

Sunday, March 15

10:00 a.m. Service at Continuing Care – Mackenzie Health
 10:30 Service – Sanctuary 12:00 p.m. Pie Lunch – gym
 12:00 p.m. UCW Executive - Chapel

Wednesday, March 18

5:30 p.m. Vision Keepers meeting - Chapel
 6:30 p.m. Meditation Group – James' office

Thursday, March 19

6:00 p.m. Prayer shawl making – Chapel
 7:00 p.m. Lenten Bible Study - Chapel
 7:30 p.m. Chancel Choir – Parlour

Saturday, March 21

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

Minister's Message: In place of a weekly message, the following is an edited version of the statement from the General Council Office in regard to COVID-19: As confirmed cases of COVID-19 continue to spread, we as a church have an Emergency Plan to help congregations plan for contingencies that may or may not arise. We urge congregations to respond with compassion, prevention, and prayer. Statistics regarding the number of confirmed cases and deaths make it easy to dissociate numbers from people and communities, but as a church we seek a compassionate response that acknowledges the people attached to each statistic. We know that people affected include not only those infected by the virus but families, friends, co-workers, and community members. We mourn with people whose loved ones have died, who have lost their livelihood through the growing economic impact, who have lost community through self-isolation and limited travel, and who have lost a sense of security through fear of contamination or racial discrimination. We also give thanks for professionals who are providing leadership in the treatment and containment of the virus, and extend our concern for those who put at risk their personal health to support others, especially the vulnerable. We hope the most vulnerable people in our society can rely on us to do all that we can to prevent the spread of the virus and the fears surrounding it. Our gathering places need to promote good preventive practices, and when necessary, we can provide alternative programming, like online worship or bag lunches for meal programs, for those most at risk in large group gatherings or isolated due to vulnerability. We thus encourage communities of faith to:

- share stories from those most affected by the virus, praying with our kin around the world
- repudiate all comments about COVID-19 that are prejudiced or racist, or that attach COVID-19 to a race or ethnicity
- practise and model good personal hygiene by washing hands often, coughing or sneezing into sleeves, and avoiding touching our face or the faces of those who are most vulnerable
- educate people on how they can prevent the spread of viruses

Our faithful response of compassion and prevention needs to be surrounded and guided by our continual prayer for the well-being of all people. May we continue to collaborate and learn from health care professionals as we seek ways to honor and respect all people.

Keeping RHUC Healthy: The Board met recently to discuss what our response as a community of faith should be to the increasing spread of COVID-19. Given that in Canada there has been only one case of community transmission thus far, and that is in Vancouver, we feel confident that we do not need to cancel worship services and other gatherings yet. We are however, monitoring the situation and will shift to providing resources so we can pray together from the comfort of our homes. In the meantime, we are implementing the following:

1. Notices have been put up in various places in the church reminding people of hygiene protocols, including frequent handwashing.
2. Specific handwashing instructions have been put up in washrooms. You are encouraged to use the paper towel to open the washroom door. The green bins have been moved close to the door to assist with this.
3. Additional hand sanitizer pumps are on back order. In the meantime, free standing pumps will be placed in Centennial Hall and entrances to the CD Building in addition to the ones previously installed in the narthex and near the accessible washroom.
4. Surfaces are being frequently wiped down with disinfectant.
5. In the sanctuary, the nursery in the back and the children's area in the front will be pared down so there are no plush or soft surfaces. Only items that can be easily wiped with disinfectant will be available for use.
6. At this time, we will still facilitate Discovery Time or Teen Seekers but will discontinue in the future should the situation warrant it. Disinfectant wipes will be provided to Discovery Time and Teen Seeker leaders.
7. We are asking people to use a non-touch greeting like a warm smile and a gentle bow. In addition, we are asking people to sit apart from each other. To this end, ushers will inform people of this request and remind them that the balcony is open to provide ample seating.
8. During Fellowship time, servers will be using gloves. This is to protect their health when receiving a mug for washing.
9. At this time we anticipate still holding Holy Week and Easter worship services. The Worship Committee will be discussing the best way to share communion at Easter.
10. People are reminded to stay home if they are sick, even if it is "just a cold".
11. If you are staying home or need to self-isolate there are Sunday home prayers posted on the website under Worship and Reflection.
12. We will continue to follow proper food handling protocols, especially by washing dishes and cutlery in hot soapy water that also contains bleach.

