

## This week at a glance

**Sunday, March 25 – Palm Sunday**

10:30 a.m. Service – Sanctuary  
12:00 p.m. Youth Choir practice – Common Room

**Monday, March 26**

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

**Tuesday, March 27**

7:00 p.m. Tai Chi – Garden room  
7:00 p.m. Beavers – gym

**Wednesday, March 28**

7:00 p.m. Scouts/Venturers – gym  
7:00 p.m. Book club – Chapel  
Cash card orders due.

**Thursday, March 29 – Maundy Thursday**

5:00 p.m. Prayer Shawl Knitting – Chapel  
6:15 p.m. Maundy Day Service - Sanctuary  
7:30 p.m. Chancel Choir – Common Room

**Friday, March 30 - Good Friday**

10:30 a.m. Service – Sanctuary  
Office closed

**Saturday, March 31**

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

## WORSHIPPING TOGETHER

### Worship

**Sunday, March 25:** We begin our worship in a spirit of joy as we read Mark 11:1-11 and remember Jesus being welcomed to Jerusalem with crowds waving branches. As we did last year, we will process around the sanctuary. Everyone is invited to participate in the parade. Then we hear passages that point us toward Maundy Thursday and Good Friday: Mark 11:15-18; Mark 12:1-12 and Mark 14:10-11. You are encouraged to attend Maundy Thursday and Good Friday in addition to Easter. Next Sunday's reading is John 20:11-18 and Mark 16:1-8.

**March 29<sup>th</sup> : Maundy Thursday**

**6:15 p.m.** Readings focusing on Jesus' last night with his disciples, and the sharing of communion.

**March 30<sup>th</sup> : Good Friday**

**10:30 a.m.** A service with Youth and Chancel Choirs.

**March 31<sup>st</sup>: Holy Saturday**

We may not gather in church but we pause with the disciples as they mourn Jesus' death. Many people fast and pray on this day.

**April 1<sup>st</sup> Easter Sunday**

**10:30 a.m.** The day of celebration dawns. We come together for Easter Sunday, the beginning of 50 days of resurrection joy. This service is for all ages. Children will have an opportunity to participate in a fun activity during the preaching portion of the service. Readings: Mark 16:1-8 and John 20:11-18.

### Easter flowers

The congregation is invited to make a donation for the purchase of Easter flowers and include a memorial/celebratory message in the Easter order of service. There will be a table in Centennial Hall after the service today where you will be able to leave your message and donation if you wish. *The Sanctuary Committee*

## Minister's Message

As we come together this Sunday we begin Holy Week, looking with expectation to our celebration of Easter. It's tempting to jump from joy to joy, to parade with palms then exuberantly announce "He is risen!" But we can't. We need to brood in the darkness of the story as well as to celebrate its light. And so we come together for Maundy Thursday. This marks the beginning of the Triduum, the three sacred days of remembering Jesus' passion, death and resurrection. We are celebrating at 6:15 pm with a meal that includes communion. The intention is the echo the experience of Jesus last supper with the disciples. At the end of the meal we strip the table, a reminder of the sadness that will soon be upon us. We continue an experiential approach to these days as we come together for our Good Friday liturgy at 10:30 am. Hearing the story of Jesus' death as evocative symbols are presented by our youth helps us enter into the darkness. We need to go there, difficult as it is. Then on Saturday we wait. I encourage you to make that a reflective day. Disconnect if you can. Then greet the light of Easter with joy. We walk the whole scriptural story of darkness and light. After all isn't that what we do in life?

## BUILDING FOR MINISTRY

## Cash Cards

Please submit your order to the office by Wednesday, March 28. Thank you!

## HOSPITALITY & WORKING FOR JUSTICE

## Truth and Reconciliation Committees

The Truth and Reconciliation Committees report included *Calls to Action* for churches. One of these requested churches to begin to educate their constituencies about the United Nations Declaration on the rights of Indigenous Peoples (affectionately known as DRIPS), with the goal to ensure we are complying with the declaration. Over the course of this year, the Living in Right Relations committee will be sharing the articles in DRIPS. Once a month, the first article from a section will be read during the Worship Service. The remaining articles from the section will be included weekly in RHUC online.

### Article 30 (land and the military)

1. Military activities shall not take place in the lands or territories of indigenous peoples, unless justified by a relevant public interest or otherwise freely agreed with or requested by the indigenous peoples concerned.
2. States shall undertake effective consultations with the indigenous peoples concerned, through appropriate procedures and in particular through their representative institutions, prior to using their lands or territories for military activities.

