

NOVEMBER 2025



OCC NEWSLETTER

Monthly newsletter of Onewa Christian Community



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Minister's Message

Dear friends,

At General Assembly 25 (GA 25), held under the theme "We Believe", the Presbyterian Church of Aotearoa New Zealand gathered for four days to reflect on what it means to be Church – looking back with gratitude, paying attention to the present, and seeking where God might be leading us next.

One of the most meaningful parts of the Assembly was the time spent in small Dialogue Groups. We were invited to explore different themes, and one that especially stood out to me was about finding metaphors for Whanaungatanga[1] – the deep sense of relationship and belonging that holds us together in Christ. We were asked to consider how God's call might shape the way we meet, serve, and care for one another in our shared mission.

As I listened and reflected, I couldn't help thinking of Onewa Christian Community. Like the wider church, we too are discerning how best to live

faithfully in a world that is changing quickly. Yet, at the heart of all the change, God continues to call us into community – to strengthen the ties of Whanaungatanga among us, and to trust that the Spirit is already at work preparing a hopeful future. As we prepare for the AGM, I invite you to take a few moments to reflect and pray about what Whanaungatanga means for us here at OCC. You might like to use this simple guide:

- Pause – Find a quiet moment and settle yourself in God’s presence.
- Pray – Ask for God’s wisdom and grace to open your heart.
- Read – Read the chosen metaphor prayerfully, listening for what it stirs in you.
- Discuss – Bring your thoughts and insights to our Annual General Meeting on 9 November, where we’ll share together what God might be saying to us.

As we continue our journey of faith, may we find joy and strength in belonging to one another, and in knowing that Christ walks with us always.

Shalom,

Jin Sook Kim (Revd)



WHETŪ (STAR)

Luke is a surveyor. When his family go on holiday they take photos of benchmark pins used for geodetic control points. The pins are crafted from corrosion-resistant stainless steel and are engineered to stay anchored in one place for the longest time. To the novice, they are little light reflecting domes stuck in concrete or rock. To the surveyor, they are another story altogether. Our modern navigation systems are held together by a highly accurate reference network of geodetic control points.

I'm sorry, you've lost me.
Quite the contrary.

Benchmark pins are placed very precisely, allowing us to determine the lay of the land and helping us know where we are, exactly. This is one way we can set the direction for our next journey or engineering project. In the past, surveyors used the stars that can be seen during the day along with a theodolite (a precision optical instrument) for orientation.

For the longest time, our ancestors looked to the little light reflecting orbs in the night sky. The stars were both a guide to navigate a way across the ocean and a reminder to begin preparing for the next season's crop in the place where our feet are planted. The stars move us and ground us.

Our ancestors gave the stars names and stories as a way of remembering what has been done and what is yet to be done. Our Scriptures remind us that God placed the stars very precisely and calls them each by name.[2] God told Abraham that his children would be like stars – uncountable and beautiful. The ancient Hebrews saw God's story of redemption and grace in the night sky. God set a star in the sky when Jesus was born. To those who surveyed the sky, this is another story altogether.

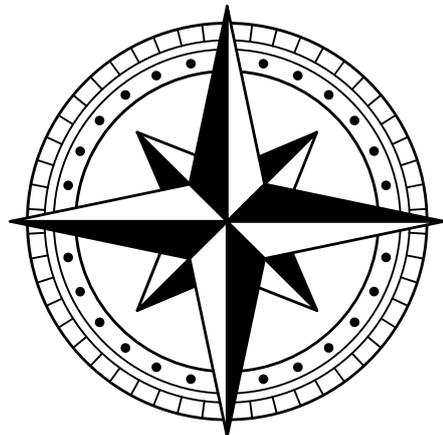
So where to from here?

Me mātau ki te whetū,
I mua kōkiri o te haere
Before you set forth on a journey,
Be sure you know the stars.

Rev Jin Sook Kim

[1] Its meaning is kinship, relationship, sense of family connection.

[2] Psalm 147:4



Onewa Christian Community Church Council Report

Community and Outreach

OCC continues to live out its call to serve our neighbourhood:

- Council approved OCC becoming a coordination centre for community activities at Hinemoa Street, supporting local connection and care.
- Sarah is looking into new initiatives such as ToolBox Parenting Course training.
- The Council also affirmed its support for developing youth leadership and encouraging support in this area.
- Council is in the early stages of looking into Alpha Course. A review of materials will be undertaken to explore if this course might be an appropriate way to foster discipleship and welcoming newcomers interested in the bible and faith.

