InterServe
Ministries

Discovery Report

Roseville Lutheran Church, Roseville MN

Discovery Team Members

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Purpose

Help Roseville Lutheran Church (RLC) evaluate the current state of its youth and family ministry program and create a strategic vision for its future.

Process

Beginning in November 2025, the Discovery Team (DT) met approximately once per month for 90 minutes at a time. DT members were specifically invited to serve on this team based on their dedication to RLC's ministry to children and youth, and RLC overall mission. Each member was able to offer valuable feedback and a unique individual perspective that helped the DT honor the past, evaluate the present, and envision the future of youth ministry at RLC.

This group spent 2 sessions strategically thinking through the vision, mission, and values of RLC in relation to its youth and family ministry program, 1 session drafting congregational listening sessions, 1 session analyzing the results of those surveys, and 1 final session creating strategic planning proposals for future staffing and program models. This report is the culmination of that work, intended to be a guide for staffing and programming decisions for the next phase of youth and family ministry.

Faith Assets at RLC

Cultural Strengths of Children and Youth Ministry at Roseville Lutheran Church (RLC)

from Exemplary Youth Ministry Study (www.firstthird.org/eym)

The Faith Assets are elements that describe congregational culture and make-up a framework for congregations to use in developing the faith of young people. The study points to these 44 elements as ways and means through which congregations have, over time and with great

effort, built their capacities to influence the faith of young people. These elements are descriptive not prescriptive. Rather than being all encompassing, they are part of a growing body of knowledge about what it takes from the congregation, the family and the youth ministry to help young people's faith life grow to maturity.

Discovery Team members reviewed the 44 Faith Assets, and determined that the following Faith Assets were most applicable to the current Congregational and Youth Ministry culture at RLC. This is based on the personal experiences and perception of our Discovery Team members.

Initial Considerations from the Discovery Team:

- The assets below represent the overall culture of RLC as a whole, and are not exclusive to Children, Youth and Family (CYF) ministry.
- All of the below values could be sorted into two broad categories: **Outreach Partnerships** and **Faith Formation**.
    - **Outreach Partnerships** – includes Mission and Outreach, immigration, and social justice.
    - **Faith Formation** – includes CYF ministry, adult education, and aspects of worship.
- Categorizing Faith Assets in this way may help prioritize certain ministry initiatives and clarify the vision going forward for CYF ministry.

"Enduring Values" at RLC

What faith assets are strongest or most evident at RLC today (ranked)?

Primary Assets

- **Demonstrates Hospitality:** The congregation values and welcomes all people, especially youth. **Outreach Partnerships**
- **Promotes Service:** The congregation sponsors outreach, service projects, and cultural immersions both locally and globally. **Outreach Partnerships**
- **Encourages Thinking:** The congregation welcomes questions and reflection on faith and life. **Outreach Partnerships & Faith Formation**
- **Establishes a Caring Environment for Youth:** Youth Ministry provides multiple nurturing relationships and activities, resulting in a welcoming atmosphere of respect, growth, and belonging. **Faith Formation**

Secondary Assets

- **Makes Mission Central:** The congregation consistently witnesses, serves, and promotes moral responsibility, and seeks justice. **Outreach Partnerships**
- **Supports Youth Ministry (Pastoral):** Pastors understand, guide, and advocate for youth ministry and its adult volunteers. **Faith Formation**

"Emerging Values" at RLC

What faith assets would we like to prioritize most going forward (ranked)?

