



The Lutheran Urban Ministry
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November 2020 News from your Ministry Manager

- During this pandemic we are all living in worrying and uncertain times. The struggling and vulnerable people of our Urban community, who are now stopping by to pick up bagged lunches, know that we care about them.
- This is an especially stressful time as so many do not have access to the internet or television for access to the world around them; and so many drop-in services in the city are suspended or have smaller capacity.
- The options for family, social and spiritual connection have lessened for everyone in Canada - and especially for the most vulnerable.
- The Urban is still hopping but just differently!! We are committed to continuing to provide physical and spiritual nourishment and connection during these temporary limitations.

Gratitude:

- I am grateful for the enthusiastic support of the Urban board of directors and the support of my small team of committed volunteers who help me once a week or more in so many different ways: Karen, Maureen, Monica, Janet and Rosemary.
- We are fortunate to continue to receive bread and pastries bi-weekly from the Steinbach Helping Hands food bank van brought to us by Lloyd and Barry (St. Paul's, Steinbach). They are given out with the bagged lunches.
- Our Winnipeg Harvest 560 Arlington St. Food Bank continues once a month. We are a small foodbank with ten clients who come to pick up their hampers. Volunteers: Wayne (Church of the Cross) and Ernie (Faith) pick up the hampers at Harvest and bring to the Urban. Jett and Barb (Gloria Dei) help to organize the hampers on arrival. Hampers are brought outside for pick-up.

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 - but now for bagged lunches 4x/week distributed outside (Wednesday men's lunch, Wednesday and 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!

- Mid-week devotionals and Sunday devotionals, emailed to me from Pastor Barry Bence, are 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) on a chosen random day each week during the distribution of bagged lunches. Toques, mitts, etc. (and bi-weekly bread/pastries) are also distributed outside.

Mandatory Masks as of September 2, 2020: Masks (cloth or disposable) for everyone entering the church property (sidewalk and parking lot) to pick up bagged lunches. We provide a disposable mask if needed. 2 m social distancing is enforced. We are limiting the gathering size for bagged lunch distribution to five people at any time on the church sidewalk and parking lot (including Urban volunteers). Additional people arriving are forming a line on the city sidewalk.

Bagged Lunches (sandwich, dessert, juice box, etc.) to take home are given outside the door in place of sit-down meals at our four regularly scheduled weekly mealtimes (Wednesday men's lunches, Wednesday and Thursday suppers, and Sunday lunches).

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

Our website has been updated with photos from "Ride for Refuge" and "Going the Distance" (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

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. 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