

**The Birth
Of A Vision**



BIRTH OF A VISION

Personal Preparation

Working on the church's primary ministry statements may be the most important thing you do for many years. It is important that every individual involved in the process be in tune with God and each other as much as possible. This assignment will help you evaluate yourself and your relationship to others in your church.

Personal Preparation

Be sure you have uninterrupted time alone to complete this exercise. You may need to go to a special place to be alone without the possibility of interruption. That place won't be in your house or your office.

Take your Bible, pen and notepad. Also take along your cell phone (if you have one) but leave it turned off.

Think through and preferably write out answers to the questions provided in the Personal Preparation Homework.

1. Pray

Ask God to work in you personally and specifically during the duration of this visionizing process.

2. Study the Word

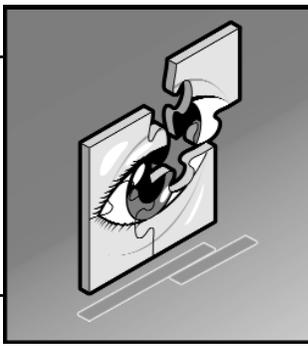
Read Philippians 3:7-15

- a. In what way can I say my personal attitude is like that of Paul?
- b. Which parts of this passage challenge my present attitude?
- c. Where do I fall short of the attitudes expressed in this passage?
- d. In verse 15 Paul promises that God will make clear to me anything that falls short of maturity. How would God do that?
- e. If God were to use another person to get through to me if I were hard-hearted in some area, who in our church would I like Him to use? Who would be the last person in our church I would like Him to use? Do I give God "permission" to use that person? If not, why not? How will I fix that?
- f. Am I being totally honest with myself?
- g. Am I willing to do whatever I believe God is telling me to do personally? In our church?
- h. Is there any hint bubbling up inside me that my motives might be self-centered or impure? If so, what will I do about that?

If you need to confess something to God do it now. If you need to confess something to someone, turn your cell phone on or get to another phone and do it now if it is appropriate. Perhaps you need some time or a face-to-face meeting with someone.

3. Study The Role of Vision

Conduct an honest assessment of the role of vision in the congregation. Answer the following questions for yourself and document your answers in point form.



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Personal Preparation

Who? - Defining the Vision and the Visionizer

- a. What is the present vision that is currently driving the congregation? Describe it.
- b. Is the original vision for the church still around? Does a pre-existing vision (a vision created by a person not presently a leader in the congregation) dominate the spiritual landscape?
- c. If the original vision or a pre-existing vision dominates the landscape, do I understand it well enough before I think about challenging it?
- d. Who is the key visionizer in the church? The original visionizer? Is that person at the helm today? If not, is the person at the helm today a visionary?
- e. Who are the best people to form the vision team, rework and reword the church's ministry statements?

Why? - Reasons for Reiterating the Church Statements

- a. What are the main reasons that are stimulating our reconsideration of vision at this time?
- b. Is the "vision talk" just another way of saying "we need a different leader?" If it is, how can I determine if the source is a preferred reality or rebellion against authority? How can I be part of the loving solution?

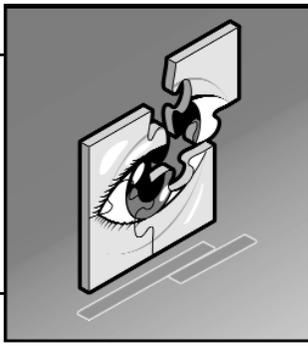
What? - Finding the Right Solution

- a. Would we be better off working at some other level and leaving the vision material for another day? If the resources are limited and the purpose is to generate a unifying force, could it be that developing vision material isn't nearly as important as some other unifying force?
- b. Will it take more vision to develop a vision? Sometimes practical leadership is more important than vision. Do we have a leader who is oriented to practical things and needs some trusted visionary friends to keep the big picture in view? Can I help fix it with more resources, more love, more opportunity or more education?
- c. Does the vision need to be reiterated, restated, revamped or retired? Can the old vision still work? Why would we try to change it rather than focus it?
- d. What are the key elements of the old vision that need to be retained? Are there key elements that someone would have died for? (If they are dropped unceremoniously, it is likely that there will be a big price to pay in burial fees!)

How? - Changing the Church Ministry Statements

Take a hard look at what your church has accomplished in the past 5 years. and remember "If we do what we have always done, we will get what we have always gotten".

- a. Compile adequate data. Write a report answering with adequate explanation the questions posed in this exercise. Examine your context (environment) by securing demographic and psychographic reports of both the church and the community. Gather and chart the following church statistical information: finances, attendance, new members, visitors, new converts, etc.



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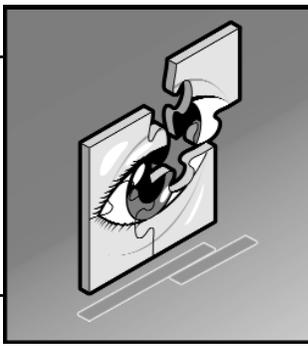
- b. Have a retreat for key church leadership. Discussion needs to take place over a period of time. Concentrated periods need to be included where there is time for uninterrupted extensive discussion with personal interaction.

4. Think About Leadership Cohesiveness

- a. Is there a high degree of trust and respect among our leadership group enabling us to dialogue with considerable openness about our perceptions and convictions?
- b. Are we able and willing to serve as a leadership group that balances the diversity of our makeup with the unity of our commitment to God's will for us?
- c. What is the level of conflict in the congregation at this time?
- d. How is that affecting our church and how may it affect our vision process?

5. Assess Task Willingness

- a. Are we willing and able to amplify a comprehensive ministry design and strategic plan to pursue the vision, insofar as such amplification and application is appropriate at this time?
- b. Are we willing and able to lead the congregation to discern God's vision so that it becomes clear, shared, compelling and the driving force of our entire church?
- c. Do we need to engage the assistance of a ministry facilitator from outside the church who has experience in leading strategic planning processes, to guide us. He should be knowledgeable, provide advice and help facilitate the process without influencing the direction of the final outcome. Those who must live with the results should make the decisions.



BIRTH OF A VISION

Statement Guidelines

In order to make the material your own, the following suggestions will help you structure your wording.

1. Establish Emphasis

If you wish to emphasize one concept above another consider the following techniques.

- a. Give it more words.
- b. Place it earlier in the statement.
- c. Use stronger words with it. (e.g. “passionate,” “especially,” “above all,” “essential.”)
- d. Make other concepts dependent on it. (e.g. “This” will lead to “that.”)

2. Be Creative

But not too creative. It is OK to use words that are tried and true. You don't have to find a new way to say it.

3. Be Clear

Use the simplest words you can find to express the full meaning.

4. Use Short Sentences

Avoid too many “thats” and “ands.” Use shorter sentences if possible.

5. Add Sizzle

Sprinkle in key words to add energy and emotion. Use strong verbs where you can, not adjectives or adverbs. Check your thesaurus and dictionary often.

6. Avoid Tentativeness

Not “we would like to” but “we are striving to”.

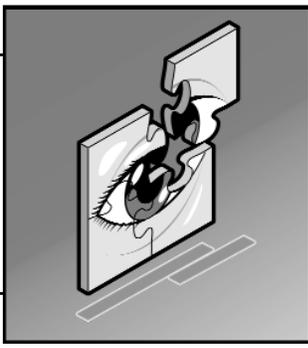
7. Be Definite and Future Oriented

Not every issue can or should be included in your Vision Statement.

8. Be Analytical

Answer the following questions about each possible inclusion.

- a. Is it important enough to warrant being in our Vision Statement?
- b. Can it be applied across the entire scope of the ministry? In other words, can others use it to refine or define more succinctly what they are doing?
- c. Since the Vision Statement is used with newcomers, would the issue under consideration be something that a newcomer would easily understand at first glance?
- d. Is the material brief enough to be memorable?
- e. Does the material express what we want to become? Does it captivate your spiritual imagination?



