

# Ōpoho Signal

The newsletter of Ōpoho Presbyterian Church

50 Signal Hill Road, Ōpoho, Dunedin 9010



**December 2024 – January 2025**

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

## Editorial

I am reading my way through the book of Isaiah. Parts of it are well known and turn up in our church lectionary readings around Advent and Easter – ‘For a child is born to us...’, ‘He was despised, rejected...’, the Lord has anointed me to bring good news to the poor, to heal the broken hearted, announce release to the captives and freedom to the prisoner...’.

But there is a lot in the book of Isaiah that makes hard reading. Among those bits are the chapters that announce harsh judgement on Israel for its godlessness and the even greater number of chapters that denounce Israel’s neighbours for their arrogance and self-sufficiency, warning that there is a terrible reckoning coming. There is a lot of hurt and anger and desire for retribution, and not a lot of forgiveness and grace among these pronouncements on Israel’s enemies in Isaiah. The pushed around, punished people of Israel are also happy to crow over others, when fortunes are reversed.

It is a disturbing read against the backdrop of what is happening in our own time between Israel and the Palestinians. The response of Israel to the reprehensible kidnappings and killings of some of its citizens has now gone very far beyond the old restraint of an eye for an eye.

I was taught to approach Biblical texts with three questions – 1) What does it say? 2) What did that mean to the people of the time? 3) What might it mean to us? It is the second question that offers the best protection against words that carried the pain and torment of the victims of oppression being used by the oppressors to justify appalling behaviour.

That Isaiah’s writings come from the same part of the world that the current conflict is happening in, makes it dangerously easy to forget that important second question. Dangerously, because without its corrective, there is much in these chapters that might encourage the mindset of those who are doing awful things today to the populations of Gaza and Lebanon.

And our woes are not only in that part of the world. Even in our own more fortunate country we are becoming used to systems and things not working as they should. As a society we seem caught in a general grumpiness and impatience with one another. We live, too, with a crisis of perception. So much of what is put forward as beautiful, good and grand is, in fact, ugly, small and shallow, while the beauty, courage and depth in what is broken, honest and healing is largely ignored. The truth is we all need help. It is beyond our power to rescue ourselves.

On the eve of Advent, we look forward to the celebration of the birth of Jesus, God's help and rescue in the middle of our mess. The way of God that Jesus shows us is not one of retribution and military might. On the contrary it is marked by compassion and care, and a regard for the ones who are ignored, shoved to the edges or moved on. It is marked by honesty, forgiveness, healing and grace.

What Jesus reveals about God is big, surprising and truly good news. It says that there is another way than 'might is right', one that is hopeful and more solid because its solidity ultimately lies in the nature of the God who created the universe and holds it. This is a way that can set us free from the paralysing mind sets of power, money, acquisitiveness and the no win of warfare. It is God's way to renew the human soul. It may seem extraordinary given all that is happening around us and within us, but these are the tidings of great joy for us and the whole of humanity – and Christmas is its beginning.

*Clare Lind*

## **Parish Council News**

The Parish Council had a relatively short meeting on 28 November. It received minutes of meetings of the Property and Finance and Christian Development Committees and noted that they were doing productive behind-the-scenes work. The Council did not make any significant decisions other than to hold a retreat in late January to consider responses to the Our Place Handbook, as requested by the Annual Meeting.

*Gregor Macaulay on behalf of the Parish Council*

## **Property and Finance Committee Update**

Our November meeting was a time of catching up on all the activity over the last month. A flooded basement cleanup involved a lot of person-power along with the successful fair set-up and clean-up. All this resulted in the basement having a further spring-clean and we have disposed of obsolete items. With the closing of the Kaikorai Church, we have been fortunate to be gifted a range of items: a lectern and falls, chairs for the Minister's office, music stands, folding tables for hall use, and soccer and tennis tables for games.. From the fair, a set of fine nesting tables has been added to the Morrison Lounge along with new speakers in the church. We hope you notice that the hall entrance door is opening easily and that the church vestry door lock is operating smoothly. The lawns were ably managed by Jane and Susan over October.

Window painting will commence before the end of the year and in January we commence a programme of borer treatment which will continue over the next three years. Our waste bins are proving very useful and the green bin is often full with garden waste. The Seed Exchange is being visited regularly with items going in and out. Soil in the garden is looking in good shape....18 months ago the soil was almost dead ....but with the application of donated mulch, pea straw, and nitrogen, we can plan for some successful planting in 2025. Our committee has worked hard to complete the funding application to Synod for our proposal to reroof the building and this has been submitted. Decisions are made by Synod in May 2025 and we will keep you informed.

Our regular groups using the hall (Steady as You Go, Pilates, Yoga, and Weaving) all plan to continue next year. We have had several people holding family celebrations along with a Scottish country dancing group. There has been an inquiry to hold Line Dancing in 2025 if there is sufficient community interest.

