

Whānau Newsletter

Flagstaff Community Church - May 2026



AI and Christian Life



Do you have questions about AI?

Join us over four sessions exploring a range of perspectives on AI, technology and Christian life - What are the implications of AI for personal and communal spiritual life and discipleship?

May 6: [Dr. Stephen Garner](#)—AI and the spiritual life - What are the implications of AI for personal and communal spiritual life and discipleship?

May 13: Dr. Stephen Garner—What's next? Robot preachers and worship leaders? - Is there a place for AI in the worshipping life of the church?

May 20: [Dr. Andrew Shepherd](#)—A Critique of

Contemporary Technologies and Their Impact on Human Flourishing - How does technology shape us?

June 3: [Matt Ensor](#)—Appreciative Insights on the Use of AI: Possibilities and Challenges - Insights along with a no-jargon opportunity for questions.

Brought to you by Knox Centre for Ministry and Leadership. There are four sessions listed separately on the events page: <https://knoxcentre.ac.nz/training-events/>

Choral Workshop, Awheawhe Waiata Flagstaff Community Choir with First Church

6th June 2026, 1.00 – 4.30 pm

Venue: Flagstaff Community Church, 9 Centennial Avenue, Wakari

Kaupapa: learn three Sāmoan songs, including one from Tinā, and a waiata

Cost: \$15 or koha - children are welcome to join us (no cost)

Lead by: Alofa Lale and Sue Mephram

To enrol: email suetim.mephram@gmail.com otherwise, just arrive on the day!

Concert: 4.00 pm for friends and family. Nau mai, haere mai!





Step into homeownership

Applications are open for Habitat's three-bedroom rent-to-buy homes in Dunedin. This is the perfect opportunity for people to make homeownership a reality.

There is no deposit needed to move in, and each rent payment goes towards owning your own home, giving you a hand up onto the property ladder.

How it works:



No deposit needed



Support from Habitat to achieve your dream of homeownership



Rent goes towards buying the home



Scan the QR code to get in contact with our team

Or contact us on
southern@habitat.org.nz
0800HABITAT
habitat.org.nz/southern





Presbyterian Church
of Aotearoa New Zealand

ENGAGE

EXPLORE GLOBAL MISSION

9am -1:30pm 9th May at DCBC

Do you have an interest in Global Mission and being a part of God's mission within our world?

Join us to explore Global Mission together:

- Inspiring Sessions
- Practical Workshops
- Connect with Mission Agencies
- Ask real questions in a supportive environment

Do you have questions you want to explore with others around your role in Global Mission now or in the future?

Contact: 2026engage@gmail.com



CHILDREN & YOUNG PEOPLE

Knox Church Dunedin is developing a new Youth Group on Fridays at 6.30pm until 8.30pm. Young people from year 8 to year 13 are welcome to come and be a part of this. Knox welcomes all young people regardless of whether they have experience of church or have a faith or not. The aim of this group is to examine the issues of our world, looking at morals and ethics from the point of view of the Knox Church community. We hope to link up with young people from other church communities around Dunedin whose churches share the inclusive values we hope Knox represents.

The Youth Group will run on the last Friday of each month. Pizza will be provided, and we will have social activities as well as discussions and hopefully visiting speakers on the subjects the young people want to investigate. All adult supervisors and leaders are police vetted, and trained in the Presbyterian Church's Warrant of Fitness for safety in working with children and young people.

Please fill in the google form attached to give permission for your young person to be a part of this group.

<https://tinyurl.com/Knox-Youth-Group-2026>



Lots of Fun
stuff!!



