

The 3E Pathway | Encourage, Equip, Engage | Proverbs 29:18

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[0 : 00] Well good morning Ontario. Hope you guys have, we're warmly greeted this morning and what about this weather? I gotta admit it. Woke up, it was a nice storm. You know, coming from Hawaii over to here, a cold storm is actually really refreshing compared to, if you can think of the hot humid rainstorms that happen, the tropical storms in Hawaii.

It's definitely a big change in there. So today we're going to start a message series over the mission, the vision and the framework here at Ontario Community Church.

The idea for this morning is that we are going to see what God, God has some great plans for this place, for this church. And there's just a lot that we turn to the Lord for direction and God will guide us as we go.

So I have an opening question for you. So imagine for a moment you're lost in the wilderness. You could be lost in the middle of nowhere, you could be lost in the forest.

You have no map, you have no clear direction. How would you feel? You feel pretty lost, right? You kind of, for a lot of us, we might go into a panic, right?

[1 : 20] And we might be like, I don't know where to go. I might have to look at the position of the sun and I might have to figure out where the wind's flowing. Try to find a way to get out of the wilderness, right? You might feel that sense of panic.

And what difference would having a compass make? Or what difference would having a good old fashioned map or maybe a GPS, if it's working, assuming that it's working, right?

That would make you feel very different having that map or that compass and you can get out of the wilderness. As we begin our vision journey, I want us to think about how God is like that GPS. God is going to guide us. He is going to lead us.

He leads us in our personal lives and He leads us as a community. He leads us as a church. So to start off, I want to show you one of my favorite Bible verses in regards to mission, vision and direction from God.

It's going to be on the screen here. It's going to be Proverbs chapter 29 verse 18. Many of you may know it. It says, where there is no vision, the people perish.

[2 : 35] Now the translation that I'm using is from the King James version, not necessarily our ESV version. This particular translation, I believe it really conveys this idea here. It's a famous verse that it's talking about divine direction from God, from our Lord our God, when it comes to His people.

This verse not only speaks of keeping the law and following God in His direction and if you don't, you will perish. But it also can be used in having vision or having a sense of direction for our own lives, for organizations, for churches, for businesses.

And it's a very encouraging verse that we need to have vision in our life. The word vision in the Hebrew is defined as mental sight. It means revelation or it means a dream.

In the modern day context, that can mean it can go over a goal, it can go over direction on where you want to go. And certainly, when we read a passage like this, we should be encouraged to have vision in our life, vision for our personal walk with the Lord.

I hope and I pray that every single one of you are on a trajectory going towards the Lord, just like when we went over our study in Jonah. Don't run from God, go towards God. We need to have vision for our families.

[4 : 04] What is the purpose of our family? Is it to glorify God? Is it to bring forth children into the world that will know who the Lord is? We need to have visions for our friendships and our relationships, perhaps companies that you may own or even a smart business.

You need to have vision there. And today we will go over the mission, the vision and the process. But before I do, I want us to take a moment to pray and we'll go right into it. And so, Heavenly Father, we thank you for this time and this opportunity for us to gather together as we are going over the 3E process.

The mission, the vision and the framework for our church, Ontario Community Church. We ask that our minds be open to you and your way and that our hearts are open to live and love like you. You God are in control and we wish to submit our intentions. We wish to submit our lives to you. And without you God, we are nothing. But through you we find a new life, we find new identity, we find salvation that exists in Christ alone.

We thank you so much once again for this time and being able to come to this place and being shielded away from nature and the storms that's going on.

[5 : 26] You protect us. Lead us and guide us as you always have. You're always there for us. You are the constant and an ever-changing world. And we say these things in Jesus Christ, the Son of the Living God. We say this all together. Amen.

So years ago, I was working at a church that was located in the middle of a desert. And this church was located in a former, a decommissioned military base.

And sadly to say, the town in which this church was in was not thriving. In fact, what was happening was the infrastructure that once existed in the military base was crumbling.

So you have this church that was located. It was doing well at the time, but the surrounding area was crumbling. You see, the church was not dead, but it wasn't in a location that it could effectively do ministry anymore.

It was in a location where they had to think, where could we go? But more importantly, where could God lead us to do effective ministry in this city?

[6 : 36] Efforts had been made to maybe let's get the military base opened again. Let's purchase some of these apartment buildings. Let's see if the city will come in and restore it, but to no avail.

