

### Saturday, Feb. 29

5:30 p.m. Family Leap Night – Centennial Hall

### Sunday, March 1

10:30 Service – Sanctuary

12:00 p.m. Youth Choir practice – Parlour

12:00 p.m. Annual General Meeting – Gym

### Monday, March 2

9:30 a.m. Shalom Seekers – chapel

7:00 p.m. H.A.I.R. – Chapel

7:00 p.m. Beavers – gym

### Tuesday, March 3

7:00 p.m. Cubs – gym

### Wednesday, March 4

9:45 a.m. UCW meeting – home of L. Saul

6:30 p.m. Meditation Group – James' office

7:00 p.m. RHUC Book club – Parlour

### Thursday, March 5

6:00 p.m. Prayer shawl making – Chapel

7:00 p.m. Lenten Bible Study - Chapel

7:00 p.m. Scouts – gym

7:30 p.m. Chancel Choir – Parlour

### Saturday, March 7

3:30 p.m. Djembe drumming – Lower Centennial Hall

**Minister's message:** It was with shock Saturday that Canadians received news that the late Jean Vanier, founder of L'Arche, had been involved in a series of abusive sexual relationships with six different women over a number of decades. How do you begin to process information like that? I know my first reaction was one of stunned inner silence. How could a man with such vision for how to create inclusive community for people with various challenges have this other side that was so hurtful and manipulative? I realize a few people would have appreciated some remarks from me last Sunday but to be honest I was still processing news I only heard Saturday evening. My former bishop, who was the accompanying bishop for L'Arche International, spoke so warmly about Jean Vanier. I've read his books. It was all so unthinkable. But there is more to the news than one man. I think about the six women who carried their painful experience in silence for so long. To echo the statement made by L'Arche, I am moved by their strength and courage. My heart breaks for L'Arche as a whole, not just Daybreak, but all of the communities around the world. As difficult as it is for each of us to process the news about someone for whom we had such respect, how much more difficult for all of them. To that end, I sent an email to people I know in leadership at L'Arche Daybreak offering our ongoing love and support. Who they are and what they are about is not changed by the unexpected news of their founder. Plus, as shocked and hurt many of us feel, Jean Vanier's abusive actions in one part of his life do not erase the good he did in founding L'Arche. May that legacy of inclusive community continue. I pray that people do not withdraw support from them because of what we have learned about Vanier's past. In a world where there is so much hurt, we need L'Arche to continue as a place of supportive and empowering community.

## worship and music

**Sunday, March 1:** We come together for the First Sunday in Lent as we reflect on John 1:29-39. Having taken time to ponder Jesus' time in the wilderness back in January, we turn our attention to a reading often reflected on in conjunction with his baptism. This is appropriate because the season of Lent was originally created as a time for people to pray and fast in preparation for their baptism. As Jesus invites his future disciples to "come and see" where he is staying, he invites us to get to know him more deeply as well. The image of water figures prominently in the readings this Lent. With this in mind, throughout the season the communion table with become a growing river, inviting us to come to the water of God's love. Following worship, we gather in the gym for our AGM.

**Sunday, March 8:** As we celebrate our second Sunday in Lent, we once again hear about water as Jesus tells Nicodemus that we must be born from above through water and the Spirit (John 3:1-17). The river on the communion table continues to grow.

**Worship Notes:** This past Wednesday we marked Ash Wednesday during which people who attended received a mark of ashes on their foreheads. Those who were unable to attend the service but would still like to begin their Lenten experience with this ancient symbol are invited to come forward during the postlude at the end of worship on Sunday. The ashes are used to trace the cross on the person as a sign of their commitment to prayer and reflection throughout the season. Traditionally associated with both penitence and mourning, ashes are a sign of sorrow. A symbol of the earth from which we come, ashes remind us of our mortality. This can seem negative but it is really just realistic. It reminds us of our connection to the earth, to all creation, to each other. It reminds us that our focus needs to be on where we are right now and not on a future heaven, and so with the responsibility to look after one another. This ritual is optional.