Images from Southern Presbytery
Easter Camp



CAMPUS AND DISTANCE LEARNING

Theology@Otago papers 2026
On campus and via distance learning

Enrol for semester 2

Semester 2 papers with an intensive

- CHTH 236/336** Māori Theology and Religion (Intensive in Ōhope, 29 June–3 July)
PAST 322/MINS 414** Christian Theology and the Arts (Intensive in Dunedin, 6–10 July)

Semester 2 papers

- BIBS 112 Interpreting the Old Testament
BIBS 132 Introductory New Testament Greek II
BIBS 211/311 God, Land and Exile in the Hebrew Prophets
CHTH 111 Doing Theology
CHTH 131 God and Ethics in the Modern World
CHTH 207/307 History of Christianity in the Pacific
CHTH 224/324 Theology and the Environment
CHTH 235/335 Special Topic: Tikanga Māori, Spiritual Regulation and the New Zealand State
CHTH 319/415 Reconciliation, Christian Ethics and Public Theology
HEBR 132 Introductory Biblical Hebrew II
PAST 318/MINS 410 * Pastoral Care in Dying, Grief and Loss
PAST 321/MINS 413 * Missional God, Missional People

Pre-Christmas Summer School (9 November – 12 December 2026)

- CHTH 217/317 * Special Topic: Theology and Science

*All papers are taught on-campus and by distance learning, except where indicated (*distance only; **face-to-face intensive)*

Theology Programme
03 479 8639

theology@otago.ac.nz
otago.ac.nz/theology

AskOtago 0800 80 80 98
ask.otago.ac.nz



University
of Otago
ŌTĀKOU WHAKAIHU WAKA

2026 Christian Savings Governance Conference July/Aug

Those serving in governance roles need to be ready for the challenges ahead. This year's speaker line-up is designed to inspire and equip for both the joys and the complexities of church and charity leadership. You'll hear from keynote speakers who are in touch with the realities of Christian governance, engage in interviews and interactive discussions and connect with a wide range of people who share your commitment to leading well. Three venues - 22 July Christchurch, 29 July Auckland, 5 August Wellington. See [more](#).

OPPORTUNITIES TO SERVE



Foodbank

Our foodbank is currently in need of the following items to support local individuals and families in our community:

- Milo
- Baking supplies (especially sugar)
- Canned ready-to-eat meals
- Simmer sauces
- Lunchbox snacks
- Breakfast spreads (jam & honey)
- Cooking oil (500ml bottles)

Every donation, big or small, makes a real difference for someone doing it tough right now.

If you're able to help, donations can be dropped off at **407 Moray Place, Dunedin 9016**

Thank you for your continued generosity and support ❤️

Kai for

OCTACAN

The spirit of winter giving Octacan,
our annual foodbank appeal



Thursday 25 June
7.30am – 2pm
Lower Octagon

Bring along your cans
and help us fill the
foodbank with kai this
winter or donate online


Presbyterian
Support
Otago


Family
works

octacan.org.nz
psotago.org.nz | phone 05 477 7115

glow WAITAKI

A community benefit dinner

Hosted by Otago Medical Research Foundation,
Presbyterian Support Otago & The Wildlife Hospital

Thursday 30 July 2026
Brydone Hotel Oamaru

Tickets: events.humanitix.com/glow-waitaki

With thanks to our sponsors:

Together Otago: our commitment to community wellbeing

Together Otago brings people together in gentle, welcoming spaces for listening, sharing, and learning alongside our parish and community partners. These gatherings are an opportunity to connect, share insights, hear updates from Presbyterian Support Otago, and explore how we can continue to work together to support our communities. Whether you bring your heart, your experience, your care for community – or all three – you are warmly invited to join us.

Upcoming dates:

- 3 June – Milton
- 5 August – Oamaru
- 7 October – Dunedin

All gatherings take place on Wednesdays from 3.00–4.30pm.



REGULAR MONTHLY NOTICES AND CONTACTS



Green Fingers: We are currently restoring our awa next to the church. This little creek is showing signs of life and is breathing again, and some native birds are showing up. There are a few folks who meet for a couple of hours on a Monday and potter away at planting, trapping pests, removing, weeding, etc. Occasionally we have a project in which everyone is invited including our local school. If you want to join us ring Neil Brown 027 435 4672.

Recycling @ Flagstaff: Bring your plastic milk and cream bottle tops, Tetrapaks (rinsed, flattened, slit open on three sides) and clean glass or plastic jars (any size, must have lids and no need to remove labels) to church. There are collection containers at the back of the church under the resources table. If in doubt, bring them along! For a comprehensive and (relatively) up-to-date list of recyclable items and where to drop them off, refer to this link <https://www.northeastvalley.org/your-community/valley-voice/july-2024>;

Mission Membership: There are a number of people who have moved from the original place where they were baptised and made a confession of faith, and who now make Flagstaff Community Church the place they live out their faith. To arrange an appointment to explore fully the implications of becoming a committed member of our congregation please contact Brendon McRae 027 356 9200.