BIRTH OF A VISION

Mission Development

Mission Statement

A church takes its energy from the belief that Jesus Christ is Lord of the universe. He left instructions for only one organism on earth whose expressed purpose is to populate itself with people from every tribe and nation. There are many ways to express it but in the end it all comes down to fulfilling what Christians have called the Great Commission.

Therefore a Mission Statement for a church always states its intention to be obedient to Jesus in this matter.

Generally you will find that church Mission Statements include two or more of these overarching ministry functions: worship, instruction, fellowship and outreach.

A Mission Statement is general in nature and might apply to most any church. The purpose for having such a statement is that it motivates a church to stay on track.

Sample Mission Statement

To Respond. To Restore. To Reproduce.

Ourtown Community Church exists to glorify God through a passionate ministry that includes worship, instruction, fellowship, outreach and service.

We are committed to achieving the highest quality in our work(A) while building leaders for our world(P) and impacting the people of Ourtown(D). We will seek **to respond** with relevance to the needs of the people of Ourtown with the love of Christ(O) as a result of our devotion to God(W). We will seek **to restore** with care the people of Ourtown with the hope(O) that is in Christ as an extension of the supporting church community we experience(F). We will seek, through faith, **to reproduce** in others the work Christ is performing in our personal and collective lives as disciples of Christ(I).

Criteria of a Good Mission Statement

1. It represents the full scope of the mandate the church was given by Jesus Christ. It embodies those concepts that are true of every church. It tells those reading our mission statement that we are committed to worship, instruction, fellowship and outreach.
2. Because this mission statement is lengthy it embodies a church motto. In other words the motto and mission statements are integrated. The mission statement is simply a more detailed explanation of the motto.
3. We have to establish our emphasis. In this case, it gives equal balance to all the biblical elements in our ministry mandate.
4. It is clear. We have used simple words that express the full meaning.
5. It is specific. We told the reader for example that our standards are high and that we are going to build leaders and impact our town for Christ.

(for additional criteria see page 23)

Mission Worksheet

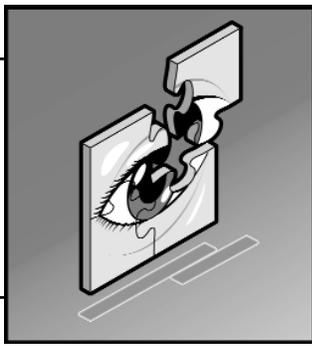
To Respond. To Restore. To Reproduce.

Ourtown Community Church exists to glorify God through a passionate ministry that includes worship, instruction, fellowship, outreach and service. We are committed to achieving the highest quality in our work(A) while building leaders for our world(P) and impacting the people of Ourtown(D). We will seek to respond with relevance to the needs of the people of Ourtown with the love of Christ(O) as a result of our devotion to God(W). We will seek to restore with care the people of Ourtown with the hope(O) that is in Christ as an extension of the supporting church community we experience(F). We will seek, through faith, to reproduce in others the work Christ is performing in our personal and collective lives as disciples of Christ(I).

Core Concepts	Motto	Short	Long	Vision Component
Preamble		Ourtown Community Church is	Ourtown Community Church exists to glorify God through a passionate ministry that includes worship, instruction, fellowship, outreach and service	
Worship	To Restore	a worshipping,	as a result of our devotion to God(W).	We believe in worship as the privilege of entering the presence of God to adore Him and experience His total interest in our lives. Worship is experienced in large and small groups(1) through various forms of expression(2), prayer(3) and in the individual's devotional life and service(4) involved in the process of personal growth and reaching out to others with the truth that is found only in Jesus Christ(2).
Instruction	To Restore. To Reproduce.	learning,	We will seek, through faith, to reproduce in others the work Christ is performing in our personal and collective lives as disciples of Christ(I).	We believe in instruction as the careful process of leading others to freely engage in the positive experience of the discovery of truth and obedience to that truth. This learning process involves knowledge of God's revelation(1), motivation to live out appropriate responses in life(2) and a commitment to follow Jesus Christ as Lord(3).
Fellowship	To Restore.	caring,	as an extension of the supporting church community we experience(F).	We believe in fellowship as a participation with each other in the family of God. The church has the privilege of welcoming and integrating all who voluntarily choose to associate with it and support its vision(1), becoming involved in the process of personal growth and reaching out to others with the truth that is found only in Jesus Christ(2).
Outreach	To Respond. To Restore.	evangelizing church community that exists to support the convinced and save the unconvinced.	We will seek to restore with care the people of Ourtown with the hope(O)	We believe in outreach as the spreading of the gospel from individual to individual, family to family, neighborhood to neighborhood, country to country and ethnic group to ethnic group with the intention of forming new churches to extend the mission. Each Christian has the responsibility to spread love and care to others by living out and sharing the good news personally(1), and participating in the global task of evangelism(2).

Optional Concepts

Personnel			while building leaders for our world(P)	We believe in leadership since the church best expresses its vision through duly authorized (elected / appointed) leadership under the pastor(2), church leadership(1) and committees(3) entrusted with various aspects of the ministry. The church requires leadership from a variety of personalities expressing all spiritual gifts through a clear structure that is transparent, understood, accepted and supported.
Administration			We are committed to achieving the highest quality in our work(A)	We believe in effective organization and the clear and careful communication of our message to all who care to listen(1) in order for our church to achieve its purpose in the world. This requires that we be true to our stand(3) and challenge people to express personal stewardship of the grace of God(2).
Demographics			and impacting the people of Ourtown(D).	We believe in understanding people and their needs both within the church(1) and the community(4) so that we can address, in a culturally relevant way, the real needs people experience. This requires that we understand how people relate and respond within the church(2) and that we provide leadership opportunities attuned to these needs(3).



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Mission Development Process

To write a good Mission Statement it is important to remember that a Mission Statement should reiterate the biblical mandate of the church in words that your community can understand. It should include these overarching ministry functions: worship, instruction, fellowship and out-reach.

Process Objective

The objective in completing this series of exercises is not to determine which elements of the biblical mandate you are going to include in your Mission Statement (worship, instruction, fellowship and outreach) but rather what emphasis or weight will each of the biblical elements have in your church's ministry and consequently the weight each element will have as you write your Mission Statement to reflect the real picture of your church.

Step 1. Read Church Contour Analysis

Without marking the page, read and digest the analysis thoroughly.

Now as you read the analysis a second time underline those words or concepts that reflect your church as it is today and circle the words or concepts that you personally would like your church to become in 5 years time.

Step 2. Church Contour Exercise

Now summarize your thoughts using the headings of this exercise.

Which ministry element(s) would your church be noted for or good at. In many cases but not all, what a church is noted for or is good at reflects the gifts and interests of the pastoral staff and leadership team.

As well, dollar and time allocation indicate the commitment that the church has to specific elements of ministry. When a particular element of the church's ministry has little or no designated budget, it is assumed that element is not a priority.

After summarizing your thoughts as to the emphasis that the church places on each of the four ministry elements, determine in your opinion what the church's emphasis should be by completing the heading "My Ideal Church".

"My Ideal Church" means that it is your opinion that the church's emphasis is best represented by the number you chose. A number (1) in the column indicates that this is your choice for the ministry area that the church ought to lead with or expose first. Place the number (1) beside only one of the four elements.

In all 4 columns place the number (2) or (3) to reflect whether the ministry area is being adequate developed (3) or should be significantly improved. (2).

While most churches are committed to implementing all four elements, it is found that many churches lead with one or two elements. Once again, these leading elements generally reflect the gifts and interests of the pastoral staff and leadership team.

Step 3. - Design your Mission Statement

Now design your Mission Statement to reflect the real picture of your church using some of the Mission Statement ideas listed on the page marked "Mission Library Statements", additional statements in the Ministry ToolBox software and of course your own thoughts and ideas.

