

## This week at a glance

### Sunday, February 25 – Lent 2

10:30 a.m. Service – Sanctuary  
 12:00 p.m. Youth Choir practice – Common Room  
 12:00 p.m. Adult Baptism/Membership – Chapel  
 12:00 p.m. Tour of RHUC - Sanctuary

### Monday, February 26

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

### Tuesday, February 27

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

### Wednesday, February 28

7:00 p.m. Scouts/Venturers – gym  
 7:00 p.m. RHUC Book club - Chapel

### Thursday, March 1

5:00 p.m. Prayer Shawl Knitting – Chapel  
 6:15 p.m. Bible Study - Chapel  
 7:30 p.m. Chancel Choir – Common Room

### Saturday, March 3

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

## WORSHIPPING TOGETHER

### Worship

**Sunday, Feb. 18:** Throughout Lent our readings are from John's gospel. John 3:14-21 is part of the dialogue between Jesus and Nicodemus and contains the well-known verse "For God so loved the world..." The main imagery of the whole passage is about Jesus being lifted up, a connection being made between the cross and the bronze serpent made by Moses as a source of healing. What does this cross focus mean to us? How does it reshape how we see the world around us? This Sunday is also Scouting Sunday. We will be joined by the various troops we sponsor. Last week the scouts were away for an event being held on the long weekend.

**Sunday, March 4:** Joanne Scofield will be our preacher as we reflect on John 2:13-22. In this passage Jesus and his disciples go to the Temple where Jesus casts out the merchants and moneylenders. **Following worship we will gather in the gym for our Annual General Meeting.**

### Minister's Message

This past week I spent Tuesday and Wednesday at the General Council Office in Toronto. I was at my first meeting as a member of the Gathering Advisory Board. For those of you who may not know, Gathering is the United Church's quarterly worship magazine, a valuable resource for those who lead worship. I've been using it for years so it will be interesting to be part of the group who help to shape it as well. It just so happened that the Racial Justice Advisory Group was at GCO at the same time. A friend of mine, Rev. Therese Samuel, is on that team and she was invited to preach. You may recall that she was the guest preacher at my covenanting service in 2016. If you do then you will know how powerful her words were. Using Psalm 139 as a jumping point she spoke of the contrast between that psalmist's assertion we are all "fearfully and wonderfully made" and the cultural lie that some of us are more valued, more worthy than others based on so many different criteria, especially regarding racial markers like skin colour, the shape of facial features, hair, and the like. She confessed that she spent her childhood wishing her skin was lighter and how she instilled some of the same internalized racism when she warned her nephews to be careful when travelling in the US. As she kept affirming the group that we are "fearfully and wonderfully made" I knew she was speaking a truth that resonated especially with those in the chapel who are racialized. But then she said something else. She spoke to those of us who are of European descent and affirmed how the history of racism has left many of us carrying a burden of shame. I could feel tears welling up as she called on us not to internalize a new prejudice. Yes, those of us who are white need to acknowledge racism and do whatever we can to challenge systemic oppression, she told us, but we also need to affirm that we are fearfully and wonderfully made. She is right. Especially since shame can be paralyzing and we end up doing nothing. As we near the end of Black History month I pray that we will all hear the truth of her words and in that truth hold firm against the lie that some races, groups, cultures, classes are better than others and reshape the world so all

can know and truly feel they are fearfully and wonderfully made. May we continue to ensure how we come together as a congregation in study and decision-making, in worship, pastoral care and outreach projects, in the hospitality we show and the partnerships we foster, affirm this truth. And may we carry it with us. Each of us, every nation, all of creation, is fearfully and wonderfully made.

Upcoming holiday: James will be away on holiday following the AGM until March 12.

## World Day of Prayer

World Day of Prayer will be held on **Friday March 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2018 at 7:30 pm at St. Mary's Anglican Church**, 10030 Yonge Street, Richmond Hill. This service this year was prepared by the World Day of Prayer Committee of Suriname. Everyone is invited.

## BUILDING FOR MINISTRY

### Finance Committee

Tax receipts are available for pick up in Centennial Hall.

### Nominating Committee

**Do you have gifts that you wish to share with our community of faith?  
Interested in learning more about how you can contribute to the mission of our church?**

We have several specific volunteer opportunities in our congregation:

- Welcome Leadership – Providing leadership for the team that helps connect the newest people in our congregation to all of our activities
- Work Party Organization – Supporting our Property Committee by organizing our volunteer work parties
- Mission & Service Enthusiast – Our congregational champion for promoting the activities supported by the M&S Fund, and stewarding our congregational contributions

You may also have skills that could be contributed to any of our Standing Committees:

