



The Lutheran Urban Ministry
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June 2021 News from your Ministry Manager

The Urban is closed for holidays for the month of July

The news of the remains of 215 children discovered buried on the grounds of the former Kamloops Indian Residential School has filled us with grief and we grieve with the First Nations of Canada. This news is only a small representation of the neglect, abuse, deaths, loneliness, hunger, pain, grief, and anguish experienced - and continues to affect the memories and current life of countless Indigenous people.

We also grieve with the Muslim community in Canada for the senseless act of terrorism and racism that resulted in the death of four members of a family in London, Ontario. A nine year old boy is hospitalized and no longer has a grandma, sister, and parents. Our neighbour, the Winnipeg Central Mosque, is only a few streets away and we stand with them in friendship and support.

Vaccination Clinics in the city are busy and I've heard a lot of people excitedly saying, "I've been vaccinated". The pandemic has affected so many lives with loss of connection, financial hardship, and also illness. A man who regularly came to the Urban for years was taken off life support a few days ago. He will be missed greatly.

When the pandemic is over we'll have so many things to talk about in our Men's, Women's and Co-ed Sharing Circles!! I'm sure that it will take at least a month for us all to talk about what's happened in our lives over all those Covid-19 months! When we re-open downstairs I'm also planning a Women's Drop-in (including children and grandchildren) every Wednesday afternoon after the Women's Sharing Circle.

Pandemic Notes:

Until Further Notice: the Urban is continuing the suspension of all regular programming (sit-down community meals, coffee hours, sharing circles, men's group, worship services, etc.) in the lower level of Lutheran Church of the Cross, due to the COVID-19 pandemic situation.

*Struggling and vulnerable single people and families (in the same numbers as pre-pandemic times when we were open downstairs) are continuing to come to the Urban - **bagged lunches 4x/week are distributed outside (Wednesday men's lunch, Wednesday & Thursday supper times and Sunday lunch)**. Our meal teams are happy to help us in this way and we are so very grateful for this. Our website calendar shows available dates for meal teams. Fellowship is happening briefly in the parking lot as long as weather permits! Worship services and sharing circles will resume when the pandemic is over.*

- Mid-week and Sunday devotionals are emailed to me from Pastor Barry Bence, printed and tucked into lunch bags.
- We have changed our pre-pandemic emergency food bags to an equitable "one food item" (if enough in our pantry) per person (two items if a family) once or twice each week during the distribution of bagged lunches. Gloves, socks, seasonal jackets etc. (and weekly bread/pastries) are also distributed outside.
- Masks and 2 m social distancing are mandatory on the church sidewalk and parking lot. The line sometimes overflows to the city sidewalk if necessary and all current gathering sizes are enforced as per provincial regulations. The Urban provides a disposable mask if needed.

The Lutheran Urban Ministry has so much gratitude for our volunteers and the meal teams; for the pantry donations, for the prayers; and for all those who donate financial support toward our operating expenses.

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, language, sexual orientation, life circumstances, marital status, race, or anything else which sometimes divides us. The Urban is committed to racial equality. 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