MISSION - STEP I

Church Contour Analysis

Misinformed people often believe that a particular building is the church. However, the imagery of the church building does reflect on the real church, which is made up of people. In the same way, the emphasis that the church places on various ministry elements creates a picture of a local church. In broad strokes, one might ask the question, "How would you describe your church in 25 words or less?" That question

elicits summary statements, which might be analogous to the statement in the grid below. These statements do not tell the whole story. They only describe the high points in the church contours. While one or two areas might characterize a church, it can only be healthy if no area is neglected.

	What does your church look like?	What do your people look like?	What does your leadership team look like?	What does your program look like?
Worship "Quenching the thirst for inspiration."	Our church is /aspires to be characterized by inspiring worship above all. This means that the Sunday services will be the event the people of our church most look forward to. We invest time and money to inject our worship with planning, people and equipment to do the job.	Our church provides its best drawing power to those who appreciate the elements of worship we include in our services. The people are personally motivated by elements of worship that stir their hearts, challenge their minds and inspire their wills.	Our church provides its best drawing power to those who have a yearning to learn. People find themselves most engaged when there is information that is new to them being presented.	Our programming features worship and training in various skills that create worship leaders. We are well tuned to engage people in worship events and in personal worship.
Instruction "Quenching the thirst for knowledge."	Our church is /aspires to be in characterized by a consistent teaching ministry. This means that our people are motivated to gain more knowledge and insight. We invest time and money to assure that we have top quality educational elements.	Our church provides its best drawing power to those who are yearning to learn. People find themselves most engaged when there is information that is new to them being presented.	Our leadership team is characterized by people with biblical and other knowledge. We also enjoy teaching/learning environments.	Our programming features a variety of educational opportunities and seminars designed to give people the knowledge they need to improve their life.
Fellowship "Quenching the thirst for belonging and service."	Our church is /aspires to be characterized by strong personal interactions that create a friendly, warm and caring atmosphere. We invest time and money to meet people at their point of personal need and to give them opportunity to feed off others in the congregation.	Our church provides its best drawing power to those who are relationally motivated. People are drawn to each other by the interactions and care represented in the programs and persons within our church.	Our leadership team is characterized by people who carry and show concern for others.	Our programming features elements that will draw people together in interactive environments in larger and smaller groups and in personal contact through visitation and one-on-one relationships.
Outreach "Quenching the thirst for propagation."	Our church is/aspires to be characterized by a desire to spread the gospel. This means that most of our programming contains an element of outreach or missions concern. We invest time and money to motivate people to reach others beginning at home and to the far-flung places of the world.	Our church provides its best drawing power to those who recognize the needs of others within our community and around the world. People find themselves involved and challenged when in some way they can touch a life outside of our present church body.	Our leadership team is characterized by people who have a passion for the lost and a concern for spreading the gospel message around the world.	Our programming features evangelism and concern for lost people. This may involve a high emphasis on missions and/or compassionate ministries as an extension of our church.
Blend "Quenching the thirst for balance."	Our church is/aspires to be characterized by a desire to balance all four elements. We invest time and money to keep working toward a balance. Our desire is to maintain our current strengths and constantly enhance our weakest areas.	Our church provides drawing power to those who have not formulated a particular focus or who are moved to be part of a church where there is a blend.	Our leadership team is characterized by people who recognize the importance of all four elements and, while they have their own particular bent, have a degree of passion for all other areas.	Our programming does not feature one area over another. At various times and places the spotlight will be placed on each area.

MISSION - STEP 2

Church Contour Exercise

	Noted For Most (1) Least (4)	Good At Best (1) Worst (4)	Dollar Allocation Most (1) Least (4)	Time Allocation Most (1) Least (4)	My Ideal Church Lead (1) Improve(2) Adequate(3)
<p>Worship</p> <p>We believe in worship as the privilege of entering the presence of God to adore Him and experience His total interest in our lives. Worship is experienced in large and small groups(1) through various forms of expression(2), prayer(3) and in the individual's devotional life and service(4).</p>					
<p>Instruction</p> <p>We believe in instruction as the careful process of leading others to freely engage in the positive experience of the discovery of truth and obedience to that truth. This learning process involves knowledge of God's revelation(1), motivation to live out appropriate responses in life(2) and a commitment to follow Jesus Christ as Lord(3).</p>					
<p>Fellowship</p> <p>We believe in fellowship as a participation with each other in the family of God. The church has the privilege of welcoming and integrating all who voluntarily choose to associate with it and support its vision(1), becoming involved in the process of personal growth and reaching out to others with the truth that is found only in Jesus Christ(2).</p>					
<p>Outreach</p> <p>We believe in outreach as the spreading of the gospel from individual to individual, family to family, neighborhood to neighborhood, country to country and ethnic group to ethnic group with the intention of forming new churches to extend the mission. Each Christian has the responsibility to spread love and care to others by living out and sharing the good news personally(1), and participating in the global task of evangelism(2).</p>					

Notations:

Noted For means that it is your opinion that the general reputation of the church would probably be best represented by the number you chose.

Good At means that it is your opinion that the actual performance of the church is best represented by the number you chose.

Dollar Allocation means that, exclusive of temporary spikes due to capital improvements or staff salaries that how the church allocates its money is best represented by the number you chose.

Time Allocation means that the volunteer and paid worker time invested is best represented by the number you chose.

My Ideal Church means that it is your opinion that the church's **emphasis** is best represented by the number you chose. A number (1) in the column indicates that this is your choice for the ministry area that the church ought to lead with. Place the number (1) beside only one of the four elements.

In all 4 columns place the number (2) or (3) to reflect whether the ministry area is adequate (3) or should be improved. (2).

Ourtown Community Church is a church home where relationships are nurtured in a warm family atmosphere(F). Spiritual growth is inspired through faithful ministry that is known for its commitment to develop fully devoted Christians who are genuine in their worship(W), disciplined in their walk(D), bold in their witness and have a passion to reach their world for Jesus Christ.(E)

Ourtown Community Church is a reaching church, committed to reaching out to others(E), reaching up to God(W), reaching into the Word(D), and reaching around one another(F).

Ourtown Community Church exists to glorify God through a passionate ministry that includes worship, instruction, fellowship, outreach and service. We are committed to achieving the highest quality in our work(A) while building leaders for our world(M) and impacting the people of Ourtown(C). We will seek to respond with relevance to the needs of the people of Ourtown with the love of Christ(E) as a result of our devotion to God(W). We will seek to restore with care the people of Ourtown with the hope(E) that is in Christ as an extension of the supporting church community that we experience(F). We will seek, through faith, to reproduce in others the work Christ is performing in our personal and collective lives as disciples of Christ(D).

The mission of Ourtown Community Church is to love God, one another and the people of our community. We are committed to personal growth through the worship of God(W), by reaching out to our community and world to share Jesus(E), by ministering to the needs of people(F) and by assisting each other to grow in love, knowledge and commitment(D).

The mission of Ourtown Community Church is to proclaim the gospel of Jesus Christ(E) to all people(C) through the power of the Holy Spirit. We worship Jesus Christ through the proclamation and study of the Word(D), prayer, music, and stewardship(W). We strive to meet the spiritual, physical, and emotional needs of our community and our church family. We commit ourselves to teach and disciple people as Jesus taught His disciples(D). We actively unite our hearts in fellowship with other Christians(F) as well as with the lost, that we might be strengthened and they might be saved(E). Since we yearn for all people to be drawn closer to God and to each other through His love, we support the work of missions in our church, our country, and the world(E).

At Ourtown Community Church, we are committed to exalting the Lord(W), engaging the Word(D), encouraging one another(F) and evangelizing the community(E).

Ourtown Community Church seeks to impact our community with the gospel(E), our lives with the Scriptures(D), our relationships with one another(F) and our walk and worship with God(W).

Ourtown Community Church is a Great Commandment(F) Great Commission(E) church seeking to glorify God(W) through a process of winning(E), building, and equipping(D) people.

