



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

August 2021 News from your Ministry Manager

- Sandy Belisle, our much loved former ministry manager, is in palliative care at Riverview Hospital. Sandy was our ministry manager at our former Ellice St. location, St. Matthew’s location, and for the first year in this location at Church of the Cross. Please keep Sandy in your prayers.
- This has been a hot summer for walking! Many of the people who attend the Urban, by necessity, walk everywhere to their destinations. Some have physical disabilities and have found the heat exceptionally difficult.
- Since mid-March 2020, when the pandemic began, the Urban has been distributing 1,000 – 1,100 bagged meals per month outside the side door of Lutheran Church of the Cross where we are tenants in the lower level of the church. Many of these are provided by the generosity of congregations and their meal teams who put together bagged meals - and this is appreciated beyond measure.
- In the past 18 months we are aware of the death of one person from our Lutheran Urban Ministry community from Covid-19 and his smiling face is really missed. We have heard from many who contracted the virus and thankfully recovered. One of our regular attendees for many years was hospitalized for many months, first intubated and then he had a tracheotomy and was on a respirator - it’s wonderful to see him again and he’s happy to be back home.
- We all long for the “old days” of our sharing circles, coffee/tea drinking, fellowship, and worship services. We will resume all of these, and also plan to introduce a Wednesday women’s drop-in (with children), when all of these pandemic worries are over. Health and safety are of paramount importance.

Pandemic Notes:

Until Further Notice: the Urban is continuing the suspension of all regular programming (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 continue to be 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