



Sunday worship each week is livestreamed at 10:30 AM 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: [Home Prayers Hymns](#). For Virtual Sunday School from 9:30 – 10:00 a.m. contact Jeffrey Dale, Youth Ministries at [jdale@united-church.ca](mailto:jdale@united-church.ca).

In this challenging time, it is important that we look after each other. If you are able to pick up groceries and other supplies for those who are homebound, please contact the church. Equally, if you are in need of this support, call the church or email [office@rhuc.org](mailto:office@rhuc.org). If you are in need of pastoral care or spiritual support, please contact Rev. James Ravenscroft. Call him at 647-705-2754 or you can reach him by email, [james@rhuc.org](mailto:james@rhuc.org).

May we continue to keep each other and world in prayer, especially those who are most vulnerable, those who are grieving or struggling, and all of those on the frontline putting themselves and their families at risk to keep all of us safe. We will get through this together.



**Minister's Message:** When I turn on the news or read the paper, there are moments when I start to feel overwhelmed. Topping the hour is understandably updates about COVID-19, but the pandemic is not the only thing going on. In other headlines you read about the US pulling out of the WHO, the continuing push to defund police in the wake of systemic racism, and concerns over government transparency about national debt. Dig a little deeper and you realize that there are still protests in Hong Kong, especially given the new legislation passed in Beijing, that there continues to be volatility between India and China, and that there are renewed tensions between the US and China over the South China Sea, and that is just China related. There continues to be a humanitarian crisis over ongoing civil war in Yemen, the pandemic is exacerbating food insecurity in the global south and there are still fears that the Israeli government is going to annex a portion of the West Bank. There is still lack of movement in regard to resolving endemic injustices impacting Indigenous people, LGBTQIA+ people are still threatened in many parts of the world, and the focus on COVID-19 does not mean that the climate crisis has miraculously disappeared. If you weren't feeling overwhelmed before, perhaps I just tipped you over the edge. So, in the wake of all of this what do we do? Pick an issue. There may be many things going on in the world, but none of us is shouldering them all by ourselves. If I try I am more likely to not do anything because the sheer scope leaves me paralyzed. Instead I follow my passion trusting that others are following theirs. Then like the adage about eating an elephant, we are together tackling the issues one bite at a time. And as we each focus on the one or two concerns that we are passionate about, we actually have an impact on others. After all, no one issue stands alone. Rather, they are mostly interconnected. So as many of us take some time this summer to recharge, may we do so trusting that the concerns on our hearts are not forgotten. Though we may become overwhelmed from time to time by the scope of injustices and other issues, we can trust that as a community we are tending to the many needs of our world.

## worship and music

**Sunday, July 12:** We reflect together on the parable of the farmer sowing seeds in different types of soil (Matthew 13:1-9). We are used to hearing the explanation that Jesus gives as well but in "Finding Good Soil" we will instead simply listen to the initial parable to consider what it means for us in our day, especially when also considering an excerpt from Barbara Holme's *Race and the Cosmos: An Invitation to View the World Differently*.

**Sunday, July 19 and 26:** We are pleased to welcome Rev. Linda Butler who will lead our Zoom-based worship while James is away.

**Sunday, August 2:** We welcome Rev. Evelyn McLachlan to lead worship.

**Upcoming vacation:** James will be taking a 3 week vacation beginning on July 16 through to August 5.

**Worship Notes:** As the economy slowly reopens, as a congregation we are opting to continue worshipping only via Zoom throughout the summer. While it may be nice to see one another in the flesh, it is also critical that we keep everyone safe. We have a Transition Team looking at how best to implement public health protocols for congregants and renters. It is likely that even when we reopen the sanctuary for worship, we will continue to offer a livestreaming option. The worship services are recorded and available for viewing through our Facebook page, <https://www.facebook.com/RichmondHillUnitedChurch/>. We also have a YouTube channel so you can access the service that way.

