

SEPTEMBER OPENER SCRIPT
SEPTEMBER 8, 2019
PASTORS CAROLYN & ED
VISION

[Slide 1: Cover Slide]

PC: Good morning and welcome to our September opener! I hope you have been enjoying the chance to be together, worship together, and grow together this morning. Ed and I are excited to share with you vision for this coming season at New Life.

PE: Yes, we are. Carolyn and I spend a lot of time talking about the church, about each one of you and what God is doing in your lives. We also meet every Tuesday to discuss short-term and long range plans to make sure we are on the same page and moving forward as a church.

[Slide 2: Staff Meeting]

PC: Those meetings can go anywhere from an hour to a couple of hours or even all week if certain things take more time to discuss.

PE: So this vision we are sharing today will be familiar and yet freshly stated. Carolyn and I have been talking for months about these things. I'm sure some of that has leaked out during meetings, conversations, and Sunday messages. Let's do the big reveal and show you where we are going.

[Slide 3: Vision]

PC: We are a church "On Mission". Loving God, reaching people. Our vision is to see this mission progress by building a strong and healthy church family, as well as building a strong presence outside our four walls in the surrounding community. These are the key things we are looking towards in this next season, healthy church family and a strong community presence. Ed, why don't you start us off with one of the ways we can build a healthy church family?

[Slide 4: Life Groups]

PE: One of the ways we've been discussing is through Life Groups. We have three groups ready to begin during the third week in September. Through these groups we can be involved in each other's lives outside of Sunday morning.

PC: I'm so excited for this. You and I have built lasting relationships through Life Groups in previous churches and we know the same will happen there. What can a person expect at a Life Group?

[Slide 5: Life Group Funny]

PE: Okay not quite like the cartoon. But definitely a time to find things in common! You can expect time to talk with each other, time to pray for each other, and some time studying the Bible together. Each group will have its own unique flavor. Some will have music, others will not. Some might have regular coffee, some might have decaf. We are encouraging everyone to try out our groups and settle into one that is a good fit for you. Carolyn you pointed out to me that through these groups people grow together and we learn how to do healthy relationship. Talk about what that means.

PC: A marker of a healthy and strong church family is doing the messy stuff of relationship well. This means speaking the truth in love, navigating conflict together rather than shying away from it, it means not hanging onto bitterness or resentment. It means not slipping out the back door if you don't like something.

[Slide 6: Loving Others]

It means not making assumptions about another person's actions or behavior and instead asking good questions. We get to know one another greatly through the friction of hard stuff.

Proverbs 27:17 says, *"As iron sharpens iron, so a friend sharpens a friend."*

[Slide 7: Proverbs 27:17]

PE: Yeah but that can be hard, neither one of us really enjoy conflict. It often hurts.

PC: This is so true. I don't really enjoy conflict but I've noticed over the years that if I am willing to engage in times of conflict rather than walk away then often those are the people I end up closest to. We've walked through things together and worked it out. This has brought strength to our relationship. To be clear, I'm not saying we should all go pick a fight with each other.

[Slide 8: Ephesians 4:31-32]

I'm just saying, Ephesians 4:31-32 is a great marker for how this can look, *"Get rid of all bitterness, rage, anger, harsh words, and slander, as well as all types of evil behavior. ³² Instead, be kind to each other, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, just as God through Christ has forgiven you."* Ed you mentioned something else to me that will give opportunity for us to build a strong and healthy church family.

PE: Yes, we also have other groups that build up and encourage each other. Things like men's and women's breakfasts, worship team practices, youth ministry events, young adult times together, and special events for our church family like worship nights or prayer times that encourage us to connect both with God and each other. There is also a new opportunity coming this winter that will help us grow strong and healthy that you've been putting together Carolyn. Talk to us about that.

[Slide 9: Micro Campus]

PC: Sure. It's Pacific Life Bible College's micro campus. We are looking at bringing credited Bible college classes here. It's a small investment with big returns. People who wish to build a Bible College education can do classes with us and receive proper credits and marks from PLBC. People who just want to dig into God's Word can do it for audit which means no cost and no assignments. These classes are all newly revised and will cost half of what it would be to do them on campus in Surrey, BC. It's taking off in many of our cities. I'm passionate about seeing us dig into the meat of Scripture together. So be sure to listen for more information.

Well, that's part one of our vision. The second part has to do with building a strong presence outside our four walls in the surrounding community.

