

Circles Process – Menu of Options Update

A big **THANK YOU** for all those who were able to stay after worship on Sunday to complete the Menu of Options Survey. We appreciate the time that you spent and believe it is very important as we move forward in this work. Some people took surveys home to complete – we are asking for you to return them by January 28th at the very latest – sooner is better. We have a great deal of tallying/analysis to do!! Thank you for your commitment to provide your feedback.

There is another opportunity to participate within community rather than having to do the survey on your own – Wed January 24th 7:00 – 9:00 pm. James will be hosting this extra session at RHUC. Please contact the office at 905 884 1301 or office@rhuc.org to leave your name so that we make sure we have enough copies of the survey on hand.

If you would like a copy of The Menu of Options to work on at home and bring back to the church by January 28th please contact the church office at 905 884 1301 or office@rhuc.org to make arrangements to receive a document. Also, the Circles Process Team would like to clarify a couple of things to ensure everyone understands where we are in the process:

1. To the best of our ability, we gathered the input we received from the Listening and Conversation Circles into the Menu of Options in a way which we believe reflects and honours the many voices of the congregation. Every comment is not included, but when a theme emerges repeatedly, comments that enrich that theme are included in the goal/objective. Of course all of these options need to be assessed together to determine where there is sufficient energy within the congregation to pursue different initiatives.
2. The section relating to the building is by no means definitive or final in any way. We are only testing the waters/willingness of the congregation to consider ideas that emerged from the Circle Processes so far. There are many many considerations to be taken into account before any decisions about the building are made. Please do not jump to any conclusions at this point. It is very early in the process. At this point we are testing the ideas that emerged in the Listening and Conversation Circles but those will not be the only ideas considered.
3. Similarly there are financial implications to much of what has been suggested. We are acutely aware of issues related to financial sustainability, and this too will be a key consideration as we move forward. The clearer we are about our direction and values, and excited about where we are headed, the stronger the likelihood that we are able to find the resources to support our efforts.

We hope you feel that your voices are being heard. Yes – it takes a lot of time, but there is a lot at stake, and we all care deeply about RHUC and want to discern the best way forward together.

Here are some thoughts from one of our participants who completed the survey on Sunday:

"Thank you so much to the Menu of Options team! I can't even begin to imagine the amount of work to concisely capture all of the different pieces of information that were presented at our full day session at the Legion. The Menu of Options clearly had a lot of thought put into it. You were able to create a clear, significantly shorter list of ideas while at the same time still honouring what had been said at previous meetings. I could see and hear what had been said in our discussions both at the first and second meeting. We have a lot of work to do but it is now feeling possible. Thank you for all of your work and I look forward to our discussions moving forward."

We look forward to bringing all of our shared voices together for a report to the Annual Meeting on March 4th.

A very big **THANK YOU** too, to Deb in the office who helped to format and copy the survey, to Glen who prepared the food for the survey session, the coffee team and Donna Smith and the other kind folk who helped to set up and clear up!

If you have any questions, please don't hesitate to connect with a member of the Circles Process Team: Terry Davies, Nancy Hart, Karen Hilfman Millson (facilitator) James Ravenscroft, Joanne Scofield, Jane Wedlock

This week at a glance

Sunday, January 28 –4th Sunday after Epiphany
 10:30 a.m. Service – Sanctuary
 12:00 p.m. Youth Choir practice – Common Room

Monday, January 29 – cash card order due
 9:30 a.m. Shalom Seekers – Chapel
 7:00 p.m. H.A.I.R. – Chapel
 7:00 p.m. Cubs - gym

Tuesday, January 30
 7:00 p.m. Beavers – gym
 7:00 p.m. Tai Chi – Garden room

Wednesday, January 31
 7:00 p.m. Scouts/Venturers – gym
 7:00 p.m. Book club - Chapel
 7:30 p.m. Trustees – Garden Room

Thursday, February 1
 6:15 p.m. Bible Study - Chapel
 7:30 p.m. Chancel Choir – Common Room

Friday, February 2
 9:15 a.m. Yoga Energetics – Upper gym
 A perfect way to start your day! By meditation, strengthening muscles and increasing your flow of energy.

