



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, use the links found on our website and below.

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: As I have shared before, I am a strong supporter of the State of Israel. Given the history of anti-Semitism across so many centuries, culminating so tragically in the Holocaust, I believe that a Jewish homeland is the only way we can ensure the ongoing protection of Jews across the world. Given the way Christians have taken part in promoting anti-Semitism, I believe that we need to do all that we can to oppose it, which includes doing what we can to support a viable and safe Israel. It is for that reason that when I attended General Council 41 in Ottawa in 2012, I spoke against the proposal for a limited boycott of goods made in settlements in the West Bank. I was distressed when we passed the proposal, albeit amended to be more balanced.

I still believe that peace will only come to Israel and Palestine through dialogue between those who live there. Pressure from outside, especially from Christians, only further entrenches feelings of fear and isolation that can be a barrier to lasting peace. I also believe in an independent and viable Palestine. For too long, the Palestinian people have been like sojourners in their own land. As one Jewish person I spoke with put it, "the Palestinians have been historically evicted from everywhere and are now in some ways where the Jews were millennia ago." Given this, it should come as no surprise that I am heartbroken at what is happening in Israel right now with violent altercations coming from both Jewish and Arab Israelis, a conflict ramped up by missile strikes coming from both sides. It pains me that the Holy Land continues to be ripped apart when it could be a model of conciliation. Instead, long standing tension is enflamed by legislation allowing Jewish Israelis to reclaim property in the West Bank without the same allowance for Arabs displaced from Israel. More and more it feels to me that the State of Israel has been coopted by the same ultranationalism that gave rise to Hamas taking over power in Gaza. As long as both groups want to see "death to...the other" because they believe only, they have claim to the land, especially a claim that comes from God, then we will never have peace. These are tense times and all we can do is watch from the sidelines. As we do, may we model conciliation in our own land, working to bring opposing groups together, neither fomenting anti-Semitic nor Islamophobic sentiments, but supporting all of our neighbours. And as we do, may we continue to pray for peace in Israel-Palestine.

worship and music

[Order of Service](#) [Hymns](#) [Discovery Time at home](#)
James' video for children:
https://1drv.ms/v/s!AIBjmozEVDROgaoZ2xr4USpl9sz_8A

The Seventh Sunday of Easter (May 16): We jump forward in John to 17:6-19 in which Jesus continues to reflect on the relationship between his followers and the world, praying that we as his followers may be one as he is one with God. We also reflect on Ephesians 1:15-23 in which the author prays for the community, an appropriate reading as we pray with those being baptised, confirmed and affirmed as new members of Richmond Hill United Church. In "Called Together in Christ", James reflects on what we mean by unity and how it applies in a global context, especially given present conflict and unrest.

Pentecost Sunday (May 23): We celebrate the third most important Sunday of the year, giving thanks for the gift of the Holy Spirit as we reflect on John 16:4-15 (as Jesus promises that an Advocate/Companion will be sent to them) and Acts 2:1-11 (when the Holy Spirit appears to them in wind and flame). We will share the readings in multiple languages and share in communion virtually.

Ember Day III (May 30): We celebrate our last Ember Day of the year as we take time to honour the Earth and consider ways to protect it. Lyn Adamson of Climate Fast will be our guest speaker.

Worship Notes: This Sunday is a special celebration of what it means to be "church" as we celebrate baptism and confirmation, as well as recognize some people transferring their membership into RHUC from other congregations. This celebration reminds us that in the United Church, we exercise our belonging to the Church of Christ as a whole, both within our denomination in general, and in a local community of faith more particularly. We are a conciliar church, meaning that we exercise our shared authority in increasingly wide circles. The local community of faith is the primary locus of mission. In turn, local congregations are joined together in regional councils (there are 16 in total, plus an additional council for Indigenous communities of faith) and these regional councils together make up the denomination as a whole. Membership in a local congregation is important because it is through our local context that we primarily live out our faith. In addition, decisions that shape our policies and practices as a denomination begin at the local level, and work their way through to Regional Councils and then to the General Council. This bottom-up approach ensures that we all have a voice. It is a tangible expression of our belief in "the priesthood of all believers", that Christ is present in and through all of us and not just those in "authority". All of us together are the church, joined together through our baptism.



