

Congregational Announcement

Good morning. I'm Pat Cowling, Vice-Chair of the Elder Board. As our board chair, Dan Bird, is away today, I have the privilege of sharing some exciting news with you about our lead pastor search. It's been quite a journey, and I want to take a moment to walk you through the process leading to a significant announcement.

As many of you know, our former lead pastor, Charles Stone, retired in March of last year. This set in motion a thoughtful and prayerful search for the next leader to guide West Park into its promising future. The elders, along with our consultant Steve Adams, engaged you, our congregation, in surveys, interviews, and 30 days of prayer to discern the qualities our next Lead Pastor should embody.

After an extensive search, we were presented with six exceptional candidates, one of whom truly stood out. We embarked on a thorough interview process, including meetings with the candidate's family, to understand his vision and alignment with West Park's mission. After prayerful consideration with his current leadership team, this candidate expressed the need for more time to discern God's will for both his ministry and West Park.

Although the initial candidate's journey took an unexpected turn, we pressed on, trusting in God's guidance and timing. We reopened the search, sought your prayers for another 30 days, and evaluated more profiles. During this time, our initial candidate and his wife engaged in 40 days of prayer and fasting which ultimately affirmed a call on his heart to move ahead with West Park.

With unanimous agreement from the Board of Elders, I am thrilled to announce that Ashwin Ramani is our candidate for the Lead Pastor position. Pastor Ramani has served at Centre Street Church in Calgary since 2012, displaying exceptional leadership and preaching to a congregation of more than 7000 people across various campuses. He is ordained by the Evangelical Missionary Church of Canada and holds a Doctor of Ministry from Asbury Theological Seminary.

Pastor Ramani, along with his wife Aboli and their four children, embodies a gracious and hospitable spirit that aligns seamlessly with our West Park community. He is a gifted and humble servant leader who shares our Vision, Values and Theology. He meets the criteria set by the congregational surveys.

To give you the opportunity to get to know Pastor Ramani better, he will be visiting on the weekend of February 11th, preaching in both English services. There will be other opportunities to get to know the Ramani family throughout the weekend. On Sunday February 11th at 3pm, we will hold a special business meeting in which the membership will vote to extend a call to Pastor Ramani as the next Lead Pastor of West Park. Lord willing, the Ramani family will officially join us on June 1st of this year.

In the meantime, we encourage you to engage with us in this process. A candidate information package will be emailed this afternoon if you are on West Park's regular email list. Copies are available at the Welcome Centre for those without internet access. Please take the time to watch some of the previous sermons by Pastor Ramani and plan to attend some of the events listed in the package. Should you have any questions, feel free to reach out to the Elders by emailing elders@westparkchurch.ca or speaking with one of us on a Sunday morning. We will be available at the Welcome Centre during the coming weeks.

Please continue to uphold this process in prayer, seeking God's guidance for both the Elders and the Ramani family. This is an exciting time for West Park, and we look forward to moving forward into our next season with unity and faith in God's ongoing provision.

Pat Cowling,

Vice Chair