Resource and Risk / Property

Sincere thanks go to David and the Resource and Risk team for their ongoing work on maintenance and safety. The Resource and Risk committee is seeking new members, especially those with experience in property matters and risk management. Are you willing to put your hand up to join this exciting team and help contribute to our resources?

The High Tea Fundraiser was a lovely success. Thank you to everyone who attended and contributed to this event.

Administration and Communications

Council has approved a new Media Consent Form which Sarah has spearheaded. This will help us manage photos and media use appropriately. This will be circulated soon at church services for signing.

AGM and Council Membership

A reminder that our Annual General Meeting will be held on Sunday 9 November 2025. This is an opportunity to reflect on the year past and to recruit new members to Church Council. If you feel called to serve or want to learn more, please speak to Rosemarie or any Council member.

Pastoral Care

Council continues to hold in prayer members of our community who are unwell or facing challenges. Please keep an eye out for one another, and let the pastoral team know if you are aware of anyone needing extra support.

With blessings,

For Onewa Christian Community Church Council



Alice in Wonderland Floral High Tea



So much goes into creating a successful event. Our Alice High Tea fundraiser was a true Wonderland thanks to some very special volunteers and contributions from the congregation and beyond! A special thank you to the Fundraising Team: Dale, Robin, Barbara, Rosemarie, Jenny and Grace for all your hard work in putting the event together! Enormous thanks to those who did the catering for the event and managed the kitchen on the day: Isabel, Fiona, Grace, Jenny and Maddy Thorne. The food was delicious!

A lot went into getting everything ready in advance. Thanks to David and Rosemarie for all the preparation for the event including putting up all the tables and chairs (a truly mammoth task!) and all the work in advance to make the space look beautiful including plumbing the bathroom, organising painters and more! Thanks too to the wonderful team of volunteers who came along to tidy and plant the gardens at Onewa Road to Barbara Westra's plan. We were also lucky enough to have the wonderful owner and director of First Scene contact us to offer to decorate the venue for free. The lovely Jo Pilkington came along on Friday evening and decorated the venue with Sarah and Rachel; transforming the Church into a magical, whimsical space with giant toadstools, card soldiers and amazing backdrops.

Then there were the wonderful on-the-day volunteers. Those who hosted a table, managed the ticket collection, ran the quiz and helped pack up. You are all wonderful people and we very much appreciate all of your efforts! Thank you Barbara Wesley, Barbara Wadams, Pat, Robin, Rosemarie, David, Rachel, Jocelyn, Rosemary Bold and Sarah who were table hosts; Angelina for the quiz, Linda Buckthought on the door and Sarah's husband Richard who came to help pack up.

Finally, we can't forget the beautiful flowers. The designers went above and beyond and it was very hard to choose a winner! Thank you to Pauline and Helene for your stunning large displays and to Barbara Westra, Dale, Pat, Isabel, Robin, Sarah, Barbara Wadams, Margaret and Pauline for the window displays. It was clear that a lot of thought and planning went into them all





Bible Talk Suppers

This will be the last BTS in 2025. We will meet at 5 pm on 23 November (4th Sunday) at the church lounge on Hinemoa Street. We will reflect on 2025 and celebrate this faith journey together. All are welcome.

Bible Talk Suppers with Bible 52 November reading plan

Week 1 (week 37/52) – Matthew 28

Additional Readings – Romans 12, 1 Corinthians 15:6, 2 Corinthians 3:18
Memory verse: Matthew 28:19-20

Week 2 (38/52) – Acts 1

Additional readings – Genesis 11:1-9, Romans 6:11-14
Memory verse: Acts 1:9

Week 3 (39/52) – Acts 2

Additional readings – Psalm 16:8-11, Joel 2:28-32
Memory verse: Acts 2:44

Week 4 (40/52) – Acts 13

Additional readings – Isaiah 49, Galatians 3:10-14
Memory verse: Acts 13:38



A memorial to Ian and Lesley Gray by Pat Reid

Recently the NZ Herald printed the Death Notice for Ian Gray. He was a few weeks short of 101 years old and was living in the Tamahere Retirement Village. The notice, written by his daughter Alison reads:

GRAY, Ian Lundie,

9 November 1924 – 29 September 2025

Peace at last.

