



Grace Maartje Mansvelt

February 3, 1997 - August 10, 2025

Our beloved Grace Maartje passed away on August 10, 2025 following a severe reaction to CAR-T treatment for lymphoma.

Grace was the first-born child of Jody Huffman and David Mansvelt, arriving in Toronto on February 3, 1997. Grace means “gift of God”, and from the beginning she was a gift to us and all who knew her.

An energetic and inquisitive child, Grace loved to laugh, read, and play outside. In 1998, Grace moved closer to Mansvelt family roots in Halifax, welcoming brother Jonathan shortly thereafter.

Grace loved learning, played piano, clarinet and three other instruments, excelled in school, and kept active through swimming and soccer. As a teen, she made her best friends in bands at Georges P Vanier Junior High and Lockview High, as well as at the Fall River Chapel Youth Group. She dedicated her summers to camp counseling at Malagash Bible Camp and Mount Traber Bible Camp.

After briefly studying sciences at Saint Mary’s University, Grace moved to Antigonish and began a new job at L’Arche. Her work living alongside people with disabilities helped Grace to realize a new direction in life, and she enrolled in Mount St. Vincent University’s Child and Youth Studies bachelor program. Grace ultimately joined the IWK Health Center Early Intensive

Behavioural Intervention program where she worked one-on-one with young children with autism. She loved the children, and the children loved her. Grace was excited to become permanent staff and considered pursuing further education when she was diagnosed with lymphoma in December 2024, requiring her to take a leave for treatment.

Grace lived bravely with cancer in hope of recovery, buoyed by the steadfast love and support of her fiancé Elizabeth, and her large circle of family and friends.

Grace was a faithful friend and a gentle, kind soul. She was an avid reader and journaler, and enjoyed nurturing her houseplants, playing games and catching up with cousins, visiting her beloved Oma, swimming in Grand Lake, working out in the gym, and exploring nature with Elizabeth. We will miss her beautiful smile, easy laugh, bear-like hair, and cosy presence.

Grace's undying love and light will remain in their partner's heart and soul until the end of time.

Grace was predeceased by her maternal grandparents Russell Huffman and Janet LaRonde, of Oshawa, ON, and paternal grandfather Nick. She is survived by fiancé Elizabeth Buno, parents Jody and David, brother Jonathan, Oma Mary Maartje Mansvelt, Grandpa Pat LaRonde and a large extended family.

A funeral service will be held at St. Thomas Anglican Church, 3534 Highway 2, Fall River, on Sunday, August 24th at 2:00pm, with reception following in the church hall. A private family interment will follow at St. Margaret's Church, Oakfield.

Donations in Grace's memory may be given to:

-Adsum House for Women and Children (<https://adsumforwomen.org/donate-3>)

-Nova Scotia Youth Project (<https://www.youthproject.ns.ca/donate>)

-Autism NS (<https://www.autismnovascotia.ca/get-involved/#donate>)

We extend our thanks to the staff at the Victoria General Hospital unit 8B and ICU for their care and compassion in Grace's final hours, and to all of the family and community support that has provided us with an abundance of love, prayer, food, and flowers.

Tribute Wall

AR

“ Grace was the 1:1 support for our son Elliot during their time at Lower Sackville Nursery School. They left an undying mark on our hearts and on the life of our son. Their kindness, gentleness and compassion will never be forgotten. Wishing you all strength and courage as you navigate this world that is now just a bit darker without this beautiful bright light. Gone but never forgotten.

Arielle - August 29, 2025 at 04:41 PM

MM

“ I first met Grace at Malagash Bible Camp in 2014. At the start of the summer, they were a stranger, and by August when we were leading a cabin together, I was so excited to spend the week working alongside my friend. Grace was deeply thoughtful and generous of spirit, and it was in conversations at camp that they shared struggles and joys and made the rest of us feel safe to share too. They were one of the first LGBTQ+-affirming Christians I knew, and their conviction toward love & inclusion shone brightly. They were gentle and goofy and humble and caring and kind, with so much love to give.