We have had a stellar year and look forward to 2025 – we welcome hearing your ideas and please let us know of any security or health and safety issues.

*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, Ōpoho 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: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*

## Fellowship Group Report

On 14 November, Miriam shared her five-week solo travel experience in Europe; to see her friend in Rome and visit family history in Hanover (Germany) and Dalry (Ayrshire, Scotland). An interview on National Radio with Katherine Leamy <https://www.rnz.co.nz/national/programmes/afternoons/audio/2018946234/heading-off-travelling-the-world-with-just-5kg-of-luggage> and the purchase of her book *Dare to Travel Solo* motivated Miriam to travel light and travel solo.

There were many highlights but one that had me smiling was these two gorgeous chaps (right) who tapped me on the shoulder in an Edinburgh second-hand shop and said “*that has to be a Kiwi accent*”. They were both from New Zealand and lived in London. I had great fun giving them advice on clothes they were trying on – both were so stylish.



## In the Garden

*One of the many interesting conversations I have while gardening at the church ...*

Marlene Hunt from Christchurch was enjoying the church gardens and asked if she could collect a rock from the gardens to take back home. This rock would be delivered to her artist friend who is creating an installation of rocks from all the Four Square shops around Four Square square shop on the corner was just what she was looking for. Her family attends the Pacific Island Presbyterian Church in Christchurch and she sends warm regards to our congregation.

*Miriam, the happy gardener*



## Presbyterian Support Foodbank



There is usually greater use of the Foodbank over the Christmas-New Year period. 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](http://www.psotago.org.nz) Seasonal goodies are welcomed and non-food items such as toiletries are also acceptable.

## 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*

## Keeping in Touch at Ōpoho 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)

## Remembrance Sunday

On Sunday 10 November, Abby gave Ted the job of making poppies from cupcake cases. Here are some of them (there were a lot more). Well done and thank you Ted!



## Abby's Jam Palace Plus



The Jam Palace will be open for business in the hall after church on 8 December – jam plus some craft items.

## Interfaith Matters

Well, sorry all. I mentioned in church on 17 November that at the Interfaith meeting that afternoon we were going to discuss two important papers. The first from the New Zealand Police – *Protecting our crowded places from attack: New Zealand's strategy*; and the second from the New Zealand Security Intelligence Service – *Know the signs: guide for identifying signs of violent extremism*. In fact the time needed for this to be done well meant discussion has been put on to March. In December we have an end of year celebration, in January we get ready for the Harmony Dinner which is our February get-together – so March it will be. If anyone would like me to forward these papers to them, do email me: [bronwenstrang@gmail.com](mailto:bronwenstrang@gmail.com)

**Bronwen Strang**



*Want to sing your  
favourite carols and get  
into the spirit of  
Christmas?*

*Families, neighbours, friends, children,  
everyone everywhere welcome*



Opoho Presbyterian Church

invites you to a

**“Community carols  
sing your heart out”**

**at the church 50 Signal Hill Road**

**Sunday 15 December from 2pm to 3pm**

- followed by afternoon tea and nibbles
  - Christmas gift ideas sales table

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*We invite you to bring a koha for  
the Otago Community Hospice & a can for the foodbank*





Christian World Service Christmas appeal pamphlets (including envelopes) are enclosed with physical copies of this newsletter and are also available at the back of the church.

## Fellowship Group Christmas Lunch



An invitation is extended from the Fellowship Group to any members of the congregation to join them at 12.30 p.m. on Thursday 12 December for a Christmas lunch in the hall. This year we are asking for a Koha of \$10 and promise a cracking Christmas dinner with all the trimmings. RSVP to Chris Young or Miriam Vollweiler for catering purposes; 027 473 7636.

