

Listening Circles

“LISTENING CIRCLES”

Two weeks ago we announced that we were making two invitations to the congregation...
First...Invitation to provide Hosts and support Team
Second...invitation to everyone to be part of a Listening Circle

PURPOSE...To identify our longer term Missional Goals that may lead to answers about the future of the Building and Long Term Financial Strength of the Church.

Good News...as of today we have 13 Hosts identified...

- **We are still looking for another 4 Hosts.**
- **We also need 2 more people to attend meetings to record on a Laptop.**
- **We would appreciate your help with these, please.**

GOALS...The Four Circle Process: provides opportunity for all voices to be heard in order for the gathered wisdom to identify mission and next steps.

The process creates a culture that is safe and respectful for people to share their wisdom and creativity, to enhance the vision that longs to emerge within the community. There will be a sense of “buy-in” by providing significant opportunity for people in the congregation to feel that their wisdom has been combined with the wisdom of others in regard to the future direction of the church.

FIRST PROCESS: LISTENING CIRCLES...Listening Circles create opportunity for Significant Conversations in which we listen deeply to each other, to the wisdom within ourselves, to the nudges and guidance of Spirit for the purpose of allowing future possibilities to emerge.

CIRCLE MEETINGS...are held in homes and consist of up to 9 people plus the facilitation team of three. Each meeting lasts 2 hours with arrival 15 minutes ahead. There are 18 Circles scheduled in mornings, afternoons, evenings and weekends.

We are hoping that everyone in the congregation will be able to attend a circle. We really want to hear the different voices that echo through RHUC and share the wisdom!

Invitation were sent out by email last week and also included in with the order of service on Sunday. It includes a list of dates, times and hosts (where known). **Please indicate on the scheduled slots your #1, #2 preference. Hand in your completed form on Sunday to either Joanne or email to Deb Fratin in the Office.** Please let us know if you have any questions.

Joanne Scofield jscofield@rogers.com & Terry Davies terry.t.davies@gmail.com

WORSHIPPING TOGETHER

Worship

April 30th Third Sunday of Easter

Reading: Acts 7:51-60 Message: "Open or Closed" by Rev. James Ravenscroft

April 17th to June 4th The Easter Season

In these fifty days we celebrate the resurrection as it is lived out in the church as a whole and our lives.

Chancel Choir Concert

'Canadian Choral Celebration' Celebrating Canada's 150th year! Sunday, May 7, 2017 @ 7:00 p. m.

Tickets can be purchased from a choir member or after church in Centennial Hall:

Adult: \$20 Senior/Student: \$15 Family: \$50

Sample Page

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James Ravenscroft, Minister: james@rhuc.org ext. 3 Barry Peters, Music Director: barrypeters.music@gmail.com ext. 4

Vanessa Armstrong, Coordinator, Sunday Morning Programmes for Children & Youth

Joanne Scofield, Coordinator, Sunday Morning Programmes for Youth

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ENGAGING, CHALLENGING & GROWING OUR FAITH

Thank you!

The UCW would like to thank everyone who helped to make the Spring lunch a success - from the pastry making to the serving and those who bought tickets and gave donations, we really appreciate it!

UCW

On **Wednesday, May 3** when we meet in the **Parlour at 9:30 a.m.**, our speaker will be **Ward 4 Councillor, David West**. He will be informing us about plans for the Civic Precinct Project at the South-West corner of Major Mackenzie and Yonge Street. Please join us for this morning of worship, learning and fellowship.

Camp Canoe Wish List!

The camp would like donations of pencils, paints, elastic bands, embroidery thread, coloured paper, clean used margarine and yogurt containers, plastic 500ml peanut butter jars with screw top lids and paper towel rolls. These items can be left at the Church on **June 18th** **But NOT BEFORE AS WE HAVE NO SPACE TO STORE THEM**. For more information please call June Blanchette 905-780-0048"

UCW June day trip

Date: Wednesday, June 7th, 2017 **Price:** \$60.00 **Leaving:** Barrows Arena (as usual) **Time:** Leaving at 8:30 a.m.

