

MAY 2026

OCC NEWSLETTER

Monthly newsletter of Onewa Christian Community



Minister's Message

Rev. Jin Sook is currently walking the Camino trail. Along the way she has met people walking for all sorts of reasons.

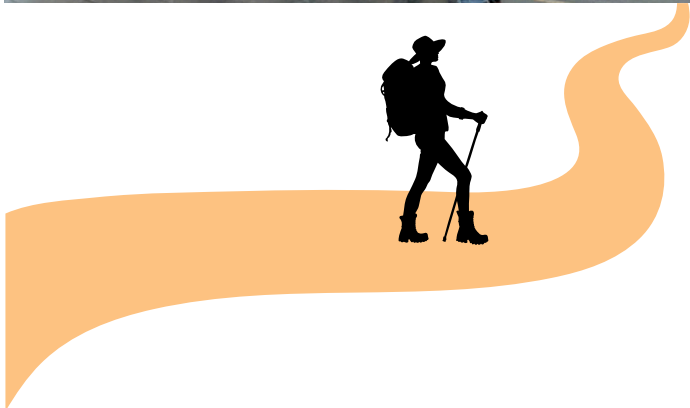
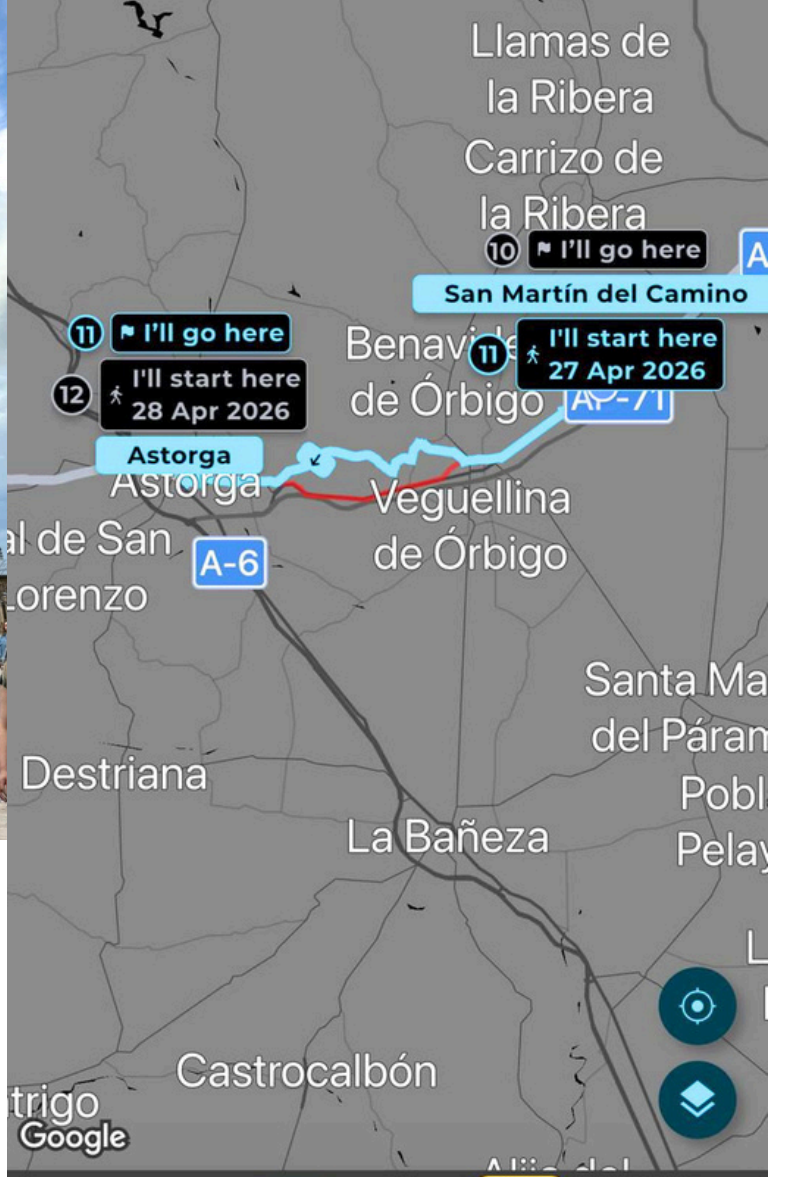
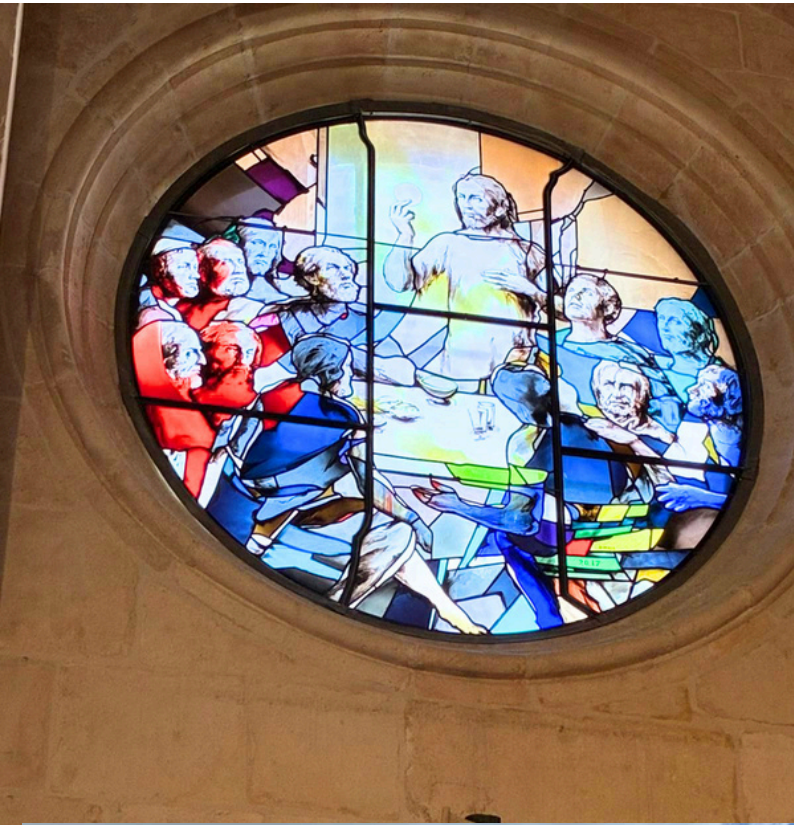
M from Italy was wrestling with his own inner struggles (alcoholism), hoping to find some answer for his life. One morning, while others gathered for breakfast, he quietly sat with a glass of beer already in hand.

