

This week at RHUC

Sunday, March 24

10:30 a.m. Service – Sanctuary
12:00 p.m. Youth Choir practice – Parlour
12:00 p.m. Faith Exploration classes – Chapel
2:00 p.m. Forest Church – 19 Church St. S.

Monday, March 25

9:30 a.m. Shalom Seekers – Chapel
7:00 p.m. H.A.I.R. – Chapel
7:00 p.m. Cubs - gym

Tuesday, March 26

7:00 p.m. Beavers – gym

Wednesday, March 27

12:00 p.m. Bible Study – Chapel
6:30 p.m. Meditation service – Chapel
7:00 p.m. RHUC Book Club - Chapel

Thursday, March 28

5:30:00 p.m. Prayer Shawl knitting - Chapel
7:30 p.m. Chancel Choir – Parlour

Saturday, March 30

3:30 p.m. Djembe drumming – Garden Room

WORSHIPPING TOGETHER

Minister's message

The shock has passed. With six days gone by since the heart-breaking terrorist attack on two mosques in Christchurch, NZ, I now feel a mix of anger and hope. I'm angry in part at the media and how this event is being reported. While clear that hatred toward both Muslims and migrants is what motivated the attacker, there is not enough thoughtfulness in how we report on an act of terror committed by a white person compared to one committed by a person of colour. I was listening to some really good discussion about this on CBC. The speaker reminded us as listeners how even with this latest incident, too many reporters want to get the backstory about the perpetrator, painting him as troubled, interviewing neighbours who can't understand what happened to "such a nice boy", perpetuating the trope that he was a lone wolf rather than part of a global network. And yet when the perpetrator is Muslim or a person of colour we dehumanize him, uninterested in the backstory because that person is not "one of us". I am hopeful though because at least the issue of biased reporting was being discussed. And I am hopeful because politicians like Jacinda Aherne are making clear that the white perpetrator is "not one of us" after all as she refuses to use his name. The victims of the attack are "one of us", each deserving for their names to be remembered, their humanity honoured and affirmed. While what happened last Friday angers me for more reasons than I can write about here, I nevertheless feel hope in the solidarity and support we see extended to Muslims and migrants not just in New Zealand but here at home and around the globe. Perhaps we are finally turning a corner and coming together as one.

Minister's Office Hours: James will be keep office hours from 1:00 until 4:00 pm on Mondays and Wednesdays each week. Feel free to stop in to see him.

Worship notes

Sunday, March 24: We reflect together on Luke 13:6-9, a parable Jesus tells about a gardener who wants to give more time for a fig tree to finally bear fruit. As we reflect on our own growth this Lent, this parable says a lot about the way we grow. The youth choir returns after March Break.

March Forest Church: Celebrate the coming of Spring with this month's Forest Church experience. We will give thanks for the gift of new life as we plant seeds and pray together for the coming season. We will meet at James' and Glen's (19 Church St. S.) from **2:00 - 3:30 pm**. Refreshments to follow. All are welcome.

Sunday, March 31: In Luke 15:11-32 we hear one of Jesus' most famous parables, the Parable of the so-called Prodigal Son. Given that "prodigal" means "recklessly extravagant" the father seems as prodigal as the younger son.

12 p.m. Lunch & Learn: Melissa and Sam, two staff members from 360° Kids will be joining us to talk about Nightstop, a program that 360° Kids is piloting to connect families in our community with youth needing temporary overnight accommodation. Enjoy a delicious light lunch (soup, bread and cheese, fruit and cookies), a chance to hear about this exciting program and put any questions you have to the staff and members of our congregation who have participated.

Meditation Service: Come to the Chapel from 6:30-7:15 p.m. on Wednesdays from **March 6th – April 17th** for a time of quiet and contemplation with readings, music, silent reflection and a theme-based ritual.

Drivers Needed: If you are able to assist with driving a senior from Oak Ridges to church on Sundays from time to time, please contact Sandra Loughton for more details at 905.773.5189 or e-mail me at bookgirl8@hotmail.com.

BUILDING FOR MINISTRY

Living In Right Relations Committee

This week we continue learning about *The Indian Act*. From 1885 to 1951 Indigenous peoples were restricted from leaving their reserve without permission from an Indian Agent. "No rebel Indians should be allowed off the Reserves without a pass signed by an I.D. official. The dangers of complications with a white man will thus be lessened and by preserving a knowledge of individual movements any inclination to petty depredations may be checked by the facility of apprehending those who commit such offences." *Hayter Reed, Assistant Indian Commissioner, 1885*. While this was never *officially* written into the Indian Act and understood by those in the legal field, not easily held up in court, the systems was effective none the less. Rations and 'privileges' were withheld for those who refused to comply. Police would arrest those found off the reserve without passes prosecuting either for trespassing or vagrancy. Parents required passes to visit their children at residential schools, beginning in 1889. "Controlling parents' access to their children aided and abetted the government's policy of keeping the family and their influence distanced from their children."

CREATING AND NURTURING COMMUNITY

Moving?

Are you planning to move away? Do you know of someone who is?

Problem: the church finds out that someone who attends our church has moved, often well after the fact! We feel badly that their life and contribution to our worship and work has not been recognized and our goodbye and best wishes have not been expressed. Please let me know or the Church Office of any such moving plans. Thanks.

