

AGM Survey Q & R

Hello RockPointe,

Thank you to those who attended and participated in this year's Annual General Meeting. It was a time to worship and give thanks, review the past year, receive updates, and vote on important matters. Next year's meeting will be Sunday, October 6th 2024, 7-9pm at Bowridge to allow those serving at RPI to attend, with a financial review at 6pm. Mark your calendars!

Here are the responses to questions submitted through the AGM survey. If there are further follow-up questions or comments please reach out to your site elders or the board secretary Doreen Trinh at dtrinh@rockpointe.ca.

Question #1:

I wanted clarity on the decision on the release of one of our Pastors. At the Town Hall meeting we were told this was a decision based on financial shortfalls. When we look at the financial statements they would not support this. At this meeting it was suggested that the decision was not based on performance. There have been those who have left the church as they perceive that this answer was false and no longer trust the leadership to be forthright believing they provide answers that are convenient for them.

Response:

The decision to release one of our pastors was based on many factors including the need to redefine the Lead Pastor role, the desire to simplify and flatten our organizational structure, the move to a more collaborative team based leadership style, and the need to keep personnel costs at a sustainable level.

The financial statements show that personnel costs were reduced from \$2.7M in 2022 to \$2.1M in 2023 - a reduction of \$0.6M. If RPC had not made those changes, we would have incurred a Ministry Fund deficit of \$0.4M rather than a surplus of \$0.2M as shown in the financial statements. This would have put our Ministry Fund cash position in the negative at year end and required borrowing to meet our operating needs. The financial statements support the necessity of the personnel changes that were made, even though they were very difficult choices for everyone.

We recognize and are saddened that some have lost trust in leadership. Choosing which staff to release is the responsibility of the Lead Site Pastor with oversight from the Board. There are sometimes aspects of these decisions which cannot be made public due to legal disclosure restrictions. We have sought to be respectful of former employees by not sharing information that is confidential and realize this lends to incomplete explanations at times that can be more difficult to accept. We ask that you would prayerfully reflect and hope that trust can be restored over time. For those who are no longer with us, know that we also feel these losses and we continue to pray for and bless them.

Question #2:

What is the process for changing people's positions...for example Cherylyn moving into associate pastor. Was the job posted publicly or does it need to be? Is she qualified (i.e. have schooling)? How are decisions made to switch people to different sites when they are connected at another site?

Response:

These types of decisions are made by the Lead Site Pastor in consultation with the Lead Team and oversight by the Elder Board. The decisions are made based on needs, gifting and qualifications to achieve the most effective organization for the furtherance of the ministries of RPC within our current budget reality. These changes that have been made were changes in title and/or location and not the creation of new positions requiring hiring of new personnel, therefore no public posting is required. Many of the changes were necessitated by the redistribution of workload resulting from the release of personnel and also our desire to have staff more closely associated with each RockPointe site. Cherylyn has the appropriate credentials, experience and qualifications for the Associate Pastor role.

Question #3 (a):

Can you please explain the logic behind having the Bearspaw Site pastor also be the Lead Pastor and who approved that decision? I can't imagine how this person can possibly have the time to do both jobs well. I suspect the Pastor will get pulled into one or the other role; at the expense of the other. How can we justify a role for a full time site pastor @ Bow & Westhills (with much smaller congregations) and expect the Bear site pastor to have a dual role?....

Response:

This decision was proposed by the Lead Team and supported by the Elder Board, based on a re-envisioning of the role of Lead Pastor from central command and control to first among equals with shared responsibility and authority. The role proposed is contingent upon the Lead Team (which includes the other site pastors and central staff) and Bearspaw site staff taking on aspects of the previous Lead Pastor role and requiring less oversight through equipping and empowering. Also, to support the Lead Site Pastor role there are more site staff assigned to Bearspaw relative to the other sites (Bearspaw has both Stephanie and Brandon serving as Associate Pastors, an organizational chart can be found here: https://rockpointe.ca/assets/misc/rpc_orgchart_sep2023.pdf). That said, there is no doubt this is a very full position and the Board will continue to work with the Lead Site Pastor to monitor the ongoing feasibility of this structure.

