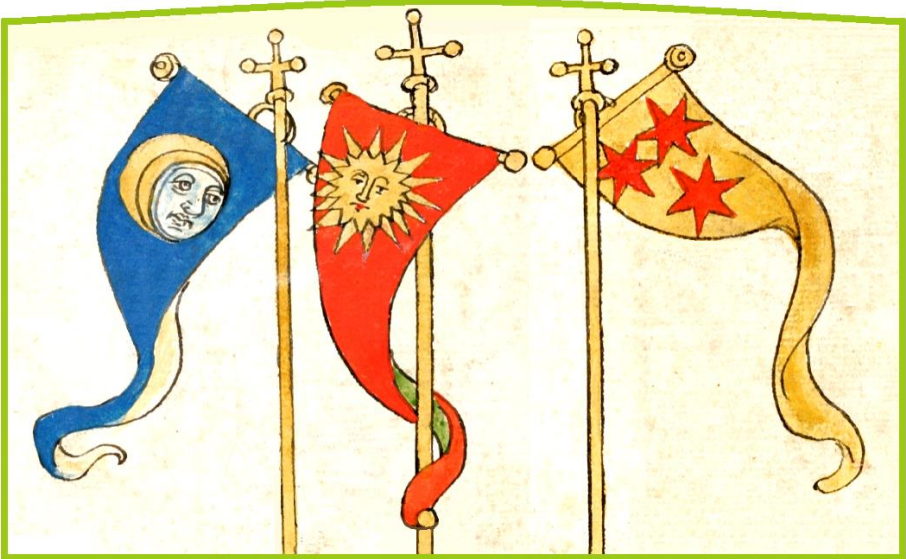


# Ōpoho Signal

The newsletter of Ōpoho Presbyterian Church

50 Signal Hill Road, Ōpoho, Dunedin 9010



Flags attributed to the Magi in a 15th-century Swiss collection of coats of arms

## February 2024

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

## Editorial

I thought that, while Christmas is still fresh in our minds, I would write about the Magi – the “wise men from the east” of the Nativity story. They are mentioned in only one of the Gospels, in Matthew 2.



In 2022, I visited Cologne Cathedral in Germany (left). It houses a massive gilded sarcophagus (below right) containing the skeletons of three men, one young, one middle-aged, and one older, said to be those of the Magi. I think the chances that they are genuinely the remains of the Magi are vanishingly small, but the relics made Cologne a place of pilgrimage and three crowns in the city's



arms (below right) commemorate the 'Three Wise Men'. Matthew does not actually say there were three or name any of them. He also does not describe them as kings, but that is what they came to be called (“We three kings of orient are”), complete with coats of arms and flags (see the front of this newsletter), names, and descriptions: Caspar is often depicted as an old man with a white beard, Melchior as middle-aged, and Balthazar as a dark-skinned younger man, from Arabia, Persia, and India (although their names and appearances and coats of arms, who brought each of the three gifts, and their geographical origins are often switched about).



Nativity scenes usually have figures of the Magi side by side with the shepherds visiting the infant Jesus, but some traditions have their visit as being up to two years later – giving a rationale for Herod's order for the killing of boys in Bethlehem aged two years and under.

We really have little, if anything, in the way of hard facts about the Magi. Indeed, some commentators would say that the Nativity stories in the Gospels are merely pious myths. But, whether historical figures or not, the Magi can still be a source for symbolic and poetic interpretation and inspiration.

Some strangers came from eastern lands  
to see a child and bring  
their homage and to give to him  
gifts fitting for a king.

The first gift for the baby was  
a cask of shining gold,  
but silver were the coins used when  
the Son of Man was sold.

The second gift was frankincense  
when Jesus Christ was born,  
but perfume did not scent the air  
when he was crowned with thorn.

The third gift was a jar of myrrh,  
another rare perfume,  
but it was an embalming spice  
more suited for a tomb.

The strangers left. What was the child  
told of these precious things?  
What meaning do we see in tales  
of stars and gifts and kings?

Led by a star and by a dream,  
the strangers found their way.  
May we be led by word and sign  
and find the Christ today.

*Gregor Macaulay*

## **Parish Council News**

The Parish Council held its last meeting for 2023 on 21 December. The only substantive business transacted was the reappointment of Andrew Smith as our Presbytery elder before members of the Property and Finance Committee joined the gathering to share desserts and fellowship.

The Council does not normally have a formal meeting in January but at the time of writing was scheduled to have a Saturday morning retreat on 27 January to discuss plans for 2024.

