

We will continue to livestream Sunday service 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, use the links found on our website and below.

We understand that this is a strange time, but we will get through it together. We are still one community, committed to care for one another with compassion and love.

Minister's Message: This past Thursday it was the Feast of St. John the Baptist. A public holiday in Quebec, this day honours John's birth, the commemoration set six months before Jesus' birth, based on the timing in Luke's Gospel. John's death is also commemorated each year on August 29, making him only one of two saints whose birth and death are both honoured. Unsurprisingly, Mary is the other. This highlights the importance of John the Baptist in the life of the church.

So why is he important, not just because he gets two feast days but because he is the topic of my message this week? Known as the Forerunner, John goes into the wilderness to prepare people for the coming Messiah. He famously says that he must decrease while Jesus is to increase. He points out Jesus to two of his own disciples, who in turn become disciples of Jesus and act as emissaries, bringing others to see Jesus as John had done for them. In all of these ways, he is a model for us as followers of Jesus, reminding us of our role as church.

Two points stand out for me. First, he points beyond himself. We can get so focused on our ongoing existence as a faith community, we may forget that we are intended to be a means to people's spiritual growth, offering insight into the teachings of Jesus and helping them grow in relationship with him. Not only do we each look to how he let go of himself in order to become more profoundly united to God, but he is present to us, helping us to do the same. As church, we are to be a school of spiritual nurture. As we grow in love, we then are able to seek the best for others in a more just world.

This leads me to the second point. John goes into the wilderness. He is a member of a priestly family. You would expect him to feel bound to the traditions but instead he leaves the Temple and Jerusalem behind. We are invited to do the same. In a time of great change for both the church and society, it is tempting to cling to the familiar. Instead, John leads us away from what has been and calls us to take a risk, to engage people where they are and to seek God's hope for them from out of their own context. In many ways we feel like we are in the wilderness, but it was there that the Christ was made known.

It goes without saying that RHUC is in a time of transition, not just with my coming move but also in the coming reopening along with the plans for redevelopment. As you experience these changes, look to John the Baptist. He has much wisdom to offer for the way ahead.

worship and music

[Order of Service](#) [Hymns](#)

James' video for children:

<https://1drv.ms/v/s!AIBjmozEVDROgax2l0MWGjU51LkZmA>

Worship for June 27: We mark the Fifth Sunday after Pentecost as we continue to consider Jesus' ministry of healing. In Mark 5:25-34, we read about a woman with a chronic illness being healed when she touches Jesus' cloak. We also reflect on "Because" by Grace Schulman. In "Liberated from Shame", James reflects on the hold that shame can have on people and the power of being loved as you are.

Worship for July 4: On this Sixth Sunday after Pentecost, we ponder Mark 6:1-13 in which Jesus first feels frustrated by the inability of the citizens of Nazareth to see beyond his past and then commissions his disciples to go in pairs to proclaim the good news. We also celebrate baptism.

Worship for July 11: On James' last Sunday, we reflect on Ephesians 1:3-14, in which the author offers a word of affirmation to the Christians in Ephesus.



Sunday offering: RHUC, like other churches, depends on donations and rentals to pay our bills. We appreciate those who use Pre-Authorized

Remittance (PAR). For those not PAR, please consider making sure you get your weekly envelope money in (mailed in or mail slot on Centre. St. door) and we hope as well that you will consider some extra to compensate for the loss in income. You can use e-transfer to 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.

programs for all

Shalom Seekers: We'll be gathering on Monday, June 28th at 10 a.m. on Zoom for a time to check-in and socialize. The Zoom invitation will be sent out on Sunday. Our regular programming will resume in September. For more information about the group, please contact Sandra Loughton.

Centering Prayer: This Zoom-based group will meet **Mondays at 12:30** for a simple format with a 20-minute silent sit. **Wednesdays at 6:30 pm** is a reflective format with readings, Taizé style refrains as well as a discussion time after the 20-minute sit. Contact James (james@rhuc.org) for Zoom links to both prayer time.

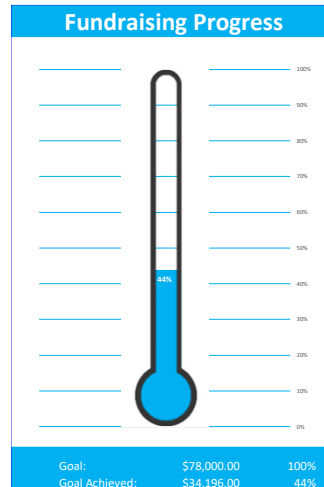
RHUC Book Club: The Book Club will be taking July and August off. Please join us on September 29th at 4 p.m. on Zoom to discuss the novel *The Book of Longings* by Sue Monk Kidd. *The Book of Longings* is a sweeping historical novel that starts with an interesting premise: What if Jesus had been married? The tale is told through the eyes of Jesus' wife, Ana. This novel is filled with drama, intrigue, tension, and tender moments. *The Book of Longings* will amaze the reader with details about life in biblical times. This is an astonishing work of fiction! The next meeting will take place on Wednesday, October 27th. (Time to be determined once we decide on an in-person or virtual Zoom meeting.) We will be discussing *The Vanishing Half* by Brit Bennett.

church news



The verdict is in: The Communications Working Group is pleased to announce that we have a winner for the Village

Commons logo. The favourite was option A. Thank you to everyone who cast a vote.



