

This week at RHUC

Sunday, March 3

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

Monday, March 4

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

Tuesday, March 5 – Shrove Tuesday

7:00 p.m. Beavers – gym
4:30 – 6:30 p.m. Pancake supper – Centennial Hall

Wednesday, March 6 – Ash Wednesday

9:30 a.m. UCW - Parlour
12:00 p.m. Bible Study – Chapel
6:30 p.m. Lenten Meditative service - Chapel
7:00 p.m. Scouts/Venturers – gym
7:30 p.m. RHUC Book Club - Chapel

Thursday, March 7

6:00 p.m. Prayer Shawls - Chapel
7:30 p.m. Chancel Choir – Parlour

Saturday, March 9

8:15 a.m. Men's Breakfast – lower gym
1:00 – 3:00 p.m. Targeting Climate Change - Sanctuary
3:30 p.m. Djembe drumming – Garden Room

WORSHIPPING TOGETHER

Minister's message

It's almost Lent! On Wednesday it will be Ash Wednesday, the traditional beginning of this season of prayer and contemplation. Lent originally developed as a time of preparation for adults preparing to be baptized at Easter. Through prayer and fasting, they intentionally took time for soul-searching as they sought to lay aside any last habits and attitudes that clashed with what it meant to be a follower of the Way of Jesus. Ashes were a sign of this, a cultural expression of sorrow. Later on, even though most people in Europe had been baptized as babies, Lent continued to begin with a distribution of ashes. While having a penitential tone, ashes are not just a sign of sorrow. They remind us that we are connected to the earth. We receive them in humility, accepting both our weaknesses as well as our gifts. We receive ashes in a desire to grow. As the days lengthen (the meaning of Lent) and we head toward Spring, we seek to more firmly identify with Christ in our lives. May this Ash Wednesday be the beginning of a time of blessing for each of us.

Minister's Office Hours: James will be keep office hours from 1:00 until 5:00 pm on Mondays and Wednesdays each week. Feel free to stop in to see him.

Worship notes

Friday, March 1: World Day of Prayer at 7:30 p.m. at Richmond Hill Presbyterian Church. A prayer movement that invites us to enrich our faith experience with the experience of Christians from other countries and cultures and to bring hope to women touched by injustice

Sunday, March 3: We celebrate our third Ember Day, an opportunity to reflect on the gift of creation and our responsibility as stewards to look after it. In a reflection on Romans 8:18-21, James will look at the image of creation being in "labour pains" for something new to be born. As part of creation we too are labouring. We share in communion together. The service is followed by our Annual General Meeting in the Lower Gym. Because of the AGM the healing service is rescheduled for the following Sunday.

12:00 p.m.: Annual General Meeting is scheduled to take place right after worship in the gym. Refreshments will be provided.

Ash Wednesday, March 6: On Wednesday March 6 at 6:30 pm there will be a service with a distribution of ashes. This traditionally way of beginning Lent is a sign of our desire to seek renewal in our lives in preparation for Easter. This year's Ash Wednesday service is the first in a series of meditative services each Wednesday of Lent. The services will be about 45 minutes long.

Sunday, March 11: We mark the beginning of Lent as we reflect together on Jesus' forty day sojourn in the wilderness (Luke 4:1-13). At the conclusion of the service people will have an opportunity to receive ashes. Following this there will be a healing service in the chapel.

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

With nature's signs of Spring come thoughts of birth...

"Before an Anishinaabe woman gives birth to a child, Elder Sam Achneepineskum tells me, she sings to them. She speaks to them when she is in a good place, and she thanks them for coming into the family's life. The baby is also told stories of their history, so they know who they are when they are born; they are prepared. When they come screaming into being, they are met by a bevy of women, each of whom has a special role to play in the birthing process. Traditionally, when a child is born, the Elders come to give the child the name they will carry for the rest of their days. A naming ceremony can happen at any time. When it does, the child enters into the realm of the tribe. Directly after birth, the placenta is planted firmly in the earth. The umbilical cord is also saved and buried to ensure the child's future connection with the land. For one year, the child is not to touch the ground. A baby is carried in their mother's tikanagan, a wooden board outfitted with hides and furs that holds the baby snug until that special day when they are ready to walk on their own. When that day comes, the baby has a "Walking Out" ceremony, wherein they take their first step, feel the ground firmly beneath their feet. And then that child is one with the Earth."