In a world of negotiated values, confused identities and distorted priorities, Ourtown Community Church is committed to God's Word(D), our identity in Christ(F), and the primary tasks of worshiping God(W) and witnessing to the world(E)(C).

Ourtown Community Church has been called by God to learn about Him(D), care about His people(F), tell about His gospel(E) and celebrate His character and mighty works(W).

Overwhelmed with the unchanging love of God, Ourtown Community Church seeks to share that love by loving God(W), loving the Word of God(D), loving the people of God(F), and loving the people for whom God sent His Son(E).

The mission of Ourtown Community Church is to know Jesus Christ(D), exalt Him as Savior, Sanctifier, Healer, and Coming King(W), and complete His Great Commission by evangelizing(E) and discipling(D) people throughout our community(C), incorporating them into a Christ-centered, community-focused congregation(F) and mobilizing them for active involvement in a missionary effort in our community and world(E).

Ourtown Community Church is a fellowship whose mission is to network(F), empower(D) and mobilize Christians for effective missions(E) and ministry in the name of Christ.

Ourtown Community Church is a Bible-believing church united within our community(C) for the purpose of identification(F), communion(W), mutual edification(D) and encouragement(F) in order to better fulfill the Great Commission and establish the church among all peoples(E).

Ourtown Community Church is a body of believers(F) united in Christ through the Holy Spirit. We are called by God to worship Him(W), to love one another(F), and to make disciples(D) through prayer(W), evangelism(E), teaching(D) and service.

A dynamic, Spirit led, Bible-based community of believers(D), developing within and without disciples for evangelism(E).

Our vision is to mature and develop each member to the full potential of their gifting. That they would demonstrate God's love through evangelism(E). Through worship each will experience God's presence(W). Through preaching and teaching all will hear God's Word(D).

We are called to build Ourtown Community Church upon the Cornerstone of Christ. We are a community that worships with integrity(W), and transforms lives through life-long Christian education and spiritual development(D). We equip all members for ministry, evangelize through word and deed(E), with passion and compassion we serve those who are in need(F).

Our church is a place of Redemption, Restoration, Deliverance, Healing and Hope(D)(F). We reach out to our community with the love and power of God(E).

Motivated by a passion for God(W) and compassion for people(F), Ourtown Community Church exists to glorify God(W) and impact our world by making disciples(E)(D) of all peoples in our growing sphere of influence(C), working together in dependence upon God(F).

Ourtown Community Church is committed to the five-fold ministry of evangelizing the lost(E), establishing new believers(D), equipping workers for effective ministry(M), encouraging one another(F) and exalting the Lord(W).

Ourtown Community Church ministers for the glory of God(W) and good of our community(C) by winning people to Christ(E), building people in Christ(F), equipping people for Christ(D) and sending people to serve Christ(A).

Ourtown Community Church is a caring family(F) committed to encouraging personal growth(D) as we celebrate our Father(W) and reach out to those He loves(E).

Ourtown Community Church is a growing church with roots deep in the Scriptures(D) and branches that reach up to God in worship and prayer(W) and out to others in ministry(F) and witness(E).

At Ourtown Community Church, we are committed to building the body(D) to worship(W) and work together(F) reaching out to others with the gospel(E).

At Ourtown Community Church we gather to enjoy God(W) and one another(F) as we study His Word(D) and scatter to do His work(E).

SAMPLE MISSION STATEMENT PHRASES

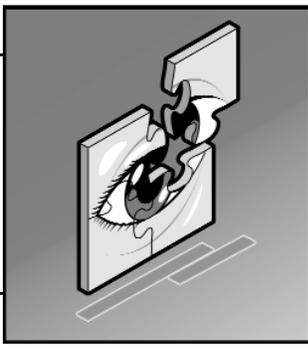
GENERAL PHRASES: is founded on ... primary purpose is ... in obedience to Jesus Christ ... our mission is ... a cooperative body ... providing channels for ... committed to ... dedicated to ... a godly influence ... to make a difference ... is encountering ... a movement of ... striving to strengthen ... inspired by ... called to ... thrives on ... grows by ... life changing ... the hands of God ... bringing hope ... the fulfillment of God's reign and realm ... to be followers of Jesus Christ ... by the power of the Holy Spirit ... to reveal and declare God's glory ... under the leadership of the Holy Spirit ... God the Father, God the Son and God the Holy Spirit ... use every resource at our disposal ... accomplish His plan ... in His timing ... to our church and community ... in all walks of life ... at all times ... minister to the whole person ... ministers to the spiritual, physical, and emotional needs ... source of life and healing ... provide an atmosphere in which ...

WORSHIP PHRASES: boldly exalt the Saviour ... a passion for God ... expressing appreciation and awe for the glory of Christ ... concentrating on the attributes of our triune God ... happily acknowledging the sovereign role of God ... expressing a yearning for godliness ...

INSTRUCTION PHRASES: to follow the commandment ... equip the saved for life and service ... built on the disciplines ... exhorting one another to love and good works ... make disciples through ... discover their purpose in life ... preparing members for lifelong ministry...

FELLOWSHIP PHRASES: the uniting of ... is deepening our relationships with ... to grow as a community of grace, joy, and peace ... God's healing and hope flow through us ... a family of believers ... our church family embraces ... through mutual and loving support ... people of all ages develop and deepen their relationship with God through ... create community among the saints ... cooperative body joined together to ... uniting people through relationships ... embrace a pluralism of race, ethnicity, and gender ... build a supportive community ... a caring people ... meaningful participation in ... a compassion for people...

OUTREACH PHRASES: message of healing, hope and wholeness ... proclaim the Gospel to the ends of the earth ... bring people back to God ... invite and prepare all people to experience God's grace and blessing ... restore to a right relationship with ... to transform people's lives through authentic Christian ministry ... show compassion to the needy ... reaching people for Jesus and building them up once they come ... encounter people with a presentation of the Good News ... gather persons into ... care for the needy, the weak and the oppressed ... becoming godly influences in our community ... reaching in the name of Christ ... winning the lost ... evangelize the sinner...



BIRTH OF A VISION

Vision Development

To help a church focus a broad Mission Statement it is useful to add some specifics that help identify the particular church. We call that a Vision Statement

Vision Statement

For a church to exist as an independent body it must believe that it has some characteristics to make it special. While there is a sense in which the church is universal, the church always must express itself in a local gathering of people who identify with each other as part of a local church. The Vision Statement of that church should reflect the uniqueness of that gathered group of people as it seeks to fulfill its franchise on a local basis.

Sample Vision Statement

Ourtown Community Church is an XYZ Denomination Church serving the northeast quadrant of Anytown by striving to reach those of Hispanic descent, particularly those who live in our neighborhood and are most likely to respond to our dynamic Bible teaching emphasis within the framework of a warm interactive family style. We enjoy and are committed to full congregational government that values the perspective of every member. It is our vision to grow a church that reaches hundreds of people in the next decade and that provides many seed families for other new churches in neighboring communities.

Sample Vision Statement Analysis

If you were to include all the vision elements suggested in the same vision statement, it could be explained in the following way:

Preamble

Ourtown Community Church is an XYZ Denomination Church

Geographical

serving the northeast quadrant of Anytown

Cultural

by striving to reach those of Hispanic descent

Demographic

particularly those who live in our neighborhood

Theological

and are most likely to respond to our dynamic Bible teaching emphasis

Style

within the framework of a warm interactive family style.

Organizational

We enjoy and are committed to full congregational government that values the perspective of every member.

Size

It is our vision to grow a church that reaches hundreds of people in the next decade and that provides many seed families for other new churches in neighboring communities.

Vision Worksheet

Differentiation

Preamble

Does this clearly distinguish your church short of including your zip code?