Saturday, February 3
 3:30 p.m. Djembe drumming –Garden Room

WORSHIPPING TOGETHER

Worship

This Sunday: We welcome Rev. Warren Ball of St. Matthew's United Church for a pulpit exchange! Our scripture reading comes from Mark 1:21-28 in which Jesus and his newly called disciples go to the Sabbath gathering in Capernaum. There he helps someone who is struggling with a "demon" but everyone is shocked because he teaches with authority.

Sunday, February 4: We will hear a continuation of this first chapter of Mark. Our service will be co-led by members of our youth group who will have been reflecting together as part of their weekend retreat experience.

Minister's Message

Heads up! The balding bearded minister with glasses you will encounter next Sunday is Rev. Warren Ball from St. Matthew's United, our sister congregation just a few blocks away. I am grateful to Rev. Warren for suggesting we do this. There is a practical reason. When either of us is away on study leave or holiday, the other person covers for emergencies. We encountered this last summer when Warren officiated the memorial for Joan Moon. Given this dynamic, it is important that each congregation gets to know the minister of the other. Connected to this are the changes that are taking place both for us as a congregation and in our denomination. During our circle conversations we named more than once the importance of forming partnerships with other groups, including churches. An obvious first go at this is reaching out to our neighbouring United Church congregations and see where we can work together. This is also the vision of clusters and networks we are being encouraged to form as we move from Presbyteries and Conferences to Regional Councils. There is also a spiritual reason. We are all part of the same "body" in Christ, branches on the One Vine. Coming together to share rather than being isolated is what we are called to do as a wider community than just our own. As the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity concludes, may we find more and more ways to work together.

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

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.

Cash Card order

If you would like to purchase cash cards for Christmas please **submit your order by Monday, January 29**. The list can be seen on the website under 'Donate to our Church' which you can print out. There are many stores to choose from such as:

- Loblaws/No Frills/Long's Metro/Sobeys
- Esso/ Petro-Canada/Shell
- Tim Hortons/Starbucks
- Chapters
- Cineplex/Silver City

Support this monthly RHUC fundraiser. 1-10% of your purchase goes directly to RHUC!

HOSPITALITY & WORKING FOR JUSTICE

Winter coats collected for First Nations Teens - update!

Warmest thanks to all RHUC folks and friends who contributed time, talent and treasured gently used or new coats and other winter wear and sports items to our shipment in support of the 100 indigenous students of Dennis Franklin Cromarty High School!

[Your Certificate of Appreciation link is attached](#). Please insert your name and print your Certificate, which is a small token in tribute, acknowledging generosity of spirit and sharing between friends. For those who shared the word of our project with others, please forward the certificate link to them so they can do the same by inserting their name and printing their own Appreciation Certificate.



With the leadership of Outreach, RHUC is sending \$1000 of RHUC Special Advent Givings to assist DFC school's programs supporting the students as well - and the school is hugely grateful for this support. Thanks to all participants, donors, RHUC staff, volunteers and friends!
Living in Right Relations Team, Outreach

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 United Church Women. Since the union of the Woman's Missionary Society (WMS) and the Woman's Association (WA) in 1962, for 55 years UCW members have lived out their mission to love God foster Christian commitment be faithful embrace spirituality promote respect and love for all God's creation We celebrate the extraordinary devotion of these ordinary heroes who have raised money for Mission & Service (over \$134 million) advocated for human rights in Canada and internationally cared for the sick promoted cooperation and leadership fed the church and community joined protests studied the Bible written letters to politicians and government leaders provided fellowship and service supported the ministry of global partners, especially the Morogoro Women's Training Centre in Tanzania, where birth attendants are trained to go out into communities and offer a healthy start for newborns as well as care for the mothers laughed, loved, and made room for women of all ages Please offer your gratitude for UCW and join them in making Mission & Service a regular part of your life of faith.

