

This week at RHUC

Sunday, December 2

10:30 a.m. Service
12:00 p.m. Youth Choir practice – Common Room
12:00 p.m. Faith Exploration Class - Chapel
4:30 p.m. Craft Dinner – lower gym

Monday, December 3

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

Tuesday, December 4

7:00 p.m. Beavers – gym

Wednesday, December 5

12:00 pm. Advent Bible Study- Chapel
6:00 p.m. Worship Committee – 67 Normandy Cr.
7:00 p.m. Scouts/Venturers – gym

Thursday, December 6

6:20 p.m. Advent Bible Study - Chapel
7:30 p.m. Chancel Choir – Common Room

Saturday, December 8

3:30 p.m. Drumming – Garden room

WORSHIPPING TOGETHER

Minister's message

The Season of Advent is upon us. It is tempting to go full bore Christmas and yet we are wisely invited to slow it down a bit, to take time to ponder. What is it that we are celebrating? Stores finally shifting out of the red for the year? Some would have us think so. We are getting ready to celebrate the significance of Jesus' birth, how the incarnation changes how we see ourselves and our purpose in the world. This pondering takes time. To symbolize that growing clarity over the next four weeks our Advent candles have been made by our friends at L'Arche in four different shades of purple/pink. Each week the sense of light grows as our own inner illumination increases. Be sure to take time out for reflection and prayer. Our moderator invites us to set aside 6 minutes each day this Advent. I plan to do just that. Will you join me in taking time in wondering who it is we celebrate, to ponder how our lives are changed?

Moderator's Advent message:

https://www.united-church.ca/sites/default/files/resources/transcript_moderators_advent_message_2018.docx
<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCKYjQvHY5ndMCMrBjCu-N5A>

Minister's Office Hours: James will be keep office hours from 1:00 until 5:00 pm on Mondays and Wednesdays each week. Feel free to stop in to see him.

Worship notes

Sunday, December 2: As we begin the Season of Advent we reflect together on the first story in Luke's narrative of John's and Jesus' birth. In Luke 1:5-20 we hear about Gabriel's appearance to Zechariah. He receives the news with doubt. We share communion.

Next Sunday, December 9: In Luke 1:26-38, we hear how Mary's reaction to news of her pregnancy contrasts with Zechariah's about Elizabeth. While questioning she accepts what is unfolding.

7:00 p.m. Carols by Candlelight

Announcements: A reminder that if you would like to make an announcement on a Sunday you need to let James know by the Thursday prior. He is able to make the announcement for you. If you would like to make it yourself, it needs to be brief. Please keep to 50 words or less.

Christian Development

If you are able to help out with the youth on the following dates please let Joan Verner know: December 9 and 16.
joanverner@rogers.com or 905-539-1222.

BUILDING FOR MINISTRY

Please remember to pick up your Generous Spirit package after church if you have not already done so. We would like to have all pledge cards returned by the end of November. Your pledge cards are an important part in the planning process for next year. P.S. Thanks to those who have already returned their pledges for 2019.



Generous Spirit Testimony by Bruce Rhodes: 'It continues to be a privilege for my family to be part of a congregation whose members and staff, year after year, truly care about and care for one another. My wife Liz and I, and our son David, first attended services at this church during the period when the congregation rallied to support the Loughton family, as Martin battled cancer. I recall that Bill Lekx shaved his head in solidarity with Martin; that, for me, at the outset of my experience at the church, was a telling example of the profound spirit of compassion that RHUC people extend to one another. More recently, this congregation has consoled the families of Chris Foot and Enid Mann.

For those of you new to the church, allow me to mention that Liz has been dealing with early-onset dementia for at least eight years. Earlier this month, Liz had her 61st birthday, and began her fourth year of living at Maple Health Centre, a long-term care facility on Keele Street just north of Major Mackenzie. [muffin with one candle] Regrettably, Liz's illness has returned her to a state of infancy, and this has brought heartache to those who know and love her.