Unfortunately, there was a lot with lead poisoning and there was a lot of just weird things going on in that military base. And although the situation looked, it was not an ideal situation to be.

The pastor and the staff, the board, the church, they all got together. They prayed and they asked God for divine direction. They asked God, where are we to go? It's going to be stepping out into daring faith, if you will, putting full trust in God for where we're going to go.

This church was going to God for direction, but they were planning for such a mood, much like how we as people should do. We can make plans and with our plans we offer it to God.

How often do we have a five-year plan and we submit it to God and God makes some major or even minor adjustments to our plans? There's a funny joke that I like to think of, and may not be funny when you're in the situation, but if you want to make God laugh, show him your plans, because God will alter plans as things are going on.

[7 : 56] But certainly we still should be encouraged to make plans, submit them to the Lord, and God will work with us. It is critical for any church, for this specific church, they came to God.

And it's critical for us as a church to come to the Lord and ask for that direction. Where should we go and how should we be as a church? I'm reminded of Proverbs chapter 15 verse 22 which says, without counsel, plans fail, but with many advisors they succeed.

This comes with the sense of having people coming together and planning together. There's also a sense of trusting in God in all seasons of life. We should trust our Lord, our God, no matter what season you're in, whether you are in a new relationship, whether you're entering retirement season, whether you have the birth of your first child, whatever season you're in, maybe you're entering college, whatever it is, trust in the Lord.

I'm reminded of the famous passage in Proverbs chapter 3 verse 5 through 6, many of you know it, trust in the Lord with all of your hearts, and do not lean on your own understanding.

And in all your ways acknowledge Him and He will make straight or make your paths straight. He will adjust. The church that I worked for made a commitment to work for God, to submit to Him and allow God to guide them.

[9 : 28] Proverbs 16 3 says, commit your work to the Lord and your plans will be established and these plans are established by God. This church, although it was established, they needed a mission, vision and framework, much like any church does.

So where do we turn to for direction? My friends, we can look at the pages of Scripture for where, how we should conduct our lives. Look, the Bible has the story of salvation. It has the story of how we can come to Christ, the miracles that Jesus Christ performed. Turning water into wine would be an amazing thing to see. The parting of the Red Sea would be an amazing thing to see.

Jesus walking on water, there's many miracles, but there's also wisdom in Scripture that we can use. We turn to the pages of the Word of God to be able for God to guide us wherever we go. The church is a beacon of hope. It is a place where we love God and we love people. The church is a place where we come to learn about the Word of God. We learn what it means to be a Christian. [10:40] We certainly should be encouraged to make a decision for Christ. We certainly should be encouraged to be baptized. We certainly should be encouraged to become members of a church, particularly this church as well.

We should have that sense of encouragement. You should be equipped with the Word of God knowing what the Word of God has to say. Let me tell you, studying the Word of God and reading the Word of God, it's something that takes a lifetime to do.

I can't tell you how many times I have read certain passages in Scripture and how God spoke to me in those verses when I was a teenager or even when I was a child is very different than how God will speak to you as an adult or whatever season you're at in your life.

You could be going through the biggest crisis in your life. You could be going through the biggest triumph in your life, the greatest celebration in your life. And the Word of God will speak to you. That's something that's powerful about our God. We are made to love God and to love people. We are made to learn about who God is and the Word of God.

[11:53] And we are encouraged to lead others to Christ through service and through the sharing of our favor. And all of these things that I'm mentioning, my friends, are all based in the Word of God.

And in the end, the wonderful thing about this story, about this church that I was telling you, they sold their building. I'm not telling us to sell our building, mind you. They sold their building and they relocated into a more centralized location.

And the church had some hiccups, like all churches do. But the church is still existing. They did relocate twice actually. But they're doing very effective ministry for the glory of God.

Because when you follow the Lord, God will take you on a path of just some incredible, incredible things. You'll see things and experience things that are just remarkable.

And for the context of this church that had existed for years, when the military base was thriving, when the military base was established, they were doing so well, but the time was to act.

[13:02] And the time was for them to move to another location to do that effective ministry. And it was through working with that church and now working here that we use the Bible as a framework.

So I'd like to introduce to you what's called the 3E pathway. It is the 3E's stand for encourage, equip, and engage.

So here is our vision statement. Ontario Community Church, we are encouraging people. We are equipping people and we are engaging lives for Christ.