Excerpt from "All Our Relations, Finding The Path Forward" by Tanya Talaga

CREATING AND NURTURING COMMUNITY

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 6:00 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

HOSPITALITY & WORKING FOR JUSTICE

Winter clothing/wish list

Winter Coats + Wish List Items needed for DFC in Thunder Bay! February Collection!

RHUC has partnered with Dennis Franklin Cromarty (DFC) First Nations High School, whose 125 students have to leave home to live in boarding houses from grades 9-12 to get their education, because their 23 remote Northern fly-in communities don't have high schools. The teens miss their families and friends and do not have much money for necessities. They appreciate the school's alliance with RHUC. Attached are (1) the school's Wish List supplied by the teachers in response to an invitation to let us know what they need and (2) an updated flyer on our February 2019 Winter Coat and Wish List drive. Please feel welcome to share with families and friends. During February please drop off donated items to the outer office. We'll have a packing/shipping time in early March. There's also info on how to make an online donation via "Canada Helps", which generates a tax donation receipt right away. Donations go towards items on the wish list.

Hands & Hearts for Africa

Virtual Walk Completed! Hands and Hearts for Africa are excited to announce that, as of February 23, we have finally completed the 10254 km Virtual Walk around AFRICA. This was an amazing feat of perseverance and dedication by our small walking team. If you see Penny Fabbro, Esther Collier, Ruth Perratt, Linda Lindberg, Rose Blois, Carmel Griffin, Barb Cooper, Rev James, Glen Warren, Donna Harrison, Karen Scott and Peg Hiscoke, please congratulate them! Funds raised were around \$1700.

Sock Hop

A big thank you to everyone who supported our Sock Hop last Saturday. Special thank-yous to our team of chefs, kitchen helpers, auction donors, teen helpers, and all the wonderful musicians (Nick and Graham on keyboard and guitar, RHUC Drummers, the Little Peter and the Elegants Band). We are thankful for being able to create an enjoyable evening for our guests while making a difference in the lives of African AIDS families. Through your generosity, the Sock Hop raised about \$2600 for Stephen Lewis Foundation. *Report by Peg Hiscoke and Donna Harrison, Hands and Hearts for Africa*

Minutes for Mission

Supervised ministry education is an intentional learning experience that enables people preparing for ministry to deepen their pastoral identity, reflect theologically, and enhance their ministry skills. Mission & Service supports supervised ministry education by providing a grant to a learning site, like a congregation, for an eight-month placement. The Rev. Maya Braithwaite recently completed a placement at Bloor Street United Church in Toronto, Ontario. One of her goals was learning about social justice in a congregational context. "Ministry is about relationships. For me, it's about collaborating with others and harnessing the creativity that God has gifted us, while letting it go and flow throughout the church. While at Bloor Street, I had the opportunity to share in the healing work of storytelling that is often involved in social justice work. I experienced what an Affirming church looks like and what an Affirming church does in its day-to-day functions and in worship. I learned about protocol as we welcomed and began the work of supporting a Syrian refugee family. I learned about conflict transformation as we grappled with ways of responding to the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's recommendations. I also shared my love for contemplative prayer and a variety of spiritual practices. We danced, journaled, meditated, and the children and I started learning about Godly Play...together." Your gifts to Mission & Service help support candidates as they prepare for ministry and are equipped for leadership in our church.

ENGAGING, CHALLENGING & GROWING OUR FAITH

United Church Women

It's our 'Irish' meeting, Wed. Mar. 6th, (9:30 am) in the Parlour with Irish music and Irish treats. Also on the 'menu' - a talk on 'Dreams and Visions' - where you'll have an opportunity to learn a bit more about the 'mystique' of dreaming and deciphering your own dreams. See you there.

U.C.W. Spring Luncheon

Hold the date of **Saturday, April 27 at 1:00** for the Annual Spring Luncheon! Tickets: \$20

H.A.I.R.

