

This week at RHUC

Sunday, June 2

10:30 a.m. Service – Sanctuary.
12:00 p.m. Lunch & Learn – Garden Room
12:00 – 3:00 p.m. Youth Choir – Sanctuary

Monday, June 3

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

Tuesday, June 4

12:30 p.m. Quilters – Garden Room

Wednesday, June 4

8:15 a.m. UCW Bus trip – bus leaves from Elgin Barrow Arena
12:00 p.m. Bible Study – Chapel
6:30 p.m. Meditation service – Chapel

Sunday, June 9

10:30 a.m. Service – Sanctuary

WORSHIPPING TOGETHER

Minister's message

On Wednesday I attended the Mayor's Prayer Breakfast. I hadn't planned on going but was invited by Melissa Ytsma from The Meeting House to join their table. While the tone of the prayers and speech was more conservative theologically than I am, it was a pleasure to share breakfast as ecumenical friends, especially as one of my tablemates deconstructed what was being said. We are hosting The Meeting House for a workshop on human trafficking on Sunday, June 2. Then this past weekend I attended the meeting of Shining Waters Regional Council. Notable for me is how it began with the sacred fire, an important way that Indigenous peoples begin a time of prayer and deliberation. I felt that everyone who gathered outside did so with tremendous respect. Finally on Sunday, June 2 I attended York Regional Police's 3rd Annual Diversity Iftaar cohosted with Al Nadwa Educational Centre. This evening meal in which Muslims break their daily Ramadan fast is usually celebrated with family and friends. But on Sunday political, community and religious leaders from across the region gathered as a much larger family. All of these events remind me how important it is for us to reach out beyond our four walls to engage with people across denominational, cultural and religious lines. In the end we are all siblings, sisters and brothers in one human family. This is an aspect of Pentecost. The Spirit not only gives the disciples courage to leave the Upper Room, but enables them to communicate with people who were visiting Jerusalem from across the empire. Barriers were crossed and in that moment they were one. May we all reach toward that experience, especially in a world moving in the opposite direction.

James will be away: This coming week, James is on retreat in Sinsinawa, Wisconsin with other Forest Church leaders in North America. He will be away from Monday, June 3 through to Saturday, June 8. While he is away, Rev. Warren Ball from St. Matthew's United Church is available should there be a pastoral need. If you need to get hold of him, Deb Fratin has his contact information.

Worship notes

Sunday, June 2: As we celebrate Pentecost we reflect together on Acts 2:1-13 as well as thoughtful words from Mechtild of Magdeburg, 13th century German mystic. Both readings remind us that we are "Joined in the Spirit" as a community and as individuals. We begin our service with a responsive prayer using bible passages offered in a number of languages. We hear a preview from next week's youth musical. We also celebrate communion.

Sunday, June 9: We celebrate our annual Youth Musical performed by our youth choir and alumni, and under the direction of Anne Leyton-Brown. This year's musical is "Rescue in the Night" which reflects on the story of Daniel in the Lion's Den. We also recognize this year's graduates from various stages of education.

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.

Lunch & Learn

You are invited to a **Lunch and Learn on June 2**. The topic is "Becoming a Centre for Community": As part of our circle process last year, we discerned together that among other ideas and possibilities for us as a congregation that we wish to share our space with others as a Centre for Community. As part of that vision we hosted a very successful roundtable last winter. There was a good deal of positive feedback on our vision and now we need to consider strategies to make this vision a reality. So let's come together and discuss some practical ways for us to move forward on our MAP.

BUILDING FOR MINISTRY

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.

Memory garden at RHUC

The spring bulbs and blossoms are wonderful this year in our church gardens, even though our spring weather has been "strange" this year. We have a special section (at the steps on the north side of the Yonge Street CD wing of the church) named our *Memory Garden*. Each year, those who would like me to plant an annual flower in memory of a loved one can give me \$3 and I will purchase and plant one in a colour you choose. When completed, a marker will be posted with the names of those remembered. Donna Smith 905-884-6307

Living into Right Relations

This week, we continue to review *The Indian Act*.

Indigenous students (at Residential schools) were forbidden from practising their traditional religion. Policy makers and Christian faith-based settlers of the time questioned whether there was such a thing as 'native religion'. It was felt Indigenous peoples needed Christianity to raise themselves from their lives of savagery.

In 1931, Duncan Scott (Deputy Superintendent General of Indian Affairs) was of the opinion that "the Government will in time reach the end of its responsibility as the Indians progress into civilization and finally disappear as a separate and distinct people, not by race extinction but by gradual assimilation with their fellow citizens."

Indigenous spirituality, creation beliefs and connection to the land were dismissed contributing to the erosion of Indigenous culture. It is believed this is the largest contributing factor to the high rate of suicide in Indigenous communities.

Next Week - Indigenous communities in the news

CREATING AND NURTURING COMMUNITY

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.

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 4**.

HOSPITALITY & WORKING FOR JUSTICE

The Pact for a Green New Deal for Canada

The Pact for a Green New Deal for Canada is a call from: scientists, youth, unions, faith groups, business organizations, and Indigenous leaders for Canada to meet the demands of the climate, economic, and social crises our communities are facing. We need to develop a shared vision of a Green New Deal that slashes emissions, sees the full implementation of the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, and invests in green jobs, clean energy, and equal opportunity for everyone. Climate Change is REAL. We have already seen deadly heat waves, forest fires, and now flooding in Ottawa, Quebec and New Brunswick; and it will only get worse. We need to take action now.

