

Defining Mission, Vision and Values Statements for Your Church

MISSION

The mission of a church is a broad statement that explains why we exist and it doesn't change often. For churches this is established by Christ and we essentially just get to say the same thing in our own words. For CofCQ our mission is "*Bringing the light of Christ into communities*". As a simple example, a church's mission might be "*making disciples and planting churches*".

Another way to express this is that a mission statement describes the purpose the church serves and the benefits it brings to its members and the community.

Questions to ask to help clarify your church's mission statement include:

- What do we do?
 - What ministries do we run?
 - What talents, skills, resources and experience does our congregation offer?
- Whom do we serve?
 - While we always seek to serve anyone we come into contact with in daily life, are there particular groups of people, or a particular location/area that our congregation is in contact with or passionate about serving?
- How do we serve them?
 - What practices, theories of change, programs, ways of doing life with people do we have/bring?

VISION

A vision is what a group wants to achieve in a defined period of time to contribute to achieving its mission. A vision statement is aspirational – it points to 1) where the congregation believes God is calling them to be in the future (usually in 3-5 years' time, or sometimes as far out as 10 years) and 2) the transformation they desire to see in their community and the world as a result of people coming to know Jesus and seeing God's kingdom come. A vision statement articulates the kind of future the congregation desires to see and what they're aiming to do towards that in a specific timeframe. This will always be grounded in both its history and its local, regional and global context as well as the kingdom of God.

For example, if a church's mission is "making disciples and planting churches", its vision for 2020 – 2025 might be "to establish 3 new church communities by 2025".

A way to check that your vision statement is a true vision and not a mission statement is that it is possible to quantify targets and goals and to measure progress towards it.

It is helpful to ask and answer the following questions when seeking God's vision for your church:

- Who are we?
 - What is our identity and history as God's people in this place? And how does/can that inform where we go in the future?
- What does God want to use us to do in our congregation, community and the world?
- What do we want this congregation and facility to look like in the future?

- Where do we want to be 1, 5, 10 years from now?
 - Do we have a vision and heart for a new ministry/expression of the Kingdom?
 - Do we want to reach a new age group/life stage?
 - What do we want people to see/think when they hear the name of our church, when they see our facility or when they meet people from our congregation?
- What are our hopes and dreams for our congregation, our community and the world?
 - As you meditate on scripture and the characteristics of God's kingdom, what does He place on your hearts collectively?
- What problem are we solving or what would look different in our community and world if we saw God's kingdom come and what part is God calling us to play in that?
 - As you see, hear of or research needs in your local community, what do you think your congregation could do to bring transformation?

VALUES

Values are principles, standards, or qualities considered worthwhile or desirable¹. *“Core values are defined as the passionate and consistent biblical core beliefs that drive your church's ministry. They are the primary principles upon which your church and ministry are built; they are the foundation.”*².

Defining your church's primary values helps your congregation and in particular the leadership understand who they are called to be and how they are called to act. Values also form the driving factor and guide for decision making with respect to church structure, staffing, ministry and even setting budgets. Values are often unspoken and many people don't realise they are what is driving their behaviour and decision making. This is why it is helpful for a church to work through and document their values so that everyone can understand them and use them as a framework for making decisions.

For example, CofCQ's values are:

- *Unconditional Love*
- *Mutual Trust*
- *Wise Stewardship*
- *Continual Innovation*
- *Safety*

EXAMPLES

Examples of vision, mission and value statements can be found at the following links and many more can be found through searching online:

- <https://www.scc.org.au/about-us/>
- <https://scofc.org.au/who-are-we/purpose-and-values/>
- <https://www.willowcreek.org/en/about/beliefs-and-values>
- <https://www.citylife.church/mission-values/>
- http://www.livinggodslive.org/downloads/MAP_-_Values_Statement.pdf
- <https://riversbaptist.com/about-us/what-we-believe>

¹ <https://smartchurchmanagement.com/church-vision-mission-and-values-statement/>

² <https://pd.church/what-does-your-church-value/>