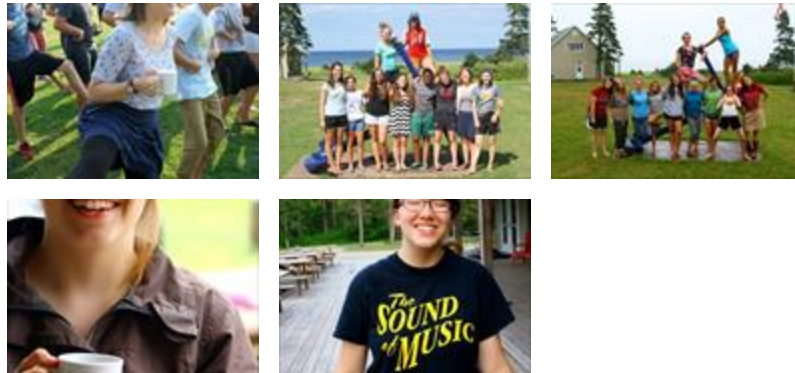
Over the years, my parents only met Grace once or twice, but after that first meeting, my mom would forever remember "giggly Grace." I got to reconnect with Grace earlier this year, and their characteristic laugh brought a sense of levity -- and hope -- to hard conversations about life changes and cancer treatment.

I'm grateful to have known Grace, and devastated that their life was cut short.

Mary Main - August 24, 2025 at 09:38 PM

MM

“ 5 files added to the tribute wall



Mary Main - August 24, 2025 at 08:39 PM

CY

“ Jody David & family, At a loss for words this beautiful and kind soul has passed. I will always remember Grace's sweet demeanor & helpful nature when we lived in Grand Lake. May you find healing as you struggle to deal with this immense loss. Crystal, Emily & Rebecca Yeo

Crystal Yeo - August 24, 2025 at 06:57 PM

SB

“ There are no words that can express how much our heart breaks for you. May you find comfort in the love that surrounds you.
Sharon/Dave Bellefontaine



Sharon and David Bellefontaine - August 24, 2025 at 07:35 AM



“ 8 files added to the tribute wall



Emma Yeo Flowerdew - August 23, 2025 at 04:02 PM



“ I was so lucky to know Grace through L'Arche Halifax. Their joy, compassion, and musical talent touched so many. Grace was always a ray of sunshine, and a calm grounding presence. I always looked forward to working with them. I am heartbroken to hear this news, and send my condolences to their family. ❤️

Sarah Cassandra - August 20, 2025 at 07:54 PM

MP

Jody and David, I just heard about the passing of Grace. No words can reveal how sorry I am for your lost. This is so heartbreaking. I am thinking of you and you family and sending warm thoughts and prayers. David and Marian

marian pelletier - August 25, 2025 at 10:02 AM

AH

“ I first met Grace in grade 7 through Battle of the Books and school band. I first knew them for their intelligence, love of learning, and talent at clarinet. But I quickly got to see their silliness, kindness, curiosity and love for adventures of all kinds. In high school, our group of friends often called her "Gracious", and they were always that. They were full of compassion, the last to judge anyone, and the first to forgive anyone who wronged them. Though Grace was incredibly smart and had many talents, they never took themselves too seriously. Any time I would spend time with Grace, I knew our time would be filled with deep questions and lots of laughter. Even though I last spoke with Grace a few years ago, I can still hear their contagious laughter in my ear.

Whether it was youth group, camp, band practice, math study sessions, school trips, chemistry classes, Sunday walks or winter beach adventures, Grace made everything a bit brighter and a whole lot more fun. I'll always be grateful for their friendship, kindness and listening ear through the years.

Anne Hulst - August 20, 2025 at 07:07 PM

AH

“ 5 files added to the album Friends



Anne Hulst - August 20, 2025 at 06:52 PM

SS

“ Grace was such a kind and loving soul. I feel grateful to have known them during my time as an assistant at L’Arche, where their warmth and musical talent touched many. I’m absolutely heartbroken to hear of Grace’s passing. Sending my thoughts and prayers to their family and friends ❤️

Sophia Salmaniw - August 19, 2025 at 08:08 PM

TJ

“ Thressia John lit a candle in memory of Grace Maartje Mansvelt



Thressia john - August 19, 2025 at 02:40 PM

KM

“ Jody, David and family...we are heartbroken for you all. Know you are in our thoughts and prayers often.
Kathy and Richard Mullin

