

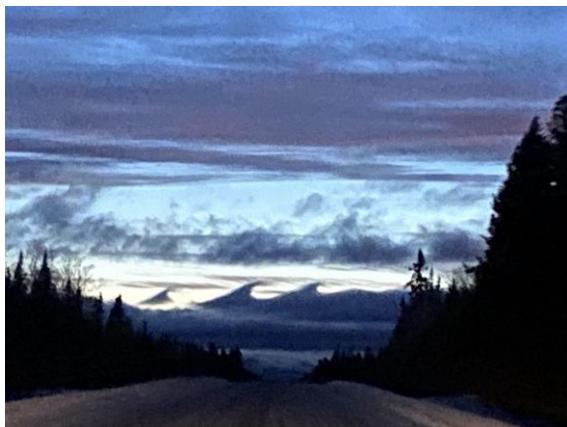


We will continue to livestream Sunday service using Zoom.

Details regarding how to connect to this platform will be emailed each week to those on our contact list. If you are not on our contact list and would like these details, contact James (james@rhuc.org). Following the online service, a recording of the full service will be posted on our Facebook page. Follow this link: [facebook.com/RichmondHillUnitedChurch/](https://www.facebook.com/RichmondHillUnitedChurch/). In addition, the weekly message will be posted on the [RHUC Blog](#).

If you ever find you're encountering issues using Zoom on Sunday, you can always visit <https://status.zoom.us/> to check the site status. To access the home based worship resource so you can use to follow along or take time for personal reflection, follow this link: [Order of service](#) [Hymns](#)

We understand that this is a strange time, but we will get through it together. We are still one community, committed to care for one another with compassion and love.



Minister's Message: "Stay the blazes home." Many of us will remember Nova Scotia premier Stephen McNeil uttering those words in the early days of the pandemic. There was even a song that became an internet sensation. Now here we are again, needing to stay the blazes home. It's more difficult somehow. Back then the lockdowns were something new. Yes, they were challenging because we had no idea how long they would last. But there was also something novel about them and so people found ways to fill the downtime (that is, if they had any, given work from home commitments and keeping children focused on remote schooling). I know one too many people who learned how to bake bread.

This time around the lockdowns have become part of the public health toolbox. The novelty has worn off and we are all feeling on edge, wondering if this time of "sheltering in place" will make a big difference. It will, but only if we give people the capacity to actually stay the blazes home. But how can they when they don't have paid sick days to get tested and then to self isolate? A lot of people live pay cheque to pay cheque. Lost days from work with no pay may be a blip to some but for others it means no food for their children and fear they'll lose their home when the pandemic is over given that landlords are entitled to compensation for each day an eviction notice is not enforced. The end result is people going to work, taking transit, potentially catching or spreading the virus. We need to find ways to respond to these very pressing individual needs so that the health and well-being of everyone can be looked after.

We understand that as people of faith. We know that reaching out to someone in a time of difficulty does more than just help the individual. It has a ripple effect that in the end makes the whole community stronger. So, as we go through another lockdown, one that somehow feels more difficult to many this time around, let us be attentive to the very real needs of individuals. May we continue to make donations for grocery cards to help where we can, make phone calls to one another and offer support, and look after our own physical, mental and spiritual needs by getting outside for some exercise.

We may need to stay the blazes home for a time, but it won't be forever. Let us be patient as we continue look out for one another and extend love where we can.

worship and music

Sunday, January 17: We now turn our attention to Jesus' years of ministry as we recall how he called his first disciples as we reflect on John 1:43-51. Of note is the importance of names and places in the text, that is the importance of identity. We hear this again in "The Name" by Tomas Tranströmer. In "Who Am I?", James reflects on how our sense of identity influences our sense of call both individually and as a community.

[Order of service](#) [Hymns](#)

[Discovery Time at home](#)

James' video to children: <https://1drv.ms/v/s!AlBjmozEVDR0gaFsBvGF-IAM8O462g?e=biZonk>

Sunday, January 24: Jesus once again calls disciples. In Mark 1:14-20 we hear the more familiar calling of the four fishers, Simon, Andrew, James and John. They leave everything behind to follow Jesus. What would we do?