Question #3 (b):

Why does RPI not appear to be given the same attention & visibility as RPC's legitimate 4th site? It seems we always talk about Bow, Bear, and Westhills. Is this intentional? Do we see RPI as more of a funded "Mission" than a church site?

Response:

We acknowledge that RPI has not yet been given the same attention and visibility as the other established sites. RPI is unique in its origin, ministry, and relationship with RPC and we are seeking to address this deficit and raise the RPI profile. We are working to integrate Naim into the Lead Team, we have promoted volunteer opportunities more often than before, the Compassion Fund is used to support the RPI community, and RPC is moving towards more equitable inclusion of RPI in its communication channels including our revamped website. We are moving in a good direction.

Question #3 (c):

Also curious how RPC arrived at the foundational decision to walk-away from a 20-year multi-site church vision without ever consulting the congregation? This seems like a MAJOR decision that was made without much consultation with the congregation. Multi-site was the DNA of RPC and for 20 years we

were all convinced by the Board and Leadership of the organizational, operational, and financial benefits of multi-site. We seem to have turned on 20 years of history, (and leaders) making several hurtful statements in the AGM about a model that was praised for many years... I'm a bit torn at this new vision to go back to being 4 independently run churches, with a small overarching governance body. If sites are independent I really question what is left of "RockPointe"?

Response:

RPC is not moving away from multi-site. We are shifting aspects of the model to move towards more site autonomy (note: moving the dial towards more autonomy, not ending at full autonomy) which enables ministering to the unique needs of the local communities. The sites are not independent and together remain RPC, consistent with our multi-site model. We remain committed to the aspects of multi-site that make sense going forward, while needing to adjust those aspects that were in place during a higher growth stage in the church. The site pastors participate in the Lead Team which is taking on some of the roles of the previous Lead Pastor job in shared oversight of the various expressions. Finance, HR, administration, and facilities remain primarily centralized to avoid duplication of staffing at each site. Also, one of our great strengths of sharing a Teaching Team will remain in place. We remain RockPointe with a different leadership style focusing on shared accountability and responsibility, mutual submission, and transparency.

The Elders and Lead Team worked together to define autonomy for RockPointe as follows: Autonomy means we give one another freedom to make decisions and act within clearly defined parameters of the broader RockPointe vision, mission and values that lead us and the governance of RPC and the Alliance Canada that we are accountable to.

The vision of 20 by 2020 expansion has not been achieved for various reasons. However, RPC remains committed to the effectiveness of multi-site, and continues to work towards achieving a permanent location for the Westhills site. Another priority that has commanded the attention and financing of RPC has been the repair and maintenance of our existing facilities. Yet, we have achieved the merger of BVA and CHCC to establish a key location in Bearspaw, the merger of Strathcona and RPC to form Westhills, supported the establishment of Metro Mercy and Capstone, RPI, and two Missional Communities. Our DNA is still the expansion of the Kingdom and we seek God's direction in how best to achieve this in the changing culture and the reality of economic constraints.

Question (d):

Does the Revenue donated / generated by each site align with the Operational expenses associated with that site, or do we have certain site(s) "funding" the others? This question has been posed for years without an answer, but this data may help inform what model for a future RPC "site" works best.

Response:

All amounts donated to the Ministry Fund are held and used for the benefit of all locations. RPC does not administer these funds on a site by site basis. All sites participate in the budgeting process where decisions are made as to where ministry funds will be spent. The giving at each site is dependent on many factors including the demographics of the community being served.

As we seek God's direction in how to expand the Kingdom, there may be times when certain sites essentially fund the others, with RPI being one example. Also, at different times in our history, both giving and costs fluctuate at the sites creating different cash flows.

Moving forward with the Westhills Rezoning Project, the analysis of our cost to run each site will be helpful, but it will be secondary to what is heard through the Spirit as a part of the discernment process.

Question #4:

Not AGM presented material, but linked on the webpage was the statement of faith document (from the Alliance). Why is God as Creator not mentioned in that? Pass that question along for me!!

Response:

Thank you for this observation. We will pass this question on to the District.

