

This week at RHUC

Sunday, February 3

9:00 a.m. Finance meeting - Chapel
10:30 a.m. Service – Sanctuary
12:00 p.m. Youth Choir practice – Parlour
12:00 p.m. Healing service – Chapel
12:00 p.m. Luncheon – Garden Room

Monday, February 4

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

Tuesday, February 5

7:00 p.m. Beavers – gym

Wednesday, February 6

12:00 p.m. Bible Study – Chapel
1:30 p.m. Lay Pastoral Visitors - Parlour
6:00 p.m. Worship Committee - Chapel
7:00 p.m. Scouts/Venturers – gym

Thursday, February 7

7:30 p.m. Chancel Choir – Parlour

Friday, February 8

Women's Retreat – Loretto Maryholme

Saturday, February 9

8:15 a.m. Men's breakfast – gym
1:00 - 3:00 p.m. Targeting Climate Change –
Sanctuary / Centennial Hall

WORSHIPPING TOGETHER

Minister's message

News broke this week of Christina Haugan, the widow of the coach of the Humboldt Broncos, extending forgiveness to Jaskirat Singh Sidhu, the truck driver who crashed into the team bus last April. For many people this act of compassion and understanding is surprising, shocking even. I wonder why this is the reaction. We may live in a world where the desire for vengeance seems to be increasingly the norm but in the long run it is a dead end. Punishing the person who caused harm is not helpful as an end in itself. Ideally we punish in the hope the person learns from what happened and begins to choose a better path. In the end forgiveness is of greatest benefit to the one forgiving. It helps the person to release the past, to not let it be a stranglehold on the future. Christina wisely said she didn't want to live in anger. It isn't easy, which is perhaps why some people have expressed shock, but in the end the path of compassion leads to growth and personal renewal. Mr. Sidhu may have been charged with many counts of dangerous driving causing both death and bodily harm, but he certainly didn't intend to kill or hurt anyone. I have no doubt that he will be haunted by his actions for years to come. In the end Christina's forgiveness will be less powerful than what he extends to himself.

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

Youth Retreat: This year's youth retreat has been postponed to later in the year. Thank you to those who volunteered to provide food for the weekend.

Sunday, February 3: We come back to Luke's gospel and so reflect on Luke 4:21-30, the fall-out of Jesus' visit to his home synagogue. The negative response at the beginning of his ministry foreshadows what will unfold at the end. Though our youth retreat has been postponed, youth members will still share in leadership of the worship service.

After worship, the **Vision Keepers Committee is hosting a pot luck lunch in the Garden Room for our LGBTQ community, their friends, families and allies.** We held this event last year and it was well attended and appreciated; we can find support and make connections with each other. This is a time of sharing as we create the safe and accepting place that RHUC strives to be.

Sunday, February 10: We shift away from Nazareth to the Sea of Galilee where Jesus calls His first disciples to follow him (Luke 5:1-11).

BUILDING FOR MINISTRY

Living In Right Relations Committee

When creating our mandate over a year ago, we named our committee the *Living in Right Relations Circle*. Not a committee, a circle. Circles are deeply rooted in indigenous culture. "Indigenous peoples around the world have clearly used processes similar to Circles to attend to the community's work. Circles of stones or wood can be found all over Europe. Some European circular sites date back 5,000 years or more. ""Circles represent important principles in Aboriginal worldview and belief systems, namely interconnectedness, equality and continuity. According to traditional teaching, the seasonal pattern of life and renewal and movement of animals and people are continuous, like a circle with no beginning and no end. Circles suggest inclusiveness and the lack of hierarchy. Circles are used in the construction of teepees and sweat lodges; and the circle willow hoop, and medicine wheel, and dream catcher are powerful symbols. " Further, exercises in circle; sharing, blanket, restorative justice, sentencing, listening. All present opportunities for healing, openness and wholeness.

Non-indigenous peoples have learned the benefits and significance of sharing in circles and the use of objects indicating a participants turn to speak uninterrupted. Circles of logs have appeared in school yards and Indigenous circle traditions added to education curriculum.