Boosting Our Signal Campaign: RHUC has embarked on a project to upgrade our AV capabilities. This project, to be implemented in Phases, not only improves the livestream services, but helps us to achieve some of our long-term ministry goals. You can donate via e-transfer to office@rhuc.org, cheque or CanadaHelps.org.



We are now at 44% of our goal (pre-tax)!! Thank you!

We have been livestreaming our worship services on Zoom for over a year now – far longer than any of us expected. Thank goodness for the technology that has made that possible, and for the people who have made that technology work for us! During that time we have embarked on the Boosting Our Signal project, to improve the visual and sound experience of our worship services for those in the sanctuary, and for those connecting remotely. The initial phase of the project made significant improvements to the in-sanctuary experience, and that will be immediately evident to everyone present when we resume in-person worship. But until then, only the members of the worship production team have experienced it directly. Improvements for those joining the service online will come in Phase 2, and that will be necessary not only for the near future, until we resume in-person worship (probably in September), but also afterwards, as we offer hybrid services, both in-person and online. Even though we have so far raised only 44% of the money needed to cover the entire project, the Board has decided to begin work immediately on Phase 2, to maximize the benefit to everyone.

In the services we have all seen every week, there has been one stationary camera (actually a smartphone!) to provide the picture, and one Bluetooth microphone to pick up voice of the individual speaking (usually James). We have relied on pre-recorded music (hymns and anthems), and online scripture readings and prayers. Even if we had a choir singing live in the service, or Barry playing the piano or organ, or different people doing readings and prayers in the sanctuary from different microphones, our system currently cannot connect sound inputs from other microphones with the picture being broadcast, so people online would not get the sound that is heard in the sanctuary. That is what Phase 2 will make possible – the ability of those connecting to the worship service online to hear as well as see what people in the sanctuary do.

We have spent about \$45,000 of the total project cost on Phase 1, and the Board has agreed to spend an additional \$25,000 on Phase 2, because it is simply too important to wait. We are confident that the improved results of Phase 2 will be evident to all online viewers, and the \$25,000 will be raised. We will all benefit from Boosting Our Signal for many years to come, whether we attend worship in the sanctuary or connect online, but we have to pay for it now. If you have not yet had the opportunity to make a contribution to the Boosting Our Signal Campaign, or if you are so pleased with the results of Phase 2 that you want to make an additional contribution, I hope you will consider doing so.



Saying Farewell to James and Glen: James's last Sunday with us is July 11th, 2021. On **Saturday July 10th - 5pm there will be a socially distanced drive or walk-by opportunity to say good-bye in person:** This will take place in front of James and Glen's home on at 19 Church St. South, Richmond Hill starting at 5pm. You will be notified of your time slot and logistics as we get closer to the date.

Contact Deb at office@rhuc.org if you would like a time slot.

Update from the Transition Team: It was recently announced that Ontario will be moving into Step 2 in the reopening plan on June 30. Members of the Transition Team suggest that we do not reopen for in-person worship right away but work toward August 1 with a maximum of 50 people in the sanctuary, socially distanced and wearing masks. People will be asked to preregister through Eventbrite.

outreach

Orange instead of Red on Canada Day? With the recent news of over 750 more unmarked graves found at a former Indian Residential School, many people are questioning whether or not they will celebrate this coming Canada Day. One possibility would be to mark this day more reflectively, perhaps do some research about the Residential School system or include a time of prayer in your festivities. Another would be to wear orange rather than red as many people do on that day. If you feel it is important to still wear red, why not wear both, perhaps an orange scarf with a red shirt. Whatever you choose to do, mark Canada Day with a broader awareness of our history and with a commitment for a more just future.

June is National Aboriginal History Month

What is Bill C-15?

"The Assembly of First Nations has long advocated for full implementation of the *UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples* and the passage of federal legislation to provide statutory commitments to implementation. In early December [2020], the federal government tabled Bill C-15, setting out a framework for implementation of the UN Declaration." "If Bill C-15 is passed by Parliament, it will start a process of reforming Canadian laws to ensure they meet the minimum standards required by the Declaration. However, the UN Declaration remains an international human rights instrument, that is to be used to interpret domestic law including the Canadian Constitution."

[Source & to read more see ... https://www.afn.ca/wp-content/uploads/2021/01/C-15_FAQ_ENG.pdf]

The National Indigenous Council of The United Church of Canada sent a brief to the Standing Committee on Indigenous and Northern Affairs supporting the passing of Bill C-15 in April of this year. You can read the Brief here...

<https://united-church.ca/sites/default/files/2021-04/national-indigenous-council-ucc-brief-on-bill-c15.pdf>

Latest News Release from the House of Commons - Standing Committee on Indigenous and Northern Affairs Bill C-15 received Royal Assent June 21, 2021 which just happen to be the 25th National Indigenous Peoples Day! [Source - https://sencanada.ca/en/content/sen/chamber/432/debates/052db_2021-06-21-e?language=e#57]

What happens now that Bill C-15 has Royal Assent? "The legislation within the bill may come into effect immediately, after a set period or only after a commencement order by a government minister. ... The practical implementation of an Act is the responsibility of the appropriate government department, not Parliament."

Bill C-8 also has Royal Assent

An Act to amend the Citizenship Act - Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada's Call to Action number 94 **#94.** We call upon the Government of Canada to replace the *Oath of Citizenship* with the following:

I swear (or affirm) that I will be faithful and bear true allegiance to Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II,
Queen of Canada,
Her Heirs and Successors,
and that I will faithfully observe the laws of Canada
including Treaties with Indigenous Peoples,
and fulfill my duties as a Canadian citizen.