

WORSHIPPING TOGETHER

Worship

Mar. 19th

10:30 a.m. Each Sunday of Lent we extinguish another candle in our mutual walk with Christ. Message: "Cleanse, Quench, Connect" by Rev. James Ravenscroft. Reading: John 4:5-26. Reading for next week is John 9:1-41.

March 26th

10:30 a.m. Each Sunday of Lent we extinguish another candle in our mutual walk with Christ.
12:00 p.m. Lunch and Learn: Aboriginal issues.

April 9th Palm / Passion Sunday

10:30 a.m. From the triumph of Jesus' entry into Jerusalem to uncertainty as shadows gather.

Minister's Message

Lenten practices can be a lot like New Year's resolutions - we have good intentions but after a couple of weeks in we've let things slide. The tendency can be to throw in the towel. But we shouldn't. So you forgot to fast on Wednesday last week, or you gave in and bought a chocolate, or you skipped reading a devotional a couple of times last week. The purpose of Lenten practices is to help us connect with God, others, our inner life. That continues to be important.

Children & Youth Programs needs you!

Our children and youth programs are an important part of Sunday morning worship. We are currently looking for leaders for our Teen Seekers program. Curriculum is available to use and adapt for the program. If this interests you, but you're not sure what to do, Joanne is also available to help with planning. We are looking for leadership on the following dates:

- April 2
- April 9
- May 7
- May 28

If you can help out, please speak to Joanne Scofield or email her at jscofield@rogers.com.

ENGAGING, CHALLENGING & GROWING OUR FAITH

Prayer Shaw knitting

We will be gathering to knit or crochet prayer shawls again this year during Lent. Finished shawls are given to people who are unwell, grieving, moving away, and also to celebrate a birth or other special occasion as a way of showing that we care and hope the warmth of the shawl will give comfort and joy. Anyone who would like to be part of this ministry is invited to come **Thursdays March 2, 9, 16, 23, 30, April 6 and 13 in the Chapel, 5:00 to 6:00**. If this time does not fit into your schedule, please contact Donna Smith 905-884-6307 to see about arranging another time.

The UC Observer – renewal and new subscription time!

It is renewal and new subscription time! **Annual subscription cost: \$25/year. Due date: April 10th**. (11 monthly issues - the July/August summer issue is a combined one).

If you would like to renew or start a new subscription, payment by cheque for \$25, payable to Richmond Hill UC, can be put in the offering plate or brought to the office. Thank you!

RHUC Book Club

Please join us on **Wednesday, March 22 at 7 p.m. in the Chapel** to discuss **Under the Visible Life** by Kim Echlin.

"Under the Visible Life takes readers from the bustling harbour of Karachi to the palpable political tension on the streets of 1970s Montreal to the smoky jazz clubs of New York City. Deeply affecting, vividly rendered, and sweeping in scope, it is also an exploration of the hearts of two unforgettable women: a meditation on how hope can remain alive in the darkest of times when we have someone with whom to share our burdens."

New members are always welcome to try us out. We are a friendly group and have wonderful, lively discussions. For more information, speak to Sandra Loughton or call the Church Office at 905.884.1301.

Getting to Know You

With all the boxes unpacked, Advent and Christmas well behind us and a routine slowly getting established, James would love to start getting to know people better. He's always up for a coffee or tea (and even a cookie). He'd love to come visit people in their homes, at local cafes, or even for a walk in the woods. He's open to individual, family and group visits. The key is a nice visit to get to know each other better. You can reach him by email at james@rhuc.org or by phone either at the church or on his cell – 647.705.2754.

During the month of **March, James will be hosting an open house on Mondays from 1 to 4 pm in his office.** Pop in for a coffee and tea.

Bible Study

James will be facilitating a Thursday evening bible study sessions from **6:30 – 7:30 PM.** We will meet in “**The Meeting Room**” (not sure what else to call Linda's office). We will begin by looking at the scripture readings for the upcoming Sunday, looking at their historical and cultural contexts and the wisdom they can offer us.

Shalom Seekers

On Monday, March 20, the group will be continuing their discussion of Christianity for the Rest of Us by Diana Butler Bass. The focus will be on Chapter Four: Finding Home. This book is a timely read as we begin to look forward to plans for RHUC in the future. Come join the conversation on Mondays in the chapel at 9:30 a.m. For more info, speak to Dawn Moon, Peg Hiscoke or Sandra Loughton.

H.A.I.R.

HAIR, the Monday evening study group, will be beginning a GREAT new book on **January 30th.** We will read and discuss the book **Faith versus Fact** by Jerry A. Coyne. The author argues that science and religion are incompatible. Come join the discussion at **7:00 p.m. in the chapel.** Copies are available from Deb in the church office for \$20.00, or pay what you can. It is an easy read and written for the layperson.

March 20 - Chapter 4a: Faith Strikes Back (33 pp.)

March 27 - Chapter 4b: Faith Strikes Back (39 pp.)

April 3 - Chapter 5: Why Does It Matter? (39 pp.)

