

Ōpoho Signal

The newsletter of Ōpoho Presbyterian Church

50 Signal Hill Road, Ōpoho, Dunedin 9010



November 2025

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

Editorial

The Night Shelter held its annual fundraising appeal in mid-October. I was delighted to use my new-found retirement freedom to help out. On a warm and sunny Saturday afternoon, I sat outside the Gardens supermarket and offered people the opportunity to provide for those who could not provide for themselves.

It is truly an amazing cross-section of society that visits the grocery store. Absolutely everyone came in and went out! There were children dashing around like dragonflies, emerging with an ice cream in hand. There were students hurrying away with a couple of wine bottles or a box of beer. There were harried mums and busy dads and their broods, usually pushing full trollies. There were older people strolling in and out, stopping to chat with friends as they were encountered. And sometimes I saw someone very old, who sat on the bench awaiting a taxi, with only a few items in their string bag. It was a revealing timeline of one's shopping life.

What was most interesting was that nothing (as far as I could figure) predicted who would stop and donate, and who would walk on by. One of the busiest mums, pulled three ways by her children, stopped the trolley and carefully pulled out several bills for the bucket. An elderly lady stopped and explained she had already donated at the Market that morning, but she didn't like to pass me by, so she would donate again. A gaggle of well-heeled and perfectly-coiffed young students passed by loudly (like so many parrots) and then one ran back and dropped a handful of coins in. A barefoot tattooed and hairy man, who was breaking the rules by using his vape inside, gave me \$5. A little boy dropped in a few coins, as his indulgent mum watched proudly. And on it went. My guess is that in three hours I collected many hundreds, though I can't be sure (the bucket is cable-tied shut).

That day (10 October) was World Homeless Day -- on which we can celebrate what we have achieved (go Night Shelter!) and acknowledge the work that we still have to do. The days when Dunedin didn't seem to have homeless people are long gone. The Night Shelter offers practical real help to people when they need it, and is an important part of the solution. Decent affordable accommodation is in short supply, though. It's certainly on people's minds – many candidates listed helping the homeless as part of their campaign in the recent local body elections. Let's hope they do.

As I sat there I couldn't help thinking about shelter – a basic human right. Most of the people coming and going that day knew where they would be sleeping

that night. I certainly did, and yet I often forget to be grateful for that. We, who have comfortable, safe. warm beds with solid roofs overhead, need to remember those who don't.

So let's reflect on the idea of shelter. How do our church and our homes and indeed our lives give us shelter? And let's remember that not everyone has shelter, and do what we can to help.

The Lord is a shelter for the oppressed, a refuge in times of trouble (Psalm 9:9)

But you are a tower of refuge to the poor, O Lord, a tower of refuge to the needy in distress. You are a refuge from the storm and a shelter from the heat. (Isaiah 25:4)

Share your food with the hungry, and give shelter to the homeless. (Isaiah 58:7)

Abby Smith, Retired Person

Parish Council News

In view of the wild weather that day, the Parish Council met via Zoom on 23 October.

Reflecting a somewhat sparse agenda, the meeting was fairly brief (less than 30 minutes) – the most interesting matters are detailed in the report of the Property and Finance Committee below and an article on the Skink Project elsewhere in this newsletter.

Gregor Macaulay on behalf of the Parish Council



Property and Finance Committee Update

Our October meeting covered a wide range of issues. Frontmost is the re-roofing project where we are looking at engineers' reports for earthquake strengthening to be tied into the project. This project is our big focus for 2026. The vestry and church door repairs are under way and will be completed before Christmas. Our seed exchange has hotted up for spring and it is being utilised and our gardens are getting some makeovers with renga renga plants being donated by our neighbours. We are looking at a fair date for 2026 and will confirm this soon.



Garden refreshment



Renga renga plantings



Seed exchange

What's going on in our church buildings?

With the forthcoming closure of the Baptist Valley Community space in November, we have bookings for three new groups who are delighted to have use of our spaces. A 15-member ukulele group is meeting weekly on Wednesday evenings (they will playing at our Fellowship community Christmas dinner) and Kung Fu and Tai Chi will be beginning on Thursday evenings. Want to know what's on and when? – check out the noticeboard in

the hall foyer and our church noticeboard on Signal Hill Road. It was great to see the Pilates group using the lawn for a class on the one fine night we have had recently. The Steady as You Go group have a monthly cuppa and cake at the end of the meeting hosted by Chris Young. The line dancing each Monday evening is almost full and people are coming from all over the city to attend. We have created a space where people are making connections, buying jam, recycling and putting up notices on our foyer noticeboard. What a fabulous community base to build on in 2026.