Primary Assets

- **Demonstrates Competent Adult Leadership (Staff and Volunteers):** Adults foster authentic relationships and utilize effective practices in youth ministry with a clear vision strengthened by training and support. **Faith Formation**

Secondary Assets

- **Encourages Thinking:** The congregation welcomes questions and reflection on faith and life. **Outreach Partnerships** & **Faith Formation**
- **Creates Community:** Congregational life reflects high quality personal and group relationships. **Faith Formation**
- **Uses Many Approaches:** Youth Ministry intentionally and creatively employs multiple activities appropriate to the ministry's mission and context. **Faith Formation**
- **Models Faith (Youth Director):** The youth ministry is a role model reflecting a living faith for youth and adults. **Faith Formation**

Recommendations from the Discovery Team:

- Seek a ministry candidate with giftedness that can uphold and elevate these Faith Assets at RLC.
- Pursue a ministry model that maintains and expands the scope of these assets to reach RLC families more broadly and more deeply.
- Pursue a CYF staffing and volunteer model that prioritizes programming and initiatives which support **Faith Formation** values, and allows for **Outreach Partnerships** initiatives to continue to be supported by other staffing and volunteer positions at RLC.

Congregational Listening Sessions
PROCESS OVERVIEW AND QUESTIONNAIRES

DT members designed and implemented congregational listening sessions, open to all members of RLC.

The first listening session took place on Wed, Feb. 4 with Confirmation students. Confirmation small groups met with their usual small group leaders and 1 member of the DT for a majority of the hour. The second and third listening sessions both took place on Sun, Feb. 8 after each worship service. Tables were set up in the Social Hall with 1 DT member seated per table, each with a posted discussion topic. Participants were invited to spend time at whatever tables/topics they were most drawn to, with the option to move between if ever/whenever they chose to.

When planning the format and drafting questions for the listening sessions, the DT's goal was to create a setting that was welcoming and approachable, and fostered open-ended group discussions. Participants were also encouraged ahead of time to be honest and forthcoming in their responses, and to not withhold constructive criticism. We had roughly 50-60 Confirmation participants at our Wednesday session, and 35-40 total participants (almost entirely adults) on Sunday. Links to the discussion questions are below:

Listening Session, Confirmation Students:
📄 Listening Session Template -- Confirmation

Listening Session, Congregation:
📄 RLC Listening Session template.docx

Desired Outcome for Youth at RLC
PER CONFIRMATION LISTENING SESSIONS

- Fun; chance to form and deepen friendships.
- Safe space to question and share.
- Connection to caring adults.
- Engaging for all learning styles.
- Relevance; topics tie directly to my lived experience.
- Purpose; Meaning; Identity.
- Spiritual and emotional support.
- Feel respected and valued.
- To know others and be known.
- Service; opportunities to value their neighbor.

Desired Outcome for CYF at RLC
PER CONGREGATIONAL LISTENING SESSIONS

- Youth to have an understanding of church as a place of love, belonging.
- Strong communication from staff.
- Community support; more opportunities to connect with other parents and families.
- Continued relationship with Wapo.
- Worship to be more inviting/inclusive of youth.

Recommendations from the Discovery Team:

- Seek a ministry candidate who has a passion and a vision for similar goals and outcomes.
- Seek a ministry candidate who can strategically shape the model of ministry at RLC to achieve these desired outcomes.
- Pursue a ministry model that regularly assesses and reflects on whether these goals are being achieved and makes adjustments accordingly.

Core Competencies
PER DISCOVERY TEAM ANALYSIS OF SURVEY RESULTS

- **Relational:** makes sincere personal connections with youth; relates faith to real life issues.
- **Visionary:** seeks new, creative ways to make church/faith more meaningful to youth.
- **Organized:** plans events and programs for youth; detail-oriented and efficient.
- **Empowering:** equips and supports adult volunteers in youth ministry. Develops service and leadership skills for youth.
- **Communicator:** effectively communicates the vision of the ministry, as well as specific programming details, with families and volunteers.
- Models Faith: models a living faith for youth and adults.

