

This week at RHUC

Sunday, June 16 – Happy Father’s Day!

10:30 a.m. Pride Service - Sanctuary

Monday, June 17

7:00 p.m. H.A.I.R. – Chapel

Tuesday, June 18

12:15 p.m. Quilters – Garden Room

Wednesday, June 19

6:30 p.m. Meditation service – Chapel

Thursday, June 20

9:30 Women’s Spirituality - trip

7:30 p.m. Chancel Choir - Parlour

WORSHIPPING TOGETHER

Minister’s message

Once again it's time for our Pride celebrations in York Region! On Wednesday the Pride flag was raised outside of our city hall. On Saturday it is the Pride parade in Newmarket. We also host a booth at the community fair. And of course on Sunday we celebrate Pride not just as a congregation but sharing leadership with representatives from PFLAG, York PrideFest and AIDS Committee of York Region. We open our doors wide to all of York Region, especially anyone who identifies as 2SLGBTQ+. Being an affirming congregation has become second nature to us. Being a community that is welcoming and inclusive of everyone, especially people who historically have been hurt and maligned by the church is what we are about. We can forget that the welcome, love and support we express within our walls is not what everyone experiences beyond them. This is why it is so important that we show public support for the 2SLGBTQ+ community by participating in the parade, hosting a table, holding a special worship service. When we walked in the parade last year a young man ran up to our group thanking us for our love, and expressing his sadness that there wasn't a church where he felt welcomed in his community. We need safe spaces because homophobia and transphobia haven't gone away. In fact incidents have increased recently. Did you read in the news about the two women beaten up by five men while riding on a bus in London? Those kinds of experiences are still too frequent. So let's keep being a safe space. Let's keep showing our public support. Let's have a huge presence in the parade (we are all wearing blue for a consistent look). And let's keep being the people of welcome, love and support that we are.

Worship notes

Sunday, June 16: We celebrate Pride with friends from across York Region. Our scripture reading is Luke 5:26-32. Jesus eating with tax collectors and other supposed "sinners" may have angered the Pharisees but it reminds us of the importance of making sure there is space for everyone at the table. We also hear an excerpt from a speech by openly gay rabbi Adam Rosenwasser.

It's time for the annual **Sundae Sunday** to celebrate the end of Discovery time for the summer. Please join me for games and ice cream this Sunday June 16. Hope to see you there!

Friday, June 21: Three Rivers Forest Church is hosting a summer solstice meditation at 7 p.m. Come to 19 Church St. S. to mark the longest day of the year. People of all faith perspectives are welcome.

Sunday, June 23: We mark our fourth Ember Day. At the transition between seasons, these days keep before us the importance of the Earth and our need to care for it. Luke 8:22-25 recounts Jesus walking on the water, a show of his complete trust in creation.

Meditation Service: Come to the Chapel from 6:30-7:15 p.m. on Wednesdays for a time of quiet and contemplation with readings, music, silent reflection and a theme-based ritual.

Cluster gathering

Time for another cluster: On **Wednesday, June 19 at 7:30 pm**, we are having another cluster gathering, this time to discuss ideas about leadership and congregational development. If you have thoughts about pastoral visiting, volunteering, stewardship, congregational activities, succession planning, sharing meals and other refreshments, and similar topics, then this is the gathering for you. Come offer feedback, suggestions for future projects, any other ideas you may have, and some finger food. See you in the parlour!

Dedicate a bulletin cover

You are invited to contribute to a week or more of bulletin covers as a dedication to a special person or occasion. The 2020 bulletin booklet will be at the Welcome Table for 3 weeks. Cost is \$20/2 packages – 100 bulletins. If you would like to participate, please fill in your name and number of packages beside the bulletin cover you would like to sponsor, pay Deb in the office (cheque payable to Richmond Hill UC, cash or e-transfer to office@rhuc.org) and let her know of dedication. Please note that there can be more than one dedication per Sunday and covers can be used more than once. Thank you!

