

This week at a glance

Sunday, April 8

10:30 a.m. Service – Sanctuary
12:00 p.m. Youth Choir practice – Common room

Monday, April 9

9:30 a.m. Shalom Seekers – Chapel
7:00 p.m. H.A.I.R. – Chapel
7:00 p.m. Cubs - gym

Tuesday, April 10

7:00 p.m. Tai Chi – Garden room
7:00 p.m. Beavers – gym

Wednesday, April 11

7:00 p.m. Council
7:00 p.m. Scouts/Venturers – gym

Thursday, April 12

6:15 p.m. Bible Study - Chapel
7:30 p.m. Chancel Choir – Common Room

Saturday, April 14

3:30 p.m. Djembe drumming –Garden Room

WORSHIPPING TOGETHER

Worship

Sunday, April 8: The RHUC Djembe drummers will be drumming prior to the start of the service.

As we conclude the first week of Easter, we pick up where we left off from last Sunday's reading. In John 20:19-31 we hear of two appearances of the Risen Christ, set a week apart. An interesting part of this reading is the emphasis on the Risen One as having physical presence. In "Blessed Body" James will explore the significance of this point and the importance of seeing our own bodies as both good and blessed.

Sunday, April 15: As we continue celebrating the fifty days of the Easter season, we listen to a reading from John 21:1-19, the final resurrection appearance we hear about in John. On this day we will bless the prayer shawls that were knitted during Lent.

Minister's Message

The chocolates may be marked clearance in the stores but Easter is just beginning not ending. We fasted for forty days and now we embark on a fifty feast until Pentecost. This week of weeks is like one very long Sunday, a celebration of what it means to share in the resurrection, to live as people with hearts renewed and spirits restored. Traditionally this was a special time for those who were baptized on Easter Sunday (or the evening before) as they reflect on their experience of being welcomed fully into the church, the Body of Christ. This season is an opportunity for all of us to do the same. What does it really mean for you to be a follower of Jesus? What does it mean for you to share in his life through baptism? What is the significance for you of being spiritually fed at the table, reminded time and again of what it means to share in divine love in every aspect of our lives? What does it mean for you to share the Spirit's breath and so to be sent out to make visible in the world the saving love and restorative justice of God's kingdom? We get to feast on these questions for fifty days! The Easter bunny may have finished the deliveries of eggs but the party is just getting started.

Centering Prayer

Each Thursday afternoon James attends a Contemplative Prayer Group in Newmarket for Centering Prayer and conversation. The group meets from 3:30 to 5:00 pm in the Rectory at St. Paul's Anglican Church. For the next several weeks, the group will be viewing the DVD **The Eternal Now – and how to be there** as an educational component to their regular 20 minute practice of silent prayer. Father Thomas Keating and Father Richard Rohr explore aspects of accessing the "sacrament of the present moment" through Centering Prayer. If you are interested in attending, James would be happy for the company on the drive there and back again. He leaves at 2:50

Volunteers needed

Seeking Volunteers to Lead Acknowledgements of the Land: Each Sunday as part of worship, we offer a word of gratitude for the land and acknowledge the local First Nations whose traditional territory we are in. We also affirm that we come together in a safe and inclusive space. Beginning this Sunday, this portion of the service will be led by lay volunteers. If you are interested in helping with this portion of the service, speak with James or a member of the Living into Right Relations Team (they will be leading this portion initially). James and LIRR members are available to offer help in how to write the welcome and acknowledgement.

Thank you!

Each time we celebrate communion, we do so knowing that the way we receive the elements has changed over the years. For many years, we stayed in the pew and received the tray from an Elder, each taking and then passing along the row, first the silver bread trays with little squares of white bread, and then the juice, from trays with a silver grid holding little glasses. Each was consumed separately, but as a community. We always knew we were finished as people put their glass in the holders on the back of each pew, making a "clunk" sound. But before those years, when our sanctuary was built in 1880, we Methodist worshippers came to the front and knelt along the communion railing which curved around the dais (platform where pulpit stands). We received in kneeling reverence at the symbolic "table", the rail's surface, just as the disciples did sitting at the table with Jesus at the Last Supper. The rail is long gone but someone in their wisdom and vision kept the railing ends and they were made into flower stands. After years of use, the stain had lost its shine and some of the decorative woodwork broke off and went missing, looking quite unpleasant, and they were put aside and not used.

We are grateful that Ken Dunn has repaired and refurbished these flower stands, one in time for Christmas and the other for Easter. They are beautiful - do take a closer look and at the photo of the railing, and notice the oval cut in each, showing where the rail had been attached. Our heartfelt thanks to Ken for his hours of craftsmanship and loving care in making this part of our history worthy of being used again; it was beautiful to see the pots of daffodils in the stands for Easter.

HOSPITALITY & WORKING FOR JUSTICE

Hands & Hearts for Africa

MEETING on Sunday, April 8: There will be a meeting after the service of Hands and Hearts for Africa in the office across from the chapel. We will be watching a 10th anniversary DVD from the Stephen Lewis Foundation called Celebrate and Re-Dedicate. We will also be sharing the latest news about the Grandmother Gathering in Tanzania--another sign of resilience in Africa. Please speak to Peg Hiscoke or Donna Harrison for more information. Newcomers are very welcome.

