

## WORSHIPPING TOGETHER

### Worship

**Sun., January 15<sup>th</sup> – Baptism of Jesus**

**10:30 a.m.** We say good bye to Christmas and turn our attention to the season of Epiphany. We will renew baptism promises.

Message: "Called into Mission" by Rev. James Ravenscroft Readings: 1 Corinthians 1:1-9 & Matthew 3:13-17

### Minister's Message

Over the next few weeks it is my intention to offer some thoughts about why we do what we do when we come together on a Sunday. Before I look at details, it is a good idea to name what we do in general. Traditionally we call our Sunday gathering "worship". The dictionary defines this as "rendering religious reverence and homage to a deity". I like to define worship as a coming together in community to connect with one another and with the Holy at the centre of life, the one we have come to call God. When we worship we come together to pray, listen, sing, ponder, enact, lament and reflect together on our sacred story, especially as presented in the Bible. As we come together in worship we do so calling on the gift of the Spirit, the indwelling presence of God, striving to be a truly inclusive community where everyone feels nurtured and loved, honouring our whole selves, engaging body, spirit, heart and mind. We come together to grow in relationship with Christ, reflecting how best to follow his way in our daily lives, holding as we do the concerns of our lives and our world. How would you define worship?

### Upcoming Baptism Celebration

Is there a new (or not so new) little person in your family? Were you considering the possibility of baptism? We have a celebration coming up on **February 19, 2017**. Contact James ([james@rhuc.org](mailto:james@rhuc.org)) to find out more, including details about preparation sessions leading up to the celebration. In addition, January 15, 2017 is Baptism of Jesus Sunday. Given that this is a traditional choice of Sundays for baptism, we will mark this day by taking time to renew our baptismal commitments.

## ENGAGING, CHALLENGING & GROWING OUR FAITH

### Bible Study

Thursday Bible Study: Beginning next **Thursday, January 19<sup>th</sup>**, James will be facilitating a Thursday evening bible study sessions from **6:30 – 7:30 PM**. We will meet in "**The Meeting Room**" (not sure what else to call Linda's office). We will begin by looking at the scripture readings for the upcoming Sunday, looking at their historical and cultural contexts and the wisdom they can offer us.

### Shalom Seekers

On **Monday January 16**, Shalom Seekers will be discussing chapter 6 of JDCrossan's series "Violence Divine" This chapter focuses on "Not, Not, Not, Not, NOT the end of the world. " If you find this intriguing, please join us in the chapel at 9:30 am. Newcomers are always welcome. For more information, please speak to Sandra Loughton, Peg Hiscoke or Dawn Moon.

### Special Occasions

Writing to the church in Rome, the apostle Paul urged them: "rejoice with those who rejoice, weep with those who weep". 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. This column is an effort to rectify that situation. Don't hesitate to add any special occasions you know about.

There are many people who quietly go about the volunteer work at RHUC. They are all valued and appreciated as they give of their time to help with our many and varied ministries. But it is rare when someone has a position for 25 years and now we celebrate **Madeline Johnson** who has coordinated the after funeral receptions as part of her being a UCW member. Ministers have all know that a phone call to Madeline would get her mobilizing her volunteers to make sandwiches, do veggie and fruit trays, set up, serve and clean up for a funeral - usually on short notice. Our THANKS to Madeline for her years of caring dedication.

## Women's Spirituality

Women's Spirituality will be this **Saturday January 14th** at 67 Richmond Street, Apt. 302, next to the RH Centre for the Performing Arts. Parking is on the west side of the building.  
Plan: come for 10:00 a.m. and bring something to share to eat.

## RHUC Book Club

Please join us on **Wednesday, January 25th at 7 p.m.** in the Chapel. We will be discussing the novel *Circling the Sun* by Paula McLain. This book is based on a real figure from history: Beryl Markham. During the pioneer days of aviation, she became the first woman to fly solo across the Atlantic from east to west. She is now primarily remembered as the author of her memoir, *West with the Night*.

New members are welcome at any time. Please speak to Sandra Loughton or call the church office at 905-884-1301 for more details.

## Nurturing our Spirituality

**On the first Tuesday** of the month, **Joanne Scofield** will be offering **Yoga and Meditation** - a yoga practice that will use postures and breathing to bring the body and mind to a place of relaxation and stillness for meditation. The next Yoga and Meditation will be on **February 7 from 7:00 – 8:00 in the Chapel**.

## Women's Retreat

This will be RHUC's seventh annual Women's Winter Retreat at Loretto Maryholme: [www.lorettomaryholme.ca](http://www.lorettomaryholme.ca) - a beautiful estate home on the shore of Lake Simcoe, just outside Keswick. This location is nice and close, about a 45 min. drive from the church.  
We gather for a program, with group and individual time, to discuss and reflect about our faith and get to know others. And we eat and have fun also! Sitting at a warm fireplace or a walk in the snow will bring relaxation and rejuvenation. Date for 2017 is evening Friday January 27th to afternoon Sunday January 29th. Some come for the two nights, some for one night and some for Saturday only. The cost for accommodation and food for two nights is \$110; for one night \$55; and for the day only is \$30. For further information contact Donna Smith, 905-884-6307. All women are warmly welcome to come!