Ian's soulmate Lesley left him in 2009 and he leaves 3 children, 8 grandchildren and 10 great grandchildren.

Onesua Presbyterian Collage, Vanuatu, Northshore Teachers College, Colwill School, Sailing, Pokeno, Swedish Valhunds, Agility and Working Dogs were their life. A celebration will be held in Hamilton on 1st November. Please contact for more details grayalison18@gmail.com Woolerton Funeral Home FDANZ.

Ian and Lesley were members of St Aidans for 27 years, living on the North Shore from 1969 and building their house in Sylvan Avenue from that time. They were most interesting people as the above summary of their lives suggests.

Ian was a son of Rev. James (Jim) L Gray and his wife Marion, who were missionaries in India. Ian had been born in India. Marion's last years were spent living in Lady Allum Home and attending St Aidans with Ian and Lesley.



Left: Ian and Lesley Gray on their wedding day, 22 November 1947

Above: in 2008

Ian and Lesley followed his parents' lead by becoming Missionaries in Vanuatu. Ian was the first principal of Onesua Presbyterian High School, Vanuatu or the New Hebrides as it was then known before Independence. Ian was the most practical person. First he had to build the school with the assistance of the Islanders. Coral had to be burnt to make lime which was mixed with sand to make plaster for the walls. Ian and Lesley and their family lived in a bamboo house of 3 small rooms while their house was being built by NZ builders Barry Pilkinton and David Murray. The house was paid for by the Presbyterian Church of New Zealand. They left NZ for Vanuatu with 3 small daughters, one of whom died tragically at Onesua, and their two sons were born during the years there.

Many years later they were to return to Vanuatu by sea in their 31 foot long Davidson yacht Sequel. Ian had the fiberglass hull and deck built and he completed building the inside using timber from 5 elm trees on their Sylvan Road section. They had had the trees sawn down before their house was built and stored it in readiness to build two yachts in later years, Sequel being the second yacht they built this way. The first was a 22 foot Wright Variant design called Vibrant. Lesley retired from school teaching and spent many months preparing for their ocean voyage on Sequel.

In his retirement Ian typically took on a new interest, as always with Lesley's support and assistance. They imported 2 Swedish Vallhunds and became the first breeders of Swedish Vallhunds in New Zealand. With typical Gray humour one of their young relatives remarked that they were going to the dogs. They took up Dog Obedience and then Agility with many years associated with the North Shore Obedience Club. DATA was formed – Dog Agility Training Association. Later a national association was formed, National Agility Link Association. The Grays continued being actively involved in all of these with life membership.



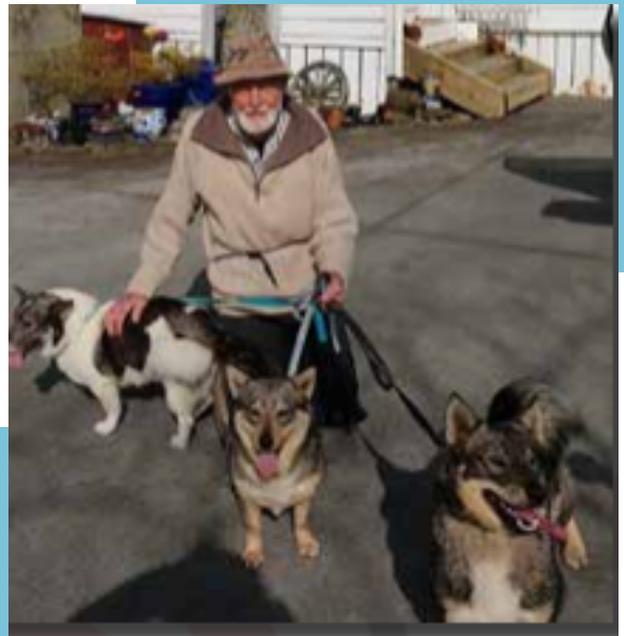
Pacific Manuscripts Bureau

PMB PHOTO 98 07

At the same time as the Grays were extremely busy with Dog Agility Training they remained very active members of St Aidans. Lesley, a most talented singer and member of the Albyn Singers, formed the St Aidans Choir and continued directing it for 25 years, providing a weekly Sunday anthem. Ian was an elder and his practical expertise was much valued as well as their liberal and open-minded Christian beliefs.

