

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: With hostilities suspended for the time being in Israel-Palestine, many of us, me included are praying with both gratitude and hope the Egyptian brokered ceasefire holds. With this in mind, I offer today a prayer. It is adapted from an earlier prayer posted on The United Church of Canada's website when tensions first started:

In this uncertain time, as the violence that gripped Gaza and Israel is thankfully suspended, we turn to you, our Help and our Strength, offering prayers of sorrow, grief, and yearning for lasting peace. No words can express the sadness and anger at the violence that has erupted.

No words can console those grieving the deaths of children, women, civilians.

No words can justify rockets fired, aggression marring hopes for peace.

And yet, we pray, trusting that you know the longings in our hearts.

In this trust:

We pray for comfort and healing for those grieving the deadly assaults both within Israel and into Gaza, violence that has now claimed hundreds of lives and wounded thousands more.

We pray for a return to dialogue between two nations with an equal claim to this sacred land.

We pray that all who seek to worship can do so safely and without fear.

We pray for a lasting ceasefire that brings an end to the violence and makes space for a just peace in Palestine and Israel.

We pray that all people in Palestine and Israel will be able to go to school, go to work, visit a loved one in hospital, chat with a neighbour, or have dinner with a friend with equal dignity, security, and respect.

Holy One, during this time and these holy days, we remember your prayer for Jerusalem, the city of peace, and long for a time when Palestine and Israel may be a witness of justice, peace, and liberation for all.

Amen.

worship and music

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

James' video for children:

<https://1drv.ms/v/s!AIBjmozEVDROgagppbYUlyE4aiGYg>

Pentecost Sunday (May 23): As we celebrate the third most important Sunday of the year, we begin by pondering "Another Planet" by Dunya Mikhail and then reflect on John 14:8-10, 16-17 and 25-27 (Jesus' promises that a Companion will be sent to them) and Acts 2:1-11 (when the Spirit appears to them in wind and flame). We once again share communion virtually. Please have bread and grape juice (or wine) prepared ahead so you can participate in communion.

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. We reflect on Job 12:7-10 in which we are advised to learn what we need to from the birds and animals. Lyn Adamson of Climate Fast will be our guest speaker.



Honouring Grads and Revealing Secret Friends (June 6): On this Second Sunday after Pentecost we honour anyone graduating this year as well as reveal who has been the secret friends to last year's high school graduates. In Mark 3:20-35, Jesus reflects on the importance of discipleship, saying that all who follow God's will are his sisters, brothers, mothers.



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.



Pride Sunday (June 13): We once again host the Pride worship service for York Region, albeit still on Zoom. Guest Preacher: Rev June Joplin, formerly of Lorne Park Baptist Church in Mississauga and now Associate Pastor of Programs and Congregational Care at Metropolitan Community Church of Toronto.

Worship Notes: As has become our custom over the last fourteen months, our celebration of communion this Sunday is once more shared virtually. In order to do this, participants need to have bread and juice/wine (or other suitable food and drink) ready before the service begins. We eat the bread and drink the juice/wine from our remote locations at the same time as the worship leader in the sanctuary. We are able to do this in the United Church because our Methodist and Presbyterian heritage regarding sacraments places the focus on the gathered community rather than the minister. This is especially the case when it comes to sharing in communion. The minister leads the celebration because they represent the congregation's connection to the wider church. Denominationally, we interpret "gathered community" broadly to include being together through computers and other devices. It is important to note that we share communion in real time and not later while watching a recorded version of the service. For this reason, the communion portion of the service is deleted from the recording that is later posted on Facebook and YouTube.



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.

programs for all

Shalom Seekers: Shalom Seekers will be taking the morning off on Monday, May 24th due to the holiday weekend. Please join us on Zoom on Monday, May 31st at 10 a.m. to continue our discussion of The Gospel of Thomas. This is a "Sayings Gospel" that was not included in the canon of the New Testament. We will look at these sayings of Jesus and discuss the findings of the Jesus Seminar which included Dominic Crossan and Marcus Borg.

For more details about the group, please contact Peg Hiscoke or Sandra Loughton.