**Sunday offering:** RHUC, like other churches, depends on donations and rentals to pay our bills. Our building continues to cost money even while closed and we continue to keep our employees working, albeit in ways that are different from normal tasks. We appreciate those who use Pre-Authorized Remittance (PAR). For those not PAR, please consider making sure you get your weekly envelope money in and we hope as well you will consider some extra to compensate for the loss in income. **You can use e-transfer to [office@rhuc.org](mailto: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. We are keeping in touch with the United Church of Canada and governments to ensure we get what bridge funds might be available to us during physical distancing.



## church news

**Grocery Home Deliveries:** Do you, or someone you know, need groceries delivered to your home during COVID-19? RHUC has a team of volunteers in place to respond. We can shop on your behalf for food, prescriptions and other basic needs in local stores, and deliver to your doorstep.

**Organizers:** June Blanchette 905-780-0048, Donna Smith 905-884-6307, Doug Loweth, 416-553-8706

**Drivers:** Heather Hartung, Marise Blanchette, Amy Hammer, Gaye Spence, Nancy Coxford, Doug Loweth.

**A Minute from the Board:** The Transition Team is looking at public health protocols along with other issues to determine how to eventually proceed with worship, programs and small group gatherings in a way that keeps everyone safe. The team is also looking at how to implement protocols with tenants. What is clear thus far is that we will need to continue with online worship in some capacity in order to keep the most vulnerable members of RHUC safe and healthy. We will also be looking at which rooms are best suited to hold various groups in order to maintain physical distancing. We will be sending out a survey soon to give us the information that is needed to make the best decisions for all concerned.

## WITH GRATITUDE AND DEEP APPRECIATION TO OUR STAFF

I am writing to express my deep appreciation for the extraordinary efforts that are being made by our staff during this most difficult time as we continue apart from one another. Efforts have been herculean. We want you to know that we appreciate your dedication, commitment to finding new and creative ways to do things in this unprecedented time. For keeping us connected. For your leadership, care and support. For encouragement to move into the future with a strong vision of our mission. For humour - often needed, as we navigate uncharted waters, when there is no map and the future continues to be uncertain. James, Barry, Deb, Dan and Paulette - we want to express our sincere thanks. In gratitude, *Jane Wedlock, Board Chair*

**A Request for Help:** As the self-isolating protocols continue, there is an escalating impact on our economy. Money is going to get tight for some, including friends, neighbours and members of RHUC. To this end, we invite you to help out if you can by donating grocery cards. When you order your grocery card (still a fundraiser for our church, BTW), donate a card to help someone who needs assistance. Contact Deb ([office@rhuc.org](mailto:office@rhuc.org)) for more information.



## RHUC PHONE TREE CREATED & GOING LIVE NOW!

We have created a Phone Tree.

Everyone in the church has been assigned to a Phone Tree branch by their postal code, so each

branch is a certain area.

### Need to change your address or tel # or

Questions on Phone tree: Email/Call Nicole or Penny.

Nicole Moore 905-508-5253 [willowrose@pathcom.com](mailto:willowrose@pathcom.com)

Penny Fabbro 905-508-6594 [pennyfabbro@rogers.com](mailto:pennyfabbro@rogers.com)

## programs for all

**Women's Spirituality:** We are planning to get together during July and August this year on our regular day, the second Saturday of the month, and we will meet this **Saturday July 11th at the Heritage Centre Park at 10:00** - bring a lawn chair and your beverage and we will share our time together, with social distancing rules. If the heat is too oppressive or if it rains, we will meet at the church where the chapel is now set up with chairs at social distancing for 12 people.

**Shalom Seekers:** Shalom Seekers meets online on Zoom on Monday mornings. Please join us on **Monday July 13 at 10 a.m.** by phone or Zoom to catch up and stay connected. You will receive an invitation e-mail on Sunday with the Zoom link and the information you will need to call in. For more details about the group, please contact either facilitator, Peg Hiscoke & Sandra Loughton.