Minute for Mission *Called to be the Church*

Our gifts for Mission & Service support health and peace and the breaking down of barriers to peace. In the Holy Land, bringing ordinary Israelis and Palestinians peacefully together is extremely difficult in such a tense and violent environment. But the International Christian Committee in Israel (ICCI) does just that. Along with Palestinian girls' empowerment programs in Arab towns in Acre, the ICCI brings Palestinians and Israelis together through a variety of programs, from academic conferences to supporting inter-ethnic organ donation. As Hussam Elias, ICCI's Executive Secretary, says, "Arabs and Jews are not 'doomed' to live together but should live together." The medical expenses related to organ donation in Israel are covered by the state; the ICCI raises awareness and organizes conferences to break down the social barriers and conflicting ideas about organ transplants that have been in place across cultures. Often, people only want to donate within their own ethnicity. As a result of the support of the ICCI and other organizations, Israeli and Palestinian families come together in very unique, life-giving situations. One Arab youth was killed in a car accident, and his family donated his heart to a Jewish person; when the boy's mother met the recipient, they hugged, and she said it felt like she was hugging her son. In another case, a Jewish family donated the liver of a relative to a young Arab man. When he got married, he invited his donor's family, and the wedding photos show them all together as one big family. As a piece of anonymous street art in the city of Haifa says, "This is for the organ donors, reminding us all that we won't be strangers for long."

ENGAGING, CHALLENGING & GROWING OUR FAITH

Men's Breakfast

The next Men's Breakfast will be on **Saturday, April 7th, 2018**. Coffee and tea will be served at 8:15am, with breakfast in the gym at 8:30 prepared by our UCW friends. New participants are always welcome. The Men's Breakfasts are 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 or 905 508 4758) by Thursday, April 5th. Thank you!

"After breakfast, Carl MacMillan will talk about "BECOMING HUMAN: ONE MAN'S JOURNEY IN L'ARCHE". Carl has been the Community Leader at L'Arche Daybreak in Richmond Hill since 2005. Founded in 1969, L'Arche Daybreak is the second L'Arche community in the world and the first in North America. Since the L'Arche community was started by Jean Vanier in France in 1964, it has become an international movement of over 150 communities in 40 countries around the world. Carl will share his personal journey of "becoming human" with L'Arche as backdrop for the past 30 years. He will invite discussion about role models, mentoring, and the quest for belonging, intimacy, and transformation."

Looking ahead: Future dates for 2018 are May 12, September 8

RHUC Book club

Please join the RHUC Book Club on **Wednesday, April 25th** to discuss the novel (historical fiction) entitled *The Lost Diaries of Susanna Moodie* by Cecily Ross. There are two copies available at both the Richmond Hill and Aurora libraries, as well as three copies and one e-book available at the Markham Public Library. As I mentioned at the last meeting, the e-book is on sale through Kobo for \$2.99, if you have an e-reader.

It is the 1830s, and despite their dreams, **Susanna** is woefully unprepared for life in the wilderness. **Susanna Moodie's** true story of hardship and survival in a log cabin deep in the bush is part of our national mythology [in Canada].

Please join us at 7 p.m. in the Chapel for a discussion about *The Lost Diaries of Susanna Moodie*. New members are warmly welcome. Speak to Sandra Loughton or call the church office for more details. (905.884.1301 Ext. 5)

Special Occasions

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. Please let us know to add any special occasions that are coming up.

United Church Women

Please hold the date for **Wednesday, June 13, 2018** for the annual UCW bus trip – heading East this year! Details to follow.

H.A.I.R.

The Monday evening study group will begin discussion of the book **THE GOD WE NEVER KNEW** by Marcus Borg on **Monday, March 12 from 7:00 - 8:30** in the chapel. Borg famously asked people who said they doubted the existence of God to tell him about the God they did not believe in, because chances are he did not believe in that kind of God either. In this book Borg reviews various understandings of God, and offers his interpretation of a way to reconcile faith in God with science, history, critical thought and reason. On March 12 we will discuss the introduction and chapter 1. All are welcome.

Bible Study

No need to have been before. Come once. Or every week. Or drop in every so often. We will look at the reading for the upcoming Sunday. See you in the chapel!

Shalom Seekers

Please join us on Monday, April 9th from 9:30 to 10:30 in the Chapel. For this session please read Chapter 4: Jesus, Our Model for Being Spirit-Filled from the book **Days of Awe & Wonder: How to Be a Christian in the 21st Century** by Marcus Borg.

Please speak to Dawn Moon, Peg Hiscoke or Sandra Loughton for more details about the book and the group. New members are always welcome to try us out!

UCW



UCW Spring Luncheon on Saturday, April 21 at 1:00 p.m.

Tickets for the UCW Spring Lunch are available from members of the UCW. The cost is \$20.00.

The UCW will be preparing for the Spring lunch on **Wednesday April 11th and 18th at 9:00am**. Anyone interested in helping is welcome to join us. For more information, please call June Blanchette at 905-780-0048

CREATING AND NURTURING COMMUNITY

The United Church Observer – Faith, Justice and Ethical Living

It is renewal and new subscription time! \$25 Please pay for your renewal / start your subscription by April 6, 2018.

'**The Observer** inspires readers with lifestyle articles and faith-based columns that help you live out your personal values and beliefs.'

RHUC Golf Tournament



The 20th annual RHUC golf fun day is **Saturday, May 26** at Bathurst Glen GC with tee times [starting at noon](#). Same scramble format as the last couple of decades and just a fun day! Anyone can win and skill is not a requirement - smile! All participants WILL have fun....

The cost is an astonishing \$55 per person including a BBQ and friendly banter after the golf. We have spots for 24 players so please sign up early.

To sign up, please let George Moon know you are coming at georgecmoon@gmail.com or in person.

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