



Bishop's Direct Appointment Parish Profile



Dear Bishop Kevin,

The following mini profile is the result of our well-attended parish consultation that was held on September 24, 2022, and our follow-up meeting with the Grace Church Board of Management on October 18, 2022. Thank you for taking the time to read and listen to our parish's feedback and requests regarding a new priest-in-charge for Grace Church in Scarborough.

MISSION STATEMENT

Grace Church is a welcoming, missional Anglican community that engages faithfully with the world around us and shares the gospel of Jesus Christ. We are committed to proclaiming and embodying Jesus Christ through compassionate service, intelligent faith and Godly worship.

INTRODUCTION

Grace Church is a community of people from diverse backgrounds, exploring and learning what it means to be followers of Jesus Christ in South Scarborough. We are a community that exists to worship God, engage with our local community and grow together in faith as we proclaim the Good News of God's Kingdom. We do not have all the answers but we are eager for the journey, and all of us are continuing to learn and grow as we worship together, study together and serve together.

OUR HISTORY

In June 2011, the South Scarborough congregations of St. Crispin, St. Giles, St. George and Epiphany voted to amalgamate their resources and join together as one worshipping body in service of the Gospel. Grace Church in Scarborough celebrated its first service as one congregation on Sunday, October 9, 2011, at the site of the former St. Giles, 35 Kecala Rd., where we continued to worship until November 2013, when the newly redeveloped site of Grace Church was finished at 700 Kennedy Rd. In October 2021, we celebrated our 10-year anniversary as Grace Church in Scarborough. We are looking forward to celebrating more anniversaries with our growing and vibrant community.



WHO WE ARE

We are a gospel-focused community with a hunger for the Holy Spirit. We love new opportunities to grow our faith and understanding of scripture, such as through bible and book studies. We like to and are encouraged to speak about our faith in and outside of our Church walls. We enjoy lively worship and are open to trying new things. We have a deeply dedicated choir, and a congregation that loves music and loves to sing. We do not always agree on everything, but we are committed to growing together in faith.



We are a warm, welcoming church. There is a strong sense of friendship and camaraderie among our members. We are a church family that loves our community and serving in our congregation. There is a culture of acceptance, and we are open to people of different cultures and backgrounds. Located behind our church is a woman's shelter, which brings many of their residents through our doors. We do our best to extend a warm welcome and engage with the women from the shelter and all newcomers. We want everyone who comes into Grace to feel welcome, accepted, and loved.



Outreach and serving the community is also very important to us at Grace. One way we do this is through our community lunch, which started nine years ago as part of the Church's mission for outreach in our neighbourhood. The community lunch program grew from an idea into a program that serves 40 to 50 people each month. This is something we were pleased to be able to continue throughout the pandemic.

However, the pandemic disconnected us from each other. It shuttered our ability to gather and have fellowship together. Time of fellowship is important to our members, and something we desire to grow and want more opportunities coming out of the pandemic. We also desire to build up and expand our ministries at Grace, but need help with getting more people involved, and with empowering lay leadership. Although we have few young people, we understand the importance of youth and children and ministering to them. We hope to be able to build up thriving ministries for young people and families in the future.

Our congregation supports these ministries:

- Choir & Concerts
- Pastoral Care Visitation
- Outreach Community Lunch
- Bible & Book Studies
- Faith Works and PWRDF
- Online Worship and Digital Communication
- Visitation to long term care
- Prayer walks
- Lay anointing
- Free Little Library
- Food Bank Donation – Youth Link Youth Shelter
- Readers & Intercessors
- Servers & Chalice Bearers
- Chancel Guild



STAFF & LEADERSHIP

- **Interim Priest-in-Charge** - Rev. Canon Derek Stapleton
- **Office Administrator** - Pauline Flemming
- **Churchwardens** - Ryan Ramsden & Jonelle Douglas
- **Music Director** - Vacant
- **Custodial** - External

**Board of Management (Canon 25)**

At the request of the Churchwardens and Vestry, the Synod Council of the Diocese of Toronto gave the approval for Grace to be designated a Diocesan Mission under Canon 25 effective May 1, 2022. A Board of Management was formed, comprised of 5 members of the parish, 3 external diocesan volunteers, and the priest-in-charge as the chair. The membership is as follows:

- Rev. Canon Derek Stapleton (Chair)
- Ryan Ramsden (Churchwarden)
- Jonelle Douglas (Churchwarden)
- Nadia Murray
- Beatrice Harvey
- Veronica Cumberbatch
- Sharon Jones (Diocesan volunteer)
- Margaret Reid (Diocesan volunteer)
- Charles Parker (Diocesan volunteer)



Both the Diocesan and Grace leadership expect and hope for Canon 25 Board of Management to be a two or three-year endeavour that will allow us to take the necessary steps to stand strong on our own for years to come. However, we do envision and hope that in the future we may continue to operate under a board structure, as some churches do, but with all members of our Board coming from within the parish – allowing for a division of responsibility and work under certain portfolios or areas of church life.



