



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, follow this link: [Order of service](#) [Hymns](#)

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: As I continue to reflect how we have been doing over the last year in regard to the various intentions in our Mission Action Plan, we turn our attention to number three: ensuring that our facilities align with our values, identity and purpose. As you can imagine, this is an intention that has received significant attention, even in the midst of a global pandemic. In fact, the pandemic has made working on this intention more important than ever. The desire to turn at least part of our buildings into a 'Centre for Community and the Arts' aligns with our history. We have long been a place where the community gathers, and we are a congregation that understands the importance of nurturing strong relationships in our neighbourhood. But we also want to make use of our space to generate revenue. The resultant loss of income from intermittent lockdowns this past year has placed a strain on our

finances, shortening the timeline needed to turn our vision into a reality. Fortunately, we have a committed facilities and finances team (branded as the Mission Action Business Plan Committee) who have been focused on this, working closely with SHS Consulting to keep moving our planned redevelopment further along. As reported in the video meeting last Sunday, we continue to engage with various organizations and groups in our neighbourhood to gauge their long-term interest in partnering with us in this project. The design workshop that was held earlier in the year was well attended and generated much enthusiasm along with some great ideas regarding community needs. These potential partners are being further consulted with a survey and there is a special gathering with Indigenous leaders being planned. The global pandemic may have curtailed many things, but it has not slowed us down in this important work. With continued effort, combined with the good will of our future partners we will achieve our vision for being a 'Centre for Community and the Arts'.

worship and music

[Order of service](#) [Hymns](#) [Discovery Time at home](#)

James' video to

children: <https://1drv.ms/v/s!AlBjmozEVDROgaUs2TmGqKUJa4qkEw>

Sunday, March 14: On this Fourth Sunday in Lent, we reflect on John 8:21-36 as Jesus speaks of the trust he has with God even though he doesn't know the end point. We also reflect on Romans 4:13-25 in which Paul reflects on the role of faith in Abraham's life. Our reflective reading is an excerpt from Nadia Bolz-Weber's *Pastorix: The Cranky Beautiful Faith of a Sinner Saint* and we take time to mark the passing of one year since the declaration of a global pandemic.

Sunday, March 21: On this last Sunday before Holy Week, we reflect on John 12:20-33 in which Jesus speaks of the need for the seed to let go of itself in order to produce fruit, and Hebrews 5:5-10 in which the author reflects on how Jesus let go of his life for others.

Sunday March 28: We begin Holy Week as we pause to remember how crowds welcomed Jesus to Jerusalem with palm fronds. You are reminded that we will recall this visually through pictures. Please send James a picture of yourself holding a branch from our local area. You may want to go outside and cut a small spruce or cedar bough or if it is warm enough for pussy willows, you could cut a few of branches. If you prefer, stay indoors and take a photo with a houseplant. Alternatively, think of items that express a celebratory welcome like ribbons, streamers or "ticker-tape". Please send to james@rhuc.org by March 25 so they can be compiled into a "parade".



Worship Notes: It won't be long until we're celebrating Maundy Thursday, Good Friday and Easter Sunday. Given that we will most likely be coming together for worship via Zoom, it is important for us to mark these holiest of days in a way that is meaningful and full. With this in mind, we are proposing that we take advantage of the rich visuals that we use in this time.

1. For Maundy Thursday, we will take time to share the "*maundatum*" within our homes, family members taking time to wash one another's feet or to wash one's own hands. We will also eat together akin to what people have done for their own family gatherings for Thanksgiving and Christmas.
2. For **Good Friday**, RHUC youth are helping to put together a video to help us see the connection between Jesus' arrest, trial and death, and what is happening in our local and global community.

3. For **Easter Sunday**, we will gather twice via Zoom:
 - For the **sunrise service** we ask you to log in from an east facing window so we can see the sun rise together. If not, take a picture of the sunrise on an earlier day and share with the group. Like for Maundy Thursday we'll eat "together".
 - For the **10:30 am service**, we want to make the connection between Easter and our daily lives and so ask that you take time between now and March 25 to prayerfully walk your neighbourhood or other favourite spot and take a picture of something that speaks to your heart of new life, resurrection, renewal in the face of death. These will be placed into a video montage for the service.

Have you considered being a reader during worship? If so then read on. Harry Ramsaran, the Chair of the Worship Committee, also coordinates the roster of readers and he is looking for new people to add to his list. Simply email Harry at harrypersad.ramsaran@gmail.com and let him know. He will be in touch when an opportunity to read is coming up. James or Deb will send you the readings by the Wednesday of the week before your scheduled Sunday, and depending on the situation with the pandemic, Brandon or Caroline will contact you to explain how you will read from home via Zoom. It is that simple.



