

GRACE CHURCH WEST HILL

Good neighbours in our shared community

Grace Church extends an invitation to all residents from our local and neighbouring communities to come together for connection, shared experiences, and strengthening of community and individual ties.

By Dan Nortes, Elder



Since 1950, your friends at Grace Church West Hill have sought to be good neighbours to our shared community. Founded by our friends at Melville Presbyterian Church with a specific mandate on delivering a Sunday School to our community, the focus is on serving children, youth and families.

Whether it's vibrant and creative worship, amazing children and youth ministries, or a Friday afternoon homework club to help support our young learners, Grace strives to find creative ways to serve by seeing a need and then meeting it.

Fast forward to 2026 and we are thrilled to continue that legacy of striving to serve and want you to know that all are welcome at Grace – there is always a place for you. Grace is filled with people just like you from all walks of life, from all parts of the world, and all finding community and a place to explore, connect and grow together.

At the heart of Grace is the multi-generational and multicultural family that we are, with a common purpose in the various ways we strive to serve. One of our most well-known ministries includes our annual Vacation Bible School (VBS).

We have pickleball, too! Our Amazing Grace Pickleball Group launches annually as soon as the weather permits in the spring, and runs through to the fall.

There is so much more that happens at Grace regularly, we are sure you will find your place. Do you love music? Come and enjoy or join our choir/praise team. Looking for a small group to explore and connect with? Check out one of our Life Groups. Interested in helping to meet needs in our community? Consider helping with our Diaconal Team or Food Bank ministry.

If you would like to explore more about Grace, you can find all the information we have shared and lots more at our church website at gracewesthill.ca.

Alvin Kim, Senior Pastor

Pastor Alvin Kim became the senior minister at Grace in 2019 after serving as a youth pastor for 18 years. He is married to his wife, Esther, and they have three children, Kingsley, Brooklyn and Elias.

Alvin is thankful for the generations of those who served and volunteered and helped grow the VBS (Vacation Bible School) in years past and up to this present time. He's excited about the ways that VBS (half day for a week) and now the five weeks of full-day camps can be of real service to the community.



Left, Cricket Krishnapillai, Youth and Young Adult Director, with Thanu Boteju, Director of Children and Family Ministries, discuss plans for the upcoming summer programs at Grace.

The heart and soul of Grace's child, youth and young adult programs

By Kathy Rew and Pamela Collins

Thanu

Thanu Boteju has been attending Grace Church for the past 16 years. She took on the role of Director of Children and Family Ministries in 2013. Thanu is originally from Sri Lanka and came to Canada 19 years ago as a skilled migrant. She served as a primary school teacher before immigrating to Canada, and she studied child psychology while working as a teacher.

Thanu is married to Nil, who serves as an elder at Grace, and together they have three children, Shanara, Shanessa and Joshua. She also works for the Toronto Public Library.

Thanu enjoys working with children, organizing many community events such as the Fall Festival, Valentine's party, Easter egg hunts and summer camps.

Along with a dedicated team of volunteers, she leads Vacation Bible School and summer camps for six weeks in the summer. These camps are very popular in the community.

Cricket

Kirushanthan (Cricket) Krishnapillai started as the Youth and Young Adult Director at Grace Church in May 2025, working in partnership with Youth Unlimited in Toronto. He is married to Kamal, who serves alongside him in ministry.

Born in Sri Lanka, Cricket immigrated to Canada with his family in 2003. After high school, he studied Police Foundations, went on to study Child and Youth Care, and is currently pursuing his degree in Biblical Studies and Theology. Cricket has extensive experience working with youth and children, having served as a camp counselor, camp director, outreach worker, after-school program coordinator, and sports coordinator.

His diverse educational background reflects his lifelong passion for supporting others. "We chose to serve at Grace as we truly felt a sense of community here," he said. "I had incredible mentors who poured into my life, and my goal and prayer is to have that same impact on the youth and young adults here at Grace."

The foundational goals of the youth programs at Grace align directly with the heartbeat of the church: Explore, Connect and Grow in Grace.

Facebook.com/groups/gracewesthill
Youtube@gracechurchwesthill



Happy Grace campers in 2025.

