



Happy Thanksgiving!

Though we were looking forward to seeing everyone, we have decided to **delay reopening for in-person worship**. This is necessary to give enough time to resolve some technical issues. We want worship to be a good experience for everyone, both for those coming to the church and for those joining from home. We will announce the official date as soon as we can.

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, follow this link: [Order of Service](#) [Hymns](#)

We understand that this is a strange time, but we will get through it together. Whether you are choosing to stay home or to worship in-person, we are still one community, committed to care for one another with compassion and love.



Minister's Message: Humans are creatures of habit. We each have certain ways of doing things -from the order of activities when we get up in the morning (I start with letting out Finley and getting my coffee going) to the traditions we carry on from year to year (we have been hosting Thanksgiving since moving to Ontario). That fact is making this a difficult year for many. Our daily habits were thrown out of whack in the Spring lockdown. Even now many of our daily activities still feel in flux. And now our yearly traditions are off kilter as well. An Easter in lockdown was bad enough but Thanksgiving? What about Hallowe'en? I don't even want to think about Christmas. So, what are we to do? First, grieve. It is OK to not be OK with everything going on. Second, adapt. We can all find ways to honour the traditions of our families and communities, looking more to the intention of the custom rather than the implementation. If your family always names what you are each grateful for in the past year (even this one) then find a way to still do that. Maybe you are "Zoomed out". So why not email who would have been at your table this year, sharing your gratuities with them and asking them to respond with the same. Reading each other's gratuities during the meal helps you feel connected. Another important tradition is coming to church, something we have adapted by worshipping via Zoom for the last 6 months. Given the recommendation of public health officials that we celebrate in only our household bubbles, it makes sense that we follow this advice as a church family. While we have resolved our technical issues, we are opting to delay reopening for in-person worship for this Sunday. It will seem odd not to be in the church building, but we are still coming together online. We also plan to add breakout groups to post-worship fellowship so that we can connect with each other and take time to share gratuities in a smaller circle. This is one way we can tend to each other's mental wellness as well as physical health. Because we are creatures of habit, paying attention to our daily and yearly routines helps us maintain some balance in these disorienting days. We may not be able to do everything as we normally would but we can honour the spirit behind our traditions, and so honour the relationships that also make us human.

worship and music

Sunday, October 11: We reflect on Matthew 6:25-34, where Jesus points to the wildflowers and birds as an illustration of how we are called to live. We also listen to an excerpt from Paulo Coelho's *El Alquimista*. Through both these readings we are reminded of the importance of being thankful for what is before us in the moment, of being "Grounded in Gratitude".

Sunday, October 18: We turn back to the later chapters of Matthew, listening to another confrontation between Jesus and religious leaders. In 22:15-22, a question about taxation turns into a lesson about allegiances. We also hear another reading from Paulo Coelho, this time from *Warrior of the Light* and celebrate the baptism of two infants.

Sunday, October 25: We look at Matthew 22:34-40 as Jesus reiterates the importance of loving not just God but loving our neighbours as well. In honour of October being 2SLGBTQ+ History month, we hear a quote of slain activist Harvey Milk.



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.

Worship Notes: Christian worship at its core is communal. We come together as a church family, trusting in Jesus' promise that he is present whenever two or three gather in his name. This is one of the reasons why we chose to worship through Zoom over these months. Similarly, congregations who chose to pre-record their services have also hosted "watch parties" so that the community can be together in some way. Fellowship in the Zoom room after worship is formally ended is another way we honour the communal nature of Christian worship. To nurture this further, we plan to include breakout rooms this Sunday. After about 5 minutes of general greetings, the Zoom host will place those still online into random groups of 4 or 5 people. Simply click "accept" and a new "room" will pop up and you can have a conversation together. Worship is taking time to praise, to reflect, to pray. It is also a time to be together, nurturing our bonds as siblings in Christ.

Faith Exploration: Do you want to deepen your understanding of Christianity? Do you want to learn more about the United Church? Contact James for a link to Faith Exploration sessions on Zoom. The sessions begin on **October 18 at 12:30 pm**.

church news



Updating our database: We need your picture! Please email the church office at office@rhuc.org with a current picture of you and/or your family (in JPG format) by Oct. 30. Contact Julia Ye at 647-835-2767 if you would like her to come and take your picture.

A word of thanks and some volunteer opportunities:

Back in March, very few of us foresaw the pandemic situation shifting from weeks into months. At the time we quickly pivoted to worship online augmented with recordings of music, all made possible with some incredibly dedicated volunteers. Much gratitude to Brandon, Glen, Howe and Paula for their help over these months. Thanks as well to the Transition Team who have been helping shift us to an in-person plus online format.

As we move forward, there are some ongoing tasks where help is needed.



