



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

***Note: the Urban is closed on Christmas Day, Boxing Day, and New Year's Day***

## **December 2024 News from your Ministry Manager**

***This year has gone by so quickly!*** I sit here at the keyboard in this last month of 2024 and I'm so filled with **gratitude** for our wonderful Lutheran Urban Ministry in the west end. My heart is also filled by the congregation I belong to for the past 19 years - First Lutheran on Victor Street – with a pastor and faith community so very vibrant with inclusivity and love. People in the west end know that “the Lutherans” really care about them, that's for sure.

**I feel so privileged to know our Lutheran Urban community.** I'm continually humbled by the inner strength, hope, faith, and kindness of our Urban community – who come to our worship services, our sharing circles, and for our conversations at the sidewalk by the side door during our bagged meal distributions. *The Urban is a ministry of spiritual care, fellowship, and connection - and feeding the body too.* We are also so blessed by the fellowship of the MNO congregation members and clergy who drop in to our sharing circles, and the clergy who volunteer to lead a service.

**We have such wonderful conversations in our sharing circles.** Last week, Norman Fullerton (member of St. Mark's), led our discussion at the men's lunch/sharing circle with his topic of the differences in the feelings of loneliness, being alone, and solitude. I continued his topic afterwards with the women's and co-ed circles. Lots of anecdotes and introspection. Restorative justice – the meaning and its hope was the sharing circle discussion the previous week.

**I'm also so privileged to know many of you who care about the Urban in countless ways** (sorry that I sometimes get names, and the congregations you belong to, mixed up when I'm saying hi – please forgive me it's my age). And some I only know in phone conversations. *All of you form the heartbeat of the Urban because we wouldn't exist without your many ways of support, care, and prayers.*

**Downstairs, the Urban tree is trimmed, the first Advent candle has been lit - and our nativity scene (donated last week from First!!) is sitting in front of the altar.** December 22<sup>nd</sup> is our Urban Christmas Carol Worship Service at 1:30 p.m., led by Pastor Don Engel, accompanied by Donna Engel at the piano, choir members from Church of the Cross. A very Christmassy bagged lunch (thanks to a grant from West End Resource Centre) to take home, and presents!

***Wishing all of you a Merry Christmas and all the very best in 2025!***

**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](http://www.reconcilingworks.org)