It was a sudden shock to the Parish Council when Ian and Lesley announced that they were buying a lifestyle property at Pokeno in 1997. They named this property Lochwinnoch after the town in Scotland where Ian's father was born. Always innovative and lateral thinkers, the Grays first of all developed an emu flock and in time carried out a scientifically controlled research programme into feeding emus under the Ruakura Research Station. For several reasons the emu farming never developed effectively.

However they had been developing the farm and building sheep fences and sheep yards so that they could continue working their Heading Sheep Dogs which had been added to the menagerie with the Swedish Vallhunds. They had also developed part of the property around a substantial stream and swamp area. With judicious draining and dredging they formed two large ponds, planted native trees and formed a bird sanctuary. This was placed into a Covenant of the Queen Elizabeth II Trust for perpetuity. Colin and I have taken our grandchildren through the reserve on the delightful walking track, complete with painted signs, a New Hebrides dance gong carved by Ian from an elm tree limb, a carved slab of swamp totara carved by a young pupil at Waiuku College and a seat donated by the Swedish Vallhund Club. The property is named Ngahere Kahu o Te Wai, Forest Cloak of the Waters , Gray's Walk.



Ian and Lesley's love of sailing continued with fishing expeditions upon the Firth of Thames. They had sold the keeler some years before with the advent of the dogs but while living at Pokeno they bought a fiberglass Sunburst. A write-up in the Franklin County news describes their rescue after an unfortunate capsizing. Their lives were undoubtedly saved by two Kaiiua people who had noticed them departing. They made a sizable donation and gave the Sunburst to the Kaiiua Sea Scouts in gratitude.

After Lesley's death in 2008 Ian continued his dog trials and promoting Dog Agility in New Zealand. He was able to take his two dogs with him firstly to the flat he moved to behind his daughter Alison's Hamilton house and then to his cottage in the Tamahere Eventide Home. He continued training them at two of his friends' properties.

St Aidan's folk were thrilled to be invited to Ian's 90th birthday party at Tamihere in 2014. We were transported in the bus that Ian hired and had driven from the North Shore. It was a joyous occasion and a further surprise was the launching that day of Ian's book "We Travel together, Lesley and Ian's Journey." You may borrow this book from me if you wish. It is a fascinating read.

The celebration of Ian's life will be held in Hamilton on Saturday 1st November. The address for the live stream/recording from his daughter Alison is below.

<https://www.hamiltonfuneralhome.co.nz/funerals/?funeral=5aTxJ>

There is a Tribute page at this address and the recording will be available afterwards.



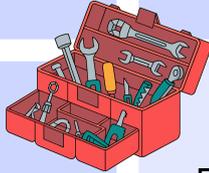
What's happening at OCC this month?

**Saturday
1 November**

Repair Cafe
172 Hlnemoa

**Sunday 2
November**

Eco Kids:
Eco Costume Party



**Friday 7th
November**

Parish Lunch
12-2pm
Birkenhead RSA

**Sunday 9th
November**

AGM after Sunday
Service

**Sunday 16th
November**

Community
Breakfast:
Tabitha Becroft
on Community
Led Urban Bush
Restoration

**Friday 21st
November**

Mad Hatter's
Quiz Night



**Sunday 23
November**

5pm
Bible Talk
Suppers

**Sunday 23
November**

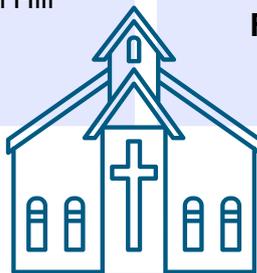
Communion Service

30 November

Combined Service
at Zion Hill

**Mondays
Tuesdays
Thursdays
Fridays**

Coffee & Games
Mainly Music
Friendship Group
Embroidery Group



Gather your team!

Gather your teams for The Mad Hatter's Quiz Night ! Pick a theme and wear a hat. BYO drinks. It's going to be a fun night!



Mad Hatter's
QUIZ
Night

WEAR A HAT, WIN A PRIZE

FRIDAY 21ST NOVEMBER, 7PM
172 Hinemoa Street, Birkenhead

TICKETS
\$25 PP
\$5 Under 15s
\$150/table of 6

Gather your team for our annual fundraiser* quiz night. Tickets include the quiz, snacks & juice. BYO drinks. The winning team gets a Christmas hamper.