OUR STRENGTHS

Our Building

We have a beautiful, new building that was renovated 10 years ago when the amalgamation took place, and we have had our roof replaced recently. The church is fully accessible, with an elevator and ramps, is up-to-code, and has a lovely, large commercial kitchen. We are located on a main road, have ample parking, and are located near transit, making our church convenient and easy to locate.



Our People

We are a multicultural congregation that is welcoming and there is a strong culture of acceptance here. There is a strong sense of community and camaraderie. There is a desire to serve and be known in the community. Our community lunch program is one of our success stories in ministry, serving the community for nine years. Our parish is gospel-focused, and our parishioners are dedicated followers of Jesus Christ. We have a love for lively worship and music, and are willing to try new things.



Our Finances/Resources

While the pandemic has many parishes really struggling financially, our congregational givings have been remarkably stable during the pandemic. We have some parishioners signed up for pre-authorized givings, but during the pandemic we had to get creative such as having offering drop-off days with a collection plate in the parking lot. Our 2022 budget projected a small deficit for the year, and at the end of September we were significantly ahead of target. We have \$50K in the Diocesan Consolidated Trust Fund, but that is all of our savings. We have substantial rental income, with two churches who rent our space (one on Saturday mornings/afternoons, and one on Sunday afternoons), rental income from the woman's shelter, and from our rectory. We have been recipients of several grants over the years from the Diocese and area of York-Scarborough, and we are open to diocesan support and working with diocesan resources.

OUR OPPORTUNITIES

Our Location

We are located in a very visible and convenient location on Kennedy Road, just south of Eglinton Ave. The nearby Eglinton Crosstown LRT should be completed soon, making the area even more accessible by reliable transit. There is also lots of new housing being built or planned in the area, which would increase the population density in the community.



Our Facilities

We have a newly renovated, beautiful facility, with a large commercial kitchen. This presents the opportunity for increased rentals and usage of our facilities by the community.



Board of Management

Over the past few years, we have lacked in the number of parishioners willing to step up to leadership positions and to volunteer in ministry roles and at events. This is one of the reasons we asked to be put under Canon 25 Diocesan Mission, and form a Board of Management with volunteers from the Diocese. There is an opportunity here to get some assistance in volunteer management and leadership development.

Pre-Authorized Givings

As mentioned, we only have a small percentage of the congregation currently signed up for pre-authorized givings. This presents an opportunity to get more members signed up, making our monthly givings more consistent and predictable.

New Worship/Fresh Expressions of Church

Currently we offer two Sunday worship services: 9AM said BCP Eucharist service, and 11AM choral BAS Eucharist service, and one weekday Eucharist at 11AM on Wednesdays. We currently have no active children's ministry or family service. This presents an opportunity to increase our range of services. We have done Messy Church and other fresh expressions of church in the past, so the congregation would be open to trying something new.

OUR CHALLENGES

Staying Connected

The pandemic was challenging. Many of our members are not connected digitally. Lots do not have Facebook or email or access to the Internet or know how to use Zoom. We tried different ways of delivering services: audio services on Sound Cloud, pre-recorded video services, worship and hymn sings on Zoom and livestreaming on Facebook. Also, we tried to stay connected through regular e-blasts, emails and letters. Yet, these efforts were not accessible to all.



Moving out the pandemic, we have the challenge of figuring out what our post-pandemic strategy should be: How do we bring people back to the pews? How do we reach and stay connected to those who are unable or not comfortable returning yet? How can we improve on communications with parishioners? Currently we are livestreaming our 11AM Sunday service on Facebook, and sending e-blasts and letters to our parish list. However, this is only being done by our churchwardens and office administrator. We need to get more volunteers to assist with these tasks.