**Weekly Meditation:** Weekly meditation is on hold while James is on holiday from July 16 through to August 5.

**RHUC Book Club:** We decided that we would continue meeting for the summer, so here is the information for anyone who'd like to join the Zoom meeting -- via telephone or video! New members always welcome to join.

- **Wednesday, July 22nd at 4 p.m.** to discuss *The Aviator's Wife* by Melanie Benjamin
- **Wednesday, August 26th at 4 p.m.** to discuss *Five Wives* by Joan Thomas

For more information, please contact me at [bookgirl8@hotmail.com](mailto:bookgirl8@hotmail.com). Please stay safe and keep on reading!  
*Sandra Loughton, Book Club Facilitator*

**Pub Theology:** We meet online once again to discuss faith, spirituality and life's big questions. The next online gathering is on **Fri., August 28 at 7:30 PM**. Contact James for the meeting log-in info.

## keeping up our spirits

**As we look to the coming days and weeks of "sheltering in place" it is important we keep our spirits up. Each week RHUC Reflections will include some ideas, reflective words, poems, recipes, pictures (send to Deb at office@rhuc.org), etc. to help in this challenging time.**

**A spiritual approach to the Lockdown:** James Finley from the "Center for Action and Contemplation" offers the following contemplative practice to help us experience the love of God even in the midst of chaos. "What is the practice that matters now? A practice is any act habitually entered into with our whole heart that takes us to the deeper place. Some of these practices, we might not think of as prayer and meditation: tending the roses, a long, slow walk to no place in particular, a quiet moment at day's end, being vulnerable in the presence of that person in whose presence we're taken to the deeper place, the pause between two lines of a poem. There are these acts that reground us in the depth dimensions of our life that matter most; so if we're faithful to our practice, our practice will be faithful to us. . . . In this contemplative practice, sit and renew your awareness that you're sitting in the presence of God all about you and within you. As you inhale, inhale God's silent "I love you," in which God is being poured out and utterly given away to you as the miracle of your very life. Then when you exhale, exhale yourself in love: "I love you." And so, we are breathing [along with God], "I love you. I love you. I love you. I love you." From the reciprocity of love, destiny is fulfilled, and the foundations of suffering are healed. As we sit this way, suffering arises. The suffering then might be our anxiety and concerns today, for ourselves, for our loved ones, for the world. As we sit in the midst

of the arising of the anxiety, when we inhale, we inhale this love of God loving us through and through, anxiety and all, finding no hindrance in our anxiety, loving us so unexplainably forever. Then when we exhale, we exhale ourselves in love, anxiety and all, to the love that loves us. This requires gentle perseverance, because anxiety arises again. It doesn't automatically go away. We sit with it, we lean into it again, and we hold fast to this love that sustains us in the midst of things. It is in this way, little by little, that we come to understand the unsubstantiality of everything but love. Love and love alone has the authority to name who we are. This practice, then, experientially grounds us in this love wisdom. This love wisdom—grounded in practice—empowers us to go out and share this with other people in the circumstances in which we find ourselves."

## outreach

**Minute for Mission:** The term "partnership" can describe a wide range of relationships undertaken by the church. The work of the church is accomplished through working with others—some full ministries of the church, including community-based organizations, as well as through relationships with organizations and coalitions we know as national partners. Mission & Service supports partnerships with community ministries across Canada. In addition to congregations, the church includes ministries such as camps, campus ministries, and community and social justice ministries that support people seeking basic needs such as food, clothing, shelter, advocacy services, and spiritual guidance. There are over 60 community ministries. Community ministries are often full ministries and expressions of the church, while some have developed into community-based organizations that partner with a variety of local government and nongovernmental organizations. Through these relationships, the church is able to faithfully and more fully make a difference in the lives of vulnerable people. These ministries call the church to risk new forms of life and membership, to be willing to be transformed by those on the margins of society, and to join them as the place where God is present and active. Through partner relationships, the church engages in advocacy and justice, research and policy, education and theological reflection, congregational engagement for justice-making, and community support.