Ourtown Community Church is [a church of XYZ Denomination]

Geographical

Is there a center to your circle of drawing power?

servicing [the northeast quadrant of Ourtown]

Cultural

Are there people from a particular cultural group that your church is especially committed to or can reach more easily?

by reaching to [those of ethnic descent (example) in our community]

Demographic

Are there people from a particular age group, social class, common interest etc. that your church is especially committed to or can reach more easily?

particularly those of [your-choice-of economic/demographic group]

Theological

Are there denominational distinctives to consider? Are there theological perspectives that are non-negotiable?

who are most likely to respond to [the you-decide emphasis]

Style

Are you committed to a particular style of worship, education, fellowship or outreach?

within the framework of [a you-pick-it style].

Organizational (Polity)

Is there distinctiveness in the way you structure your ministry that you would not give up without a real fight?

We enjoy and are committed to [a rule-by-somebody organizational structure].

Size

Are you committed to some size considerations? (For example, small groups, regional impact, neighborhood focus, satellite churches, daughter churches.)

It is our vision to grow/build a church that is [your-size-picture] reaching [your-dream-number of people] by [your-longer-term general time frame].

Sample Build

Ourtown Community Church is an XYZ Denomination Church serving the northeast quadrant of Anytown by striving to reach those of Hispanic descent, particularly those who live in our neighborhood and are most likely to respond to our dynamic Bible teaching emphasis within the framework of a warm interactive family style. We enjoy and are committed to full congregational government that values the perspective of every member. It is our vision to grow a church that reaches hundreds of people in the next decade and that provides many seed families for other new churches in neighboring communities.

Questions

Sample

Linking Terms

Agency:
Through, in order that, with a view to, that.

Emphasis:
Particularly, especially, focused on, geared to.

Desire:
Seeking to, committed to, becoming, called to.

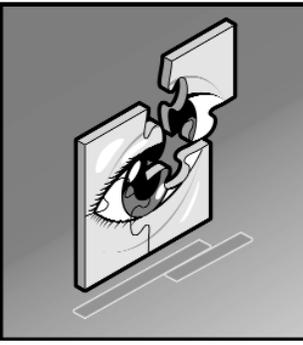
Exclusion:
Not, avoiding, deliberately, eliminating.

Environment:
Within, in concert with, in the context of.

Energy:
Dynamic, passionate, resolutely, zealous, yearning, excited about, aggressive.

Causal:
Resulting in, as a result of, leading to, demonstrating itself in.

Conjunctive:
And, at the same time, with equal emphasis, balanced with.



BIRTH OF A VISION

Vision Development Process

Misinformed people often believe that a particular building is the church. However, the imagery of the church building does reflect on the real church, which is made up of people.

In the same way, the emphasis that the church places on various ministry elements creates a picture of a local church. In broad strokes, one might ask the question, "How would you describe your church in 25 words or less?"

These statements do not tell the whole story. They only describe the high points in the church contours. While one or two areas might characterize a church, it can only be healthy if no area is neglected.

Process Objective

The objective in completing this series of exercises is to determine which vision elements are to be included in the Vision Statement you are going to write.

Do the vision elements chosen, clearly and specifically define our ministry and does the church leadership agree on the inclusion of those basics elements in our vision statement?

A second objective is to assess the need for movement right or left of where the church stands now on those same ministry issues. This information should be taken into consideration as you develop the church's Vision Statement.

Before you begin the process read the Vision Worksheet making sure that you understand completely what is meant by the use of the words being used to describe each vision element.

Step 1 - Church Vision Exercise

Sometimes the hardest things to achieve seem simple on the surface. Here is a simple but demanding challenge for you. Describe your church in 25 words or less. Now describe the church as you long for it to be in about five years.

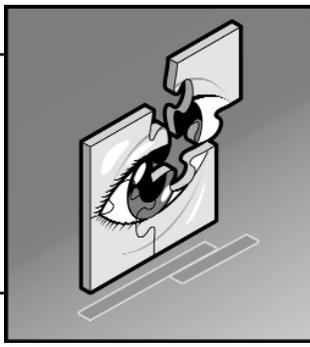
Step 2 - Vision Statement Library Elements Exercise

Distribute the "Elements" exercise (4 pages) to all professional staff and key church leadership.

Include the appropriate instructions suggested below.

a) Indicate your preference using the scale 1-5. Circling 3 would indicate that you like the stand or emphasis the church presently holds. Moving one way or the other from 3 would indicate that you would like to change the church's emphasis on that specific issue. "More" means a slight change in emphasis. "Much More" means a dramatic change in emphasis.

b) At the beginning of each category there is a list of words and phrases. Please underline the specific word(s) or phrase(s) that appeal to you when you consider the specific ministry elements. Underline no more than 2 key words of phrases.



BIRTH OF A VISION

Vision Development Process

c) Ask them not to converse with each other until the exercise has been completed. It is important to know what each person thinks before serious discussion takes place.

Step 3 - Compile Vision Statement Library Elements Results

Collect the "Elements" exercise from those who have completed the homework.

Fill in the appropriate columns with the total number of people who chose "Much More", "More" or "Like Way It Is". Now convert those numbers to a percent.

If you have large groups doing the exercise, it would be helpful for discussion purposes to compare for example the staff with the leadership team in each column. You do that simple by putting in 2 numbers or 2 percents (36% / 60%) in each box in the grid. The first percent would represent the staff and the second percentage would represent the church executive or leadership. If there is a wide variance in any of the columns or percentages, those issues become critical discussion points.

Example 1 - If 80% of the group wanted to "Stay As We Are" with 10% "More" formal and 10% "More" casual the issue would need very little or no discussion. You are satisfying a majority of the congregation.

Example 2 - If 40% of the group wanted to be "Much More" formal and 40% of the group wanted to be "Much More" casual with only 20% of the group somewhere down the middle, that should be an issue that would get serious discussion. There is a wide variance and you are satisfying only 20% of your congregation. In most churches that would be unacceptable.

Example 3 - If you were doing a comparison between the staff and the church leadership in a single grid box and 25% of the church leadership wanted to be more traditional (5% / 25%) and 25% of the staff wanted to be more casual (25% / 5%) you would not only have a variance on the issue with only 40% down the middle but you have a serious variance between the leadership and the staff.

Step 4. - Gather a Consensus on Vision Elements

The right approach is not to put your head in the sand and not deal with the variance(s). Meet until you can agree or at least agree on a compromise on the basic elements of your Vision Statement.

A church will never succeed until a majority of the leadership and congregation can agree on who they are and what are they endeavoring to accomplish.

Step 5. - Design your Vision Statement

Now design your Vision statement to reflect the real picture of your church using some of the vision statement ideas listed on the page marked "Vision Library Statements", additional statements in the Ministry ToolBox software and of course your own thoughts and ideas from your discussions.

Sometimes the hardest things to achieve seem simple on the surface.
Here is a simple but demanding challenge for you.

Describe your church in 25 words or less. But there are some rules.

1. Complete your description in the simplest terms you can think of so that, if possible, the average person with a grade nine education could understand it.
2. Use complete sentences and not single words or bullet points.
3. Avoid statements that speak of the building or location of your church building.
4. Tell the truth about what the church is like right now and what it is truly striving to become as evidenced by the way you spend your time and money.
5. Ignore the 25-word limit if you need to.

**Describe the church as you long for it to be in about five years in 25 words or less.
Use the same rules.**

Geographical Phrases

Geographical Phrase: the region of ... the district of ... the area bounded by ... centered in the community of ... with a ministry focus in the XYZ area of Ourtown

Regional
Church

much stay as much
more more we are more more
1 2 3 4 5

Neighborhood
Church

Regional Church means that the church is interested in drawing people from a broad geographical area.
Neighborhood Church means the church identifies itself with a much more limited geographical area.