Donna Smith, 905-884-6307

Prayer Shawl knitting for Lent

We will come together again this year 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 and hopes the warmth of the shawl will bring them comfort and joy. Anyone who would like to be part of this ministry is invited to come to the **Chapel from 5:30 to 7:00 pm, on Thursdays in March: 7, 14, 21, 28, and April: 4, 11, 18**. Come every week or as often as you are able. Last year we had six gather and another three make shawls at home. Patterns, yarn and needles are available.

Donna Smith, Coordinator, 905-884-6307

RHCPA Speaker Series Spring 2019

April 4 – 10:00 am – 12 p.m. The Fab Four: from Inception to Beatlemania

April 18 – 10:00 am – 12 p.m. Karen King: Civil rights in Canada

April 25 – 10:00 am – 12 p.m. David Newland with Siqiniup Qilautu The Northwest Passage in Story and Song
\$45 for entire series. RHCPA Box office: 905-787-8811 or rhcentre.ca

HOSPITALITY & WORKING FOR JUSTICE

Lenten givings

Engaging youth in environmental initiatives is a federal and municipal priority. Engaging and empowering our youth in an environmental initiative that they will design - they will set the parameters and drive the project. **The seed money we collect on two Sundays in Lent, March 31 and April 7**, will be our way of supporting them - a wonderful way to invest in a sustainable future and harness all the youthful energy and wise counsel that we see around us.

Minutes for Mission

Our gifts for Mission & Service give children in war-torn countries a chance to be children in places like Palestine with the help of Defence for Children International. On a mural in Aida Refugee Camp inside Bethlehem are the words of Article 31 of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child. The article states the right of the child to rest and leisure, to engage in play and recreational activities, and to participate freely in cultural life and the arts. The refugee camp is less than one kilometre in size and holds more than 5,500 Palestinian refugees. Just around the corner from the mural is a playing field covered by netting. The netting is to protect children from tear gas canisters, rubber bullet capsules, and other debris that Israeli Defence Force soldiers use during their weekly raids on the camp. Children have been reprimanded for playing a game similar to, North American "Cowboys and Indians." The game is called "Palestinians and Settlers." The difference is that the game doesn't end with capture; once captured, the "Palestinian" is punched and kicked by the "Settlers." This is a disturbing normalization of the occupation. According to the Director of the Accountability, Programme of Defence for Children International, Palestine (DCI-P), 150 to 200 Palestinian children are arrested and persecuted in the Israeli military system each year. Each child is exposed to torture, solitary confinement, physical assault, and interrogation to ensure confession to a crime (whether committed or not). Mission & Service supports children's rights in Palestine.

A Taste for Life in York Region

The AIDS Committee of York Region (ACYR) annually participates in and organizes the fundraising event A Taste for Life (TFL) in York Region. Each year in April, restaurants across York Region team up with ACYR and donate 25% of their lunch/dinner sales to support our work.

ENGAGING, CHALLENGING & GROWING OUR FAITH

Shalom Seekers

If you need a kick-start to your week, please feel welcome to join us in the chapel from 9:30-11:30 am on Monday mornings. We offer a safe place to explore faith questions. We will be continuing our study of Barbara Brown Taylor's book "Learning To Walk in the Dark" on Monday March 25th. This week we focus on chapter 5: "The Eyes of the Blind" and explore our understanding of what it means to be "blind." Newcomers are especially welcome.

Bible Study

Wednesdays at noon. Please bring your lunch with you.

Faith Exploration Classes

Are you curious about the teachings of Jesus, especially how we live them out within The United Church of Canada? Do you want to translate what you were taught in Sunday School into an adult understanding? Are you wondering about baptism or considering becoming a member of RHUC through confirmation or transfer from another congregation? Or maybe you are just interested in sharing faith with other adults? Then come to James' office and explore faith with others. The sessions run from now until April in 3 week blocks based on themes. Faith Exploration Classes are at noon on Sunday. Everyone welcome.

Section 4: Living in Faith

March 24: Living in Service

March 31: Living for Just Relationships

April 7: Living with difficult ethical questions April 20: Retreat Day

RHUC Book Club

Please join the RHUC Book Club on **Wednesday, March 27 at 7 p.m.** in the Chapel to discuss **The Saturday Night Ghost Club** by Canadian author Craig Davidson. Davidson was born in Toronto and raised in Calgary and St. Catharines. His 2018 novel **The Saturday Night Ghost Club** was a finalist for the Rogers Writers' Trust Fiction Prize. *"Reality never changes. Only our recollections of it do. Whenever a moment passes, we pass along with it into the realm of memory. And in that realm, geometries change. Contours shift, shades lighten, objectivities dissolve. Memory becomes what we need it to be."* Neurosurgeon Jake Baker recalls a summer spent in Niagara Falls many years ago when along with two of his friends and his eccentric Uncle C, they formed the Saturday Night Ghost Club – a ragtag group of misfits who explored the urban myths of Cataract City. (www.everyreadthing.com). For more information, please contact Sandra Loughton, Facilitator, or Deb Fratin in the Church Office at 905.884.1301, Ext. 5. New members are always welcome.

Broadview (The Observer) renewal time

It is time to renew or to start your subscription for Broadview (change in name from The United Church Observer). **Annual subscription rate is \$25.** Please submit your cheque, payable to Richmond Hill United Church, **by April 3.** Thank you.

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.

Happy Birthday to **Oda Barlow** as she celebrates her 96th Birthday on Wednesday, March 27th.

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.