BUILDING FOR MINISTRY

Wanted - yarn

Cleaning out, downsizing? Bring unwanted yarn to the church to be knit and crocheted into pray shawls. Donna Smith 905-884-6307

MAP update

It was about a year ago that we gathered in Centennial Hall to conclude our Circle Process and adopt our Mission Action Plan (MAP). It has been a busy year as various "project teams" have been putting wheels under our vision. There are times the process seems to be going slowly and other times it feels too fast. Chances are then that we are going at the right speed. One thing that hasn't happened as regularly as it could have is reporting on the work. This update seeks to address this and the MAP Pilot Team commit to improving in this regard.

Improving our Sense of Welcome: - A committee was formed and they have met twice since the winter. Their initial focus has been on the various groups that share space with RHUC.

Community Engagement: - In the early winter, following a series of interviews with community leaders and representatives from local organizations, we had a very successful roundtable with community groups and other neighbourhood stakeholders. We received positive feedback on our vision to be a centre for community.

- Since that engagement we have received an increase in rental interest and have been contacted by some possible partners.

- Possible partners have suggested that we may want to rename the CD Building to reflect its use as a community space and not just for the church.

- A significant relationship is emerging with the Richmond Hill Centre for the Performing Arts. They are supportive and willing to assist us in making use of our sanctuary for concerts and other events. A "Sanctuary Concerts Working Group" has been formed which brings together both members of the congregation and the community.

Facilities and Finance Assessment: - With awareness that given the complexity of our buildings along with our attachment to them we need both detailed and impartial information, SHS Consulting Group was contracted to help us make decisions about our 3 buildings. A large group of representatives from various committees met prior to and just after the AGM. Since then a smaller working group has formed. See information below on the Mission Action Business Plan Committee.

Engaging in Justice, Dynamic Worship, Offering Care to All Stages of Life:- As part of a vision to create an interfaith justice group in York Region, we received a grant from Living Waters Presbytery. The aim is to reach out to various spiritual groups for a youth-focused art project.

- The first cluster had worship and spiritual formation as its focus. In addition, worship season planning events have been held, a meditation circle has been started, Joan and Susan met with the Youth Ministry Coordinator for our Region and we have been reviewing our programs with children.

Communications : - A new Communications Team has been formed with members each taking on a specific task. Brandon is overseeing internal communications, Howe is looking after social media and graphics for advertising, Carolyn is compiling information in preparation for a website review and Glen looks after the blog and is our back-up graphics person. Advertising of events will be coordinated by Deb Fratin, RHUC's office administrator.

Governance Review: - at our AGM we approved the proposal to restructure our governance model from a large council into a smaller policy and strategy board.

- In addition, we agreed to form 3 clusters of various committees and teams which would come together 2 or 3 times a year to make plans and implement projects. The first of these clusters (Worship, Music and Spiritual Formation) met recently with the Leadership and Congregational Development Cluster scheduled to meet on June 19th at 7:30 PM.
- We also agreed to form an Operations Team to oversee day to day decisions. This group includes representatives from the Property and Finance Committees along with the board chair, ministry personnel and other staff.

Implementing MAP with a Business Plan: Following the AGM, a Mission Action Business Plan Committee (MAB Plan) has been established. Members of the Committee include: Carolyn Balant, Nancy Hart, Rev. James Ravenscroft, Jane Ridout, Don Thomson, Wendy Thomson, Bill Warwick and Jane Wedlock. The Committee has met twice and will meet monthly, working with SHS Consulting to firmly identify a way forward for the RHUC buildings. At the last meeting, the group finalized the wording of a request for proposals for building condition assessments of the Sanctuary, CD Building and Manse to be performed. Factoring in the reports and other work done by our Property Committee, the contracted firm will assess the buildings this summer. We expect a business plan to be ready in time to prepare next year's Generous Spirit programming in the fall.

