



Vision vs. Mission Statement What's the Difference?

From small congregations to megachurch, churches use mission and vision statements to guide their current operations and future goals.

What Is a Mission Statement?

A mission statement expresses your congregation's core values and purpose, often using a "to statement" template. A strong mission statement is usually a concise phrase (about two to three sentences) that sets forward what the congregation does, how it does it, and, sometimes, why. It can also include information on where the church is based, its target market or audience, or a general statement about the church's values and goals. The audience for a mission statement ranges, often encompassing congregation members, staff, potential members and other stakeholders. A mission statement is closely related to—and often used interchangeably with—a church's vision statement.

What Is a Vision Statement?

A vision statement is a short statement—about one sentence—that describes the future-facing goals and ambitions of your congregation, often using a "to statement" template. It distills your church's vision for the future in a way that outlines your organization long-term goals and, similar to a mission statement, reflects your faith community's core values. A well-crafted vision statement should serve as a guide or a mantra that inspires your members to work toward the greater goal of your church.

A vision statement is closely related to—and often used interchangeably with—a congregation's mission statement.

Mission Statement vs. Vision Statement

Mission statements and vision statements are closely related and easy to conflate—here are some of the key differences between them:

- **Purpose:** Mission and vision statements are closely related but serve slightly different purposes. In general, a mission statement describes the "what" and "how" of the congregation (sometimes also including the "why"), while a vision statement focuses more on the "why" or meaning behind the church's actions. In short, a mission statement can serve as a roadmap of strategic planning to work toward the company's vision statement.
- **Timeframe:** The biggest difference between mission and vision statements is in the timeframe. A mission statement outlines all the things your church is doing in the present to reach the congregation's goal, while a vision statement describes what your church is building toward in the future.



- **Audience:** The audiences for mission and vision statements can vary widely. In general, mission statements are public-facing statements primarily geared toward members and the community. However, they can also drive ministry and offer a sense of cohesiveness for daily decision-making. Vision statements are typically more focused on members, staff and volunteers (and other existing stakeholders) to help drive their ministry in the best direction for the future.

2 Examples of Mission Statements

Here are a couple of effective mission statement examples from Starbucks and Disney to help you write your own mission statement:

1. **Bethlehem Lutheran Church:** At Bethlehem, we strive to be a new creation in Christ by being: Known by God and By Each Other, Challenged together to understand God more fully and Sent to be God's ambassadors in our community.

Bethlehem's mission statement suggests their mission is to help deepen their stakeholder's faith in God through helping their members be known, be challenged in discipleship, action and worship and then sent into God's world to serve His people.

2. **Joy Church:** Joy Church seeks to "Be God's People, Share God's Love and Do God's Work." Their mission is easy to remember and centered around each member's relationship to God.

2 Examples of Vision Statements

Here are two vision statement examples to help you write your own:

1. **Bethlehem Lutheran Church:** "At Bethlehem, we celebrate and share in Christ's gift of salvation. Every time we gather we are a new creation in Christ, starting anew every day, and embracing what God is calling us to do in all of the places we call our community. In Christ's death and resurrection, God has already accomplished everything. This gift of salvation is at work in the world, setting us free to be God's people and **to become who Christ already made us to be.** Come join us and see!

Bethlehem vision statement is short and highlights their unique identity and product in an ambitious, far-reaching way.

2. **Joy Church:** Joy Church's vision is to develop "deeper faith in God and exhibit greater Love to each other and the community." Their statement is concise, and adopts ambitious goals, extending God's love and reach beyond their own members—which is what they're known for.

Glase Consulting can walk your congregation through a vision/mission process along with a strategic plan that will guarantee growth, health and productive ministries. Call you today.