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.



Graduates: Please let James know by May 26 if you have any graduating family members this year so that they can be acknowledged in the June 6 worship service. Thank you.

programs for all

Shalom Seekers Please join us on **Monday, May 17th at 10 a.m.** via Zoom to look at *The Gospel of Thomas* which is known as a "Sayings Gospel". Why was it not included in the Bible along with the other gospels? Come and join in the discussion. All are welcome. The Zoom invitation will be sent out the day before the meeting. Please speak to Sandra Loughton or Peg Hiscoke for more information about the group.

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. 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.

RHUC Book Club: Please join us on **Wednesday, May 26th at 4 p.m. on Zoom** (via video or telephone) for a discussion of Anna Quindlen's 2016 novel *Miller's Valley*. New members are always welcome. Please speak to Sandra Loughton for more information about the book club. Here is a short description of the book to whet your appetite: "Filled with insights that are hallmarks of Anna Quindlen's bestsellers, this extraordinary novel is about a woman coming of age, as she unearths secrets about her family and her town, and surprising truths about herself. Miller's Valley is a masterly study of family, memory, loss, and, ultimately, discovery, of finding true identity, and a new vision of home. As Mimi says, 'No one ever leaves the town where they grew up, even if they go.' Miller's Valley reminds us that the place where you grew up can disappear, and the people in it too, but all will live on in your heart forever." (Goodreads)

Pub Theology: Friday, May 28 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.

Forest Church: Will be on **Sun., May 30 at 3:00 p.m.** this month instead of May 23 due to the long weekend.

church news

Saying Farewell to James and Glen: We are all hoping that restrictions will be lifted and we will have a chance to say farewell and thank you in person. However, we must be prepared for not being able to do this. If you would like to be part of a small team of creative thinkers planning a lovely farewell - please contact me at: jane.wedlock2@gmail.com or 416 837 3930. James's last Sunday with us is July 11th, 2021.

Joanne Scofield's Ordination: Joanne Scofield, a long time member of our congregation is being ordained in Vancouver on June 13th 2021. We hope the service will be available through zoom. If you would like to contribute to a gift for Joanne - please let me know. jane.wedlock2@gmail.com or 416 837 3930.

RHUC Search Team: The Board has approved the following motion: That the following people be appointed to the Search Team responsible for helping RHUC discern and find a new pastoral relationship to support and enable our ministry.

Anne Leyton-Brown, DJ McCready, Doug Loweth, Howe Foo, Nancy Hart, Ruth Perratt, Sandra Loughton, Sara Mollaei, Sara Perez and Sharon McNutt

We are grateful for their willingness to take on this responsibility and for sharing their gifts. They represent involvement in very diverse aspects of our congregational life. It is important that in our discernment and search process that we be forward thinking - looking at who we are called to be in ministry as a congregation, as well as who we are now. Our ministry as a faith community is dynamic - we have certainly learned this over the past 15 months.

If you have a chance - please thank these folks for taking on this role and support them as they undertake this important work. *Many thanks, Jane Wedlock*

Church Gardens: The spring bulbs, shrubs and trees have been blooming beautifully these past few weeks and with the cooler weather, the flowers have lasted longer. As the gardens are prepared for another growing season, you may be dividing some **perennials and they would be appreciated at the church – specifically, lily-of-the-valley, hens and chickens, and forget-me-nots.** We received a number of foxgloves last fall and we are looking forward to them blooming. Also, if you are downsizing and moving from a house, **you may have a wheelbarrow you could pass on!** Please let Donna Smith, 905-884-6307, know if you can bring any of these items to the church so she can put them away for safe-keeping. Thanks!