Sunday, January 31: Jesus turns his attention from calling disciples to his ministry of healing (Mark 1:21-28). Julia Ye, our student minister, is preaching.

Sunday, February 7: We mark another Ember Day and take time to focus on the gift of creation and the importance of tackling the climate crisis.

Worship Notes: "To chat or not to chat? That is the question." While that may not be something Hamlet said, it is a question on people's minds as we do more and more on Zoom, especially gathering for worship. As you can imagine, there are people who love to be able to make comments using chat during worship and others who find it distracting, not unlike the question of making an affirmation or clapping when we are worshipping in person. Chat is a feature than can be disabled outright, turned off during the meeting, say for the readings or the sermon, or limited to allow communication to and from the host. We are looking at a variety of options so that we can respond to the needs of pro and con chatters alike. How do you feel about the chat feature? Send James an email (james@rhuc.org).



Sunday offering: RHUC, like other churches, depends on donations and rentals to pay our bills. We appreciate those who use Pre-Authorized

Remittance (PAR). For those not PAR, please consider making sure you get your weekly envelope money in (mailed in or mail slot on Centre. St. door) and we hope as well that you will consider some extra to compensate for the loss in income. You can use e-transfer to office@rhuc.org, Canada Helps, <http://www.rhuc.org/donate.html>, or post-dated cheques to the Church, 10201 Yonge St., Richmond Hill, L4C 3B2.

programs for all

*****NEW*** LENTEN BOOK STUDY:** New Year's Day is barely behind us and Lent is coming! Rev. James Ravenscroft is planning a 2021 Lenten Book Study. **The study will take place on Zoom (or via telephone) on Thursdays at 7 p.m. on the following six dates: Feb. 18 and 25, March 4, 11, 18 and 25.**

The two books we'll be reading and discussing in tandem are *The Skin We're In: A Year of Black Resistance and Power* by Desmond Cole AND *21 Things You May Not Know About the Indian Act: Helping Canadians Make Reconciliation with Indigenous Peoples a Reality* by Bob Joseph. Specific chapters from the two books will be assigned for each session. This study will be a way for us to explore the reality of systemic racism in Canada.

Here are a few words (well, more than a few) about these two books to whet your appetite: Based on a viral article, *21 Things You May Not Know About the Indian Act* is the essential guide to understanding the legal document and its repercussion on generations of Indigenous Peoples, written by a leading cultural sensitivity trainer. Since its creation in 1876, the Indian Act has shaped, controlled, and constrained the lives and opportunities of Indigenous Peoples, and is at the root of many enduring stereotypes. Bob Joseph's book comes at a key time in the reconciliation process, when awareness from both Indigenous and non-Indigenous communities is at a crescendo. Joseph explains how Indigenous Peoples can step out from under the Indian Act and return to self-government, self-determination, and self-reliance - and why doing so would result in a better country for every Canadian. He dissects the complex issues around truth and reconciliation, and clearly demonstrates why learning about the Indian Act's cruel, enduring legacy is essential for the country to move toward true reconciliation.

A bracing, provocative, and perspective-shifting book from one of Canada's most celebrated and uncompromising writers, Desmond Cole. *The Skin We're In* will spark a national conversation, influence policy, and inspire activists. Both Cole's activism and journalism find vibrant expression in his first book, *The Skin We're In*. Puncturing the bubble of Canadian smugness and naive assumptions of a post-racial nation, Cole chronicles just one year—2017—in the struggle against racism in this country. It was a year that saw calls for tighter borders when Black refugees braved frigid temperatures to cross into Manitoba from the States, Indigenous land and water protectors resisting the celebration of Canada's 150th birthday, police across the country rallying around an officer accused of murder, and more. (Source: Indigo.ca)

If you're interested in taking part in this Lenten Study, **please let Sandra Loughton know as soon as possible if you'd like to purchase copies of one or both books.** Here is the approximate cost of the books factoring in Sandra's 10% discount: **The Skin We're In** (hardcover) \$22.50 plus tax and **21 Things** . . . (paperback) \$14.63 plus tax. The order for the books will be placed on Monday, January 25, so the deadline for the group order is Sunday, January 24. You'll be notified by e-mail or phone when the books are available for pick up at the church office. Payment can be made when picking up the books by cash or cheque or by e-transfer at any time after ordering. Please contact Sandra at: bookgirl8@hotmail.com or by telephone at 905.773.5189 to register and order your books. We hope you can join us!

