

This week at a glance

Sunday, March 4 – Lent 3

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

Monday, March 5

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

Tuesday, March 6

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

Wednesday, March 7

9:30 a.m. U.C.W. – Centennial Hall
7:00 p.m. Scouts/Venturers – gym

Thursday, March 8

5:00 p.m. Prayer Shawl Knitting – Chapel
6:15 p.m. Bible Study - Chapel
7:30 p.m. Chancel Choir – Common Room

Saturday, March 10

8:15 a.m. Men's Breakfast – lower gym
3:30 p.m. Djembe drumming –Garden Room

WORSHIPPING TOGETHER

Worship

This Sunday: Joanne Scofield will be sharing our message. Based on Exodus 20:1-17, she will be focusing on the significance of Sabbath and pausing for rest. Following worship we will gather in the gym for our Annual General Meeting.

Sunday, March 11: Using a Hymn Sing format, Barry Peters will be sharing interesting info about Canadian hymns.

Healing Service: With the AGM right after worship, there will not be a Healing Service this Sunday. We have rescheduled to the following Sunday (March 11). The service will be in the chapel.

Minister's Message

On Sunday we will gather in the gym for our Annual General Meeting. This year we receive an additional report, that is an Interim Report from our Circle Process. So far we have identified overarching values articulated collectively during the process, values that will guide us in our future directions. We have also named goals which we will narrow as we head toward our Consensus Circle to be held on April 29. As the members of The Circle Team tabulated and analyzed your responses we were inspired by the themes that were emerging. It feels like the Spirit is leading us and I know you will receive the report with the same trust that we are moving into a future not entirely of our own making. At the same meeting we will hear reports from the Finance and Property Committees. We receive all three reports in the knowledge that together they help us in our shared discernment. As we both hear and respond to these reports I know we will do so with openness, understanding and gratitude. We are on a shared journey together. May our AGM be one more step toward an inspired future.

Upcoming holiday: James will be away on holiday following the AGM until March 12.

World Day of Prayer

World Day of Prayer will be held on **Friday March 2nd, 2018 at 7:30 pm at St. Mary's Anglican Church, 10030 Yonge Street, Richmond Hill.** This service this year was prepared by the World Day of Prayer Committee of Suriname. Everyone is invited.

Worship Notes

A Reminder: This will serve as a reminder for those doing announcements on Sunday mornings that we are attempting to keep the announcements to 50 words or less. Thank you to those who have been keeping this new guideline in mind when delivering announcements!

Forest Church

This Month's Forest Church: On Sunday March 18, we will once again be hosting a Three Rivers Forest Church event at Richmond Hill United. Our theme for March focuses on the return of birds as we head into Spring. Beginning at 4:00 pm, we will gather in the chapel where we will make bird feeders and take time to give thanks for the return of our feathered friends.

Teen Seekers

The Nature of Evil: I had the privilege of working with the Teen Seekers on Sunday, February 25th. Based on material from the Living the Questions DVD geared to young adults called *Dream. Think. Be. Do.*, we were looking at the topic of evil this past week. We started with a series quotes from the DVD, as seen below, and then reflected on them in relation to the recent mass shooting at a high school in Florida on February 14th.

- Where does evil come from? If God creates good in the world, who or what is creating evil?
- God calls us to reduce suffering and evil in the world. How can we do this?
- Evil is only the embodiment of choices for the "not good" over "good".
- Demons and devils and Satan are not objects, things, or persons; they're conditions of hatred, spirits of injustice, attitudes of jealousy, structures of destruction.
- "Whatever the status of evil in the world, I know that the only God in whom I can believe will be a God found in the midst of evil rather than at a safe distance from it; suffering the evil rather than inflicting it." Robert MacAfee Brown

After our discussion, the teens recorded some of their thoughts on paper. Here are some of their messages to President Trump and the American people:

- You work for the American people, not your donors and the NRA.
- #PrayforFlorida
- America needs [new] gun laws NOW!
- If someone was running around hitting people with a stick, what would you do?
 1. Give everyone sticks
 2. Give some people sticks
 3. Take away the sticks
- The stick is like a gun. Americans mostly think that if one person has a gun, give everyone one.
- Seventeen people died on a day meant for celebrating those you love.
- You need to do something about [the lyrics of] your National Anthem.
- What makes me mad is that another school shooting is not going to change anything.

