

This week at a glance**Sunday, December 3 – 1st Sunday of Advent**

10:30 a.m. Service
12:00 p.m. Healing service has been rescheduled to December 10th
12:00 p.m. Youth Choir practice – Common room
4:00 p.m. Advent Craft Dinner – lower gym
Cash card orders due – last one before Christmas!

Monday, December 4

10:00 a.m. Shalom Seekers – Chapel
7:00 p.m. H.A.I.R. – Chapel
7:00 p.m. Cubs - gym

Tuesday, December 5

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

Wednesday, December 6

10:00 a.m. UCW Christmas Potluck – Centennial Hall
7:00 p.m. Scouts/Venturers – gym

Thursday, December 7

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

Friday, December 8

9:15 a.m. Yoga Energetics – Upper gym
A perfect way to start your day! By meditation, strengthening muscles and increasing your flow of energy.

Saturday, December 9

8:15 a.m. Men's Breakfast – lower gym
3:30 p.m. Djembe drumming –Garden Room

WORSHIPPING TOGETHER**Worship****Sun., December 3rd - First Sunday in Advent.**

10:30 a.m. The first candle in the Advent Wreath is lit. Our space has been decorated with garlands. We wait in anticipation for more decorations. We sing a Christmas carol along with Advent hymns.

4:00 p.m. Advent Craft Dinner – an event for all ages!

- 4:30 p.m. Craft making
- 5:30 p.m. Potluck dinner
- 6:30 p.m. A reflective worship service for approx. 30 minutes

Sun., December 10th – Second Sunday in Advent.

10:30 a.m. The Christmas trees festoon our space. Lit for this service, we wait for one more week before decorating them. The second Advent candle is lit.

12:00 p.m. Healing service.

7:00 p.m. Carols by Candlelight with the Chancel and Youth Choirs. There will be readings, and opportunities for congregational carol singing.

Sun., December 17th - Third Sunday in Advent

10:30 a.m. The previously lit Christmas trees are now fully decorated in this service for all ages. Nursery is still available. The third candle of the wreath is lit.

Sun., December 24th - Fourth Sunday in Advent

10:30 a.m. Our crèche is added as the final decorations in preparation for Christmas. The fourth Advent candle is lit as we anticipate the festivities to come.

Wednesday, December 20th

7:00 p.m. Longest Night Service Hosted by Richmond Hill United Church and co-led with Richmond Hill Presbyterian Church, St. Mary's Anglican Church, St. Matthew's United Church, and St. Paul's Evangelical Lutheran Church, this quiet and reflective service is for anyone who has experienced loss and finds this season difficult. There will be an opportunity to light a candle in memory of someone and to receive anointing. Refreshments will be served in Centennial Hall.

Thursday, December 21st, 7:00 p.m.

Winter Solstice Service. We will gather in the chapel before moving outside to mark this darkest time of year by burning the Yule log and sharing our hopes for the coming year. Hosted by our in-house eco-spirituality group, Three Rivers Forest Church.

Minister's Message

It's that time of year again! With the Santa Claus parade concluded and that jolly old elf dropped off at Hillcrest Mall, it must be Christmas! That certainly is the impression I get as I look around town. And yet the church calendar tells us that Christmas is still a few weeks away and following the arrival of the big day we have twelve days to celebrate! This approach is counter-cultural and in many ways I like that. Holding to a bit of quiet and contemplation in the lead up to Christmas reminds me to slow down, to prepare my heart as thoroughly as I'm preparing my home, to ponder the true meaning of Jesus' birth beyond tinsel and twinkling lights. May we each find ways to pause this Advent time and make room for Christ.

This coming Sunday we begin our Advent festivities. The sanctuary will be slowly transformed over the course of the month. The spirit of the first Sunday of Advent is that of "waiting" and "wakefulness" with the expected arrival not a baby in the past but the coming Cosmic Christ. We hear Mark 13:24-37. Next week we turn our attention to John the Baptist. As we listen to Mark 1:1-8 we hear him pointing to the arrival of an adult Jesus about to begin his ministry.