If you'd like to learn more about the unique experience (in circle) of the Kairos Blanket Exercise check out; <https://www.kairosblanketexercise.org/>

[Sources: <http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/aboriginal/strategygr01lancircle.pdf>, <http://www.livingjusticepress.org/?SEC=0F6FA816-E094-4B96-8F39-9922F67306E5>]

CREATING AND NURTURING COMMUNITY

Lay Pastoral Visitors

Pastoral Visitor's meeting will be on **Wed. Feb.6th at 1:30 pm in the Parlour**. A physio-therapist, who works at MacKenzie Health, will review particular features of strokes. Members of the congregation are invited to attend this meeting.

Prayer Shawl knitting/crocheting

We have received a large amount of yarn for people to use with their making of prayer shawls. We usually meet during Lent once a week to make them together, and we will do so again this year, but if you would like to make a shawl during these cold winter days, please come to the cabinet in Centennial Hall for some yarn after worship on Sundays. We also have needles and hooks.

HOSPITALITY & WORKING FOR JUSTICE

Net Zero event at RHUC – Targeting Climate Change



We will be running an important networking event to target climate change in Richmond Hill. Please print and share this flyer wherever you can and come with your questions, anxieties, and concerns. We want to act together, not alone, and to ensure the next generation knows we are not ignoring a crisis that they will have to face.

- **February 9th, 2019**
- Sanctuary and Centennial Hall
- 1:00 pm - 3:00 pm
- experts from the town, engineering and science sectors, funding and legal experts, and vendors will be present with plenty of time to answer questions and resolve issues together
- contact targetclimatechange@gmail.com with questions and to indicate interest

Sock Hop / Auction coming soon!

SOCK HOP: SATURDAY FEB 23 (5:30-9:30pm)

If you are tired of snow and need to chase away those Mid-winter Blues, come join us on Saturday Feb 23 at our 50s-60s Sock Hop! Bring your friends and family to our fun winter evening of live music, pasta dinner and auction. We will be gathering in the lower gym at 5:30pm and we invite you to wear your craziest socks for the Crazy Sock Challenge. TICKETS ON SALE TODAY and every Sunday before our event in Centennial Hall or at the office during the week at 905-884-1301 ext. 5. Why not treat your Valentine sweeties to Tickets? Cost is \$25 adult, \$20 for seniors or students and \$55 for families. Our favourite band, Little Peter and the Elegants, will be there to get our feet dancing!

Sock Hop Auction 2019 - Smaller and Elegant!

This year as in other years we welcome donations to our Silent Auction tables. However for Sock Hop Saturday Feb 23, we are aiming for a much smaller and more elegant look. In order to achieve this, we would like to preview potential auction items. If you would like to donate an item, please send us a photo by email to handsandhearts@live.ca. We have set a deadline of Feb 16 for donation submissions. For more information or if photos are a challenge, please speak to Peg Hiscoke or Donna Harrison.

Hands & Hearts for Africa Virtual Walk

Virtual Walk Around Africa: Approaching Namibia.

There is a saying in Namibia that the 'Left hand must learn before the right hand is broken' (in other words "Be Prepared!") 'As we trek through sub-Saharan Africa, we have been on a steep learning curve, surprised by the beauty of the land and the joy and dignity of the people. We feel especially blessed to be meeting with grandmothers who are caring for extended families impacted by AIDS. We celebrate the dignity and courage of these grandmothers who are not broken after 30 years of battling the AIDS virus but instead are vocal advocates for better healthcare, land rights, human rights for themselves and others.

We are still some distance from Windhoek in Namibia but we will be there soon. Situated in the center of the country, Windhoek lies on top of the Khomas Highland plateau at an elevation of 5430 ft. Our trek winds steeply upwards to this city, founded in 1840 by a South African farmer and then again in 1890 by Curt von Francois, an army major in the Imperial German Army. From the city we can see the Eros and Auas mountains surrounding.

Tourists often describe Windhoek as the most 'un-African' because of its cleanliness. The city center has many German-style buildings including the Tintenpalast or parliament buildings and the alte Feste fort. Because of hot water springs nearby, the city has had many names: Herero Otjimuse or 'place of steam' and Damara which means 'firewater' in the Nama language. Windhoek in South African means 'windy corner'.