Here is a longer, poignant message:

- Warnings were ignored, and one young man decided to change the lives of everyone in that high school, the lives of every student in America.
- Everyone who's heard of this tragedy was affected. And yet, what has changed?
- Stocks went up, and people are still battling these futile laws to no effect. Every victim of mass shootings died for nothing.
- I implore you, in all countries: DO SOMETHING. Do something that won't combat violence with more violence. Please.

Due to the length of our session, we weren't able to have a discussion about Canadian issues in relation to violence and evil. We did, however, talk about the courage and initiative of the American students who organized protests in response to the recent Florida shooting.

We are so blessed at RHUC to have such a wonderful group of teenagers in our midst. I thank them for sharing their thoughts with us on this challenging topic. *Sandra Loughton*

BUILDING FOR MINISTRY

RHUC Council

Council minutes are posted on the RHUC website monthly under 'Governance'. Council meetings are on the second Wednesday of each month at 7:30 and are open to anyone to attend. Please note that there will not be a meeting on Wed., March 14.

HOSPITALITY & WORKING FOR JUSTICE

Stephen Lewis Fundraiser

Thanks from the Heart! Hands and Hearts for Africa would like to thank all those who participated in our Sock Hop last Saturday. You helped make the Hop a truly joyful event as well as making a huge difference for African AIDS families. Through your generous support we were able to raise about \$3400 for the Stephen Lewis Foundation projects.

Special thanks to our music sponsors and all those who advertised, sold tickets, baked, served, set up and cleared the room at closing. We especially celebrate the help of five teenagers plus the RHUC drummers who not only played for us but also graciously responded to our request for helping hands.

If you share our passion for justice, please join us as helper or participant at our next event. For more information about Stephen Lewis Foundation or our local Grandmother Group, please speak to Peg Hiscoke or Donna Harrison.

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. From Feb. 29 - March 6 we will review articles from Section 5, Relationship to the Land.

Section 5: Relationship to the land (land ownership)

Article 25

Indigenous peoples have the right to maintain and strengthen their distinctive spiritual relationship with their traditionally owned or otherwise occupied and used lands, territories, waters and coastal seas and other resources and to uphold their responsibilities to future generations in this regard.

Article 26

1. Indigenous peoples have the right to the lands, territories and resources which they have traditionally owned, occupied or otherwise used or acquired.
2. Indigenous peoples have the right to own, use, develop and control the lands, territories and resources that they possess by reason of traditional ownership or other traditional occupation or use, as well as those which they have otherwise acquired.
3. States shall give legal recognition and protection to these lands, territories and resources. Such recognition shall be conducted with due respect to the customs, traditions and land tenure systems of the indigenous peoples concerned.

Article 27 (land ownership and legal rights)

States shall establish and implement, in conjunction with indigenous peoples concerned, a fair, independent, impartial, open and transparent process, giving due recognition to indigenous peoples' laws, traditions, customs and land tenure systems, to recognize and adjudicate the rights of indigenous peoples pertaining to their lands, territories and resources, including those which were traditionally owned or otherwise occupied or used. Indigenous peoples shall have the right to participate in this process.

Lenten givings

This year's Lenten givings will support two Indigenous groups: one in our community and one in North Western Ontario. As one way of responding to the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's Calls to Action we are asking members of our congregation to ACT by supporting two projects. Kathy McBey and her team have started the ball rolling with the winter coat drive last December in support of the Dennis Franklin Cromarty High School in Thunder Bay. This has developed into something much larger. To support Indigenous young people who leave their reserves to travel to High School in Thunder Bay we need much more than warm coats. We have the opportunity to work with staff of the school and groups outside the school to meet the many needs of these at risk students and we hope to build this friendship into a long-term partnership.