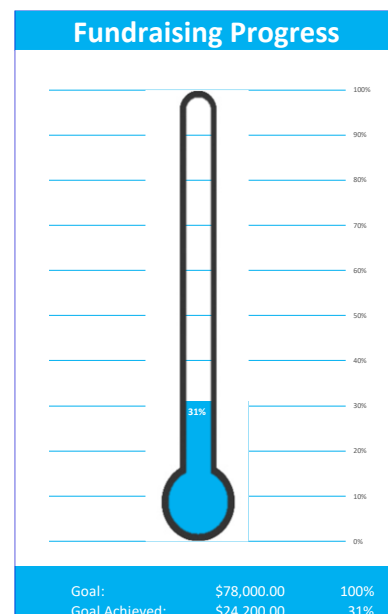
Prayer Shawl Ministry: Several people have gathered during Lent for the past 15 years at RHUC to make prayer shawls and have interesting conversations. This year we were not able to



gather at the church because of Covid so our sessions were on Zoom on Wednesday afternoons for an hour. This was actually a blessing as one person who always makes a shawl at home, joined us as she didn't have to travel 45 minutes one

way, to meet at the church! An average of 8 ladies met and even though Zoom is not the best way to visit, we could at least see our church friends; this was such a help during Covid lockdown that we continued to meet till the end of April. Most of us made one shawl, two ladies made 11 each. We were pleased to have James dedicate the 34 shawls during the service on May 9th. These shawls will be given to members, and others, who are living with a life crisis or challenge like illness, grief or a move away from RHUC, or rejoice with a birth, baptism or becoming a member of our faith community. If you know of someone who would benefit from knowing that others care about them, please contact Deb in the church office or Donna Smith, 905-884-6307, Coordinator.

Our Virtual Home by Jane Ridout – see link on website.



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 etransfer to



office@rhuc.org ,
cheque or
CanadaHelps.org.

We are now at 31% of our goal (pre-tax)!! Thank you!



Outreach

Mosaic Interfaith & Organization for Islamic Learning special series on Spirituality: Mosaic has partnered with the Organization for Islamic Learning to offer a two part series on Spirituality. Spread over two coming Sundays, **May 30th and June 6th**. It will offer us an opportunity to learn how each of our faiths approach this subject and use their teachings to help improve ourselves and come closer to a meaningful relationship with God. This series is free and will be recorded so that if you miss part of it you can watch, or re-watch, at a later time.

Fran Isaacs & Shabnees Siwjee, Mosaic co-chairs.

May 30th 2021: Topic: Exploring Spirituality Through Different Pathways

Time: May 30, 2021 02:00 PM America/Toronto

Join Zoom Meeting <https://zoom.us/j/5929544287>

Meeting ID: 592 954 4287

June 6th 2021: Topic: Exploring Spirituality Through Different Pathways

Time: Jun 6, 2021 02:00 PM America/Toronto

Join Zoom Meeting <https://zoom.us/j/5929544287>

Meeting ID: 592 954 4287

community news

Kids Help Phone for parents and youth who may be struggling with loneliness and the need for connection with friends and family they may be missing.

10 Creative Ways to Connect at a Distance

- Play a game together (in an app, online or by video)
- Mail a handwritten letter or printed photo
- Take an online museum tour together
- Create a virtual book club
- Cook or enjoy a meal together through video
- Make an adventure list of things to look forward to in the future
- Send GIFs or Memes that remind you of someone
- Share a link to a song or playlist you've enjoyed
- Go for a physically distanced walk, or video chat while exploring the outdoors
- Doodle or colour while talking on the phone

Also, their website has a lot of great resources and information www.kidshelpphone.ca

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.

Raspberry French Toast

Ingredients

- 1 package (9 ounces) cream cheese, softened
- 1 teaspoon vanilla extract
- 2 tablespoons raspberry jam
- 1 cup whole milk
- 4 large eggs
- 1/4 teaspoon ground cinnamon
- 8 (1/2-inch thick) sliced brioche
- 4 tablespoon unsalted butter
- 1/2 cup raspberries, plus more for serving
- Confectioners' sugar, for garnish
- Maple syrup

Directions

1. With mixer on medium speed, beat cream cheese with vanilla until smooth. Stir in raspberry jam.
2. In a large shallow dish, whisk milk, eggs, and cinnamon.
3. Spread cheese mixture on one side of brioche slices. Divide raspberries among four slices, top with remaining four slices, pressing to make four sandwiches.
4. Heat a 12" nonstick skillet on medium. Melt two tablespoons of butter per sandwich. Dip sandwiches into egg mixture, turning to soak both sides. Place two sandwiches in skillet, cook two to three minutes per side or until golden brown.
5. Transfer to a plate. Keep warm in oven at 200F while cooking remaining sandwiches. Dust with confectioners' sugar, serve with maple syrup and more raspberries.

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