Please be assured that the Board is monitoring the situation and will adjust protocols accordingly. In the meantime we encourage people to pray for those impacted by COVID-19 around the world and to close to home, especially those who have lost loved ones.

Worship and music

Sunday, March 15: We reflect together on John 4:5-24, the meeting at a well between Jesus and a Samaritan woman. Jesus proclaims himself as "living water". What is the significance of this statement in our lives? In what ways does our own connection to Jesus quench our thirst and bring new life? With this Sunday being the first of two during the March Break, children will go to the Centennial Hall for Discovery Time but youth will remain in the sanctuary.



12:00 p.m. **PIE Lunch** - gym
Why PIE? PIE = Public, Intentional, Explicit
 Come on the 15th and hear more,
bringing your donation of a pie,

savoury (quiche, shepherds...) or sweet (fruit, custard...) and we'll all eat pie for lunch! Great way to celebrate and have fun! *This Lunch & Learn is sponsored by RHUC Vision Keepers.*
Contact person: Donna Smith, 905-884-6307

Sunday, March 22: We reflect together on the meeting between Jesus and the man who was blind from birth (John 9:1-41). This Sunday is the end of March Break. Both children and youth will remain in the sanctuary throughout worship. There will be activities available in the children's area.

Worship Notes: Christian worship is generally divided into four parts: a gathering time, reflection on the word, a response to the word (including sacraments) and a sending out time. Each of these sections of the liturgy include times of prayer or singing that help us transition from one to another. At RHUC we have incorporated a variety of formats to help prepare to hear the word. During Lent we are praying a responsive "Prayer of Self Awareness". At other times we have sung together a centring refrain. Often during the extended season of the Sundays after Epiphany or the Sundays after Pentecost, we have used a singing bowl as a way to get ready to hear the readings. While this bowl has been used in some settings because it is attributed to Tibetan religious practice, this is not our intent. We have adopted the bowl simply for the sound it makes and so the transition it offers between one portion of the service to another.

Upcoming Transfer of Membership: According to the polity of The United Church of Canada, while we are all part of the Church by reason of our baptism, we live that out in a local congregation. We become members of a congregation either through the Reaffirmation of our Faith and the Laying on of Hands (also known as confirmation) or by transferring our membership from one congregation to another. The United Church recognizes confirmation celebrated in other denominations. During the upcoming Easter season, a Sunday is being set aside to recognize people who would like to be members of RHUC. Please let James or Deb know if you would either like to transfer your membership or to be received into membership by reaffirmation.

United in Prayer Day, March 21, 10 AM to 2 PM: Each year in March, Centring Prayer groups all around the world join together to meditate and practice *lectio divina* on the same day, a tangible expression of being united in Spirit. RHUC's centring prayer group is hosting the United in Prayer Day for our area. Everyone is welcome to attend. Coffee and tea will be provided. Please bring a bag lunch.

programs for all

Men's Breakfast has been cancelled for this Sat. March 14.

Women's Spirituality: March 14 at 9:45 am in the Chapel.
 Program: 'The Book of Esther for Today'

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: Shalom Seekers will be taking a break on Monday, March 16th due to March Break. We will meet again on Monday, March 23rd from 9:30 to 11:30 a.m. in the Chapel. At that time, we will be continuing with Session 3 of the DVD series ProFuture Faith: The Prodigious Species Comes Home with Rev. Michael Dowd. Session 3 is entitled *The Epic of Evolution: A Cosmic Timeline*. Rev. Dowd delves into topics such as Evidential Mysticism and the Future of Earth, as well as Humans Have Instincts; Snakes Don't Talk. If you want to learn more, please join us any Monday for some good conversation and fellowship. Please speak to Peg Hiscoke or Sandra Loughton for more details.

