



FAMILY MINISTRIES



グレースシティチャーチ東京
gracecitychurchtokyo



Grace City Vision

Revealing God's glory through a church planting movement, seeking to renew people's lives, to restore the city, and build God's Kingdom, through proclaiming Christ's gospel of grace in city center Tokyo!

Mission 2020

To establish at least 3 churches, each with its own characteristics and different style of worship, and combined 1000 worshippers!

Introduction: Raising your family in Tokyo

"Raise up a child in the way he should go..." Envisioning how to parent in this seemingly difficult city is a daunting task. Be encouraged: raising a child in a city has many more advantages than disadvantages and will mark your children in wonderful ways, ways which will stay with them for a lifetime. Children are members of our church community and at Grace City Church we desire to support parents as we raise our children in the gospel.

We want to help you connect to the life of the church and help you find ministries in which to grow and serve as parents and as a family. In addition, we want to share practical resources to help you find your way, not only by offering ministries to your children, but also by sharing good advice from those who have gone (or are going) before you. We want to encourage and support you as you honor God's plan for your family by living well in this city that He loves.

Grace City Church's Family ministries seeks to encourage, disciple and support families in their commitment to live in and embrace the city so that they can live out the gospel in ways that help their community and city flourish.



① Moms' Community Group

The purpose of Moms' Community Groups is to create an environment of prayer, worship, Bible study and connection, renewing us in the gospel so we can effectively serve our families and our neighbors. Babies and toddlers are welcome to join their mothers at these groups that meet on weekdays or Saturdays during the day at one of the members' homes. Older children are encouraged to spend quality time with their fathers.

② Parenting resources

Grace City Church Tokyo would like to offer seminars on Gospel-centered parenting, Christian parenting counseling and a time and a podium to discuss parenting issues with professionals and other parents. Other ways in which we can support and encourage one another at Grace City is through sharing of resources and experience. We can recommend books, websites, courses, shops, schools, play areas, pediatricians, etc.

③ Grace Kids

Purpose

Grace Kids' children's ministry seeks to guide our children to Christ, inspiring them to live God-centered lives, and seeks to encourage families, supporting parenting and the commitment to stay in and engage the city. This education, training, and discipling are practiced in line with Grace City Church's values and beliefs.

Core values and beliefs

1. Children are gifts from God. (Ps. 127:3-5)
2. Children, like all the rest of humanity, are seriously flawed and need a savior. (Genesis 8:21 & Psalm 51:5)
3. Children can grow in grace and use their spiritual gifts for the glory of God. (2 Peter 3:18 & 1 Corinthians 14:12)
4. In the context of the Covenant the congregation has the responsibility to fulfill its pledge to nurture and train children in the ways of the Lord. (baptism promise* & Psalm 78)



* pastor: By means of his/her baptism this child is accepted into the holy catholic Church as a member of God's family. Let us therefore as brothers and sisters in Christ, renewed in our baptism, wholeheartedly welcome this child.

congregation: With joy and gratitude we welcome you (...) into the church of Christ. For we are one in Christ. We promise to love, encourage, and support you. And we will unceasingly help you to deeply know and follow Christ.

Babies and toddlers

As babies and toddlers do not get much out of the corporate worship service and could keep their parents from fully participating in the service, we try our best to provide a nursery for newborns to children up to 3 years old run by parents and volunteers. A team of at least one parent and one volunteer runs the nursery from 5 minutes before the worship service until 5 minutes after the service ends in the Grace Kids' Room. Please, bring a diaper bag with sufficient diapers, wipes and a set of clean clothes, a drink and a snack for your child. Make sure your belongings are marked with your name. There is no curriculum for kids in the nursery, but the staff will not only care for them but also actively play with them. Toys are being provided. If you choose to bring your child's favorite toy, please, remember to take it home again when you pick up your child. Pick up your child immediately after the service ends. Only parents will be allowed to pick up their own children. Be aware that from that moment on the children will be your responsibility again. Parents who make regular use of the nursery are expected to participate in the rotation schedule for babysitting. There is no obligation for parents to bring their young children to the nursery. If parents feel more comfortable keeping their children with them during (part of) the worship service, they are welcome to do so.