Sunday Sermon: If you would like a copy of the speaker's message from Sunday, then please email Brendon on brendon@churchatflagstaff.co.nz and a copy will be sent to you.

Pastoral Visit: If you would like a pastoral visit from someone from within the pastoral team or the minister, please ring elder Sarah Barton 021 385905.

Flagstaff Prayer Time: Sharing life, ministry and prayer together. Everyone welcome. Every Tuesday 9 – 10 am in church foyer. Join us as we share and celebrate stories of God's action amongst us and pray for one another and discern God's leading into the future.



Interested in studying Theology? The Theology Programme at the University of Otago offers a wide range of papers and qualifications, all available via distance learning. Some papers are taught via videoconferences, others include teaching days in Wellington, while a few involve week-long intensives. For further information go to www.otago.ac.nz/theology. or phone 0800 80 80 98 or 03 479 8639.

Life Groups: Life Groups @Flagstaff are a vital part of who we are as a community of faith as we seek to grow in Jesus. Not only do we explore the messages God has for us from the Bible, but we also have the opportunity to connect with others and experience a place where no-one stands alone. If you would like to join one of our weekly groups, please contact Sarah Barton 021 385905.

Discipleship Groups: which focus on study and prayer. Wednesday 1.30 p.m. Contact Sarah 021 385905.



Community Facing Groups: Where the focus is on friendship around a common interest. These groups are welcoming and may centre on an activity, a hobby, a talent, a life stage, a project or service. Groups include, Steady as you Go, Hire a Helper, Community Garden, Women's Coffee Group @ Coffee Culture (Held 1st Tuesday of the month at 7.30 pm), Green Fingers, Walking Groups and more! If you would like to join a group, start a group or find out more information then please contact Brendon on 027 356 9200.

Tithing/Giving: There are many ways we can support the activity of God in our church, community and world. Two ways of making your church offerings.

1. Use internet banking to make direct credits or automatic payments to the Flagstaff Community Church. Westpac bank # 03-0903-0192517-03. Please include your name for reference or if you use Envelopes use your Envelope reference/number.
2. Join the envelope system by contacting Alison Jenkin (Wakari) 021 1052 320. You will receive a set of personally numbered envelopes. This can be placed in the kete/basket at the foyer entrance anytime during Sunday Worship.

If you give to special appeals or missions, you can ensure your donation goes to that particular mission by writing the name of the appeal or special purpose when you make the internet payment or when you put your number or name and address on an envelope.

Flagstaff Community Church Services 9.30am (Communion 3rd Sunday of each month)

Contacts:

Prayer Chain: Sarah Barton 021 385905

Pastoral Care: Sarah Barton 021 385905

Envelope System: Alison Jenkin 021 1052320

Technical Equipment: Andrew Sims andrewcarolynsims@gmail.com;

Church Newsletter: Lisa Wells office@churchatflagstaff.co.nz;



Kaumātua - Elders

Parish Clerk: Sarah Barton parishclerk@churchatflagstaff.co.nz

Presbytery Elder: Don Lind donovan.lind@gmail.com

Beth Scarlet raybethscarlet@yahoo.com

Vanessa Gordon: ness.gordon@gmail.com

Tim Mepham: rautakiadvice@gmail.com

Gary Dent: gary.dent7@gmail.com

Andrew Sims: andrewcarolynsims@gmail.com

Child Protection Officer: Jane Davis edlumic@icloud.com

Health and Safety Officer: Joe Carpenter josephcarpenter3000@gmail.com

Minister: Rev Brendon McRae

Phone: 027 356 9200

brendon@churchatflagstaff.co.nz

Parish Contact details:

Administrator: Lisa Wells

office@churchatflagstaff.co.nz

P O Box 10074

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Office and Church: 9 Centennial Avenue,

Wakari, Dunedin

Website: www.churchatflagstaff.co.nz

Facebook: www.facebook.com/churchatflagstaff