Miriam, John, Michael, Benjamin, Meegan, Judy and Clare

Vestry Door repairs under way



Interfaith Matters

On the evening of Tuesday 14 October, people of different faiths gathered at the Quaker Centre in Park Street for the *Week of Prayer for World Peace* gathering. We gathered to express our common spiritual and practical commitments to work together for peace and justice, everywhere on planet Earth. Someone from each faith gave a prayer or reflection on peace. The different faiths were: Buddhist; Hare Krishna; Baha'i; Quaker; Church of Christ of Latter Day Saints; Jewish; Christian; Brahma Kumari; Hindu, and Christian Science. The reflection below is the one I gave representing the Christian community.

The Passing of the Peace: Symbolic or Sacred?

Reading from the Gospel of John 20:19-21

¹⁹ When it was evening on that day, the first day of the week, and the doors were locked where the disciples were, for fear of the Jews, Jesus came and stood among them and said, "Peace be with you." ²⁰ After he said this, he showed them his hands and side. Then the disciples rejoiced when they saw the Lord. ²¹ Jesus said to them again, "Peace be with you. As the Father has sent me, so I send you."

An element that is common in a service at Ōpoho Presbyterian Church is the Passing of the Peace. Though it has taken many different forms throughout the history of the Church, you would be hard pressed to find a congregation that does not include some variation of the practice. At Ōpoho, given that we are a small congregation, there is the opportunity to pass the peace with everyone.

As this is such a lively time, there are moments when the person leading the Community Time (usually the Parish Clerk) has to call us back to our seats so that the service can continue! But is this simply a time where we are able to greet those around us, or is there something deeper and more sacred about this practice that we are missing?

Some trace the practice of Passing the Peace back to various Jewish traditions in Paul's letters in the New Testament. A common instruction from Paul to his audience is that they are to "Greet one another with a holy kiss." (Romans 16:16; 1 Corinthians 16:20; 2 Corinthians 13:12; 1 Thessalonians 5:26).

Paul characterises this kiss as holy because it represents the purest form of Christian love: one that wishes for the peace of Christ to be passed on to all in their community. In some of the places that Paul and other Christians were

living, they were not welcomed or met with any form of peace. They were often persecuted and cast out by those who did not share in their faith.

The kiss of peace soon developed into liturgical practice in the early church and was typically affiliated with communion. When we eat the bread and drink from the cup, we remember Jesus who died for our sins and we recognise that when we pass the peace of Christ, we are expressing that the very nature of our community is one that founded in the love, grace and peace that Christ continually extends to us through the cross.

Over time, the passing of the peace has lost much of its significance in our worship services. It could be seen another opportunity to catch up with friends or greet those who we have not yet been introduced to. Of course, to say that there should be time on Sunday in which we converse with the members of our congregation; for this aspect of community is also an important part of our worship. However, this is not the aim that the passing of the peace is meant to serve. Rather, it is a sacred extension of the grace that Christ offers.

So instead of reducing the passing of the peace to a simple greeting, let us take the opportunity to reflect thoughtfully on the sacred practice that has been passed down to us by our Christian brothers and sisters who have gone before us. Let us embrace the peace and grace that has been lovingly extended to us by our Lord and offer that same peace to those who we worship alongside. May the peace of Christ be with us all.

New Zealand hymn writer, the late Shirley Murray wrote these words:

Let us go in your peace,
let us know what is peace
by the power of your love,
by the Spirit's release,
and in all we must face
that can hurt or destroy
let us work for your peace:
kindness, justice and joy.

Amen.

Benjamin Thew

Rostered Opportunities for Service: 2026

One of the things I like about Opoho Church is that so many people play a part in the ongoing work, which allows this small church to be so active, both within the church and within the community. Some of this work is upfront and easily visible (silly hats anyone?) while other work takes place behind the scenes. Some involves committed, skilled individuals in specialised and leadership roles; and some involves working with others such as on a working bee or a committee or a one-off event.

But much of the ongoing work is done through eight separate rosters, currently involving at least 35 people, many of whom volunteer for several rosters. Not all volunteers are formal church members, and we greatly value the help of any church associates, friends, and members of the community.

