

## This week at RHUC

### Sunday, June 9

10:30 a.m. Service – Youth Musical - Sanctuary

### Monday, June 10

7:00 p.m. H.A.I.R. - Chapel

### Wednesday, June 12

6:30 p.m. Meditation service – Chapel

### Thursday, June 14

7:30 p.m. Chancel Choir - Parlour

## WORSHIPPING TOGETHER

### Minister's message

**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 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.

### 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](mailto: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

### 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

### 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

This week in the news...

Today, ceremonies are taking place commemorating the 75th Anniversary of D-Day. A group from Manitoba's First Nations were invited to hold a drumming ceremony to honour Canada's Indigenous peoples - part of the televised remembrance today on Juno Beach. Two of the drummers grandfathers fought at Dunkirk and Juno Beach. *For more information...*

<https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/manitoba/d-day-france-anniversary-indigenous-drummers-1.5162942>

Monday was marked by the release of the Final Report summarizing the inquiry into Missing and Murder Indigenous Women and Girls. It's now up to all levels of government to honour all those lost, along with their families and friends, by ensuring the report's recommendations are acted on in the very near future.

*For more information...*

<https://www.cbc.ca/news/thenational/indigenous-families-look-for-closure-after-mmiwg-inquiry-final-report-1.5162744>

<https://aptnnews.ca/2019/06/05/its-so-important-for-him-to-say-it-pressure-mounts-for-trudeau-to-admit-present-day-genocide/>

A week ago Friday, students at Kiluutaq School in northern Quebec had a surprise conversation with Canadian Astronaut David Saint-Jacques still orbiting in the International Space Station. David and his wife Veronique are both doctors with a shared love of Nunavik. Veronique was a family doctor in the village of Umiujak and David the co-chief of medicine in Puvirnituk. *For more information...*

<https://aptnnews.ca/2019/06/05/canadian-astronaut-david-saint-jacques-flaunts-ties-to-the-arctic-during-ga-with-students-in-umiujak/>

## 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.



## 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

## '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](http://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](mailto:pennyfabbro@rogers.com). Our next meeting is **Tuesday, June 18**.

## HOSPITALITY & WORKING FOR JUSTICE

## Nwet Zero Update

Net Zero has been working hard over the last few months and wants to let you know what has been happening. We hope this is part of a more regular set of updates!

1. We committed at the AGM to develop a draft Climate Action Plan for RHUC before the end of August. This is in the works and will include actions to lower our greenhouse gas emissions and actions to help educate the community on the climate crisis.
2. We are continuing to run Targeting Climate Change (TCC) events. Our third event is this Saturday, from 1-3, and you are very welcome to attend. The purpose of the events is to give the community access to expertise and information about the climate crisis. These events have led to some incredible opportunities:
  - a. Networking has enabled an active and powerful community to develop within Richmond Hill - one neighbour has felt empowered to run a Green New Deal Town Hall because of the community support she received. We have been able to link with her family's endeavours and will now be sharing our social media through the website they have created. Please check out [www.neighboursfortheplanet.ca](http://www.neighboursfortheplanet.ca).
  - b. As Esther goes back to work in the fall, we have known that our ability to maintain these events is limited, but our increased presence in the community has allowed for connections to be made with St. Mary's Anglican's very active green team, St. Matthew's United Church, and the Christian Reformed Community Church at Yonge and Crosby. We hope to form a diverse team to run the open events several times a year. The first event run like this will be on October 5th, we hope!
  - c. Esther was invited to and attended a meeting the City's Sustainability, Planning and Regulatory Services climate team to get a better understanding of how the City is acting to mitigate the climate crisis. RHUC was seen (along with Blue Dot and Drawdown) as one of the 3 major voices for environmental influence in Richmond Hill - because of the effectiveness of the TCC events. Esther has just recently been invited to send 2 people to be part of the City's Advisory Committee for the upcoming work on designing a climate change framework and a community energy and emissions plan.

- d. Drawdown Richmond Hill is also very active on the climate crisis and we have now a solid link with their work as Esther and Peter DeVita are both part of the team.
- e. TCC drew attention from both our MP Majid Jowhari and MPP Daisy Wai. Majid has donated \$307 (his refund from the federal carbon charge) to our potential geo-exchange system and has given us links to funding at the federal level. MPP Wai has been willing to meet with us and we have been playing phone tag but hope to meet in the summer.
- f. RHUC is on the map as many members of the community who have never been here before have entered the building and felt a part of something positive and community-building. (Please note - our connection with Marj Andre during the Community Engagement work towards the Round Table enabled the success of TCC. Marj connected Esther with many critical people in Richmond Hill and contact was made with Richmond Hill's environmental team through the Round Table process. Success builds on us being active and engaged in the community.)

