



Sunday worship each week is livestreamed at 10:30 AM 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/. In addition, the weekly message will be posted on the [RHUC Blog](#).

To access the home based worship resource so you can use to follow along or take time for personal reflection, follow this link: [Home Prayers Hymns](#) You can find an at home "Discovery Time" with children here: [Discovery Time](#)

In this challenging time, it is important that we look after each other. If you are able to pick up groceries and other supplies for those who are homebound, please contact the church. Equally, if you are in need of this support, call the church or email office@rhuc.org. If you are in need of pastoral care or spiritual support, please contact Rev. James Ravenscroft. Call him at 647-705-2754 or you can reach him by email, james@rhuc.org.

We are grateful for all those who are able to support the ongoing ministry of Richmond Hill United Church. If you would like to make a contribution, you can do so through CanadaHelps.org. <http://www.rhuc.org/donate.html>

May we continue to keep each other and world in prayer, especially those who are most vulnerable, those who are grieving or struggling, and all of those on the frontline putting themselves and their families at risk to keep all of us safe. We will get through this together.

Minister's Message: I realize the connection is in my head rather than formally but each Victoria Day weekend I pause for a moment in gratitude for the Commonwealth. I assume I make the connection because of how synonymous Queen Victoria was with the expansion of the British Empire. We well know that the legacy of the Empire is mixed and in many cases the bad outweighed the good. And yet through the 1950s and 60s a transition took place as more and more former colonies became independent nations. These 54 nations have always had the potential of being a true vehicle of cooperative enterprise and respectful sharing. I must emphasize the word potential because the Commonwealth is predicated on a colonial past. This means it carries within it the legacy of racism and white privilege, a legacy we continue to see in our world, even in Commonwealth countries. I am sure many of you saw the news of a rise in anti-Asian violence here in Canada. The video clip of a Chinese woman at a bus stop being punched by a young white man is but one of many. Even more troubling is the case of a black woman in London who was spat on while working in a railway station. Given that the perpetrator did it knowing he'd contracted COVID-19 and this woman later died, to my mind he should be charged with murder. I feel so angry when I think about these incidents. Pandemic-related stress or not, there is no excuse for such incredible malice. And then my anger shifts to deep sadness as I look to the witness of Jesus and his radical inclusion. I weep for the world that could be, a world rooted in love and justice for all. But there is hope. As I meditated this morning I heard a whisper in my soul reminding me that change is happening one heart at a time. I trust in that. I trust the words of Martin Luther King Jr. that the arc of history is bending toward justice. I pray that is so.

worship and music

Sunday, May 17: We continue to reflect together on stories from the Acts of the Apostles, this time hearing about the death of Stephen (Acts 6:8-14 and 7:54-60). It is a troubling story and yet one that reminds us how new ideas can so often be met with anger, even violence. But there is hope as we hear in the poem "Special Plates" by Jalal ad Din Muhammad Rumi. In the end love changes hearts and we can come together in unity.

Sunday, May 24: We hear a story about Paul preaching in Athens (Acts 17:22-31). As he points to an altar to an unknown god and uses their tradition to make connections with the gospel, he offers a way of living respectfully with each other.

Sunday, May 31: We conclude the Easter Season as we ponder Acts 2:1-21. We will honour multiple languages as we celebrate Pentecost, the "birthday of the church". We will share communion virtually as we did on Easter Sunday.

DIY Worship: Each Sunday we have a worship service that is accessed through the Zoom platform. The outline of the worship service (prayers, readings, etc.) is also found on the website. For those who would rather create their own celebration, possible hymns for **Sunday, May 17** include: "Let Us Build a House" (MV 1), "In Loving Partnership We Come" (VU 603) and "Holy God We Praise Your Name" (VU 894). For **May 24** consider these hymns: "Draw the Circle Wide" (MV 145), "Immortal, Invisible, God Only Wise" (VU 264) and "Praise Our Maker" (VU 316). For **Pentecost Sunday (May 31):** "On Pentecost They Gathered" (VU195), "O Holy Spirit, by Whose Breath" (VU200) and "Spirit God, be our Breath" (MV150).

Sunday offering: RHUC, like other churches, depends on donations and rentals to pay our bills. Our building continues to cost money even while closed and we continue to keep our employees working, albeit in ways that are different from normal tasks. We appreciate those who use Pre Authorized Remittance (PAR). For those not PAR, please consider making sure you get your weekly envelope money in and we hope as well 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 give post-dated cheques** to the Church, 10201 Yonge St., Richmond Hill, L4C 3B2. We are keeping in touch with the United Church of Canada and governments to ensure we get what bridge funds might be available to us during physical distancing.



