



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: We've passed the halfway mark in examining our 9 MAP intentions and come to the one which most of us think about when we think of church - worship, or more specifically that we will "create dynamic, meaningful and engaging worship". Our main projects for this are "creating worship experiences that engage all ages and cultures", "providing worship opportunities at times other than Sunday morning" and "creating meditative space and opportunities". As you'd expect the suspension of in-person worship and at times an almost complete closure of our church buildings has in some ways thrown a big wrench into this intention.

One of the difficulties of our move online for worship has been finding ways to connect with multiple ages. The online experience is difficult for those less comfortable with computers and accessing the internet. This group includes some of our more senior members. Fortunately, Zoom can be accessed by phone and there are a number of people who have joined worship that way (with some coaching). But we shouldn't automatically link age and discomfort with technology. Online access has brought worship into the homes of folks who previously had difficulty getting to church, including being able to broadcast the Sunday service into local care homes. This has brought a silver lining to this past year and has motivated us to continue livestreaming worship as we move forward. It has also been challenging to engage children and youth in worship that is fully online. But in the last few months I have been creating short videos with a children's message that accompany activities that can be done at home. And thankfully Anne and Ian have met with youth online every Sunday. Thank you so much both of you. And to teens who've been so dedicated in connecting with each other in this way.

But the pandemic has also brought unexpected opportunities. It took a few weeks to get into a groove, but we've been able to create engaging worship services using sound recordings from past services, recent recordings of the choir, soloists, and Barry offering meditative music. Over Lent, we have also been showcasing the music of other choirs, an unexpected treat. The online format has given us a jump on adding video clips and other imagery into sermons and I am so grateful to Glen who has put together visually rich videos for hymns, anthems and other music. Now that we have a projector, we can keep bringing this visual richness to worship when we are in person again.

We have also been able to continue with Centering Prayer, even offering a second gathering because we are online. Three Rivers Forest Church events being outside has meant that at least when we have not been in lockdown, we have been able to provide some face-to-face (but socially distant) opportunities for spiritual, and social connection.

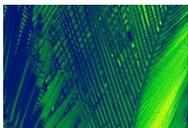
This pandemic could have been a big hindrance to Intention 5, but it all goes to show how adaptive and creative people can be. We were able to create dynamic, meaningful and engaging worship during a pandemic. Just imagine what we can do when we are all back together again.

worship and music

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

James' video to children: <https://1drv.ms/u/s!AIBjmozEVDR0gaYcy5GnNUXldrcX2A>

Sunday March 28: We begin Holy Week as we both remember how Jesus was welcomed to Jerusalem (Mark 11:1-11) and reflect on moments of increasing conflict (Mark 11:27-22; Mark 12:1-12; and Mark 14:10-11) which lead into his last days. We conclude with Philippians 2:5-11 in preparation to hear the rest of the story on Maundy Thursday, Good Friday and Easter Sunday.



Virtual Palm Parade: If you haven't yet sent in a picture of yourself holding a branch, please do so as soon as you can. If you can't go outside to hold a small spruce, cedar, pussy willow, or other type of branch, you can always take a photo with a houseplant. The what is less important than as many of us participating in the palm parade as are able. Please send to james@rhuc.org. We end the service more solemnly than we have done, concluding with an anthem and a simple word to send us into Holy Week.

Holy Week Services: Maundy Thursday, Good Friday and Easter Sunday services will all be held via Zoom.

Maundy Thursday at 6:30 pm (please note the change in time from what was posted last week. 7:00 seemed a bit late given that part of the service is eating together on Zoom). This is a communion service so be sure to have bread and wine (juice) prepared along with the rest of your meal. We'll take time to share the "maundatum" with family members washing one another's feet or individuals washing their own hands.

Good Friday at 10:30 am. We will reflect on chapters 18 and 19 of John as RHUC youth take part in a video to illustrate the connection between Jesus' arrest, trial and death, and what is happening in our local and global community.