Philosophy of Grace Kids' time

It is most beneficial for kindergarten and elementary school children to learn about God in a class that is geared for their age and development. Grace City Church staff and interns are available to assist our children in learning to love and worship God in ways that they can understand. We also believe that from the beginning children need to be taught how to participate in the larger worship service. However, we also still want them to benefit from teaching that is connected to their stage of life. For this reason, we encourage children to be involved at the beginning of the regular worship service where they will learn to worship by being with their families and the larger Grace City community. Before the sermon begins (including the Scripture reading) children will go with a children's ministry worker to a designated classroom to their age-appropriate time of learning. The children will be dismissed from the class by the time the congregation responds to the sermon by singing, so that the children can participate with their families in the offering, prayer and benediction that conclude the worship service. It is our desire that families feel welcomed and loved here at Grace City Church. It is our greatest desire that the corporate



worship of God happens here. To this end, we ask that if your child becomes a distraction to others around him/her, please, remove your child from the service so the worship experience of others will not be interrupted. Of course an attitude of grace is assumed at Grace City Church, but please remember that your children are solely your responsibility before and during the worship service, except for the time that they are in the care of the Grace Kids' staff in the classroom. Also during the fellowship time after the service parents are expected to supervise their own children.

Curriculum

As the attention span of many children does not go beyond 5 to 10 minutes, the classroom routine is divided in the following sections:

- Small talk: how are the kids doing?
- Bible story from Jesus Story Book Bible (written by Sally Lloyd Jones).
- Brief discussion on the theme, repetition of the main teaching points, sometimes supported by the use of interactive materials to reinforce the lesson.
- Craft or game to reinforce the lesson.
- Clean up.
- Return to the worship service together as a group.

Praying, singing and offering are acts of worship that the children do together with their families during the corporate worship service. If the teacher finds it appropriate, praying and singing can also take place during Grace Kids' time. In exceptional cases the teacher might offer the children a snack. If that is the case, the teacher shall consult with the parents of the children that suffer from allergies.

Classroom rules

1. Obey the teacher.
2. Listen.
3. Be kind; be safe.
4. Keep your hands and feet to yourself.

Other Grace Kids' activities

Twice a year Grace City's staff and volunteers offer an outing to Grace Kids. We encourage the parents and siblings to go along as a way to support their children and the staff and to enhance learning. Furthermore, on every first Sunday of the month at 2:00 PM we offer a Kids' Dance Class where a Christian professional dancer teaches the children how they can worship God, exercise and have fun



though dancing. During the yearly Grace City Church Retreat in Golden Week (first week of May) Grace Kids' can enjoy their own kids' program during the time their parents have (Bible) study sessions. The staff appreciates any other ideas for Grace Kids' activities.

Practical information

Do not bring toys or snacks to the Grace Kids' classroom; unless you have consulted with the staff (be aware of children with allergies!). Make sure your child has been to the toilet before Grace Kids' time and send them to the class room with clean hands. Children are not allowed into the baby/toddler area in the worship space, unless their parents are there and they need to consult with them. Church toys need to stay in the baby/toddler area. Snacks and drinks are available for everybody attending the worship service during fellowship time, not during the worship service. Please, serve your own children after the service.

④ Band of Grace

Purpose

Grace City Church's youth ministry for middle and high schoolers seeks to present Jesus Christ in clear and attractive ways through thought provoking teaching, genuine community and regular acts of service. It is our vision to see a movement of Tokyo teenagers who know Jesus Christ personally living out the truth of the gospel at their schools and in their communities.

Core values and beliefs

1. Gospel-centered - Foster spiritual growth through study and discussion of the Bible.
2. Joy-filled - Provide a supportive, fun-loving environment where students are known and cared for.
3. Outward faced - To foster a community where Christian and non-Christian students alike feel valued and respected.
4. Mercy-minded - To extend the grace we have experienced to others throughout the city by regularly serving those in need.



Activities and philosophy

Band of Grace meets at least twice a month. On the second weekend of the month (Saturday or Sunday) we gather at Starbucks in Ginza for Bible study. The same material that regular Grace City Community groups use is being studied, although modified for their age. On the fourth weekend we go out for a fun event like a pizza party, karaoke, bowling, seeing a movie or sports. Band of Grace members are encouraged to bring their (non-Christian) friends along to these events. The ideas for 'fun events' need to be come from the members themselves and organizing is their responsibility. Grace City staff/youth group leaders are available to them with the necessary resources, guidance and counseling. We realize that taking initiatives and carrying responsibilities are skills that need to be learned. Within Grace City community we try to offer and facilitate a safe environment where these skills that greatly contribute to social and spiritual maturity can be developed. We encourage developing this spiritual and social growth not only within the context of the Band of Grace youth group, but also within the Grace City Church community as a whole. Therefore participation within the worship team, Grace City Relief mercy ministry, Amazing Grace women's ministry, helping out with the Grace Kids and other possible ministries are other ways to learn, grow towards maturity, find your own place and enjoy the Body of Christ that is the church.

Contact

Questions, comments and ideas for Family Ministry are welcomed by Eline de Boo

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