Virtual Sunday School

Sundays from 9:30 am – 10:00 am
Songs. Stories. Discovery.
For Zoom Link, Contact – Jeffrey Dale, Youth Ministries Coordinator jdale@united-church.ca

church news

Grocery Home Deliveries: Do you, or someone you know, need groceries delivered to your home? RHUC has a team in place to respond. We can shop on your behalf for food, prescriptions and other basic needs, in local stores, and deliver to your doorstep.

How does it work? Call June, Doug or Donna at the numbers below. One of our Callers will get in touch with you, take down your list, and let you know how it works. One of the Drivers will then shop for you, and deliver to your home. You will have your delivery within a week – most likely just a few days. You pay for the groceries as usual, but the shopping and delivery are free.

Callers: Donna Byres, Donna McErlain, Bill and Joanne Fotheringham, Penny Fabbro, June Blanchette, Sandra Loughton, Nicole Moore. **Drivers:** Heather Hartung, Marise Blanchette, Amy Hammer, Doug Loweth, Rob Spence

Organizers: June Blanchette 905-780-0048 Donna Smith 905-884-6307 Doug Loweth 416-553-8706 We'll get through this together!

A Minute for the Board: As provinces slowly give permission for businesses to reopen, it is only a matter of time before churches are allowed to do the same. This will not happen right away and must be done with careful planning and forethought. With this in mind, the board is planning a Zoom conversation on Thursday June 4 at 7:00 PM. Along with members of the Worship Committee, Lay Pastoral Visitors, the Family Ministry Committee (formerly CD), Property Committee, the Operations Team and the Communications Team, a special invite is being offered to medical personnel, teachers, and other frontline workers. Contact James for log-in information and to answer any questions and concerns.



RHUC PHONE TREE CREATED & GOING LIVE NOW! We have created a Phone Tree.

Goal & Objectives:

- Build Ongoing Community at RHUC among its members – during COVID & beyond it.
- Be a system for getting Emergency messages (cancellations/emergencies) out to the RHUC congregation quickly.
- Phone Tree Branch Leaders will call their members on a regular basis to check-in based on need (bi-weekly/ weekly).

Everyone in the church has been assigned to a Phone Tree branch by their postal code, so each branch is a certain area.

THANK YOU TO ALL WHO HAVE VOLUNTEERED TO BE PHONE TREE BRANCH LEADERS.

What do you have to do?

- Nothing –except answer the phone.
- Within the next 2 weeks, you will get a call from your phone Tree Branch leader.
- They will introduce themselves & confirm the RHUC services available to you during this time.
- If you need help, they will make sure you have the contact #s so you can get help.

Want to talk? Please chat with your Phone Tree Branch Leader.

Make a new Friend.

Things to talk about:

- Weather, pets, etc.
- Hobbies (reading, crafts, nature walks, travel, books, theatre, music, collecting of things i.e. stamps, buttons, etc., baking, cooking etc. etc. etc.).
- What are doing? What have you tried? What do you want to do?

There are many ways to build community. While we are far apart and things aren't the same, we are not alone. We will find ways to stay connected with each other.

Need to change your address or tel # or Questions on Phone tree:

Email/Call Nicole or Penny.

Nicole Moore 905-508-5253 willowrose@pathcom.com

Penny Fabbro 905-508-6594 pennyfabbro@rogers.com

HUGE THANKS!!! - to Donna Smith and James for helping Nicole & Penny get the Phone Tree up & running.

A Change in Zoom Coffee Times: Each week there are 2 opportunities to check in with one another via Zoom. This first check in time is Tuesday evening at 7 pm. We have changed the second opportunity to Thursday morning at 10:30 am. Grab a coffee and a cookie or two and check in with your friends on Zoom.

Any graduates this year? Each year as school comes to a close, we look forward to celebrating tweens, teens and young adults who are graduating. This year is no different, albeit our celebration will be. So, if you know of someone who is graduating from Grade 8, Grade 12 or from a post-secondary program, let James know (email james@rhuc.org) so that we can be sure to recognize them during worship June 7. Please email him by May 31.

A Request for Help: As the self-isolating protocols continue, there is an escalating impact on our economy. Money is going to get tight for some, including friends, neighbours and members of RHUC. To this end, we invite you to help out if you can by donating grocery cards. When you order your grocery card (still a fundraiser for our church, BTW), donate a card to help someone who needs assistance. Contact Deb (office@rhuc.org) for more information.

An order for cash cards will be going in May 21.

programs for all

Weekly Meditation: Each Wednesday at 6:30 pm, James hosts 45 minutes of reflection and meditation via Zoom. If this is something that interests you, please let James (james@rhuc.org) or Deb (office@rhuc.org) know so that they can send you the log-in details.