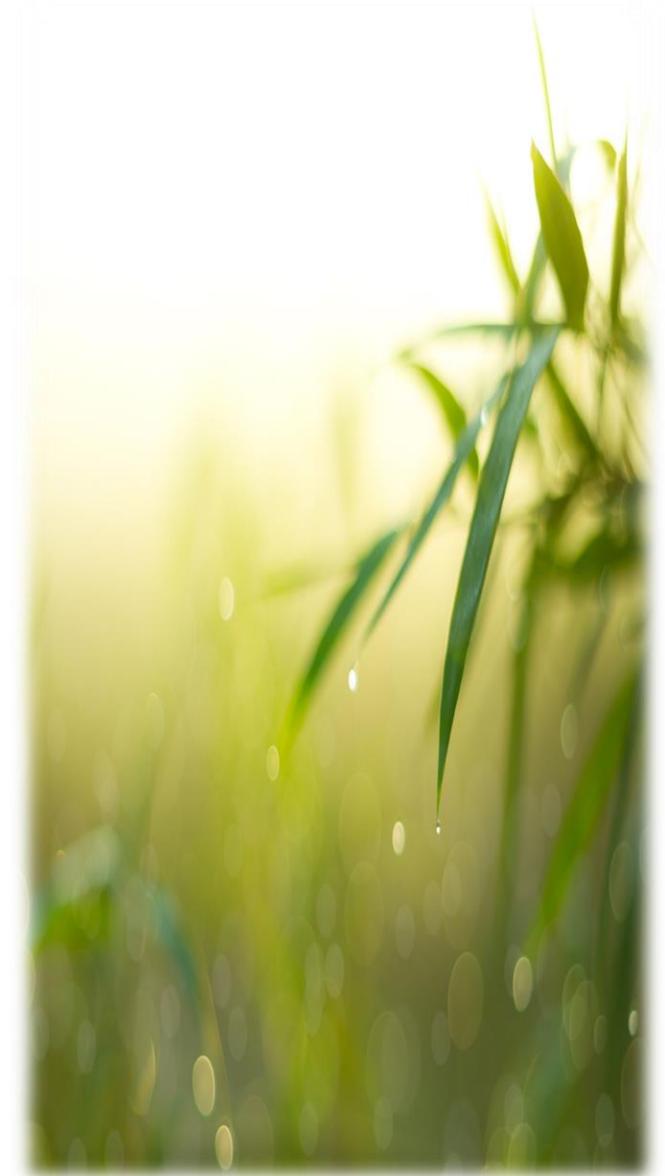
**Dear Friends of Five Oaks,** We miss seeing you at the Centre! The Board, Volunteers and Staff have been working hard as Ontario enters into Phase 2 and soon Phase 3 of re-opening and understanding its impact on Five Oaks. Since April, we have welcomed 143 migrant workers and have cooked over 6000 meals. We have been excited to host our current guests and continue to plan to welcome migrant workers and support Ontario Farms into the early Fall. We are grateful to offer this hospitality.

People of the United Church have asked how they can support our church as we reach out to partners and the vulnerable communities they work with during this time of pandemic. Make a gift today to support those suffering around the world because of COVID-19. Your support will reach vulnerable communities in the Global South and provide them with life saving food. To learn more and support this appeal, visit [COVID-19: Global Response](#).



Due to the ongoing health crisis, Rendez-vous 2020 is set to be a Rendez-vous unlike any other..! The event will still be going ahead August 11-14, but through a virtual platform instead of an in-person gathering.

Through real-time online events, recordings, and interactive workshops, we will celebrate bold faith, brave space, and brazen grace. While this is a free event, you do need to register in order to gain access to the event app. The final day to register is August 7. Register before July 15 to get your commemorative t-shirt or toque in time for the event, available for \$10 each at the time of registration!



To unsubscribe, please write to: [office@rhuc.org](mailto:office@rhuc.org) , and put "unsubscribe" in the subject line. Published by Deb Fratin. Please submit notices by noon on Wednesday.