Y from Korea was discerning whether to change her career. She had been a K-pop lyricist, living a deeply creative life, yet now stood at a crossroad.

There were many others too - some walking alone, others in groups - each carrying their own stories, questions and hopes.

As she journeys alongside them, she has found herself praying that each one would discover what they were truly seeking.

There are photos on the next page showing glimpses of Rev. Jin Sook's journey.



THIS SUNDAY!

BOX BUILDERS WANTED!

COME BUILD, CREATE & EXPLORE!



SUNDAY 3 MAY
9.30AM
172 HINEMOA ST
BIRKENHEAD

Join us for an epic morning of forts, towers & imagination using recycled materials ♻️! Let's reuse, repurpose and play!

Please register by emailing sarah@onewacc.org.nz



This issue features the second in a series of stories about our congregation entitled **PEOPLE OF OCC**

A Life Well Lived in Faith and Community: Barbara Wadams

Anyone who has attended our church will likely have met Barbara Wadams. You'll know her not just for the many roles she's held over the years, but for her steady presence, practical help, and deep commitment to our community.

Barbara was born in Waiuku, the third of four children (her older sister is Pat Reid). She spent much of her childhood in Karaka and Dargaville where her father was a school principal. Life was simple, busy, and full of outdoor adventure. "I thought I was deprived at the time," she laughs, "no playgrounds or swings. Just trees to climb, eggs to collect, and shouting competitions with my brothers." Looking back now, she describes it as a very happy childhood.



The church was always part of life. It was right next door growing up, so Sunday school, picnics, and church activities were just what you did. One memory that has stuck with her all these years is the Sunday school picnic, especially the ice cream arriving in heavy canvas bags. "That was such a treat!"

As a teenager, she was already busy baking (even if the last batch often got burnt while she got distracted playing outside!) and later trained as a teacher at Ardmore. Weekends home from Ardmore involved mowing lawns, helping at home, sewing her own clothes, practising the organ and keeping up with study. It's a testament to Barbara's caring nature that she still feels bad for not bringing other teaching students home with her but looking back now she sees that she would've been too busy to entertain them.

And then there's the story of how she met her husband John, one she still tells with a smile.

Barbara wasn't particularly keen on going out dancing, but a cousin finally convinced her to join a group heading to the Crystal Palace dance hall. "There was

no alcohol in those days,” she says, “just orange cordial!” Most of the men she danced with made jokes about her being from Manurewa and how she must be blinded by the lights of the big city; until John came along.

John had already made the mistake earlier that night of asking a seated girl to dance, only to discover that she was taller than him when she stood up. So next time, he played it safe and asked a standing Barbara seeing that she was the shortest in the group!

They danced a few times, and then he invited her out for supper. She hesitated, mostly because she was worried about how she’d get home, but agreed anyway. “That’s what you did in those days, went out for supper. It was probably mushrooms on toast or something like that,” she says. John took her back home that night, and that was the beginning of it all. They married three years later.

Marriage, motherhood, and family life brought both joy and challenge. Julia was born followed by Kylie who was born with complex needs. In those early days, Barbara’s life became focused on caring for Kylie, doing therapy exercises, feeding her, and celebrating every small step forward. “When she rolled over, it was a miracle,” she remembers. Although Kylie needed a lot of extra time, John and Julia were just as important. Life was full and demanding, but always grounded in love.