Living into Right Relations

Summer weather is here! *Officially*, Summer begins the day of the solstice - June 21. If you happen to be in Winnipeg June 22, why not take in the largest national celebration 'Indigenous Day Live'. *For more information*, <https://www.aptncommunity.ca/event/indigenous-day-live-winnipeg/>

Here are some other activities you can take in to support and learn more about Canada's Indigenous peoples.

ROM Indigenous Art Event <https://www.rom.on.ca/en/whats-on/fnlrom-indigenous-now-2>

Pikiskwe-speak: A Cross-Canada Touring Art & Film Installation (North York Central Library)
<http://pikiskwe-speak.ca/>

McMichael Art Gallery Kleinburg <http://mcmichael.com/collection/first-nations/>

Or, if you enjoy loosing yourself in a good book, here are a couple by Indigenous writers; **Starlight**, by Richard Wagamese (Canadian Fiction) and **Indigenous Relations**, by Bob Joseph (Canadian Non-Fiction)

(Happy trails - L. I. R. R. column will return in the Fall...)

CREATING AND NURTURING COMMUNITY

Women's Spirituality

Women's Spirituality June Outing - **Thursday June 20th** - carpooling from church at **9:30**, and going to Hillary House and Koffler Museum of Medicine in Aurora. Cost \$5. And then for lunch - place to be decided. Guests are welcome at all our gatherings. Speak to Donna Smith, 905-884-6307

Secret Friends

June is the month when our young people are finishing up another school year but for Grade 12 students, June is the closing of a chapter in their years in high school and sights being set on beginning college/university in September. For most this will mean leaving home for study and we at RHUC keep in touch with them through our Secret Friends ministry. Students are matched with a volunteer who sends cards, notices and goodies throughout their first year with our faith community's best wishes and support during this big change in their lives. If you know of any student, please give their name to me and they will be part of this program. Thanks. Donna Smith, Coordinator 905-884-6307

Pride month – June



June is Pride month in York Region and at RHUC. Following are the events planned to celebrate our being an Affirming Ministry, meaning that all are welcome to the life of work and worship in our faith community.

Sunday June 9th, 3:00 till 7:00 Pride in the Park: A free family friendly event to celebrate with music, art and poetry, presented by and for the LGBTQ community and allies at Richmond Hill Heritage Centre, Amos Wright Park, 19 Church Street North. Bring a chair and enjoy the afternoon.

Saturday June 15th, York Region PrideFest Parade on Main Street, Newmarket*: RHUC will be in the Parade again this year, our 6th time to show our commitment, support and inclusion of all people in a fun experience. Be at the Parade marshalling area at 2:30 to participate or be a spectator and cheer us on the route with the Parade starting at 3:00.

and after the Parade, **Pride Community Fair:** RHUC will have a booth at the Fair along with other agencies and organizations who support the LGBTQ community. This gives us a chance to network with others, see what groups are doing and show that God's love is for everyone. If you can help set up the booth at 1:00 or be an attendant with someone at the booth for a couple hours, please contact Donna Smith, 905-884-6307

* Newmarket isn't that far away....takes about the same time to drive to Finch Subway! Main Street has interesting shops, good restaurants for a meal, or cafes for a treat and ice cream parlours. And the Saturday Farmers Market is open.

Sunday June 16th, RHUC Pride Service at 10:30 am with our ministry of cake.

The Affirming Ministry Vision Keepers Committee members are: Susan Greene, Doug Loweth, DJ McCready, Dianne McLeod, Brian Moore and Donna Smith.

'Connecting the Community'

Many things happen within our church walls and often the only person who knows is Deb Fratin, our Church Office Administrator, who looks after our rentals and building usage schedule. A new group has started to rent Centennial Hall on Tuesday mornings for two hours. "Connecting the Community" was started in our town about seven years ago by Marj Andre with her vision to connect people with each other so word would get out about the interesting and wonderful things happening; social agencies, businesses, self-help groups and seniors' support are some of the people who attend. An average 45 people gather to share information, network and support the efforts of others. On May 28th Marj held her official opening here "As One Door Closes, Another Door Opens" with 72 people attending! Bev Blake and I serve coffee and tea and donations are for our church. They are very happy to be meeting here and appreciate the warm welcome they are receiving. Connecting the Community is a great addition to our church as their vision is much the same as ours: partnering with community, supporting others and being open and welcoming to everyone. Marj also sends out a weekly email newsletter with all that's happening in Richmond Hill, another great way to communicate and connect people. Sign up at OnRichmondHill.com to receive this information in your Inbox and know what's available for you to be part of! Submitted by Donna Smith