So what does that mean? It means we are encouraging people to love God and to love people. My friends, that is probably one of the most important things for any church to have.

To learn to love God with all of your heart. There is the equipping. And this is very important where we are equipped to know what it means to be a Christian.

[14:04] To make a decision for Christ is the most important step in your spiritual walk with the Lord. But it's the beginning. It's not the end. It's just like the word commencement when you graduate.

It is the beginning. It's not the end. So when you become a new believer in Christ, that is the beginning for you to grow in the faith.

And as you grow, engage. You engage the community. You engage people through service and through sharing in your faith. So I want to go over these three points.

So we encourage people to love God and to love others. Like I said, this is the first and most important part. When we worship God, when we're singing songs, when we're praising the Lord, we are loving God.

Look at the lyrics of what you're singing. What do they mean? What are they saying? These are songs that are really to get us to think and reflect on our lives.

[15:06] But more importantly, it is for us to intentionally focus on our Lord and our God and saying, thank you Lord. We praise you Lord.

We love you because you loved us first and foremost. Look, we don't have to come to the Lord as perfect people. We come in our current state.

We can be going through trials and tribulations in our life. We could just be okay. But no matter what you are going through, you can still come to the Lord and say, thank you God for this life that you've given to me.

I thank God for every moment, every second, because look, time is so short here on this earth. And when we come to praise the Lord, we thank God. That's just one part of it.

God's way is higher. God is holy. And God's arms are open for us to come to Him to make that decision. We don't look, I don't know where you all are on your spiritual journey.

[16:08] But what matters is that you can come to the Lord. John 13, 34 through 35, right? A new commandment I give to you that you love one another just as I have loved you.

You are also to love one another. But by this, all people will know that you are my disciples if you love one another. Jesus gave his disciples a new commandment that they love each other just as Christ had loved them.

Now that's a pretty amazing kind of love, right? I think of that song, Amazing Love. How could it be? We are to exhibit that love. It's one of the great encouragement that, like I said, God loved us first and foremost.

And we're to exhibit that love of Christ. 1 John chapter 4 verse 7 through 8. All of these verses are going to be in your notes. You don't have to turn there. There's a lot of verses here. So I'm trying to go over as quickly here.

Let us love one another, for love is from God and whoever loves has been born of God and knows God. Anyone who does not love does not know God because God is love.

[17:18] One of the many love passages here, right? That we should love one another. That is what we're commanded to do. We're reminded that love comes from God and we are, it's for us to love others.

It's a demonstration of the love that God has for us. And this is why we are that first point encouraging. Because we're encouraging people through loving God.

It's that love when you invite your friends or your family or people you interact with. It's through personal invitation. It's through that communication that you have with people.

Mark chapter 12 verse 30 through 31. Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind and with all your strength. You shall love your neighbor as yourself and there is no other commandment greater than these.

It is Jesus Christ who sums up the love God and love people. It's the summary of the law. It is Christ who made this declaration about love and we as Christians are to follow in the footsteps of Christ.

[18:27] 1 Corinthians is a very, very powerful passage chapter 13 verse 1 through 3. But it's basically saying if I speak in tongues, if I have prophetic powers, if I understand all mysteries and have all knowledge, but I don't have love.

What's it saying? I gain nothing. That can be a week ago and on and on about that passage and many of these passages. But all of this is for that first point.

The apostle Paul is saying you may have those gifts and those abilities, but if you don't have love, you gain nothing. Ouch! That's really hard, but it's to encourage us to love. It's to encourage us to love others.

1 John chapter 3 verse 18. Little children, let us not love in word or talk, but indeed and in truth. It's saying that the action is speaking louder than words. Certainly we can have conversations with people.

But what is the action that you do to exhibit love to others? It's just like the famous faith without works is dead passage in scripture. We show love through our action and in truth. We know that Jesus Christ is the way, the truth in the life and we are to go encourage people.

[19:42] It is the action. It is the doing. And what this looks like is we invite people to church. It may be that family member. It may be a co-worker. It may be your neighbor. Who is your neighbor?

That's a very profound question to think about. Is it literally the person next door or is it the person across the street? Is your neighbor down the street? Where does it end? At what point is it no longer your neighbor?

That's a very good question to think about. It is being present with others. It's offering to pray and be there with someone to show the love of Christ and encourage them to come to Christ.