Kathy Mullin - August 19, 2025 at 12:41 PM

RP

“ I met Grace 7 short months ago. On one of my many visits to hospital Grace was my roommate. It meant everything to me. We learned pretty quickly that we were both battling lymphoma so the curtain was opened and the conversations flowed. We shared our hopes and of course our fears. Like many other posts I got the gift of Graces caring and kind spirit. We stayed connected after we were released with almost daily texting -checking in on each other. I learned of how important their family was to them and cherished. They shared with me their recent vacation experience on PEI. I know it was special for them and Elizabeth. To the family, I am still in shock and can feel the heaviness of your grief. Elizabeth, I am touched and so grateful for you reaching out to me. Grace has a special place in my heart and my journey. Sending love , Rosie, Dave, Julia and Lauren.



Rosie Pangman - August 19, 2025 at 10:42 AM



I am so very saddened to hear this news. I taught Grace at LHS and was amazed each day by her kindness, compassion and advanced abilities to tackle any math problem. It was an honor to be part of Graces educational journey! Sending hugs and prayers to all family and friends xo
Leah Chiasson

Leah Chiasson - August 19, 2025 at 10:50 AM

NC

*I was lucky to have met Grace at Rstudios- they started coming to Pilates and barre and quickly became a huge part of our community. The thought never crossed my mind that they wouldn't beat this. We are absolutely heartbroken and saddened to hear the news. Grace was such a special human and will be so greatly missed ❤️
They have made such a HUGE impact on our spaces and I will be forever grateful for knowing them for as long as I did. Rest peacefully Grace ❤️❤️❤️❤️❤️*

Nicola Cameron - August 19, 2025 at 12:52 PM

HH

*Dear Jody , David and Jonathan
Grace sounds like an incredible young woman- a daughter. sister, future wife and above all a caring loving person. I can't imagine how difficult this time is for you. I pray you will be able to find comfort in your memories of sweet Grace.
It will take some time, so allow yourselves to grieve, but surround yourselves together with the knowledge of the amazing young woman Grace was.
💖💖💖💖*

Heather McDonald (was Henderson,Jodie) - August 19, 2025 at 07:58 PM

MH

“ *Grace was a very kind and caring person. I have such fond memories with Grace from when we were in high school and camp together. Grace always helped me with my math homework, knew how to make others laugh, and was a talented musician. I was grateful to reconnect with Grace in recent years at All Nations Church. Sending so much love to their partner and family ❤️*

Marissa Van Harmelen - August 19, 2025 at 05:56 AM

LL

“ Grace was such a genuine, kind, caring soul. I wish I could have visited them one last time for one last chat. At work, Grace would often come into my office near the end of the day for a chat; we could talk for hours if given the chance. There were always lots of giggles and jokes. I feel like we became fast friends for sure!! I wish I had gotten to show you that videogame we had talked about, and that you were able to come visit me in NB! Rest easy, you put up one hell of a fight.

Lauren Legere - August 18, 2025 at 11:06 PM

OW

“ I only had the chance to talk to Grace a few times, but we had some surprisingly deep chats while putting up Christmas decorations in the office last year. I was so shocked to hear of their passing - they will be very missed.

Olivia Woodland - August 18, 2025 at 09:56 PM

MC

“ Grace made such a positive impact on everyone they worked with! Grace was the kindest and most empathetic person whose positive attitude was infectious. Grace immediately fit in at the office and will be sorely missed by everyone.

Meghan Chisholm - August 18, 2025 at 09:06 PM



“ I’m so sad to hear about Grace. I got to know them from work at EIBI. Unfortunately we didn’t get out kayaking this summer like they wanted, but I will be thinking about them the next time I’m out on the water. Grace was an incredible person, gone far too soon. They were full of kindness and positivity and had a great sense of humour. I will miss them . My condolences to Elizabeth and the rest of their family.