We walk slowly as the combination of altitude and temperature of 34c makes our way exhausting. Part of our trek through southern Namibia is along the rim of the Fish River Canyon which is the largest canyon in Africa, 100 miles long, 27 km wide and almost 550 meters deep. It is also supposedly the second largest canyon in the world after the Grand Canyon and a natural wonder of exposed rock with no plant life.

We are heading to the 'windy city' to meet with Lorenz Hembapu of the Catholic AIDS Action, which provides home-based care in rural areas of Namibia. As we make our way through the countryside, we understand how the geography of the land and the oppressive heat make home-based care a necessity to ensure meds are taken and much-needed counselling and testing supports are received.

Breakfast club volunteers needed!

Looking for bright, cheerful volunteers to assist with making nutritional breakfasts for our students Tuesday morning from approximately 8:00 -9:30 a.m. at Sixteenth Ave., P.S. No experience needed. Contact Lezlie Hood at Sixteenth Avenue P.S. 400 Sixteenth Avenue, Richmond Hill *tel: 905-884-5598 ext. 101*

Minutes for Mission

Our gifts for Mission & Service offer hope for those taking chances on alternative forms of farming in areas of severe drought. One example is the work of the National Council of Churches of Kenya with the National Drought Management Authority. The council advises the agency of the needs in drought-stricken areas. In places like Meru and Tharaka Nithi, the National Council of Churches of Kenya has a number of farms that have had success with conservation farming, which uses mulch to keep the ground moist. The success of these farms gives farmers hope that they can feed their families and communities regardless of the weather. Many of the farmers are women who have been empowered to take over running the farm from their husbands. We are thankful that Mission & Service, in partnership with the National Council of Churches of Kenya, offers hope with severe drought and empowers of women.

Net Zero on Bill 66

Bill 66 is currently making waves in our community (<https://www.ola.org/en/legislative-business/bills/parliament-42/session-1/bill-66>). It is an omnibus bill from the Ontario Government that includes provisions to cancel regulations that limit development on the Green Belt and Oak Ridges Moraine, to remove the requirement for public consultation before development, and to repeal the Toxics Reduction Act, which requires certain industrial facilities to consider ways to reduce the use and emission of toxic chemicals in their operations. You can read more about the concerns here: <https://ontarionature.org/bill-66-facts/>.

Richmond Hill council has chosen to not discuss the bill (in a narrowly rejected motion on Dec. 17th). A second motion to reject Bill 66 is to be put before [Council](#) at the [Feb 4](#) Committee of the Whole (COW) agenda. This meeting [starts at 4:30 pm](#). If it passes at COW, it will go to Council for final approval [on Feb 11](#). We are hoping many residents will speak strongly about their concerns at the meeting or at least attend it on February 4 (link to ask to speak is here: <https://www.richmondhill.ca/en/our-services/Council-Meetings-Agendas-and-Minutes.aspx>). You can attend this meeting by going to the council chambers on the first floor at 225 East Beaver Creek at 4:30 on February 4.

Other municipalities such as Vaughan, Aurora, Oakville, Burlington, Kitchener/Waterloo, Guelph have passed strong resolutions against it. Tell your friends, significant other, nieces, nephews, brothers, sisters and colleagues that we need their help to protect our Green Belt and Moraine – for now and in the future. The decision of today, may impact our health of tomorrow.

ENGAGING, CHALLENGING & GROWING OUR FAITH

Men's Breakfast

The next Men's Breakfast will be on **Saturday, February 9th, 2019**. 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 (harrypersad.ramsaran@gmail.com or 905 508 4758) by Thursday, February 7th. Thank you!

After breakfast you are invited to the Parlor for a presentation **Title: "Brexit - We don't need EU anymore!"** by Heather MacRae. Heather MacRae is Associate Professor of European Politics at York University. She held a Jean Monnet Chair in European Integration from 2014-2017. Her research interests span a wide range of European Politics, but especially focus on Gender Policy in the European Union. She is currently working on a SSHRC project on the "Invisibility of Gender in European Policy Making". In 2016, the citizens of the United Kingdom voted by a slim majority to leave the European Union. Even as the vote was held, it was not clear what "exiting" the European Union really meant. Now, only weeks before the deadline for withdrawal, we are not much closer to knowing what Britain without the EU and the EU without Britain really entails. This talk will start by explaining what the EU is, how it works and why the UK felt its interests were not being met through the Union. From there, we will look at the main difficulties with "just leaving" the EU. We will wrap up with some thoughts on what might happen in the near future.