What can you do?

1. Sign the Pact for a Green New Deal to send a message to all political parties that action is needed to address all these crises <https://greennewdealcanada.ca/>
2. We are holding town halls to get input from people from every walk of life to form a vision for a better life and economy. Join us at one of the following town halls:

→ **Richmond Hill**: Sun June 2, 2 pm <https://act.greennewdealcanada.ca/town-halls/richmond-hill/>

Open Doors Peace Walk

Mosaic Interfaith is hosting "Open Doors Peace Walk" on Sunday, June 23 starting at 2:00 p.m. an opportunity to visit four places of worship. Each stop will host a short program and refreshments.

1. 2:00 – 2:30 p.m. Temple Har Zion, 7360 Bayview Ave., Thornhill
2. 2:45 – 3:15 p.m. Imam Mahdi Islamic Centre, 7340 Bayview Ave., Thornhill
3. 3:30 – 4:00 p.m. Cham Shan Temple (meet at the Peace Bell) 7254 Bayview Ave., Thornhill
4. 4:30 – 5:15 p.m. Mehraban Guiv Darbe Temple, 3590 Bayview Ave., Toronto

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

In the Kalpakkam area of Tamil Nadu province, India, the local fishing community is dealing with a very different threat than the one it faced with the 2005 tsunami. A nuclear power plant became a death trap during the tsunami, with several workers drowning within its walls. No one knows how many died for sure, as the government never released a number. Today, some villages believe the nuclear plant is still connected with death and destruction. They say that people go fishing and suddenly die afterwards from a lack of blood circulation. Rates of cancer, birth defects, infertility, and autoimmune and neurological diseases have increased, affecting young and old alike. Mission & Service partner the Human Rights Advocacy and Research Foundation works in the region to help affected families, often paying medical costs. For those families where the primary breadwinner has prematurely died or been incapacitated, the foundation helps with finding employment, school costs, and other day-to-day expenses. The Department of Atomic Energy says that the rates of radiation are too low to cause a health effect. Local doctor, Dr. Pugazhendhi, who runs a local clinic with the foundation's assistance, has seen an increase in illness and believes radiation plays a part in this increase. The Human Rights Advocacy and Research Foundation trains the local community about its rights and how to organize to collectively and defend their rights to clean air, water, and land.

Mobilize against Human Trafficking in York Region – event at RHUC

When: Sunday, June 2 Time: 5:30 – 8:30 p.m. Where: Richmond Hill United Church

This event facilitated by "The Meeting House" and Women's Inter-church Council of Canada is being held at RHUC. This is an opportunity to learn from experts on this important issue in our time. The evening is facilitated by Cheryl Nembhard, award winning filmmaker and Social Activist who works with at risk youth, former gang members and survivors of sexual assault. One panelist of note is Suzanne Smoke from Biindigen Healing and Art, an Indigenous-run healing and wellness organization. Indigenous women are disproportionately impacted in human trafficking in Canada. For more information and to register: tinyurl.com/PrayerYorkRegion2019

“Doctrine of Discovery: Stolen Lands, Strong hearts”

The screening of "Doctrine of Discovery: Stolen Lands, Strong hearts" with guest speaker Rev. Ginny Doctor, the writer of the documentary, is being held on **Tuesday June 4, 2019 at Holy Cross Lutheran Church, 1035 Wayne Drive, Newmarket at 7:00pm.**

Manitoulin Style Fish Fry

When: Friday, June 7

Time: 4:30 – 7:30 p.m.

Where: King City United Church, 50 Elizabeth Grove

Adults: \$20 Children 6-12: \$10 children 5 & under: Free

Reserve tickets by calling 905-883-5181 or at the door.

ENGAGING, CHALLENGING & GROWING OUR FAITH**Shalom Seekers**

Please join us on Monday, June 3 from 9:30 to 11:30 a.m. in the Chapel. We will be looking at Session 3 of the DVD series First Light featuring Marcus Borg and Dominic Crossan. The topic for this coming week is God's Great Clean-Up and we will learn more about the Baptism Movement of John. Please read the four-page summary that was handed out if you have time. We will also have some social time with RHUC staff as we celebrate the end of the season with coffee/tea and refreshments and a chance to catch up with one another.

For more details about the group, please speak to Peg Hiscoke or Sandra Loughton. New members are warmly welcome to attend any time.

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."

U.C.W. bus trip

SAVE THE DATE! UCW Annual Bus Trip will take place on **Wed. June 5th, 2019**. Please **MEET** at Elgin Barrow Arena at **8:15 a.m.** as bus departs at 8:30 a.m. Return by 5:30 p.m. Elora/Elora Gorge/Fergus Unique Shopping Lunch Museum Tour and More For more information, please speak with Bev Blake.

Bible Study

Bible study takes place Wednesday at noon in the Chapel.

RHUC Book Club

The RHUC Book Club will be taking a break over the summer. The next meeting will take place on Wednesday, September 25 at 7 p.m. in the Chapel. Please look for an announcement about the book for September in future editions of RHUC On-Line. New members are welcome at any time. Please contact Deb Fratin in the church office at 905-884-1301 Ext. 5 or Sandra Loughton, Facilitator, for more details.

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.

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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