A.M.D.G. Mission and Service Fund Sunday Texts: Matthew 5: 14-16

 November 2nd, 2014 Matthew 13: 31-2

 John 6: 4-14

**Matthew 5:14-16** *The Message Paraphrase*

***14-16****“Here’s another way to put it: You’re here to be light, bringing out the God-colors in the world. God is not a secret to be kept. We’re going public with this, as public as a city on a hill. If I make you light-bearers, you don’t think I’m going to hide you under a bucket, do you? I’m putting you on a light stand. Now that I’ve put you there on a hilltop, on a light stand—shine! Keep open house; be generous with your lives. By opening up to others, you’ll prompt people to open up with God, this generous Father in heaven.*

**Paying It Forward**

 Last Sunday evening, at our Annual Congregational Turkey Supper, we officially began our Stewardship Campaign for the coming year. Our theme this year is ‘Paying It Forward’ and is taken from the movie of the same name in which a young boy creates a school project designed to somehow make a difference in the world. His plan is simple – he gives something to one person who needs it – who, then, is asked to return the favour not by paying back to the giver – but by paying it forward – by doing something for 3 others. In this way, that initial act of kindness gets multiplied again and again.

 And that is also what happens when we offer our gifts of money, time and talent here at West Point Grey United Church. Our gifts, large or small, get multiplied as together we seek to live God’s love in this community and in the world. And that’s exciting!

 One opportunity we have to ‘pay it forward’ in sharing God’s love is through the Mission and Service Fund of the United Church of Canada. West Point Grey United supports local outreach such as supporting refugees, building relationships with our ethnic neighbours and our First Nations sisters and brothers, offering ESL (English as a 2nd language) classes, hosting TLC (the Lunch Club) which reaches out to seniors in the community, and through our gifts of money, clothing and socks to First United Mission – to name a few ways. And the Mission and Service Fund of the United Church is another important opportunity to ‘pay it forward’ by joining together with over 3,000 United Church congregations across the country to fund ministry in Canada and around the world.

 Through the Mission and Service Fund – as Canada’s largest Protestant denomination – we play a significant role on social issues, peace and justice advocacy, environmental concerns, and offering support for important work in addressing poverty, violence and discrimination. It provides resources for congregational life and faith formation, ethnic ministries, work with children, youth and young adults, theological schools and internships, and chaplaincy on university campuses and in prisons. The M & S Fund also supports overseas personnel and churches around the world – as well as emergency funding in the event of natural disasters and traumatic events.

 These are just a few of the ways our Mission and Service dollars ‘pay it forward’ in Canada and around the world. Thank you for your support.