The second point is to equip believers for spiritual growth. We want every person to make a decision for Christ. I want to make that very clear. And as they become Christians, they should grow in knowing the word of God and knowing what it means to be a Christian.

It's that yes moment. You receive the free gift of salvation. You begin on your spiritual journey in discipleship. To be a disciple is merely to be a student. It's to be a student of Christ.

[20 : 57] We always are learning. We're always growing, aren't we? We're always are. The things we learn as a young adult or as a teenager or as a child, it's going to be a different lesson than when you're 30, 45, 65, whatever ages you are.

We're always growing. Ephesians chapter 4, 11 through 13, it's talking about, he gave apostles, prophets, evangelists, the shepherds and teachers to equip the saints for the work of ministry for building up the body of Christ.

And it's this idea of being equipped. Do you realize that this is the one time in scripture where the word equip is mentioned as the act of equipping? Now, I know the word equip is used many times in scripture, but the act of being equipped, it's the one time that it shows up there.

So it's contextually, the word of God is saying that God gave leaders unique gifting for the process of equipping others. We as the people of God are to constantly be equipped on this process of growth.

Second Timothy 3, 16, all scripture is breathed out by God. I love this verse. It's profitable for teaching and reproof for correction, for training in righteousness.

[22 : 18] It's saying that God divinely inspired the word of God and we are to be equipped, right? We are to be prepared in this sense so that we can do every good work in the name of God.

I cannot emphasize this enough. Look, we are not saved by works. No, we're saved by grace through faith.

We are saved so that we can do good in the world. There is a profound difference between the two. Many other faiths make the opposite argument. You must do to be saved.

It's already been done by Jesus Christ dying on the cross. I want to make that very clear. Jesus died on the cross for us and because he died on the cross for it, that should be encouragement to go out into the world and to do good in the name of Christ.

Hebrews 5, chapter 5, verse 11 through 14. We can go on and on, but it's about this verse. It's saying you need milk, not solid food for everyone who lives on milk.

[23 : 38] He's talking about people in the church who need to go back to milk. But the idea, just like in 1 Peter 2, verse 2, like newborn infants, they long for pure spiritual milk.

I'm mentioning the milk passages, if you will, right? As babies, do you give a newborn baby a nice juicy steak? I mean, no, if you do, I think you got to rethink how you're feeding your newborn baby, you know?

You give them a bottle, you give them milk, right? And that milk is nourishing them as they're growing, right? And then there comes a point where your child is like, I'm done with the bottle. I want to try mac and cheese.

I would know nothing about this, you know? Not that my kids have mac and cheese all the time, not that that's one of their favorite foods. The idea is that we all start out just as infants who are drinking spiritual milk.

Well, eventually there comes a point where we no longer need milk. And we start going into 1 Peter, it's saying you may grow up, right?

[24 : 53] Or in Hebrews here, milk is for unskilled. Solid food is for the mature, who have their powers of discernment trained by constant practice to distinguish good from evil.

It's a process that we grow. We start learning more about our faith and we become mature adults. I can't, look, I don't mean to be critical of anyone when I'm saying this, but certainly I feel there's a problem that a lot of churches, they don't train their people.

We need to go in the Word of God. We need to go deep and learn the more intricacies of Jesus Christ, or to learn about wisdom literature, or we need to learn about the minor prophets.

It's just like why we went over the whole eight week series on Jonah. There are a lot of things that when you first read that, you don't really get. That's why we go in depth. That's why we have Bible studies. It's to help us grow on the process. And certainly here, we're not just going to have milk. I really hope that you guys can have an asparagus, or maybe some watermelon, or some steak, some mac and cheese, or potatoes and gravy, a variety of foods, if you will.

[26 : 12] I know that we can think of, well, what is a watermelon, Patrick? I don't know what the spiritual truth of watermelon is. The point is, though, we are to go deeper in the Word of God, and we are to grow.

And finally, we have to understand that to be a disciple, it's to be a student, it's a lifelong process. There is no end, however, there is a trajectory that we see that people are growing in their faith. It's just like in Sunday school, right? I can't help but think of Jonah as the example, right? You do the little coloring sheet with Jonah in the whale, right?

Nice little colors. As you get older, how is that connected with Scripture? Why is this wording here? You know, it's those kind of things.