Cultural Phrases

Cultural Phrase: diverse ethnic backgrounds ... striving to achieve the ethnicity balance of the area ... all racial and ethnic backgrounds while recognizing that our roots are in the XYZ community

All
Inclusive

much stay as much
more more we are more more
1 2 3 4 5

Focussed
Culture Or
Ethnicity

All-inclusive means the church as a whole does not have any identifiable cultural or ethnic group with which it strives to relate.
Focussed Culture Or Ethnicity means the church is primarily composed of people from one background and strives to maintain that identity.

Demographic Phrases

Demographic Phrase: a place of comfort and healing for disenfranchised people needing emotional, material, and/or spiritual support ... people seeking a place to belong and explore Christian values without undue pressure to conform ...

Representative
Focus

much stay as much
more more we are more more
1 2 3 4 5

Demographic
Focus

Representative Focus means the church has no particular group within the society it is tuned to more than any other.
Demographic Focus means the church deliberately targets a group of people from one age group, disenfranchised group, education/economic group or station in life group. If this is your preference, please indicate below the focus group(s).

1) _____ 2) _____

Size Phrase

Size Phrase: a church committed to multiple services ... to service an increasing number of constituents ... a church motivated to start satellite ministries in neighboring communities ... prepared to relocate to other premises as our size warrants ... intent on starting at least one daughter church every five years ... a church committed to unlimited growth ultimately ministering to thousands within commuting distance of our ministry center

Unlimited
Growth
Aspirations

much stay as much
more more we are more more
1 2 3 4 5

Defined
Growth
Aspirations

Unlimited Growth Aspirations means the church intends to grow as large as it can in one campus relocating as necessary if the property becomes too small.
Defined Growth Aspirations means that the church intends to grow to a particular size and then facilitate further growth in some other way such as another campus or daughter church.

Organizational Phrases

Polity Phrase: a leadership driven ministry ... a congregationally monitored ministry ... participative management style ... an aggressively vision driven ministry ... a family style church where every voice is heard

Pastor Led

much more	stay as more we are	much more
1	2 3	4 5

Board Led

Pastor Led means that the pastoral staff makes the decisions on a day-to-day basis under the authority of the senior pastor and the church leadership plays a policy-making role only.

Board Led means that the church leadership is heavily involved in each ministry area of the church with each leadership member working side by side with a staff person and playing a significant role in the decision making process of the committee.

Goal/Objective Orientation

much more	stay as more we are	much more
1	2 3	4 5

Response Orientation

Goal/Objective Orientation refers to the desire of the church to state ahead of time what positive changes it hopes to see in the future.

Response Orientation refers to an attitude that resists projecting future outcomes, believing that proper attitudes and behavior today will lead to whatever God may desire.

High Demand

much more	stay as more we are	much more
1	2 3	4 5

Low Demand

High Demand means that the church places specific expectations on its attenders in terms of the commitments they make in things like attendance, giving and serving.

Low Demand means that the church gives complete freedom to all attenders to establish their personal level of involvement without any pressure or minimal encouragement to higher commitment.

One Family Orientation

much more	stay as more we are	much more
1	2 3	4 5

Segmented Family Orientation

One Family Orientation refers to the desire of attenders to know everyone in the church.

Segmented Family Orientation refers to a willingness to know only a segment of the whole church as long as there is a good network of relationships for each individual within the whole.

Family Church Orientation

much more	stay as more we are	much more
1	2 3	4 5

Vision Church Orientation

Family Church Orientation views the commandment to love one another as the primary concern believing growth will follow love.

Vision Church Orientation views the Great Commission as the most significant concern and therefore requires more initiative to get the right results.

Worship Phrases

Style Phrases: a dignified style of worship ... a liturgical ministry ... a casual informal style ... a contemporary style suitable to emerging adults ... a middle of the road style of ministry

Theological Phrases: a strong Bible oriented ministry ... a positive message of hope and forgiveness ... a training center with practical instruction in ministry skills ... a community where all the charismatic gifts are nurtured and expressed ... a safe haven for second marriage partners

Solitary Leadership	much more more stay as we are more much more 1 2 3 4 5	Many Leaders	<p>Solitary Leadership means that the same person does all the leading in the meetings.</p> <p>Many Leaders means that there is always more than one leader in every meeting. One leader a week but different every week, would be somewhere in between.</p>
Very Dignified	much more more stay as we are more much more 1 2 3 4 5	Very High Energy	<p>Very Dignified means a reserved, even solemn atmosphere where anything out of the range of normal is frowned upon.</p> <p>Very High Energy means a fast enthusiastic pace, perhaps with spontaneity or joviality.</p>
Very Spontaneous	much more more stay as we are more much more 1 2 3 4 5	Very Organized	<p>Very Spontaneous means there are very few advance preparations. The meeting takes its own shape depending on the will of the participants.</p> <p>Very Organized means that the elements are planned and rigorously scheduled.</p>
Very Intellectual	much more more stay as we are more much more 1 2 3 4 5	Very Emotional	<p>Very Intellectual means that the basic appeal to the mind and thought processes of the people</p> <p>Very Emotional means that the basic appeal is to the heart and the feelings of the people.</p>
Very Formal	much more more stay as we are more much more 1 2 3 4 5	Very Casual	<p>Very Formal means reserved and well-defined demeanor, careful protocol and dress.</p> <p>Very Casual means relaxed atmosphere, standards of dress and freely expressed behavior.</p>
Very Decision Oriented	much more more stay as we are more much more 1 2 3 4 5	Very Development Oriented	<p>Very Decision Oriented means there is some direct means of closure at every meeting (e.g. a public altar call). People are encouraged to make spiritual decisions right then and there.</p> <p>Very Development Oriented means that while decisions are sought there is no expectation that people will declare such decisions at the meeting.</p>
Very Traditional	much more more stay as we are more much more 1 2 3 4 5	Very Contemporary	<p>Very Traditional means that things are done in the same way they have been conducted over an extended period of time.</p> <p>Very Contemporary means almost trendy. Anything from the 80s or older would be out unless it was part of a current trend to nostalgia.</p>
Very Performer Oriented	much more more stay as we are more much more 1 2 3 4 5	Very Participation Oriented	<p>Very Performer Oriented means that the entire meeting depends on the platform crew with very little if any participation by the congregation.</p> <p>Very Participation Oriented means strong (if not almost total) participation from the congregation in things such as music, testimony, sharing, teaching, interaction and prayer.</p>
Very Predictable	much more more stay as we are more much more 1 2 3 4 5	Total Variety	<p>Very Predictable means the same order of service, patterns of speech or liturgy is repeated week after week.</p> <p>Total Variety means that virtually every meeting has strong differences from previous meetings in order and content.</p>

VISION - STEP 2

Vision Statement Library Elements

Very Believer Oriented

much more	stay as more	we are	more	much more
1	2	3	4	5

Very Spoken Word Centered

much more	stay as more	we are	more	much more
1	2	3	4	5

Very Bible Oriented

much more	stay as more	we are	more	much more
1	2	3	4	5

Very Unbeliever Oriented

Very Believer Oriented means that the meetings are simply not suitable for people who have not made a commitment to Christ.

Very Unbeliever Oriented means that everything is geared to those who don't know Christ. Seeker orientation with little attention to the needs of believers, would be to the unbeliever side.

Very Musically Centered

Very Spoken Word Centered means that the vast majority of the time is used with one or more people talking in sermons, teaching, testimony, etc.

Very Musically Centered means that the emphasis is placed on either performed or congregational music.

Very Life Need Oriented

Very Bible Oriented means that the meetings are simply not suitable for people who have not made a commitment to Christ.

Very Life Need Oriented means that material is always related to life today. At the extreme, the Bible might barely be mentioned as the foundations for the concepts.