Shalom Seekers: Please join us on **Zoom at 10 a.m. on Mon., Jan. 18th** to continue the discussion of Barbara Brown Taylor's book *Holy Envy: Finding God in the Faith of Others*. This week we'll be discussing Chapter 10: Divine Diversity which starts on page 175. For more details about the group, please speak to Peg Hiscoke or Sandra Loughton (Co-Facilitators).

HAIR: Our Monday-evening study group, HAIR (Heretics, Agnostics, Infidels and Other Riffraff), will resume **on Monday January 11 at 7:00 pm over Zoom**. This group intends to be a place of inquiry and questioning, where doubts are expressed, uncertainties about our faith and its relevance to our daily lives clarified, and the application of the teachings and principles of our Christian faith to major issues of our time are explored, and where we have interesting and stimulating discussions. This year we are using videos of TED talks to launch discussion and have dealt with such topics as environmentalism and climate change, racism and social justice, ethics and values, science and religion, and healthy ageing. Monday's discussion will be based on a TED talk by Celeste Headlee entitled "10 Ways to Have a Better Conversation". These discussions are open to anyone interested, and new members are always welcome. To get the Zoom link please contact David Leyton-Brown at dlbrown@yorku.ca.

Three Rivers Forest Church: This month's event on **Sunday, January 24 at 3 p.m.** will be similar to the Winter Solstice celebration in that it will be a combination of individual practice and a Zoom-based group gathering. Participants are asked to take some time to go for a meditative walk and to gather found natural objects that they can then use to create an image that reminds them of the sun, late January being the time when we begin to notice how the days are in fact getting longer. This time of year is also associated with creativity. Participants are asked to take a picture of their creation so that they may share it with the group. Please contact James (james@rhuc.org) for the Zoom link as well as for additional information.



RHUC Book Club: Please join us on Zoom on **Wednesday, January 27 at 4 p.m.** to discuss the novel **AMERICAN DIRT** by Jeanine Cummins. The Zoom invitation will be sent out the day before the meeting. For more information about the book club, please contact Sandra Loughton, Facilitator, at bookgirl8@hotmail.com. New members are always welcome to see what we're all about.

Two opportunities for Centering Prayer: This Zoom-based group will meet **Mondays at 12:30** for a simple format with 20-minute silent sit. **Wednesdays at 6:30 pm** is a reflective format with readings, Taizé style refrains as well as a discussion time after the 20-minute sit. Contact James (james@rhuc.org) for Zoom links to both prayer times.

church news

Staff: Due to the province wide shut-down, James and Deb are now work remotely from home. James can be reached via cell at 647-705-2754 or email at james@rhuc.org. Email Deb at office@rhuc.org or phone message at 905-884-1301 ext. 5.

MAP Minute: We may be in the middle of a pandemic but that hasn't stopped the work of implementing Mission Action Plan. One key part of our plan is finding ways to communicate who we are to the wider community. In today's world a website is a big part of doing that. To that end, the Communications Team has been looking beyond our "repaired" website to having a new website developed. Given budget constraints, the Team has opted to engage recent website development grads who will use our website as part of their portfolio. As part of this task, the Team has looked at the values and intentions named in our 2018 MAP as the source for a colour palette as well as possible tag line and logo. Please contact James if you have any questions about this project.

More opportunities to connect online: As we once again spend more time in our homes, it is important that we don't isolate ourselves. With this in mind, we are considering offering a weekly evening gathering on Zoom like we did last Spring. This would be an opportunity to check in with friends as well as a chance to stay up to date with what is happening at the church. We are also exploring other ways to gather, perhaps for games, for prayer, to discuss the sermon. If any of these possibilities interest you, email James (james@rhuc.org).



