

WORSHIPPING TOGETHER

Worship

April 9th Palm / Passion Sunday

10:30 a.m. From the triumph of Jesus' entry into Jerusalem to uncertainty as shadows gather.
Message: "" by James Ravenscroft. The Palm reading is Matthew 21:1-11 and the Passion reading is Matthew 26:14-26-66.

April 13th Maundy Thursday

7:00 p.m. Readings focusing on Jesus' last night with his disciples, and the sharing of communion.

April 14th Good Friday

10:30 a.m. A service with Youth and Chancel Choirs.

April 15th Holy Saturday

We may not gather in church but we pause with the disciples as they mourn Jesus' death. Many people fast and pray on this day.

April 16th Easter Sunday

10:30 a.m. "Alleluia!" The story of the resurrection and the celebration of communion.

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.

Minister's Message

The most important week of the Christian year is now upon us. On Sunday we mark Palm Sunday and enter into Holy Week. It's a profound week both spiritually and emotionally for many people. On Sunday we will hear not only the account of Jesus' entrance into Jerusalem with loud cries of "Hosanna" but we will hear texts associated with the next few days – Jesus' overturning the tables of merchants and moneychangers in the Temple, Jesus confronting Pharisees and other leaders, Judas choosing to betray him. Towards the end of the week we enter into what is traditionally known as the *Triduum* or Three Days as on Thursday we gather in the Upper Room to remember the Last Supper and "walk" to the Garden of Gethsemane as Jesus prepares to face his impending arrest, trial and death. We recall these the next day on Good Friday, mourn with his disciples on Saturday and then come back together on Sunday morning to encounter the empty tomb. These are not so much separate services but one long service during which we get to go home to eat and sleep and pray. I encourage you to come to all of the services if you can, as well as to pray at home on Saturday. This is a special time of year as we look to rise with Christ on Easter Sunday.

Easter flowers

The congregation is invited to make a donation for the purchase of Easter flowers and include a memorial/celebratory message in the Easter order of service. There will be a table in Centennial Hall after the service today where you will be able to leave your message and donation if you wish. The Sanctuary Committee

ENGAGING, CHALLENGING & GROWING OUR FAITH

Prayer Shaw knitting

We will be gathering to knit or crochet prayer shawls again this year during Lent. Finished shawls are given to people who are unwell, grieving, moving away, and also to celebrate a birth or other special occasion as a way of showing that we care and hope the warmth of the shawl will give comfort and joy. Anyone who would like to be part of this ministry is invited to come **Thursdays April 6 and 13 in the Chapel, 5:00 to 6:00**. If this time does not fit into your schedule, please contact Donna Smith 905-884-6307 to see about arranging another time.

RHUC Book Club

Please join us for our next meeting on Wednesday, **April 26** at 7 p.m. in the Chapel to discuss David Bergen's novel, **Leaving Tomorrow**. David Bergen is a Canadian author and he won the Giller Prize for an earlier novel, *The Age of Hope*, as well as other awards and honours.

"Leaving Tomorrow is a thoughtful, tender, often wry novel of growing up and falling in love.

In the small Alberta town of Tomorrow, young Arthur yearns for a larger life. His father loves horses and good books, while his mother follows practicality and her faith. Bev, his rough-edged brother, chooses action over thought. Arthur lives among them—intelligent, curious, romantic and at odds with his surroundings and his religion. His one ally is his adopted cousin, the fearless Isobel. Their mutual admiration for the land, literature, all things French and each other sustains Arthur."

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!

The UC Observer – renewal and new subscription time!

It is renewal and new subscription time! **Annual subscription cost: \$25/year. Due date: April 10th.** (11 monthly issues - the July/August summer issue is a combined one).

If you would like to renew or start a new subscription, payment by cheque for \$25, payable to Richmond Hill UC, can be put in the offering plate or brought to the office. Thank you!

United Church Women – Spring Luncheon



UCW Spring Luncheon on Saturday April 22nd at 1:00 p.m. A celebration of Canada's 150th Birthday! Ticket: \$20
Tickets are available in Centennial Hall after worship service.