VISION - STEP 3

Vision Component Analysis

Differentiation	Key Word	Much More	More	Stay As We Are	More	Much More	Key Word
Geographical	Regional						Neighborhood
Cultural	All-Inclusive						Focussed Cultural
Demographic	Representative						Demographic
Size	Unlimited Growth						Defined Growth
Organizational	Pastor Led						Board Led
	Goal/Objective						Response
	High Demand						Low Demand
	One Family						Segmented Family
	Family Church						Vision Church
Worship Style	Solitary Leadership						Many Leaders
	Dignified						Very High Energy
	Spontaneous						Organized
	Intellectual						Emotional
	Formal						Casual
	Decision Oriented						Development Oriented
	Traditional						Contemporary
	Performer Oriented						Participatory
	Predictable						Variety
	Very Believer						Very Unbeliever
	Spoken Word						Musically
	Very Bible						Life Need

Geographical Phrases

Geographical Phrase: the region of ... the district of ... the area bounded by ... centered in the community of ... with a ministry focus in the XYZ area of Ourtown ...

Cultural Phrases

Cultural Phrase: diverse ethnic backgrounds ... striving to achieve the ethnicity balance of the area ... all racial and ethnic backgrounds while recognizing that our roots are in the XYZ community ...

Demographic Phrases

Demographic Phrase: a place of comfort and healing for disenfranchised people needing emotional, material, and/or spiritual support ... people seeking a place to belong and explore Christian values without undue pressure to conform...

Size Phrase

Size Phrase: a church committed to multiple services ... to service an increasing number of constituents ... a church motivated to start satellite ministries in neighboring communities ... prepared to relocate to other premises as our size warrants ... intent on starting at least one daughter church every five years ... a church committed to unlimited growth ultimately ministering to thousands within commuting distance of our ministry center ...

Organizational Phrases

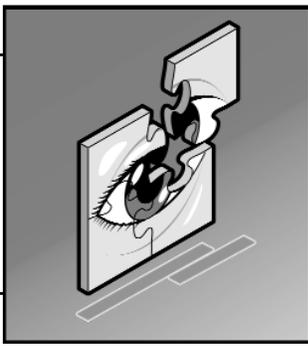
Polity Phrase: a leadership-driven ministry ... a congregationally-monitored ministry ... participative-management style ... an aggressively vision-driven ministry ... a family style church where every voice is heard ...

Worship Style Phrases

Style Phrases: a dignified style of worship ... a liturgical ministry ... a casual informal style ... a contemporary style suitable to emerging adults ... a middle-of-the-road style of ministry ...

Theological Phrases

Theological Phrases: a strong Bible oriented ministry ... a positive message of hope and forgiveness ... a training center with practical instruction in ministry skills ... a community where all the charismatic gifts are nurtured and expressed ... a safe haven for second marriage partners ...



BIRTH OF A VISION

Biblical Core Values

One dictionary defines values as "the moral principles or accepted standards of a person or group." To be a value something must be believed with a resulting difference in attitude and behavior. Values are part of our belief structure that show up in the way we conduct ourselves collectively and individually.

Some values are for the moment. They are pragmatically developed in light of the setting in which they operate at the time. These include careful adaptations to the current culture. When the culture changes these values change with it.

Other values are held for the long term and more critically define the person or group over a longer term. They are resistant to change but still negotiable if your back is to the wall. But Core Values are the things you believe are non-negotiable. If those values are suspended or violated, the group or person knows it has failed. When Core Values are stated, they had better be core or the changing world will erode them and even ridicule them. However, carefully thought-out Core Values can provide a solid mooring that is respected by those both on the inside and the outside. If thirty years from now your Core Values still resonate in the hearts of people, they have even greater strength because you can say, "This is what we have stood for all these years and here is how you can see that we took these statements seriously."

Core Values can fall into the following categories:

- The Nature Of The Church
- The Nature Of Authority
- The Nature Of Relationships
- The Nature Of Morality
- The Nature Of The Message
- The Nature Of Methods
- The Nature Of Personal Growth

Sample Core Value Statements

Leadership: We believe that God himself orders the affairs of the church of Jesus Christ and ultimately ordains its leaders. Therefore, it is our responsibility to develop, recognize, support and respect leaders in our church. Leadership is a right that has to be earned through serving in a constantly changing environment.

Methods/Risk: We believe we must take risks to find continual improvement. Promoting the status quo for its own sake, although seemingly safe, stifles growth.

Motivation: We believe in motivating people by using every possible legitimate means of encouragement. However, we also believe it is dangerous and sometimes wrong to focus on positive or negative consequences when such attention has the potential to motivate insincere behavior.

Core Values Worksheet

Related Categories

Sample

Statement Test

Differentiation	Related Categories	Sample	Statement Test
The Nature of the Church	Primacy, Meeting, Unity, Outreach	Primacy: We believe the church is the one divinely designed organism to supply people with the insight and support they need to achieve a full life.	1. The Centrality Test Is this value of such high importance that we would never give it up?
The Nature of Authority	Leadership	Leadership: We believe that God himself orders the affairs of the church of Jesus Christ and ultimately ordains its leaders. Therefore, it is our responsibility to develop, recognize, support and respect leaders in our church. Leadership is a right that has to be earned through serving in a constantly changing environment.	2. The Consensus Test Does this value simply reflect the viewpoint of a few people or does the church really endorse it?
The Nature of Relationships	Forgiveness, Authenticity, Home Life, Listening, Individual Worth, Service	Authenticity: We believe Christ's followers must manifest authenticity and yearn for continuous growth.	3. The Durability Test Do we expect this value will endure through generations?
The Nature of Morality	Moral Development, Character, Integrity, Fidelity	Integrity: We believe we always must strive to be real. We must demonstrate honesty, sincerity, respect, biblical morality and humility in all walks of life. Compromised integrity is failure. We believe that biblical, not cultural, standards are the measure of true integrity.	4. The Impact Test Is this a value that truly shapes our attitudes and behavior as a church?
The Nature of the Message	Content, Teaching, Truth,	Content: We believe the Bible is the primary means by which God has expressed His instruction for mankind about Himself and everything we need to guide the church and our individual lives.	5. The Supplantation Test Is this value important enough to us that it is highly unlikely anyone could ever recommend a more important value to take its place?
The Nature of Our Methods	Organizational Pruning, Culturally Relevant, Excellence, Impact, Dignity, Change, Risk,	Organizational Pruning: We believe we must look for ways to most efficiently use our limited resources. Activities that aren't central to our mission must be eliminated regardless of their perceived results. A growth climate is one of gradual change and continual improvement.	
The Nature of Personal Growth	Accountability, Exercise Giftedness, Opportunity, Motivation	Motivation: We believe in motivating people by using every possible legitimate means of encouragement. However, we also believe it is dangerous and sometimes wrong to focus on positive or negative consequences when such attention has the potential to motivate insincere behavior.	

Church

Church/Primacy: We believe the church is the one divinely designed organism to supply people with the insight and support they need to achieve a full life.

Church/Meeting: We believe in the power of meeting together for mutual building up and worship. While the formats and times for meetings will vary according to need, the principle of meeting is essential for fulfillment of our individual and collective needs.

Church/Unity: We believe in the unity of the local church and the responsibility of each participant to promote that oneness under the leadership of the congregation. The input of every participant is valued within the context of support for the vision, values and goals of the church.

Church/Outreach: We believe it is our responsibility to reach out to those who have not experienced the grace of God with a credible witness of the good news of repentance and faith in the risen Lord Jesus Christ. We believe lost people matter to God, and therefore matter to us.

Authority

Authority/Leadership: We believe that God himself orders the affairs of the church of Jesus Christ and ultimately ordains its leaders. Therefore, it is our responsibility to develop, recognize, support and respect leaders in our church. Leadership is a right that has to be earned through serving in a constantly changing environment.

Relationship

Relationships/Forgiveness: We believe the church must be an environment characterized by love, acceptance and forgiveness. Since all sin is forgivable, restoration to meaningful fellowship and significant service upon restoration is the norm.

Relationships/Authenticity: We believe Christ's followers must manifest authenticity and yearn for continuous growth.

Relationships/Home Life: We believe the church must promote strong personal home life. The local congregational life must enhance rather than diminish the strength of the home.

