

Dear Friends,

It's fast coming up to five years since Kathryn and I first arrived at RPC for me to serve as your minister. Time flies. To be honest, five years seems like five minutes. On one hand, it is as if we've been here for ages. Kathryn and I enjoy living in Sydney's East. More importantly, we love the church family and feel part of the community. On the other hand, our work has only just begun.

As we prepare to pass our 2027 Budget later this month, I began to reflect on what God has been doing at RPC and what I have learnt as your minister over the past five years.

Let me begin with a few examples of what God has been doing at RPC.

One thing God has been doing at RPC began many years before I arrived. RPC has a long, rich gospel heritage. From the outset, I was aware that our church expects its ministers to preach the Scriptures and to be pointed to Jesus Christ as the way, the truth, and the life. Your expectation of Christ-centred, Biblical teaching motivates me to dedicate myself to preaching.

God has been saving people at RPC. It's a joy to observe so-called "nones" and "dones" join RPC. "Nones" are those who have little, if any, Christian background. "Dones" may have been christened or grown up in church but have had little to do with Christian community for many years. The main reason that these folk have joined RPC is that either they come to faith in Jesus for the first time, or have come back to the Lord after many years of being away.

God has also been at work to bless RPC with a stable and faithful staff team and eldership. A church's health relies upon godly, prayerful, servant-hearted leaders.

I am grateful for the faithfulness and dedication of our eldership team. Each elder loves Jesus and His church, and is committed to RPC's values of the Bible as God's authoritative word for our beliefs and life, prayer to talk to God, church as holy community, and growing and training God's people for gospel service.

I work with the staff team on a daily basis. I am especially thankful that they are a skilled, godly and committed group of people. Kevin is now in his tenth year of ministry at RPC. He was called to be our associate minister four years ago. What a blessing it is to have had he and Jenny living and serving among us and for such a long time! They have had an effective and fruitful ministry here. Not long after I first arrived, Annette joined the team as a volunteer pastoral assistant. Then in early 2023, Christyn was engaged to provide administrative support. I cannot imagine how I would have coped without Annette or Christyn or Kevin.

So, what have I learnt about ministry in Sydney's East these past five years? There have been many lessons. I will mention just two.

I have learnt that church buildings matter and that we neglect them at our peril. I didn't always think like that. But being at RPC has convinced me otherwise, despite them being a constant worry. Our building is well located in the heart of Randwick. We regularly have people drop-in because of our visibility and central location. We can use our facilities for church activities without asking others for permission. Our building is a positive for gospel witness.

I have also learnt that the Eastern Suburbs has its peculiar challenges for reaching people with the gospel. Life is good in Sydney's east. Money is to be made. Pleasures are to be had. Beaches are to be enjoyed. How do we convince locals they need Jesus and that he is their greatest good?

Please join me in praising God for the good things he is doing at RPC and pray that as we plan for 2027, that we will use what He gives us to win lost souls for Christ.

God Bless,
Mark Adams