Worship Notes

The Worship Committee is already well into planning for Advent and even the New Year! We meet on the first Wednesday of the month. The Chancel Choir has been working on Advent & Christmas music for a few months now. Excitement is building for the Chancel Choir's concert with Liona Boyd on December 2nd and for Carols by Candlelight/Lessons & Carols on the evening of December 10th. You can purchase your tickets for the Liona Boyd concert on December 2nd from a choir member, the church office, <https://richmondhill.snapd.com/events/view/1094582> or after the services on Sunday mornings. This concert is a fundraiser for RHUC so please help to spread the word and bring your friends and family!

A few things have been brought to my attention lately as Chair of the Worship Committee, so I thought I'd take this time for a few reminders:

- Please remember to avoid perfume, cologne, and aftershave while at RHUC. These scented products adversely affect people who suffer from allergies and we want our building to be comfortable and safe for all who attend.
- If you need/want to make an announcement on a Sunday morning, please e-mail or call James Ravenscroft before Saturday of that week. (james@rhuc.org or 905.884.1301) If James is away on holiday or study leave, you can e-mail me as Chair of Worship at bookgirl8@hotmail.com or call me at 905.773.5189)

If you have any questions or concerns or positive comments about worship at RHUC, please feel free to speak to any member of the worship committee (James, Barry, Dawn Moon, Anne Leyton-Brown, Anne Dunn, Craig Lee, Harry Ramsaran, Joan Verner, Dominick Shelton, Linda Clark, Sandra Loughton). Sandra Loughton, Worship Committee (Chair)

**Liona Boyd – 'A Winter Fantasy'
SOLD OUT!**

On **December 2 at 7:30 p.m.** the Chancel Choir is privileged and honoured to be presenting a concert, "A Winter Fantasy", with **Liona Boyd**, one of Canada's musical icons!

HOSPITALITY & WORKING FOR JUSTICE**Minute for Mission
Called to be the Church**

Our gifts for Mission & Service support microcredit programs. Let us hear about one of these programs in Kenya. Women with disabilities living in urban slums and rural areas of Kenya face multiple levels of discrimination and struggle to earn a living. Mission & Service partner the Ecumenical Disability Advocates Network (EDAN) has partnered with the organization Women Challenged to Challenge to address the issues of poverty these women face. EDAN is a ministry of the World Council of Churches committed to the full inclusion of people with disabilities in church and society. Its goal is to break down the walls of fear and prejudice that prevent these people from having rich and meaningful lives. EDAN lives out this goal in different ways around the world. In Kenya, EDAN and Women Challenged to Challenge have established a revolving loan fund that gives women with disabilities access to modest business loans. The loans, averaging US\$50, allow women to run their own small-scale businesses. These range from a vegetable stall in a local market to selling used clothing to making food to sell. No matter the business, what the loans provide is opportunity—opportunities for women to improve their families' lives and to provide shelter, food, clothing, and an education for their children. We sing thanksgiving that Mission & Service is supporting women with disabilities in Kenya to improve their families' lives.

**Winter coats needed
for First Nations
Teens!**

HIP ('Honouring Indigenous Peoples') received a request from **Andrée Cazabon (Director of the movie "Third World Canada")** for winter coats and running shoes for **100 teens attending Dennis Franklin Cromarty School in Thunder Bay.**

Many indigenous students are sent to live away from home, to Thunder Bay for high school (it is unfortunate that there is no other high school solution in their own fly-in and other remote First Nations communities). These high school students do not have money and are in need of winter coats and running shoes. They need adult sizes (i.e. no baby or children's wear).

Once RHUC collects these coats from generous donors throughout our community, HIP (Honouring Indigenous Peoples) will assist with transporting the boxes directly from RHUC to the school, so the students receive warm coats early in the bitterly cold Winter Semester. (HIP has already sourced soccer uniforms and balls to add to our RHUC-Thunder Bay dedicated shipment collection.)

How you can help!