Question #5:

Given that there is a large surplus in the compassion fund, we need to prayerfully consider what God would have us do. Those who donate to the fund, want to see it used, not just sitting there.

Response:

Agreed. Please join us in prayerfully considering how God would have us use this fund.

Question #6:

A deadline date for the decision and direction from PST group.

Response:

The PST and Elder Board are discerning the path forward. As with any undertaking with such a scope, there will be a series of decision points as we move forward. The proposed schedule shared at the Westhills Town Hall on November 12th includes research, a detailed vision, engagement with elders and Westhills family, concept development, and a presentation proposed for June 2024. This process will also be communicated to the broader RPC congregation.

Question #7 (a):

As was stated, each site has now been staffed up individually with young leaders. I'm great with the young leaders, but where does this go from here? As each site becomes autonomous are we moving away from the multi site model and the efficiencies it brings. At what point do the sites become independent? It would seem that the central lead team becomes redundant and not needed. At this point the site leaders have the additional burden of the central entity, is that necessary?

Response:

The RockPointe Lead Team is not purely a central team, rather is made up of the site pastors from each site and some central support staff. The sites are not independent and together remain RPC, consistent with its multi-site model. The site pastors participate in the Lead Team which is taking on some of the roles of the previous Lead Pastor job in shared oversight of the various expressions. Finance, HR, administration, and facilities remain primarily centralized to avoid duplication of staffing at each site. Also, one of our great strengths of sharing a Teaching Team will remain in place. We remain RockPointe with a different leadership style focusing on shared accountability and responsibility, mutual submission, and transparency.

Question #7 (b):

In addition, as each site becomes autonomous, it becomes more and more difficult, as an example to vote for elders. I only know the Westhills people. Should I have voted for the others that I don't know or abstained? What does that then due to quorum?

Response:

RPC remains an entity composed of multiple sites with shared membership, finances, HR, leadership, and one Elder Board drawn from all sites. This has not changed. The Annual Report provides some background information on the Elder candidates for all members to review. You are free to vote or abstain for any or all of the candidates as you are led. This does not affect the quorum.

Question #7 (c):

What then happens with giving? Is it shared equally amongst the sites, and what about the debt? At this point it would assume Westhills is covering for the debt of Bearspaw and Bowridge? Not sure all of this has been thought through. On the other hand, if there is an autonomy of the individual sites, then there is more opportunities for more elders and engagement.

Response:

This question appears to be founded on the assumption that the sites are independent. Please refer to the answer to the first part of this question. At times each site will hold different monetary requirements. Bowridge went through a significant renovation incurring debt, Bearspaw is in the process of selling land to cover the cost of a roof repair, and Westhills has the potential of a significant upcoming capital investment related to finding a long-term home.

Question #8:

How long will the discernment process be for how to spend the compassion fund?

Response:

As is the nature of discernment, the timing of this is unknown at this time. We will seek to stay in step with the Spirit and trust in God's timing.

Question #9:

Just curious: why was the AGM moved from the end of September (as in the past) to mid-October?

Response:

The October timing of the AGM allows more time for preparation and publication of the Annual Report. September is a very busy month with the restarting of various ministries post-summer. Our bylaws require that we hold the AGM prior to the end of the fourth month following our fiscal year end, which is the end of October, so this year we thought we would experiment and see if the October timeframe helped with the September workload. All feedback we have received was positive so we will continue the October AGM but will shift the day of the week to accommodate those individuals serving at RPI on Monday nights.

Question #10:

Why is personnel spending 3% above the 50% target? Are there plans to hit the target?

Response:

As shown in the Financial Report, personnel spending in the Ministry Fund for fiscal 2023 was \$2.03M. Total expenditures for that period were \$3.98M, putting personnel at 51% of total expenditures. 2023 was a year of transition which included partial salaries of some staff who have been released. It is our intention to steward to this goal in 2023/24 and as we move forward.

Question #11 (a):

I would like to see a plan for how the compassion funds will be spent this year. People give to that fund expecting it to be used to help people and it feels like that isn't being done to the extent that it should be. It feels like we're hanging on to our treasure rather than being generous with it.

Response:

Agreed. Leadership is keeping this need visible as a part of our meetings and will continue to discern how God would have us use these funds. We welcome your prayers and input as we discover this together.

