

MAY 2020

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# Straight<sup>+</sup> from the street

A newsletter for friends of Inner City Pastoral Ministry

"WITH WHAT SHALL I COME BEFORE THE LORD?...HE HAS TOLD YOU, O MORTAL, WHAT IS GOOD; AND WHAT DOES THE LORD REQUIRE OF YOU BUT TO DO JUSTICE, AND TO LOVE KINDNESS, AND TO WALK HUMBLY WITH YOUR GOD?"

~ MICAH 6:6-8 ~



## ICPM – A MINISTRY OF PRESENCE

When I arrived in Edmonton and met for the first time with the Board of the Inner City Pastoral Ministry (ICPM), I asked, "What is your understanding of the ministry of ICPM? What would you like me to do?" The Board's answer was simple: "ICPM is a Ministry of Presence. With God's help, and with our support, discern your way forward."

"Well," I thought, "what freedom!" Freedom to explore, to engage, to build meaningful relationships with the many individuals calling the Urban Core their home. So, off I went, onto the streets, into the local Drop-Ins, visiting in homes and hospitals, and at times in the jails. A Ministry of Presence: meeting the community, offering support and spiritual care, while seeking to understand the complex needs of people subject to the restraints of poverty, addictions, mental health challenges, housing and homelessness, marginalization, and discrimination. A Ministry of Presence: building trust, and with a love modeled by Jesus, offering faith and hope, all the while nurturing supportive community.

As with any ministry, the needs of the many, physical and spiritual, cannot be met by one person alone. I was soon introduced to an ever-widening circle of members of God's family, people both supportive and compassionate. Through them, working together, the lavish action of God's care poured forth, a gushing torrent. They offered food and drink, vouchers, personal items, socks, clothing of every sort, a vast

array of donated items. Matthew 25 came alive: "I was hungry and you gave me food. I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink. I was naked and you clothed me. I was a stranger and you welcomed me."

I soon discovered that the spiritual care of people in the urban core had to be relevant, in order to respond to the needs of persons whose lives were shaped by an array of difficult circumstances, not "just" the fact of being poor. As Gabor Maté points out in his book *In the Realm of Hungry Ghosts*, the heavy addictions witnessed in the urban core often arise from unaddressed early childhood trauma, including the trauma of violence and abuse within the home, the trauma of families broken by alcohol and drug abuse or incarceration, and, in some cases, the additional trauma of racial discrimination. Such trauma, if unaddressed, has a devastating effect not only on the body, but on the mind and spirit of those of "lived experience."

I found that the spiritual graces offered within a ministry of "human care" relate, not so much to orthodox worship and formalized liturgies, as to satisfying the deeper search of the human heart for acceptance, genuine love, hope, healing, and—where possible—reconciliation. As Mother Theresa noted, "We think sometimes that poverty is only being hungry, naked, or homeless. The poverty of being unwanted, unloved, and uncared for is the greatest poverty."



Pastor Rick  
The Muffin Man

In the Inner City, the spiritualities and beliefs of the Christian Church found themselves in the company of the spiritualities of Alcoholics and Narcotics Anonymous; of the resurgence of Indigenous ceremony, teachings, and worship of the Creator of the Land; and indeed of the spiritual blessings of the synagogues and mosques in our midst. Jesus' reflection on ministry comes to mind: "The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he has anointed me to bring good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim release to the captives and recovery of sight to the blind, to let the oppressed go free, and to proclaim the year of the Lord's favour" (Luke 4:18-19).

2020 is my fourteenth year of ministry with Inner City Pastoral Ministry. As I retire, I am blessed by the love of the community toward me, and left in awe of the many, many people, from a wide spectrum of faith communities, who have laboured alongside me in their care of the poor. As I leave and pass the torch, I thank you for enabling me to share in this unique and enthralling ministry.

God's Peace.

*Rick Chapman +  
Pastor, ICPM*



**Pastor Rick & Michelle - Mother's Day**

## A WARM WELCOME TO PASTOR QUINN STRIKWERDA

Among the seven men who applied for the position of ICPM Pastor, only one, the Rev. Quinn Strikwerda, had all of the experience and qualities we sought. We are delighted to introduce him as our next ICPM Pastor, and we wish him well.