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

Bible Study

For 2019 we are moving Bible Study to **Wednesdays at noon**. Please bring your lunch with you. This means no Thursday evening Bible Study.

H.A.I.R.

We are starting our new HAIR season with a series of 5-6 sessions that will explore the issues facing the people indigenous to Canada. We will be using the series **First Contact**: Most Canadians have never taken the time to get to know Indigenous People or visit their communities. First Contact takes six average Canadians, all with strong opinions about Indigenous People, on a unique 28-day journey into Indigenous Canada. Leaving their everyday lives behind the six will travel deep into Winnipeg, Nunavut, Alberta, Northern Ontario, and the coast of BC to visit Indigenous communities. Narrated by host and social justice activist George Stroumboulopoulos, First Contact is a journey that will turn the six participants' lives upside down. Challenging their perceptions and confronting their opinions about a world they never imagined they would see. It is an experience that will change their lives, forever. <https://aptn.ca/firstcontact/>
Please join us - the discussions are open and safe and intelligent and entertaining! Monday nights, 7:00 pm, Chapel.

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 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 Retreat

All women are invited to come to the RHUC's Women's Winter Retreat at Loretto Maryholme, a beautiful estate home on the shore of Lake Simcoe, just outside Keswick: www.lorettomaryhome.ca. This location is nice and close, about 45 min. drive from the church. We gather for a program (Theme: "Gestating In Winter: The Spirit's Time Before Spring's Emergence"), with group and individual time to discuss our faith and we get to know each other better that a "hello" on a Sunday morning. And we eat and have fun also! Sitting at a warm fireplace or going for a walk in the snow (hopefully) brings us relaxation and rejuvenation. The date for this our ninth retreat is the **evening Friday February 8th to the afternoon Sunday February 10th**. Some stay for the two nights, some one night and some come just for Saturday. The cost for accommodation and food for two nights is \$125; for one night \$65; and for the day only is \$35. For further information contact Donna Smith, 905-884-6307. Consider this your welcoming invitation to attend!

RHUC Book Club

Please join us on **Wednesday, February 27th at 7 p.m.** in the Chapel to discuss the novel *Please Look After Mom* by Kyung-Sook Shin. This book was translated from the Korean by Chi-Young Kim. Kyung-Sook Shin was the first woman to win the Man Asian Literary Prize. This was her first novel to be published in English and Shin has won numerous literary awards for her other works. "Shin renders a tender and beautiful portrait of South Korea, but the novel recognizes a familial dilemma experienced throughout the world." ~ Ms. Magazine blog

"Lovely. . . Please Look After Mom, especially its magical, transcendent ending, lifts the spirit as only the best writing can do." ~ Minneapolis-Star-Tribune

For more information, please speak to Sandra Loughton or call the Church Office at 905.884.1301, Ext. 5 and speak to Deb Fratin. New members are welcome to drop in to any of our meetings. No previous book club experience is required just a love of reading!

Shalom Seekers

Please join us on **Monday, February 4th from 9:30 to 11:30 a.m.** in the Chapel. We will be starting a new study this week. The book we will be looking at is *LEARNING TO WALK IN THE DARK* by Barbara Brown Taylor. This book is described as an inspiring guide for those times in life when we don't have all the answers. We will also be taking a look at the theme of darkness and dark versus light in the Bible. The author was named by *TIME Magazine* as one of the world's 100 most influential people in 2014. Barbara Brown Taylor has published many award-winning books and is a Professor of Religion in the U.S.

For this week, please read the introduction entitled "Treasures of Darkness", pages 1 to 17. Please come even if you haven't had a chance to do the reading.

For more information about the group, please speak to Sandra Loughton or Peg Hiscoke, co-facilitators, or call the Church Office at 905.884.1301, Ext. 5, and speak to Office Administrator, Deb Fratin.



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.

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.