We are starting our new HAIR season with a series of 5-6 sessions that will explore the issues facing the people indigenous to Canada. We will be using the series **First Contact**: Most Canadians have never taken the time to get to know Indigenous People or visit their communities. First Contact takes six average Canadians, all with strong opinions about Indigenous People, on a unique 28-day journey into Indigenous Canada. Leaving their everyday lives behind the six will travel deep into Winnipeg, Nunavut, Alberta, Northern Ontario, and the coast of BC to visit Indigenous communities. Narrated by host and social justice activist George Stroumboulopoulos, First Contact is a journey that will turn the six participants' lives upside down. Challenging their perceptions and confronting their opinions about a world they never imagined they would see. It is an experience that will change their lives, forever. <https://aptn.ca/firstcontact/>
Please join us - the discussions are open and safe and intelligent and entertaining! Monday nights, 7:00 pm, Chapel.

Bible Study

Wednesdays at noon. Please bring your lunch with you.

Men's Breakfast

The next Men's Breakfast will be on **Saturday, March 9th, 2019**. Coffee and tea will be served at 8:15am, with breakfast in the gym at 8:30 prepared by our UCW friends. New participants are always welcome. The Men's Breakfasts are a time of fellowship and camaraderie. Feel free to contact us if you're interested in more information. Cost is \$10 / person, with net proceeds to the UCW. Please RSVP to Harry Ramsaran (harrypersad.ramsaran@gmail.com or 905 508 4758) by Thursday, March 7th. Thank you!

After breakfast you are invited to the Parlor for a presentation Title: Davenport-Perth Community Ministry by Tina Conlon. Tina Conlon started working at Davenport Perth Community Ministry in June 2014. The Davenport Perth Community Ministry (DPCM) is a ministry of presence, walking in solidarity with the culturally diverse, low income community of Davenport Perth. The role of the ministry is to provide community development and community organizing support, offer pastoral care and be engaged in advocacy through coalitions and networks.

Tina came to Canada from the Philippines in 1972 and shortly became active in organizing community kitchens with economic refugees from Canada's eastern provinces. She worked as a live-in caregiver then became involved in organizing migrant workers. After reading about the UCC's Social Gospel, she became a member of Central United Church in Windsor in 1973, and became a candidate for ministry in 1979. Tina received her M.Div. at Emmanuel College in 1983 and has since worked in a number of nonprofit organizations.

Tina was one of the first members of Toronto Food Policy Council where she served for seven years and is proud to have contributed to preventing the sale and use of recombinant bovine somatotropin (rbST) in Canada. She was at the founding meeting held at Ryerson University of Food Secure Canada in 2001. She was one of the civic society members who contributed to writing Canada's Action Plan for Food Security in response to the World Food Summit Plan of Action.

Looking ahead: Future dates for 2019: April 13th and May 11th

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 3: What does it mean to be church?

March 3: How do we worship?

Section 4: Living in Faith

March 17: Living with Respect in Creation

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 - rescheduled

Since the February 27th meeting was cancelled due to bad weather we will be meeting on **Wednesday, March 6 at 7:30 p.m.** (Please note: Not 7 p.m. as usual) to discuss PLEASE LOOK AFTER MOM by Kyung-sook Shin. If you can't make it that evening, please make sure you drop off your copy of book at the church office by March 6th.

We will choose a book for the March 27th meeting on March 6th and I will send out an e-mail in case there are some people absent from the re-scheduled meeting.

New members are always welcome to come and check out the book club. For more information about the RHUC Book Club please speak to facilitator, Sandra Loughton (bookgirl8@hotmail.com) or contact Deb Fratin in the Church Office at 905-884-1301, Ext. 5.

Shalom Seekers

Please join us on Monday, March 3rd from 9:30 to 11:30 a.m. in the Chapel to discuss *Learning to Walk in the Dark* by Barbara Brown Taylor. This coming week we'll be looking at **Chapter 3: Hampered by Brilliance**, pages 59-72. Taylor, in this chapter, describes how light has stolen away the dark and how our need to chase away the dark brings environmental change to us and our planet. If you would like to hear more, feel welcome to join the discussion and get your week off to a great start! Please speak to either Peg Hiscoke or Sandra Loughton for more details.

Please note: No meeting on Monday, March 11th due to the March Break holiday.

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.

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.