Lay Leadership & Volunteer Management

As mentioned in our opportunities, lay leadership and volunteers has been lacking, and the pandemic did not help the situation. This has been a continuous issue with our community for many years, with a lot of our members experiencing burn out. Prior to the pandemic, we had started a year of rest and restoration through our Sabbath Year, but due to the pandemic, we were unable to complete this year. We hope with the help of the Board of Management, and a new priest-in-charge, we can get more people to step up and help out so that it is not just a few people carrying the heavy load of running the parish, building, and all of our ministries.

The Rectory

We currently have our rectory rented to tenants and paying much lower than market rent. Annual rent increases are slowly bringing us closer to market rent. However, since the rectory has current tenants, it is not available for a priest to live in, unless our current tenants are willing to leave.

Aging Congregation

Our aging congregation is an issue, as is with most Anglican churches. We do not have many young people – children, youth and young adults, and many of our aging congregants are moving away into long-term care facilities, retirement homes, or are sadly passing away. Our challenge is to find creative ways to get young people to join Grace.



The Amalgamation

Lastly, although we amalgamated over ten years ago now, many still refer to themselves as a member of one of the originating parishes. There is still some level of divide among the congregation of those who came from one of the four originating parish, and those who joined Grace post-amalgamation. How do we move past this?

LOOKING FORWARD

As we look to the future, we hope Grace Church will be an attractive and exciting community. We would hope to have lively worship, with clapping of hands and stomping of feet, and making a joyful noise through song and music. Speaking of music, we hope it will become even more eclectic, and we have had many well-attended concerts and music-filled special services. Our hope is that our ministries will be vibrant and thriving, including ministry to children and young people, with lots of people involved.

We also want to be a community that continues to be welcoming and allows space for all to be a part of Grace. This also means we want to have future leadership who listens to all voices, concerns, ideas and opinions. We want to be a place where people feel comfortable speaking up, and to be a place where we can ask questions and grow together.



How Do We Get There?

We have learnt through the MAF grant process, that setting benchmarks and unrealistic goals is not always healthy and can cause us to burn out. Many of us at Grace experienced burnout prior to the pandemic. However, if we do the following, and have faith, nothing is impossible in Christ:



- Pray together
- Work together
- Grow together
- Worship together
- Move together towards a common vision
- Proclaim and embody Jesus Christ and His Gospel
- Serve the community
- Stay connected
- Support each other
- Support new ideas, ministries, and events
- Encourage others to get involved
- Welcome everyone

OUR NEW PRIEST-IN-CHARGE

We would love to have a priest with some experience who embraces the Anglican traditions, yet is contemporary enough to move forward with the changing times and try new things. They should be theologically well-rounded, strongly rooted in scripture, yet preaches 'forward not backward' – relevant to today's world and a forward thinker. A preacher who relates the Gospel of the day to our daily lives and leaves us with lessons and empowerment to walk away in faith. They need to speak to all of us in a language that we understand. They should be someone who encourages and teaches us how to share the Gospel with strangers – a shepherd to shepherd us.

We would like someone who is welcoming, friendly, kind and patient, who listens to our members and is inclusive in decision-making. They should be down-to-earth, not afraid to show their humanity and be vulnerable – not an ego-driven leader or narcissist. Someone who is open to other cultures and traditions and operates out of mutual respect. We do not have many young people at Grace, so a priest who has a vision and passion for youth and children's ministry would be a blessing.

With an aging congregation, we need someone who sees the value of pastoral care – because we have many sick and shut-ins – we do not want them to feel forgotten. We also feel it is important to keep in touch and follow up with those whom we baptise.

We are a community who loves music and singing, and lively worship and fellowship. Our priest would ideally be someone who also loves to sing or loves music, who can bring fun and vibrancy to worship, and who will get involved with fellowship and encourage others to join. We also need someone who will encourage other people to step up and help with parish initiatives and in parish ministries. We need to empower lay leadership and keep people motivated and interested.

Community Outreach is important to Grace. We would like a priest who will help us find out what our local needs are so we can serve them and build relationships, and someone who will get involved themselves. They should not be afraid to get their hands dirty.

We are waiting expectantly for someone who brings joy to the life of the parish, builds up the community and sends us out to be Christ's hands and feet in the world.

Thank you again, Bishop, for your care and leadership.

Gratefully submitted,

Jonelle Douglas	Ryan Ramsden, ODT
Churchwarden	Churchwarden

CC: Grace Church Board of Management