During the past seven years, Rev. Quinn served as senior pastor at St. Augustine Parkland Anglican Church in Spruce Grove; as Chaplain at the Edmonton Remand Centre; and most recently as Vicar at All Saints' Anglican Cathedral. At the Remand Centre, he led worship, and provided one-on-one counselling for both men and women. Amongst his duties at

the Cathedral, he coordinated outreach ministries, including a Wednesday afternoon produce market and a Friday breakfast program, both of which served inner city folk often seen at ICPM. His ministry there also included meeting "the spiritual and physical needs of a diverse downtown community." He is already acquainted with Pastor Rick, Associate Pastor Jim Gurnett, and Oskapewis-Iskwew Michelle Nieviadomy.

Rev. Quinn's leadership skills and experience testify to his ability to work as a member of a team, and to plan programs for teens and others. He is a

member of the Executive Council of the Anglican Diocese of Edmonton, and of ICPM's 4 Directions Sacred Circle steering committee. He also has a life beyond the church, as husband of The Rev. Madeleine Urion, and father of two boys aged twelve and nine. And he loves spy novels!

Pastor Quinn joins the staff of ICPM on May 25. We look forward to welcoming him!

*Nancy Kerr  
Chair, Ministry and  
Personnel Committee, ICPM*

*Welcome to the Team!*





ICPM Lunch Delivery During COVID-19

## REFLECTION BY ICPM BOARD MEMBER ANDREA WILHELM

How the world has changed since our last Newsletter. The corona virus made its way around the world, and strict physical distancing and isolation measures came into effect in Alberta as elsewhere. One of the populations most vulnerable to the virus is our marginalized inner city friends. The immune systems of many of them are compromised, and some may not have a home where they can isolate. Physical and spiritual care is needed now more than ever. I am so impressed with ICPM's response. Pastor Rick, Oskapewis-Iskwew Michelle, and Pastoral Associate Jim have not only adjusted, but stepped up to the challenge in amazing ways. They are among the front line workers who bravely serve the most vulnerable, providing essential spiritual and physical care. We are so grateful for their courage, service, and love. Please hold them in your prayers, that they may be safe and healthy, that they may have joy, and that God may touch many through them.

We are also very grateful for the adapted but continuing Sunday lunches, as highlighted last month in a Global News story (<https://globalnews.ca/news/6781897/edmonton-church-meals-less-fortunate-covid-19-coronavirus/>). Thank you, dear lunch groups, for your continued support! And thank you to all who have donated socks and underwear, or cash for needed items we hand out at the EXPO Centre, where ICPM has a hospitality booth serving the community Monday to Friday. We are in continued need of those items and ask for your ongoing in-kind or cash donations.

As the ICPM ministry continues, so does the work of the Board. We have begun meeting online, and will hold a virtual AGM on Thursday, June 18; see the announcement in "Coming Events" (page 10). Please join us! If you have not received the Annual Report, please email [info@icpm Edmonton.ca](mailto:info@icpm Edmonton.ca) for a copy.

Finally, yet another change in ICPM's world: after fourteen years of service, Pastor Rick is retiring. The Board started looking for a replacement last fall, and, despite the pandemic, was successful in securing a new chaplain. We are very pleased to welcome the Rev. Quinn Strikwerda. He comes with high praise, and we are confident that, with the support of Jim, Michelle and the ICPM Board, he will be well received into the community. Pastor Quinn starts with us on May 25.

I am so grateful for the ministry of presence that ICPM continues to provide in the inner city. It expresses and flows out of God's presence in the world. As Pentecost approaches, I share with you the prayer below about God's presence.

Andrea Wilhelm  
Member, Board of Directors, ICPM



*Come, Holy Spirit, our souls inspire;  
enlighten us with your heavenly fire.  
For if you are with us, then nothing else matters.  
And if you are not with us, then nothing else matters.*

~ An adaptation by the Rev. Mark Kalvaitis of a prayer by the Rev. Barbara Brown Taylor, based John Cosin's translation of the Latin hymn **Veni Creator Spiritus** (Come, Holy Ghost, our souls inspire)



## PANDEMIC PRAYER

*May we who are merely inconvenienced remember those whose lives are at stake.*

*May we who have no risk factors remember those most vulnerable.*

*May we who have the luxury of working at home remember those who must choose between preserving their health and paying their rent.*

*May we who have the flexibility to care for our children remember those who have no options.*

*May we who have to cancel our trips remember those who have no safe place to go.*

*May we who are losing our margin money in the tumult of the economic markets remember those who have no margin at all.*

*May we who settle in for a quarantine at home remember those who have no home.*

*As worry grips the world, let us choose love.*

*During this time, when we cannot physically wrap our arms around each other, let us find ways to be the loving embrace of God to family, friends, and neighbours.*