## Lectionary for December, January, and February

<b>Sunday 1 December – 1st Sunday in Advent</b>			
Jer 33: 14-16	Ps 25: 1-10	1 Thes 3: 9-13	Lk 21: 25-36
<b>Sunday 8 December – 2nd Sunday in Advent</b>			
Bar 5: 1-9 <i>or</i> Mal 3: 1-4	Lk 1: 68-79	Phil 1: 3-11	Lk 3: 1-6
<b>Sunday 15 December – 3rd Sunday in Advent</b>			
Zeph 3: 14-20	Is 12: 2-6	Phil 4: 4-7	Lk 3: 7-18
<b>Sunday 22 December – 4th Sunday in Advent</b>			
Mic 5: 2-5a	Ps 80: 1-7	Heb 10: 5-10	Lk 1: 39-45, (46-55)
<b>Tuesday 24 December – Christmas Eve</b>			
Is 9: 2-7	Ps 96	Titus 2: 11-14	Lk 2: 1-14, (15-20)
<b>Wednesday 25 December – Christmas Dawn</b>			
Is 62: 6-12	Ps 97	Titus 3: 4-7	Lk 2: (1-7), 8-20
<b>Wednesday 25 December – Christmas Day</b>			
Is 52: 7-10	Ps 98	Heb 1: 1-4, (5-12)	Jn 1: 1-14
<b>Sunday 29 December – 1st Sunday after Christmas</b>			
1 Sam 2:18-20, 26	Ps 148	Col 3: 12-17	Lk 2: 41-52
<b>Sunday 5 January – 2nd Sunday after Christmas</b>			
Jer 3: 1-7	Ps 147: 12-20	Eph 1:3-14	Jn 1: (1-9), 10-18
<b>Monday 6 January – Epiphany</b>			
Is 60: 1-6	Ps 72: 1-7, 10-14	Eph 3: 1-12	Mt 2: 1-12
<b>Sunday 12 January – 1st Sunday after the Epiphany</b>			
Is 43: 1-7	Ps 29	Acts 8: 14-17	Lk 3: 15-17, 21-22
<b>Sunday 19 January – 2nd Sunday after the Epiphany</b>			
Is 62: 1-5	Ps 36: 5-10	1 Cor 12: 1-11	Jn 2: 1-11
<b>Sunday 26 January – 3rd Sunday after the Epiphany</b>			
Neh 8:1-3, 5-6, 8-10	Ps 19	1 Cor 12: 12-31a	Lk 4: 14-21
<b>Sunday 2 February – 4th Sunday after the Epiphany</b>			
Jer 1: 4-10	Ps 71: 1-6	1 Cor 13: 1-13	Lk 4: 21-30

<b>Sunday 9 February – 5th Sunday after Epiphany</b>			
Is 6: 1-8 (9-13)	Ps 138	1 Cor 15: 1-11	Lk 5: 1-11
<b>Sunday 16 February – 6th Sunday after Epiphany</b>			
Jer 17: 5-10	Ps 1	1 Cor 15: 12-20	Lk 6: 17-26
<b>Sunday 23 February – 7th Sunday after Epiphany</b>			
Gen 45: 3-11, 15	Ps 37: 1-11, 39-40	1 Cor 15: 35-38, 42-50	Lk 6: 27-38

## Coming Events at Ōpoho Presbyterian Church December 2024

1 December ~ Sunday	10 a.m.: Worship, the Rev. Clare Lind, Quarterly Communion 11.15 a.m.: Advent Choir practice in church 2.30-4.30 p.m.: Children’s Sports Afternoon
8 December ~ Sunday	10 a.m.: Worship, Julie Mander and Opoho children; followed by Jam Palace in hall 11.15 a.m.: Advent Choir practice in church
12 December ~ Thursday	12.30 p.m.: Fellowship Group Christmas lunch, Morrison Lounge
15 December ~ Sunday	9.15 a.m.: Advent Choir practice in church 10 a.m.: Worship, the Rev. Clare Lind – Nine Lessons and Carols 2 p.m.: Sing Your Heart Out – community carol singing in church
19 December ~ Thursday	7.30 p.m.: Parish Council (and Property and Finance Committee), 14 Blacks Road
22 December ~ Sunday	10 a.m.: Worship, the Rev. Clare Lind
24 December ~ Tuesday	11.30 p.m.: Christmas Eve service, the Rev. Clare Lind
25 December ~ Wednesday	10 a.m.: Worship, the Rev. Clare Lind – Christmas Day
29 December ~ Sunday	10 a.m.: Worship, <i>Some Favourite Hymns</i>

## Coming Events at Ōpoho Presbyterian Church January and February 2025

5 January ~ Sunday	10 a.m.: Worship, the Rev. Dr Kerry Enright
12 January ~ Sunday	10 a.m.: Worship, preacher TBA*
19 January ~ Sunday	10 a.m.: Worship, preacher TBA*
20 January ~ Monday	Material due for February <i>Ōpoho Signal</i>
26 January ~ Sunday	10 a.m.: Worship, the Rev. Clare Lind
2 February ~ Sunday	10 a.m.: Worship, the Rev. Clare Lind, Communion
6 February ~ Thursday	Waitangi Day – public holiday
9 February ~ Sunday	10 a.m.: Worship, preacher TBA*
11 February ~ Tuesday	7.30 p.m.: Christian Development Committee, Morrison Lounge
12 February ~ Wednesday	7.30 p.m.: Property and Finance Committee, Morrison Lounge
13 February ~ Thursday	2 p.m.: Fellowship Group, Morrison Lounge
16 February ~ Sunday	10 a.m.: Worship, the Rev. Clare Lind
20 February ~ Thursday	Material due for March <i>Ōpoho Signal</i> 7.30 p.m.: Parish Council, Morrison Lounge
23 February ~ Sunday	10 a.m.: Worship, the Rev. Clare Lind, Harvest Thanksgiving

**\* Please let Gregor Macaulay know if you can help with taking the services on any of these days (and also on 8 June and 12 October) or have suggestions for anyone who could be invited to do so.**

### Deadline for next *Ōpoho Signal* – Monday 20 January

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)