- Christian Development – Participating in the work of programs and activities offered to children, youth and adults which nurture and encourage faith exploration and formation
- Fellowship – Participating in the work of events and activities to sustain and develop fellowship within the congregation
- Finance – Participating in the work of overseeing financial expenditures and coordination of budgeting
- Lay Pastoral Visitors – Participating in the work of our program of lay pastoral visitation
- Ministry & Personnel – Participating in the work of overseeing relationships within the pastoral charge ministry, particularly the roles and functions of paid leaders and employees
- Outreach and Social Action – Participating in the work of fostering understanding and action concerning the church's mission in our local community, our country, and our world
- Property – Participating in the work of supervising, maintaining, and improving all church property
- Stewardship (Generous Spirit) – Participating in the work of encouraging the congregation's stewardship of time, talents and treasure
- Welcome – Participating in the work of welcoming new people into our church
- Worship – Participating in the work of overseeing the worship life of the congregation

Come share with our Nominating Committee in discerning if any of these roles might be for you. The Committee members are Nancy Hart (Chair), Donna DeVita, Heather Moon, Brandon Moore, James Ravenscroft, and Donna Smith.

## RHUC Council

Council minutes are posted on the RHUC website monthly under 'Governance'. Council meetings are on the second Wednesday of each month at 7:30 and are open to anyone to attend.

## Cash Cards

If you would like to order cash cards, a monthly RHUC fundraiser, please submit your order **by Monday, February 26**. Thank you!

## HOSPITALITY & WORKING FOR JUSTICE

### 50 – 60's Sock Hop!

#### Stephen Lewis Fundraiser

#### 50's-60's SOCK HOP on SATURDAY FEB 24 from 5:30 – 9:00 p.m.!

Hands and Hearts for Africa warmly invite you to our Fabulous February Sock Hop. Coming soon on Saturday Feb 24 from 5:30 -9pm in the lower gym.

Brush off your dancing shoes and join us for a fun evening of delicious pasta, live music and silent auction. Be sure to wear your craziest socks for the Crazy Sock Prize and bring your friends and family. Tickets cost \$20 Senior/ Student, \$25 adult, \$55 per family of 4. Call Deb at the church office for tickets. Come join us at the Hop and support the Stephen Lewis Foundation!

Ground breaking News: Did you know the Stephen Lewis Foundation is doing ground breaking work with African AIDS families in Sub-Saharan Africa? Why ground breaking? Because the Foundation supports and mentors community-based programmes for the long term and consults with the families and grannies directly. Ground breaking because the Foundation has developed an assessment tool to measure the impact of community-based programmes on Quality of Life- something never done before re AIDS but soon to be used by UNAIDS, the Global Fund and on the agenda for the World AIDS conference next year!

## Lenten givings

This year's Lenten givings will support two Indigenous groups: one in our community and one in North Western Ontario. As one way of responding to the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's Calls to Action we are asking members of our congregation to ACT by supporting two projects. Kathy McBey and her team have started the ball rolling with the winter coat drive last December in support of the Dennis Franklin Cromarty High School in Thunder Bay. This has developed into something much larger. To support Indigenous young people who leave their reserves to travel to High School in Thunder Bay we need much more than warm coats. We have the opportunity to work with staff of the school and groups outside the school to meet the many needs of these at risk students and we hope to build this friendship into a long-term partnership.

Our other project is closer to home. Jake Charles, a member of the Chippewa band on Georgina Island has started a cultural awareness project, First Nations Cultural Tours and financial support from groups like us will help him get this exciting opportunity off the ground. We will report back to you regularly on how these funds are being used and hope you are as excited by this opportunity as we are.

*Respectfully submitted, RHUC Outreach Committee and the Right Relations Committee.*

## Minute for Mission *Called to be the Church*

Our gifts for Mission & Service support community ministries across Canada. Anticipation builds as the children and youth wait for the muffins they made to bake. Different ages and backgrounds, everyone joins together on this summer day at the London Community Chaplaincy. "I love the community with the kids. Everybody is like everybody else's family," says summer counsellor Ashley deBakker. The chaplaincy provides advocacy and support for families who face the challenges of living in poverty in two housing complexes in London, Ontario. The summer programs for children and youth are part of the year-round mix aimed at helping children learn while having fun. Drop-in programs allow children to learn crafts, like making beaded animals, and play cooperative games. Sydney Franzmann, Summer Camp Director, describes Alphabet Soup, a summer program for children in grades 2, 3, and 4 to better their reading: "Like school, but in a fun way." United Church of Canada Mission & Service support is key for London Community Chaplaincy, says Chaplain Pam Cullen, Executive Director. "It becomes one of our main funders for the year."

## Out of the Cold

We have the dates and menus set for this year at St. Mary's Anglican on Mondays.

- Feb. 26 - Chicken Quesadillas
- March 26 - Roast chicken.

