it, which was marvellous. Clearly a lot of time and effort had gone into making the squares. However, 46 of them were made of acrylic yarn, which is not so good as I can incorporate only up to six or so acrylic squares in each blanket, as the objective is to make warm blankets. Wool is what we need in the blankets, or yarn with a high percentage of wool.



The Mission Without Borders coordinator has also suggested using darker wool colours, as some of the blankets are used by homeless people, and light colours can get discoloured easily. Knitted wool garments for children older than five, teenagers, and adults also welcome (scarves, gloves, hats, jumpers). No baby or toddler garments thanks.

Marian Weaver

Jam Palace



The Jam Palace is open every day in the Hall Lobby – you'll find jams, jellies, preserves, and chutneys. Just help yourself and follow the instructions for paying.

Interfaith

WORLD INTERFAITH HARMONY WEEK

*Love of God
and love of the Neighbour*



*Love of the Good
and love of the Neighbour*

The Official UN Observance in the First Week of February (1-7 February 2026)

World Interfaith Harmony Week is an annual event observed during the first week of February, since its UN General Assembly designation in 2010. The Assembly pointed out that mutual understanding and interreligious dialogue constitute important dimensions of a culture of peace and established World Interfaith Harmony Week as a way to promote harmony between all people regardless of their faith.

Recognising the need for dialogue among different faiths and religions to enhance mutual understanding, harmony and cooperation among people, the Assembly encourages all countries to spread the message of interfaith harmony and goodwill in churches, mosques, synagogues, temples, and other places of worship during that week, on a voluntary basis and according to their own religious traditions or beliefs.

Here in Ōtepoti Dunedin, a Celebration of Harmony Dinner was held at St Peter's Anglican Church, Caversham on Tuesday 3 February. It was organised by the Dunedin Interfaith Council. The community came together to enjoy a vegetarian meal and to have fun. Between courses we were treated to a variety of performances by people with special talents, the Tongan Choir filled the hall with their fine voices, and we were treated by dances by the Otago Southland Chinese Association and an Indian dance by Jayanthi Rajesh from the Natyaloka School of Indian Dance.

The Harmony Dinner was a chance to meet new people, regardless of their faith. We can all stand together in harmony, knowing that Christ stands beside us.

Benjamin Thew

Rhamadan Friendship Evening

Pearl of the Islands Foundation Inc. (PIF), in collaboration with the Dunedin Methodist Parish and the Dunedin Interfaith Council, warmly invites you to an evening of dialogue, connection, cultural appreciation and a special musical performance.



Keynote Speaker: The Rev. Professor Douglas Pratt
(from Cromwell)

Theme: Dignity, Justice and Kindness

Wednesday 4 March, 7.00-9.30 p.m.

Venue: Mornington Methodist Church,
1 Galloway Street, Mornington, Dunedin.

Dinner/light supper will be served at 8.26 p.m.,
coinciding with the breaking of the fast.

In the spirit of Ramadan, PIF will also be running a
food parcel donation campaign.

Contributions toward the event and food parcels are warmly welcomed.

All are welcome to this special evening of dialogue and connection.

Lectionary for March 2026

Sunday 1 March – 2nd Sunday in Lent			
Gen 12: 1-4a	Ps 121	Rom 4: 1-5, 13-17	Jn 3: 1-17 <i>or</i> Mt 17: 1-9
Sunday 8 March – 3rd Sunday in Lent			
Ex 17: 1-7	Ps 95	Rom 5:1-11	Jn 4: 5-42
Sunday 15 March – 4th Sunday in Lent			
1 Sam 16: 1-13	Ps 23	Eph 5: 8-14	Jn 9: 1-41
Sunday 22 March – 5th Sunday in Lent			
Ezek 37: 1-14	Ps 130	Rom 8: 6-11	Jn 11: 1-45
Sunday 29 March – 6th Sunday in Lent, Palm Sunday <i>or</i> Passion Sunday			
None <i>or</i> Is 50: 4-9a	Ps 118: 1-2, 19-29 <i>or</i> Ps 31: 9-16	None <i>or</i> Phil 2: 5-11	<i>Palm</i> Mr 21: 1-11 <i>Passion</i> Mt 26: 14-27:66 <i>or</i> Mt 27: 11-54
Monday 30 March			
Is 42: 1-9	Ps 36: 5-11	Heb 9: 11-15	Jn 12: 1-11
Tuesday 31 March			
Is 49: 1-7	Ps 71: 1-14	1 Cor 1: 18-31	Jn 12: 20-36