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 by video or telephone to discuss the novel *Miller's Valley* by Anna Quindlen. The Zoom invitation will be sent out the day before the meeting. Please note, I will be picking up your library copies of the book at the church on Thursday, May 27th between 10:30 and 11:30 a.m.

For more details about the group, please speak to facilitator, Sandra Loughton. New members are always welcome!

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: This month's event hosted by Three Rivers Forest Church will be held at **3:00 pm on Sun., May 30** (not on May 23). Gathering at the arbour at the Canyon Hill Avenue entrance to Twickenham Park, participants will take time in the forest with a special focus on the trees, taking time to learn what wisdom the trees may be offering in this time of growth.

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, hopefully via 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: 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!

Our Virtual Home by Jane Ridout: I have been reading about the history of Richmond Hill United Church. I learned that the original church building we now call our historical sanctuary was built when the original building burned down. It was so important to the members of the congregation that they raised \$17,000, which was then 25 times the annual givings of the congregation. When Sunday school attendance exploded in the 1950's the congregation again rose to the challenge. They demolished the small building to the north of the sanctuary and contributed time, talent and treasure. The able bodied in the congregation dug the foundations for what some of us now call the Christian Development Building and some the Village Commons, or made lunch for those that were digging. And everyone, whether they were one of the diggers, or one of the lunch makers, or someone who just cheered them on from the sidelines, donated the money needed to buy the land and build the building, which was almost \$250,000, again a sum many times more than the annual givings of the congregation.

As you all know, when you walk in the front door of the Church you walk by the cornerstone that says 1880, the year they started building the sanctuary. I was born the year they laid the cornerstone for the Christian Development Building.

So, if you're part of my generation, you were too young to be asked to contribute to either of the original buildings. There's a programme coming via Zoom shortly, open to anyone who wants to participate called "The Church has left the Building". It focuses on *how will we combine online and in-person church*. I think those of us who consider ourselves members of the congregation of Richmond Hill United Church are being called on to build our wing of the church. **There is no cornerstone because ours is a virtual wing.**

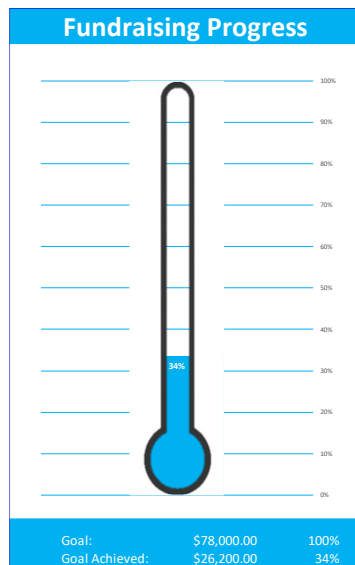
25 times the annual givings of RHUC in 2020 would be more than eight million dollars. The Boosting Our Signal Campaign sets out a virtual structure that will cost \$82,000, or one one hundredth of that. I have no doubt that this congregation also has the financial wherewithal to raise that money.

At this time 37 households, including mine, have contributed to Boosting Our Signal, which has allowed us to build the foundation for our virtual structure. That means many of the people reading this have not.

Here are the gifts received so far:

Range	# of Households	Total Received
More than \$2,000	2	\$ 9,000
\$1,000 to \$2,000	7	8,040
\$400-\$500	6	2,900
\$150 to \$250	6	1,198
\$100 or less	16	1,262
Total received	37	\$ 22,400

I want to thank those of you who have built the foundation that has allowed us to deliver on-line church with your donations so far. To secure the future of our church we will need to be able to invite people into our congregation through our virtual building, as well as welcoming them into the physical spaces envisioned and created and paid for by earlier generations. Our virtual building is not yet complete. If you have not yet supported the AV project I hope that you find yourself in a position to contribute and that we will be able to complete our installation of the system and our generation's legacy to the congregation of Richmond Hill United Church.



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 34% of our goal (pre-tax)!!

Thank you!



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. 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.. 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.

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

Youth Summer Jobs: There are a number of new and exciting summer job positions with the General Council Office for youth between the ages of 15 to 30. We would love to work with you! Please [take a look](#) at these opportunities.



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.

Home. A place where when you get there, you know your heart has been there all along. *Gloria Gaither*

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