Special Occasions

Writing to the church in Rome, the apostle Paul urged them: “rejoice with those who rejoice, weep with those who weep”. 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. This column is an effort to rectify that situation. Don't hesitate to add any special occasions you know about.

Nurturing our Spirituality

On the first Tuesday of the month, **Joanne Scofield** will be offering **Yoga and Meditation** - a yoga practice that will use postures and breathing to bring the body and mind to a place of relaxation and stillness for meditation. The next Yoga and Meditation will be on **Tuesday, April 4 from 7:00 – 8:00 in the Chapel.**

HOSPITALITY & WORKING FOR JUSTICE

In search of rocking chairs and picnic table

Do you have a rocking chair at home that you've been thinking about donating? Consider donating it to the church. We are looking for one or two rocking chairs for the use of nursing moms and other adults with children. Thanks so much.

If you have a picnic table in good condition that is looking for a new home, RHUC could use another one for our green space. Thank you!

Lenten Givings

This year the focus of our **Lenten givings** will be **Doctors Without Borders or MSF Canada.** This excellent group of dedicated health professionals and volunteers spreads their efforts around the world through 70 active projects. Current highlights (or lowlights) are work with displaced people in the Syria/Lebanon/Jordan area, work in Northern Nigeria (the site of a recent bombing of a refugee camp) and helping in South Sudan where there is widespread famine. As our Advent givings supported the Toronto Native Women's Centre (over \$2000) we traditionally shift our support to a global project during Lent. We count on your support. Specially marked envelopes will be in the pews on three Sundays - March 5, 19 and 26.

Minute for Mission *Called to be the Church*

Our gifts for Mission & Service support racial justice. Let us hear a story about this important work. Working toward racial justice in church and society is a lifelong journey. We must be open to learning from each other, with each other, and with the Spirit, so that we continue to break down barriers and build just institutions. We need to work together for racial justice within our church. The United Church's online racial justice workshops are one step on this journey. Because we believe that we are a "whole people of God" with a "priesthood of all believers," racial justice workshops are open to everyone in the United Church. These racial justice workshops help participants engage in self-examination around White privilege and internalized racism, as well as analyze the systemic nature of racism in the church and wider society. They offer our ministry leaders tools to begin or continue the work of racial justice in local ministry contexts. We sing thanksgiving that our gifts for Mission & Service encourage continuous learning and provide resources for justice and right relationships. If Mission & Service is already a regular part of your giving, thank you so much! If you have not given for Mission & Service, please join me in making Mission & Service a regular part of your life of faith. In all our Mission & Service giving, with a willing heart, we sing thanksgiving to God!

CREATING AND NURTURING COMMUNITY

Thank you!

Thank you to **Heather Burton** for the beautiful portrait of Rev. Sang Chul Lee. Be sure to take a look at it in Centennial Hall.

'Anything Goes' at the Newmarket Theatre

April 20-23, 2017 @ the Newmarket Theatre with Glen. Tickets 905-963-5122. www.wavestagetheatre.com
'Bon voyage! Set sail on a "de-lovely" cruise through some of Cole Porter's most famous songs. A brassy nightclub singer, a starry-eyed stowaway and Public Enemy No. 13 are booked on a transatlantic luxury liner bound for romance and laughter. Hum along with an easy-to-love score packed with hits including "I Get a Kick Out of You," "You're the Top," "It's De-Lovely," "Blow, Gabriel, Blow" and more!' **Glen (James' spouse) is in the production.**

News from Helen Phillips

Helen and Perry moved from Brampton a year ago to the Sarnia area. Their daughter Joanna and partner Adrian Swaby welcomed their baby boy, Shanchai Christian Swaby, born June 24, St. John's Day. Shanchai like the city (sort of); say it like ShankEYE, Shan like in Shank (but no k, the n is sort of silent, not Shann) and Chai like EYE (with a K), not like the tea. Helen can be reached at philesop@sympatico.ca.

Mayor's Prayer Breakfast

A Christian celebration of prayer for the Richmond Hill community. **Wednesday, May 24 from 7 – 9:00 a.m.** \$30/person. Keynote speaker: Rev. David Payne, the lead and founding pastor of The Campus Church in York Region. He has written two books: **Hitting the Wall: Finding Perspective When Life Stops Working** and **Run! The Amazing Race**. Hot breakfast, live music, free book. If you are interested in going please let Deb know in the church office and RHUC can book a table (for 10).

Blog post

Lent and Easter Services at RHUC <https://rhucblog.wordpress.com/2017/03/09/lent-and-easter-services-and-events-at-richmond-hill-united-church/>

Spiritual Practices for Lent <https://rhucblog.wordpress.com/2017/03/08/spiritual-practices-for-lent/>

RHUC Bookclub March 2017 <https://rhucblog.wordpress.com/2017/03/03/rhuc-book-club-under-the-visible-life-march-22-2017/>

The Hop <https://rhucblog.wordpress.com/2017/03/02/the-hop/>

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