RHUC Quilters

Our dedicated quilter's group meets on Tuesday at 12:15 pm in the Garden Room, every other week and wrap up by about 3 pm. Bring along your lunch if you'd like and tea will be available. No experience is required. For more information, contact Penny Fabbro at pennyfabbro@rogers.com. Our next meeting is **Tuesday, June 18**.

Summer 2019 community events in Richmond Hill

Hike the Headwaters: Tuesday, June 4 from 10 – 11:30 a.m. Oak Ridges Corridor conservation Reserve

Solstice Paddle & Canoe Certification: Saturday, June 22 from 9 – 11 a.m. or 12 – 3:15 p.m. Lake St. George Field Centre

For more information or to register, visit trca.ca/get-involved/events or call 416-661-6611 ext. 5203.

HOSPITALITY & WORKING FOR JUSTICE

Climate Change!

IS CLIMATE CHANGE OUR WORLD WAR THREE?

I cannot believe that I am using the word “War”, I am an avowed Pacifist!
However, compared to the disastrous results of all the wars from the beginning of the 20th Century, I believe that our current Climate Change Crisis will dwarf the results of war by putting the whole future of life, of every kind, at an imminent risk of wholesale destruction. **UNLESS WE ACT NOW!**

You know that I am an Eternal Optimist, but feel that I need to say that I am very concerned for myself, my children, my grandchildren and all creatures and plants that share this wonderful planet of ours. At the very least we can expect a great deal of our land to be lost to the oceans and we will not be able to support potentially 10 Billion people with their needed **Air, Water, Food and Shelter**. The millions of refugees currently migrating from their homes gives us a first glimpse of what can be expected in the next 20 years...**IF WE DO NOTHING!**

At a recent Cluster on Worship and Christian Education, I proposed that this crisis requires RHUC to consider how we can pay real attention and take action NOW. There are some very committed people and groups that are working on this right now...but the sessions with our Community are at days and evenings of the week when not everyone can attend. I earnestly ask that we recognize the **largest gathering of members is on Sunday** and that we acknowledge the importance of this challenge to all of us by devoting time on **One Sunday per Month, or equivalent to Climate Change**.

Some potential areas to **Learn, Discuss and Take Action** are (not in priority order)

1. **Learn the basics**, which we may think we already know?
2. What does the **Scientific Community** tell us
3. **Celebrate the good things** that are already being done around the world.
4. What can we learn from **Indigenous Peoples** on how to **live WITH Mother Earth**.
5. Learn what **Personal Actions** we can take, which we may already think we are doing.
6. Bring our **currently engaged groups** and other interested parties, RHUC and the wider community to collaboratively join together for maximum energy and Action. There are already several groups that have been working with RHUC, so the beginning is already in place.
7. Create a **Groundswell of pressure on every level of Corporations and Governments** to continue and expand a concerted effort to save Our Planet.
8. As we head into a **Federal Election**, which has **Climate Change Platforms** from all parties, invite representatives to share their **Party Plans**.
9. Demand that the elected government **Immediately start the measures they have proposed**, in collaboration with the best ideas from all parties and scientific authorities. **Let this not be a promise that begins three years after the election!!**

Dear Friends, I urgently urge you to consider this message and let the people on the **Worship Committee, James Ravenscroft, Governance Structure Members, Esther Collier, Peter De Vita or myself** know that you are ready to go to “War” to save Our Beautiful Planet.

