

This week at RHUC

Sunday, January 20

10:30 a.m. Service – Sanctuary
12:00 p.m. Youth Choir practice – Parlour
12:00 p.m. Exploration Class - Chapel

Monday, January 21

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

Tuesday, January 22

7:00 p.m. Beavers – gym

Wednesday, January 23

12:00 p.m. Bible Study – Chapel
7:00 p.m. RHUC Book club - Chapel
7:00 p.m. Scouts/Venturers – gym

Thursday, January 24

6:30 p.m. Community Roundtable
7:30 p.m. Chancel Choir – Parlour

Saturday, January 26

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

WORSHIPPING TOGETHER

Minister's message

The Minister's Message spot in RHUC Online can be an opportunity for a second go at a sermon, or in this case a Learning Together talk. With a baptism happening on Sunday I emphasized the significance of how being baptised makes us part of a wide family around the world, including people from Syria, Nigeria and Colombia, along with any number of other countries. In emphasizing this I also gave the impression that people of other faith traditions may not be children of God. I apologize for that impression because it is certainly not my belief. I believe that every human on this planet is part of a vast family, all of us siblings. The diversity of faiths, including no particular faith, is a gift, enabling all of us to see a larger picture of life's sacredness and our call within it. While the term "Body of Christ" does refer to the Christian church writ large, this too can be limiting, especially when we move away from identifying Christ exclusively with Jesus. If we understand Christ as Logos, God's "Conversation" with creation (as colleague Victoria Looz describes it), then Christ is revealed wherever people are searching for meaning, seeking understanding and wisdom, in spiritual dialogue with the divine and one another. All of creation, along with the sacred scriptures from many traditions and scientific exploration, is God speaking to us. In this capacity the Body of Christ is all of us, all of creation. We are all children of God, humans and non-humans alike.

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

Sunday, January 20: With the story of Jesus returning to Nazareth (Luke 4:14-21) as a backdrop, we are pleased to hear from Melissa Carter about her experience in Central America, expressing in her own way the significance of proclaiming good news to the poor, bringing sight to the "blind" and releasing captives.

Sunday, January 27: We take a brief break from Luke's gospel as we turn to John 2:1-11, the story of Jesus attending a wedding feast and turning water into wine.

January Forest Church activity: Meditation Walk and Mandala Making on January 27 at **3:00 pm at Phyllis Rawlinson Park**. Take part in a meditative walk followed by a joint mandala making activity using found objects. We will take time to give thanks for the strengthening light and the promise of the coming spring. Be sure to dress warmly. Refreshments to follow.

Sunday February 3rd: 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.

BUILDING FOR MINISTRY

Community Engagement Task Group – volunteers needed for Community Roundtable!

Community Roundtable: Thursday, January 24 from 6:30 to 9:00 pm. As part of the ongoing implementation of our Mission Action Plan to become "a centre for community", the Community Engagement Task Group has been organizing a community roundtable with leaders in various sectors in our town.

To help make the roundtable a success we are still in need of: 2 parking attendants (these people simply give a map of parking areas nearby to those seeking a spot), 3 greeters (to help serve appetizers and drinks during the evening), 3 recorders (take notes of the table conversations on a laptop or tablet, or if handwritten to transcribe on a computer within 36 hours). Please sign up in Centennial Hall after worship on Sunday.

Living In Right Relations Committee

Last week we discussed the Sixties Scoop referring to a practice that occurred in Canada (from the late 1950's into the 80's) of taking, or "scooping up" children from their families and communities for placement in foster homes or adoption. Nested in the explanation of this horrible act of cultural genocide, there was one little sentence. Once small sentence, easily passed over in a paragraph of shocking enlightenment for those caught unaware. "The continued practice of taking Indigenous, Inuit and Métis children from their families and communities and placing them in foster homes or for adoption is termed Millennium Scoop." The CONTINUED practice. Not was, but is.

Sunday January 13, 2019, The Toronto Star was one of several news outlets featuring a story written by journalist Steve Lambert, of the Canadian Press. (<https://www.nationalnewswatch.com/author/steve-lambert-the-canadian-press-2/>) Steve reported the existence of two live social media videos showing an Indigenous mother, in Winnipeg, having her newborn removed by social workers and police. The mother was not told when she might see her child again. "Birth of a Family" is a 2017 First Nations Documentary produced by the National Film Board of Canada. Director Tasha Hubbard and co-writer Betty Ann Adams both experienced forced removal and adoption from their birth parents into non-indigenous homes. "Canada's documentary films festival described the film as a "raw emotion, a heart-wrenching combination of pain and joy, shown by the siblings throughout the film is as moving as anything I have seen on film. Their willingness to lay bare their experiences and feelings is inspiring, and while their story is devastating to watch it acts as a reminder of the resilience of the First Nations people who, against all odds and despite every effort to destroy them, continue to persevere."

Government policies have been discontinued, multiple class action lawsuits filed, creation of national bodies of survivors, settlements, The Truth and Reconciliation Commission, The Aboriginal Justice Implementation Commission, The Kimelman Report (<https://digitalcollection.gov.mb.ca/awweb/pdfopener?smd=1&did=24788&md=1>) and still the abuse continues.

Jane Philpott, Outgoing Minister of Indigenous Services, had this to say, "The video itself was disturbing and raised a number of questions, obviously, for anybody who saw it." Newly appointed Minister of Indigenous Service Seamus O'Regan can be reached at Seamus.OREgan@parl.gc.ca and <https://www.aadnc-aadnc.gc.ca/eng/1291132820288/1291132853616>

[Sources: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sixties_Scoop, https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Birth_of_a_Family

HOSPITALITY & WORKING FOR JUSTICE

Hands & Hearts for Africa meeting

HANDS AND HEARTS FOR AFRICA MEETING POSTPONED TO SUNDAY JANUARY 27th.