However, amid these challenges that my family has faced, I recognize, and salute, the generosity of spirit, and the courage, that so many of you have graciously shown over the past eight years when you have asked me: Bruce, how is Liz doing? How is David doing? How are you doing? It takes courage to ask these questions, because the answers are often difficult to bear. I am grateful to those of you who ask these questions, because you invite me to answer truthfully; and, to paraphrase John Chapter 8, Verse 32, the truth shall make us free.

I will conclude by sharing one of the other sources of our family's gratitude toward this church: the choirs! First off, David valued and benefitted from his participation in the Junior and Youth Choirs. Anne and Barry have always generously contributed to the younger singers among us. Beyond this, in recent months, on Sundays, as I listen to our wonderful choirs, I find myself hearkening back to the enthusiastic way that Liz always responded to the music. Even in the days leading up to her moving into long-term care, despite the fact that her declining cognitive state led to increasing levels of confusion, Liz, amazingly, always knew which mornings were Sunday mornings; she would badger me to drive her to church, often wanting to get here for 9 AM. The sermons were, sadly, beyond her comprehension, but the **music** resonated with Liz like nothing else. To Barry and Anne, please know that you, with your choirs, have provided us, and especially Liz, with a precious gift. A spirit of family thrives in this congregation, and it is a generous spirit at that. Thank you!

**Cash Cards – easy
Christmas shopping!**



Avoid the crowds and support RHUC's monthly fundraiser! The last cash card order of 2018 is due by **Wed., Dec. 5th**. Earn 1 – 10% for RHUC with every purchase! Many gift cards to choose from. Order forms available online and at the bulletin board across from the church office.

HOSPITALITY & WORKING FOR JUSTICE

**Advent – Outreach
Committee**

The Outreach Committee has lots of suggestions for helping you with meaningful ways for Advent and Christmas. Our **Advent givings envelopes** this year will be available on **December 9 and December 16th**. Our support will help 360° Kids buying presents for every one of their clients. The new Hub, on Yonge at Crosby, is serving a huge number of at-risk youth and since many of them are not living at home and have no family support, this is an especially difficult time of year. Our history of friendship and support is very important to them and to us.

As we have done for many years, we are again **collecting back packs for the Krasman Centre**. We will be collecting the back packs at the service on **Sunday, Dec. 16** and you are invited to fill your own (see the Outreach notice board for ideas) or give us loose toiletries, hats and scarves, socks etc., and we will pass them along. As many of the Krasman clients have precarious living arrangements these back packs are always well received. If our collection date doesn't work for you, we will accept back packs anytime under the tree in the sanctuary or in the church office. Cash donations or cheques payable to RHUC re Krasman Centre are also welcome.

Kathy McBey is busy collecting donations for the **Franklin Cromarty District High School** in Thunder Bay. The Indigenous high school has drawn up a wish list of items the students need and Kathy is also heading up a warm winter coat drive. Please see the Outreach notice board for further information and keep our friends in Thunder Bay in your hearts and minds.

There are several opportunities to bake and serve this Advent. On **Fri., Dec. 21st**, we are providing a **turkey dinner for the Krasman Centre**. We will cook the turkeys and make the stuffing and gravy. We are asking you to prepare side dishes and desserts. Please contact Wendy Thomas if you can help with this. She will have a sign - up sheet after church on Dec. 9 and 16th. If you would like to help serve the meal on the 21st, please let Wendy or Lyn May know.

Please check out the giving catalog, **Gifts with Vision**, in the office and Welcome table. Put together by the M&S division of the United Church these catalogues contain lots of exciting ways to make part of your Christmas givings stretch all around the world!

We have invited new friends from the Yezidi community in Richmond Hill to join us at the **Advent craft dinner on Sunday, Dec. 2 at 4:00 p.m.** If you are able to attend with a pot-luck contribution, we could give these families a warm welcome to RHUC!