Relationships/Listening: We believe each constituent has something to teach us and must be heard and encouraged to share his/her viewpoint.

Relationships/Individual Worth: We view congregants as people of value who are worthy of their care and investment of time and energy. We understand that our church's future ministry is linked to the nurturing and growth of its members.

Relationships/Service: We believe we are here to serve others. Any form of stealing, cheating, personal empire building or other self-serving activities detract from our growth. As we surrender our perceived rights, we gain ultimate effectiveness. Generosity is a lubricant that frees our spirit and helps us grow.

Morality

Morality/Moral Development: We believe the essence of the Christian life is to live out, by grace, the character traits best exemplified by our Lord Jesus Christ. The moral standards stated in the Bible and exemplified in Christ are timelessly applicable to all people of all ages in all societies.

Morality/Fidelity: We require that our senior leaders exemplify a history of personal faithfulness to their marriage vows from the point of conversion on.

Morality/Character: We believe that good moral character is more important than talent, training, status or experience.

Morality/Integrity: We believe we always must strive to be real. We must demonstrate honesty, sincerity, respect, biblical morality and humility in all walks of life. Compromised integrity is failure. We believe that biblical, not cultural, standards are the measure of true integrity.

Message

Message/Content: We believe the Bible is the primary means by which God has expressed His instruction about Himself for mankind and everything we need to guide the church and our individual lives.

Message/Teaching: We believe anointed teaching is the primary catalyst for transformation in the lives of individuals and in the church.

Message/Truth: We believe the Bible is the source of absolute moral truth; it is the guidebook that defines the principles and standards by which we must live. Biblical principles and beliefs are not for sale, nor are they dependent on affirmation or acceptance by the culture.

Methods

Methods/Organizational Pruning: We believe we must look for ways to most efficiently use our limited resources. Activities that aren't central to our mission must be eliminated regardless of their perceived results. A growth climate is one of gradual change and continual improvement.

Methods/Culturally Relevant: We believe the church must stay culturally relevant within the bounds of doctrinal purity.

Methods/Excellence: We believe excellence honors God and inspires greatness. To offer Christ our best work we pay close attention to detail to insure accuracy.

Methods/Impact: We believe the church must work to make a difference; grasp a vision for success; practice the courage to take risks.

Methods/Dignity: We believe that, even though man is sinful, because he was created in God's image, all people are to be treated with dignity, respect and love. Their individual and family needs matter to us as we help them address the issues of their lives and seek to bring the mercy and grace of Christ to them with the utmost of courtesy and concern.

Methods/Change: We believe it is our responsibility to adapt the methods and means we use to meet the needs of the people God sends our way even when that adaptation is more comfortable for the receiver than it is for us the givers.

Methods/Risk: We believe we must take risks to find continual improvement. Promoting the status quo for its own sake, although seemingly safe, stifles growth.

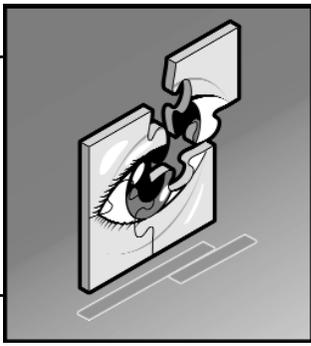
Growth

Growth/Accountability: We believe relationships and systems of accountability within and outside the church are highly valued and are essential elements to help us maintain our stand.

Growth/Exercise Giftedness: We believe continual and intentional spiritual, intellectual and emotional growth is imperative and is the norm and that each member must use his/her gifts and talents.

Growth/Opportunity: We believe the best atmosphere is one in which people can take a chance to risk failure in the pursuit of finding new and better ways to serve.

Growth/Motivation: We believe in motivating people by using every possible legitimate means of encouragement. However, we also believe it is dangerous and sometimes wrong to focus on positive or negative consequences when such attention has the potential to motivate insincere behavior.



BIRTH OF A VISION

Church Motto

The marketing world rides on the back of mottos and logos. Countless tens of thousands of dollars are invested in finding just the right words, just the right font and the perfect color. Like it or not we are in competition for brain cell space with multi-national corporations. Obviously, without the power of the message and the Spirit there is no competition -- we should just go home and forget it.

But we can give it some careful and prayerful thought. We must. It is the language of the people we long to reach.

Motto

As you consider a potential motto, imagine yourself driving by the church and seeing it for the first time. You want to ask many questions about that motto. Of course, it has to be short enough to be read and remembered. It also needs to communicate in words that capture the attention of the people who read it. You can design a motto for people on the inside (the church) if you wish. If you care to have the motto ring a bell in the head of the unchurched person driving by, you may select different words.

As you review the many samples in the Ministry ToolBox, you will notice how some are constructed in the language of the marketplace, others require some prior Christian exposure. These words will communicate some brief content but they will also carry emotional messages. Give attention to the potential emotions that are generated in your readers. What do you want them to think and feel in the second or so they spend reading your words?

Sample Church Mottos

A Soft Touch in a Hard World
Making a Fresh Start Together
Promoting Real Faith; Building True Disciples

Note:

You will discover a wide variety of statements in the Ministry ToolBox System. We have inserted them to meet the demands of a broad variety of churches.

A Bridge in the Community
A Bible-Based Church for Thinkers
A Caring Family Dedicated to Improving Lives
A Caring Family Dedicated to Transforming Lives
A Caring Place in Our Community
A Church for Runaways
A Church with a Difference
A Community of Joy
A Community of Grace, Joy, and Peace
A Community Where People Count for Eternity
A Family of God Building Together
A Family Church with Room for Your Family
A Going Church for a Coming Lord
A Grace-Driven Church for a Grace-Needing People
A Haven of Hope in a Hopelessly Wrong World
A Healing Place for Hurting People
A Home for Healing and Hope
A Light in the Darkness
A Movement of Christians Living out Our Faith
A Place of Hope
A Place for New Beginnings
A Place to Belong
A Place to Begin Again
A Place to Call Home
A People of Faith; a People of Mission
A People with Purpose and a Passion for God
A Ray of Light in a Darkened World
A Safe Harbor in the Sea of Life
A Soft Touch in a Hard World
A Vision for the Harvest
An Alive and Growing Church

Called to Go; Called to Care; Called to Teach
Celebrating Our Heritage with a Hope for Today

Discover the Difference for You and Your Family

Establishing God's Kingdom on Earth Through People
Exalt; Edify; Equip and Evangelize
Experience the Difference

Finding a Bright Future in God's Promises
For the Glory of God and the Good of Our Community

Glorify; Win; Prepare
Good News for the Whole World
Growing Together
Growing Together in Christ
Growing; Sharing; Celebrating
Growing, Sharing, Celebrating, Together for Christ

Here We Grow Again! (During Building Program)

Living It Up! Living It Out!
Loving God - Making Disciples

Making a Fresh Start Together
Making Room for You
Making a Difference

Ourtown's People-Loving Church

Promoting Real Faith; Building True Disciples

Reaching up in Worship; Reaching in for Strength;
Reaching out in Love
Real Faith; True Disciples
Rooted; Connected; Transformed

Still Standing on the Promises of God

The Church with Open Arms
The Church of the WORD
The Whole Gospel to the Whole World
Touching the World with the Word of God
To Know; to Grow; to Flow
To Know Him and Make Him Known
To Respond; to Restore; to Reproduce
To Reach; to Respond; to Restore; to Reproduce
To Worship, Reach, Build and Pray
Touching Hearts; Building Homes
Touching People's Hearts; Building Godly Homes
Touching the World with the Word of God

We Are Learning, Loving and Living the Truth
We Believe in New Beginnings
Where Everybody Is Somebody
Where Everybody Is Somebody and Jesus Is Lord
Where Everybody Is Somebody and Nobody Is Left out
Where the Bible Comes to Life
Where the Difference Is Worth the Distance

