



The Lutheran Urban Ministry
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“Reconciliation is getting to know one another”, Mary Simon, Governor General: National Post, July 26, 2021

January 2023 News from your Ministry Manager *Happy New Year!*

2022 has come to a close and during this Christmas season we're reminded that the Christmas message isn't just about a manger and cute animals around it. It's the ultimate reassurance to us of God's love and promises.

With currently rising unrest, climate change, and economic uncertainties in the world, those living in poverty worldwide are affected most deeply. So many people who attend the Lutheran Urban Ministry have challenges and struggles in their daily lives. The following examples are not stand-alone but often inter-related for many people and form seemingly huge mountains to get out from under.

- **Housing Insecurity:** *substandard housing examples* - promises of repairs that don't happen; drafty windows; furnaces that quit and a long wait for restored heat; rent increases that exceed the budget with food purchases suffering as a result; crime in the building or the neighbourhood creating stress, fear and uncertainty; a long walk to the bus stop; some live in substandard rooming houses or group homes.
- **Food Insecurity:** *examples* – rising food prices causing the food budget to be used up even sooner; nutritious food purchased less often; many can only go to the grocery/convenience store in walking distance.
- **Physical Disabilities:** *examples* - many of the people who attend the Urban worked for many years but are now unable to do so. Some live on a small monthly disability payment. Some have not worked enough years for an adequate CPP and exist on only OAS and the supplement and deal with rising rent and food prices.
- **Mental Health Disabilities:** *examples* – struggles with depression, anxiety, PTSD, FASD, bi-polar, etc. Some people struggle with addictions. Loneliness, homelessness, sleeplessness, worry, trauma, grief and loss - currently experienced or from painful memories also affect mental health.

On January 15, Pastor Barry Bence will lead our first worship service since the pandemic began. He plans to have a candle lighting in memory of family members and friends who have passed away since our last in-person service. Masks will be required and will be removed when receiving communion. Doors open at 1:00. Worship service 1:30 – 2:15 p.m. Bagged meals distributed as people exit the service. As well, bagged meal will be distributed outside from 1:00 – 2:00 p.m. for those not attending the worship service.

We plan to resume sharing circles sometime in February as well, and these are in the planning stages.

- After our sharing circles and worship services are back in full swing, bagged meal distribution will continue outside the side door on Wednesdays and Thursdays (and Sundays) at the times listed on the door.

Our website: www.theurban.ca. Please keep our vulnerable Lutheran Urban Ministry community in your prayers. Please contact me: rhonda@theurban.ca for additional information, or to have your meal team added to the calendar.

Kind regards,
Rhonda Gorham,
Ministry Manager, Lutheran Urban Ministry Corp.

We welcome all because God welcomes all, regardless of age, ability, health, ethnicity, gender identity, gender expressions, language, sexual orientation, life circumstances, marital status, race, or anything else which sometimes divides us. The Urban is committed to racial equity. We welcome diversity and uniqueness. Our unity is in Christ, whose grace is freely given to all. All are welcome. The Lutheran Urban Ministry Corp. is a member of Reconciling Works – Lutherans for Full Participation www.reconcilingworks.org