It is easy to just roll over rosters from year to year. But circumstances change, and what you volunteered for in the past may no longer be a good fit in the present, or for 2026. And while some like to faithfully carry out familiar roles, others like to have a go at something different. Furthermore, new people arrive, others go travelling, or leave. And the rostered duties change too, from time to time. People can (and do) come on and off the rosters at any time, but after two years we all have the chance to reconsider our volunteering. So, rather than just rolling over the lists, we set up new rosters each two years and we are now seeking volunteers for rostered duties in 2026. The new rosters will begin from the second week of February in 2026, based on the new sign-up sheets which are out now.

Our current rosters are:

1. Door duty: 2 people each week
2. Morning tea: 2 people each week
3. Church and hall cleaning: 1 person on church and 1 on hall. Cleaning as needed once during a two-week period.
4. Flowers: 1 person (or friends!) Summer only. Rostered for a two-week period.
5. Prayers: 1 person each week other than communion Sundays.
6. Data projector and sound equipment: 1 person each week
7. Readings: 1 person each week
8. Music: most months have one service with Music Group (instruments), maybe one with lead singer(s) and guitars/violin, and two or three with piano/organ.

The frequency of turns obviously depends on the numbers of people volunteering on the roster and the number of people needed in each role.

A sheet with more information about the rosters, together with a sign-up sheet, is available with this newsletter, in the hall lobby, and at the back of the church. Please contact me, Jenny Bunce, for any questions or comments, or to return sign-up sheets. [jenny.bunce@gmail.com/ 022 658 1710/ 25 Signal Hill Road]

Anyone interested in the prayers roster should see the Minister (the Rev. Clare Lind), while anyone who would like to contribute to the music would get a warm welcome from David Murray [david.murray@planetnz.com; 473 1314; 021 0240 3190]

Jenny Bunce, Roster Compiler

Seed Exchange and Garden Update

Lots of seeds coming in and out as spring proceeds. Malcolm Arthur from Evans Street (below left) grows amazing pumpkins and donated his pumpkin seeds for others to enjoy. A lovely unknown person donated lavender bushes from her Port Chalmers garden to the Port library. We are delighted to have one that now resides in our garden (below right).



Opoho Skink Project

Some of you helped with filling bags for this project, and we thank you for that. The project is a “Citizen Science” initiative that came out of Clare Lind’s contact with Professor Alison Cree.

The Southern Skink, or Tussock Skink, is endemic to Otago and is known to be on some urban and semi-rural properties. They are classified as vulnerable, meaning if left alone with the creeping destruction of habitat and predation by introduced species, we could lose the Southern Skink eventually.



The project is about seeing if any skinks are living in the Opoho area.

As part of our Eco Church activities we applied to the Justice and Compassion Trust for funding and were able to purchase tracking tunnels and cards. The Opoho School is our partner in this, and the school families have been given tunnels and tracking cards to set up on their properties. Over three weeks the tunnels have been set, and in the last week of October we hope to have some information coming in.

A website for people to put their information about what has crawled through their tracking tunnels has been set up. We hope to have some data from the website in early November.

With the information obtained, if there are any skinks detected, information can be given to the property occupiers (should they want it) about how to look after and nurture the skinks.

We are encouraging the families to give back the tunnels so that we may be able to run another tracking program in the future.

If you have any questions about the project please contact me (Marian Weaver), Clare Lind, Theo Molteno, or Kirk Hamilton, as we are all on the project team.

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 outings 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

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



Marian Weaver

Fellowship Group

An interesting meeting on 9 October when Eric Odell, the Community Support Officer from our local SPCA in Torridon Strett, shared information and stories about the activities that are part of daily life in their work. Clearly we are a group of pet-loving families in Opoho. We challenge you to match the names to the owners!

CATS: Kate, Milly, Tinks, Ping, Chairman Meow, Nukey, Winter, Whitely, Ginger

DOGS: Tinks, Scamp, Goldie, Bucky, Dash

PEOPLE: Simon, Marion, Sue, Clare, Miriam, Chris, Marian, John R, Val, Evelyn, Gaynor, Fiona, Mary, John S

As usual the afternoon tea was outstanding. Our November meeting will feature Mary Somerville sharing “this is my life” along with a birthday celebration.

Please keep a note in your diary for the Thursday 11 December meeting at 12.30 p.m. – our community Christmas lunch.

Miriam Vollweiler and Chris Young

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 Non-food items such as toiletries are also acceptable.