*Amen.*

~ Denise Isaacs, SCIC Associate (March 2020)

## ICPM'S RESPONSE TO THE COVID-19 VIRUS

In the midst of a world-wide pandemic, with restrictions like social distancing and quarantine, and with lives at stake amongst the vulnerable, we suddenly face an altered lifestyle paradigm both individually, as families, and as a community. In the rapidly evolving flood of information and misinformation, worry about catching the illness is almost surpassed by anxiety about how best to respond! This shift in operating mode affects the faith community—churches, synagogues, mosques, temples; it also affects social support agencies, especially those tasked with serving homeless populations and those living in the urban core. How does one respond in the face of

such urgency? Each ministry and agency must receive, sort, and apply the direction and guidance of medical professionals and various levels of government: Wash your hands! Don't touch your face! Social distance! Self isolate! Exercise! Keep busy to preserve your mental health!

Inner City Pastoral Ministry is making a response. The ministry team, along with the supporting faith community, agreed to continue certain aspects of ICPM's activity. We cannot offer our usual Sunday worship, as this involves a gathering of over 100 people at Bissell West. What we can do is offer lunches at the door for the many who continue to make their homes in the urban core, whether in rooming houses

or assisted living facilities, or in the camps spotted throughout the inner city. But lunch preparation had to be altered as the volunteers who provide the food could not access their churches and commercial kitchens to prepare. So Sharon Webb, the Lunch Coordinator, sent out a note asking that the lunches be pre-packaged, and contain non-perishables like a juice pack, a bottle of water, packaged cookies, a power bar, a cheese stick and a bag of chips, supplemented by a fresh and tasty orange and banana.

Each Sunday holds surprises. For instance, the Knights of Columbus and the Catholic Women's League from Our Lady of Perpetual Help in Sherwood Park arrived



with 250 pre-bagged lunches. But to our surprise, the ladies of the CWL had lovingly sewed 250 linen carry bags to hold the nutritious lunches! In celebration of Palm Sunday, Pastor Rick hung palms across the front of the Bissell entrance, offering palms to the local patrons and later making palm crosses with the homeless at the EXPO Centre. Imagine the "homeless" carrying palms throughout the city as they bottle-pick and make their daily rounds!

Each week lunches not handed out at the Bissell Drop-In are distributed at the EXPO Centre. Like other agencies that support the inner city population, ICPM has a booth there, where we are present Monday through Friday from 10 am until noon. We offer "give away"—socks, underwear, snacks, toques, gloves, toiletries, and assorted other useful items. Recently, in response to requests from a number of persons frequenting the EXPO Centre during COVID-19, ICPM was granted permission to host a Sunday Service from 1:00 to 2:30 pm in the "Wellness Activity Room." Music, readings, reflections on the scripture of the day, prayer, and the

breaking of bread are offered by the Ministry Team. Attendance is capped at 15 people due to COVID-19 regulations!

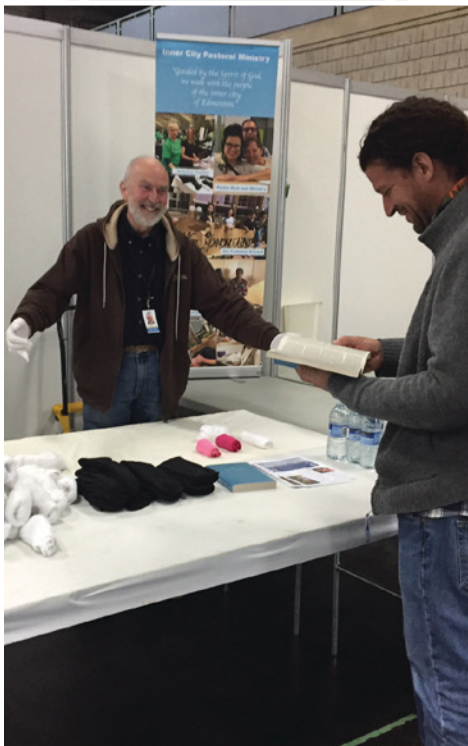
Our shift in ministry seems in many ways a "small" response to such a vast and all-encompassing challenge as COVID-19. Yet, as Mother Theresa said, "I don't do great things. I do small things with great love." In summary, here is what ICPM is offering:

- A ministry of loving, prayerful presence to the urban core community under pandemic conditions.
- Caring, prayerful responses to those who are anxious.
- Friendly humorous banter, that is, one-on-one relational conversation.
- Practical assistance, including gifts of socks, underwear, toques, gloves, snacks, toiletries, and other assorted useful items. (Please donate! Supplies run out quickly!)
- Phone calls to members of the Community of Emmanuel and the Men's and Women's groups, just to keep in touch through the week.