Zoom host: This person launches Zoom each Sunday, lines up videos, makes connections between the various worship leaders, communicates with the camera operator and helps the service run smoothly in terms of Zoom;

Camera operator: This person operates the phone/camera each Sunday, helps cue the various worship leaders in the sanctuary and communicates with the Zoom host to help the service run smoothly from the sanctuary;

Audio Support: This person prepares the audio recordings of hymns, anthems and other music by editing them from previously recorded services, choir rehearsals and other recording sessions. The recordings are used to create the videos that accompany services. (James has been doing this and would be happy to teach someone how to use audio editing software. If he can do it, it is pretty easy to use.)

programs for all

Men's Breakfast: On **Sat., Oct. 10 at 9:00** the Men's Breakfast will present an online dialogue between two retired Political Science professors about the upcoming US presidential election. Because of COVID restrictions we cannot meet in person over breakfast, but we can still share food for thought. David Leyton-Brown and Bob Drummond will discuss the issues and personalities in this election, key factors to watch between now and November 3, and especially on election night, and the consequences of different possible outcomes for the US and for Canada.

Women's Spirituality: We will gather **this Saturday, Oct. 10th at 10:00 in the Chapel** and we will be outside for a short time so come dressed for the weather. Program: "Kiss of Peace: Ten most famous kisses in the Bible". Bring your own beverage and snack if you wish; masks and social distancing protocols will be followed.

Shalom Seekers: Please note that there will be no meeting on holiday Monday, October 12th.. We have been fortunate to have been able to meet in Amos Wright Park on Church Street for four consecutive Mondays but **meetings will resume on Zoom starting on Monday October 19 at 10am..**

We will begin our study of a new book called **Holy Envy: Finding Faith in the Faith of Others** by Barbara Brown Taylor. In her book, BBT describes how she met a dry patch in her faith journey and how she found her way back to her faith by teaching Religion 101 at a small rural college. For October 19 we will look at the Introduction on pages 1-13.

Meeting reminders for our Zoom meetings will be sent on Sundays and will include links to join the Zoom meeting and phone numbers to attend by phone.

For further information, please contact Peg Hiscoke and Sandra Loughton.

RHUC Book Club: Please join the RHUC Book Club on **Wednesday, October 28th at 4 p.m.** to discuss the novel **FIVE LITTLE INDIANS** by Michelle Good. This new novel is on the Scotiabank Giller Prize longlist for November 2020. "Five Little Indians is a heartbreaking and uplifting story about the lives of five kids who are taken and placed in a church-run residential school." (The Vancouver Sun). This may not be an easy read, but it seems like the perfect time for such a story. New members are always welcome to join us on Zoom. For more information, please speak to Sandra Loughton, Book Club Facilitator. An invitation for the Zoom meeting will be sent out on October 27th.

Weekly Meditation: Weekly meditation is Wednesday evenings from 6:30 - 7:15 in the Chapel with social distancing and please wear a mask.

community partnerships update

Even as we navigate the second wave of COVID we are moving forward with important partnerships that speak to our Mission Action Plan commitment to be a vital presence in the core of Richmond Hill. Two initiatives began this week. A Drop By Centre, operating in partnership with the **Krasman Centre** using the downstairs gym in the Village Commons until the end of December; and after much preparation and renovation, carried out by our new partner **Home on the Hill**, the manse is providing space for programming and supportive housing. Individuals supported through these initiatives are part of our community - our neighbours - and we believe by providing access to space, we are contributing to the health and wellbeing not only those who will benefit from these critically needed services, but also to the broader community.

A note from our partners about why these supports matter:

Krasman Centre is grateful for the opportunity to use Richmond Hill United Church's facilities to operate our Peer Support Drop-By Program, where we can continue the work we have been doing to support those most vulnerable in our community, since the beginning of the Covid-19 pandemic. RHUC has been a respected friend and community partner of Krasman Centre and the people we support for many, many years. We are pleased to be able to continue to nurture this mutually supportive relationship through this partnership, as we demonstrate our shared values and a shared vision of communities where no one is 'left behind'. Krasman Centre's Drop-by program at Richmond Hill United Church is allowing those most vulnerable in our community, to continue to access Peer Support, prepared meals, non-perishable food, reusable masks, clothing, personal hygiene items, harm reduction resources, and referrals to the wider range of social services and resources available in York Region, with all infection prevention and control measures in place. We have to stay physically distant, but we are still able to maintain social connection! On behalf of Krasman Centre and the people we support - we sincerely thank you.

