

Grace

for the next Generation



Helping
Children to have
Fun in Church

The first **Grace Project** enables churches to have a part-time professional children's worker based at their church for 8 hours a week.

The **Grace Worker** spends *one day per week* and *one Sunday per month* at each of their churches. During this time they can

- run children's clubs
- visit schools
- organise one-off events, giving local children the opportunity to hear about the **grace of God**
- encourage each church to have a strategy for its children's ministry and outreach programme
- support all-age activities, including worship
- provide mentoring, training and encouragement for volunteers

Grace will work with any denomination which is a member of the organisation 'Churches Together'. It will respect the theology, ethos and traditions of each church.

Grace for the next Generation was registered as a charity in January 2008 (registration number 1122162).

Mission Statement:

Grace for the next Generation exists to promote good quality Christian children's work. It will help churches to reach more children and to cater for their needs. This will be done by undertaking research, providing training, mentoring and other services.

Why is 'Grace' needed?

Grace for the next Generation has been launched to share the love of God with today's children and to find new solutions to the big issues facing churches today.

Let's face it: the church in Britain is getting smaller. Wouldn't we love to change that situation? I believe that we can - if we invest in children and their families. Many parents welcome a Christian education for their children. They want their children to have a spiritual dimension to their lives, knowing right from wrong. Just imagine what would happen if there were enough committed children's workers to provide a club for every child of these parents. Supposing we could find a way to reach more children and inspire them with the good news of Jesus. If more children caught the excitement of being a Christian, there could be a whole generation for whom knowing God was the norm.

What stops this from happening? It's usually the shortage of 'know-how' and 'people-power'. The first **Grace Project** can communicate 'know-how' and provide a professional worker at an affordable price.

I hope that you will
catch the vision of '**Grace**'.

Big problems need big,
creative solutions!



Rachel Coupe,
B.Sc., P.G.T.C., M.Ed.

How will 'Grace' work?

Grace for the next Generation provides '*know how*' and '*people-power*'.

'Know-how'

Every church is different! **Grace** can offer a service that is tailored to your own particular situation. This is done by providing an experienced, trained worker who will find out what resources, limitations and opportunities exist in your local area. They will then develop a unique strategy for your church. It is often helpful to build relationships outside the church building and create opportunities for people to find out what happens inside the church. If you are interested in having a Grace Worker, please invite one to come and explain **Grace Strategy** at one of your church meetings.

'People-power'

It is expensive and complicated to employ your own children's worker. **Grace** makes this more affordable and takes on the administrative tasks. The Grace Worker can sustain your existing children's work and start new initiatives. They will develop the children's programme by building on existing work, looking for new opportunities for ministries, encouraging existing workers, recruiting new volunteers and building up a team spirit.

Why is the project called 'Grace for the next Generation' ?

An extensive piece of Lutheran research* showed that the biggest single factor which keeps children coming to church is an understanding of the concept of grace. The name '**Grace**' serves not only as a name for the organisation, but also as a reminder that we need to teach 'grace'. Every child needs to know that God loves every one of us, whether we deserve it or not!

The aim of the project is to reach children with the gospel. It is better to do so while they are still young and keen to learn about Jesus. Children are known to be very spiritual and the capacity to think about spirituality reduces during puberty.** Recruiting children to a Christian group is easier than recruiting teenagers. With really good spiritual nurturing, more children will continue with Christian activities into their teens and adult life.

*Strommen & Hardel, 'Passing on the Faith', 2000, St Mary's Press

**Hay & Nye, 'The Spirit of the Child', 1998, Blackwell



Is it possible to revive children's ministry in a church with few or no children?

Yes! With God's help all things are possible. The founder of '**Grace**' has revived the children's ministry in more than one church. Strategies for doing so include using quality materials, good publicity, home visiting, personal invitations, and the same person running both the drop-in toddler group and the Sunday groups. At the moment, most schools are open to Christian visitors. (There is no guarantee that this opportunity will last forever, so it's important to act now!) Children of primary school age are keen to join clubs with their friends. There are many parents who are happy to send their child to a Christian club if it is well publicised and has a good reputation. Caring parents want the best for their children – and that includes a strong spiritual foundation. Children's work is a good way to reach adults too!

The task of recruiting from un-churched families and passing on the faith isn't as easy as people sometimes think. Children are unlikely to catch enthusiasm for Christianity through an adult who has limited experience of prayer and bible reading. The church needs more children's workers with a real sense of vocation!



What can a 'Grace Worker' offer my church?

One 'quarter' of a full time, professional worker would be available 8 hours/week to plan and run activities. The programme would be individualised for each church. Here is an example of what could be achieved in that time:

<i>weekly:</i> ? visit toddler group ? run after-school-club	<i>monthly:</i> ? school assembly ? co-lead all age service	<i>annually:</i> ? holiday club
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Other activities could include special services at Christmas; lunch clubs held on school premises; R.E. lessons; class visits to the church building; Saturday events; half-term holiday events; nurture groups for teenagers who've grown up in the church; organising uniformed organisation to participate in all-age services via drama etc.



How will 'Grace' guarantee professional, quality workers?

The first Grace Worker has lots of experience in a variety of settings. She has been a schools' worker for an ecumenical group of churches and has worked as a qualified teacher in primary and secondary schools. She holds an MEd. In a voluntary capacity she has been the Children's Work Secretary for the URC East Midlands Synod, trained at a Pentecostal church and has run the children's work in both Anglican and Methodist churches. A very good 'track record' includes establishing new groups, reviving small groups and recruiting enthusiastic volunteers. She has been a member of Children Worldwide since 2002. All Grace Workers are carefully selected. Applications will be encouraged from professional people with experience of working with children. CRB clearance will be arranged and they will receive training and mentoring from a supervisor working for **Grace**.

What do I do now?

Please talk to other members of your church about the **Grace for the next Generation**. Put children's work on the agenda for your next meeting and consider whether your church could usefully employ a Grace Worker. This leaflet can be copied or emailed to you. Please feel free to ask any questions. If you would like to know more information about the **Grace Worker Scheme**, please contact Rachel Coupe, 11 Blackthorn Close, Melbourne, Derby, DE73 8LY.

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