Food and other goods delivered to the foodbank in October

Jam Palace News

Since getting home, Abby has been busy replenishing the marmalade supplies. As spring moves into summer, there will be lots of produce coming along. If you have extras or you know of a good tree somewhere, please pass on to Abby. A bucket of fruit is always welcome!



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.

Church Fair Countdown



It's four months till the Church Fair (Saturday 14 March)! Time to be sorting out things you might like to donate or make. We can't take them yet, alas, but will be grateful for your stuff when the time comes. Put the date on your calendar!

November Writers' Group

Tuesday 4 November
Morrison Lounge
7 to 8 p.m.

Everyone who writes is welcome!
Bring something you have written,
something you're working on,
or something that you've read lately
that impressed you.



Keeping in Touch at Ōpoho 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 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

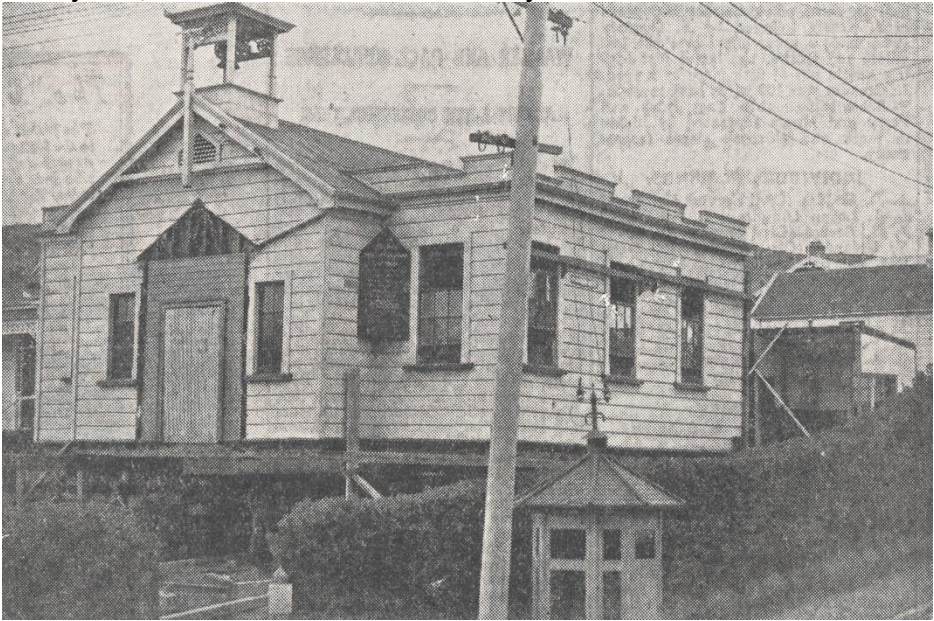
Spring Is Here!

Flowers in the church on 12 October – thank you Fiona Stirling.



Holy rollers...

In 1937, the old wooden Opoho Church was moved on rollers, 23 metres up Farquharson Street. It was repurposed as a Sunday School hall, and the present brick church was built on the original site. This photo below, published in *The Evening Star* on 23 August 1937, shows it nearly ready for the shift. The entrance porch has been removed, and the building is jacked up by about two metres. Presumably the main contractor, George Collier, carried out the work. The new church opened just four months later, on 19 December. It was decided not to give it the old bell. Another photo shows the completed church and hall side by side, each with its own bell and belfry.



The old church had been built by the Baptists using voluntary labour around 1892. It was purchased by the Presbyterian Church in 1909 and added to in 1913. The addition is the battlemented portion on the right of the photo.

The building served as a hall for nearly 20 years. It was in a ropery state by the end. When the Reverend and Mrs Belmer were welcomed to the parish at a function in the hall on a wet evening in 1955, attendees had to avoid being dripped on. A new hall, planned for over a decade, was approved in 1956 and the old one was sold for its materials. The current hall opened in April 1957, with the Morrison Lounge added in 1964.

David Murray

Dunedin's Exhibitions in a City of Gold

In the church on the afternoon of Sunday 12 October, David Murray set the scene with piano tunes from the 1930s and over 90 people attended Brian Millers

talk, *Dunedin's Early Exhibitions in a City of Gold*, which held the audience spellbound for a full hour. All of us came away with an enhanced understanding of our city's heritage and how gold influenced building, art, commerce, and the shape of our city. Rumour has it that wood from our vestry door may have come from the dismantled 1925-26



exhibition. People stayed for afternoon tea with many saying this was the first time they had been to Opoho Church. For others, they had been in the church but never seen the lounge and hall. The jam palace and recycling centre were admired and \$500 in koha was given towards our roof project.