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

WE NEED YOUR HELP! The youth will be having an overnight retreat on Saturday February 3rd and we are looking for help in providing the food! Meals and snacks have been planned so all you need to do is sign up on Sunday the 28th and deliver it to the church by Friday the 2nd at 4pm. Paula will be in Centennial Hall on Sunday with the sign-up sheet. Thanks in advance for supporting our youth ministry! *Paula and James*

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, January 29th at 9:30 a.m.** in the Chapel as we continue our study of the DVD "This Changed Everything" on the 500th year since the Protestant Reformation. We will be looking at a host of interesting topics such as: John Calvin, the Priesthood, The Middle Ages, Sacraments, and Salvation.

For more information about the group, please speak to one of the facilitators: Dawn Moon, Peg Hiscoke or Sandra Loughton. New members are always welcome.

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

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

RHUC Book Club

Please join us on **Wednesday, January 31st at 7 p.m. in the Chapel** to discuss Chris Bohjalian's fifteenth book, **The Sandcastle Girls**.

"This spellbinding tale travels between Aleppo, Syria, in 1915 and Bronxville, New York, in 2012—a sweeping historical love story steeped in the author's Armenian heritage, making it his most personal novel to date." (Amazon.ca)
This novel shines a light on the Armenian genocide which saw the death of 1.5 million Armenians.

For more information about the group, please call the church office at 905.884.1301 or speak to the group's facilitator, Sandra Loughton. New members are always warmly welcome to try out the group!

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.

Geoff Loughton and Sabina Staempfli are pleased to announce their recent engagement.

They plan to get married in the spring of 2019. Congratulations!.

CREATING AND NURTURING COMMUNITY

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

High Notes Gala

We at High Notes Avante Productions Inc believe music and words have the power to create social change, inspire, empower and give hope to those touched by mental illness. Our 'image raising' events feature world class performances and speakers, and showcase the lives and talents of artists and personalities who are living good lives despite having an existing or past mental health challenge. We aim to erase stigma, educate, create community and save lives by encouraging others to reach out and also share their stories. Mental illness is nothing to be ashamed of. If 1 in 5 people are affected and we all know someone who suffers, we should show the same compassion and respect for those affected by mental illness as for those affected by physical illness. Our events are therapeutic for those affected and an eye opener for the community at large. We invite you to get involved because **We ALL have a (mental health) story.**

Join us for an evening of inspiring stories, beautiful music, facts and laughter!

WHO: Luba Goy, Lloyd Robertson, Michael Landsberg, Orlando Da Silva, Giles Tomkins, Michael Bridge, Frank Horvat, Suzanne Smoke, Phillip Krivor, Mark Selby & Jennifer Walls

WHAT: The 5th HIGH NOTES GALA for MENTAL HEALTH celebrates, respects and honours those touched by mental illness with an evening of music and testimonials from celebrities and artists.

WHY: Mental illness is nothing to be ashamed of and deserves the same compassion and respect as physical illnesses. Learn the facts, make new connections and mingle with representatives from mental health support organizations.

WHERE: The Richmond Hill Centre for Performing Arts
10268 Yonge Street, Richmond Hill

WHEN: Thursday February 1 @ 7:30 pm (VIP reception @ 6:45 pm)

TICKETS: 905.787.8811 | RHCENTRE.CA
Regular: \$35 | Students: \$10 | Current Mental Health Clients: \$10
VIP tickets \$65 (include a Meet & Greet Dessert Reception in the Plaza Suite)



HIGH NOTES AVANTE is a registered charitable organization using the power of words and music to raise the image of mental illness, educate and reduce social isolation for those touched by mental illness.



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