RHUC Book Club: Please join the RHUC Book Club on **Wednesday, March 25th** for their discussion of *THE DIFFERENCE* by award-winning Canadian author Marina Endicott. The meeting will take place in the Chapel at 7 p.m. Here is a short description of the novel: From one of our most critically acclaimed and beloved storytellers comes a sweeping novel set on board the *Morning Light*, a Nova Scotian merchant ship sailing through the south pacific in 1912. Kay and Thea are half-sisters, separated in age by almost twenty years, but deeply attached. When their stern father dies, Thea returns to Nova Scotia for her long-promised marriage to the captain of the *Morning Light*. But she cannot abandon her orphaned young sister, so Kay too embarks on a life-changing voyage to the other side of the world. At the heart of *The Difference* is a crystallizing moment in Micronesia. If this description piques your interest, please feel free to join us for the discussion. New members are always welcome. For more details, please contact Sandra Loughton or Deb Fratin in the Church Office at 905.884.1301, Ext. 5.

H.A.I.R.: The upcoming sessions for HAIR are based on Theme 2 of the DVD series, "The Challenge of Paul" as led by progressive biblical scholar, John Dominic Crossan. In Theme 1, Crossan helped viewers reclaim Paul as a voice of justice and inclusion by look at his letters in the context of the Roman Empire. Crossan continues this by exploring both the Acts of the Apostles and the Epistles of Paul, and helping the viewer to see the contrast between how Luke depicts Paul and who Paul really is based on his letters.

Prayers Shawls: Finished knitted/crocheted 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. Patterns, yarn and needles are available. Donna Smith, Coordinator, 905-884-6306

Youth Confirmation: Are you in Grades 7 to 12? Do you want to deepen your understanding of the United Church and your Christian faith? Do you want to become a full member of RHUC and so be able to participate in all aspects of decision-making and leadership in the congregation? If any of this sparks your interest (or as a parent you think it might spark your teen's interest), James is planning to lead Confirmation classes over the Easter season (April 12 to May 24). Contact him (james@rhuc.org) for more information or to register.

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

outreach activities

Coat drive for DFC First Nations High School: Thank you to all for your generous support for the teens of DFC First Nations High School in Thunder Bay, by providing the requested new or gently used: coats, hairbands, towels, swim trunks, and skin protection items, plus, donations to purchase more of these, for our shipment!

We collected donations, or purchased:

- 85 warm winter coats
- 114 hats
- 23 swim trunks
- 14 towels
- 120 hairbands
- 217 Chapstick / lip balms
- + bedding, and more

16 large boxes are packed and ready to ship to the school, with support by John Carrie's HIP - Honouring Indigenous Peoples - the local Self Stor (who provided boxes) and Trucks for Change.

Kathy McBey

Climate Action Planning Instigated at the Church



Climate Change Information Fair
Learn Practical Actions You Can Take Right Now

Free Event
Sat. April 4th, 2020
1:00 - 3:00 p.m.
St. Matthew's United Church:
333 Crosby Ave,
Richmond Hill

Event will include:

- Experts in the science and economics of the climate crisis
- Experts in home renovation and renewable energy use
- Reps from groups advocating for climate action
- Extensive educational and networking opportunities
- Refreshments

Join us on Facebook: [Targeting Climate Change - Richmond Hill](https://www.facebook.com/TargetingClimateChange/)

Inform others with [#TargetingClimateChangeRH](https://www.facebook.com/TargetingClimateChangeRH/), [@TargetingClimate](https://www.facebook.com/TargetingClimateChangeRH/), [@ON_EcoSchools](https://www.facebook.com/TargetingClimateChangeRH/)

For more info, please contact us at: targetingclimatechange@gmail.com

Partners: SHAWDOWN, Toronto 350.org, Green Living, EcoAction

The RHUC community was asked to participate in climate action planning by creating or joining a small Climate Action Group (three people or family groups recommended). Have you joined one?