Sincerely in Gratitude for this Planet, Love, Joy, Hope and Determination
Terry Davies (terry.t.davies@gmail.com) (289-597-2523)

Net Zero Update

Our Targeting Climate Change event on Saturday included about 30 people from the community - a lower amount than we had hoped for, but with new faces. The energy was still very great and people connected - people that now know each other in the community and are supporting each other's climate actions. Our MP Majid Jowhari stopped by and so did Julius Lindsay and his wife and child. Julius has been hired by Richmond Hill to develop a climate action plan. Esther will be on the advisory group for this action planning - as a result of these Targeting Climate Change meetings.

Since Esther is back to work in the fall, she has sent out emails to various faith communities to gather together an ecumenical team, working to run these events in the future. I

Peter and Esther and members of the Drawdown Team in Toronto (please check out www.drawdown.org - learn about this hopeful plan for a way to draw down the greenhouse gas emissions on the planet) presented at the Richmond Hill Council meeting on Tuesday, June 11, in support of Councillor David West's motion to declare a climate emergency in Richmond Hill. Unfortunately, this motion was referred to staff to report back in 6 months on actions that could be added to the motion to improve its efficacy. Vaughan voted to declare a climate emergency last week, adding to the over 400 communities in Canada that have declared (366 are in Quebec!).

Esther and Sharon have joined Drawdown Richmond Hill's Plastic-Free Eco Challenge - you can join us as well and begin to live life plastic free. Click on this link: <https://plasticfree.ecochallenge.org/teams> and search for "Drawdown Richmond Hill" and join up! You can select what you plan to work on and help make the world plastic free. The people who began this team are from connections made through our climate passion - but you can also make your own challenge.

If you would like to understand climate change better, Esther is always free to run a Climate 101 session - so talk to her.

The crisis is serious, we all have to take it seriously and encourage each other to take decisive actions to live greenhouse gas emission free.

Climate Action

This is the petition in favour of declaring a climate emergency in Canada. More information through the link below. Please share with others to get even more signatures.

<https://campaigns.wedonthavetime.org/love-canada-motion-to-declare-a-climate-emergency-3c138716-0f80-4810-ad00-3883a21f2471>

WANT TO KNOW MORE ABOUT AFRICA?

Hands and Hearts for Africa urge you to mark your calendar and experience one or both of the following events coming soon:

1-- ZIMSCULPT (June 28 to early Sept) is a world-class outdoor art show at Edwards Gardens (corner of Leslie St and St Lawrence Ave East). Featured are hundreds of Zimbabwean stone sculptures set in the beautiful grounds of Toronto's Botanical Gardens. This exhibit is back by popular demand and is free with lots of free parking. Open daily. As a few of us experienced last year, you will be blown away by the beauty, creativity and playfulness expressed in this art form.

Peg Hiscoke and Donna Harrison will be going on Weds July 10th and invite others to join them. Carpooling can be arranged from the church at 10am. Please let us know if you are interested in going on the 10th at handsandhearts@live.ca

2-The 2019 REGIONAL GRANDMOTHER AND FRIENDS GATHERING will be held on Sept 14 at St Bonaventures church on Leslie Street, just south of Edwards Gardens. This event brings together all the Grandmother Groups in the GTA area for a day of renewal and is very open to interested friends and supporters. We will meet the new Interim Executive Director of the Stephen Lewis Foundation and hear news from a frontline worker in Africa.

If interested in joining us, please ask Peg Hiscoke or Donna Harrison for a Registration Form. Early registration by June 30 is \$30 and the later fee is \$35 for the day event including lunch. Parking at the church is described as ample. Please contact us for info at handsandhearts@live.ca

Waste Free Living

What, Why and How to reduce your waste:

When: Saturday, June 22 from 1:00 – 3:00 p.m.

Where: Shiraz 93815 Yonge St.

Guest speaker: Nancy Lotecki-Neely. Nancy is a zero-waster from Caledon and set up Zero Waste Caledon.