## programs for all

**Lenten Bible Study:** Beginning on Thursday March 5 at 7:00PM, James will lead a bible study entitled "What does the Bible say about....?" Each Thursday of Lent, participants will study what the bible teaches about everything from fair wages to race relations. The first topic is focused on the environment. Other topics will be chosen by those who attend the first session

**Shalom Seekers:** Please join us on Monday, March 2 in the Chapel from 9:30 to 11:30 a.m. We will be starting a new 8-week DVD study entitled *ProFuture Faith: The Prodigal Species Comes Home* with Rev. Michael Dowd, an American Progressive Christian minister, eco-theologian, author, and TED talk speaker. The first session is entitled "*Un-trivializing God*". New members are welcome at any time. Please speak to Peg Hiscoke or Sandra Loughton for more details.

### Shalom Seekers ~ Update

On Monday, February 24th we spent the first part of our time together trying to come to grips with the news that broke on the weekend about the founder of L'Arche, Jean Vanier, and the finding that he abused six women starting in the 1970s. It has left many of us in shock, feeling disappointed and confused. During our talk we posed questions and shared our thoughts about the investigation and findings and Vanier's legacy. Peg closed our discussion with a moving prayer for the courageous victims and our friends at L'Arche.

As a result, I have been thinking about L'Arche Daybreak and our relationship with them this week and thought I would share the following:

- Over many years, core members and assistants have taken part in worship at RHUC.
- We got to know George, Lloyd, Thelus, Peter, Stephanie, Heather, Gordie, and Amanda and many, many more core members and assistants over the years.
- L'Arche members took part in worship services from time to time at RHUC. Who can remember trying to get Gordie away from the microphone once he got a taste of public speaking?
- One of the most moving things I have ever seen in a worship service were the times when The Spirit Movers were part of our morning service. This involved a form of liturgical dance to lovely music with core members (some in wheelchairs) and assistants. I left those services with two words at the forefront of my mind: Grace & Beauty.
- The Christian Development & Fellowship Committees worked with L'Arche Daybreak for many years in co-hosting Holocaust Education Week Events in their beautiful Dayspring chapel.
- The brothers of two of our Shalom members worked with L'Arche in the early years in France and elsewhere.
- Did you know the candles on our communion table are made by core members at L'Arche?
- Did you know that some RHUC Council Retreats over the years took place in the beautiful space at Daybreak?
- One of our Shalom members stopped at Daybreak after our meeting to offer our support and caring.

As many of you know, RHUC's ties with L'Arche Daybreak in Richmond Hill go way back and we need to show them our love and support more than ever right now at this very difficult time. We have learned that Daybreak already has a process in place to help staff, core members, and volunteers come to grips with the news of this report. They are committed to transparency. Let us pray that healing will come and that they will be able to move forward.

Sandra Loughton  
Co-facilitator, Shalom Seekers

**H.A.I.R.:** Our Monday evening study group (Heretics, Agnostics, Infidels and other Rif-raff), which welcomes and explores questions, doubts and uncertainties about the relevance of our faith at 7:00-8:30 in the chapel. New participants are welcome at any time.

**RHUC Book Club:** Rescheduled for **Wednesday, March 4 at 7 p.m. in the Chapel** to discuss the novel **THE BOSTON GIRL** by Anita Diamant. Visitors are always welcome to try out the group. No previous book club experience is necessary - just a love of reading and talking about books, or listening if you just want to see what it's all about. Please speak to Sandra Loughton or call the Church Office at 905.884.1301 Ext. 5 for more information.

**Dedication of bulletin covers:** If you would like to dedicate a bulletin cover please speak to Deb in the office. \$20/Sunday

**Prayers Shawls:** We will come together again during the Christian season of Lent to knit and crochet prayer shawls. Finished shawls are given to people who are unwell, grieving, moving away and also to celebrate a birth, joining our church or other special occasion as a way to show the church cares with a hope that the warmth of the shawl will bring comfort and joy. Anyone who would like to be part of this ministry is invited to come to the **Chapel from 6:00-7:00 on Thursdays beginning February 27th through April 9th.** Come every week or as often as you are able. Last year we had seven come on Thursdays and another four made shawls at home. Patterns, yarn and needles are available. Donna Smith, Coordinator, 905-884-6306