Easter Sunday Sunrise Service at 6:45 am. Remember to log in from an east facing window so we can see the sun rise together as we reflect on the first Easter based on Mark 16:1-8. We'll eat breakfast "together" as an agape meal.

Easter Sunday Communion Service at 10:30 am. If you haven't done so yet, please take some time 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. It can be anything - someone cleaning their windows, a cheerful chalk drawing on the sidewalk, blooming crocuses, etc. Send to james@rhuc.org by

March 30. This is a communion service so be sure to have bread and wine (juice) prepared ahead of time.



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.

Have you considered being a reader during worship? Harry Ramsaran, Chair of the Worship Committee, is looking for new people to add to his list. 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 Friday 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.

programs for all

Shalom Seekers: We will meet on **Monday March 29 at 10 am** on Zoom for our 6th and final Lenten study called "Lifting up Scripture through Art." This week we pair an eclectic mix of music with the Lectionary readings for Holy Week. Speak to Peg Hiscoke or Sandra Loughton for more information.

Please note there will be no zoom meeting on Easter Monday April 5th. We will resume on Monday April 12 at 10 am for a social time.

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, racism, social justice, ethics, science, 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.

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 time.

Prayer Shawl knitting and crocheting will meet on Zoom and visit that way while we work on our Prayer Shawl on **Wednesdays to May 26 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.

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: Please join us on Wednesday, **March 31st at 4 p.m.** on Zoom (by video or telephone) to discuss the novel *Recipe for a Perfect Wife* by Oakville resident, Karma Brown. The link for the meeting will be sent out

by e-mail the day before the meeting.

On **April 28th at 4 p.m.** we'll be gathering once again on Zoom to discuss *CHASING PAINTED HORSES*, a novel by Drew Hayden Taylor, an Ojibway from the Curve Lake First Nations in Ontario. This book is the 2021 selection for the One Book/One Aurora Program put on by the Aurora Public Library. I will be getting in touch with everyone to see about picking up their copy of the book. The Aurora Library is kindly lending us a set of 20 books for the month of April. The Zoom invitation will be sent out the day before the meeting. New members are always welcome. Please speak to me, Sandra Loughton, for more details about the book club.

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

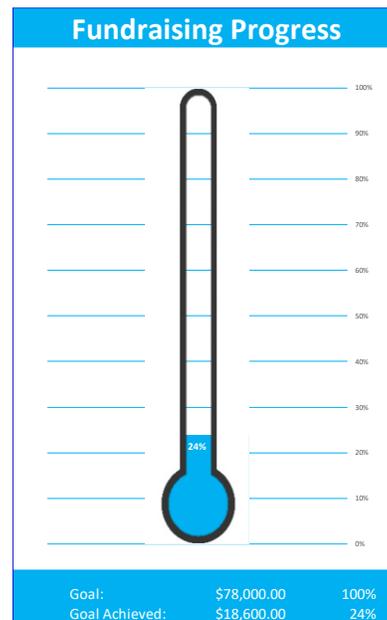
Congregational Update March 7, 2021: See attached

Happy Birthday and congratulations to **Oda Barlow** who will be 98 on March 27th!

Apartments needed: Does anyone at RHUC have, or know of, a vacant apartment in our area? We have two families from the congregation in need. An elderly woman recently lost her accommodation and is staying in a hotel. Plus, an adult son and his mother are facing eviction because the landlord is planning to sell the house where they are living. Any leads would be greatly appreciated.

Nominations Committee: The Nominations Committee is looking to fill the following roles: **Finance Committee Members**

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)



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 e-transfer to office@rhuc.org, cheque or



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

Outreach

Save The Date: Learn more and register at www.cdngrandmothers.com **VIRTUAL CONCERT FUNDRAISER THURSDAY, APRIL 15 'TOGETHER IN CONCERT':** IN SOLIDARITY WITH AFRICAN GRANDMOTHERS. A Tapestry of Canadian Talent on April 15, 2021 ~ 7:30 pm EDT. Join us online for a 90-minute concert of music, dance, storytelling and drumming with host Jackie Richardson, an award-winning performer for her theatre and music achievements and featuring Steven Page, National Ballet of Canada, David Myles, Stratford Festival and Sheree Fitch. Hosted by Canadian Grandmothers. A FREE concert and donations are appreciated ~ all proceeds are raised for the

Grandmothers-to-Grandmothers Campaign of the Stephen Lewis Foundation.