- Donate a Winter Coat during December!
- Drop off a new or gently used coat, or running shoes, to Richmond Hill United Church, 10201 Yonge St, Richmond Hill ON L4C 3B2. Please bring coats and running shoes, (or HIP donation cheques), to Deb in the church office for storage til shipment, in the Coffee Room just behind the Office.
 - questions? Kathy and Rod McBey 647 458 2717 kathryn.mcbeey@gmail.com, or
 - for delivery/church hours info: Deb Fratin, Church Administrator, [905-884-1301](tel:905-884-1301) ext 5 (office@rhuc.org)
- Make a financial donation! (<https://www.canadahelps.org/en/charities/HIP/campaign/coatdrive/>). All funds raised will go directly to purchasing and transporting coats to students of Dennis Franklin Cromarty School in Thunder Bay. HIP is a registered charity and tax receipts will be provided. No amount is too small and all donations are thankfully received! Cheques delivered to the church are be made payable to 'HIP' and the subject line (on the cheque, or for the online donation), should specify this special project, by noting either "RHUC Winter Coats" or "Dennis Franklin Cromarty School".
- Spread the word!
- Please forward and share this request with all of your contacts. Donations from friends within and beyond RHUC are all gratefully received! This is our chance to help and to make an important difference for teens who need our help.

Gifts with Vision

We have received the new 2017-2018 alternative gift catalogue from the United Church of Canada. It contains the usual assortment of charities 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 meeting an immediate need, like hunger and shelter; to tackling employment, like providing education or small business start-up money; to sending a kid to camp or buying basic school supplies. There are some catalogues on the welcome table but you can also do everything on the web: giftswithvision.ca This is the *alternative way of giving, and giving something that is really needed!* Contact: Donna Smith 905-884-6307

ENGAGING, CHALLENGING & GROWING OUR FAITH

Shalom Seekers

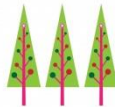
Please join us on **Monday, December 4 from 10 a.m. to 12 noon** for our closing session for the season. We'll be having refreshments and visiting starting at 10 a.m. and then we will close with an Advent worship service at 11:30. Please speak to one of the group's facilitators for more details: Peg Hiscoke, Sandra Loughton or Dawn Moon.

We will reconvene on January 8th and continue to look at the 500th anniversary of the Protestant Reformation.

Church Library

If you have been using the lift or popping into the outer office for mail or as a shortcut to see Deb, you will have noticed that our library books have been relocated here from the chapel. We did this in order to make them more visible, an incentive to browse and hopefully borrow. We took advantage of this move to pare down our collection and so stay tuned for details regarding books, bibles and even older hymnbooks to given away.

Christmas Tea – this Saturday, Dec. 2



The United Church Women (UCW) will be hosting a **Christmas Tea on Saturday, December 2, 2017 from 1:00 – 4:00 p.m.** Tea: \$10 (sandwiches, scones, squares, cookies, tea & coffee) Bake table, jams, preserves, knitting and jewellery!

This event is a major fundraiser for our church as the UCW donates to the Mission and Service Fund which supports work locally and around the world. The UCW purchases many items throughout the year, thus helping out the church's operating expenses! This said, we look to the whole congregation to support the Christmas Tea by attending, telling acquaintances of this event and with donations of food. Please contact Donna Smith for suggestions of what food is needed. THANK you for your support.

United Church

The UCW will have their Christmas Potluck Lunch on **Wednesday December 6th at 10:00am**. Bring your Christmas Stockings and a gift card for Massey Center. All ladies are invited to join us. Any further information call June Blanchette 905-780-0048.

Men's Breakfast

The next Men's Breakfast will be on **Saturday, December 9, 2017**. 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. After breakfast, we will enjoy a talk by Greg McGovern, who spoke to our group a few years ago about his work at Metrolinx. This time he will share with us his thoughts about innovation, disruption and transformation in our societies. Greg will illustrate these general challenges with the advent (!) of automated / connected cars and smart cities in our lives. All are welcome!

Feel free to contact us if you're interested in more information about it. Cost is \$10 / person, with net proceeds to UCW. Please RSVP to Harry Ramsaran (hramsaran@rogers.com or 905 508 4758) by Thursday, December 7th. Thank you!