All are welcome to attend **our January 27th Meeting of Hands and Hearts for Africa in the Garden Room after the service from 12 noon until 1pm.** We will be firming up plans for our fabulous February 23 Sock Hop which includes live music, pasta dinner and, this year, a slightly more elegant silent auction.

We will be discussing a recent January letter from Ilana Landsberg-Lewis, director of the Stephen Lewis Foundation. In this letter, we will celebrate small steps towards an AIDS free Africa but we will also hear her frustrations and disappointments. If you are curious about the work of the Foundation, please come and join us. We welcome new helpers at our events, especially teens that need community service hours. For more information, come to the Garden Room on January 27th or speak to Peg Hiscoke or Donna Harrison.

Hands & Hearts for Africa Virtual Walk

Virtual Walk around Africa: Almost to Cape Town, the "Mother City": As we celebrate the New Year, we approach Cape Town, South Africa on the most southerly tip of the African continent. This city is the oldest South African city, known to locals as the "Mother City." As we walk in the shadow of Table Mountain, we remember the sad history of apartheid and the painful struggle for liberation, led by Nelson Mandela. The surprises to newcomers like us are the beautiful beaches, the white-washed Cape Dutch architecture, and the many opportunities for adventure and culture. Sadly, we only have time for a short break in the cool quiet of the beautiful Kirstenbosch Botanical Gardens. We are here in this beautiful city to visit with leaders of two innovative community-based programmes supported by the Stephen Lewis Foundation. In these programmes, we see the living out of the African saying that "Children are the reward of life", We have walked many kilometers to hear how these new initiatives address the particular treatment needs of children and youth.

Our first visit is to the Blue Roof Clinic which is home to the Kidz Alive programme, with its focus on improving the interaction of healthcare workers with children around HIV issues. Kidz Alive builds adult skills and confidence and encourages counselling in the child's own language, the use of play and art therapies and creation of child-friendly spaces. ...

Our second visit is with leaders of MUSIC WORKS, which runs weekly music therapy sessions for children who have been referred by health clinic staff, teachers, nurses, or parents. In the 'Music for Life' programme there are many stories of how children, traumatized by AIDS, have begun to heal by learning music skills and by making music together. We are delighted to be asked to join in the music. However, we will soon have to take our leave and begin the trek to Windhoek Namibia to the northwest.

Update about our Virtual Walking Team: New feet on the road! We are pleased to welcome some new walkers to our Virtual Walking Team. Their names are Don, Glen, and Robert. They are family members who have decided to ramp up their support of our efforts in the final leg of our journey. They have already given us a leap forward and with their added steps we hope to reach our destination of Gabarone Botswana by February 23, the night of our Sock Hop. We remind you that there is still time to make a donation in support of our walking efforts up until February 23. .For more information, please speak to Donna Harrison or Peg Hiscoke or contact us at handsandhearts@live.ca

Net Zero

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

Minutes for Mission

Our gifts for Mission & Service support the work of LGBTQ Two-Spirit justice and global partnership. Here's a story from the shores of Lake Couchiching, Ontario, on the territory of the Chippewas of Rama First Nation. In late 2017, about 40 LGBTQ people, Two-Spirit people, and straight and cisgender allies gathered from 11 countries to support one another and work toward the inclusion of people of all sexual orientations and gender identities in all parts of the world. Two-Spirit participants provided leadership, guiding the group in lighting the sacred fire, leading sunrise ceremonies, a Talking Circle, and evening gatherings, and sharing teachings about Two-Spirit identities. Participants were cared for by the sacred fire and the firekeepers, receiving a gift beyond compare. They also learned about the role that colonialism plays in the oppression of LGBTQ Two-Spirit people. One of the Two-Spirit participants shared, "To be given the honour of being the doorway keeper for the circle and the conduit within the circle to the pathway of the Sacred Fire, thank you!... Against deep odds we heard that changes are happening all over, step by step, life by life." We give thanks for the gifts of Two-Spirit people, the work of our global partners, and the ministry of Affirm United.

ENGAGING, CHALLENGING & GROWING OUR FAITH

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 2: Who is Jesus?

January 20: Jesus' Teaching

January 27: Jesus' Death and Resurrection

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, with group and individual time to discuss our faith and we get to know each other better than 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!

Women's Spirituality

The gathering of this new year will be **Saturday January 19th** at the home of Donna Smith, 67 Richmond St. #302 at 10:00. It will be good to be together as a group and share some food and conversation in a relaxed morning.

RHUC Book Club

Please join us this **Wednesday, January 23rd at 7 p.m. in the Chapel** to discuss Alice Hoffman's novel, **The Marriage of Opposites**. New members are always welcome!

Shalom Seekers

Please join us on **Monday, January 21 from 9:30 to 11:30 a.m. in the Chapel** when we will be listening to and discussing an interview with L'Arche founder and social innovator, Jean Vanier. The subject of the interview/podcast is The Wisdom of Tenderness.

Feel free to come for one session or a few to try us out! For more information, please contact one of the group's co-facilitators: Sandra Loughton or Peg Hiscoke.

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.

Shining Waters Regional Council, Region 10

NAME OF THE REGION: Shining Waters Regional Council is the name of our new region. In the Anishinaabemowin language Georgian Bay is referred to as 'Shining Waters'. Also the word 'Ontario' is related to Haudenosaunee words describing a beautiful or sparkling lake.

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.