Registration fee: \$15 register at <https://www.eventbrite.ca/e/waste-free-living>

Food Bank Donations

Collection for the Food Bank continues at RHUC. Please put your non-perishable donations in either of the two boxes – one outside the church office and the other in the Narthex. Donna McErlain collects the food from the two bins and brings it to the Food bank. Thank you!

Minutes for Mission

The Longhouse Council of Native Ministry started 30 years ago as an outreach to Indigenous people in Vancouver, British Columbia. Established without a building, today its home is a church in the low income Hastings-Sunrise neighbourhood, and its outreach extends to all those seeking a caring community. The ministry still maintains a significant commitment to First Nations. There is a weekly sharing circle mostly (but not exclusively) attended by Indigenous people, a carving and language class, and several 12-step groups, including an Aboriginal Alcoholics Anonymous group. However, poverty and homelessness, now growing in leaps and bounds, have made the congregation a hub for anyone seeking economic and social justice. Regular Sunday worship, baptisms, marriages, and funerals are central to Longhouse. So, too, are the weekly food bank, and participation in annual Advent and Lenten vigils to raise awareness of those who are silenced in the city. As the Rev. Barry Morris says, there is a “creative tension between being a pastoral charge and a community ministry,” an urge to support as well as to change society. Longhouse is one of the many community ministries across the country supported by Mission & Service.

ENGAGING, CHALLENGING & GROWING OUR FAITH

Shalom Seekers

After our trip to the McMichael Canadian Art Collection in Kleinburg this past Monday, we will be taking a break for the summer. We will meet again on **Monday, September 9th from 9:30 to 11:30 a.m. in the Chapel** and resume the Living the Questions DVD study: First Light with Dominic Crossan and Marcus Borg. We wish you all a safe and enjoyable summer! Peg Hiscoke & Sandra Loughton, Facilitators.

H.A.I.R.

The Monday evening study group continues its viewing and discussion of thought-provoking TED talks. The last session before the summer will be Monday, June 24. All are welcome in the chapel from 7:00-8:30."

Bible Study

Bible study will resume in September.

RHUC Book Club

The RHUC Book Club is on summer hiatus now until Wednesday, September 25 at 7 p.m. in the Chapel. The book for discussion at that first meeting in the fall will be: **THE BOAT PEOPLE** by Canadian author Sharon Bala. (Please note that there are at least twelve books at the library with the same title, so take special note of the author's name.)

The Boat People was a finalist for the Canada Reads competition in 2018 and, it was also a finalist for the 2018 Amazon Canada First Novel Award.

"*The Boat People* is a high-stakes novel that offers a deeply compassionate lens through which to view the current refugee crisis. Inspired by real events, with vivid scenes that move between the eerie beauty of northern Sri Lanka and combative refugee hearings in Vancouver, B.C. where life and death decisions are made, Sharon Bala's stunning debut is an unforgettable and necessary story for our times."

New members are always welcome to attend and try out the group. No previous book club experience is required -- just a love of reading and talking about books with others. For more details, please speak to Sandra Loughton, facilitator, or call the Church Office at 905.884.1301, Ext. 5. Happy reading this summer!

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. Congratulations! We extend congratulations to **Esteban Perez** who is graduating this year with an Advanced diploma in mechanical engineering from George Brown. We also congratulate **Bev Blake, David Overland and James Ravenscroft** who took part in the Big Bike Ride this week to raise funds for the Heart and Stroke Foundation. They were part of the "Connecting the Community" team which raised more than \$15,000.00.

Skylight Festival

Are you in planning mode for your summer? **Consider coming to the Skylight Festival! Held at Five Oaks Retreat Centre this coming July 26-28**, Skylight is a creative and inclusive gathering where diverse people connect to explore music, art, spirituality and justice. With a pow wow taking place at nearby Six Nations, the plan thus year is to conclude on Sunday morning so people can attend. You can camp, book a room or stay in nearby Paris. Shad is headlining and James and Glen will be leading Forest Church activities. Let's go as an RHUC group! Register at www.skylightfestival.ca.

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