[Slide 10: Event Collage]

PE: We got our feet wet this year with a Trunk or Treat event, a Bike Rodeo, serving at the Salvation Army, and the Great Giveaway event. We want to make sure this important part of our mission and vision stays front and centre and doesn't fade. With that in mind we are putting together outreach team leaders who will bring ideas to the table to reach our community on a regular basis. Our goal would be to see those team leaders joined by an outreach team that would give support and invest in those ideas.

[Slide 11: Ingrown Church]

PC: I agree. The trend for churches is to have a season of passionate outreach, then shift back inward to discipleship, then outreach fades once again into the background and the church becomes ingrown. Because reaching people is a part of who we are, we want to make sure that part of our identity doesn't fade. We also have observed that many in our city don't know we exist or have negative ideas about who we are. We want our presence in the community to leave a good taste in people's mouths so to speak. Also, we must be reaching out the poor, Scripture is very clear on our responsibility and God's promise to that end.

PE: What do you mean?

[Slide 12: Isaiah 58:10]

PC: Isaiah 58:10 says, *"Feed the hungry, and help those in trouble. Then your light will shine out from the darkness, and the darkness around you will be as bright as noon."* I believe if we are not reaching out than scripture is clear that no matter how many cool events we host or how many discipleship type things we do our light will be dim in our city. We must be reaching out to the poor in body and the poor in spirit.

PE: This is great, I'm excited to see our passion as a church for this continue to build. Our time serving together this summer was so encouraging and exciting! So how do we make sure people are prepared to ministry to others? What will be doing with that?

[Slide 13: DWJD]

PC: We will continue to emphasize the techniques many of us learned together last winter in the Doing What Jesus Did series. Through that we learned how to lead someone to Christ, how to pray with someone to be baptized in the Holy Spirit, how to hear God's voice, how to pray for someone to be healed, and how to pray for strongholds to be broken in a person's life. You'll see us putting it into action more on Sundays and during our Life Groups by practicing on each other in a very authentic time of ministry and in a safe place.

PE: I think this is so great. We have already seen fruit in people's lives through that series and it gives us an effective, non-threatening way to make an impact in people's lives personally. Jesus' ministry grabbed the attention of those who did not yet know Him. I believe He still does that as we allow ourselves to be used to pray for and see miracles happen. People are drawn to the things Jesus does.

[Slide 14: Salt and Light]

PC: Absolutely! I also believe that once we've received these things for ourselves, we can't help but get excited to share them. Next Sunday we are going to begin a series called Salt and Light. We will be looking at the ministry of the Holy Spirit and how the gifts of the Spirit operate to encourage our body and by extension impact our world. We won't just learn together but there will be an opportunity each week for altar ministry for those who would like to receive. We are going to witness the Holy Spirit's work and we are going to witness the gifts in operation in a very deliberate and intentional way. I believe people are going to be unstuck in areas where they've been held back and I believe people are going to be empowered in a new way to reach out world.

[Slide 15: Matthew 5:13-16]

PE: Yes, all of this comes from Matthew 5:13-16, *"You are the salt of the earth. But what good is salt if it has lost its flavor? Can you make it salty again? It will be thrown out and trampled underfoot as worthless.*

¹⁴ "You are the light of the world—like a city on a hilltop that cannot be hidden. ¹⁵ No one lights a lamp and then puts it under a basket. Instead, a lamp is

placed on a stand, where it gives light to everyone in the house. ¹⁶ In the same way, let your good deeds shine out for all to see, so that everyone will praise your heavenly Father."

PC: Exactly. The Holy Spirit gives our lives flavor that is appealing to others and the gifts of the Spirit in operation shine a bright light to our world that points to God.

[Slide 16: Vision]

This coming season we are going to continue to be a church "On Mission". Loving God, reaching people. Our vision is to see this mission progress by building a strong and healthy church family, as well as building a strong presence outside our four walls in the surrounding community.

PE: So how do we go from here today, how do we contribute as individuals to this vision?

[Slide 17: Joshua Statement]

PC: We stay committed to each other and we stay committed to reaching our city. We don't give up when the going gets tough. We say as together as Joshua in the Old Testament said, *"But as for me and my family, we will serve the Lord."* Today we can say together, *"as for us as the New Life family, we will serve the Lord."* Say that together.

Let's close in prayer that way and then close with "He Reigns" as a declaration of unity and faith for this future season together.

[Slide 18: Cover Slide]

PE: Close in prayer.