## Minute for Mission *Called to be the Church*

Our gifts for Mission & Service support the Ecumenical Accompaniment Programme in Palestine and Israel. In 2002, the World Council of Churches developed the program to create an international presence in the face of Israeli occupation. Since then the United Church has sent over 25 ecumenical companions who have been posted in many regions of Palestine and Israel. From February through April 2017, a United Church of Canada Ecumenical Companion was posted in north Israel. There they primarily monitored agricultural gates—counting the number of Palestinian farmers granted access to their land and noting whether the gates were open during their allotted times. During a visit, the Ecumenical Companion took United Church staff to a Palestinian park, where Palestinian families enjoy picnics and fresh air. The simple act of picnicking there is a protest against the occupation, and claims land that is (for now) Palestinian. Two Israeli settlements sit atop the valley ridge overlooking the park. The once-flowing river is diminished to a stream, as pipes route water over two kilometres to the Israeli settlement. Ecumenical Companions take a risk participating in the program. They also face a context very different than life in Canada. Many return to Canada informed and ready to advocate for a just peace and an end to the occupation. Mission & Service allows United Church Ecumenical Companions to accompany the mission and ministry of the World Council of Churches in occupied Palestine. They share first-hand experience to inform their local community of faith, civil society, and government of the realities of occupation. Our gifts for Mission & Service accompany partners in the midst of occupation.

## ENGAGING, CHALLENGING & GROWING OUR FAITH

### Women's Spirituality

Women's Spirituality will gather this **Saturday, March 19<sup>th</sup>** in the Garden room at 9:45 a.m. for refreshments before the program starts. Topic: "Eve: How to See Long Term Consequences in Little Decisions".

### United Church Women

All women are invited to join us in Centennial Hall for worship, learning and fellowship on **April 4, 2018 at 9:30 a.m.** Rev. James Ravenscroft will be speaking to us about his experiences with First Nations people.

Please hold the date for **Wednesday, June 13, 2018** for the annual UCW bus trip – heading East this year! Details to follow.

### H.A.I.R.

The Monday evening study group will begin discussion of the book **THE GOD WE NEVER KNEW** by Marcus Borg on **Monday, March 12 from 7:00 - 8:30** in the chapel. Borg famously asked people who said they doubted the existence of God to tell him about the God they did not believe in, because chances are he did not believe in that kind of God either. In this book Borg reviews various understandings of God, and offers his interpretation of a way to reconcile faith in God with science, history, critical thought and reason. On March 12 we will discuss the introduction and chapter 1. All are welcome.

### Bible Study

No need to have been before. Come once. Or every week. Or drop in every so often. We will look at the reading for the upcoming Sunday. See you in the chapel!

### Shalom Seekers

Please join us on Monday, March 26 from 9:30 to 10:30 in the Chapel. We have just started the book **Days of Awe & Wonder: How to Be a Christian in the 21st Century** by Marcus Borg. For this session please read **Chapter 3: My Conversion to Mysticism** and **Chapter 4: Jesus, Our Model for Being Spirit-Filled**. Please speak to Dawn Moon, Peg Hiscoke or Sandra Loughton for more details about the book and the group. New members are always welcome to try us out!

N.B. There will be no meeting on Monday, April 2nd due to the Easter holiday.

### RHUC Book Club

Please join us on **Wednesday, March 28th at 7 p.m.** in the Chapel to discuss Claire Cameron's novel **The Last Neanderthal**. "From the author of *The Bear*, the enthralling story of two women separated by millennia, but linked by an epic journey that will transform them both." That is a little snippet to whet your appetite!

New members are always welcome. Please speak to facilitator, Sandra Loughton, or call the church office for more details. 905.884-1301 Ext. 5

### UCW



**UCW Spring Luncheon on Saturday, April 21 at 1:00 p.m.**

Tickets for the UCW Spring Lunch are available from members of the UCW. The cost is \$20.00.

## CREATING AND NURTURING COMMUNITY

### The United Church Observer – Faith, Justice and Ethical Living

It is renewal and new subscription time! \$25 Please pay for your renewal / start your subscription by April 6, 2018.

‘Founded in 1829, **The Observer** is the oldest continuously published magazine in North America and the second oldest in the English speaking world. It has won international acclaim for journalistic excellence and garnered more awards for writing than any other Canadian religious publication.’

‘**The Observer** motivates readers with social justice articles about courageous people taking action in their local communities and in the world.’

### Prayer shawl 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 on **Thursday, March 8, 15, 22 and 29, in the Chapel, 5:00 to 6:00**. Last year we had 8 people gathered and a couple people made them at home. Patterns and some yarn are available.

### Mom to Mom sale

Where: Thornhill UC, 25 Elgin St., Thornhill

Date: Saturday, April 7, 2018

Time: 9 a.m. – 12 noon

\$2 admission donated to yellow Brick House Women’s Shelter

You will find amazing deals on gently used, toys, clothes, books outdoor toys, baby gear, furniture and so much more!

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