

Opoho Signal

April 2018

via email

Opoho Signal

Newsletter of the Opoho Presbyterian Church

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April 2018

Minister: Rev Margaret Garland

phone: 03 395 6129 - cell phone 027 757 2367

Parish Clerk: Tui Bevin phone: 03 473 8677

Worship Services at Opoho:

Every Sunday at 10 am

**Other services are listed in the Calendar
on the back cover.**

Easter

Here we are at Easter, although there have been chocolate eggs and hot cross buns in The Warehouse and supermarkets since just after Christmas. Many people in the wider community probably think that it is appropriate that Easter Sunday this year coincides with April Fool's Day, for we preach Christ not only crucified – a stumbling block to Jews and folly to Gentiles (1 Corinthians 1:23) – but also risen. I do not propose to rehearse the arguments for and against belief in a literal, physical Resurrection; I will simply say that something exceptional must have happened after the death of Jesus for someone as down to earth as Peter to go on to spend the rest of his life telling people about Jesus and to be martyred for doing so – he did not deny Christ again as he had before the Crucifixion. Peter's was a commitment that went far beyond just thinking that Jesus was a really, really impressive teacher or an unforgettable Galilean guru (thank you John Barclay for introducing me to that phrase).

Easter has largely had its religious content hollowed out and discarded in recent decades and now has a curious place in popular culture as an excuse for a four- or five-day holiday at unpredictable times in March or April and for eating chocolate and marshmallow

eggs and bunnies, but with its religious significance sidelined or derided. It is now possible for shops to be open for business on Good Friday and Easter Sunday. Oddly, no-one seems to suggest that shopping is essential on Christmas Day or the morning of ANZAC Day – the latter day was originally intended to be treated as being “as sacred as a Sunday” but is now treated as being considerably more sacred.

Christmas, despite its name, has also been secularised. It is increasingly difficult to find Christmas cards that depict manger scenes or the Magi and vague “Happy Holidays” and “Season's Greetings” messages are increasingly seen rather than “Merry Christmas” – and just try to find an Advent calendar that mentions any significant figure other than Barbie or Disney princesses. Christmas is now largely a time of eating and drinking (often to excess) and exchanging gifts for no obvious reason, under the patronage of Santa Claus (formerly known as Father Christmas). (As an aside, I would mention the story – perhaps it is an urban legend – that a Japanese department store once marked the Christmas season with a window display featuring a smiling Santa nailed to a cross.)

In this issue.....	Page
Editorial	2
Parish Council Report	5
News from the Parish & the Wider Church.....	7
Voices for the Earth: A Climate Change Initiative.....	8
Opportunities for Service.....	10
Opoho Church Fair.....	12
Knitting for Others	12
Lawnmower Musings.....	13
Table Setting Prayer.....	14
Autumn Prayer	15

In this issue.....	Page
Fundraising.....	16
Bible Book A Month.....	16
Continuing Psalm Writing for Today	17
Movie Group.....	17
Keeping in Touch	18
Calendar for early May	18
Lectionary for April & early May.....	19
Opoho Signal contact details.....	19
Calendar for April	20

Does any of this matter? Historically, the observance of Christmas and Easter had little place in Presbyterianism – ‘Sabbath observance’ was transferred to Sundays and there is no specific scriptural justification for any other holy days. Otago’s first minister, the Rev. Thomas Burns, is said to have dug his garden on Christmas Day, and it is probable that my own Free Church of Scotland ancestors did not mark Christmas or Easter with any religious observances. The habit has been inherited and I, the son and grandson of New Zealand-born elders who both became Session Clerks, was never taken to church at Easter or Christmas as a child, and in my adult life have been to church on either day only a couple of times. I am not a poster boy for the significance of the two festivals.

Perversely, I do see value in the patterns of the church year, of Advent and Christmas, Lent and Easter, Pentecost, and the rest. I have never given up anything for Lent, and don’t propose to start now, but the seasons of the church calendar (rediscovered by Presbyterians only in the twentieth century), combined with the rhythms of the lectionary, give a shape and form to our worship and thinking as they systematically focus on aspects of the history of God’s dealings with his people and his revelation in the life and ministry of Jesus, and link us in solidarity with other branches of the Church who follow the same cycles.

