

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

January 2025 News from your Ministry Manager

This first month of this new year begins with so much uncertainty in this world we live in – political turmoil, wars, freedom of the press threatened, conspiracy theories, accelerating world poverty, and the list goes on. **In the midst of all this, we can hold fast to the certainty of our Creator’s abiding and unconditional for all of us - all faiths, all colours, all genders - always.** We are never alone.

Our Urban Christmas Carol Service at 1:30 on December 22 was wonderful! Approximately 130 people attended in our regular worship space in the lower level of Lutheran Church of the Cross.

- The tree was trimmed, the advent and altar candles lit, and the nativity scene (donated by First Lutheran) was grouped at the base of the altar. *Christmas was in the air!*
- Pastor Don Engel led the worship service, accompanied by Donna Engel at the piano and choir members from Lutheran Church of the Cross, and including others who joined the choir that day. *A heart-warming Christmas message, and so much singing!!*
- *All of the men and women attending received a large gift bag filled with wonderful items and treats. 107 large gift bags for many of the children and grandchildren of Urban attendees had been filled – all with their names and ages on the tags.* Some grandmas and grandpas were dropping off the gifts to their grandchildren on their way home.
- *We were very fortunate to have received from the West End Resource Centre (formerly called the Daniel McIntyre/St. Matthews Community Assoc.) a grant for the funds to purchase all of the ingredients for the Christmas bagged lunches that everyone took home after the Christmas Carol Service.* These bagged lunches – prepared the previous day by our "Urban sandwich making brigade" - were also given at the side door between 1:00 and 2:00 that day to those not coming in for the Christmas carol worship service. This was the second year that we were awarded this grant and we are so grateful. It was an extra special Christmasy lunch!

The first sharing circles of this year began with the topic “how is your week going”? or “what’s on your mind”? and we had great conversations! Someone mentioned that our sharing circles feel like a family to him, and we hear that often. We really encourage our MNO congregation members and clergy to drop in and join us in fellowship.

To our MNO Congregation Members and Clergy: A wonderful opportunity to have fellowship with our Urban Community - please drop by anytime to our:

Sunday Worship Service: door opens at 1:00 p.m. with coffee/tea. Worship service 1:30 – 2:15 p.m.

Men’s Lunch/Sharing Circle every Wednesday - Downstairs at Noon

Please stop by at 12:00 p.m. Noon (*ring the doorbell*) for lunch and great fellowship and conversation!

Women’s Sharing Circle every Wednesday at 2:00 p.m. (until 3:30 p.m.)

Please arrive at 2:00 p.m. (*ring the doorbell*) for coffee/tea/dessert and great fellowship and conversation!

Women’s Drop-in every Wednesday from 4:00 – 5:30 p.m.

Please drop in (*ring the doorbell*) for coffee/tea/cookies and visiting together! Kids & grandkids welcome to come with you and we have colouring and arts and crafts to keep them busy.

Co-ed Sharing Circle every Thursday at 4:30 p.m. (please arrive at 4:30 p.m.)

(*ring the doorbell*) Join us for great fellowship and conversation! And coffee/tea/dessert.

- 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