Make friends and memories close to home this summer

Get ready for an unforgettable summer at Grace Church! Our specialized, day-long summer camps are open to the public, offering a safe, high-energy environment where kids learn, play, and grow. Run by trained summer staff and dedicated volunteers, our programs tailor fun recreational activities to every age level. Beyond the excitement, our camps focus on teaching teamwork, responsibility, spirituality, integrity, and kindness to help kids make great life choices.

Our 2026 Summer Schedule

- Vacation Bible School (June 29 – July 3): Packed with engaging Bible stories, energetic games, and crafts.
- Arts Weeks (July 6–10 & July 13–17): Campers dive into art, drama, and dance. Parents are warmly invited to a Friday eve-

ning showcase to enjoy live performances and a gallery display of their child's artwork.

- Sports Camp (July 20 – July 24): Focused on active games, friendly tournaments, and team-building.
- Adventures Weeks (July 27–31 & August 4–7): Features exciting themed days, crafts, and games. We wrap up the final day of camp with a fantastic carnival full of games and prizes.

Registration is open to everyone!

Location: Grace Church, 447 Port Union Road, Scarborough
Contact: Secure your spot by contacting Thanu Boteju at 416-284-8424 or email tboteju@gracewesthill.ca.

"The camp is very affordable and truly feels like each dollar goes back into creating many memorable activities for our children. The counsellors are warm and attentive. What stands out the most is they are participating in a play which parents can go to on the evening of the last day of the camps, building confidence in the children. We are very grateful to have this camp in our area."

M Ward, Centennial resident

Local and neighbouring community members are always welcome

Grace Church creates welcoming opportunities for people of all ages to connect, grow, and build meaningful friendships within the community. Open to everyone, regardless of religious background, the church's outreach programs are designed to create a warm and supportive environment where neighbours can gather, learn, and encourage one another.

DOXA Prep Academic Support



DOXA PREP (Partner, Relate, Engage, Promote) is a Scarborough-based academic support and mentorship program that helps youth grow academically, socially, and spiritually. Through tutoring, small-group learning, and practical soft skills development, students build confidence, strengthen relationships, and gain tools for success in school and beyond. By partnering with certified teachers and educators, DOXA PREP equips youth to reach their full potential and make a positive impact in their families and communities.

Founded in 2006, DOXA is a Scarborough-based network which invests in the next generation through mentorship, outreach, and community impact.

Children



Volunteer teams use Bible stories, crafts, games, and songs to ensure that every week is a fun and meaningful experience. Throughout the year, children can also look forward to several special events, including Valentine's celebrations, Palm Sunday, Easter, Mother's and Father's Day celebrations, Vacation Bible School, Grace Summer Camps, our Fall Festival, and the annual Christmas play and presentation.

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Fellowship & Community Connection



Grace hosts several fellowship opportunities that help strengthen community ties. Ladies Day Apart is an annual event designed to give women a chance to pause, relax, and enjoy renewal away from the pressures of daily life. Women of all ages and stages are invited to participate in a meaningful and refreshing experience.

At the Christmas Children's Service, the many volunteers within the church help to execute this wonderful family service, open to the community, with decorations, a Christmas drama, and a present for every child.

CCRA board member, Kathleen Rew, is very active in the ministry of the church and works with the Sunday School program.

Youth and Young Adult Programs



Programs at Grace offer a healthy balance of spiritual growth, friendship, and fun social activities. Each month follows a rhythm that allows students to connect in different ways.

Classic Youth nights, held on the second Friday, provide intentional opportunities for spiritual growth through Scripture discussions, and interactive games and activities. The third and fourth Fridays focus on outreach and community connection through sports nights, bowling, mini-golf, skating, and other fun outings. These evenings are designed to be welcoming and accessible, encouraging students to invite friends.

Pickleball at Grace



Grace also continues to grow its popular community pickleball program. Open to adult neighbours of all skill levels, the Amazing Grace Pickleball Group meets regularly on outdoor courts located behind the church. Newcomers are always welcome, and paddles along with beginner instruction are provided for those trying the sport for the first time.

For young adults, Grace offers gatherings twice each month that combine spiritual learning with social connection. Participants explore spiritual disciplines together while also enjoying a wide variety of social outings, including skating, bowling, Activate, and other group activities. The program brings together people from different stages of life and faith journeys, creating an atmosphere where everyone feels welcome.

More information about all community programs can be found at Grace Church's website: gracewesthill.ca.