TO BOOK:
email sarah@onewacc.org.nz to or
phone 021 0919 7097

Onewa Christian Community
PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF AOTIAROA NEW ZEALAND

* 10% of proceeds go to De Paul House



KAIPĀTIKI Repair Cafés

REUSE ♥ REPAIR ♥ CONNECT

**Electrical - Sewing - Bike Repairs - Costume Jewellery -
General Repairs - CAB Advice and more!**

Sat 1st November

1.00-3.00pm

**Onewa Christian Community
172 Hinemoa St, Birkenhead**

**FREE!
Event**

**Onewa
Christian
Community**
MEMBER CHURCH OF ACHROA NEW ZEALAND

Kindly supported by

**Kaipātiki
Local Board**
Auckland Council

1st Saturday of the month, x1 venue per month - kaipatikirepaircafes@gmail.com

 **Bayview
Community
Centre**

 **Birkdale Beach Haven
Community
Project Inc**
We Belong Here | Nō Kōnei okei tōtau

 **Highbury House
Birkenhead's Community Centre**

 **GLENFIELD
Community Centre**



Eco Kids Event!

ECO COSTUME PARTY!



Sunday 2nd November 2025
Meet 9.30am @OCC,
172 Hinemoa Street



Come dressed as your favourite character and create your own **Eco costume accessories** from natural and recycled materials to take home!

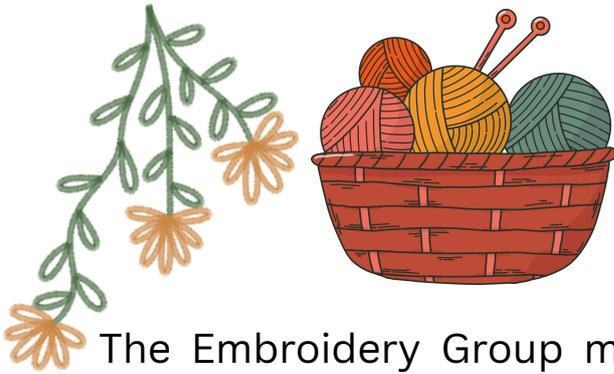
Enjoy a **Free drink**

PLUS Round 8 of our kids **Eco Photo Comp.** Win a \$30 Paper Plus Gift Card !

Register by emailing
sarah@onewacc.org.nz .
Parents need to attend.



www.onewacc.org.nz



Invitation to join the Embroidery Group

The Embroidery Group meets every Friday 9.30-12 noon during term time in the Lindisfarne Lounge at St Aidan's at 97 Onewa Road.

We would welcome any newcomers who are interested in stitching (embroidery or knitting) to join us. For enquiries contact: Helene Muller (h) 480 9146 or (m) 0211889853



The Pastoral Committee invite you to the

Parish Lunch

**7th November 2025, 12 Noon-2pm at the RSA
Tickets \$25 each**

Meet in the upstairs lounge. Go down in the lift to restaurant. 3 Choices:

- Fish & Chips
- Chicken dish
- Vegetarian

RSVP by Tuesday 4th
November to
barbarawesley21@gmail.com /
021 0825 6064
Pay by cash or Internet banking



Roster for the month – November 2025

November Roster

Date	Elder	Door Duty	Prayer	Reading	Morning Tea
2 nd November	Pauline Fish	Rosemarie Dawson	Pauline Fish	David Hansen	Barbara Wadams & Dale Kerr
9 th November	Rachel Hurr	Garry Pash	Rachel Hurr	Garry Pash	Lynn Carter & Barbara Westra
16 th November	Community Breakfast				
23 rd November	Karen Davies	Robin Baxter	Karen Davies	Robin Baxter	Robin Baxter & Elizabeth Wong
30 th November	Combined Service at Zion Hill				
Serving Elders for Communion	Cathy Fraser, Nan Inkson, Karen Davies, Pauline Fish				

Get in touch

Minister: Rev. Jin Sook Kim minister@onewacc.org.nz / Ph 021 0295 2589

Community Engagement Lead: Sarah Thorne community@onewacc.org.nz

Ph 021 0919 7097

Admin: Pauline Soo admin@onewacc.org.nz

Giving

BNZ account

Account name: ONEWA CHRISTIAN COMMUNITY

Account number: 02-0112-0168422-000

Something to share?

News and opinions for the newsletter always welcome:
please think about contributing for next month's edition.

E-mail all articles to Sarah (sarah@onewacc.org.nz)

by 25th of the month