Shalom Seekers: During this time of "lockdown" and social isolation, we have been keeping in touch via scheduled Zoom chats on Monday mornings, as well as regular e-mails from people checking in and sharing photos of their walks, gardens, etc. This past Monday we had a record number of Shalom members on Zoom! It was great to see so many faces on the screen. We even had someone join by phone which was wonderful as well.

This coming Monday is a holiday, but that doesn't seem to matter right now when we're all at home. We will have a Zoom chat again and this week (May 18th) it will be purely a social time. You will receive an invitation e-mail as usual and until then, stay well and keep smiling. *Sandra Loughton & Peg Hiscoke, Co-Facilitators*

RHUC BOOK CLUB: The Book Club will be getting together again on-line for another Zoom meeting on **Wednesday, May 27th at 4 pm**. All book club members will receive an invitation e-mail before the meeting with all the necessary information. You may join via Zoom or by telephone. Please contact me if you have any questions. It is easy to connect by phone. We will be meeting again on Zoom on either June 17 or 24 at 4 pm to discuss Ann Patchett's latest novel *The Dutch House*. The date will be confirmed after our May meeting. Stay well & keep on reading! *Sandra Loughton, Facilitator*

Pub Theology: We meet online once again to discuss faith, spirituality and life's big questions. The next online gathering is on **Fri., May 29 at 7:30 PM**. Contact James for the meeting log-in info.

keeping up our spirits

As we look to the coming days and weeks of "sheltering in place" it is important we keep our spirits up. Each week RHUC Reflections will include some ideas, reflective words, poems, recipes, pictures (send to Deb at office@rhuc.org), etc. to help in this challenging time.

"Let Evening Come" by Jane Kenyon

Let the light of late afternoon shine through chinks in the barn,
moving up the bales as the sun moves down.

Let the cricket take up chafing as a woman takes up her
needles and her yarn. Let evening come.

Let dew collect on the hoe abandoned in long grass. Let the stars
appear and the moon disclose her silver horn.

Let the fox go back to its sandy den. Let the wind die down. Let
the shed go black inside. Let evening come.

To the bottle in the ditch, to the scoop in the oats, to air in the
lung let evening come.

Let it come, as it will, and don't be afraid. God does not leave us
comfortless, so let evening come.

Interested in the Environment? Looking for Gardening and Birding tips? Check out the [TRCA Toronto Region Conservation Authority](https://www.trca.ca/en/conservation/conservation-events) website event page. They are holding a large number of online workshops. Some upcoming sessions are:

- Landscaping for Birds
- Culinary Herbs: Growing, Harvesting And Preserving
- Introduction to Vegetable Gardening
- The Magic of Rain Barrels
- Sustainable Balcony Gardening
- Gardening For Birds, Butterfiles and Beyond

No-Bake Cookie Dough Bars (Vegan & Gluten-Free)

Vegan, Gluten-Free, Nut-Free, Soy-Free, No Added Oil

Makes 8 large bars; serves 16

Ingredients

- 1 cup soft Medjool dates (about 8 ounces), pitted
- 2 3/4 cups rolled oats (about 2 1/4 cups oat flour), certified gluten-free if needed
- 1/4 cup smooth tahini (or almond butter or cashew butter)
- 4 1/2 tablespoons pure maple syrup
- 1 tablespoon pure vanilla extract
- 1/2 teaspoon fine sea salt
- 1 cup vegan chocolate chips, divided (I use these [mini chocolate chips](#))
- 2 teaspoons refined coconut oil, melted (optional; omit to keep oil-free)

Directions

1. If the dates are not very soft, cover them with hot water for 5 minutes, then drain and pat dry.
2. Place the oats in the bowl of the food processor and pulverize them until you have a fine oat flour. Alternatively, you can use store-bought oat flour.
3. Add the pitted dates, tahini, maple syrup, vanilla, and salt to the oat flour. Pulse until the mixture forms into a sticky dough (it should turn into a ball). If it feels dry, add a spoon of plant-based milk a teaspoon at a time until the dough just sticks together when pressed.
4. Fold in 1/2 cup of the chocolate chips using a silicone spatula.
5. If the dough is too sticky to handle with your hands (this is more likely if your kitchen is warm), place the dough in the fridge for 20 minutes to firm it up a bit.
6. Line a 9x5-inch or 8x4-inch loaf pan with parchment paper, leaving some overhang. You can also use a similar-shaped glass storage container or an 8x8-inch square baking pan (if you use the latter, the bars won't be as thick though). Spread the dough into pan and smooth the top out evenly, pressing all the way into corners. Use a flat-bottomed glass to get the mixture even on top. Place the pan in the freezer for 30 minutes (or longer) to set.
7. Using the parchment paper as handles, lift the cookie dough out of the pan.
8. Place the remaining 1/2 cup chocolate chips in a microwave safe bowl with the coconut oil, if using. Microwave on high in 30-second intervals until the chocolate is almost melted. Use a spoon to stir the chocolate until it is melted. If you omit the oil, the instructions are the same.
9. Pour the melted chocolate on top of the cookie dough. Since the bars are cold, the chocolate will harden on top. Slice into 8 bars and serve immediately. Store leftovers in the freezer.