So what is the take-home message? It is my view that Easter is a valuable season for paying particular attention to the meaning of the Resurrection of Jesus. But it should not be merely an annual exercise. Every Sunday is ‘the Lord’s Day’ – a weekly commemoration of the Resurrection – and the significance of that event (however one conceives it) should inform our words and actions on a daily basis. That is a safe message for the members of our parish. How do we communicate the good news of the Resurrection to the unchurched majority in our community – or do we just leave them to their chocolate Easter eggs?

Gregor Macaulay

Parish Council Report

Shortly after Easter we farewell John and Diana Barclay again, as they return home to Durham at the end of John’s study leave. John’s open lecture at the university, “Early Christianity and the Survival of the Poor”, will be available as a podcast on the university website in due course, at

<http://www.otago.ac.nz/news/itunesu/podcasts/> We have enjoyed the Barclays’ involvement with Opoho and we look forward to them (hopefully) returning one day. We wish them well.

The funeral of a former Opoho man, Gordon Evans, was held at Opoho Church at the end of February. His whanau were very appreciative of the welcome and support of church members. Thank you to those who helped.

The Lenten Wednesday Worship series of five evening services offered rich discussion around Bible readings and poems or songs by New Zealand writers on Lenten themes. Up to 12 people, not all of whom were Opoho parishioners, attended. Thanks to all who helped take services, make soup or tidy up.

Plans are well underway for the joint Opoho and Knox Christchurch initiative: *Voices for the Earth: A Climate Change Initiative*. Further information is on Page 8 in this *Signal* and will be available on our website. Do let any one you think may be interested know about this.

Our Property and Finance Committee has a lot going on at present: the painting of the outside of the church buildings should happen shortly; further working bees have made a huge difference to our grounds and buildings; the long term tenant of the church garage has moved out and there are discussions with a prospective tenant; and the Committee is undertaking a review of the envelope system. They would also still like to hear from anyone with ideas and enthusiasm for a fundraising project. The committee consists of: Brian Cunningham (treasurer), Michael Ovens (convenor), Mark

Bevin (parish council liaison), Alan Cloughley, Miriam Vollweiler (hall bookings) and Margaret. A big thank you to you all for all that you do.

The Southern Presbytery and the Synod of Otago and Southland will meet in Invercargill on the 27 and 28 April respectively. I am the Opoho representative to the Presbytery and will attend along with Margaret, and with Andrew Smith, who is on Presbytery Council. Andrew is the Opoho commissioner for Annual Meeting of Synod. Please keep these meetings in your prayers.

The Southern Presbytery and Synod have joined together and formed a joint website for Southern Presbyterians. You can access their monthly newsletter and study leave reports (including our minister, Margaret's) through this site: <https://www.southernpresbyterians.nz>

Southern Presbyterians is now also on Facebook.

Brockville Community Church is facing an uncertain future due to lack of funds. Please keep this church and its minister, the Rev Andrew Scott, in your prayers

A consultation on the Review and Development of Southern Presbytery is currently underway and parishes and individuals have been asked to respond to a discussion document. Parish Council is formulating its response, and encourages all interested parishioners to comment on it individually, as well. Margaret has electronic copies of this available. The deadline for submissions is 16 April 2017.

The PCANZ Assembly agreed to the "Justice in Action: We Say Yes!" statement that calls upon all congregations to "take up the gospel mandate of being agents of Justice and Action". You can read the statement on the Presbyterian Church website:

<http://www.presbyterian.org.nz/speaking-out/what-we-believe/we-say-yes-statement>

The InterChurch Bioethics Council is an ecumenical cross-cultural body supported by the Anglican, Methodist and Presbyterian churches of Aotearoa New Zealand. Its mission is to increase the knowledge and understanding church members and the wider community have of the spiritual, ethical and cultural issues relating to biotechnology, and enabling and encouraging citizens to take action on these issues. The last PCANZ General Assembly (GA16) resolved

to encourage churches and individuals to access the Inter Church Bioethics website: <http://www.interchurchbioethics.org.nz>

Representation at the PCANZ General Assembly (GA18) is being organised differently this year. The Assembly has provided commissioner selection guidelines which include:

- ❖ Presbytery cannot commission a minister or elder who was commissioned to GA16
- ❖ Presbytery must seek to commission men and women in proportion to men and women in full parish membership. In Southern Presbytery parish membership is made up of 65% women and 35% men.