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

Women's Spirituality will meet **this Saturday, March 13 at 10:00 - 12:00**. Program: "Easter Icons: How they change through the ages". Please contact Donna Smith at donnasmith44@rogers.com for Zoom link.

Men's Breakfast via Zoom will be held on March 13th, 2021 at 9:30 am: Our guest speaker will be *Jaime* Cruz. Jaime is a Public Education Coordinator for the Alzheimer Society of York Region. For the last 25 years he has worked alongside individuals living with dementia to maintain strengths and abilities. He continues to educate the community about dementia and eliminate the stigma behind it.

Jaime's presentation will be on..... The Aging Brain: What can happen to our brain as we age? Learn about the parts of the brain and what can happen if they are affected by a cognitive impairment, injury or stroke. Learn the differences between Depression, Delirium and Dementia. Think about what medications can do to support us and what to be weary of.

Shalom Seekers: We will meet on Monday March 15 at 10 am on Zoom. This week is our 4th Lenten session in our Lenten Study "Lifting up Scripture through Art." Our focus will be on sculpture. Scripture readings are from the lectionary. Resources will be provided before we gather. Contact Peg Hiscoke or Sandra Loughton for more information. Newcomers are very welcome.

Prayer Shawl knitting and crocheting will meet on Zoom and visit that way while we work on our Prayer Shawl on **Wednesday's to March 31 from 2:00 – 3:00 p.m.** We have given out many of those made during Lent last year to those who are grieving the death of a loved one or those who are baptized or join our congregation or to those people who move to another community. Yarn, needles and hooks are available. Phone Donna Smith, 905-884-6307 for information, and to get the Zoom link.

HAIR: HAIR (Heretics, Agnostics, Infidels and Other Riffraff), is on **Monday evenings at 7:00 pm over Zoom**. This group intends to be a place of inquiry and questioning, where doubts are expressed, uncertainties about our faith and its relevance to our daily lives clarified, and the application of the teachings and principles of our Christian faith to major issues of our time are explored, and where we have interesting and stimulating discussions. This year we are using videos of TED talks to launch discussion and have dealt with such topics as environmentalism and climate change, racism and social justice, ethics and values, science and religion, and healthy ageing. These discussions are open to anyone interested, and new members are always welcome. To get the Zoom link please contact David Leyton-Brown at dlbrown@yorku.ca.

Two opportunities for 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 times

Lenten Book Study: March 18:

"uncontrolled movement (september)" and "women of exceptional merit (october) in *TSWI*, and Chapter 5, "And Its Days Are Numbered" in *21*

Pub Theology: Friday, March 26 at 7:30 PM on Zoom: It is time to come together again to talk about faith, spirituality and life's big questions, all over the beverage of your choice. Let James know if you would like to participate, and he will send you the Zoom link. Feel free to invite a friend.



RHUC Book Club: On Wednesday, **March 31st** please join us on Zoom at 4 p.m. to discuss *Recipe for a Perfect*

Wife by Karma Brown. (Please note the change from March 24th listed last week in

Reflections.) Brown's novel is set in two different time periods -- the 1950's and modern day. A new homeowner finds notes left in the basement in cookbooks from a previous owner of the house. A somewhat dark and mysterious, but very readable tale! Karma Brown lives in Oakville, Ontario and has published five books to date.

For more information about the RHUC Book Club, please speak to Sandra Loughton, Facilitator. New members are always welcome. The invitation and link to the Zoom meeting will be sent out the day prior to the meeting. We hope you can join us via video or telephone!

church news

SAVE THE DATES

April 11, 2021 Leadership and Congregational

Development Forum (on Zoom Time to be confirmed. More details to follow.)

Sunday May 2nd, 2021 - Annual General Meeting (on Zoom)

- time to be confirmed



MISSION ACTION PLAN Minute

Annual Reports: We are also trying something different with our Annual Reports for an unforgettable 2020 that has pushed us in all sorts of new directions. The Board felt we can take the opportunity to really reflect on how we have adapted our life as a faith community this past year and frame it in the context of our 9 intentions from our Mission Action Plan that was approved by the congregation in April 2018.