Hands & Hearts for Africa

2018 VIRTUAL WALK AROUND AFRICA: Virtual Walk Around Africa: WORLD AIDS DAY

On December 1st, World AIDS day, we stop for a moment to honour our sisters and brothers around the world impacted by HIV/AIDS. We remember especially the millions in Africa who are facing this health epidemic with dignity, courage and resilience. Our Hands and Hearts for Africa Walking Team has reached the halfway point in our Virtual Walk and now approach Lusaka, Zambia. We have collectively walked over 5000 kms and have another 5000 to go. Our commitment is strong, taking strength from the lives of African grandmothers who are the primary caregivers for Africa's next generation.

In the latest GRASSROOTS from Stephen Lewis Foundation, there are encouraging stories from Uganda and South Africa about grandmothers who have met the challenges of the pandemic and now are becoming strong voices for their communities at every level of government. Sadly in the same newsletter, we have news of an alarming resurgence of HIV infections among girls and young women--3 young women infected every 4 minutes! This SLF report highlights programmes that address this critical need-- programmes led by youth and for youth to address especially the stigma and discrimination around HIV/AIDS.

As we continue to walk, we ask for your prayerful support for the Stephen Lewis Foundation and its life-changing programmes. With gratitude we thank our many supporters who have helped us raise \$1000 so far. Together we can make such a difference in the lives of African AIDS families. For more information, please contact handsandhearts@live.ca

Living In Right Relations Committee

This week we learn more about the Residential School experience. It should be noted there are many perspectives of the residential school system. That of the; educator, church, students and their families.

Educator

Teachers were not provided by the government and were not formally trained. Most 'teachers' were nuns, missionaries or associates of the affiliated churches. There were no clear goals or standards for residential school education. Teachers were underpaid, overworked, under-qualified and ill prepared to be surrogate parents. Some of the staff were sexual predators, consequently many students were sexually abused. When allegations were brought forward responses were inadequate - police were rarely called. Sometimes the predators were fired, other times they continued to teach. The main focus of their teaching was religious instruction.

Students

Students were at school for ten months of the year. If students went home for two months, they felt ashamed and that they didn't belong. Brother's and sisters rarely saw each other at 'school' as students were segregated by gender. Not all students completed their 'schooling' before returning home.

An example of a day at residential school...

5:30 am: Boys are doing the morning chores; milking the cows, feeding the animals

6:00 am: Everyone else got up

Went to Chapel for morning Mass

Breakfast:

Sticky porridge cooked by students the night before

A piece of bread with butter

A glass of milk

Morning cleaning duties

Classes:

The first hour was religious studies

The next two hours were academic studies (math, reading, writing)

Work Time/Chores

Girls learned to sew, laundry, cook and clean

Boys learned to farm, grow a garden, and chop wood

Some boys learned basic carpentry and shoe repair

Cleaning groups cleaned their designate part of the school

Study hour

Supper

Clean-up

Recreation time

Prayers

Bedtime

Number of students who attended: 150,000 (estimate)

Number of students who died: 6,000 (estimate; records incomplete)

How long did they operate?

Mohawk Institute in Brantford, Ontario, accepted first boarding students in 1831

Gordon Residential School in Punnichy, Saskatchewan, closed in 1996

Who was Dr. Peter Bryce?

"Medical Inspector for the Department for Indian Affairs (1904 -1920)

He visited 15 Western Canadian residential schools compiling mortality statistics from 1892 to 1907 finding that 30 to

60% of students had died from smallpox and tuberculosis over those 14-15-years and further that 25 to 50% had died in the very first year of school. He suggested the overall numbers could be even higher, noting that in one school alone, the death toll reached 69 per cent. (Globe and Mail, April 24, 2007) Submits full report to the Department of Indian Affairs in 1909. The government and Indian Affairs does nothing.

