

This week at a glance

Sunday, February 4 – 4th Sunday after Epiphany
10:30 a.m. Service – Sanctuary
12:00 p.m. Youth Choir practice – Common Room
3:00 p.m. Forest Church – meditation walk at Phyllis Rawlinson Park

Monday, February 5
9:30 a.m. Shalom Seekers – Chapel
7:00 p.m. H.A.I.R. – Chapel
7:00 p.m. Cubs - gym

Tuesday, February 6
7:00 p.m. Beavers – gym
7:00 p.m. Tai Chi – Garden room

Wednesday, February 7
9:30 a.m. UCW meeting - Chapel
7:00 p.m. Scouts/Venturers – gym
7:00 p.m. Worship Committee - Chapel

Thursday, February 8
6:15 p.m. Bible Study - Chapel
7:30 p.m. Chancel Choir – Common Room

Saturday, February 10
8:15 a.m. Men's Breakfast – lower gym
3:30 p.m. Djembe drumming –Garden Room

WORSHIPPING TOGETHER

Worship

This Sunday: Our youth retreat weekend is upon us which means that this Sunday's worship service will be co-led by our youth. Over their retreat they will be reflecting on Mark 1:29-39, a passage comprised of several scenes - Jesus healing Simon's mother-in-law, Jesus healing even more people and releasing them of demons, Jesus withdrawing to a quiet place to pray, Jesus and his disciples going on to additional places to share the good news. All of these scenes together create a story line not just about Jesus but about each of us as his followers, called to share love and serve others in our world.

February 11: The following week the Season of Epiphany (actually the Sundays after Epiphany) draws to a close as we celebrate Transfiguration Sunday and share in the sacrament of communion. The scripture reading will be Mark 9:2-10.

Minister's Message

I was recently visiting someone in their home and we were talking about God and grace and love, and the topic circled around to whether you could love everyone, even if they do terrible things. "Like what?" I asked. "Like that man who killed those men in Toronto," came the reply. "Yes, I said. Even him." And I meant it. If I believe that the same spark of divine love is in him as in me as in anyone or thing, which I do, then at the very least I need to look to that reality which connects us, to the gift of graced love that holds us all together and love him. It is incredibly hard to do in a situation like this one, which is why my next statement was "Just because I said I need to doesn't mean I do. It means that I need to try." Rather than hate what I feel these days is anger. And not just at the accused. I feel anger that it took so long to find who has been targeting gay men. I feel anger that from appearances, even if not in fact, that it took a white gay man to go missing for efforts to be galvanized when before that gay men of both South Asian and Middle Eastern descent were missing. And on top of the anger I feel sorrow for a world where these kinds of things happen. I feel sorrow that a "safe haven" for the LGBTQ2 community doesn't feel safe. And I feel sorrow that as much as I say I love Bruce McArthur, it is an intellectual "I should" rather than an abiding "I do". We definitely all need grace.

Forest Church in February

Our upcoming Forest Church experience is scheduled for February 4 at 3:00 pm. We will gather for a meditation walk in Phyllis Rawlinson Park (park near the gate) during which we will gather natural objects to create a large mandala. We will conclude with hot drinks and snacks. The park roads are not plowed so be sure to wear snow boots and warm clothes. Forest Church events are open to everyone so remember to invite your friends.

Palm fronds needed

Time to bring in palm fronds: As Lent draws near, it is time to think about the distribution of ashes, which also means needing to prepare the ashes in the first place. So, please bring in your palm fronds from last year, or previous to that, so they can be burned and the ashes used as we begin Lent.

Adult Baptism /Membership

Do you want to learn more about the teachings of Jesus and what it means to be Christian? Are you interested in becoming a member of Richmond Hill United Church? Are you seeking to grow spiritually? Are you looking to share your beliefs with a supportive group of friends? Then consider joining a series of teaching sessions this coming February and March (even longer depending on the needs of the group). **We will hold our first meeting on February 18 after worship.** See James for more information.

BUILDING FOR MINISTRY

Tour of RHUC

RHUC has gathered at the corner of Yonge & Centre Streets for worship, concerts, events, food and fellowship since our 1880 building was constructed. There is lots of history that has happened which will be shared, along with a tour of even the "hidden" places, after the service on **Sunday February 25th. Gather in the sanctuary right after you pick up a coffee/tea; I will aim to be finished at 1:00.** *Donna Smith, 905-884-6307*

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
- Council Secretary – Keeping the records of our monthly Council meeting
- 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.

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. Tickets are on sale today after the service or call Deb at the church office. 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!

Minute for Mission *Called to be the Church*

Our gifts for Mission & Service support girls, human rights, and learning. On a Kenyan mountain surrounded by farms is the Jerusalem Secondary School for Girls. The school is supported by Mission & Service global partner the Organization of African Instituted Churches. It is a safe place for young women who are escaping child marriage and the threat of female genital mutilation, or female circumcision. The students share with pride their commitment to completing their education—students like Philomena. Philomena was able to complete primary school before her father sold her into marriage when she was 16. While her husband never forced her to undergo female genital mutilation, his family pressured her to do so. When her husband died, she was told by his family that she would now need to undergo the procedure or they would throw her out and keep her four children. In fear, Philomena and her children ran away. She returned to her home village, where her mother welcomed her and the children into her home. Philomena's mother heard about the school a short walk away and encouraged her daughter to go to it. Philomena was able to get a scholarship, and while she spends her day in class, her mother takes care of her children. Philomena is beginning her final year of secondary school and looking forward to going to university, where she will study education. Her dream is to become a teacher because she believes that education is very important. The Organization of African Instituted Churches supports the school by providing scholarships and contributing to the salaries of three teachers.