This means we are inviting all committees/groups who normally submit reports to consider their collective work this year and pick one or more of the nine intentions to answer the following question:

In 2020, how have we (committee, group etc.) contributed to RHUC meet our commitments to:

1. Be a culture of welcome, respect and safety where we honour one another and respect diversity
2. Engage with the community in our neighbourhood
3. Ensure our facilities align with our values, identity and purpose
4. Develop intentional opportunities for people to gather to build relationships, nourish spiritual wellness and engage in justice
5. Create dynamic, engaging and meaningful worship
6. Reach out with care to people at all stages of life
7. Communicate our story both within and beyond the congregation
8. Be good stewards of our finances and facilities
9. Foster and Value Leaders and Volunteers

The reports do not have to be long. We are trying to get a sense of our collective efforts and how they are contributing to the goals we set for ourselves as part of the Mission Action Plan. The pandemic has changed many things, but also The reports do not have to be long. We are trying to get a sense of our collective efforts and how they are contributing to the goals we set for ourselves as part of the Mission Action Plan. The pandemic has changed many things, but also created opportunities for new ways of being church. We think there is a great story to tell!

NEW OPPORTUNITY: We are also extending an opportunity to anyone in the congregation to reflect on what you or your family has been doing this year that could fit into our MAP intentions. Or, if you have experienced something as a result of people part of this community or been impacted by someone in our congregation. Our faith and being part of RHUC informs our day-to-day lives, not just what we do as part of RHUC. We encourage you to think of a couple of sentences that help tell the story of anything you would like to share that speaks to one of the 9 intentions above.

Please forward reports and other contributions to office@rhuc.org by **March 19th, 2021**. If you have any questions, please contact Jane Wedlock at jane.wedlock2@gmail.com.

Nominations Committee: The Nominations Committee is looking to fill the following roles:

1. **Vice-Chair of the Church Board**
2. **Forum Facilitator for Mission, Outreach & Social Action**
3. **Members of the Finance Committee**

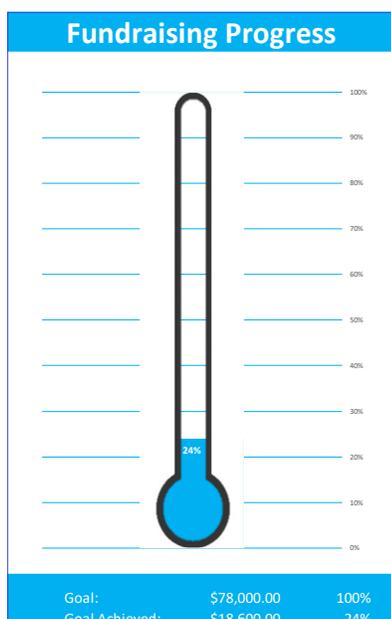
If you have questions about the above positions simply contact one of the following committee members: Kathleen Crosbie (kltcrosbie 'at' gmail.com); Donna Harrison (donna115 'at' sympatico.ca) Donna Smith (donnasmith44 'at' rogers.com); and Doug Loweth (loweth 'at' sympatico.ca)



Everyone is welcome to mark the commitment we made at our last regional meeting to become an **Affirming Region** as a part of living into our equity vision. Please join us this Sunday, March 14 at 2 PM in a service of worship to celebrate. Rev. Michael Blair will preach and the title of his

reflection is: "Dance".

Here's the [Order of Service](#). Please join us in the Zoom meeting at 2 PM: <https://united-church.zoom.us/j/97304437237> or in the YouTube Livestream <https://youtu.be/euKAge7bYfc> We look forward to seeing you there!



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 etransfer to office@rhuc.org, cheque or



We are now at **24%** of our goal!! Thank you!

lifting our spirits

This is a section for poems, reflections, recipes, uplifting news items, anything to help us get through this, and to do it together. Please submit items to help us all "lift our spirits". Email Deb at office@rhuc.org.

St. Patrick's Prayer

May the Strength of God pilot us.
 May the Power of God preserve us.
 May the Wisdom of God instruct us.
 May the Hand of God protect us.
 May the Way of God direct us.
 May the Shield of God defend us.
 May the Host of God guard us against temptations of the world.
 And, may you see the face of Christ in everyone you meet,
 And may everyone you meet see the face of Christ in you. Amen

community news



P.I.E. = Public. Intentional. Explicit.

Want some Pie? Sunday, March 14 is National Affirming Day (and Pi Day). As such we are planning a post-Worship gathering of LGBTQI+ folks and allies on Zoom. This is an opportunity to chat, to consider how Public, Intentional and

Explicit we are as an Affirming Ministry and to have some pie (virtually, of course). Contact Deb for a Zoom link for this gathering. And Moderator Richard Bott invites everyone to join him in celebrating PIE Day 2021! <https://youtu.be/dX-46NSfH0>



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