Kylie went on to bring a lot of joy, especially through her love of dance. From the moment she saw a ballet class as a teenager, she was hooked. She danced for years and even became a bit of a star at talent competitions: while others sang, she performed full dance routines in costume and almost always won.





Going to church in the first few years of Julia's life had simply involved going to the service alone and often to the evening service. One day her mother said that Julia should attend Sunday School. Barbara agreed and one day soon after, Barbara had a realisation during the service. "I just thought, this is where I'm meant to be."

From there, she got involved and never really stopped.

Over the years, she's done just about everything, helping out our leading Sunday school, Girls' Brigade, Christmas productions, the op shop, Buzzy Bees, mainly music and multiple church committees. She spent years as secretary of the pastoral committee, later joined the resource committee, and eventually became an elder and now serves on church council.

She also helped run a homework club at the Birkdale church with Jenny Martin, picking up local children after school, feeding them, and helping them with reading and schoolwork. "We didn't have much and quite often it was just the two of us, but we made it work," she says.

Barbara's faith has been constant through some very difficult times, including the loss of her husband and later Kylie. "Of course I asked 'why me?'" she says honestly. "But I've always been trusting of God."

Even now, her motivation is simple and clear: to be part of the church community and to help where she can. "It's who I am," she says. "I just believe I'm meant to help people."

And that's exactly what she's done; quietly, faithfully, and consistently and for over fifty years.

We're very lucky to have her.

Volunteering with Pest Free Kaipātiki

by Edmund Sharrock

I been volunteering with Pest Free Kaipātiki for many years on and off but this year I decided to be more actively involved with them. I got involved with a reserve. they all knew me - happy days.

There was night walk they were hosting and they wanted me to be guide. I had never guided a whole group before I had done night walks before. I was more than keen to do so.

On the day was very nervous about how everything should go would there be anything to see and what would I talk about. On that day I was blessed with gift of gab and with many of God's creatures. We got to see spiders, fish ,centipede, crickets, Ground Weta, Cave and Tree Wetas. There was much discussion of plants Puri, Kahikatea, Kawa Kawa, Manuka and Kanuka. I hope that walk encouraged the people to see beauty of the night and inspire to help to maintain the little slice of heaven. (If you'd like to volunteer, have a look at the poster on the opposite page for more information).

Onewa Youth

Onewa Youth meets at 172 Hinemoa Street on Tuesdays at 5pm during term time.

The group seeks to build connection and faith together in a safe, friendly and open environment.. If you know a young person who might be keen to join the group, get in touch with Sarah on sarah@onewacc.org.nz





KAURI GLEN RESERVE

UPCOMING EVENTS *Calling for volunteers!*

MONTHLY RESERVE MEET UPS
Every last Sat of the month, 3 - 5pm

We meet monthly for events, working bees and more. Sign up to the Kauri Glen Reserve mailing list to receive updates!

- KAURI DIEBACK TRAINING** 2 May, 10 - 12pm
- PLANTING IN KAURI GLEN** 27 June, 3 - 5pm

Don't miss this chance to join in for a planting in Kauri Glen. Kauri Dieback training is mandatory for participation to keep our kauri trees safe.

LOOKING FOR TRAPPERS!

Love walking through the bush? Want to help keep our forests healthy by keeping pest number low? Join us as a trapper in Kauri Glen! All training provided. Kauri Dieback training is mandatory.



Start your Sunday with us!



FREE!

Community Breakfast

All Welcome

Sunday 17th May

9.30am



**172 Hinemoa St,
Birkenhead**

SPEAKER

Ilan Blumberg

from Alt Jewish Voices

FAMILY GAME & PIZZA NIGHT

FRIDAY 17 JULY 5 PM

172 HINEMOA ST, BIRKENHEAD

Onewa
Christian
Community
NEW ZEALAND SOCIETY OF CHRISTIAN WORSHIP

Admission: \$10/person;
\$30/family of 4

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

BIBLE TALK SUPPERS

Meet on Every 4th Sunday
5pm at church



May Roster

Date	Elder	Door Duty	Prayer	Reading	Morning Tea
Sunday 3rd May	Barbara Wesley	Robin Baxter	Barbara Wesley	Robin Baxter	Barbara Wadams/ <u>Robin Baxter</u>
10 th May	Jocelyn C	Rosemarie D	Jocelyn C	David Hansen	Elizabeth W/ Linda <u>Buckthought</u>
17 th May	Community Breakfast				
24 th May	Mary Boyd	Jocelyn C	Mary Boyd	Jocelyn C	Jocelyn C/Barbara Westra
31 st May	Nan Inkson	Katie Sholley	Nan Inkson	Katie Sholley	Barbara Wesley/Robin Baxter
Serving elders: J Collinge, Robin Baxter, Barbara Wadams and Rachel Hurr.					

The Friday 31st May service will be at OCC, 172 Hinemoa Street

Contact us

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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