Net Zero has also been actively exploring funding for a potential Geo Exchange heating system for the church, as we committed at the AGM. Here are some of the things we have already explored:

- a. We have applied for and received pre-approval for a \$30 000 grant from Faithful Footprints, the United Church of Canada's resource for helping churches reduce their carbon pollution.
- b. Property has also inquired with Toronto United Church Council and received confirmation that a \$50 000 loan from TUCC (interest free for 5 years) would be available until this fall for the project we are suggesting.
- c. We have met with the town and been informed of Community Improvement Plan Grants for HVAC projects (HVAC = Heating and Air-Conditioning; a geo-exchange system is a full HVAC system as it supplies both heating and cooling). There are also grants for accessibility. We fall exactly into the area of the City that is of a high priority to be improved and should have no trouble accessing these grants. This will be our next highest priority.

Net Zero also committed to researching geo-exchange systems installed in our geographical area. Already, three have been explored and the reports show communities very pleased with their installations and price ranges that fall within our estimated \$150 000 to \$200 000 range. We are still planning on visiting the Centre for Performing Arts which has installed geothermal and you are welcome to attend that visit with us. Let anyone on Net Zero or Property know of your interest. We will be reporting on our findings at an upcoming meeting with the congregation - as we committed to do. Again, these initiatives have garnered us community connections - representatives from the Vishnu Mandir Hindu Temple and Holy Trinity Anglican Church have come on our exploratory visits to other Geo Systems. They are keen to see what RHUC does and how they might follow.

Reminder: The climate crisis has reached such an extent that all of us on this planet need to strive to reach net zero greenhouse gas emissions by 2050 (findings from an IPCC report last October). This will involve heating our homes without using natural gas, and we believe geo-exchange systems are the best method of doing this. We will continue to explore other options and will of course hire reputable engineering companies to do a complete system design (part of the estimated costs above) before installing such a system. At this time we can only consider doing a geo-exchange system for the sanctuary (no system is planned for the CD building in the short term due to added engineering complications in adding ventilation to this building).

Note: Even our exploration of a geo-exchange system for RHUC has led to community connections. Sheridan College will fund and assign four or more professors to work on the Research and Development portions of the project. There are opportunities for using our initiative to provide insight to the province for how it will meet the IPCC standards. We have contacts with the Ontario Society of Professional Engineers who are interested in seeing how battery banks may be used to store energy during low-use hours for use during peak periods. The Canadian GeoExchange Coalition has also provided help with our analyses. Geo-exchange systems are long-term solutions to home-heating (and cooling). Over their life cycle they have lower costs than traditional heating and cooling methods, so there is an economic value for RHUC. The most significant impact is cutting our GHGs by about 45% so that RHUC will meet the IPCC 2030 reduction targets. It is this reduction in GHG emissions that will have the most significant impact for our children and generations to come.

### **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>

## 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

As we look back over our history as The United Church of Canada, we remember one of the saints whose work forms the foundation that the United Church of ours is built on: Audrey McKim. Audrey McKim was born in Toronto in 1926. At the United Church, she was an editor of *Discovery* and *World Friends* with the Board of Sunday School Publications. She was also the Director of Christian Education at two Toronto churches. Audrey was one of the first United Church of Canada missionaries in Kenya, where she served for 10 years. She initially went to Kenya as a deacon of the United Church, and was part of the Canadian contingent to Operation Crossroads Africa in 1962. In 1963, Audrey returned as a Christian Education Worker with the National Christian Council and the Christian Churches Educational Association, where she worked until 1967. She was also a prolific writer and authored numerous articles and books, mostly for children. She was a founding member of the Canadian Society of Children's Authors, Illustrators and Performers. Her children's storybooks and books of prayer are filled with words and images that teach as well as entertain.

## 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

Shalom Seekers will be gathering in the church parking lot on Monday, June 10th at 9:30 a.m. to carpool to the McMichael Canadian Art Collection in Kleinburg. We'd like to leave as close to 9:30 a.m. as possible so we can be there when the gallery opens at 10 o'clock. Once there, we will walk around and look at the various art collections and then have lunch together at the café. If there is time and energy afterwards, we will look around some more either inside or outside.

This will be our last session until Monday, September 9th. At that time, we'll be continuing the DVD Series: *First Light* with renowned Biblical and Jesus scholars Dominic Crossan and Marcus Borg. New members are welcome at any time. Please speak to Peg Hiscoke or Sandra Loughton to find out more about the group.

## 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.

### 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 to **David Leyton-Brown!** At the recent meeting of Shining Waters Region, David was elected as the new president of our Regional Council. In addition Harry Ramsaran was elected as a member of the new Communities of Faith Commission and our minister, James Ravenscroft was elected as a member of the Pastoral Relations Commission. We wish them grace and blessing in this important work as a United Church region.

### 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](http://www.skylightfestival.ca).

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