To: Travel to Niagara Parkway with stops along the way to Niagara-on-the Lake

Lunch: Grace United Church put on by their UCW ladies.

Activities:

- Shopping in the lovely historic Niagara-on-the-Lake.
- We will end our trip at Southbrook Winery for a wine tasting of three wines in the Grand Room, including an explanation of each wine, and also information about the excellent work being done in Organic farming and wine making. This is a chance to "catch up" with Bill and the family.
- If not too late in the season, we may see some of the new lambs!
- There will also be an opportunity to shop in the Southbrook Wine Shop.

Tickets will be available after Church or contact Bev Blake 905-780-6019 blakeb@rogers.com

Men's Breakfast

Richmond Hill United Church next Men's Breakfast will be on **Saturday, May 6, 2017**. Coffee and tea will be served at 8:15am, with breakfast in the gym at 8:30 prepared by our UCW friends. After breakfast all members of our church are invited to the parlor for a talk by James Ravenscroft about "The challenging relationship between Christian Faith and Indigenous Culture." Our esteemed minister will share with us his experiences and insights during his time in ministry in Northern Manitoba.

New participants are always welcome. The Men's Breakfasts is a time of fellowship and camaraderie. Feel free to contact us if you're interested in more information about it. Cost is \$10 / person, with net proceeds to the UCW.

Please RSVP to Harry Ramsaran (hramsaran@rogers.com 905 508 4758) by Thursday, May 4. Thank you!

Looking ahead: Future dates for 2017 are September 2, October 7 November 4, December 2nd.

RHUC Book Club

We have been invited by the Aurora Library to take part in the **OneBook/OneAurora** program this spring and fall. I will be picking up and distributing copies of our book for **May 31st** at the April meeting. The novel is **Natural Order by Brian Francis** and we are welcome to take part in an author visit in Aurora this coming fall. (Saturday, October 21 at 2 p.m. at the Aurora Library - free tickets available starting August 1st) *In the novel, author Brian Francis inhabits the mind of an elderly woman who remembers her life in episodes dealing with her son's sexuality and the constraints of small-town society in the '50s and '60s. Key to the narrative is a compelling commentary on how we treat seniors in our society. Natural Order is beautifully written, serious while at the same time, really funny.*

For more details, please speak to the group's facilitator, Sandra Loughton, or call the church office at 905.884.1301. Hope you can join us. Newcomers are always welcome!

Bible Study

James will be facilitating a Thursday evening bible study sessions from **6:15 – 7:15 PM** in the chapel. We will begin by looking at the scripture readings for the upcoming Sunday, looking at their historical and cultural contexts and the wisdom they can offer us.

Shalom Seekers

Shalom Seekers invite you to join them at 9:30am in the chapel on Monday morning for a discussion about Diana Butler-Bass's book "Christianity for the Rest of Us." We will be focussing on chapter 9 and Butler-Bass's findings that the most vital mainline churches have re-discovered the practice of 'testimony'. However, this is not 'testimony' as it has been known in the past. If you are curious, please join us for an interesting morning with coffee and lively conversation. For more information, please speak to Dawn Moon, Sandra Loughton or Peg Hiscoke.

H.A.I.R.

H.A.I.R. On **Monday, April 24**, we begin a new DVD study, "Painting the Stars – science, religion and an evolving faith" – part of the Living the Questions series. This 7 week study will finish on Monday, June 12 (excluding Victoria Day). Come join in the discussion at 7:00 pm in the chapel.