Tui Bevin



News from the Parish, and from the Wider Church

- ❖ Welcome home to those who have recently returned from travels around New Zealand, and around the world. We are delighted to see you safely home. To those who are away from Dunedin, or about to set off on journeys near or far, we keep you in our prayers, and look forward to your safe return, when the time is right!
- ❖ We remember in our prayers the family of Ivan Elder, who died recently, aged 99. Ivan's daughter, the Rev Dr Susan Jones, is a former minister of Opoho Presbyterian Church.
- ❖ Our prayers go with Margaret, Tui and Andrew Smith at the end of this month, as they head to Invercargill to attend the meetings of the Southern Presbytery, and of the Synod of Otago and Southland.
- ❖ **Congratulations to Simon Rae**, on the 50th anniversary, recently, of his ordination.

From Simon:

"Recognition of fifty years in ordained ministry came unexpectedly, with a letter from the Moderator, recognition, and

a chocolate, in our Opoho Church service, flowers (I have not been given flowers since I was upgraded on a Thai Airways flight in the 1980s) at the Presbytery Resource Group gathering and a surprise visit from some of the people I worked most closely with in the Dunedin Chinese Church.

Among them was Professor Sik-hung Ng, now of Hong Kong - having held two Psychology chairs in China after teaching in Dunedin and VUW, Wellington. One of his research interests is the 'power' people exercise through their choice and use of language - he encouraged my efforts to be inclusive and affirming - and I knew his fluent interpreting would carry the same values. He wrote in our Visitors Book:

'Mature age brings its unique blessing; like a tree giving shade and serenity to whoever cares to come into its fold.'

That was affirming for us, and something we have come to appreciate in many of the friends we have known over the years."

- ❖ Knitting for Others - Abby Smith has sent details of three different projects that need wool, knitters, people to sew up, and money for postage. All the information you need is on Page 12 of this *Signal*.

from our Correspondents

Please do pass on to Andrea Johnston any news and snippets you come across, for inclusion in Parish News.

Andrea's contact details are on Page 19.

Voices for the Earth: A Climate Change Initiative

Many people were struck by the wildly swinging weather conditions we experienced at the end of January - 30+ degree temperatures one day and cold rain and flooding and snow the next, while Canterbury was battling wild fires and scorching temperatures.

Out of this came a conversation between Opoho Church and Knox Church in Christchurch about climate change and our response to it.

On Sunday 29 April, people from Knox Church will be coming south to join with us in the morning service at 10 am. In the afternoon we will host a seminar which we have called "*Voices for the Earth: A Climate Change Initiative*". The seminar runs from 2 pm to 5 pm.

The speaker for the first part of the afternoon is Bronwyn Hayward, speaking on her book: *Sea Change: Climate Politics and New Zealand*. Bronwyn is an Associate Professor at Canterbury University's Political Science Department.

The second part of the afternoon will include a panel of local people sharing thoughts from a city, church, personal and arts perspective with a discussion time to follow. Peter Matheson, Henrik Moller, and Maureen Howard have all agreed to be part of the panel - we are still chasing up at least one more panellist. There will be time for discussion and the seminar will conclude at 5 pm.

The following weekend, people from Opoho Church will travel to Christchurch. We will share in morning worship at Knox Church. In the afternoon, Knox will host the seminar. Bronwyn Hayward will again open the seminar, and a panel discussion will follow, this time with local Canterbury panellists.

How can you help?

We will be needing billets for some of the people coming down from Knox Church - Saturday and Sunday nights probably. More about this closer to the time.

We will have an afternoon tea during the seminar on the Sunday afternoon - can you help to serve and/or provide some food?

Do you fancy a road trip to Knox Church for Sunday 6 May? We will probably go up on the Saturday and back on Monday, although as there is nothing planned for the Sunday evening, travelling home then would be fine. If we had enough people we might look at a people mover as a more sustainable option.