- Needed support for those who are ill and those who grieve the loss of loved ones. In the midst of pandemic, life and death continues.
- Sunday Worship, limited to 15 gathered participants.
- Solidarity with other agencies and social support workers present at the EXPO Centre.
- Opportunity for witness on the part of the wider Faith Community in difficult times and circumstances.
- Opportunity for the ICPM Board and Ministry Team to minister in very different and evolving ways.

May God grant us life, and strengthen our resolve to end COVID-19!  
God's Peace!

*Rick Chapman +  
Pastor, ICPM*



**ICPM Booth  
At EXPO**



**Preparing Lunch  
Always Brings A  
Smile**



**OLPH Lunch At  
Easter- TV Coverage**



## PANDEMIC DAYS

On March 11th we had our monthly men's lunch group, with a lively discussion, amongst the 15 men gathered around the table at Bissell Centre, about how we deal with broken relationships in our lives. That evening I went to see a play at Citadel Theatre, never suspecting it would be the last performance there for many months. The Sunday coming up would be my week to offer the reflection at the Community of Emmanuel service, and I was making notes for that. Life seemed to be going along nicely.

Then, on March 13th, when I went to check a book out of the library, it was shut down. And so began Edmonton's adventures with COVID-19 ...

There was no worship service on March 15th, as we shifted to only serving lunches out the front doors at Bissell Centre and visiting briefly with people. Most of the services at Bissell Centre were discontinued the next day. And by the 23rd I was sitting with Pastor Rick in an orientation meeting with staff from several community agencies to prepare us for opening the doors at the EXPO Centre the next morning.

In the weeks since then, the EXPO Centre has been the focus of my activities. On "my days" I am there with an assortment of little things to share—fresh fruit, granola bars,

juice boxes, pocket books, crayons and colouring books, decks of cards, LOTS of socks and underwear. I chat with some of the hundreds of people who drop in each day, sometimes fill a request for a cross or a Bible, try to be a listener.

EXPO Centre meets a lot of physical needs to some extent—there is food, coffee, usually showers and laundry, cots to nap, housing workers, and more. But people stuck at the bottom of poverty sitting long hours in a huge echoing bare warehouse-like space is also a little depressing. The disruption of COVID-19, that troubles many of us, is much more substantial for people who have none of the options to fill their changed days that are available to most of us, who have homes and disposable income, Netflix accounts and comfortable reading chairs.

Along with time at EXPO, I still try to stay in touch with people with whom I have developed relationships through my presence in the urban core. It is more difficult, as few of the places in the neighbourhood where people have normally gathered are still operating. So if people do not come to EXPO Centre, it is a challenge to know where they are. Few have phone service to help locate them. It has been sad that some for whom I cared a lot have died without my even knowing.

Our monthly visits to McCullough Centre at Gunn have also been a casualty of the COVID-19 changes.

But we carry on, doing what we are able. It is good that we now have approval to begin a small less-than-15-people worship service on Sunday afternoons at EXPO Centre. We are getting to know some new people there whom we have never encountered around the usual neighbourhood. And we are heartened knowing that, even in these disrupted and challenging times, the Creator knows where each loved one is, and cares for each as a mother hen for her chicks.

And I cannot end my report without saying a word to honour Rick Chapman. A significant factor in my decision to leave semi-retirement and contract work to seek the position of Pastoral Assistant was my admiration for Rick and his commitment to the people of the urban core. In various ways I had seen him in action since he arrived at ICPM, and I thought I would benefit from working with him. My feeling has been proven true over the past couple of years, and I want to say there is a huge debt owed him for his creative, loving, and energetic commitment. I will miss you Pastor Rick!

*Jim Gurnett  
Pastoral Associate, ICPM*



EXPO Center



While we are collectively in this storm together, we have to recognize that we are all in different boats. One of my first thoughts when we were instructed to "Stay home" was "What about the people who have no home?" How does this news translate for our vulnerable community? And how it is going to impact the people?

The response from the Inner City Pastoral Ministry leadership was immediate. In a time of uncertainty, with doors of other agencies being temporarily closed, ICPM continued and continues to be a ministry of presence for the people.