So it's finally, just think of this idea. You're a Christian, you made that decision for Christ's sake. Maybe you just stopped baptized as well. Now what? Grow.

[27 : 10] Be encouraged to grow. And then finally, that third point, it's to engage people for service, to share in their faith. And as we are equipped on that path of spiritual growth, we should be encouraged to engage the community for Christ.

To make a decision for Christ is to be set free from sin. It doesn't give you that ticket to ride. So as you're learning and growing, be encouraged to be present in the community.

Be encouraged to share in your faith. Look, I know there's a lot of people out there that are like, well, look, I don't have a crazy testimony story where I was on the streets and I was doing drugs and I turned around for Christ.

You don't have to. You know what's the most encouraging thing that you can do if you don't have a crazy testimony story? It's just being present with someone. It's just being there for people.

It's exhibiting that love. And that's this final point, engaging people for service. We are the hands and the feet of God. We are to do good things for Christ.

[28 : 22] There are many opportunities where we can, yes, share in our faith, but also do good in the world. We're to make a difference. It's like, think of the times in Scripture where someone's asking for your coat or someone's asking for food.

Doesn't Scripture say something about that? Doesn't Scripture say that if someone's hungry, we should feed them? Doesn't Scripture say if someone's thirsty, you give them a drink?

How often do we do that? I gotta keep myself in check because sometimes when someone's hungry, I'm like, look, I got somewhere to be. But we should be encouraged though when someone's asking for food.

We give them food. Now, I know that hits home because it's like, well, should we give them money? What do we do with that? I know we have love ink that helps us, but also if someone specifically is asking for food, just offer them food.

You don't have to offer them money. That's between you and God. There's many ways to serve the Lord. We should be engaged in our community by serving with our time, with our talent and treasure.

[29 : 37] Matthew chapter 28 verse 19 and 20 says to go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, and baptizing them to observe all that I have commanded you and behold, I'm going to be with you.

It's the Great Commission. We are told to make disciples, to make students, if you will, of all nations. I love how that's the definition of disciple is a student because you're always learning from God.

It's a constant thing that's happening. We engage the community by sharing the gospel, by sharing our testimony and by serving the community. Now, how what that looks like from one person to the next, that may look different.

You may be better at sharing your testimony. You may be better at helping, helping feed people. It really depends. I would say that each person is different with that.

Scripture says we are to love God and to love people and part of that love is by serving God. By serving God and serving his people.

[30 : 51] Acts 1-8, it says you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you and you will be my witness in Jerusalem. Jesus promises that the Holy Spirit will give us power to witness to others because God is with us.

God gives us the tools. He gives us the ability, the opportunity, the strength to speak to people. Yeah, we forget nervous when we talk to people, right? And don't you get nervous when you talk to people about your faith?

There's something about that. I don't know why that is, but I think it's just going up to a stranger, if you will. But God gives us the tools to be able to speak to others.

You never know who God will have you speak to. Because perhaps God is going to use you in a certain moment to speak through you to someone.

You might share the gospel with them. You might just have a conversation. You might be going to a concert and just meet somebody who hasn't been to church and you just say, oh yeah, I go to this church or whatever.

[31 : 55] You don't know the impact that does. You probably will never see him again. When you're going to the coffee shop or you're going to a restaurant, you're going to the grocery store, you have no idea the profound impact that we have on others.

I have a really great short story to tell you. A long time ago, when I was writing my first book, I was working with someone to help do research with me, right?

This person was not a Christian, but I said there's some biblical themes here. Help me write the book, help me drop the outline. It was really great. That person, just by sending emails, chats, occasional phone calls, months after the book was published, I got maybe five copies bought, right? It wasn't really a success. However, you know the crazy thing, and I don't really tell people this story. I don't know why. Maybe I haven't found the right opportunity.

The person who worked with me came to Christ. Like three months later, got an email. I really appreciated working with you. It was an honor.

[33 : 12] And because of your interaction and kind of reading the contents of the book, I went to a church. I made a decision for Christ. I got baptized and now I'm active in the church.

And I'm like, interaction, just as I look, I would have never thought this person would have come to Christ. There's just someone to help me with organizing structure here.

But that goes to show you how much of an impact you can have on people. And we are encouraged to just by being yourself and say, yeah, I'm a Christian. This is how God's worked in my life. That's all the conversation was.