Thomas and Stephanie McBey are thrilled to share the wonderful news of the safe arrival of ~ **Jack Alexander McBey** ~ Jack arrived on Sunday, December 27th, 2020, at 12:52 pm, and weighed 7lb 4oz. Jack and both new parents are doing well! Congratulations!

lifting our spirits

As we once again endure another period of lockdown, we will once again have a section of "RHUC Reflections" focused on keeping everyone's spirits up. This is a section for poems, reflections, recipes, uplifting news items, anything to help us get through this, and to do it together. Please submit items to help us all "lift our spirits". Email Deb at office@rhuc.org.

Love sends us in our full humanity,
to encounter the full humanity of others:
messy, real, complicated as it is.
That compassion may be our practice.
That differences may be our teacher.
That honesty and truth may guide us.
God calls not the perfect but the willing.
With the assurance of the Spirit's companionship, go in peace.
from [enfleshed](#)

Quick and easy Brussels sprouts and apple slaw

- 3 tablespoons apple cider vinegar
- 2 tablespoons lemon juice
- 1 small shallot, very finely minced
- 2 tablespoons smooth Dijon mustard
- 1 tablespoon maple syrup
- 4-5 tablespoons extra virgin olive oil
- salt
- Freshly ground black pepper
- 750–850 grams Brussels sprouts
- 1 sweet apple, thinly sliced
- 1/2 cup dried cranberries
- 1/2 cup toasted pecan pieces
- 130 grams goat cheese, plain or cranberry, crumbled



Directions

1. In the bottom of a large bowl, whisk together the cider vinegar, lemon juice, shallot, mustard, and maple syrup. While whisking, slowly drizzle in the olive oil and continue to whisk until the dressing comes together. Season with salt and pepper and set aside.
2. Trim the Brussels sprouts then, using a food processor fitted with a slicing blade, shred the sprouts. Dump the shredded sprouts into the bowl with the dressing and add in the thinly sliced apple, dried cranberries, and toasted pecan pieces.
3. To serve, place the slaw in a large serving bowl and top with the crumbled goat cheese.

Film: The film *Messiah/Complex* is available until the end of January. "[*Messiah/Complex* is] an iconoclastic new production of Handel's classic oratorio, which draws on biblical texts to form a stylized narrative of suffering, hope and redemption." [Click here](#) for detailed instructions.

outreach

Out of the Cold: Mark **Saturday February 20th** on your calendar and join us in a virtual walk for Out-of-the-Cold's annual fundraiser walk. This year it will probably be held virtually, and more details will follow. We will need a team name to register so send your suggestion to Donna Smith, donnasmith44@rogers.com. Hopefully this event will help connect us when we can't gather at our church but also support this very worthy cause.

community news

The Village of Richmond Hill BIA: *Skillage in the Village* Scavenger Hunt. Below are the details How to Play. The Village of Richmond Hill Business Improvement Area (BIA) has partnered with Brainy Games to create an outdoor, free to play, virtual Scavenger Hunt.

Who? Play alone or as part of a small team (physically-distant). All ages.

What & Where? Go back in time, solving over 100+ clues from Richmond Hill's past & present. Locations in the vicinity of Yonge Street (Major Mackenzie Dr. to Crosby Ave.)

How? Click the link. www.hidden.live

- Register to play. Create a profile.
- Start playing. Once signed up, select an image.
- Each image will have something missing from it.
- Your job is to go to the location, find & fill in the missing answers.
- Correct answers = points.
- Team/person with most points at end of the Scavenger Hunt wins.

Why? FUN! Learn about Downtown Richmond Hill - the Village that became a City.

Prizes: Winner(s) get 1 of 2 Gift Certificates (\$250 each) for a BIA member store of Your Choice (see Business Directory on website)

Taking pics? Tag us #skillageinthevillageRH

Only available until **January 31st, 2021**.

Sign Up Now & Start Playing!

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.