*Gregor Macaulay on behalf of the Parish Council*

## **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)

## Property and Finance Committee Update

So good to see our church being an active part of the Opoho community. Thank you to Abby for her organisation of the December Christmas craft fair which was well supported by a steady stream of visitors over both Saturday 2 and Sunday 3 December. The fair made over \$1300. Our facilities are continuing to be used by regular groups with Yoga on a Monday, Steady as You Go on a Tuesday, and a weaving group on a Wednesday. We have over 35 people a week using our facilities.

It was wonderful to see the Opoho School holding their end of year disco in the hall and, as the evening was warm, children were enjoying the grounds and Christmas decorations in the hall (thank you Benjamin). The December Fellowship Christmas lunch took over both the Morrison Lounge and hall. All our regular users plan to continue renting the facilities for next year and plans are also under way to start a weekly craft group open to the community.

With all the new visitors to activities, we have a sign that indicates the hall entrance.



Brian put up the new sign

Other completed tasks in December include having the gutters cleaned and the piano and organ tuned. From our maintenance walkabout in November, we have a programme of activities prioritised to both enhance and maintain our facilities. Our December Property and Finance meeting morphed into joining

the Parish Council for a dessert gathering – what an excellent way to end the year.

*Miriam Vollweiler* (Committee convener)

## **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*

## **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.

# Poems Prayers Psalms & Prose – Ōpoho Writers' Group

**Tuesday 27 February, 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***

## **New Rosters**

From the middle of February, rosters are being compiled on the basis of volunteer forms provided late last year. Please check your entries (not forgetting any new rosters you signed up for!) and let Jenny Bunce know of anything that seems to have gone awry, or any change in circumstances that affect a roster. The rosters are not closed, and new additions or needed withdrawals are welcome at any time.

For 2024, we now have a grand total of 31 volunteers plus several additional helpers. The number of rosters that people signed up for ranged from one to all eight (!), with the average being between three and four. It was good to see people taking the opportunity to try out new things, and to withdraw from rosters that no longer suit their circumstances.

With new people coming on board, it seems a good time to review the written information available for several rosters, some of which is out of date. We also need to ensure that a personal orientation is available where needed, e.g. for the computer/data projector and sound system. I am therefore in the process of identifying one or two people for each roster who will act as co-ordinators – compiling or updating written information, and ensuring everyone knows what is what, and what is where, who to tell about anything that needs fixing, and that we are all singing from the same song sheet. This is a work in progress, but we already have several rosters with some informal co-ordination:

John Roxborough has indicated his willingness to help anyone who wants support with the computer/data projector/sound system operation.

David Murray masterminds and co-ordinates the music roster, and Abby and Marian look after singing.

Clare Lind links in with the prayers people so that the prayers fit in with the theme of the service.

Flower people are looking at how we could possibly match some flower producers with some flower arrangers.

Hall cleaners have discussed whether the hall really needs cleaning every two weeks.

Any individual or group who would like to act as co-ordinators for the big rosters such as door duty, morning tea, and church/hall cleaning, would be very welcome.

Meanwhile thank you all for what you have done and continue to do, whether on rosters or in so many other and specialized ways. It is one of the things that makes Opoho so special.

*Jenny Bunce*





## Interfaith Matters

WORLD INTERFAITH



HARMONY WEEK

The first week of February each year is the official United Nations Interfaith Harmony Week, so the Dunedin Interfaith Council puts effort into celebrating the wonderful concept of interfaith harmony and invites all of every faith in Dunedin.

This year it will be on Wednesday 7 February, 6.00 to 8.30 p.m., a celebration at the Church of Latter Day Saints, 14 Fenton Crescent, St Clair.

It will involve various speakers and musical entertainment and everyone takes food (vegetarian) to share – but the sharing really takes place in the meeting with others around you, i.e. the interfaith harmony.

*Bronwen Strang*



## 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.



Donations of wool (*not acrylic*) are needed at the moment for knitters to take from the bag in the church to make more squares.

Money to buy wool would also be welcomed.

Any queries please contact me at 027 473 6026 or [weavermariane@gmail.com](mailto:weavermariane@gmail.com)

*Marian Weaver*

## Gardening at the Church – an update and invitation

A number of the people in the neighbourhood stop and talk to me while I am gardening at the church. I am full of energy and loving my retirement and (with Benjamin's permission!) have decided to "take on the church garden".

Property and Finance will be focusing on working bees in other areas of the church, but you can find me in the garden regularly weeding and digging while listening to music and podcasts – I'm in my happy place. My focus is to complete the weeding and then work on replenishing the soil quality with compost and mulch.



- *If you would like to donate pea straw or compost I will welcome your support.*

I am delighted to report that some keen gardeners in the Opoho neighbourhood and a friend in Andersons Bay are taking seeds and cuttings from their own gardens and preparing them for future plantings in our garden.