1922 – Out of frustration, he self-publishes “The Story of a National Crime” exposing the Churches and Canadian government’s agenda of genocide. He wrote that Catholic and Protestant churches were deliberately exposing native children to smallpox and tuberculosis in residential schools across Canada, and letting them die untreated and that thousands of children had died as a result. (Globe and Mail, April 24, 2007) His book is largely ignored by the Federal Government and the public.”

[Sources -<https://www.omfrc.org/2017/03/solving-indian-problem-indian-residential-schools/>, <https://www.thecanadianencyclopedia.ca/en/article/residential-schools>, https://indigenousfoundations.arts.ubc.ca/the_residential_school_system/, <https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/a-history-of-residential-schools-in-canada-1.702280>, <http://rschools.nan.on.ca/upload/documents/section-3/a-typical-day-at-residential-school.pdf>]

Next Week - learning more about the Indian Act

Gifts with Vision

We have received the new 2018-2019 alternative gift catalogue for the United Church of Canada. It contains the usual assortment of projects you can support through giving a donation in someone's name - a gift from you to help others, given in their name. Gift cards are available to let the person know you thought of them with this gift for others. Those especially hard to buy for or those who have everything might appreciate your desire to alleviate another's hardship here in Canada and around the world. Needs range from an immediate need, like hunger and shelter; to tackling employment by providing education or small business start-up money; to sending a kit to camp or giving help to the world's displaced people.

There are some catalogues on the Welcome Table but you can do everything on the web: www.giftswithvision.ca *This is the alternative way of giving, and giving something that is really needed!* Contact: Donna Smith 905-884-6307

Minute for Mission *Called to be the Church*

In China, the Amity Foundation offers programs for people on the margins—people like Zhou Jian, a 34-year-old baker who has been working at the Amity Bakery since it opened in 2007. As a child, Zhou Jian was placed in an institution where he stayed until 2004, when he was given the opportunity to live at Amity Foundation’s Home of Blessings for those who are developmentally challenged. When he arrived at the home at age 21, he did not understand the concept of words or numbers. Slowly, under the loving care of Amity teachers, he mastered these skills. Zhou Jian was then ready to take on another challenge by working in the bakery. He has grown in skill to become one of the main bakers. Zhou Jian is constantly learning new techniques, proudly mastering each new challenge. He displays so much pride in the mouth-watering baked goods he produces that he has become the face of the Amity Bakery. His smiling face can now be seen on billboards and posters around China! At the Amity Foundation’s 30th anniversary celebration in 2015, it was Zhou Jian who welcomed everyone and invited the guests to taste the cake that he and the other bakers had so lovingly prepared. We are thankful for the loving way that the Amity Foundation offers developmentally challenged individuals like him the opportunity to live out their passion for creating and learning. As we live out our faith of loving our neighbour, we do so in celebration of Mission & Service global partners like Amity Foundation.

ENGAGING, CHALLENGING & GROWING OUR FAITH

United Church Women

The UCW will hold their **Christmas Potluck on Wednesday December 5th, 2018 at 10:00am**. All Ladies are invited. Any further information call June Blanchette 905-780-0048

Bible Study

We will once again have Bible Study in the chapel from 6:15 to 7:20 pm. We reflect together on the scripture reading for the coming Sunday, exploring context and sharing together how the theme of the reading continues to speak to us in our own day. Each session stands alone so be assured you are welcome even if you can only come once in a while.

Advent Bible Study: This coming Advent (Dec. 2 - 24) James will facilitate two Bible Study sessions each week, one at noon on Wednesdays (bring a bag lunch) and one at 6:20 pm on Thursdays. We will explore what the bible tells us about Jesus through each of the birth narratives, including those in the apocrypha (early Christian books that didn't make it into the Bible). We begin on Wednesday, Nov. 28th and on Thursday, Nov. 29th at 6:20 p.m.