## outreach activities



**FEB 29TH FAMILY LEAP NIGHT  
FEATURING CHILI DINNER AND BOARD GAMES  
COME LEAP INTO MARCH WITH US!**

**WHEN?** SATURDAY FEB 29, 2020 FROM 5:30PM-8PM

**WHERE?** MAIN FLOOR OF RHUC, A FULLY ACCESSIBLE EVENT! ENTRY AT YONGE ST DOOR

**MENU?** VEG OR MEAT-BASED CHILI, SALAD, ROLL AND BEVERAGE WITH SWEETS TABLE.

**GAMES?** CHOOSE A GAME WE PROVIDE OR BRING YOUR OWN FAVOURITE!

**SPECIAL HAPPENINGS?** RHUC DRUMMERS, DOOR PRIZES, RAFFLE, BAKE SALE, LEAP DAY QUIZ.

**WHO IS INVITED?** ANYONE WHO LIKES TO PLAY CARDS OR BOARD GAMES

**TICKETS?** \$10 SINGLES, \$5 FOR 14 AND UNDER.

**ON SALE?** CHURCH OFFICE /905-884-1301-EXT 5; SUNDAYS AFTER SERVICE AT OUR TICKET TABLE

**WHAT FOR?** SUPPORTING AFRICAN AIDS FAMILIES AND STEPHEN LEWIS FOUNDATION,

**HOSTED BY?** HANDS AND HEARTS FOR AFRICA

## Donations north to DFC School: Coats+ Drive for DFC First Nations High School students in Thunder Bay has been extended:

1. Please bring requested donated items into the church to

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- Any of the items requested in the list below are very much appreciated, and thanks!
- Items can be left in the outer office near the upper elevator door.
- Any donation cheques can be left with Deb in the office.

2. So far we have some coats, hats, 100 girls' hairbands, and donations of \$100. Thank You!!

When asked what the students need next, DFC's staff rep, Sean Spenrath indicate these items would be a big help:

1. Winter coats - ideally 50, adult sizes, with a special request for some L and XL if possible (hats, gloves/mitts welcome too)
- 2, Girls' hair bands- 200
3. Swimming trunks (Male; ideally: 10 Medium ,10 Large, 10 XL
4. Towels- 30
5. Lip chapsticks, hand creams, and face lotions. - ideally 120 each

RHUC will sort, pack and ship donated items north to DFC School. Please bring new or gently used items (or donations with which we can purchase items) to RHUC Office, and thank you so much!

**Thursday, March 5:** World Day of Prayer 2020, 7 p.m. at St. Mary Immaculate Church. "Rise! Take your mat and Walk". All welcome!

**Minute for Mission:** The Financial Assistance Committee of The United Church of Canada oversees nine funds to support ministry personnel and lay members during times of extraordinary financial hardship, personal or vocational assessment, post-secondary education, and sabbatical leave. Three funds are supported by Mission & Service. The Support and Advocacy Fund provides financial assistance for gay, lesbian, bisexual, transgender, queer, and Two-Spirit ministry personnel who are experiencing difficulties in maintaining employment in the church because of their known or perceived sexual orientation or identity. The Personnel Emergency Fund provides financial support to a pastoral charge to fulfill their obligation of salary continuance to ministry personnel and congregational designated ministers who are on administrative leave or suspension, as part of a disciplinary process. The Fund for Survivors of Sexual Misconduct assists with the costs of counselling for two distinct groups. First, ministry personnel who are survivors of sexual abuse are supported to stay in active ministry while participating in therapy. Second, individuals who have experienced sexual misconduct in a United Church context are provided with financial contributions toward the cost of counselling to enhance their healing. One recent recipient says, "It has been a long journey. I am deeply grateful to The United Church of Canada for caring about victims of sexual abuse. I hope for my own healing and for the healing of others."

## church news

**Wed. Mar. 4th** - Our UCW Irish Meeting will be held at the home of Lynne Saul. Time - 9:45 am. Come for "Top of the Morning" fellowship - and don't forget to wear your green. Looking forward to seeing you.

The **UCW** has decided not to hold their Annual Spring Lunch. As everyone enjoyed the quiches, as a fundraiser, we will be making them in time for Easter. Details to follow.

Hold the date of **Wednesday, June 3** for UCW's bus trip to Thornbury!

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.