Question #11 (b):

Curious as to the number of people who call RPI home or are in its ministry scope. We have ministry teams of 4-5 people at our 3 main sites and only 1 person at RPI. That seems unbalanced given the increasing multi-cultural dimension of Calgary. Would like to hear more about RPI at our sites. We only hear that they need help on Monday evenings from time to time.

Response:

The weekly attendance at RPI for their Saturday service ranges from 45 to 60 people, and Monday night programs serve 60 to 90 people in the community.

RPI is supported by over 50 volunteers from our RPC family. It is a model for our other sites in honoring and engaging the congregation in ministry opportunities.

Question #11 (c):

Why is the 2023-2024 budget allocation for personnel expenses 62% of the budget when the target was supposed to be around 50%?

Response:

The 2023-2024 budget shows Personnel Costs at 1.76M. Total Ministry Fund Expenditures are 2.81M. The budget shows personnel costs as 62% of Ministry Fund Expenditures. However, the personnel target of 50% is derived from the Personnel Costs divided by Total Expenditures (not just Ministry Fund Expenditures). Total Expenditures in the 2023-2024 budget are 3.72M. The Personnel Costs represent 47% of Total Expenditures which is in line with the 50% target.

Question #11 (d):

If, according to the Dwayne's report from Westhills, the main issue with not continuing the lease at Ambrose is storage space for our stuff, can we not find another way to deal with our stuff? I doubt that any school or institution that rents us space will provide us with storage space.

Response:

This has been successfully addressed through negotiations between the PST and Ambrose for the short-term through August 2025. Ambrose continues to grow, has a shortage of storage space and has struggled supplying the resources for our weekly set up.

Regarding storage, Ambrose initially requested all of our equipment be stored outside so they could free up the two storage rooms in their gym that we use. Discussions were needed around our Tech/AV that cannot be stored outside. Ambrose is currently storing their equipment in the lobby under the stairs, however this is not a long term solution and impacts the aesthetics of their facility. Also, we have reduced the amount of classroom storage that we require.

The amount of equipment that we set up and takedown each week is significant. This has increased as we are now also setting up the chairs and floor protection which was previously done by Ambrose. This requires RockPointe to manage an additional team for this set up. Ambrose has been very gracious in working with us on these issues, which we have both compromised on, and we are thankful for the continued use of their space.

Question #11 (e):

Concern about the increasing separation of the 3 sites. Are we headed to 3 distinct, separate churches? If so, that seems to put Westhills at a distinct disadvantage without its own space but yet we have been giving to help pay off the debt of the other site's renovations/facility needs.

Response:

See response to question 3(c). RPC is moving towards more site autonomy regarding ministering to the unique needs of the local communities. The sites are not independent and together remain RPC, consistent with its multi-site model. The site pastors participate in the Leadership Team which is taking on some of the roles of the previous Lead Pastor job in shared oversight of the various expressions. Finance, HR, administration, and facilities remain primarily centralized to avoid duplication of staffing at each site. Also, one of our great strengths of sharing a Teaching Team will remain in place. We remain RockPointe with a different leadership style focusing on shared accountability and responsibility, mutual submission, and transparency.

At times each site will hold different monetary requirements. Bowridge went through a significant renovation incurring debt, Bearspaw is in the process of selling land to cover the cost of a roof repair, and Westhills has the potential of a significant upcoming capital investment related to finding a long-term home.

Question #11 (f):

Why were two elders concluding their service at Westhills but only being replaced by one elder (Ken Siemens)?

Response:

There were several factors that influenced this decision. One of these is the significant change in the board over the last 2 years. We had 5 new elders join last year and 3 this year which we feel brings enough change and new perspective at this time. Another factor was that if we considered adding another elder it would have been from Westhills and the membership list at this site is not as large as the other sites. We also noted that the size of our overall congregation has decreased. The board now consists of Ron Gray, Ryan Brammer, and 10 elders which we feel is an appropriate size given the governance needs of our church.

For this season, RPC has decided to engage one less Elder based on the work of the Nominating Committee in finding qualified and interested candidates.