Please keep the ideas and stories coming. It is a lovely way to feel connected.

outreach

RHUC family, I need your help! There's a project in the works at my daycare, for whenever we get back, and I am hoping you can help! We are collecting plastic bottle caps! Pop bottles, juice bottles, water bottles, sauce bottles, milk cartons...you get the idea! And we need a lot of them! I would be ever so thankful if you could collect them for me 😊 Thanks so much! *Paula Windsor*

Every year the Curtain Club enters some of our productions into the Association of Community Theatres – Central Ontario Festival. This year we entered *The Patron Saint of Stanley Park, Burn* and *Tempting Providence*. At the online awards gala, we received 18 nominations and 8 awards – very strong results. All three productions were recognized and we are proud to announce that *Tempting Providence* took home the big prize of Best Overall Production of a Drama! This show has not yet opened but we were fortunate to have a dress rehearsal adjudicated. You now have something very special to look forward to when we reopen with this award-winning production. We encourage you to share this information with friends who may not have email or web access. The Box Office will remain open during the postponement period to assist you. (905-773-3434)

Please visit www.thecurtainclub.org/covid-19, the dedicated page on our website that displays the most up-to-date information for members and patrons. We also use social media and email distributions for communication.

United Church Global response to COVID -19: Many United Church people have been looking for ways to support global partners and the vulnerable communities they serve as they face the challenges of the COVID-19 pandemic. One way to offer your support is through donations to help support Mission & Service partners in the global South. To learn more and support, visit [COVID-19: Global Response](#).

As part of our global response to COVID-19, the United Church joined with Mennonite Central Committee Canada (MCC) and Nobel Women's Initiative in a letter to the Minister of Foreign Affairs, Francois-Philippe Champagne, urging the Canadian government to ensure that humanitarian assistance is not impeded by economic and political sanctions during this unprecedented health crisis. [Read the full letter.](#)

Asian Heritage month is currently underway. As we honour the contributions of Asian Canadians to our church and society this month and beyond, take a look at some [worship resources](#) you can use to celebrate Asian Heritage with your community of faith.

Minute for Mission: Our gifts for Mission & Service make the Wampum-Neechi program at Five Oaks Education and Retreat Centre in Paris, Ontario, possible. This week-long program brings together 10 Indigenous and 10 nonIndigenous youth (ages 12–14) for six days in the summer. They forge new friendships across cultures, enjoy summer days together, and learn about Indigenous (Haudenosaunee and Cree) history and cultural values. The project’s vision is for these young people to be continually engaged in activities, workshops, and play—all in a creative, learning-enriched, fun, and safe environment. Wampum-Neechi creates a positive space for friendships to grow, which in turn fosters healthy dialogue, reconciliation, and relationship-building between Indigenous and nonIndigenous people. The adventure includes these activities:

- a trip to Kana:ta Village, a cultural centre
- spending the day in Six Nations of the Grand River
- learning Haudenosaunee and Cree songs
- learning about the church’s role in residential schools and ongoing work toward reparations, healing, and reconciliation
- rafting on the Grand River, swimming in the pool at Five Oaks, and learning traditional arts, crafts, and games

Additional support for Canadian Seniors: The Prime Minister, Justin Trudeau, today announced a series of additional measures to help Canadian seniors and provide them with greater financial security in this time of crisis. These measures include:

- Providing additional financial support of \$2.5 billion for a one-time tax-free payment of \$300 for seniors eligible for the Old Age Security (OAS) pension, with an additional \$200 for seniors eligible for the Guaranteed Income Supplement (GIS). This measure would give a total of \$500 to individuals who are eligible to receive both the OAS and the GIS, and will help them cover increased costs caused by COVID-19.
- Expanding the New Horizons for Seniors Program with an additional investment of \$20 million to support organizations that offer community-based projects that reduce isolation, improve the quality of life of seniors, and help them maintain a social support network.
- Temporarily extending GIS and Allowance payments if seniors’ 2019 income information has not been assessed. This will ensure that the most vulnerable seniors continue to receive their benefits when they need them the most. To avoid an interruption in benefits, seniors are encouraged to submit their 2019 income information as soon as possible and no later than by October 1, 2020.

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.

Smart fabric face masks for purchase locally:

<http://www.smartfabricmask.com/>