Our other project is closer to home. Jake Charles, a member of the Chippewa band on Georgina Island has started a cultural awareness project, First Nations Cultural Tours and financial support from groups like us will help him get this exciting opportunity off the ground. We will report back to you regularly on how these funds are being used and hope you are as excited by this opportunity as we are.

Respectfully submitted, RHUC Outreach Committee and the Right Relations Committee.

Minute for Mission *Called to be the Church*

Our gifts for Mission & Service support the important work of The Healing Fund. Let us hear a story of how The Healing Fund is building resilience and hope in Indigenous children and youth. Pimicikamak Cree Nation (pronounced as pim ih chik uh mak) is a Creespeaking Indigenous community north of Lake Winnipeg in Cross Lake, Manitoba. Pimicikamak means "where a lake lies across the river." The community initiated a three-day suicide prevention strategy by inviting Indigenous and non-Indigenous artists to their community to create art with their children, youth, and families. Using an Indigenous framework called Circle of Courage, the project was created to promote strength, resiliency, and healing among the participants by fostering their sense of belonging, mastery, independence, and generosity. Through various creative arts such as drum-making, storytelling, painting, singing, song writing, music, and comedy, participants were recognized for their talents and gifts. It strengthened the participants' relationships with each other as well as their relationships with adults and Elders in the community. With guidance from the artists, the youth were also able to build their leadership skills by helping coordinate parts of the project. Every evening, participants generously shared their artwork with the community, thus creating a narrative of healing and hope. Our gifts for Mission & Service support this and other healing initiatives.

ENGAGING, CHALLENGING & GROWING OUR FAITH

United Church Women

UCW St. Patrick's Day Meeting, **Wed. March 7th, at 9:30 a.m.**, in Centennial Hall. Have you ever wondered what the stories are behind your favourite Irish "sing-alongs?" Come and find out. And don't forget to wear your green! See you there.

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, in this case Exodus 20:1-17. See you in the chapel!

Shalom Seekers

Please join us on Monday, March 5th in the Chapel from 9:30 to 11:30 a.m. where we will be concluding our study of the Reformation with the final segments of the DVD, ***This Changed Everything: 500 Years of the Reformation***. The topics for this week will be War & Pacifism and Women & Marriage.

We will not be meeting on March 12th due to the March Break. On Monday, March 19th we'll be starting our discussion on ***Days of Awe and Wonder: How to be a Christian in the 21st Century***. This book contains some never-before published sermons and essays by Marcus Borg and it was published posthumously. Please see Sandra Loughton to pick up your copy of the book. For March 19th, please read the Foreword (pages ix-xiv) written by Marcus' wife, Marianne, and Chapters 1 and 2.

If you would like to join us for this book study and need a copy of the book, please let one of the facilitators know as soon as possible: Peg Hiscoke, Dawn Moon or Sandra Loughton.

Men's Breakfast

The next Men's Breakfast will be on **Saturday, March 10, 2018**. Coffee and tea will be served at 8:15am, with breakfast in the gym at 8:30 prepared by our UCW friends. After breakfast, all are invited to a presentation by George Moon: "A Little Waltz through Dance/How to Enjoy Having Two Left Feet". George will briefly discuss various smooth and rhythm dances, the benefits of dance, where it has taken Dawn and him, and then finish with some examples. 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 about it. Cost is \$10 / person, with net proceeds to the UCW. Please RSVP to Harry Ramsaran (hramsaran@rogers.com or 905 508 4758) by Thursday, March 8. Thank you!

Looking ahead: Future dates for 2018 are April 14, and May 12

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

UCW



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

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.

CREATING AND NURTURING COMMUNITY

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 1, 8, 15, 22 and 29, 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. Last year we had 8 people gathered and a couple people made them at home. Patterns and some yarn are available.

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