UCW Christmas Tea and Bake Sale



The UCW will hold their **Christmas Tea and Bake Sale on Saturday December 1st at 1:00pm**. Tickets are \$10.00 each and includes Sandwiches, Scones, Christmas Cookies, Squares and Tea or Coffee. Volunteers are needed to help with setting the tables, serving food, kitchen plate prep, as well as donations of food. If you are able to help please contact Donna Smith, 905-884-6307. This fundraiser supports the operating costs of the Church and Mission and Service projects locally, nationally and worldwide. This is a "yummy" way to bring in this joyous season.

Men's Breakfast

The next Men's Breakfast will be on **Saturday, December 8th, 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, December 6th. Thank you!

Looking ahead: Future dates for 2019: January 12th, February 9th, March 9th, April 13th and May 11th.

After breakfast you are invited to the Garden Room for a presentation on "Night Shift in the ER" by one of RHUC members, Dr. Dominick Shelton. Highlights will include a behind the scenes description of working in the ER, challenges of working in the ER and his most memorable ER cases.

Dr. Dominick Shelton is an emergency physician working at Sunnybrook Health Sciences Centre. He is also the Medical Director of Quality & Safety in the Emergency Department at Sunnybrook. He holds appointments of Assistant Professor in both the Department of Family and Community Medicine and the Institute of Health Policy, Management and Evaluation at the University of Toronto. Dominick is the Former Director of the Emergency Department at Women's College Hospital. He is a co-founder of the following organizations: Camp Jumoke (a camp for children with sickle cell anemia), TAIBU Community Health Centre, Black Physicians' Association of Ontario and U of T Faculty of Medicine Summer Mentorship Program for Black and Aboriginal Students.

Join Dominick to hear his presentation on "Night Shift in the ER". Highlights will include a behind the scenes description of working in the ER, challenges of working in the ER and his most memorable ER cases.

Faith Exploration Classes

Are you curious about the teachings of Jesus, especially how we live them out within The United Church of Canada? Do you want to translate what you were taught in Sunday School into an adult understanding? Are you wondering about baptism or considering becoming a member of RHUC through confirmation or transfer from another congregation? Or maybe you are just interested in sharing faith with other adults? Then come to James' office and explore faith with others. The sessions run from now until April in 3 week blocks based on themes. Faith Exploration Classes are at noon on Sunday. Everyone welcome.

Section 1: Who/What is God?

December 2: God is Triune

December 9: God as Connected (Incarnation and Bible)

Section 2: Who is Jesus?

January 13: Jesus' Life and Ministry

January 20: Jesus' Teaching

January 27: Jesus' Death and Resurrection

Section 3: What does it mean to be church?

February 10: The gift of the Spirit
February 24: Being Church
March 3: How do we worship?

Section 4: Living in Faith

March 17: Living with Respect in Creation
March 24: Living in Service
March 31: Living for Just Relationships
April 7: Living with difficult ethical questions

April 20: Retreat Day

Women's Winter Retreat

Ladies mark your calendars - the **RHUC Women's Winter Retreat** is **Friday February 8 to Sunday February 10, 2019**

H.A.I.R.

We will resume on December 3 and have our last meeting on December 10 before stopping for the Christmas break. HAIR, the Monday evening study group, is using TED talks and other videos to trigger discussions about ethical questions, the implications of faith in the modern world, and other important issues of our time, such as when to stand up against discrimination, how to make a difference in helping others (effective altruism), environmental challenges, etc. Since each discussion is self-contained it is possible to join us in the chapel any Monday at 7:00 without having to "catch up". Everyone is welcome to any or all of these fascinating discussions.

Shalom Seekers

On **Monday, December 3rd** we will begin our session at 9:30 a.m. as usual in the Chapel. Just after 10 a.m. we will welcome a guest from Meditation Toronto who will be leading us in a Meditation Yoga session. Please dress in comfortable, non-restrictive clothing and bring a yoga mat if you have one, or a large towel. You will have the option of doing the meditation and stretches from the comfort of your chair as well.