Abby Smith receiving donations for the roof project and Brian Miller and Helen Zonneveld with mementoes from the New Zealand and South Seas International Exhibition of 1925-1926

Lectionary for November and December 2025

Saturday 1 November – All Saints			
Dan 7: 1-3, 15-18	Ps 149	Eph 1: 11-23	Lk 6: 20-31
Sunday 2 November – 21st Sunday after Pentecost			
Hab 1: 1-4, 2:1-4	Ps 119: 137-144	2 Thess 1:1-4, 11-12	Lk 19: 1-10
Sunday 9 November – 22nd Sunday after Pentecost			
Haggai 1:15b-2:9	Ps 145: 1-5, 17-21 <i>or</i> Ps 98	2 Thess 2:1-5, 13-17	Lk 20: 27-38
Sunday 16 November – 23rd Sunday after Pentecost			
Is 65: 17-25	Is 12	2 Thess 3: 6-13	Lk 21: 5-19
Sunday 23 November – Reign of Christ			
Jer 23: 1-6	Lk 1: 68-79	Col 1: 11-20	Lk 23: 33-43
Sunday 30 November – 1st Sunday of Advent			
Is 2: 1-5	Ps 122	Rom 13: 11-14	Mt 24:36-44
Sunday 7 December – 2nd Sunday of Advent			
Is 11: 1-10	Ps 72: 1-7, 18-19	Rom 15: 4-13	Mt 3: 1-12
Sunday 14 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 21 December – 4th Sunday of Advent			
Is 7: 10-16	Ps 80: 1-7, 17-19	Rom 1: 1-7	Mt 1: 18-25
Wednesday 24 December – Christmas Eve			
Is 9: 2-7	Ps 96	Titus 2: 11-14	Lk 2: 1-14, (15-20)
Thursday 25 December – Christmas Dawn			
Is 62: 6-12	Ps 97	Titus 3: 4-7	Lk 2: (1-7), 8-20
Thursday 25 December – Christmas Day			
Is 52: 7-10	Ps 98	Heb 1: 1-4, (5-12)	Jn 1: 1-14
Sunday 28 December – 1st Sunday after Christmas			
Is 63: 7-9	Ps 148	Heb 2: 10-18	Mt 2: 13-23

Deadline for next *Ōpoho Signal* – Thursday 20 November

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: November and December 2025

2 November ~ Sunday	10 a.m.: Worship, the Rev. Clare Lind, Communion
4 November ~ Tuesday	7 p.m.: Writers' Group, Morrison Lounge
9 November ~ Sunday	10 a.m.: Worship, Jane Bloore, Remembrance Sunday
11 November ~ Tuesday	7.30 p.m.: Christian Development Committee, Morrison Lounge
12 November ~ Wednesday	7.30 p.m.: Property and Finance Committee, Morrison Lounge
13 November ~ Thursday	2 p.m.: Fellowship Group, Morrison Lounge
16 November ~ Sunday	10 a.m.: Worship, the Rev. Clare Lind
20 November ~ Thursday	Material due for December-January <i>Opoho Signal</i> 7.30 p.m.: Parish Council, Morrison Lounge
23 November ~ Sunday	10 a.m.: Worship, the Rev. Clare Lind
30 November ~ Sunday	10 a.m.: Worship, Abby Smith
7 December ~ Sunday	10 a.m.: Worship, the Rev. Clare Lind, Quarterly Communion
10 December ~ Wednesday	7.30 p.m.: Property and Finance Committee, Morrison Lounge
11 December ~ Thursday	12.30 p.m.: Fellowship Community Christmas Lunch, in hall
14 December ~ Sunday	10 a.m.: Worship, the Rev. Clare Lind – Lessons and Carols 2 p.m.: Sing Your Heart Out – community carol singing in church
18 December ~ Thursday	7.30 p.m.: Parish Council, venue TBC
21 December ~ Sunday	10 a.m.: Worship, Julie Mander and children
22 December ~ Sunday	10 a.m.: Worship, the Rev. Clare Lind
24 December ~ Wednesday	11.30 p.m.: Christmas Eve service, the Rev. Clare Lind
25 December ~ Thursday	10 a.m.: Worship, the Rev. Clare Lind – Christmas Day
28 December ~ Sunday	10 a.m.: Worship, preacher TBA