Nurturing our Spirituality

On the first Tuesday of the month, **Joanne Scofield** will be offering **Yoga and Meditation** - a yoga practice that will use postures and breathing to bring the body and mind to a place of relaxation and stillness for meditation. The next Yoga and Meditation will be on **Tuesday, May 2nd from 7:00 – 8:00 in the Chapel.**

Special Occasions

Writing to the church in Rome, the apostle Paul urged them: "rejoice with those who rejoice, weep with those who weep". While we include in our prayers, the names of people who are ill or mourning, we are not always aware of the special occasions which give rise to rejoicing. This column is an effort to rectify that situation. Don't hesitate to add any special occasions you know about.

On **Sunday April 30th**, we are holding a send-off celebration for Ian Wilgus after the service in Centennial Hall. Ian will be flying to Regina on May 6th to participate in the United Church Explorer's Program, a 3 month program which allows young adults to explore ministry as a vocation. Ian will be working (or 'has been partnered') with Rev. Cameron Fraser at Knox-Metropolitan United Church and will have experiences in Worship Leadership, Pastoral Care, Presbytery, Outreach, and Forming Community Connections, including work with the indigenous communities in the area. Ian is looking forward to this rich and exciting experience (or 'opportunity')

Ian will post regular updates on RHUC Online, and is reachable by email at ianwilgus@rogers.com. The members of Ian's Home Committee are: Mark Baker, Susan Greene, Anne Leyton-Brown, Lyn May, DJ McCready, and Joanne Scofield.

HOSPITALITY & WORKING FOR JUSTICE

Minute for Mission *Called to be the Church*

Our gifts for Mission & Service support safe spaces for children. Let us hear the story of one such place, Camp Caterpillar on Candle Lake, Saskatchewan. Fran Forsberg shares her experience. "Being a mom of three gender-variant children I was afraid to give my children the experience of camp. I was afraid that my children would be singled out as weird, bullied by staff and other children for the simple fact that they do not fit into the gender norm. "I asked around, and after being refused twice, I was told by the Rev. David Kim-Cragg about Camp Tapawingo. A member of the board took my request to the board the following week. One week later not only did I get a resounding YES, I also received the news that Alison Starks (A.J.), a Director for Camp FYrefly, had agreed to run the camp. "I met with A.J. Both of us were very excited at the prospect of this camp for children ages 7–13 who happen to be transgender and extended the invitation to their siblings as well. Twenty-two children, transgender, two-spirit, and cis-gender, arrived at Camp Caterpillar. "They formed friendships. They were assured that they were safe, accepted, and valued for their authentic selves. These young humans continue to support each other through e-mails and texts. "I speak for all the parents; we are thankful for A.J. and her staff, who are LGBTQ+. I read one comment from a boy who is 11 and trans: 'I had the best time of my life at camp!'" We sing thanksgiving for LGBTQ+ camps like Camp Caterpillar! If Mission & Service is already a regular part of your giving, thank you so much! If you have not given for Mission & Service, please join me in making Mission & Service a regular part of your life of faith. In all our Mission & Service giving, with a willing heart, we sing thanksgiving to God!

CREATING AND NURTURING COMMUNITY

RHUC Quilters

Next sewing bee will be **Saturday May 13th at 12:30 in the Garden Room**. We should have a whole village by then! Sewers and non-sewers welcome.

Annual RHUC Golf Fun Day!

The Saturday after the long weekend, **May 27th at Bathurst Glen Golf Club** with tee times [between noon and 1 p.m.](#) The cost is only \$55 including the BBQ after play. This is a scramble event that allows all levels to play; even those that don't! Please save the date and let George Moon (georgemoon@gmail.com) know if you want to be part of the exciting day!

Blog post

Lent and Easter Services at RHUC <https://rhucblog.wordpress.com/2017/03/09/len-and-easter-services-and-events-at-richmond-hill-united-church/>

Spiritual Practices for Lent <https://rhucblog.wordpress.com/2017/03/08/spiritual-practices-for-lent/>

RHUC Bookclub March 2017 <https://rhucblog.wordpress.com/2017/03/03/rhuc-book-club-under-the-visible-life-march-22-2017/>

The Hop <https://rhucblog.wordpress.com/2017/03/02/the-hop/>

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