Reflections from the Discovery Team:

- The Relational competency seems to be overwhelmingly the most desired competency for this position from both the youth and adult participants. For these respondents, being a Relational Children, Youth, and Family staff person is the cornerstone for the relationship-building aspect of this ministry. The desire for the incoming staff person to have a strong congregational presence, as well as a presence at community events, would also be included in the Relational competency. Per all the listening sessions, there is a universal desire for this staff person to create personal connections with youth, as well as parents and families. Crucially, this competency relates not only to the desired qualities of the eventual staff person, but also the desires for the youth ministry culture as a whole—inspiring authenticity and relationship-building *in others* is essential.
- As mentioned above, youth participants most often cited the importance of building authentic relationships with their friends in the program. In many cases, especially for high school students, there is a strong desire for more of these opportunities to be offered at RLC. The Visionary competency will be essential to this effort. The Discovery Team talked about how that wouldn't necessarily mean bringing in a person with a pre-established plan for how to update the ministry model at RLC. Rather, this is a competency that indicates someone who is willing to be open and attentive to the needs of the context, to listen to those needs as they are voiced, and to seek a creative solution accordingly. In some cases, this may mean trying ministry initiatives that

struggle or fail and having the necessary tools to anticipate challenges and plan accordingly, to troubleshoot, to pivot, or to start over with a new approach.

● Especially as we consider new, adapted, or expanded ministry initiatives, having a staff person with a strong Organizational competency will be an essential part of the process. This is congruent with the adult's desire for a Relational CYF staff person–adults want youth to feel personally connected to CYF staff and other members at RLC, youth are specifically looking for more opportunities to make meaningful peer-to-peer relationships. Both top competencies point to the same values of connectedness, relationships, and authenticity. Once again, the idea that this staff person would be equipped to inspire authentic relationships *in others* is essential.

● The Empowering competency affirms the high level of importance for the volunteer work at RLC and how volunteers contribute to the success of CYF ministry . There are ministry areas that are heavily supported by volunteers– including Confirmation Small Groups, VBS, and seasonal events (e.g. the Christmas Program, Dresser Build, etc.). There are other ministry areas where there is room for volunteers to take on a more involved role, such as RLC Kids or summer mission trips. In all of the above, CYF staff would need to continue to offer continual leadership. This would include volunteer recruitment and support for members, especially as a strategy for inviting new ideas and avoiding volunteer burnout.

● Seeking a candidate who is Organized (detail-oriented) and a good Communicator are together perhaps the most catalyzing competencies for all others on the list—Relational, Empowering, and especially Visionary are all much less effective without the underpinnings of a well-structured model of the broader ministry. The DT also drew connections between the Organized/Communicator competency and the Visionary competency, and the importance of strategically executing a vision through good collaboration, effective communication, and reliable execution.

● Modeling Faith is a key competency for anyone interested in a ministry position, especially when working with youth. For many young people who go through our Children's or Confirmation ministry programs, their parents are the primary role models for living a life of faith–and some students may not even have that. For any young person, the idea of growing into adulthood while living a life of faith may feel confusing, exclusionary, inauthentic, or otherwise out of reach. It is important for young people to see this ministry staff person as someone who is committed to the Gospel and the mission and vision of RLC in their daily lives. This isn't a desire for someone to be perfect; but rather someone who is committed to working through the same faith struggles as anyone else with humility, grace, and authenticity.

● There are opportunities for a person with a minor deficiency in one competency to compensate for that through another competency. As an example, leveraging recruitment and volunteer training (Relational/Organized) in order to establish and lead a volunteer Youth Team dedicated to imagining new youth ministry initiatives (Visionary) could be an effective model, if such a model was well-suited to the ministry candidate's strengths.

Guiding Principles for CYF Staffing and Programming at RLC
PER THE DISCOVERY TEAM

Relational	Educational

• Seeks to know more about others
  • Asks thoughtful questions
• "What's going on with you now?"
 	
Values
o Community/Connection
o Belonging/Hospitality
	• Seeks for others to know more
	  • Provides thoughtful answers
	• "What will you need to know later?"
	
	Values
	o Learning/Knowledge
	o Development/Growth

Recommendations from the Discovery Team:

• Seek a ministry candidate whose strengths and priorities in ministry align much more with the **Relational** Model of leadership above.

• Pursue a ministry staffing and/or volunteer model that can provide essential support for the Educational Model functions of the role, shown above.