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

This Monday, April 10, Shalom Seekers will be discussing Chapter 7: Healing~ Entering Shalom. If you would like to join us on Mondays, we promise a friendly place and lively discussion in the chapel from 9:30-11:30am. For more information, please speak to Sandra Loughton, Dawn Moon or Peg Hiscoke.

Women's Spirituality

This is a reminder that Women's Spirituality will gather **this Saturday April 8th in the Garden Room a 9:45 a.m.**
Program: Spiritual Practices to prepare for Holy Week. Hope you can join us!

H.A.I.R.

We will read and discuss the book **Faith versus Fact** by Jerry A. Coyne. The author argues that science and religion are incompatible. Come join the discussion at **7:00 p.m. in the chapel**. Copies are available from Deb in the church office for \$20.00, or pay what you can. It is an easy read and written for the layperson.
April 3 - Chapter 5: Why Does It Matter? (39 pp.)

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 Monday April 3rd, several of us went to Living Waters Presbyterial meeting in Stroud. **June Blanchette** has led our UCW for a number of years and at this meeting was installed as the **President of UCW - Living Waters Presbytery**. We wish June well in her new roll as President. June is also a member of Toronto Conference UCW. Congratulations!

HOSPITALITY & WORKING FOR JUSTICE

Minute for Mission *Called to be the Church*

Our gifts for Mission & Service support human rights. Let us hear a story from the Philippines. "The prevailing situation of the Philippine society is even worse when seen through the prophetic eyes of the church. There is major ongoing social unrest in our country today," says the Rev. Jerome Baris of the United Church of Christ in the Philippines. Mission & Service partners the United Church of Christ in the Philippines and the National Council of Churches in the Philippines are actively involved in advocacy for human rights. Human rights violations are widespread, with thousands of activists being intimidated, "disappeared," jailed without charges or trial, or killed. These people have stood for the rights of the Filipino people, including Indigenous people, who are often involved in land disputes with the government and corporations, particularly around mining. The United Church of Christ in the Philippines and the National Council of Churches in the Philippines are calling for peaceful resolutions to conflicts and for assurances that the people most affected will be included in the discussions. They condemn violent responses to communities trying to determine their own futures. We sing thanksgiving for Mission & Service partners walking with people in the Philippines in their struggle for human rights. 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

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 (georgecmoon@gmail.com) know if you want to be part of the exciting day!

RHUC Quilters

Our next get together is **Saturday April 8th at 12:30 pm in the Garden Room**. Let's see if we can finish our houses and start our wacky web... All are welcome. Feel free to bring a lunch or snack. There is always hot water for tea!

'Anything Goes' at the Newmarket Theatre

April 20-23, 2017 @ the Newmarket Theatre with Glen. Tickets 905-963-5122. www.wavestagetheatre.com
'Bon voyage! Set sail on a "de-lovely" cruise through some of Cole Porter's most famous songs. A brassy nightclub singer, a starry-eyed stowaway and Public Enemy No. 13 are booked on a transatlantic luxury liner bound for romance and laughter. Hum along with an easy-to-love score packed with hits including "I Get a Kick Out of You," "You're the Top," "It's De-Lovely," "Blow, Gabriel, Blow" and more! **Glen (James' spouse) is in the production.**

Mayor's Prayer Breakfast

A Christian celebration of prayer for the Richmond Hill community. **Wednesday, May 24 from 7 – 9:00 a.m.** \$30/person. Keynote speaker: Rev. David Payne, the lead and founding pastor of The Campus Church in York Region. He has written two books: **Hitting the Wall: Finding Perspective When Life Stops Working** and **Run! The Amazing Race**. Hot breakfast, live music, free book. If you are interested in going please let Deb know in the church office and RHUC can book a table (for 10).

Blog post

Lent and Easter Services at RHUC <https://rhucblog.wordpress.com/2017/03/09/lent-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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