In case you are interested and/or available, we get together from 1 to 4 in the kitchen at St. Mary's Anglican Church and prep the main, veggies and salad. It's lots of fun and not usually much later than 3:30. If anyone would like to contribute salad materials that would be great. I make the dressing but always need greens etc. Just bring them directly to St. Mary's the day of. We aren't responsible for desserts this year as they usually get lots of contributions but homemade cookies and bars are always welcome for snacks and bag lunches. Just bring them to the RHUC kitchen large fridge labelled in a disposable container. I can't promise to get people's family heirloom cookie tins back to them. **If you would like to serve or help in other ways from 4:30 to 7 p.m. on Monday, Feb. 26 or March 26, give your name to me and I'll pass it along.** Thanks for your help in past years and looking forward to working together again this year. *Lyn May, Chair of Outreach*

## ENGAGING, CHALLENGING & GROWING OUR FAITH

## Worship Leadership Training, Part 1

**Worship Leadership Training Part 1, redux:** Were you considering learning how to lead worship, compose prayers, preach a sermon but unable to participate in the fall? Or perhaps you just want to learn more about worship and why we do what we do. We will be holding a repeat of the first 3 sessions on Thursday March 1, as well as Wednesday March 14 and 21 at 7:30 pm in the chapel.

## United Church Women

UCW St. Patrick's Day Meeting, **Wed. March 7th, at 9:30 a.m.**, in Centennial Hall. Have you ever wondered what the stories are behind your favourite Irish "sing-alongs?" Come and find out. And don't forget to wear your green! See you there.

## 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, in this case John 3:14-21. See you in the chapel!

## Women's Spirituality

Women's Spirituality will gather this **Saturday February, 24<sup>th</sup> at 9:45 a.m.** for refreshments and conversation. **Program at 10:15:** "The Circle of Hearts". 'As our candle burns we will know that the beauty of the Divine Spirit is in every woman's heart...Because the Heart transforms experience.'

## Shalom Seekers

Our next session will be on **February 26 from 9:30-11:30 in the Chapel** for a continuation of the DVD series on the Protestant Reformation: This Changed Everything. Our discussion will focus on the Church, Scripture and Tradition.

All are warmly invited to join with the group. For more information, please speak with Dawn Moon, Sandra Loughton or Peg Hiscoke.

## 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.



## RHUC Book Club

Please join us on **Wednesday, February 28th at 7 p.m. in the Chapel** as we discuss the novel "**The Curious Charms of Arthur Pepper**" by Phaedra Patrick.

"Phaedra Patrick understands the soul. Eccentric, charming, and wise, **The Curious Charms of Arthur Pepper** is about finding courage, generosity, and compassion, even when all seems lost. With clear-eyed prose and a moving story, Patrick reminds us how selfless people can be; she reminds us to be brave."

New members are welcome to check out the group at any time. No previous book club experience is necessary! Please speak to Sandra Loughton for more information.

## 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

## Prayer shawl 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 on **Thursday, 22, March 1, 8, 15, 22 and 29, 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. Last year we had 8 people gathered and a couple people made them at home. Patterns and some yarn are available.

## Blanket Exercise

February 28<sup>th</sup> at 2:00 – 4:00 p.m. Richmond Hill Presbyterian (Wallace Hall) Our Lenten Reflections this year are on the theme of reconciliation. You are invited to the Blanket Exercise to learn more about the relationship between First Nations and settlers in Canada. We will be led by Carragh Erhardt, Healing and Reconciliation Programme Assistant for the Presbyterian Church in Canada. The Blanket Exercise is an experiential learning tool about the historic and contemporary relationship between Indigenous and non-Indigenous peoples in Canada. People from the community and other churches are welcome. Lenten Reflections series will run from February 21<sup>st</sup> to March 21<sup>st</sup> at 2:00 p.m. There is no charge –refreshments will be served. Address 10060 Yonge Street: parking first left north of Major Mackenzie.

## March Break Go Project Camp

March Break Go Project Camp at Islington United Church from March 12 – 16. Open to Grades 7+. \$395/youth/week. Meals and accommodations included. Email [paige@islingtonunited.org](mailto:paige@islingtonunited.org) to RSVP or for more info. [www.thegoproject.ca](http://www.thegoproject.ca) or call 416-239-1131 ext. 31.

## The Go Project

Job opportunities and children's camps: visit [www.thegoproject.ca](http://www.thegoproject.ca).

## GROUNDING: ECOLOGY, FAITH. HOPE

**GROUNDING: ECOLOGY, FAITH. HOPE** (May 25-26, 2018) is a unique event being sponsored by Bracebridge United Church. Through expert speakers, artwork, workshops, music, and worship we'll explore hopeful ways to respond to the ecological crisis as people of faith. This will be a companion event to the 2018 Muskoka Summit on the Environment which will take place May 24-25 at the Bracebridge Sportsplex. The Summit brings together speakers from the world of environmental science. This year's theme, *Restoring Our Relationship with the Natural World*, is a great fit for those of us who belong to a faith tradition. To learn more, and to REGISTER go to: [www.grounding.ca](http://www.grounding.ca)

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