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 Food Bank via their website www.psotago.org.nz

Lectionary for April 2026

Wednesday 1 April			
Is 50: 4-9a	Ps 70	Heb 12: 1-3	Jn 13: 21-32
Thursday 2 April – Maundy Thursday			
Ex 12: 1-4, (5-10), 11-14	Ps 116: 1-2, 12-19	1 Cor 11: 23-26	Jn 13: 1-17, 31b-35
Friday 3 April – Good Friday			
Is 52: 13- 53:12	Ps 22	Heb 10: 16-25 <i>or</i> Heb 4:14-16;5:7-9	Jn 18: 1-19:42
Saturday 4 April – Holy Saturday			
Job 14: 1-14 <i>or</i> Lam 3: 1-9, 19-24	Ps 31: 1-4, 15-16	1 Peter 4: 1-8	Mt 27: 57-66 <i>or</i> Jn 19: 38-42
Sunday 5 April – Easter Sunday Dawn			
Ex 14: 10-31; 15:20-21	Ps 114	Rom 6: 3-11	Mt 28: 1-10
Sunday 5 April – Easter Day			
Acts 10: 34-43 <i>or</i> Jer 31: 1-6	Ps 118: 1-2, 14-24	Col 3: 1-4 <i>or</i> Acts 10: 34-43	Jn 20: 1-18 <i>or</i> Mt 28: 1-10
Sunday 12 April – 2nd Sunday of Easter			
Acts 2: 14a, 22-32	Ps 16	1 Peter 1: 3-9	Jn 20: 19-31
Sunday 19 April – 3rd Sunday of Easter			
Acts 2: 14a, 36-41	Ps 116: 1-4, 12-19	1 Peter 1: 17-23	Lk 24: 13-35
Sunday 26 April – 4th Sunday of Easter			
Acts 2: 42-47	Ps 23	1 Peter 2: 19-25	Jn 10: 1-10

Deadline for next *Ōpoho Signal* – Friday 20 March

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

Coming Events: March and April 2026

1 March ~ Sunday	10 a.m.: Worship, the Rev. Clare Lind, Quarterly Communion
8 March ~ Sunday	10 a.m.: Worship, Meegan Cloughley
11 March ~ Wednesday	7.30 p.m.: Property and Finance Committee, Morrison Lounge
12 March ~ Thursday	2 p.m.: Fellowship Group, Morrison Lounge
15 March ~ Sunday	10 a.m.: Worship, the Rev. Clare Lind
20 March ~ Friday	Material due for April <i>Opoho Signal</i>
22 March ~ Sunday	10 a.m.: Worship, the Rev. Clare Lind
23 March ~ Monday	Otago Anniversary Day
26 March ~ Thursday	7.30 p.m.: Parish Council, Morrison Lounge
29 March ~ Palm Sunday	10 a.m.: Worship, Abby Smith
5 April ~ Easter Sunday	Daylight saving ends – clocks go <i>back</i> one hour 10 a.m.: Worship, the Rev. Clare Lind, Communion
6 April ~ Easter Monday	Public holiday
8 April ~ Wednesday	7.30 p.m.: Property and Finance Committee, Morrison Lounge
9 April ~ Thursday	2 p.m.: Fellowship Group, Morrison Lounge
12 April ~ Sunday	10 a.m.: Worship, the Rev. Jay Robinson
19 April ~ Sunday	10 a.m.: Worship, the Rev. Clare Lind
20 April ~ Monday	Material due for May <i>Opoho Signal</i>
21 April ~ Monday	Easter Monday – public holiday
23 April ~ Thursday	7.30 p.m.: Parish Council, Morrison Lounge
25 April ~ Saturday	ANZAC Day
26 April ~ Sunday	10 a.m.: Worship, the Rev. Clare Lind
27 April ~ Monday	Public holiday

**ROSTERS WILL BE CIRCULATED
SEPARATELY BY EMAIL.**