Looking ahead: Future dates for 2018 are January

RHUC Book Club

The book club will meet again in the New Year on **Wednesday, January 31st at 7 p.m. in the Chapel**. The book is to be announced near the end of December as we are planning to get a book club set of 15 books from the Markham Library which we can have out for six weeks. It will depend which of our choices are available at the time of pick-up. Sandra will pick up the books and let people know that they are available for pick-up at the church or will bring them on a Sunday for distribution.

H.A.I.R.

H.A.I.R. - We have finished our discussions of the McLaren book, and for the next two weeks we will be considering the philosophical and ethical implications of a pair of current issues. All are invited to join our discussions from 7:00-8:30 in the chapel.

December 4 - Freedom of speech (triggered by, but not limited to, the recent events at Wilfrid Laurier University)

December 11 - Sexual Harassment (triggered by the recent public attention to sexual misconduct in Hollywood and Washington, and the "me too" movement)

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.

Happy birthday to **Cam Smith** as he celebrates his 90th birthday!

BUILDING FOR MINISTRY

Cash card order – last order before Christmas!

If you would like to purchase cash cards for Christmas please **submit your order by Sunday, Dec. 3**. The list can be seen on the website under 'Donate to our Church' which you can print out. There are many stores to choose from such as:

- Loblaws/No Frills/Long's Metro/Sobeys
- Esso/ Petro-Canada/Shell
- Boston pizza/East Side Mario's
- Tim Hortons/Starbucks
- Chapters
- Cineplex/Silver City
- The Gap
- Shoppers Drug mart
- Winners/Homesense
- The Bay
- Lowes and many more!

Support this monthly RHUC fundraiser. 1-10% of your purchase goes directly to RHUC!

Pledge forms



We ask that return your 2018 pledge form to the church office by the end of November so that the Finance Committee can prepare the budget for next year.

CREATING AND NURTURING COMMUNITY

Donation of a wheel chair/transfer wheel chair

A neighbour has offered a wheel chair and a transfer wheelchair which fits nicely in the trunk of a car to anyone who may need these items. She does not want to charge anything just wants to give them away. If you know of anyone who could use them please speak to Enid Mann at 905 884 8868.

'So What's Going on Around Here?'

We have updated the bulletin board outside of the spare office (across from the Parlour) for various groups at RHUC to advertise themselves. It is called "**So What's Going On Around Here?**" If you want to invite others to join your group, or just let people know what is happening with your group at RHUC, please send me a PDF version of the notice you want posted and I will print it and post it onto the bulletin board. Please send it in print-ready form, as I don't feel comfortable editing anyone else's work. Send your ready-to-print notice to: Fran Bazos: fran.bazos@hotmail.com. Please put in the email subject box: RHUC submission, so I see it and don't pass it by. *Thank you, Fran Bazos*

Welcome Committee

Are you planning to move away? Do you know of someone in our Church who is? Problem: the church finds out that someone has moved, often well after the fact! We then feel badly that their life and contribution to our worship and work at RHUC has not been recognized and our goodbye and best wishes have not been expressed. Please let Deb in the office or Donna Smith, 905-884-6307 know, as we continue to show and be a caring community.

Christmas concert

Enjoy beautiful selections of traditional Christmas songs, carols and sacred music. Join soprano Victoria Gydov, pianist Karine Vasserman, violinist Oleksandra Fedyshyn and tenor Charles Di Raimondo to celebrate the upcoming holidays together with inspiring and uplifting music!

When: December 16th, 2017 at 7pm-9pm

Where: Richmond Hill United Church

Tickets: \$25 at www.maestromusic.org

Event: <https://www.facebook.com/events/1959381107657128/>

Living Presence Ministry

"The Frost is All Over" A Canadiana Folk Liturgy & House Concert for the Advent Season on **Sunday, December 17 @ 7:00 p.m.** at the Burrow, 1 Mondial Cres., East Gwillimbury. www.livingpresenceministry.org/frost.

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.