Susan Dobson, Executive Director, Krasman Centre

Our gratitude towards the people of the Richmond Hill United Church for providing the Manse as a space for our supportive program is immeasurable. Your kind action enables Home on the Hill to realize its dream of providing a home to individuals with severe and persistent mental illness which will include a cooking program, recreational services and an art program to keep tenants meaningfully engaged and well. Our first tenant was about to become homeless and desperately needs ongoing medical care which we will monitor. We could not have opened this supportive housing opportunity without you and for that, we are eternally thankful.

Kathy Mochnecki MSW RSW, President of the Board of Directors

outreach



Minute for Mission: Our gifts for Mission & Service support theological education in seven theological schools across Canada. Emmanuel College in Toronto is one of them. There is a certain energy when you enter Emmanuel College that is difficult to pinpoint.

The energy could be from the history of students and faculty, many of whose pictures hang in the corridors, or it could be the energy of the current student body, a diverse interfaith group studying for ministry, teaching, or lifelong learning. Like many United Church theological schools, Emmanuel is a place to explore and challenge long-held beliefs. The process for those who are studying for ministry has many paths to navigate, from interviews with regional councils to internships and meeting all the requirements of their courses. That is where the faculty come in, educators with a special pastoral side that is not found in other university settings.



WALKING UP MOUNTAINS

A VIRTUAL WALK FOR AFRICAN AIDS Thanksgiving to Dec 1st

Have you ever walked up a mountain?

A small contingent from our Hands and Hearts for Africa Walking Team are setting off to do just that! Please cheer on our team of Barb Cooper, Rose Blois, Linda Clark, Donna Harrison and Peg Hiscoke. New walkers are still welcome to join us!

Our Challenge?

Starting on Thanksgiving weekend, we will begin our Virtual Walk up Africa's mountains, starting with Mount Kilimanjaro, Africa's tallest mountain. Once we have reached the Kibo summit and returned to base, we plan to climb up other mountains. How many summits can we climb before we complete this challenge on December 1st, World AIDS Day?

Why are we doing this?

We are walking to remind you that Africa's grandmothers are facing a double challenge of AIDS plus Covid 19! To ensure a healthier and more resilient Africa, please consider donating in support of the Stephen Lewis Foundation during this Virtual Walk.

Donations can be made directly online at www.stephenlewisfoundation.org or by cheque to The Stephen Lewis Foundation, 260 Spadina Avenue, Suite 100, Toronto, Ontario, M5T2E4. Please include a note on the donation page online or on your cheque that you are supporting the "2020 Hands and Hearts for Africa Virtual Walk."

Our First Mountain

Kilimanjaro is the tallest free-standing mountain in the world at 19,341 feet (5895 m) and is part of the Eastern Rift Mountains in Tanzania. Its name means 'white mountain' but sadly the ice caps and glaciers are melting. This mountain has 3 volcanic cones and Kibo is the highest peak.

50,000 people climb Kilimanjaro every year and 65% make it to the top. The most successful climbs allow for acclimatisation at different altitudes and take 7-9 days. There are 6 routes to the Kibo summit and our team will combine efforts to climb all 6. We chose October to begin as this month offers the best weather for climbing. Total walking distance is 662 kms (410 miles) from base to summit and back again.

For more information about the Stephen Lewis Foundation's work or to join our walking team, please contact Donna Harrison or Peg Hiscoke at handsandhearts@live.ca.

Tips for people living alone

- "This is a time for social approaching," even if it's from a physical distance, said psychology professor Joordens. Get back in touch with family or friends you haven't talked to for a while. Think of new people to contact who might be in the same situation as you and appreciate the connection.
- If video chats have become tiresome or you're not feeling connected, try the "old-fashioned telephone," Joordens said. Phone conversations often require more attention and listening than Zoom chats.
- Make appointments to talk to someone regularly. Make it clear it doesn't matter if you don't have anything in particular to talk about — you can even watch TV and talk about it.
- Music can be a great way to boost your mood — and someone else's. Make a playlist that takes someone back to a fun time in their life or includes tunes they want to belt out.
- If you have a hobby you love, such as cooking or baking, consider posting a video of your activity and build an online community, Joordens said.
- Remember the basics for both physical and mental well-being: keeping a routine, eating well, sleeping well and exercising.
- It's normal not to feel OK sometimes. But if you are in distress, reach out to a friend or family member. [Click here for a list of other places to get help.](#)
- INTERACTIVE [How close are we to a vaccine for COVID-19?](#)

"Now & Then" Podcast: As infection numbers go up, many people are feeling anxious. This is understandable. These words of Henri Nouwen remind us of a love that is stronger than our anxiety, a love that is holding us in these challenging times.

Well-known Christian author and activist Shane Claiborne joins us on "Henri Nouwen, Now & Then," calling us to let love and justice be the signature of our lives in these challenging times.

[Listen to the Podcast](#)

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.