A presence that is so important in the midst of this storm. We must remember that a lot of the community members we

serve struggle with homelessness, low income, poverty, addictions, and mental health. Trauma and crisis are the constant storm for our community. The people are already at a disadvantage in this "new storm." So it is important for us to continue to be able to offer support and presence for the community on Sunday mornings and midweek. It has been good to witness how the City and community agencies have come together to provide a safe refuge at the EXPO Centre during this pandemic. But there are still many folks living on the streets in our city who may not access these services for whatever reason. So our presence in the inner city on Sundays continues to be significant.

The smiles, the gratitude, the glimpses of hope over receiving new socks, underwear, a juice box, and a snack bag are encouraging. While we may not meet their every need physically, emotionally, mentally, spiritually, financially, or socially, ICPM's presence shows Creator's hope, light, love, goodness, and kindness. We are perhaps an anchor during someone's storm.

*Michelle Nieviadomy  
Oskapewis-Iskwew, ICPM*



*"I heard that we are all in the same boat, but it's not like that.  
We are in the same storm, but not in the same boat.  
Your ship could be shipwrecked and mine might not be.  
Or vice versa.  
So, friends, we are not in the same boat. We are going through a time  
when our perceptions and needs are completely different.  
Each of us will emerge, in our own way, from this storm.  
It is very important to see beyond what is seen at first glance.  
Not just looking, actually seeing.  
We are all on different ships during this storm,  
experiencing a very different journey."*

~ Author unknown



In Lonnie Melashenko's book *Angels Among Us*, there is a chapter entitled "Help by an Angel." It is so fitting that it begins,

*Truly, our lives are interwoven with those of angels. This is especially true of those who love God and wish to serve Him faithfully.*

There isn't a more fitting description of the dedication Coby Veeken has shown in her life, and especially in her work for Inner City Pastoral Ministry as both a Sunday volunteer and a member of the Board. When asked how long Coby has volunteered with ICPM, her daughter said that it has been well over 25 years—so long that it is hard to remember when she began this ministry!

Coby helped as a Sunday Lunch volunteer every Sunday that she was not away visiting family. That would amount to a possible 6,500 selfless hours just on Sunday mornings! Carrying donated clothing and household items (some she has collected from St. Vincent de Paul), she

presents them on Sunday mornings for the folks to choose.

Her time on the ICPM Board would add several more hours, as she has, under Pastor Rick's leadership, provided lunch for Board members as they leave their workplaces to participate in Board meetings ... and not go hungry!

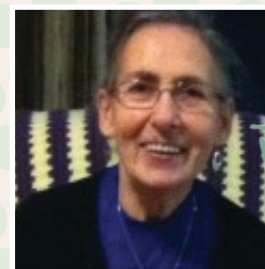
Over a 20-year span, along with her family and the Our Lady of Perpetual Help church family, Coby first made Christmas gifts, and then moved on to creating hundreds of Easter gifts, for special people in the Emmanuel Community.

Coby's other gifts include knitting, which she does all year to provide, on colder days, for those in need. Recently she sewed about 100 face masks for folks at the EXPO Centre and for ICPM staff. In a recent Global News story, she could be seen sewing lunch bags: Coby, along with the community of ladies in the Catholic Women's League, made 282 bags to serve lunch on one of their appointed Sundays at the Community of Emmanuel.

It is hard to show our thanks, for she does these many things without expectation of thanks. Nevertheless, Pastor Rick says that he *is* thankful for the dedicated support she has shown him over the entire 14 years of his role as Pastor for ICPM.

It is even harder to say goodbye! But we are all most grateful for this "angel among us." Coby, your life of service has blessed us all!

*Sue Pasker  
Member, Board of Directors, ICPM*



## STEWARDSHIP REPORT



**Human Concern International Distributing Blankets  
On A Cold Sunday**

Inner City Pastoral Ministry has developed a wonderful community of donors, including individuals, churches and other organizations. Along with grants, donations are our major source of funds. They provide a constant stream of revenue throughout the year, enabling the ministry team to make a difference for those who lack food, shelter, and clothing on a regular basis. Donations range from \$10 to \$5,000, and are indeed an important part of the annual budget of ICPM.

This year we were blessed to receive \$28,502.00 in the Advent Campaign. Since then, during COVID-19 time, we have received individual and church donations totalling \$4,431.05. Donations through Canada Helps are another source of contributions from the community. A link on the donation page of the ICPM website takes donors to the ICPM page of [canadahelps.org](http://canadahelps.org), where a donation can be made online and a receipt received by email.