The Sankofa bird - *Credit: Logo for the Sankofa Global Project, Public domain, via Wikimedia Commons*



Mission and Service: Thanks to support through Mission & Service and the United Church Foundation, six young Black adults will begin to collect stories from Black church members about their experiences in the church as well as their knowledge of

Black church history. This fall, they will facilitate online gatherings to share learnings. The project runs through December 2021.

"Hopefully, the young adults will gather prophetic stories that help us understand Black experiences in our churches. The aim isn't so much to identify what we do wrong. It's not about blame. It's about hearing the experiences and asking ourselves 'Where do we go from here?'" says Emo Yango, who works in the United Church's Communities in Mission unit. Yango adds that one of the aspects of the project he finds exciting is building leaders. "We lack resources from Black voices, especially younger ones. We are building leaders. These leaders will help us live into our commitment to become an anti-racist church."

Church members who would like to share their experiences or learn more about the project can contact Emo Yango.

Becoming anti-racist is an ongoing journey of transformation. Your gifts through Mission & Service help us take vital steps forward. Thank you for helping to build stronger Christian communities and a better world.

community news

Would you like Pfizer with that? **A look at the GTA's first drive-thru COVID vaccination clinic, opening Monday at Canada's Wonderland:**

<https://www.thestar.com/news/gta/2021/03/25/would-you-like-pfizer-with-that-a-look-at-the-gtas-first-drive-thru-covid-vaccination-clinic-opening-monday-at-canadas-wonderland.html>

CAYR: *Boys & Books* is a new book discussion group for cis and trans guys into guys starting on April 13th - registration link is: <https://forms.gle/o1Lm9mncrH23F8RC8>

HIV Self Testing Kits will soon be available: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1G1ia1S7uZo>

To Infinity and Beyond is a workshop running to celebrate Trans Day of Visibility on March 31st, CAYR Community. Registration is open at <https://www.eventbrite.ca/e/to-infinity-and-beyond-exploring-transgender-identities-tickets-118056156141>

"This is a very understandable explanation of **the various vaccines** and might provide some clarity in light of all the media reports to which we are exposed. Great graphics!"

<https://youtu.be/K3odScka55A>

Please join us for "From the Table to the Cross," a **Good Friday service with Moderator Richard Bott** and members of the General Council Executive. We will gather online to remember stories of Jesus' final hour and sing and pray together. If you are able, please bring a glass of water, a flower, and a candle to help to set the table that reaches far beyond our own walls and screens. Available for streaming starting at **9:30 a.m. EDT, April 2** on YouTube: youtube.com/unitedchurchofcanada ([opens in a new tab](#)).

Light a Flame for a Guaranteed Livable Income

[In this video](#), Moderator Richard Bott invites you to join the call for a Guaranteed Livable Income



and contact our Prime Minister and Minister of Finance. April 8 is a chance to make this call visible; plan to light a candle and post publicly on social media (#UCCanlivableincome) in solidarity with small outdoor vigils being held on Parliament Hill, at Minister Chrystia Freeland's constituency office, and at other MP constituency offices.

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.

A Poem for Palm Sunday

They shouted with praises, reaching the sky.
Pushing and shoving to see Jesus pass by.
Crying, "Hosanna, hosanna, glory to the King!
He comes to us today, great joy He doth bring."

They threw down palm leaves, covering the way,
Making a clear path for Him to travel that day.
Raising joyful voices, as praises filled the air,
Their day had come, God answered prayer!

But, in a short time they changed their chants
From joyful noise, to a mob's hate-filled rant.
From Hosanna, hosanna, as when He was praised,
To crucify Him! Crucify Him, as their anger blazed!

In disbelief we might question why they turned?
But maybe the question is, "What have we learned?"

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.