I had no idea this person like what do you mean you you went to a church you said you're not you made it clear you're not Christian. Well, yeah, but yeah, that's always a good one, right? Yeah, but I went to a church.

I became a Christian and now I'm not doing that kind of work anymore. Now I'm going to church and going to Bible study. It's it's remarkable. And I tend to think that although the book flopped God, God's will was done.

[34 : 23] And in the same way, God's will will be done through you. We should be encouraged by that. First Peter 4:10 as everyone has received a gift, use it to serve one another as good stewards of God, very of God's very grace.

Whoever speaks it saying serve. It's that final point to engage the community for Christ. Every single one of us has gifts, talents and abilities, and we are encouraged to serve others based on our own unique gifting.

Find out your spiritual gifts. Find that out and use it to serve God. God will be glorified in this. And I actually love in that first Peter passage.

He says serves by the strength that God supplies in order that everything God may be glorified through Jesus Christ, which is basically saying when you're serving God, God will be glorified.

God will be basically proud. He'll be glorified by you serving him by you using your gifts. That's an encouragement. Like when I read that, I'm like, man, I want to serve the Lord and I want to continue to serve the Lord.

[35 : 31] I want God to be glorified in this. This ain't about me. It's about my glory. This is about God's glory. God's given us everything that we are. Our lives, our families. Shouldn't we use that to

honor and glorify him?

It's definitely something to think about. Matthew chapter 5 verse 16, in the same way, let your light shine before others so that they may see the good works and give glory to your Father in heaven. We know that in scripture that God is light and in him there is no darkness. We should exhibit that light that comes from God. Let the light shine through you for others.

That is an encouragement. We are saved so that we can do good in the world. As a Christian, we are the hands and feet of Christ.

Ephesians 2.10, we are his workmanship created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand that we should walk in them again.

[36 : 36] Saved by grace through faith so that we can do good. I've got to make that clear to you guys. And this final verse is but an encouragement for us that we are created to make that decision for Christ and do good in the world.

What this looks like is believers serving in the church, serving maybe being a greeter, maybe helping in the tech team, but it's also sharing in your faith, serving in the community.

Certainly, I encourage all of you to serve in the church, but also serve in the community, sharing your faith. Let others know that you're a Christian.

Don't be ashamed of the gospel. Don't be ashamed of your faith. And so this is the 3D pathway to encourage love for God and others, to equip believers for spiritual growth, and to engage people in service and in sharing their faith.

As we close, I want us to imagine this church as a beacon of hope for people, for the lost. I want to remind us that we have the opportunity to reach people for Christ, to give hope to the hopeless, to help those in need, and to make a profound impact on the community.

[37 : 54] I want us to picture. I want you to look at, turn to the empty pew next to you. I want you to imagine a person who is not here, someone who is yet to come here.

Imagine someone who's sitting next to you, coming to Christ. Imagine their life being transformed. Imagine seeing someone become baptized.

Imagine seeing someone growing in their faith where they're learning, Jesus died for me. You know, my son, my son Aaron, my firstborn, he's not old enough to fully understand.

But I know one time he went to a good Friday service, right at the end of that. He's in the car. Jesus died.

I said, I'm going to make you tear up a little bit here, but that's right. Jesus died. And that made an impression on him. And I think that's, I hope that'll be with him for the rest of his life.

[39 : 06] Imagine lives being transformed just like it could be a child, could be an older person. With us being a church that has a clear vision for Christ, we will be an effective church that will grow in a healthy way.

You see, I want this church to grow, not necessarily in numbers. Numbers are good, but health is better. Have a healthy church that is sold out for Christ, that loves God, that worships and praises the Lord, that is growing in that constant state of being equipped and engages, engages in the community for Christ.

So with that, let's pray. Father God, we thank you for this time and this opportunity to come together to worship you, to praise you, to pray to you, and to be motivated to act, to be inspired to learn as you call us to serve.

We pray that this church will be a beacon of hope for those who are lost, that they may come to you, may they be restored in you, may they be on that path to grow in you.

May we be an encouraging church to love you and to love others. May we be an equipping church to equip people to grow and mature in you. May we be an engaging church to engage people and the community in your holy name.

[40 : 35] We ask that you are with us as we are preparing for our time of communion before we leave this place. We ask that you are with us, inspire us and motivate us to be with us now and forever.

It is in Jesus' name that we pray. We all say together, Amen.