

Greetings! I had to wait until the groundhog predicted the length of winter before compiling the monthly email. As if the predictions of a celebrity rodent might determine our plans! As people of faith, we let faith colour our hopes for the future. February marks the beginning of Lent, the season named after the “lengthening” of daylight, and the deepening of our journey with Jesus. Come and join (virtually) us for a variety of worship and program offerings in the weeks ahead.

February is African Heritage or Black History Month. Our February focus is Antiracism, and you will find videos posted daily on that theme in our Facebook group. You don’t need to “join” Facebook to see our posts, just search for the Rideau Park United Church Facebook Group.

Sunday, February 7 at 10:00 am – Sunday worship – a musically inspired service, with a Minute for Mission on the Guatemalan Stove project.

Wednesday, February 10 and 17 at 10:00 am – Recalculating: a Bible Study exploring sudden changes and new directions in the story of God’s people. Contact Elizabeth or Steve if you would like to receive the Zoom link for this discussion group.

Sunday, February 14 at 10:00 am – Sunday worship with **guest speaker Adele Halliday**, the United Church of Canada’s first antiracism and equity officer.

Monday, February 15 is Family Day. The “office” will be closed, so staff (who are working from home) may not answer your emails or phone calls.

Wednesday, February 17, at 7:00 pm – Ash Wednesday: A zoom worship gathering to mark the beginning of Lent. We invite you to be creative in preparing your own symbols for the service: a candle to light, bread and cup for communion, something to draw a cross on your hand or forehead. (I am planning to use cocoa power mixed with some oil, but you can use whatever you have on hand, like a washable marker or black hockey tape – be creative!)

Sunday, February 21 at 10:00 am – Lent 1 communion service. The service will be livestreamed, so we invite you to bring your own bread and cup to the computer.

Monday, February 22, at 1:30 pm – Our Knitting Group is meeting by Zoom for stitchery and conversation. If you are interested in joining us, contact administrator@rideaupark.ca for the invite.

Wednesdays, February 24 and March 3, 10, 17 and 24 at 7:00 pm – Evening Reflections in Lent. The theme is *Conversations with Jesus* – a prayer and reflection service to deepen our journey.

Sunday, February 28, at 11:30 am – Following our regular morning worship at 10:00 am, the **Rideau Park United Church annual congregational meeting** will be held over Zoom. There will be a separate email containing details, agenda and the link to the annual report.

Sunday, March 7, 10:00 am service – will include the annual **lighting of a Memorial candle** in memory of the members of our church family who died in 2020.

Sunday, March 14 is P.I.E. Day, a day when we commemorate our choice to be Public – Intentional – Explicit about our decision to be an LGBTQ+ inclusive faith community. Stay tuned for more details.

Sunday, March 28, 10:00 am service – Palm Sunday service.

Thursday, April 1, 7:00 pm (exact time to be confirmed) – **Holy Thursday**, a shared service with Emmanuel and Kitchissippi United Churches, livestreamed from Emmanuel United's website: <http://www.emmanuelunited.ca>.

Friday, April 2, 10:00 am – Good Friday service, shared with Emmanuel and Kitchissippi United, livestreamed from Rideau Park United.

Sunday, April 4, 10:00 am – Easter Sunday worship.

Join other women from Rideau Park for a **half hour Zoom cyber chat**. Email Georgina: (gfitzgerald@rideaupark.ca) for the link. Topics differ each week. The last three were: What belief, biblical story or event of the Christian religion did you once hold as true but can adhere to no longer? Once Queen Elizabeth passes on do you think Canada should continue to have a member of the British Royal Family as its Head of State? Tell us something about yourself that sounds as if you're making it up but is actually true. These chats are informal, usually fun, and we try to end before Zoom cuts us off at 40 minutes. Hope you'll be able to participate in some of them.