As well as local churches we are looking to contact other groups within the community who may be interested - schools, environmental groups, and more. We have posters available, and smaller handouts. Please think about places where you might put up posters; and

Opportunities for Service

For the week leading up to, and including, Sunday:

	Morning Tea	Door Duty	Readers	Prayers	Music	Flowers	Sunday School	Hall Cleaning	Church Cleaning
1-Apr Easter Day	Jane Bloore Jenny Rodda	Michael Ovens John Somerville	Gregor Macaulay	—	David Murray	Jane Bloore	Activities at back of church	Chris Young	Jane Bloore
8-Apr	Hospital Chapel Service 10.30am. No morning service at Opoho								
15-Apr	Tony Parry Bronwen Strang	Shona & Philip Somerville	Tui Bevin	Andrew Smith	Gaynor Haig	Allison Mulder		Bronwen Strang	Shona & Philip Somerville
22-Apr	Cunninghams	Jane Bloore John Stenhouse	Jane Bloore	Abby Smith	Mark Bevin	Allison Mulder		Bronwen Strang	Shona & Philip Somerville
29-Apr	Shona & Philip Somerville	Mary Somerville Marian Weaver	Andrea Johnston	—	Music Group	Winter Flowers		Gregor Macaulay	Jenny Bunce
6-May	Bronwen Strang Jenny Bunce	Gregor Macaulay John Somerville	John Stenhouse	—	David Murray	Winter Flowers	Activities at back of church	Gregor Macaulay	Jenny Bunce
13-May	Marian Weaver Christine Cleugh	Smith/ Spencers	Mike Garland	—	Mark Bevin	Winter Flowers		Church Fair, Sat 12 May	Michael Ovens

Thank you so much to all who contribute now, and have contributed in the past, to these activities.

Communications: Thank you to all those who contribute, by preparing leaflets; keeping up-to-date the Opoho Church website, the Opoho Church Facebook page and the noticeboard on the Signal Hill frontage; preparing and distributing the *Signal*; and putting up and taking down the event-specific noticeboard on the Farquharson Street corner. We appreciate everything you do!

individuals who might be interested, to whom you might give a handout – and be ready to pick up and distribute what you can! If you have ideas, questions, please contact Margaret.

Margaret Garland

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### *Opoho Church Fair 2018*

*Saturday 12 May*

*11 am to 2 pm*

Make a note of the date!

And between now and then, look through your cupboards, wardrobes, and bookshelves, for items that can be passed on for sale at the Fair.

This year we are making a special feature of the Clothes Sale by holding it in the church.

Bronwen and Miriam put such care into the presentation of the clothes that with the extra space, they will be able to have fun displaying clothes of all colours, shape and texture - as good as an art show!

It will be a celebration of recycling. So go to your wardrobe now and pull out all the stuff you no longer want – because we want it!

Ring Fiona on 473-0024 if you would like things collected.

**Fiona Stirling**

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Knitting for Others

Opoho Church has for a long time been part of Operation Cover-Up, where knitters provide 20 cm knitted squares to be sewn into big colourful blankets, which are shipped to orphanages in eastern Europe. Abby has recently taken part in the effort to provide a knitted teddy to every child that comes to the Dunedin Hospital Emergency

Department. And there is a city-wide programme to knit singlets for premature babies.

If you are a knitter, here's your chance to use up some "stash", or you can take wool from the bag at the back of the church. You will find instructions for all three projects there. If you aren't a knitter but you want to help, you can provide wool, you can help with postage, or you can sew up the projects. Please talk with Marian Weaver (perfect name for the job) or Abby Smith if you are interested.

More info

Operation Cover Up: <https://www.mwb.org.nz/get-involved/operation-cover-up/>

Teddies for ED: <https://www.facebook.com/ED-Kiddy-Distraction-Packs-1546473042287069/>

Singlets for little babies: <https://www.knitworld.co.nz/charity-knitting/help-our-babies/>

Abby Smith

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### *Lawn Mowing Is My Time for Thinking and I Feel Good!*

Let me explain why being part of what I call a 'flash mob catering crew' for the recent Southern Presbytery dinner warms my soul and my belief in the power of community.

A church email callout from Christine had me donning a pinny, gathering some pots and joining a group of women for several hours' work in the church kitchen. We worked, hard, weaved about each other giving and receiving orders – all taking pride in ensuring our guests had a great experience. Sitting down to eat together before the final clean - you could feel the bonds of what I call the sisterhood amongst us - not forgetting the brotherhood, especially Jeff.

There have been other flash mobs - the recent spring clean where lots of us came together and tackled some tough jobs. It takes one

person to step up, make the call out. If you can't that's ok, if you can that's ok.

I think such a concept is a way we can reach out to others in the community - whether they are church members or not. If we need help, see a need - ask or step up and make a call out for a flash mob. Email networks are great for call outs – the challenge is to ask for help and /or step up and make a call.

