



## Grateful/Thankful/Blessed

The Mission Team are GRATEFUL for the opportunity to start up an After School Youth Drop In program for 11 - 15 year olds here at St. Andrew's - and YOU can help!!

Start date for this program is Wednesday, September 20th from 3:30 - 5:00 pm. The program will initially be held once a week on Wednesday's, and after a trial period of 3 months it will be evaluated and may possibly include more weekdays.

God planted a seed in my heart about ten years ago after I spoke with a Social Worker who represented the SW quadrant of the city. She had indicated in our conversation "that Youth are at risk due to the fact that they were not going home after school"!

Her reason being, that melded family units having a new Stepmother or Father were adding little ones to their household and it was either very chaotic when they came home after school, or they would come into an empty house waiting for everyone to return back home again at supper time.

Therefore, they were hanging out on the streets and often getting into trouble.

I believe God places something important we hear on our hearts and it stays there until that opportune time when with His help it moves forward and becomes a reality. My thought was: as a church of caring people, we might be able to offer an outreach program to youth in our neighborhood. St. Andrew's mission statement "Woven Into The Neighbourhood" fits beautifully and would embrace young people that are often overlooked or possibly shunned by society.

I presented my thoughts to our Mission Team a year ago. It was well received, allowing this concept to take hold. Now we have gathered a sub group of wonderful people who share this passion and vision as we take the steps needed to accomplish God's work.

Part of this reasoning was our church building is vacant from 3:30 - 5:00 pm weekdays, which is the proposed timing for such an initiative.

We have Woodman School just around the corner which would make such a program accessible to their students.

St. Andrew's could offer a welcoming and safe haven for them. The age group suggested would be 11 - 15 years and would accommodate 20 young people. This activity would be held in the Karl English Lounge.

Proper adult supervision is imperative, and hopefully those initial introductions with youth will develop into deeper connections and eventually form mutual friendships for all ages.

The boys and girls participating will be given a nutritious snack upon arrival and then they will be offered stations such as a variety of games, an art table and hopefully a homework corner to assist them in their schoolwork.

If you feel God is speaking to you about being involved in this exciting program and wanting to join us on this Adventure we would welcome you with open arms!

This opportunity is near and dear to my heart. Please feel free to contact me for more information.

God's Blessings ~ Judy McKearney