- If you would like to join me when I'm gardening (you can choose the music), contact me.



Tinks the dog hard at work supervising gardening

*Miriam Vollweiler* (the happy gardener)

## **Fellowship Group**

Our final gathering for 2023 was a Christmas lunch on 14 December when we were joined by some of the locals who attend the Steady of You Go exercise class. Thanks to our catering crew for putting on such a sumptuous feast. It was a perfect way to end our year and a tradition we want to continue.





*Miriam Vollweiler*

## Lectionary for February and March

<b>Sunday 4 February – 5th Sunday after the Epiphany</b>			
Is 40: 21-31	Ps 147: 1-11, 20c	1 Cor 9: 16-23	Mk 1: 29-39
<b>Sunday 11 February – Transfiguration</b>			
2 Kings 2: 1-12	Ps 50: 1-6	2 Cor 4: 3-6	Mk 9: 2-9
<b>Lent</b>			
<b>Wednesday 14 February – Ash Wednesday</b>			
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
<b>Sunday 18 February – 1st Sunday in Lent</b>			
Gen 9: 8-17	Ps 25: 1-10	1 Peter 3: 18-22	Mk 1: 9-15
<b>Sunday 25 February – 2nd Sunday in Lent</b>			
Gen 17: 1-7, 15-16	Ps 22: 23-31	Rom 4: 13-25	Mk 8: 31-38 <i>or</i> Mk 9: 2-9
<b>Sunday 3 March – 3rd Sunday in Lent</b>			
Ex 20: 1-17	Ps 19	1 Cor 1: 18-25	Jn 2: 13-22
<b>Sunday 10 March – 4th Sunday in Lent</b>			
Num 21: 4-9	Ps 107: 1-3, 17-22	Eph 2: 1-10	Jn 3: 14-21
<b>Sunday 17 March – 5th Sunday in Lent</b>			
Jer 31: 31-34	Ps 51: 1-12 <i>or</i> Ps 119: 9-16	Heb 5: 5-10	Jn 12: 20-33
<b>Sunday 24 March – Palm Sunday <i>or</i> Passion Sunday</b>			
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	<b>Palm</b> Mk 11: 1-11 <i>or</i> Jn 12: 12-16 <b>Passion</b> Mk 14: 1- 15: 47 <i>or</i> Mk 15: 1-39 (40-47)
<b>Easter</b>			
<b>Sunday 31 March – Easter Dawn</b>			
Ex 14: 10-31, 15: 20-21	Ps 114	Rom 6: 3-11	Mk 16: 1-8
<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

## Coming Events at Ōpoho Presbyterian Church February and March 2024

4 February ~ Sunday	10 a.m.: Worship, the Rev. Clare Lind, Communion
6 February ~ Tuesday	Waitangi Day – public holiday
7 February ~ Wednesday	7.30 p.m.: Property and Finance Committee, Morrison Lounge
8 February ~ Thursday	2 p.m.: Fellowship Group, Morrison Lounge 7.30 p.m.: Christian Development Committee, Morrison Lounge
11 February ~ Sunday	10 a.m.: Worship, Gregor Macaulay
15 February ~ Thursday	7.30 p.m.: Parish Council, Morrison Lounge
18 February ~ Sunday	10 a.m.: Worship, the Rev. Clare Lind
20 February ~ Tuesday	Material due for March <i>Ōpoho Signal</i>
25 February ~ Sunday	10 a.m.: Worship, the Rev. Clare Lind, Harvest Thanksgiving
27 February ~ Tuesday	7 p.m.: Writing Group, Marine Science tea room, first floor, 310 Castle Street
3 March ~ Sunday	10 a.m.: Worship, the Rev. Clare Lind, Quarterly Communion
10 March ~ Sunday	10 a.m.: Worship, Professor Murray Rae
13 March ~ Wednesday	7.30 p.m.: Property and Finance Committee, Morrison Lounge
14 March ~ Thursday	2 p.m.: Fellowship Group, Morrison Lounge
17 March ~ Sunday	10 a.m.: Worship, the Rev. Clare Lind
20 March ~ Wednesday	Material due for March <i>Opoho Signal</i>
21 March ~ Thursday	7.30 p.m.: Parish Council, Morrison Lounge
24 March ~ Sunday	10 a.m.: Worship, the Rev. Clare Lind (Palm Sunday)
25 March ~ Monday	Otago Anniversary Day
29 March ~ Friday	Good Friday – public holiday
31 March ~ Sunday	10 a.m.: Worship, the Rev. Clare Lind (Easter Day)

### Deadline for next *Ōpoho Signal* – Tuesday 20 February

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)