## HOSPITALITY & WORKING FOR JUSTICE

## Sock Hop!



Come and enjoy our 2017 fun-raising **SOCK HOP on Saturday Feb 25 starting at 5:30pm**. We promise that the lower gym of RHUC will be a lively place with live band, pasta dinner and silent auction. Again this year we will have a combo playing during dinner and then from 7-9pm the wonderful 50s-60s music of Little Peter and the Elegants. Starting TODAY, tickets can be ordered at the church office at 905-884-1301 ext 5 or at [handsandhearts@live.ca](mailto:handsandhearts@live.ca). This fun evening would be the perfect birthday or Valentine gift for someone special.  
Tickets are \$25 per person or \$45 per family. Later in January and throughout February, tickets will be on sale after church as well. Help us make a difference for African AIDS families and let's meet at THE HOP!  
For more information, please speak to Peg Hiscoke or Donna Harrison of Hands and Hearts for Africa.

## Net Zero

The Net Zero Committee would like to wish you a Happy New Year and to remind you to stay the course on acting for the environment. The issues facing our planet have moved past 'serious' into 'dire'. Rather than being extremist, this is actually probably understating the situation, which has reached this stage because we are often too uncomfortable to speak about the reality. While the science is alarming, there are also many rational answers available and exciting solutions to our global issues - if we will pay attention.

The Net Zero Committee is asking you to resolve to start the conversation with your family and at work, regularly, throughout the coming year. We offer the following resources to help you find quick information to support your conversations:

The David Suzuki Foundation: <http://www.davidsuzuki.org/blogs/science-matters/2017/01/its-time-to-heed-warnings-about-humanitys-collision-course/>

Ecos Environmental Health: <https://www.facebook.com/EcosEnvironmentalHealth>

Keep sharing your eco actions with each other as well - let's challenge ourselves to do what we can to make a difference.

## Fabric Sculpture Workshops



**Fabric Sculpture Workshop on Saturday Jan. 28!** CREATE A MERMAID for your home or garden and help make a difference for African Aids families. Andrea Chan of Creative Genius Within will be our teacher and will show us how to create a lovely piece of art out of tee shirts, foil, wire and Paverpol.

Date? Sat Jan 28

Time? 9-4

Cost? \$125

Anyone 16 to 96 is welcome. Children aged 14 and up with an accompanying adult are also welcome. Andrea would appreciate signup as soon as possible to help her plan ahead. Please see Peg Hiscoke after the service or contact her at [handsandhearts@live.ca](mailto:handsandhearts@live.ca). We regret that the Three Birds workshop on Jan 21 has been withdrawn.

Linda Clark will be at a sign up table in Centennial Hall after the service. She may have a sample mermaid to show you.

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

Our gifts for Mission & Service support the work of reconciliation. Let us hear a story about reconciliation in El Salvador. El Salvador is no stranger to violence. After a civil war that lasted over a decade, peace accords were signed in 1992. But the country is now dealing with an unprecedented rate of murder and gang violence. Miguel Tomás Castro is a pastor of Emmanuel Baptist Church, a Mission & Service partner in the capital, San Salvador. He heard about Canada's Truth and Reconciliation Commission during one of his visits to Canada and was inspired to create a Conference on Peace and Reconciliation in his own country. In March 2016, a United Church delegation, including Moderator Jordan Cantwell and Charlene Burns of the Aboriginal Ministries Circle, travelled to El Salvador to take part. At the conference, Charlene shared her story as an Indian residential school survivor, quoting Justice Murray Sinclair in saying, "The truth was hard. Reconciliation will be even harder." However, as Charlene said when referring to her people and to the people of El Salvador, "We are the generation to choose the path of life for the future of our children and grandchildren and those who are yet to come, the right path, a path toward peace and reconciliation." We sing thanksgiving for the work of reconciliation. If Mission & Service is already a regular part of your giving, thank you so much! If you have not given for Mission & Service, please join me in making Mission & Service a regular part of your life of faith. In all our Mission & Service giving, with a willing heart, we sing thanksgiving to God!

## CREATING AND NURTURING COMMUNITY

### Blog post

Soc Hop - Saturday, February 25, 2017 <https://rhucblog.wordpress.com/2017/01/05/soc-hop-saturday-february-25-2017/>

### Counselling available

Joanne Scofield is currently doing a Counselling Internship at RHUC. This is in conjunction with a course she is taking at the Toronto Centre for Pastoral Care Education. The counselling is confidential and free of charge. If you are interested in counselling, please contact Joanne directly at 416-618-5597.

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