*Mary-Lou Cleveland  
Chair, Board of Directors, ICPM*



*Goodness is stronger than evil;  
Love is stronger than hate;  
Light is stronger than darkness;  
Life is stronger than death;  
Victory is ours through Him who loves us.*

— Desmond Tutu



In this time of COVID-19, we have all been challenged by the impact of the virus, especially non-profit organizations like Inner City Pastoral Ministry. Inequalities in the areas of housing, physical and mental health, and food security have been made both more evident and more severe by the present circumstances. These are, of course, inequalities that we have long recognized and tried to address. Through the generosity of individuals and churches in the community, ICPM has been able to shine a light, providing spiritual comfort and life necessities to those who are most vulnerable and marginalized. And in these present times, we continue to contribute care, comfort and food on Sundays in the inner city, and through the week at

the EXPO Centre. Now as a Board we are meeting virtually, and looking to a future that is very different from the past. Because present circumstances have made social inequalities so evident, we expect to be reaching out to a community whose eyes have been opened.

On behalf of the board, I extend to Pastor Rick, Michelle Nieviadomy and Jim Gurnett our love, and our gratitude for their work. Blessings and joy!

Mary-Lou Cleveland  
Chair, Board of Directors, ICPM

*Lord, you are my hope and trust. ~ Psalm 71: 5*

*The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it. ~ John 1: 5*



Serving Lunch At The Bissell Center

### ICPM Annual General Meeting

Thursday, June 18, 2020

6:30 pm: Virtual shared supper, and keynote address

7:00 – 8:00 pm: AGM

Guest Speaker: The Rt. Rev. Dr. Jane Alexander  
Anglican Bishop of Edmonton

This will be a “virtual” meeting, using the  
teleconferencing software program Zoom:

Zoom link for the event:

<https://zoom.us/j/97552192317>

One tap mobile:

+16475580588,,97552192317# Canada

Dial by your location:

587 328 1099

Meeting ID:

975 5219 2317

### ICPM Mission Statement

Inner City Pastoral Ministry is an interdenominational Christian Ministry of Presence. In partnership with the community, and guided by the Spirit of God, we walk with the people of the inner city of Edmonton.





You can donate to ICPM quickly and easily online! Go to [www.CanadaHelps.org](http://www.CanadaHelps.org)  
Search for "Inner City Pastoral Ministry". All who donate \$10 or more receive a tax receipt.

## ENCLOSED IS MY GIFT FOR INNER CITY PASTORAL MINISTRY

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City/Town \_\_\_\_\_ Province \_\_\_\_\_ Postal Code \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_ Email \_\_\_\_\_

Gift Amount \$ \_\_\_\_\_

### ICPM Board Members

Mary-Lou Cleveland ..... Anglican - Board Chair  
 Dr. Nancy Kerr ..... United - Past Board Chair  
 Victoria Wynn ..... United - Secretary  
 Cathy Armstrong ..... Anglican - Treasurer  
 Sharon Webb ..... Anglican - Sunday Lunch Coordinator  
 Ann Matheson ..... Anglican  
 Rev. Linda Whittle ..... Anglican  
 Sue Pasker ..... Lutheran  
 Colleen Smith ..... Roman Catholic  
 Lucas Stone ..... At Large  
 Andrea Wilhelm ..... Lutheran

### ICPM Ministry Team

Rev. Rick Chapman ..... Anglican - Retiring Pastor  
 Rev. Quinn Strikwerda ..... Anglican - Incoming Pastor  
 Jim Gurnett ..... Anglican - Pastoral Associate  
 Michelle Nieviadomy ..... Indigenous Oskapewis-Iskwew  
 Bruce Thompson ..... Anglican - Artist in Residence  
 Gord Holub ..... Indigenous Helper  
 Farley Magee and Julie Lloyd ..... Musicians in Residence  
 Linda Heywood ..... Food Coordinator  
 Annie Johnson ..... Food Coordinator  
 Nicole Wiebe ..... Evangelical Free - Graphic Design  
 Jim Whittle ..... Anglican - Newsletter Copy Editor

## **INNER CITY PASTORAL MINISTRY**

Straight From The Street

c/o Bissell Centre

10527 96 St. NW

Edmonton, AB T5H 2H6

[www.icpmedmonton.ca](http://www.icpmedmonton.ca) | [info@icpmedmonton.ca](mailto:info@icpmedmonton.ca)

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