Innovative	Administrative

• Present, with Futuristic view: "How does this shape where we're going?"
  • Big-Picture oriented; imagines
  • Strong communication: articulates vision
 	
Values
o Exploration/Curiosity
o Vision/Relevance
	• Present, with Historic view: "How does this reflect where we've come from?"
	  • Detail oriented; executes
	  • Strong communication: provides information
	
	Values
	o Stability/Consistency
	o Efficiency/Implementation

Recommendations from the Discovery Team:

- Seek a ministry candidate whose strengths and priorities are fairly balanced between the two models above, but lean toward the **Innovative** Leader model above.
- Pursue a ministry staffing and/or volunteer model that can provide essential support for Administrative functions of the role, shown in the model above.

Special Considerations from the Discovery Team:

- Although youth engagement is a prominent concern for many people in the congregation, the DT recognizes that attendance is not always the most reliable metric of a youth ministry's overall health. Especially as this ministry continues to adapt to changing circumstances in this next phase of ministry, it is essential that ministry leaders at RLC prioritize the values named in this report, with an understanding that our progress may not be easily quantified.
- Although the DT believes that a person who exhibits the Core Competencies would greatly strengthen Children, Youth, and Family ministry at RLC, the DT recognizes that no one person will be able to, on their own, address all the concerns brought forward in the survey. In the next section, we'll look at potential staffing models to help support the efforts of the incoming Children, Youth, and Family ministry candidates.

Program Recommendations

PER DISCOVERY TEAM

Sunday Education Hour – Restructure

The current Sunday worship model, especially as it relates to RLC Kids, involves children leaving worship during the sermon and having 10-15 minutes of educational and fellowship based programming. While this model was a useful change during COVID and immediately after, it's no longer ideal for children or their families.

There have been some discussions outside of the Discovery process considering a change to the Sunday morning worship structure that would include an hour-long break between worship, possibly starting Fall 2026. The DT supports this proposal, for a number of key reasons:

- Having an hour-long break between worship would grant more time for the youth to be together at RLC Kids (probably a 45 minute program block within the hour-long break). This affords more opportunities to deepen educational and fellowship ministry goals.
- One combined session allows for children from both worship services to participate in one larger group for RLC Kids. There are many benefits here, including a more unified RLC Kids community, greater engagement, and a more consistent experience.

- Some parents (and elementary-aged youth) from our conversation groups expressed a desire for more regular music opportunities for kids. Part of that extra time could include opening RLC Kids with camp songs or other music opportunities.
- An education hour keeps youth in worship during worship time, which aligns more closely with our values of worship being inclusive to people of all ages.
- There are greater opportunities for Sunday morning fellowship with age groups that do not feel a strong sense of belonging or connection within their peer groups. This is especially true for 4-6th graders, middle schoolers, and high schoolers. A dedicated education hour may offer an opportunity for these age groups to have their own fellowship programs outside of RLC Kids.
- Many parents expressed a desire for more opportunities to connect with other adults on Sundays. With this new worship structure, they could join Adult Ed, or have coffee in the Social Hall, or perhaps participate in a new ministry initiative dedicated to fellowship for parents of young families.

This model would likely require a larger volunteer coalition, especially if multiple programs for different age groups are eventually implemented. The CYF Intern position could continue to oversee RLC Kids, and the incoming CYF staff person would likely be responsible for volunteer recruitment and overall organization for other age groups.

New High School Ministry Initiatives

From the beginning of our Discovery process, one of the most obvious gaps in ministry at RLC is with high-schoolers. Although this is an understandable and fairly common situation for churches, the DT strongly recommends making this a CYF program focus going forward.

This will require a certain amount of trial and error, patience, and adaptability with new program initiatives. Although the DT can't prescribe an exact program model for high school ministry, there are a few opportunities that should be considered:

- The middle school Service Learning Trip has a couple years of momentum, continuing this summer. Especially as those students age up, this is a great opportunity to offer fellowship and meaningful service to high schoolers in future summers.
- Regular fellowship opportunities–offered either on Wednesday nights, Sunday mornings, or as monthly events–would offer high schoolers predictability with their schedules and consistent connection with their peers.