Cheyenne Hall - August 18, 2025 at 08:55 PM



“ I’m so sad to hear about Grace’s passing. Grace and I worked together and became close through sharing a caseload of kids. Grace was so committed to their job. Grace and I often stayed late on Friday afternoons, preparing data, packing bags of toys for the week ahead and of course chatting, because Grace loved to chat. I will miss Grace’s joyful and positive presence. Sending condolences to Elizabeth and family. □

Jane Gallivan - August 18, 2025 at 08:31 PM



“ I am so incredibly saddened to hear of the loss of Grace. I was fortunate to get to know Grace through work this past year, and they quickly became a dear friend. They spoke so lovingly and proudly of Beth and their family. Often talking about Jonathan’s medical school ventures, visiting her parents and lunch dates with Oma. It was so very evident how important their family was to them. Grace was always thinking of others- I recently had a baby and Grace often checked in on us to see how we were doing and stopped by with a gift and visit even through their treatment. They will be so very missed.

Amanda McGuire - August 18, 2025 at 08:17 PM

CR

“ To Elizabeth and family,
Grace meant the world to me - as I'm sure they did you.
They joined EIBI (now PPAS) two months after me. If they didn't randomly stop in the hallway and ask me at least three questions at once (they LOVED to chat!)- they never would've been my friend. Grace was the definition of a friend. Kind, thoughtful, great sense of humour and their authenticity shined.
Working with them was such a joy.
Please reach out if you need anything at all regarding the service, memories - or just to share their memory.
I will always love Grace.

Chelsey Robichaud - August 18, 2025 at 07:52 PM

CR

In one of my last conversations with Grace, they mentioned how excited they were to visit England. I will be going there next week (pending Air Canada). They will be in my heart during that trip.

Chelsey Robichaud - August 18, 2025 at 07:53 PM

CR

“ 2 files added to the album Friends



Chelsey Robichaud - August 18, 2025 at 07:42 PM

KB

“ I have so many memories sitting across from Grace in the Lockview High band room. I fondly recall their curiosity and endless questions, and their giggle when they made a particularly goofy joke or comment. I'm sending all of my love and care to their close ones, and keeping their memory tucked into the folds of some precious years. Their loss will be deeply felt by any and all that knew them.

Katelyn Barker - August 18, 2025 at 07:24 PM

CR

The endless questions is so them! <3 Katelyn though I don't know you but you nailed the description. Sending love <3

Chelsey Robichaud - August 18, 2025 at 07:54 PM

RS

“ Grace was always a joy to be around. They lit up every room and made everyone feel so welcome. I haven't seen Grace in at least a year and then since high school before that. They had so much love to give and I'm so thankful I got to know them, even if it was years ago. My heart goes out to their family and friends, and I will cherish the memories we have together forever.

Rachel Smith - August 18, 2025 at 07:15 PM

KS

“ I got to know Grace a bit during her time in Antigonish, she was a talented, kind and compassionate assistant. I am so sad to hear of her death. I will remember her fondly. I believe her light shines on wherever we remember her. Sending love and prayers to her family.

Karen Stewart - August 18, 2025 at 06:42 PM

LP

“ I remember Grace well from Malagash Bible Camp. She had such a joyful smile and calming demeanour. I loved the way her eyes almost disappeared when she smiled! She had such a willing heart to help wherever there was a need. My heartfelt condolences to you all along with prayers of comfort. May you know our God Emmanuel in these sad days.

Lisa Putnam - August 18, 2025 at 06:33 PM

LA

“ Grace and I were sitting at Oma’s kitchen table one morning, doing sudokus. I was over visiting from Ontario with my mum and dad, and I was just enjoying the moment. Every time I got to see my Mansvelt family was special to me, given the usual 1700km distance between us. I remember being a bit stuck with my sudoku puzzle; I felt like I had checked every option, but still couldn’t fill in any more numbers. When I looked over to see Grace’s progress, all I saw was a hand moving swiftly and methodically from one tiny box to another, writing numbers seemingly without pause. I asked how it was possible to do the sudoku that fast. Grace responded with something like: “I just... do it.” Now, this answer didn’t magically make me a sudoku master too. But what Grace reminded me of in that moment is that you can’t be so afraid of having to backtrack a little that you won’t try a solution in the first place. Sometimes, in order to solve a puzzle, you have to write a wrong number or two. Today, I aspire to be as fearless and resolute as Grace—not just in my sudoku ventures, but in everything.

Lauren - August 18, 2025 at 11:03 AM

TK

“ Thinking of you all! Big hug from
Ton ,Karin, Daphne & Jonathan. 🤗

Ton & Karin - August 18, 2025 at 10:58 AM