



The Lutheran Urban Ministry
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October 2020 News from your Ministry Manager

Thank you so much to everyone who participated and donated to our annual Urban fundraiser the **October 3, 2020 Ride for Refuge**, a national fundraiser for charities and non-profits working with the vulnerable and disadvantaged. Thank you to the five teams for the Urban: *Gloria Dei, First Lutheran, St. Mark's in Motion, Abundant Life, and the Urban Board & Friends team!!* This was an exciting year and besides walking or riding there were lots of Freestyle options (Pastor Michael cleaned the sanctuary at First Lutheran to raise money for the Urban!!!) **Donations are still possible to Urban teams online until October 31, 2020 on the Ride for Refuge website:** <https://rideforrefuge.org/charity/theurban>

Thank you so much to the team members and supporters of the **Epiphany Lutheran Church "Going the Distance" fundraiser for the Urban!** It was awesome!!

Canadian Lutheran World Relief donated over 130 handmade quilts to the Urban and warmed so many hearts and bodies! CLWR also sent us school kits, hygiene kits, and small stuffed animals (saving the stuffies for the children's Christmas bags).

During this pandemic time, we are continuing to provide physical and spiritual nourishment in the best way we can in the present circumstances. **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. So many ask if we'll be open downstairs soon but we have to keep everyone as safe as possible.

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.

- Mid-week devotionals and Sunday devotionals, emailed to me from Pastor Barry Bence, are tucked into lunch bags.
- Fellowship is still happening on the sidewalk & church parking lot although conversations will become brief when it's winter.
- We have changed our pre-pandemic emergency food bags to an equitable "one food item" per person once a week (two items if a family) on a chosen random day each week during the distribution of bagged lunches.

Mandatory Masks *as of September 2, 2020: Masks (cloth or disposable) are now mandatory for everyone entering the church property (sidewalk and parking lot) to pick up bagged lunches. We provide a disposable mask if needed. The Urban enforces 2 m social distancing on the church grounds of Lutheran Church of the Cross during bagged lunch distribution.*

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). This schedule is posted on the north side door of Lutheran Church of the Cross. 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 in the parking lot as long as weather permits!

We have 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 will be updated this month 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