Groups will participate in these tasks:

1. **Meet virtually or physically once every three months (send a quick email to Esther Collier at targetclimatechange@gmail.com when you have met, including your group name in the subject line).**
2. **Second meeting and following meetings (send a quick email to Esther Collier at targetclimatechange@gmail.com each time you meet):**

We will let you know when the first Lunch Plus, addressing the climate issue, will occur. This is the flyer for the next **Targeting Climate Change meeting on April 4, 1-3 pm, at St. Matthew's United Church.**

Minute for Mission: Camino de Emaús is a vibrant ministry serving hispanophones (mainly from Chile) and francophones in Montreal, thanks in part to support from Mission & Service. In recent years Camino de Emaús created a wellness program geared to seniors called Camino de Oro, or Golden Path. They organize outings, fitness and dance classes, wellness workshops with guest speakers, and other activities to foster community and combat social isolation. Camino de Emaús also recently exhibited its memory museum and participated in commemorating those whose lives were lost or forever changed by the coup in Chile on September 11, 1973. Several people shared photos and thoughts of lost loved ones and also called for everyone to continue to work together, with respect and tolerance, to show solidarity not only with Chile but also with other causes closer to home, as there is still much to improve in Chile, Canada, and the world. Camino de Emaús is a faith-filled community that welcomes those in need of healing and support.

Camino Parry Sound: An exciting pilgrimage week walking the shores of Georgian Bay and learning about its social, cultural, and geological history.

Arrive: Sunday, August 23 at 7:00 p.m.

Depart: Saturday, August 29th after brunch

Cost: \$600/person all inclusive

For more information or to register, contact the Camino guide, Monica Moore at revmonicamoore@gmail.com or call St. James UC at 705-746-8553.

church news

Core Culture Connections presents:



A Night of Music
An Intercultural
Concert Series

A new initiative at RHUC to hold concerts in the Spring of 2020, with 2 types of performers each concert and intermission snacks by a local restaurant/ caterer.

1st concert:

March 27, 2020 7:30 pm – 10:00 pm. Doors open 7:00 pm

Venue - Richmond Hill United Church Sanctuary

Tickets:

Online - \$15 General Admission, \$12 Students/Seniors + fees. Credit Card payment. Online sale ends March 25th. 9 pm.

At Door - \$18 General Admission, \$15 Students/Seniors. Cash only.

Included in the ticket price – Snacks from *Aneal's Taste of the Islands* & coffee/tea.

Buy Tickets – <https://www.eventbrite.ca/e/core-culture-connections-a-night-of-music-tickets-96330251375>

What should you do?: Please share! Tell your friends! Email them or share on social media. Like/Follow our FB / Instagram posts.

Facebook (FB) – www.facebook.com/corecultureconnections

Instagram – www.instagram.com/coreculture.connex/

The event is now also up on RHUC's Facebook Page so you can share it with your friends.

Broadview subscription: if you would like to renew your subscription or start a subscription, please give your payment of \$25 (cheque to RHUC, cash or e-transfer to office@rhuc.org) to Deb in the office by March 23, 2020. Thank you.

Yonge Street is Nearly 225 Years Old: Did you know that Yonge Street will be 225 years old next year? Richmond Hill resident Luc Sagar did. And so he is proposing a celebratory parade for July 1. The plan is for the parade to travel 2.25 km (northbound from Silver City Cinema near Highway 7 to Hillcrest Mall). The plan is to synchronize with other parades, including one planned for Aurora (going southbound from Mosely Street to Murray Drive). Doesn't this sound like fun! Luc is seeking volunteers to join a planning committee. If you are interested in helping plan this 225 Anniversary please let James know and he will forward to you Luc's contact information.

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, and put "unsubscribe" in the subject line. Published by Deb Fratin. Please submit notices by noon on Wednesday.