I have been enjoying harvesting mushrooms from the church lawn and have had 2 meals-worth (and counting!) – thank you!

**Miriam Vollweiler**



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After I read Miriam's piece, I went looking for a prayer that might 'fit'. This one comes from a little book from Wild Goose publications, containing a collection of "prayers for the whole of life".

Andrea Johnston

Table-Setting Prayer

As I prepare these places

May there be a place for Christ

At our table, in all that is said and shared.

David McNeish

In *We bring you everything, and tip it out in front of you*
Wild Goose Publications 2017

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*Autumn*

We see signs of summer's passing in golden leaves,  
shortening days, misty mornings, autumn glow.

We sense its passing in rain that dampens,  
winds that chill, Harvest's bounty placed on show.

Creator God, who brings forth  
both green shoot and hoar frost,  
sunrise and sunset,  
we bring our thanks  
for seeds that have grown  
harvests gathered,  
storehouses filled,  
mouths fed.

And, as your good earth rests  
through winter's cold embrace,  
we look forward to its re-awakening  
when kissed by Spring's first touch.

**John Birch**

[www.faithandworship.com](http://www.faithandworship.com)



*Fundraising*

A critical contributor to our financial balance is the annual fair and this year is no exception. Please get behind this as much as possible.

This year there is no art exhibition and sale of art-works, and we need ideas both for fundraising, and especially a willingness to get behind an idea – coordinate and /or help.

What ideas do you have? Have you seen anything that has been successful, fun, not actually costing the parishioners more that it raises, and that, most importantly, you would like to be personally involved in?

Some of the ideas floated so far:

- Concert(s)
- Quiz evening(s)
- Community dinner with the “blokes” cooking and serving the meal - \$40 a head.

3 projects raising about \$3-400 each will compensate for the absence of the art exhibition. Please put your thinking caps on.

**Mark Bevin, Property & Finance**

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Bible Book A Month Discussions

7.30 pm Thursday 5 April ~ Amos

7.30 pm Thursday 3 May ~ Obadiah

The April Bible Discussion is on the book of Amos.

We meet at 7.30 pm at 129 Signal Hill Road and everyone is welcome, even if you can only make an occasional evening, or are new to the Bible.

Please read the month’s book beforehand if possible. For more information please ask Margaret the minister, or John Stenhouse the discussion leader.

Tui Bevin

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*Continuing Psalm Writing for Today*

*6.30pm - 8 pm Wednesday 17 April*

Since early 2017, a group has been looking at Psalms in all their biblical and modern day shapes and sizes, and we have penned new psalms. Some have been printed in previous issues of the *Signal*, and there are more to come!

We will meet next on Wednesday 17 April at 129 Signal Hill Road, with shared takeaways for tea. Please RSVP to Margaret or Tui that you are coming, by 4 pm that day.

It is not too late to decide to come along - you might have a psalm to share or perhaps you would like to simply sit in, and join in the conversation. If you have any questions, or would like to come along this month, please talk to the Minister.

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Movie Group

The next movie group meeting is at 56 Warden Street on Thursday 12 April at 7 pm. Details of the month’s movie will be included in the Sunday notices.

Movie nights are an opportunity for people to gather in someone’s home, to watch a movie together, and afterwards reflect together over a cup of tea or coffee, on anything that particularly struck them as they watched.

The group is very informal. All are welcome to come along as and when they are able, with different people hosting as they are able. The gatherings are usually on the 2nd Thursday of the month at 7 pm, although the day is flexible.

If you would like to know more, if you have a movie to suggest, or you are interested in hosting, contact Shona Somerville, email shonahsomerville@gmail.com or phone 473-8862.

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## *Keeping in Touch*

Do you know...

Opoho Church has a website, [www.opohochurch.org](http://www.opohochurch.org)

On the website 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)

Copies of the Parish Directory, with contact details of parishioners, are available on the back pew in the church.