On December 10th we will have a social morning beginning at 9:30 a.m. and enjoy coffee, tea, and goodies with church staff joining us for part of the morning. This will be our last session until January 7, 2019.

For more details about the group, please speak to either Peg Hiscoke or Sandra Loughton or call the church office at 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.

CREATING AND NURTURING COMMUNITY

Welcome Committee

RECOGNITION OF DAWN & GEORGE MOON ~ November 25, 2018

Peg Hiscoke and Sandra Loughton made the following presentation last Sunday during the service to honour the gifts and work of Dawn and George Moon during their long history with RHUC. As some of you know, Dawn and George Moon moved away in September to Kitchener, Ontario to be closer to their daughter Catherine, husband Tim, and granddaughter Natalie. For some of us, their move was almost inconceivable because they have been such an integral part of this congregation.

'Both Sandra and I have shared a long friendship with Dawn. For over 20 years we three shared the leadership of Shalom Seekers on Monday mornings. We often joked that we were working towards our PhDs! What we especially appreciated were Dawn's insightful prayers and relaxing meditations. Not to mention her love of singing in the choir, her leadership in Prayers of the People, and her skills at organizing.

Dawn has been involved in many groups and committees over her time at RHUC, but most recently she has

been a long-time member of the Worship Committee and a key member of the Chancel Choir organizing committee. Dawn helped out immensely with all of the concerts and was also our "Hearts & Flowers" person for many years. Dawn's caring personality really came out in this role. Dawn made sure that when there was a big event in a choir member's life – the loss of a loved one, or an illness – that we remembered them with a card and flowers or another gift. Dawn arranged all of this on her own, including personal delivery services! Dawn – your caring and dedication will be great missed by many, many people.

Now we may not have worked as closely with George, but we do know that he is a whiz with technology, an avid golfer, an organizer of the annual RHUC golf tournament, and a group leader for the teens. George was also a member of the Ministry & Personnel Committee and a member of the Communications Group among other committees over the years. George is also a talented dancer on the dance floor. As a matter of fact, Dawn and George have won many awards for their ballroom dancing and have travelled as far as Egypt for competition!

So now, George and Dawn, your dancing feet have taken you a short distance away from us, but we hope that you will come back sometimes. You will always be welcome at RHUC!

On behalf of the congregation we present you with this prayer shawl as a token of our love and friendship. May God bless you in this new phase of your lives.'

Out of the Cold Program – Richmond Hill Presbyterian Church

Richmond Hill Presbyterian Church will be hosting the Out of the Cold program this coming winter every **Sunday evening from December 9th 2018 to January 13th 2019**. The program will be operated by Mosaic Interfaith Out of the Cold from 6pm Sunday evenings to 8am Monday mornings. Mosaic Interfaith OOTC provides emergency shelter beds, meals and support services to the homeless in partnership with 16 interfaith communities in York Region. RHPC will be joining this winter service by providing space on Sundays for up to 30 beds for those in need.

Mosaic is looking for volunteers to help with the following duties:

- Registration of clients – 6pm – 9pm
- Serving pizza meal and refreshments – 6 – 9pm
- Cleanup – 6-9pm
- Breakfast Crew – serving cold breakfast and coffee, signing out clients and cleanup – 5:30 – 7:30 am

If you are interested in volunteering, please contact Lyn May at lynniemay@gmail.com or 905-884-9805.

Creating a Circle of Care

Saturday, December 1 from 9:30 a.m. – 3:00 p.m. at Sharon Hope United Church. A pastoral care workshop for congregations that goes beyond tea and cookies. This event is free but registration is required at www.livingpresenceministry.org.

To unsubscribe, please write to: office@rhuc.org, and put "unsubscribe" in the subject line. Published by Deb Fratin. Please submit notices by noon on Wednesday.