Out of the Cold

We have the dates and menus set for this year at St. Mary's Anglican on Mondays. We will be preparing 4 dinners:

- Jan. 29 - Shepherd's Pie
- Feb. 12 - Beef stew
- 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, Jan. 29, Feb. 12th, 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

Youth Retreat

Please deliver the food you have signed up for to the church by Friday the 2nd at 4pm. Thanks in advance for supporting our youth ministry! *Paula and James*

Men's Breakfast

The next Men's Breakfast will be on **Saturday, February 10, 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, February 8. Thank you!

Looking ahead: Future dates for 2018 are March 10, April 14, and May 12

"After breakfast, all are invited to a presentation and discussion by Dr. D.J. McCready. DJ has been at RHUC since 2011. He is a Professor Emeritus in economics at Wilfrid Laurier University where he taught for 40 years. He has published many articles and books in Economics and some in Political Science for his interests lie in Public Finance and Health and more specifically in policy issues. You may remember he spoke a few years ago on his research in Kenya and Rwanda. He has turned his attention to economic justice, and one of the huge issues from a policy perspective is the growing income inequality which now becomes the topic of his talk.

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 Mark 1:21-28. See you in the chapel!

Shalom Seekers

Please join us on **Monday, February 5 in the Chapel from 9:30 to 11:30 a.m.** We are continuing our discussion of the Protestant Reformation through the viewing of the DVD "This Changed Everything". We will start out with the topics Priesthood, the Middle Ages, and move on to Sacraments, Salvation, and Scripture and Tradition. It is a great way to start your week! For more information, please speak to Dawn Moon, Peg Hiscoke or Sandra Loughton. New members are welcome at any time.

H.A.I.R.

Each Monday evening from 7:00 - 8:30 pm, RHUC's evening discussion group gathers in the chapel. We are going to be viewing 'The Challenge of Paul' for the next 3 weeks, Jan. 29, Feb. 5 and Feb. 12. Featuring renowned historical Jesus scholar John Dominic Crossan, this video series explores the world of Paul's time and place. Crossan pushes past generations of doctrine and dogma to reveal the real-life character of Paul who shaped a generation of courageous Christ-followers to boldly challenge the greed and violence of the Roman Empire.

UCW meeting

The UCW will meet on **Wednesday February 7th, at 9:30am in the Chapel**. We will be celebrating friendships and hear what is happening with the UCW at Presbyterial and Toronto Conference.

UCW

Hold the date for the **UCW Spring Luncheon on Saturday, April 21 at 1:00 p.m.**

RHUC Book Club

Please join the book club discussion on **Wednesday, February 28 at 7 pm in the Chapel** where we'll be discussing the touching, comic novel **The Curious Charms of Arthur Pepper** by British author, Phaedra Patrick. New members are always warmly welcomed. Please call the office at 905.884.1301 or 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, February 15, 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.

A second Sunday Brunch

On **February 11** after worship, in the Garden Room, **we are hosting a potluck brunch for the LGBTQ2S community**, their friends, family and allies. Come out to this meal where all can find support and make connections. This is a time of sharing as we create the safe and accepting place that RHUC strives to be.

Lay Pastoral Visitors Committee

The hospital service officiated by RHUC members, held at Mackenzie Health, will now be held on the **4th Sunday of each month**. Donna Byres and Anne Whittingham co-chair that event regularly.

Yonge Street Mission

To our friends at Richmond Hill United Church, As we begin a new year, we want to thank you again for your amazing support of Yonge Street Mission. Your contributions have truly helped thousands of Torontonians take steps out of poverty. Last year, YSM provided over 80,000 meals to street youth and adults experiencing chronic poverty and supported over 5,000 families with food from our food bank, homework clubs and life skills training.

Currently, we are busy planning the **Coldest Night of the Year Walk for Saturday, February 24**, and as a valued partner we are reaching out to invite you to join us. Our goal this year is \$185,000 which will be invested in initiatives such as our new Evergreen Centre for Street Youth. We are one month from Walk Day, and your support would go a long way to helping us achieve this goal.

We would love to have a conversation with you about how you could be involved. We are specifically asking you to consider:

- Joining the Church Challenge and participate in a bit of friendly competition with other local churches – all in support of Yonge Street Mission
- Recruiting Team Captains and Walkers to fundraise and participate in the Walk
- Volunteering to be a part of the event delivery

We'll be here to make this a positive experience for you and for all of the Yonge Street Mission community members who benefit from your generous and valued support. Please visit <https://cnoy.org/toronto> to register or donate.

With sincere thanks in advance, Angie Draskovic, President & CEO, Yonge Street Mission

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