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 either to Andrea [andrea.johnston@columba.co.nz](mailto:andrea.johnston@columba.co.nz) or to Margaret [marg.garland@gmail.com](mailto:marg.garland@gmail.com)

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Calendar for early May	
The calendar for April is on the back page.	
3 May ~ Thursday	7.30 pm: Bible Book of the Month. <i>Obadiah</i> 129 Signal Hill Road
6 May ~ Sunday	10 am: Worship with Holy Communion. Rev Peter Wishart <i>Voices for the Earth</i> trip to Knox Christchurch
10 May ~ Thursday	7 pm: Movie Group. Details TBC
12 May ~ Saturday	11 am - 2 pm: Opoho Church Fair
13 May ~ Sunday	10 am: Worship: Rev Margaret Garland

Lectionary readings, 1 April 2018 to 13 May in Year B, the Year of Mark			
Easter Dawn - Sunday 1 April			
Ex 14: 10-31, 15: 20-21	Ps 114	Rom 6: 3-11	Mk 16: 1-8
Easter Day - Sunday 1 April			
Acts 10: 34-43 or Is 25: 6-9	Ps 118: 1-2, 14-24	1 Cor 15: 1-11 or Acts 10: 34-43	Jn 20: 1-18 or Mk 16: 1-8
Sunday 8 April - 2nd Sunday of Easter			
Acts 4: 32-35	Ps 133	1 Jn 1: 1-2: 2	Jn 2: 19-31
Sunday 15 April - 3rd Sunday of Easter			
Acts 3: 12-19	Ps 4	1 Jn 3: 1-7	Lk 24: 36b-48
Sunday 22 April - 4th Sunday of Easter			
Acts 4: 5-12	Ps 23	1 Jn 3: 16-24	Jn 10: 11-18
Sunday 29 April - 5th Sunday of Easter			
Acts 8: 26-40	Ps 22: 25-31	1 Jn 4: 7-21	Jn 15: 1-8
Sunday 6 May - 6th Sunday of Easter			
Acts 10: 44-48	Ps 98	1 Jn 5: 1-6	Jn 15: 9-17
Thursday 10 May - Ascension			
Acts 1: 1-11	Ps 47 or Ps 93	Eph 1: 15-23	Lk 24: 44-53
Sunday 13 May—7th Sunday of Easter			
Acts 1: 15-17, 21-26	Ps 1	1 Jn 5: 9-13	Jn 17: 6-19

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

Deadline for next Opoho Signal - Monday 16 April

Please send all material for the May Opoho Signal to:
Andrea Johnston, 6 Abbeyhill Road, Pine Hill, Dunedin 9010
phone 473 9473 mobile 021 516 275
email andrea.johnston@columba.co.nz

Coming up @ Opoho Presbyterian Church in April

1 April ~ Sunday	7 am: Combined Easter Dawn service. Mt Cargill 10 am: Worship with Holy Communion and Choir. Rev Margaret Garland
4 April ~ Wednesday	8 pm: Property & Finance Committee meeting
5 April ~ Thursday	7.30 pm: Bible Book of the Month. <i>Amos</i> 129 Signal Hill Road
8 April ~ Sunday	NO WORSHIP AT OPOHO CHURCH 10.00 am Meet at the church 10.30 am: Worship at Dunedin Hospital Chapel 11.30 am Pastoral Care & Community Committee meeting in Margaret's study 5 pm: Children's Easter Service with tea in the Church
11 April ~ Wednesday	7.30 pm: Christian Development Committee meeting at 160 Rolla St.
12 April ~ Thursday	7 pm: Movie Group. 56 Warden St. Movie to be advised
15 April ~ Sunday	8.15 am Pastoral Carers' breakfast. 10 am Worship. Rev Margaret Garland.
16 April ~ Monday	Deadline for May <i>Opoho Signal</i>
17 April ~ Tuesday	6.30 pm to 8 pm: Psalm writing with tea. 129 Signal Hill Road
19 April ~ Thursday	7.30 pm: Parish Council. Morrison Lounge
22 April ~ Sunday	10.00 am: Worship for Harvest Thanksgiving. Rev Margaret Garland. Please bring food items for PSO Food Bank. 11.30 am: Parish pot luck lunch in the Hall
25 April ~ Wednesday	Anzac Day. 2.00 pm: Fellowship Group. Morrison Lounge Speaker: Mary Somerville.
29 April ~ Sunday	10.00 am: Worship with Music Group. <i>Voices for the Earth</i> . Revs Margaret Garland and Matthew Jack. 2 pm to 5 pm <i>Voices for the Earth</i> seminar
The calendar for the early part of May is on P. 18	

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April 2018

via email