Confirmation Ministry Adjustments

The two most consistent pieces of feedback from Confirmation students were:

- Time with my small group is incredibly valuable. Small group time offers the most opportunities to connect with my peers, to engage directly with the material on a personal level, and to feel relaxed and "myself" in a church setting.
- Large group teaching is difficult to sit through, and I don't always understand how it relates to me or my life.

With this, the DT would like to propose adjusting the breakdown of Large Group/Small Group from 30 minutes each to possibly 15 minutes Large Group, 45 minutes Small Group. This is something that could be planned for and implemented starting Fall 2026. Additional considerations :

- This may require a more robust system of recruiting, equipping, and supporting volunteers, given that their leadership would take on a larger role in the goals of the program. As an example, there may need to be more time dedicated to the Confirmation Leader meetings each night before class starts, to allow staff more to check in with volunteers and offer support.
- Some of the existing curriculum would need to be adjusted–large group lessons would need to be streamlined and small group materials would need to be expanded.
- This might open up the candidate pool somewhat, as duties for leading Large Group Confirmation might not require as much formal theological training as the current model.

Formation of a Volunteer CYF Ministry Team

This would be a volunteer-led, staff-supported team that would report to council in some capacity. Creating this volunteer team would afford several ministry opportunities:

- Regular, structured feedback from leaders within the congregation. This could range from brainstorming and troubleshooting specific programs or events, to the broader visioning of overarching ministry goals.
- Delegation of specific ministry responsibilities. The CYF Ministry Team might choose to take ownership of one or two specific CYF initiatives, and work together on planning and execution. The question of what specific initiative(s) would be up to the Ministry Team itself, but some ideas for RLC might be working on monthly Youth Fellowship events, or regular Sunday education-hour programming for a specific age group.
- More of a network-based, community focus on volunteer recruitment, rather than invitations to serve coming solely from individuals on staff. Peer fellowship and support for parents and other adults connected to the CYF program.

Staffing Recommendations

PER DISCOVERY TEAM

The DT discussed two primary options for hiring and staffing this CYF ministry position:

A. Creating a job posting and hiring for one CYF full-time staff person (40 hours).
B. Creating multiple job postings and hiring multiple candidates at half-time or partial time (10-20 hours), totaling at-or-near 40 hours.

After careful discussion, there was consensus that both of these two staffing models could be successful, and that the pros and cons of each were worth including in our report.

Considerations for a Single, Full-Time Staffer

- With a single full-time staff person, a majority of the responsibilities would fall to this one person. This would have the benefit of creating a more centralized program model.
- Quality candidates with specific gifts in ministry might be more likely to look for full-time work, with benefits. Theoretically this person would be able to stay on staff for several years, building up a program and developing relationships within the congregation.
- This would likely require an external posting, for which there may not be a very wide pool of qualified candidates.

Considerations for Multiple, Part-Time Staffers

- With multiple part-time staff, there is an opportunity to look for candidates within the congregation. In previous contexts, InterServe has been able to help members from within a congregation who are available for part-time work to transition into a staff role.
- Even with one or two part-time staffers, some ministry responsibilities named in this report might still need to be covered by volunteers. This can a very successful, team-based model that might also include any combination of the following:
  - Unpaid volunteers or volunteer teams.
  - "Super" volunteers who receive a stipend for their work (usually 5-10 hours).
  - The creation of a CYF Ministry Team. As mentioned above, this recommendation would be valuable under both staffing models, but could potentially have a more robust supporting role under the multi-staff model, if needed.
- With a multi-staff model, there may be more opportunities to hire candidates with specialized qualifications or callings. A quality candidate with skills that skew towards Children's Ministry, for example, would be a great fit for a team-based, muti-staff model.

While considering both options, the DT realized that the greatest determining factor would be the availability of candidates. The DT has a slight preference for pursuing a single-staff model initially, with the option to pivot to a multi-staff model if hiring prospects are scarce for full-time candidates. Ultimately, the DT will consult with RLC staff and council before additional steps are taken.